

shrieking over our heads, and amidst the sound of the shells and their sharp explosions one heard the crack of rifles and the bang bang of the machine guns, the dull heavy explosions of the shell mortars. As we stood there I thought of what our gallant troops—for the Germans were responding in lively style—were subjected to day after day and night after night. When we came back I had a feeling not merely of respect but of affection for those gallant men who are so cheerfully risking and laying down their lives for us.

Next morning, just before 4 o'clock—I will not say I was awakened because I did not sleep very much in these novel and perilous surroundings—but I was conscious of a resumption of the artillery fire. I thought it was the Germans retaliating and that any time a big shell might reach the general's dugout; but the general said, "No, it is our guns bombarding again. I don't know what it is all about, because it is not on the programme, but we'll find out at the trenches." There we learned that the Germans had given our men rather a hot time of it with trench mortars and machine guns, and they had sent back word asking the artillery to respond and silence the Germans' fire. It evidently accomplished its purpose, for in half an hour or so our artillery ceased firing—and within five minutes the birds began singing in the trees, such are the contrasts between peace and war at the front.

I wish I could tell you about the trenches. We went to the firing line held by a Western Ontario Regiment, the 18th Battalion. I will only say this, my first impression was one of surprise at seeing so few men there—that was because I did not understand military procedure. There is no use keeping a large number of men in the firing lines and exposing them to unnecessary danger. It is only necessary to have a few sentries and snipers and observers and especially machine guns there. Under ordinary conditions they are able to cope with the situation and the rest of the men are in the trenches behind, near enough to be speedily available when wanted.

I saw the German positions through a periscope and that is the only way one wants to see them, because their snipers are just as active as ours. The snipers have a habit of putting a nick on the butts of their rifles for every German they