

ourselves in awaiting reinforcements, which arrived at about 9 p.m., joining in digging themselves in with us. We made a very good job of that part of it and awaited later developments. The next day, Friday 23rd, the shelling of our trenches was terrible, and it was kept up all day and the greater part of the night at certain parts of the line of trenches which we were holding. Gas was frequently used, and lots of our poor boys fell victims to the cruel ideas and doings of the barbarous brutes with whom we are fighting. Still we held on all this time without a wink of sleep and under, I must say, very trying circumstances. Saturday morning at about 4 a.m. shells were poured at us like a hailstorm and our trenches and men suffered very badly by it. My section of platoon found ourselves in a rather awkward situation about 1 p.m. on that day. It happened that the whole of our brigade had retired in the morning, also the Algerians, who were on our left, and to our surprise we found that we were in the trenches, one corporal, one lance-corporal, and about 11 or 13 men all alone and practically surrounded by the Germans. Two things were left for us to do: first, give ourselves up as prisoners, or take a chance in retiring in the open until we could get hold of our battalion. They both seemed to me certain death. However, we decided to adopt the latter. Up over the parapet we got, when shrapnel, machine guns, and rapid rifle fire were turned on us in such a way as to show one a true and real picture of hell. However could one survive such an ordeal is a question I often since have asked myself, but I was one of the few out of our party who came through it unscathed, much to my appreciation of the fact that April 24th, 1915, was the luckiest day of my life. I afterwards joined in with an English battalion, and on Sunday, 25th April, was taken off the field suffering from exhaustion and the effects of gas poison.