

GREAT WAR STORIES

Harold George Traves

Remembering the sacrifices of those with South Canterbury connections who served their country 100 years ago.

CAROL BELL

Harold Traves was a ploughman on enlistment, the son of Mrs W. Traves of Roslyn Terrace, Timaru.

He embarked at Wellington on February 13, 1917 with G Company Reinforcements, bound for Plymouth.

On August 13, 1917 Harold's service records show he was wounded in action with gun shot wounds (shell fragments) and admitted to No.2 NZ Field Ambulance.

After passing through other medical stations, he was transferred back to England,



The cigarette case belonged to Harold George Traves that "stopped a bullet".

where he was eventually admitted to the No.1 NZ General Hospital at Brockenhurst on August 30. There he was declared unfit by the medical board. He

subsequently embarked for New Zealand on the "Marama" on November 21, 1917.

Harold Traves' son, William (Bill) Traves, and Harold's obituary recount how he was severely wounded by a shell-burst, that also killed a trench-mate, after being on the front for only two days. The shrapnel tore across Harold's chest and

through both arms. Then, while being evacuated, he again came under fire and the stretcher



A postcard portrait of G Coy, 22nd Reinforcements, 28th platoon, at Trentham Camp in early 1917. Traves is standing in the doorway, fourth from left. (Images: Courtesy of B Traves)



Harold George Traves, 1917.



Harold George Traves, posed within a lifebuoy of the hospital ship TSS Marama, in which he was invalided back to New Zealand in late 1917.

bearers carrying him dropped him. Sometime during this ordeal a cigarette case that he was carrying in his pocket, that he had earlier swapped for some Woodbines, also stopped a bullet. The wounds rendered Harold unfit for service and required further convalescence in Hanmer upon his

return to New Zealand. Even so Harold went on to work as a drover and live to the ripe old age of 82.

■ This is part of the SCROLL project. You can find SCROLL stories, hosted by the South Canterbury Museum, at museum.timaru.govt.nz/scroll