

George Arthur Ball, second son of Harry and Amelia was born in Southbrook on 25th July, 1893. He attended primary school at Ohoka, Opawa and Sydenham Schools, before moving to Timaru in 1908. He could remember his chore as a boy, of carrying buckets of water from an outside well into the house for domestic use. The family was large, and all the older children had to work hard in their spare time, for their father was a strict Victorian disciplinarian.

When the family moved to Timaru, he worked at Ballantyne's Departmental Store, retailing until June 1915 when he left New Zealand in the 2nd South Canterbury Company of the N.Z.E.F. He enlisted in January 1915 and after training in NZ arrived at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli, at the beginning of August. In September, having developed septic poisoning from shrapnel injuries, he was transhipped on the 'Equitoria', a hospital ship, to England.

Something of the atmosphere of the Gallipoli Campaign can be gleaned from the jottings from Arthur's diary at the time.

"Landed on peninsula between 2am and 3am & walked along the beach through saps(sappers) carrying ammunition till 4am and rested at beginning of Gully. Towards noon started to advance up - shells began to pour on us - English blocked us up - Times warm - Arrived top of Apex at night - picks and shovels carried for entrenching lost between firing lines - Lost the company - Six of us slept on side of Hill - Picked up 2nd Bn. Company at foot of Gully - advanced to top again - A hot reception on arriving - Hell on earth, lost about 2/3 Company, marvel we escaped - Picked up our boys on Rhododendron Hill.

At night first time in trenches - In all next day, came out at night, On Rhoda, for about 8 days - On Apex in trenches night and day - In rest Otago Gully about 22nd Aug for two days - Walk up to Table Top - on here for four days - From here we saw our Mounteds advance on the left - About 30th went to Apex; what a time we had, for ten days being shelled all the time, night and day. On rest about 8th Sept walking up to Rhoda, digging saps around to Apex - this is what they call a rest. Sept 11th sent off Peninsula on to Hospital Boat. Next day on Imbros, picked up Ted again and started on journey to England."

After weeks in Leeds Hospital both Ted and Arthur visited 'the aunts of Arundel'. From October 1915 to October 1916, Arthur was either in hos-

pital or Sling Camp from where he left for active service in France, for trench warfare, taking part in the Messines Attack in which he was wounded in July 1917.

From his diary of trench fighting in France - "June 6th -Left camp for trenches -arrived at 12pm, Fritz shelled with tear gas as we were going along through the trenches to our places.

June 7th At 3.10am Bombardment opened with all guns, Mines blown up in Hun trenches -tremendous explosion, Hopped down parapet, rushed across Steenbeck. Ted and I kept together, marched along and went into our own barrage, got  $\frac{1}{2}$  way up hill. In shell hole, hopped out after two Huns machine gunned us. Ted got smashed in leg -did not see him afterwards - Still going along, boys toppling all around like nine pins - We picked up officers & got along to assembly place -Still going strong -got to lower end of Oxonian Trench on left of Messines. Here we had to dig ourselves in, for the artillery had smashed the Hun trenches. We reached our own part of trench at 6am. Started digging in, just got down nicely by 12 noon -Fritz started to shell & didn't he bump in all sorts, had us going some. Near 2pm Fritz started counter attack just as Aust. went over. Fritz shelling all the time.

June 8th -Shelling still -one landed plonk on parapet, just on buried 4 of us as we were being relieved. At 6pm had to get out of trench and run about 200yds of open ground -got back to Fritz's old 2nd line.

June 9th Dug deeper -Also got shelled here -Shell landed on parapet and showered dirt all over us. At 2pm got relieved from here & went over ground we had taken -nothing but shell holes.....

June 13th Fritz shelling all day long, landing them all around us, got one well into our trench. At 5.30pm along came orders that we were to go over at 7pm once again, what the first Battalion should do -but to have no artillery supporting us. Just before 7pm over came 7 of Huns aeroplanes just as we were lining up to hop over, and started firing their machine guns at us. At 7 over we went, the planes still above us, and all at once Fritz opened up on us with his big guns - what a hot time. It was a marvel how we got through. We got his first line, no Huns about except for the dead. Here we waited for a minute or two for a breather. As we were spelling Fritz opened up on us with his big guns -up and out of it we went -lost a few men, but took his second line of trench & stopped for about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an hour while he was shelling back. After he had quietened



down we went forward and dug in -Never saw the rest of the company. At night digging all the time, no shelling. In morning at 8am orders came up that we had gone too far, so had to hop out & run across open ground about 200 yds and to the left to join up with the rest of the Company. Got over to them all right but felt very small as we had advanced about 500 yds. Day quiet, repairing trench at night. Our battalion had to go over again with artillery barrage in front of us. At 8pm up hopped the other boys; our Coy in support did not go over and Fritz opened plunk on our trench. They got the line all right and got dug in. In 3hrs time as everything was getting to normal again, some Hun fired up an S.O.S. rocket and Fritz was on to us again. What a night we put in, shells landing all around us every minute, gas shells and H.E. of every description. He blew in 5 bays of our trench, going all night long. At daybreak 3am, along came our relief & let us get back. We doubled over the back country as fast as possible & at last got back to Hill 63, our cooks waiting there for us. The first lot of rations in 36 hours....."

In 1920 in Timaru, Arthur married Agnes Forbes Bruce to whom he had become engaged in Dundee, Scotland. Their two children were Doris Agnes and Arthur Bruce (Bruce). Between 1920-24 Arthur worked as a taxi proprietor and a land agent, returning to work at Ballantyne's in 1925 until his death on 24th March 1951.

Arthur was keenly involved in local affairs serving for many years as a committee member of the Timaru West End Ratepayers' Association. He was also a foundation member of the West End Swimming Club, helping in fund raising to build the baths and serving the club as handicapper for several terms and as president. During that time in the 1939-45 War years a feature of the social life of Timaru was the weekly dances run by that club on Saturday nights. Aggie's orchestra provided the music for these functions which provided plenty of entertainment for the 16 to mid twenty age group(Something which is lacking today).

Bridge playing, rifle shooting, gardening, reading and family life were Arthur's favourite forms of relaxation.

Agnes Forbes Ball nee Bruce, was born in Dundee, Scotland on 11th January, 1901, the oldest in a family of five, most of whom were natural musicians. Aggie worked as a book keeper in the Courier Newspaper Office in Dundee until coming to New Zealand to be married on 7th December,