

The next event of any importance to occur was the Industrial Strike of 1913-14.

This Strike was the biggest thing of the kind that has happened in New Zealand since the big Maritime Strike of 1890-91.

From the time the strike was declared, it could be seen that a great deal of bitter feeling and riotous conduct would follow. This is always to be expected when "special police" are used.

In Wellington and Auckland, it was the signal for disorder and bloodshed when the Special Constables appeared in the street. It was not possible for the Police themselves to maintain law and order in Wellington and Auckland without the aid of Special Police. When some "specials" are provided with batons, they fancy they are empowered to do a lot of things, and sometimes their actions lead to trouble that could be avoided by the use of a little forbearance and reason.

Although Dunedin was the headquarters of the Seamen's Union I was able to manage to keep order with my own men without the aid of Foot or Mounted Specials.

In those days the watersiders and seamen were not a vicious combination and, when properly handled, were amenable to reason. Today, the Police have different elements to cope with, Communists and Red Feds who have no respect for the laws of God or man.

For a few days after the declaration of the strike I was kept busy with Mr. Bartholomew, S.M., enrolling and swearing in Special Constables. We enrolled 600 Foot Specials, and 400 Mounted Specials. The Mounted Specials were billeted in "Tahuna Park", an ideal place for a military camp. The Foot Specials were sworn in, paraded, their names and addresses taken, and they were then dismissed until called upon, if required. I had then a good man with me in Senior Sergeant Dart (now a law practitioner at Methven). The Senior Sergeant was an excellent drill and was

well skilled in handling men. The Mounted Specials were capably commanded by Mr. *Lu* Hazlett and Mr. Crosbie Morris. We got on splendidly, and not a thing would be done without consulting me. I had great luck in the handling of this strike right through. The owner of the premises where the "Strike Committee" and the "Executive of the Seamen's Union" met was a namesake and an old friend of mine, and she kept me posted in everything that took place at these meetings. Also, I had a friend in the "Commerce Protection Committee" who kept me informed of what went on at their meetings.

At the Strike Committee's second meeting, a well-known Labour agitator named Steve Boreham, when addressing the meeting, mentioned my name in connection with a matter that occurred in Oamaru, after the Maritime Strike already referred to. At the close of his remarks, he said "How can we cross a man with a heart like that?" This is what Boreham referred to.

The winter following the Great Maritime Strike, there was real distress in all seaport towns, and the distress I saw in Oamaru that winter reminds me in a smaller way of the distress and want that I see around me today.

One night I was sent for to go to the Queen's Hotel and when I got there I found seven residents deliberating as to the best way of rendering assistance to those in dire want. There was a Mr. Gatfield present, the owner of a boiling down and fellmongery works at Evaline, outside Oamaru, who stated that he had a line of 200 of the finest sheep that ever passed through his hands, and these were at the disposal of the poor, but he did not know how they could be doled out to those in need of them. I said I had more time at my disposal than any of those present, and could undertake the job. I knew those in distress, and I had a good man in view who would assist me. I said to Mr. Gatfield, "If you send in 120 sheep on Thursday morning to start with, I'll make all arrangements." I went straight away and had "locals" inserted in both newspapers, giving all particulars. I had a gallows erected in the gaol grounds, placed two large tables in position, borrowed the necessary tools and aprons from a local butcher, and when the sheep arrived I was well set. They were a splendid lot and not one

of them under 65 lbs. To those with over three of a family I gave a whole sheep, and those under three half a sheep. At 6 o'clock the 120 sheep were disposed of. I rang up Mr. Gatfield and asked for 60 more and these were also disposed of. At the time, the weather was bitterly cold, and the meat would easily last a week.

The donor of those sheep was as good-hearted a fellow as ever lived. He came to Oamaru with a large sum of money and spent it in Oamaru, and eight years after this event I saw him breaking stones on the roadside at Aramoho, a suburb of Wanganui.

Steve Boreham, previously referred to, lived in Oamaru then and so did his two brothers, and old Mrs. Boreham, the mother, lived in a little cottage on the roadside at Pukeuri. In this dole of sheep the three Borehams participated, and I sent half a sheep out with the Mounted Constable to the old mother. This little action on my part gained the favour of this noted Labour agitator, Steve Boreham.

One Saturday night, while the strike was on, the Mayor, Mr. Downie Stewart (Late Minister of Finance) rang me up at my Office and stated that some of the strikers were addressing a meeting at the "Cargill Monument", that the streets were blocked with people, and the trams could not run and were held up by the crowd. I told him I'd be at the scene in five minutes. When I arrived at the Monument, things were as the Mayor had described. It was just 9 o'clock and Constables and Sergeants in charge were then going on, and coming off, duty. I had them halted in case of trouble. I took a Sergeant with me and approached the speaker, a Victorian, named McGuire, a regular "firebrand." I said, "I hope you won't put me to the trouble of bringing you before the Court. You see how the street traffic is blocked, and a serious accident may happen any moment. You have any amount of room at Victoria Square, and you can speak there until you are tired without interruption." He said he would speak on where he was. At this moment, Steve Boreham mounted the steps of the Monument and said "We must obey the Superintendent, and those of you who are out for law and order will follow

me to Victoria Square." In three minutes there were not 50 persons left at the Monument. The Mayor and a friend of his watched the proceedings and, after the crowd had dispersed, came and spoke to me, and asked me how I managed to disperse the crowd without trouble. I said, "A little 'mesmerism' did the business."

All preparations were now being made for the opening of the Port. I had two telephone connections with "Tahuna" Park", and a few days before the Port was opened I gave a "false alarm" to the Camp officers in order to test the efficiency of the arrangements, and in 12½ minutes I had 200 Mounted Specials beside me at the wharf, and this I considered highly satisfactory. The Specials were loth to return to Camp empty-handed.

On the Saturday night before the opening of the Port I was invited to attend a meeting of the "Commerce Protection Committee." I took my Sub-Inspector (Fouhy) with me. The Committee announced that it had promises from 300 free labourers to work the boats. A member of the Committee (a Mr. Ritchie) was, I was told, opposed to me for some reason right through the piece. He addressed me by saying "Have you plans of the Harbour and wharves prepared and barricades erected?" I said, "I have no plans prepared. I am not a "Sunday Soldier"; only a policeman, and I am quite sure I am not going to engage in battle. The flimsy barricades erected by the Harbour Board on its own account were swept away like matchwood this morning. Before coming to this meeting tonight I seriously thought out my intentions in this matter. I intend to use my own men only in protecting the free workers and keeping order. I have 40 men at my disposal, and I pledge my position to pick up all the free labourers that may turn up in any part of the city, at any time, day or night, and safely escort them to the ships they are to work on, and safely protect them there. I have two telephone connections with the Mounted Camp at "Tahuna Park" and in response to a false alarm on Thursday morning I had 200 Mounted Specials beside me at the wharf in 12½ minutes, and this was most satisfactory." This seemed to satisfy the Committee.

The Railway Station was the rendezvous, and 3 a.m. was the time fixed. At 2.45 p.m. I marched 40 men out of the Police Station

and when we got to the Railway Station there were only 70 free labourers to pick up, instead of 300. Every street in the City was patrolled by Strike Pickets, and these were successful in prevailing on the balance of the free labourers to return to their homes.

The Meeting place of the free labourers was supposed to be kept quiet; yet the streets from the Railway Station to the wharves at that early hour were lined with people. A few incidents happened on the way to the wharves, but it would take too long to give particulars of them here.

That evening the free labourers started unloading two ships, and from time to time more free labourers were arriving, and work went on without any interruption.

Next day, the carrying away commenced, and at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, as I was walking along the wharf, rounding one of the Goods Sheds, I was astounded to see the street strewn with bags of flour and sugar and other things, and four strikers on top of a lorry, emptying out the stuff with all their might. I bounded off the wharf (I had no Arthritis then) and collared one, one ran away, and two ran into the Railway Goods Shed, and the door was closed after them by two Railway Officials. There were a Sergeant and three Constables within twenty yards of the lorry taking no action. When they saw me arresting one of the offenders they came to my aid, but I waved them off and said I would see them later. I took my ~~man~~ ^{man} along to the Police Station through a crowded street, and there wasn't a "boo" nor a "hoot". When I got near the Police Station I was stopped by three members of the Strike Committee who wanted to bail the prisoner. I said there was no bail for the prisoner, nor for any prisoner found offending as this one was. He must remain in the lock-up until brought before the Court. I delivered myself to the men very strongly. The usual "spy" was present and conveyed every act and word of mine to the Commerce Protection Committee at their meeting that night. If I had not appeared on

the scene at the moment I did, my reputation was shattered to smithereens.

Straight away I put the matter in the hands of the Detectives, and that night they rounded up the three other offenders, and the four were brought before the Court next morning and dealt with. It was a bad time to come to loggerheads with so many of my men, so I accepted their explanations. I reported the two Railway Officials, and they were adequately punished.

A few days after this the whole of the Strike Committee were arrested on warrant by orders from Wellington, and to make the arrests I took two Detectives with me. It was Saturday morning and was strike pay-day of the watersiders and seamen out on strike. The paying out took place at the Watersiders' Offices, Rattray Street Wharf. When we arrived the paying out was not quite finished, and we waited. When finished paying, some 300 men all told, the Chairman of the Committee sang out to me that they were now ready. We marched them along to the Police Station without a murmur from the crowd. On arriving at the Station, the prisoners were charged, and then admitted to bail. On Monday morning they came before the Court and were bound over to keep the peace.

Every day, signs were increasing that the strike was broken and all that remained for a complete collapse was the turning to of the seamen.

A deputation, headed by Mr. Percy Sargood, waited on me at my office, and asked if I knew anything about the intentions of the seamen. "We have come to you," he said, "as we think you know everything that's going on in connection with the strike." I said, "I am afraid, gentlemen, you are giving me too much credit, but if you retire to the next office for three minutes, I may be able to find out the information you are looking for". I rang up my female friend, and she told me that the seamen had just risen from a meeting, and that two delegates were appointed to go to Wellington that night, where a meeting of seamen would take place at 10 a.m. next day, when the intentions of the seamen would be decided. The moment that