

Timaru Herald. 9 August 1918 (Papers Past) [21/05/2018]

Sergeant L. E. Johnson, who previous to enlisting was private secretary to the Minister of Railways, and earlier was a resident of Timaru, was recently farewelled at Oaklands Park Military Hospital, Surrey, on the eve of his departure for France. For some months Sergeant Johnson was in charge of the commercial division of the re-educational scheme for disabled New Zealand soldiers established at Oaklands Park. Captain H. Richards, O.C. of Disabled Soldiers' Re-educational Departments, presided, and on behalf of the students presented Sergeant Johnson with a handsome gold English hunter watch.

Evening Post. 3 February 1919 (Papers Past) [03/09/2021]

A Press Association telegram from Auckland states:—Mr **L. E. Johnson**, private secretary to the Minister of Railways, who has been on active service, returned by the Oxfordshire yesterday. He was discharged in England to enable him to return to New Zealand at the earliest opportunity.

Akaroa Mail and Banks Peninsula Advertiser. 22 March 1927 (Papers Past) [03/09/2021]

A TRAGIC DEATH.

FALL OF FIFTY FEET.

The staffs of the Ministerial offices at Parliament buildings were shocked yesterday morning, when the body of Leonard Edwin Johnson, one of the best-known and most-liked of private secretaries, and for some time private secretary to the Hon. O. J. Hawken, Minister of Agriculture, was found in a court-yard of the new buildings, commonly called the well.

The indications were that Johnson had thrown himself over the top of the building, falling head-first into the gravel court below — a drop of over 50 feet.

The tragedy apparently happened late on Sunday night, though nobody else knew that Johnson was on the premises. Johnson had been worried lately, but the drastic relief of his own trouble came as a great shock.

The late Mr Johnson was born at Nelson on December 12, 1875, and began his career as a journalist on the literary staff of the "Temuka Leader" and later he was on the "Timaru Post." While on this paper, 21 years ago, he was appointed private secretary to the Hon. Sir William Hall-Jones, then Minister of Public Works, with whom he served for some years. Then he joined the late Hon. Robert McNabb, Minister of Lands. Next he went as private secretary to the Hon. Sir Thomas McKenzie, who was Minister of Agriculture, and for a time was Prime Minister. The late Hon. Sir William Herries then claimed Johnson's services. While with him, Mr Johnson went to the Great War, later resuming service, and he was with Sir William Herries when Sir William died.

Mr Johnson established himself later with the Hon. W. Downie Stewart, and after returning from an American health tour with the Minister of Finance he went as private secretary to the Hon. O. J. Hawken, with whom he was till the time of his death.

Mr Johnson was well-known in political circles all over the Dominion as a cheery, bright personality, liked by both confreres and members of Parliament. Ministers thought highly of him.