

uneventfully, except that the snipers kept things going. I had a few narrow escapes myself. That night we were relieved in the front trenches and went to the reserve. We slept all day in the reserves (we hadn't slept a wink for four days), and in the evening we started on a very welcome march back to the billets where we still are. The net result of our work was that the Huns were driven back nearly half a mile and we captured several trenches. Besides this we had withstood as hot a bombardment as has any in the war. Not bad for green troops first time in the fire, is it?

"And now I've had a good hot bath, some new clothing, lots of civilized food and lots of sleep, and am feeling as good as ever.

"My impressions are many—here are a few of them: (1) The man who said "War is hell" is right to the letter. (2) There is no pluckier man in the world than the British soldier. (3) The Germans are a poor bunch, especially those who indulge in firing on Red Cross parties. And lastly if ever I come through the war it will take a hell of a lot to thoroughly scare me.

"Now, you've got a description of the little bit of war I saw. I find, on looking over the description, that it is a very poor one. Please goodness, I'll be able to tell it to you by word of mouth one of these days."

LIEUT. F. C. BIGGAR, former Manager at Virden, writes from France on 3rd June, 1915, an interesting letter which has quoted at some length:

"I think I didn't give you any news of leaving England and the break up of the 32nd. The Canadian casualties at Ypres were so heavy that they rushed us over at three days' notice to fill the gaps.

"Since arriving we have seen a fair amount of country behind the British line. We marched mostly at night which is less interesting but safer and cooler, and are billeted in farms or bivouac in fields. You would be surprised how comfortable one can be with a couple of blankets lying on a tiled floor, and when it is fine out of doors its first-rate, unless too cold.

"Our first spell in the trenches began a week ago last Saturday night. The one we occupied was the original British front line one during the winter, but owing to the capture of two German trenches we were some distance from the actual firing line. It was really a sand bag breastwork, not a trench, but was well constructed, and there were enough booby huts and dugouts to give us all sleeping accommodation. A booby hut is a low sort of dog kennel with roof and walls made of sandbags, and a dugout is much the same but dug down instead of built up. They afford fair protection from shell, splinters or shrapnel, but of course can't keep out shells, if hit.

"After six days of this they moved us to another part of the line two or three miles away.

"The change was made at night, as usual, and it was rather a weird feeling travelling along in single file over breastworks, across ditches, through barbed wire entanglements, the whole more or less lighted by the moon and the vast number of star shells thrown up by the Germans. These latter are rather like a big Roman candle ball and light a very large extent of ground, while they are much better than those issued to the British. Every now and then you would hear the whiz of a bullet overhead, but these were just strays and not aimed at us, though if they hit they hurt just as much.

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