

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 5 (1939-1940)
Heft: 6

Artikel: A "New Chum's" experience
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943253>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 10.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Notes from all corners of the globe speak of the generous gifts, which have been pouring in and continue to come to Switzerland from Swiss abroad. The Swiss people in New Zealand, just like those of any other part of the world, have now a splendid opportunity to demonstrate that their hearts still beat on the right spot for their old country.

So let us start doing something without further delay and collect money and new woollen clothes of above description from among our Swiss communities in New Zealand, and I suggest that they be sent either :

- (1) directly to the Consulate of Switzerland, Brandon House, Wellington; or
- (2) to entrusted fellow-countrymen in the different local districts, who are willing to take a lead in this drive; or
- (3) to the President or the Secretary of the Swiss Benevolent Society of New Zealand, Mr. Ernst Merz, British Chambers, 35, High Street, Auckland, C.1. and Mr. Werner Ungemuth, Clarence Road, Northcote, Auckland, N.4. respectively.

Every gift, small or large, will be appreciated in the spirit in which it is given. The names of the donors will be published in our monthly bulletin "HELVETIA". No mention, however, will be made regarding the size of the gift, which is in keeping with our democratic principles.

I further suggest that all those entrusted with the collection of money and new woollen clothes, forward the proceeds of their collection to the Consulate of Switzerland, Brandon House, Wellington C.1., who will issue a receipt for each and every gift and attend to the forwarding of same to Switzerland. A receipt for every gift will also be requested from the organisations in Switzerland to whom they will be delivered and such receipt later on will be handed out to the donors in New Zealand. Make your donation for "The Mobilised Swiss Soldiers" now!

Dr. Walter Schmid.

While endorsing the appeal of our respected Consul on behalf of the Swiss Benevolent Society of New Zealand, I wish to impress upon our members and friends that this is one of the few opportunities when we can give proof of our love and affection to our dear Fatherland. According to various reports, Swiss all over the world have toed the mark in a very generous manner.

Although a Society of still tender age, we do not want to lag, but show our sincere patriotism in a substantial manner.

Werner Ungemuth, Secretary.

+++++

A "NEW CHUM'S" EXPERIENCE.

There are experiences and incidents in every man's life that he never forgets. They may be tragic or they may be humorous. Maybe they will be worth relating, or perhaps not.

Nevertheless I would like to relate to our readers one of my both humorous and worrying experiences when first a New Chum in this country.

It is now thirty-six years since I arrived in New Zealand, - "God's own country" as Dick Seddon, then our Prime Minister, called it. After holding a job on a farm near Pukekohe, I decided on a change of climate and obtained employment in the South Island. A neighbouring farmer at Pukekohe, hearing of my intended departure for the South Island, came to me with the request that I take his eighteen year old son Willie under my wing as far as Timaru. I was only too glad to accede to this request, and in fact I felt rather flattered to be trusted with such responsibility. Willie intended to visit his Grandparents in Timaru and to spend some months harvesting in South Canterbury. As there was no main trunk train connection with Wellington, we had to travel by the steamer "Rotoiti" from Onehunga to New Plymouth and thence to Wellington.

Willie's mother and sister saw us off at Onehunga, and when taking my steamer ticket, his mother observed my pocket wallet in

which I carried my money. She asked me if I would mind taking charge of Willie's rather large roll of notes, as he had neither pocket wallet nor an inside pocket in his clothing. At the same time it was agreed that I should give him a pound note from time to time whenever he was in need of money.

After a very rough trip we reached New Plymouth and immediately transferred into the train for Te Aro. We reached Te Aro station about 7.20 p.m. and the steamer "Rotomahana" was due to leave Lyttelton at 7.45 p.m., so naturally we had no time to waste; but as the saying goes, "more haste less speed", for we had not gone very far toward the docks when I remembered that I had left my field-glasses in the train, so handing my swag to Willie and instructing him to go straight to the steamer and there wait for me, I rushed back to the Station and sought the carriage in which we had travelled. As I reached the carriage I found the Guard of the train just taking charge of them as lost property, and after a lengthy argument and necessary identification I obtained possession of them. Rushing back to the steamer - for now the time of its departure was very close - and getting on board, I at once looked for Willie, but there was no Willie to be found. What a state to be in -- no Willie and no swag -- but with the money belonging to Willie in my possession, and the knowledge that wherever he was he had only seven shillings and sixpence in his pocket. The next morning I arrived at Lyttelton, while he was somewhere in Wellington with my swag which contained all my necessary effects.

Imagine me, practically a new chum who had not yet mastered the English language, in Lyttelton and Willie, an inexperienced boy of eighteen who had never before been further from his home than Auckland, left stranded in Wellington, with the small amount of seven shillings and sixpence in his pocket. And what of my clothes? I needed them as soon as I reached my destination.

Well, the first thing for me to do was to go to the Union Company's shipping office from where I telegraphed a ticket to the shipping office at Wellington as well as to the Purser of the steamer "Mararoa" which was to leave Wellington that night. My anxiety could hardly wait for the "Mararoa" to dock the next morning. I scanned every face that came down the gangway, but there was no Willie, - his name not even on the passenger list. Now, what had happened to Willie? In my distress, I turned to the first policeman I met and told him all my troubles, and as wonders never cease, he proved to be a Pukekohe boy, born on Pukekohe Hill, and knew Willie's parents quite well. Is it surprising that he did everything possible; he took me to the Police Station and introduced me to the Sergeant in charge, who immediately telegraphed to Wellington enquiring if there was a Willie ----- in one of the hospitals, or if he was locked up. The reply was negative, so with a heavy heart I continued my journey to Timaru and Fairlie.

After arriving safely at my destination, I once more unloaded my troubles, and asked the Boss to communicate with Willie's people, which he did immediately.

Now, what did happen? Where was Willie since we had parted? Instead of making a beeline for the steamer, he settled down at the street corner where I had left him patiently waiting my return until it was too late for the steamer. I must have passed him on my way back to the docks without noticing him. Like myself in Lyttelton, Willie was much distressed and at a loss what to do next. His money would not go very far, so he decided to send a telegram to his people neatly worded :
"U----- lost, send more money."

Imagine the state of mind of the old people at Pukekohe, who quite naturally came to the conclusion that I had bolted with Willie's cash. It must have been a great relief to them when my boss's letter arrived, explaining what had happened.

So, to make the story short, everything was cleared up. Willie was glad to get his money, I was glad to get my blankets and working clothes, and Willie's people were glad to know that Willie and his money were no longer parted, and that he had arrived at his destination, although I am afraid without much of my paternal care on his behalf.

+++++