

## WORK OF THE NAVY.

### NEW ZEALANDER'S STORY.

#### AN EXCITING DAY.

#### RAIDING CRUISERS SIGHTED.

[BY TELEGRAPH. —OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Dunedin, Friday.

Mr. J. Sinclair Thomson, who is well-known in Dunedin, has three of his four sons serving at the front. The youngest is under age, and one, Lieutenant Colin Sinclair Thomson, is serving on a destroyer at present in active commission in the North Sea. Judging by letters received by his father his boat is having a lively time.

Writing in September Lieutenant Thomson refers to the bad weather being experienced, and says that a destroyer on a calm day is a very different weapon from the same ship in a gale. One-half of the officers and ship's company are more or less seasick, and no one can get any food or sleep. The German submarines seemed to be good sea boats, but happily they appeared to be poor shots when it came to the critical moment, because a number of our ships had been missed. Some had also been hit by torpedoes which did not explode.

"They appeared amongst us the other day," says the lieutenant, "and we had a lively five minutes." He then relates an experience in action. "It was a night affair in which we could not see whom we were shooting at or who was shooting at us. We do not know what damage we did to the enemy, but they put one shell into us. It was a wonderful piece of luck that no one was injured. It was early on the morning of the Scarborough raid, and German ships were all over the place. We had to reduce speed and drop out of the line to see what the damage was, as we were full of water forward, and when daylight came we were by ourselves. It was an exciting day, as we could not steam fast. The weather was awful, and just when we were making the best of our way to the nearest port, we heard that the Germans were practically between us and it. We had to risk meeting them, and sure enough about two o'clock in the afternoon saw them – five large, fast cruisers, like the *New Zealand*, only larger and faster. We did our best to run, but had to slow down. However, they either did not see us or they thought it not worth while chasing us, as they passed us about 10 miles off. The destroyer sent to support us was fired at by a German cruiser, but escaped and picked us up later on."

In a later letter, Lieutenant Thomson says it appears that they were luckier than they thought to escape. The German cruisers actually fired on one of their ships, and it was simply marvellous that they did not see the injured destroyer in the daylight.

Press. 1 October 1915 (Papers Past) [19/01/2022]

New Zealanders will learn with much interest of the promotion of Lieutenant **Colin Sinclair Thomson**, R.N., son of Mr Sinclair Thomson (The Crossing, Geraldine). He was yesterday gazetted to the command of the destroyer Leven. In 1913 he was on board H.M.S. Cambrian, and last year he was appointed to H.M.S. Ambuscade.

Lieutenant Alastair Sinclair Thomson, Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, is now with his regiment in France.

Press. 8 February 1921 (Papers Past) [19/01/2022]

#### **GERALDINE.**

It will be of interest to many in the Geraldine district to know that Lieutenant-Commander **Colin Sinclair Thomson** was in command of the destroyer Verdun, which conveyed from France the body of the unknown warrior recently interred in Westminster Abbey. Lieutenant-Commander Sinclair Thomson is the eldest surviving son of Mr and Mrs J. Sinclair Thomson, of "The Crossing," Geraldine, and was in charge of a destroyer all through the war, and since then was for some time on duty in the Baltic. He joined the Navy after passing the naval entrance examination in New Zealand about 20 years ago. /