

LIFE IN TRENCHES OF BRITISH NEAR BATTERED YPRES

Captain Simson Writes of The Modern Battle

MAN WELL NIGH UNSEEN

Only Smoke and Sound Tell of Conflict—Officer of Heavy Artillery Tells of Long-distance Combat

(New York Evening Post.) Daily life in the British trenches, near the places where the Germans delivered their fiercest attacks, at Ypres, are described in a letter from the front, written by Capt. Noel Simson, R. G. A., of the 48th Heavy Battery, Third Division, on active service, and published below. The letter was written to J. S. Simson, of Monterey, California, a brother. Captain Simson was not allowed to name the place from which he wrote, but was able to date two sections of the letter. It is as follows:

At present we, the British army, are practically stagnating in front of the German line. After very severe fighting—the fiercest of the whole war so far—the Germans have apparently given up their attempts to break through to the coast ports, Calais, Dunkirk, etc., and if reports prove correct and they do make further attacks to sever the allies' line it is probable they will occur in the vicinity of Arras and Bethune.

After several weeks of terrific attacking on the part of the Germans with vastly superior numbers, they seem to have worn themselves out and all we have to do is to hold the line in which we are entrenched until the order comes that we are to push forward. Whether that will be tomorrow or next month depends upon Joffre, who has conducted the campaign so successfully so far and will without doubt continue to do so. His is the policy of deliberation, taking no risks, and since delay does not aid the allies and militates against the chances of German success, we do not much mind.

Nearly a week and my leave which appeared so certain was cancelled the day before I should have gone. I need not add that every one was in the same boat; all leave was stopped, and if you were sitting beside me at this moment you would know the reason. A fierce attack is proceeding at this moment on our left with the object of capturing a ridge and village (I am sorry, but I must not mention names; you must be content with the fact that it is in Flanders) which has been causing us some annoyance and which in addition forms a bit of the German salient into our line. I got up at 5 a. m. with another officer, came up the hill from which I am now observing, fixed two straw dummies clad in khaki in a likely situation to attract "les obus allemands," and then came on to our point of vantage, from which we have a wonderful view over the surrounding country, also a deep shelter trench. I might add that the spot where we fixed the dummies is unobscured by any living soul within several hundred yards. By the time we reached our trench, dawn was just breaking away over the enemies' lines; the view extends for fifteen or twenty miles and more than half round the horizon, so you can imagine what a spectacular sight the artillery bombardment presented.

At seven sharp the artillery bombardment began; the sun had not yet risen, of course, and the brilliant flashes of shrapnel bursting in the trees and among the houses of the village, with their puffs of pure white smoke drifting away, looked extraordinarily pretty. Here, on the hill, we might have been watching a mock artillery, pageant, for there is nothing to disturb one's peace of mind—except the constant booming of cannon, to which we have all become thoroughly familiarized long ago. A modern battle viewed from any position where a general idea of the proceedings can be gained appears to be noise, smoke, and flashes (at night)—the human element is absolutely invisible. Every variety of noise can be heard, from the sharp crackle of rifle fire and the busy tap-tap of machine guns through the descending scale of "bangs" to the "boom" of the heavy guns throwing 120-pound shells and over.

Colors of Shell Smoke. The smoke, too, presents many varieties. Shrapnel gives a puff of pure white, lyddite bursts indifferently black—if detonation is perfect—or if imperfect, all shades from bright to greenish yellow. I have also frequently seen clouds of pink smoke, but have never been able to decide whether it is the real burst or clouds of the brick dust, for I have never noticed it except among buildings.

The peace of mind of which I spoke was not to last continuously, however. At 7.40 the hum of an approaching shell told us that the enemy had realized something was "up" and was not going to let us have it all our own way. It was a light field-gun shell and burst in the grass about twenty-five yards to our left; another one a few moments after sailed overhead and fell the other side of the hill, and having seen plenty of the bombardment, I retired into my trench, at the bottom of which I am now sitting on a comfortable seat of straw.

The shells are falling over and to our left in some numbers now, but in a good trench one feels wonderfully snug, and unless they start with their high explosive shells on us, my peace of mind will not suffer any disturbance. The combination of a deep trench and the knowledge that the enemy are ignorant of one's exact whereabouts is very reassuring. I have been fired upon by artillery in the open and exposed to their view and I don't mind telling any one I don't like it, but that was months ago during the now historic retreat, and we have learnt a thing or two since then. But we will leave the attack for the moment.

I shall not be able to tell you whether it proves successful until tonight, more probably tomorrow, for it takes time for news to filter through from the infantry to their brigadiers, and from them to the divisional generals and so back to the artillery in the shape of a narrative of daily events. In this form of fighting with a line 250 miles long, the artillery does not move about, taking up new positions daily, any more than the infantry makes or takes trenches except at intervals—sometimes of days' and even weeks' duration. Our guns

AT 10:30 SATURDAY NIGHT THIS SALE WILL ABSOLUTELY AND POSITIVELY CLOSE.



EVERY FLOOR IS JAMMED

This TREMENDOUS Stock Must Go!
Now For the Grand Wind-up—This Tremendous Sale Closes Saturday Night. Let Nothing Prevent You From Being Here. This is the END.

ONLY 15 MINUTES TO A CUSTOMER

The limit of time given to any customer will be 15 minutes. The store will be jammed Saturday. Pianos will sell as fast as we can wait on the customers. Buy quick. When you see the Piano you want, "Nail it." A positive guaranteed saving of \$100 on any Piano.

DON'T STAND IN ONE PLACE

Keep moving. Do your part to handle the mob that will be here. Seats will be provided for customers. We will consider it a special favor if you will sit with us. We have taken on additional pleasure and will wait on you as soon as we possibly can.

PLEASE KEEP TO THE REAR OF STORE

Keep back to the rear of the store. We have a competent man charge of the floor and he will instruct you when your turn arrives. But as the time limit is fifteen minutes you will not be compelled to wait an unreasonable length of time.

DON'T CONGEST THE TRAFFIC IN THE MAIN ENTRANCE

The main entrance must be kept clear to allow the people to come in and the Pianos to go out. Come early and in that manner you will have a large stock to select from. But in any event we will ask you to keep back. Your turn will come and you will be waited on in a competent manner.

HANDBAGS MUST BE CHECKED IN THE MAIN OFFICE.

All hand bags must be checked in the main office. We have provided a space to accommodate several hundred articles. You will receive a check for same and in that manner we will be responsible and guarantee safety to the article checked. Please bear this fact in mind and be governed accordingly.

DON'T CROWD. DON'T PUSH

We expect the greatest demonstration on these floors today that has ever been witnessed, and why not? We will sell Pianos as low as \$10 each if it becomes necessary. Do not crowd. Don't push. Nothing can be accomplished by it. Every customer will be treated exactly alike. One man's money is as good as another's.

BUY QUICK

When you see the Piano you want and the price and terms are satisfactory, "Nail it." Don't hold back. The Piano you want may be taken while you are hesitating. You will not need a salesman to wait on you. Every Piano is marked in plain figures. Quick sales is the motto for today.

THIS IS THE END OF THE BIG PIANO SALE.

This tremendous stock must be sold. We will not take "NO" for an answer. When the doors close tonight at 10.30 o'clock we will not have a single instrument of this stock unsold. Even if we have to give them away. We will then resume business under the old methods that we established here.

MR. WORKMAN READ THIS

We have been laughed at for selling New Pianos, \$10 Down and \$150 a Week. But there is many an honest man and woman in St. John who can not afford to pay cash for a piano or pay the tremendous price asked by small dealers. Come to this store—Come today—Bring along whatever amount of money you can spare. The man or woman with a two dollar bill looks just as good to us as the millionaire. This is the foundation of this business. COME DOWN, MR. WORKINGMAN; bring along the wife and kiddies. You will be well received and courteously treated.

A LAST WORD!

This is the last call. This is here. It is only a matter of hours now and this great mammoth, sweeping and tremendous sale will be history. Come here under any and all circumstances. Come and name your own price and terms. Can we say more? Is there anything in the English Language that will make this proposition more attractive? This sale will go down in history as the most remarkable of any kind or character that has ever been introduced in the history of this country.

R. R. Fares and Freight Paid to Out-of-Town Purchasers

Three of the World's Best Pianos — PRICES AND TERMS SLAUGHTERED

These three Pianos are only a sample of the many that must be sold here today. Come in and look at them. Bring along any professional musician of your acquaintance. Come prepared to buy. This is your last chance. Get your Piano now.

WAS \$250 NOW \$95.00 DOWN \$5.00 PER WEEK

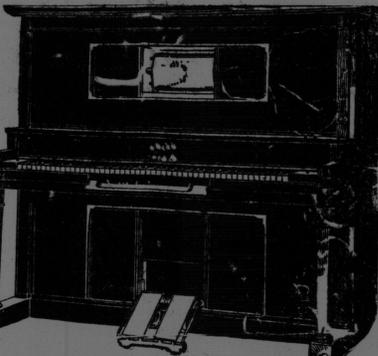
WAS \$350 NOW \$92.00 DOWN \$5.00 PER WEEK

WAS \$500 NOW \$245 DOWN \$15.00 PER WEEK

This Piano will be sold for the above price. Can you afford to lose this opportunity? This is a bargain if ever there was one.

This Piano must go. This price will buy it as a last resort. Come and see this Piano. If the price is not low enough you can name it yourself.

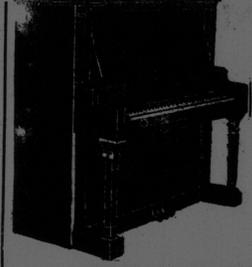
Here is a Piano that will be cleaned out for \$125. As low as \$2.00 down and \$2.00 a week. Stool, scarf, delivery and tuning free.



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 This is a Beautiful Piano Stool Free

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YOUR LAST CHANCE

Give the kiddies a Piano. Buy them their Piano NOW! Prices and terms are torn to atoms. Read every word of this advertisement. Bring it with you and ask the salesman to show you the Pianos advertised in this paper today. Can you ever hope to buy a Piano at this price, again? REMEMBER THAT THIS SALE WILL CLOSE TONIGHT AT 10.30 O'clock. Every Piano in the entire Building must go at some price. Be here today.

We Will Positively Close at 10.30 Saturday Night.

We deliver pianos to any R. R. Station in Canada

J. A. McDonald

Piano & Music Co., Ltd.

Stores Open Evenings Until 9 O'clock

We Will Deliver Pianos Until Midnight Saturday

Any Piano selected now can be left with us (without any extra charge), and we will deliver it FREE.

see the extent of the damage there. The Germans are still dropping occasional shells into the town—to no purpose, for it is almost deserted—no doubt out of pique at not having been able to enter it in spite of their most supreme efforts. It is curious to see a fair-sized town with empty streets—I do not suppose I saw as many as fifty people in my half-hour ride about the place. The havoc in some quarters is terrible, but in spite of what the papers say, large parts of it have suffered little beyond broken windows and chips in brick work and plaster. In some places a block of six or more houses are completely demolished crumbled to pieces by shell, and every thing inflammable burnt.

The public square where the Germans directed most of their fire has suffered tremendously. There irretrievable damage has been done, the magnificent town hall is burnt out, its massive tower pierced by huge shell, and great gaps in the solid masonry, showing what heavy guns have been brought to bear on it. One obviously antique building, if a shell of tottering walls can be graced by that name, turned out to be the museum. Some of the holes made by shell are stupendous. I saw the king twice when he was over here, the first time by chance. I happened to have ridden into a town about five miles in rear of our position for some things for the battery and was in the street through which he passed in his car. The next day he came to within one-half mile of our battery, and we sent my spare map

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