

## RECOLLECTIONS OF LIEUT. COLONEL FRANK HAY

Cambridge was my second corps in charge. My lieutenant was the late Colonel Fred Searle. The corps was very small; I can't recall the number of soldiers on the roll but there wouldn't have been more than 30 and this included all the officers stationed on the S.A. training farm at Putaruru, and they could seldom get to meetings on account of their work and the distance (about 25 miles). We (my lieutenant and I) biked this distance over rough metal roads. Remember that the year was about 1930 and bitumen was almost unknown except close to cities. This we did monthly, conducting meetings on Sunday and taking part in the Y.P. meetings held with children in the Hodderville Home. We were given hospitality at the manager's home first by Lt Colonel Fitness, then by Major Armstrong and Major Middlemiss who were successive managers. This was one of the highlights of our stay at the Corps.

The comrades at the centre were largely elderly. The treasurer, a single lady (Miss Marshall) had been treasurer for many years. The home league secretary, a Sister Mrs Denton, had also held her position for a long time over a company of about 12 ladies, the meeting being held in the quarters. This almost caused an international incident: previous officers had, for many years, been female and when the D.C.'s wife heard of the Home League meeting at night in the quarters it was felt to be most improper and we were told to make other arrangements.

The local soldiers were most faithful in their attendance at meetings and supported us liberally, not with money for they were all working folk, but we were always welcome for a meal in their homes.

During our term we commenced openair meetings at Te Awamutu on the sale days. At that time I was asked to take a second lieutenant as there was a surplus coming out of college and no appointments for them. Also about this time the Awapuni Dam was being built and with the help of a Brother Fredrickson who came to work on the dam we commenced a sunday school which later had 100 children but with the conclusion of the dam the workers departed and so did the children.

A number of officers before us had used a horse and gig to get about but when we arrived there was no gig and the horse had died, because as was reported to us, they had not fed it properly, one lady officer giving it only a large mug of oats and chaff for its daily meal; this may have been apocryphal.

However, in my second term in Cambridge, (I had two terms of 18 months each with about 9 months separating them), the lieutenant came home with a model T. Ford for which he had paid £5. It had no upholstery in the back seat and rattled like a tin can and that was our mode of transport until with some effort we raised £25 for a nice 2-seater.

In the centre we had weekly openair meetings on late nights and Sunday morning and night before the salvation meeting. We carried out Bible-in-school classes in rural areas with an outpost Sunday school at Newstead though this was run very successfully by Mrs Theo Fitness with a little oversight from us.

The town of Cambridge was strongly Anglican and while we were well received the country areas were much better to work in.

I have very happy memories of my days at Cambridge but I think it taught me more than I ever gave to it.