

Evening Star. 17 January 1916 (Papers Past) [31/07/2021]

A genuine “message from the sea” arrived in Dunedin on Saturday. It appears that when the Sixth Reinforcements were some days out from Wellington Sergeant R. L. Aitken, of St. Kilda, threw a bottle overboard containing a message. The bottle found its way to the beach at North Karamea, on the West Coast, where it was discovered by Mrs W. Johnston, who has now forwarded the message on to Aitken’s relatives.

Evening Star. 12 October 1916 (Papers Past) [31/07/2021]

Sergeant Robert Lyal Aitken, who died from wounds received in action somewhere in France on the 30th of September, was the third son of Mr W. Aitken, of Oamaru. and was 27 years of age at the time he met his death. He was born at Totara Valley, Pleasant Point, near Timaru, and received his education partly at Outram and partly at Oamaru. As a youth he was employed with the Farmers’ Co-operative Association in Oamaru, and on leaving their employ he came to Dunedin and entered the service of Mr C. Johnson, draper, Rattray street and from there to Messrs Herbert, Haynes, and Co., where he continued until in answer to the call for men he enlisted in the Sixth Reinforcements. He was an enthusiastic supporter of athletics, and for a number of years a very prominent member and no mean performer in the Caversham Harriers. He also took a keen interest in military affairs, holding the rank of sergeant of the Dunedin Cycling Corps, and later showed a keen interest in the National Reserve movement. Through these and kindred associations he made a host of friends, who deeply regret the loss of a popular comrade and fellow-citizen. Advice was received yesterday that Sergeant Aitken’s younger brother John, who left with the 12th Reinforcements, died in hospital, Birmingham, from wounds received in France. Another brother is at present on leave prior to proceeding to the front.

Otago Daily Times. 13 October 1916 (Papers Past) [31/07/2021]

DEATH FROM WOUNDS.

Sergeant Robert Lyal Aitken, who died from wounds received in action in France on September 30, was the third son of Mr W. Aitken, of Oamaru, and was 27 years of age. He was born at Totara Valley, Pleasant Point, near Timaru, but received his education partly at Outram and partly at Oamaru. As a youth he was employed with the Farmers’ Co-operative Association in Oamaru, and subsequently he came to Dunedin and entered the service of Mr C. Johnson, draper, in Rattray street, and from there to Messrs Herbert, Haynes, and Co.,

where he continued until he enlisted with the 6th Reinforcements. He was an enthusiastic supporter of athletics, and for a number of years was a prominent member and no mean performer in the Caversham Harriers. He also took a keen interest in military affairs. He was a sergeant in the Dunedin Cycling Corps, and later showed a keen appreciation in the National Reserve movement.

Word has been received that Sergeant Robert Lyall Aitken, third son of Mr William Aitken, a well known Oamaru resident, has died from wounds received at the front in France (says the North Otago Times). Sergeant Aitken, who was 28 years of age, went to Oamaru with his parents as a child, and was educated at the South School. He was for a time in the employ of the North Otago Farmers' Co-operative Association, but later accepted a position in the drapery establishment of Messrs Herbert, Haynes, and Co., Dunedin, where he enlisted in the Sixth Reinforcements. He was married, and leaves a wife, but no children. Sergeant Aitken was a keen volunteer, and as a cadet and member of the King's Rifles acquired considerable skill as a marksman, winning a number of prizes. He continued in the service when the Territorial system came into operation. He was a keen sport, and a member of the Oamaru Boating Club, the Hill Gymnasium Club, and the Excelsior Football Club. As a member of the St. Andrew's Harriers in Dunedin he won the club championship. Subsequently he joined the Caversham Harriers, and was one of the team from that club that won the Edmond Cup some five years ago. Mr Aitken has another son on active service in France, and a third is to leave with the Nineteenth Reinforcements.

North Otago Times. 12 October 1916 (Papers Past) [31/07/2021]

Private J. A. Aitken.

Word was received yesterday that Private J. A. Aitken, second youngest son of Mr W. Aitken, of South Oamaru, had died of wounds on the 18th inst, in the First Southern General Hospital Birmingham. Private Aitken was educated at the South School and Waitaki High School. He was employed as a carpenter by Mr D. Sinclair of Oamaru at the time of his enlistment, and sailed from New Zealand with the Twelfth Reinforcements. Private Aitken was about twenty-two years of age. Another son of Mr W/ Aitken (Sergeant R. L. Aitken) was reported as having died of wounds a few days ago; while a third son belongs to the Nineteenth Reinforcements,

Timaru Herald. 1 October 1919 (Papers Past) [31/07/2021]

IN MEMORIAM

AITKEN.—In proud and loving memory of my brothers, Sergeant **R. L. Aitken**, 6th Reinforcements, died of wounds, Abbeville, France, September 30th, 1916; Private J. A. Aitken, 12th Reinforcements, died of wounds, at Birmingham, England, October 8th, 1916.

—Inserted by W. J. Aitken, 19th Reinforcements.