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Class C

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Waitaki Boys' High School,
Dunedin,
New Zealand.

14th October, 1942.

Squadron Leader R. J. Hogg,

Dear Dick,

I have chosen your name from a list of distinguished Old Boys of Waitaki Boys' High School because I have read with interest of your exploits over Germany. How I should have liked to be with you in those great raids over Hamm for which you are famous! It must have been an awe-inspiring sight to see those huge cities a roaring inferno of flame.

As the newspapers appear to be decrying New Zealand's war effort perhaps you may be interested in what our family and the boys of Waitaki Boys' High School are doing. Although you cannot compare anything we do with the tremendous risks and sacrifices you and your pals are making, I think you will find that we are doing a little bit towards this great struggle to which the Empire is giving all its heart and strength.

I consider that perhaps the greatest effort of boys of our age is to prepare themselves to make good

and loyal citizens of the British Empire in the future. We, the boarders at Waitaki keep ourselves healthy and fit not only by sports such as swimming, athletics and many others for which we have excellent facilities but also have a hard course of physical drill followed by a run and a dip before breakfast.

As we are boarders we are ~~unable~~ unable to do any emergency precaution scheme work such as being messengers, runners, but we can give our services in many other ways. For instance we all get together to make nets and as it is rather a monotonous job, community sings or something similar are arranged to help pass the time away making the work a pleasure instead of an ordinary dull part of the school curriculum.

At school on Fridays last period I take a courses in signalling which I consider will be very useful to us in the future. I think we all take a lot more interest in the school cadet corps than we used to before there was a war. Although there is very little ~~amm~~ ammunition and most of our rifles have been commandeered by the Army there is much greater scope for inspecting such things as Thompson sub-machine guns and Lewis guns. I

myself don't enjoy military training; nevertheless I cannot but realize its great importance in wartime.

After Prayers, in the Hall of Memories every morning we have a talk on the world situation from the Rector lasting from fifteen to thirty minutes. Not only does this keep us up to date in current events, but also helps us to understand many things which are not fully explained in the newspapers. We also learn a great deal concerning the political situation, in Geography and History.

Another duty which we do voluntarily is taking the place of the maids. Many girls are requisited for war work in factories, in the Army, Navy and Air Force here in New Zealand so that it is up ^{to us} to assist in every way possible. Not only do we make our beds and sweep out our class-rooms but also set the tables for the boarders' meals. Of course these have their advantages in that we sometimes get morning and afternoon tea.

One of my greatest hobbies is photography and I am a very keen member of the Camera Club. This Club increases our knowledge of this subject greatly and ~~the more~~ ^{makes} one realize the important part photography can play in modern warfare.

Last year before I came to board-
 school I helped in a chemist's
 shop in place of a boy who had
 gone overseas. The proprietor was a
 fastidious old gentleman as the two
 incidents I am going to relate will prove
 to you. One day there was a terrific
 storm and when I arrived at the shop
 I was promptly thrown out into the
 howling rain. In a minute or so
 the door re-opened and to my
 amazed eyes came the sight of a
 piece of paper about a foot square
 lying on the floor. I was detailed to
 stand on this and not move. A
 pretty dejected figure I must have
 looked standing there like a statue
 with rain dripping off me. That
 same day the old gentleman did not
 bring his car to work, in case it got
 wet but preferred to walk himself
 and get thoroughly soaked. I wonder
 how he would react to an air-said.
 Although a great many things could
 be told about him no one could
 say he ~~was~~ was miserly with his
 money. I worked for two hours after
 school and all Saturday mornings
 for which I received twenty-two
 shillings a week.

If I were to list all the things
 which my mother is doing for the
 war effort it would take all
 the letter. However I shall tell

you a few. She is a member of the C.P.S. Medical Services, works in a Patriotic Sewing Bee and also serves meals in Service Clubs. You may imagine that this takes all her time but she is still able to back a minesweeper's box once a month and do without a maid. These are but a few of the things which my mother finds time for.

Now I come to perhaps the greatest of all as far as our family is concerned. My father never seems to have a spare moment in which to enjoy himself. He is a very keen member of the Home Guard and will soon be earning a commission. His training takes up four nights a week and Sundays. Not only has he taken over the business of a friend overseas but also gives all the hard-earned profits to him. There is hardly anything more I can relate about Father as he works a great deal but speaks very little.

My sister, Norah, who is fourteen years of age is a semi-cripple which renders her unable to do many things that other girls of her age are able to do. Nevertheless she knits ties and socks and is a very keen helper in the Service Clubs even though her particular job may be only washing dishes.

Derek, my brother, is seven and quite a bright youngster at that. Although he is really too small to do anything for the war effort he is a very eager waste-paper collector. Each week he takes along to school about as big a bundle as he can carry.

Of course we are all rationed in such things as sugar, tea, petrol and rubber appliances but when I read about what is happening in England I don't think New Zealand has any call to growl.

Well, I hope to read many more accounts of your daring raids over Germany and see you back safely before long.

Wishing you the best of luck,
I remain,

Yours sincerely,
Alan D. Holland.