

Press. 21 June 1915 (page 10) [28/04/2015]

TROOPER W. T. HUXFORD.

Trooper W. T. Huxford (Canterbury Mounted Rifles, killed), was the eldest son of Mr Geo. Huxford, farmer. Milford, Temuka. Trooper Huxford was born at Kurow, North Otago, on June 28th, 1895, and was at the time of his death not quite 20 years of age. He was a good all-round athlete, and had achieved some success in football, boxing, and running. He won several events at last year's sports meeting at Temuka. and with the prize money he purchased a horse. His time being up in the Senior Cadets he applied for a transfer, and was granted permission, to join the Mounted Corps. Trooper Huxford, who left with the Main Force, was universally esteemed by all who knew him, both in South Canterbury and North Otago.

Auckland Star. 22 June 1915 (page 7) [28/04/2015]

CAREERS OF THE FALLEN.

WOUNDED AND KILLED.

CANTERBURY.

(By Telegraph. — Own Correspondent.)

ONE OF THE MOUNTEDS.

Trooper William Thomas Huxford killed in action on May 30, was the eldest, son of George Huxford, of Milford Lagoon Road, Temuka. Trooper Huxford was barely 21 years of age. He was educated at the Duntroon School, and was one of the first to volunteer for active service, and left with the main Expeditionary Force. He was a fast and clever runner, and footballer, and won two events at the Temuka Easter sports last year. He was of a quiet and unassuming disposition, and well liked by all with whom he came in contact.

Timaru Herald. 2 August 1915 (page 9) [28/04/2015]

SOLDIERS' LETTERS.

AT THE DARDANELLES

Mr D. Bain, of "Stumps" Farm, Orari, has received a letter from his brother Trooper L. Bain, who is with the Main Expeditionary Force at the Dardanelles. The following are some extracts: —

"As this is one of my days out of the trenches I will scribble a note in reply to all those letters you meant to write to me but could not because you were too busy. I find this shooting of Turks more interesting than duck shooting, but a little more dangerous. Besides being in the trenches we have had a couple of smacks at the enemy in the open. In the first go two Temuka boys lost their lives. There was a Regiment of Wellington men cut off for a while about a mile away and two troops of us (S.C.M.R.) and a troop of Nelson men were sent out to help them in. We had to go over a piece of ground covered by a machine gun and several rifles. Talk about going for your life. Alex dodging the willow tree was not in it. He was stripped to the singlet, while we were carrying our packs and rifles and ammunition. It was at this place where George Moore was killed. After a hundred yards of that we had to go sneaking and crawling up gullies and round hills, with Turks all round us, till we got to the trench where the Wellington M.R. were. They came out of the trench and removed their wounded and we went in. Here we had another hot half hour and some of us narrow escapes. . . . However we accounted for a good many of the enemy. When the Wellington men got well away we retired from the gully as intended. When the Turks found we had left they came down after us, and if you can imagine 500 beagles and a few huntsmen's horns you will

have some idea of the noise they made. When we thought they had come far enough we climbed a bit of a hill and to a trench and pasted them. "We gave them 'Allah, Allah!' I got separated here from poor Huxford and never knew he was hit till near daylight, when they told me he was dead. I had walked over his body lying in the bottom of the trench, twice in the night, carrying messages and did not know it was him. He was a good fighter, a bit too keen if anything, exposing himself too much. It was sad coming back to the dug-out and nothing left of poor Huxford but his pack. He and I had slept side by side ever since we left Temuka, and he was as good a mate as ever any man had.

The infantry chaps are getting far more to do than we are. Dave Scott's a Lance Corporal, and Wattie Oldfield a Sergeant. . . .

We are very well off here as far as food is concerned. We get half a tin of tobacco two packets of cigarettes and a box of matches a week, and a nip of rum in bad weather. Not going bad, are we? -----

I'd better stop or the censor may think I'm making it too hot, and stop the whole jolly lot."

Oamaru Mail. 18 August 1915 (page 1) [28/04/2015]

LETTERS FROM OUR BOYS.

The following letters are from Sergt.- Major Nugent Cuff to his mother, Mrs Cuff, of Papakaio: -

Anzac Cove, 12/6/15.

. What a treat a bit of news of one's old whereabouts is. Jock M'Lardy was game until the last. He led a charge but had to retire, and it was then that they got him. He had nine bullets through him. Poor old Jock, how he will be missed in Oamaru. I have seen very few of the Oamaru boys; they are all here and there, and it's very hard to find them.

This is a great life. We are dug into the hills to protect us from the shrapnel of which in different parts we get a good deal. One is hurt now and then and some are killed. This place is noted for three S's —snakes, shrapnel, and snipers. When we first landed it was great to see the fellows dodging when a bullet went by, but now they take practically no notice. You see a shell land and then if no one is hit a great cheer goes up. They go bathing in the sea in hundreds, indeed at times I think there are thousands. Then it reminds one of a big regatta day, not like a big war, for all the notice that is taken of the snipers. But sometimes they get home and a few get hit. Some of them are deadly shots, but it has to be pretty thick to get our men out of the water. Sometimes their big guns drop a shell or two, and this makes a scatter, but otherwise our men don't seem to care at all. You would hardly credit the crowd of men here. If a man is shot it does not interfere with work at all. "Poor beggar!" or some such remark is passed, and if anything can be done for him it is done. Our men and the Australians are never tired of talking of the great work the others have done, and the Turks know our mettle too. We are known as "White Ghourkas" and "South Sea savages." There have been many whose luck was out in our regiment, but that cannot be avoided.

We are all liking it well. It is a good time on the whole in the trenches, especially if one can get a shot at a Turk. Many of them are big strong men, but they are in many cases driven to it, and they don't like the colonials at all.

The country is very rough where we are, but away on the flanks it seems very good, something like the hills towards the mountains below Herbert. A prickly shrub grows on it that we have called wild holly. We have both heard and seen the warships bombarding at different times, and it is a great sight. They shake the hills; it is like a big earthquake rumbling through them. The aeroplanes are a great factor in this war, for they glean valuable information and do good work. It is great to hear the Turks when they are charging you

yelling "Allah! Allah! Allah!" It does get one's blood up. In some cases we hear that they are driven to it with machine guns —if they go back they get it and if they come on they surely get it also —for our boys have shown themselves good fighters.

. To-day there is not a sound of any sort. It is hard to realise that we are in the heart of the old world. The sea is as calm as can be, yet here we are in the thick of a big war, we on one side of the hill and our enemy on the other, with only 150 yards between us. I saw "Bricky" Taylor and young Phillips up near the station, they are both all right.

23/6/15.

. I have never felt better. We go about in short trousers and they are all right. Our men nearly all go about without shirts, and are all as brown as berries. It was a bit hot like that the first few days. The sun here is very hot indeed. This morning at 3 a.m. all hands were awakened by one of our destroyers firing a dozen shots into the Turkish trenches. They were filing over our face of the hill into the face at the back of us. Lately we have been getting a good deal of shrapnel, and he who does not duck into his dugout when he hears it coming is very foolish. I have been all round among most of the New Zealand boys that are here now, and it is hard to realise the difference, compared with the crowd that left with us. When one hears of some of those who have stayed behind it seems awful. I would not have stayed for anything; some now would seem like being driven to it. This is the farthest from my birthplace I have put in June 21st, but I wouldn't be surprised if I put in the same day here next year, for it is a long way to go yet.

We are being very well fed, one could not get more. We get bacon, ½lb; jam, ¼lb; corned beef, 1lb; biscuits, 1lb; vegetables. We get fresh meat and bread twice a week, also rice and figs. A supply ship brings further provisions, so you can see we are well cared for. We had some great work burying Turks the other day, some of them had been dead for two weeks in this sweltering sun. Our scouts have a bit of fun some nights. The other night they went out and got two Turks on a Cossack post. One died from wounds after they got him in. One was all right; another crawled down to the beach and died there. They were well equipped and seemed well fed. The first night some of our boys had the bayonets shot off their rifles, and the flying bayonets wounded others. Two got them in the head and one got a piece of bayonet through one wrist and a bullet through the other. Nice reception for a start! The Turks came on like a mob of sheep and some of them were shot right on the parapet of our trench, or bayoneted there. You must imagine what it was like, for I can't describe it. It was wonderful how our boys faced it. Some of them were very young, but now all are keenly looking for another round up. Some of them are a bit too keen like a young sheepdog. "Bricky" Taylor is still going strong. I met Andersons nephew, Willie Huxford, that used to be up at Duntroon. He was killed in a gully about 100 yards from where we are camped. Bill Anderson and I are going up one of these days to fix the grave up and put a little cross on it. It was on May 31st he was killed. Poor old Jock. He was thought well of by all and was a good soldier.

Oamaru Mail. 18 August 1915 (page 5) [02/05/2015]

Trooper William T. Huxford, of the 8th (Canterbury) Mounted Regiment, who was killed in action on the 30th May, was a North Otago boy. He was the son of Mr George Huxford, late of the Tokarahi Estate, and now farming at Temuka. Trooper Huxford was barely 20 years of age, having been born at Kurow on the 28th June, 1895, and was educated at the Duntroon School. He was one of the first to volunteer for active service, and left with the Main Expeditionary Force. He was a fast and clever runner and footballer, and won two events at the Temuka Easter sports of last year.