

Timaru Herald. 19 January 1918 (Papers Past) [22/12/2013]

A SOLDIER'S FAREWELL AT GAPES VALLEY.

A successful farewell social and presentation was tendered to Private Ray Hopkins in the Gapes Valley hall on Thursday evening, about forty couples being present. Owing to the bad weather the attendance was much smaller than usual. Mr A. Heyder, secretary of the patriotic committee, occupied the chair and introduced the guest of the evening. He spoke very highly of the soldier's parents and grandparents, stating that he had known the latter forty-five years ago, and that if the departing soldier had the energy and courage of his ancestors he would make a name for himself and uphold the honour of his district. His grandparents were practically the pioneers of New Brighton and built what is the present hotel.

Mr P. Mulvihill made the presentation, a wristlet watch, engraved with name and date. He also spoke very highly of the soldier and his family. He said that Mr Hopkins had already given two sons, both of whom had paid the supreme sacrifice, and much sympathy was felt for them by the people of the district. He hoped that the present guest would be spared to come back, covered with glory. Mr Mulvihill read a letter from the Defence Minister expressing sympathy for the bereaved parents, and also stating that Mr Harrop Hopkins, one of the sons killed, was to receive the D.S.O. for bravery on the field. This would be handed to his parents later on. Mr McNaughton also spoke very highly of the soldier and his family.

Miss Elsie Hall buckled on the watch. At intervals the Valley orchestra played national airs, and at the close of the presentation the soldier was cheered, and given musical honours.

The chairman stated that he had received a letter from Driver A. Walton thanking the people of the district, and the Ladies' Sewing Guild for the Christmas parcel sent by them. It arrived in first class condition as if it had only been packed a few days, and every article was of great use. Driver Walton said it was not so much the value of the parcel as the spirit in which it was sent that gave it great value.

A dance followed, the Valley orchestra supplying the music, and Mr Tindall acting as M.C. Several songs were contributed between dances. The ladies provided an excellent supper.

Among those present were two soldiers just returned from the front — Privates G. Williams and J. R. Bradshaw of the 10th Reinforcements.

Temuka Leader. 22 January 1918 (Papers Past) [02/12/2017]

DISTRICT NEWS. GAPES' VALLEY. PRESENTATION TO PRIVATE RAY HOPKINS. (From Our Own Correspondent.)

A successful farewell social and presentation was tendered to Private Ray Hopkins in the Gapes' Valley Hall on Thursday evening, January 10th, about 40 couples being present. Owing to the bad state of the weather the attendance was much smaller than usual. Mr A. Heyder, secretary of the Patriotic Committee, occupied the chair, and introduced the guest of the evening. He spoke very highly of the soldier's parents and grand-parents, mentioning that he had known the latter 45 years ago, and that if the departing soldier had the energy and courage of his ancestors he was sure he would make a name for himself, and uphold the honour of the district. His grand-parents were practically the pioneers of New Brighton, and built what is the present hotel.

Mr P. Mulvihill was then called on to present the soldier with a wristlet watch, engraved with name and date. In doing so he spoke very highly of the soldier and his family, being intimate with them ever since they came to the district. Mr Hopkins had already given two sons, who had paid the supreme sacrifice, and much sympathy was felt for the family by the people of the district, and all hoped that the present guest would be spared to come back covered with glory. Mr Mulvihill then read a letter from the Defence Minister, expressing sympathy with the bereaved parents, also stating that Mr Harrop Hopkins, one of the sons killed, had earned the D.S.O. for bravery on the field. This would be handed to his parents later on.

Mr, J. McNaughton also spoke very highly of the soldier and his family, and endorsed all that was previously said of them. He then wished the soldier God-speed and a safe return.

At intervals during the presentation the Valley Orchestra played the National Anthem, "Marseillaise," and Star Spangled Banner. The audience sang "For he's a jolly good fellow," which was followed by three hearty cheers.

The chairman stated that he had received a letter from Driver A. Walton, thanking the people of the district (through the Committee) and the Ladies' Sewing Guild, for the Christinas parcel sent by them. He stated that it arrived in first-class condition, and looked as if it had only been packed a few days, and that every article was of great use. It was not so much the value of the parcel as the spirit in which it was sent that he appreciated, and he felt he could not express his feelings for the kindness and thoughtfulness of those he left behind.

The dancing programme was then resumed, the musicians being the Valley Orchestra. Mr J. Tindall, of Hilton, acted as M.C. very efficiently throughout the whole evening. During the evening songs were contributed by Messrs S. Heyder, W. Toomey, B. Hopkins, and Private G. Williams. An excellent supper was provided by the ladies, and was done full justice to by all. At the commencement of the dance, the grand march was headed by Private Ray Hopkins and his mother, next followed Mr Bert Hopkins and partner, and then Private G. Williams and partner. Twenty couples were in the march. Extra dance music was played by Messrs. M. Patrick, B. Patrick, S. Heyder, G. Fletcher, Private G. Williams, and Miss A. Pye. Miss Elsie Hall, of Gapes' Valley, fastened the watch on to the soldier's wrist, amidst loud applause. There were visitors from Timaru, Temuka, Kakahu, Pleasant Valley, Raincliff, Hilton, . Geraldine, and North Island, amongst them being two returned soldiers, who had just arrived from the front — Private G. Williams and Private J. R. Bradshaw. Both of these men were members of the 10th Reinforcements. A most pleasant evening was then brought to a close with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem, and three cheers for Private Ray Hopkins.