

# Britain and France of Today

Continued from Page 8

road, but the support of the front trench extends back not less than 20 miles with such scenes as I have described. Multiply by 450 miles, which is approximately the battle line from the North Sea to Switzerland, and the reader will be able to form some faint idea of what it means to carry on such a great war as is now being waged.

We slept at a rest camp about five miles from the front trenches. About 11 o'clock we were roused by terrific crashes. Rushing out to see what was the matter, we discovered that the Germans, taking advantage of the dark night had sent over airplanes and were dropping bombs in order to destroy airdromes or munition depots. The bombs did not find our resting place, but next day as we advanced to the front, we discovered that one bomb had hit a hut filled with soldiers, of whom 14 were blown to atoms and as many more injured.

## In the Front Trenches

Next day we divided into parties and moved up to the front trenches. I selected the location of the famous 43rd Battalion of Winnipeg, as I knew most of the men and officers. On the way up there is a repetition of the scenes which I have already described, in addition we found the big guns located along the road and in convenient places. Most of them were dug in and covered with camouflage so that their location could not be discovered by the enemy. Of course, there was no battle on, but our guns as well as those of the enemy, four miles away were keeping up an intermittent firing. I suppose just to let each other know that they were there.

Leaving our automobiles in convenient places, we hurried along in the shelter of a line of hills to the trenches. As we went, there was the constant cracking of our guns as well as those of the enemy, although our guns were sending over many more shells. These shells passed harmlessly over our heads. All we could hear was a screeching or whistling in the air. When the enemy returned fire their shells were dropping not dangerously near, but sufficiently near to give one an uneasy feeling. We were told that in this exchange of artillery fire, not more than one shell in three hundred reaches a vital mark.

## A Day at the Front

We spent the day among the boys in the trenches. They have their resting couches dug in the side of the trench where they recline on hay or blankets, smoking cigarettes when they are not busy, and have a much better time than their friends at home might think—in fact the only complaint that I heard was that they did not have enough to do—that it was rather monotonous lying on their arms week after week. However, their complaint was soon remedied because a few days after we left they were ordered into the great drive which has been going on ever since with such wonderful success for the British armies.

We inspected the dugouts, talked

with the officers and men, drank afternoon tea with the officers, and had a thoroughly enjoyable day. It was all so interesting to meet hundreds of splendid fellows with whom one was acquainted at home. They were all so glad to see us and to fill us with messages to dear ones at home, that when the time came to say good-bye we left them with real reluctance.

## Vimy Ridge Visited

The following day we went with General Curry, the Commander of the Canadian Forces, and a large party of officers, to visit the historic field of Vimy Ridge where our Canadian soldiers covered themselves with undying glory. We spent the day wandering about the fields and in the afternoon sat down upon the side of an enormous crater, where a mine had exploded, and listened to the story of the battle told by General Curry himself. It was indeed an historic occasion.

The great battle field covers an area of, I should say, about ten miles square. It used to be a fertile portion of France, covered with fields of waving grain and rich vegetables. It had very many villages because the French people follow the example of the Menonites—they have no homes or outbuildings on their farms. They are segregated in villages for social, educational and religious purposes, and go out to their land holdings to do their work. Not less than one or two dozen of these villages have been absolutely wiped off the slate, nothing remaining but here and there a heap of brick and mortar. Towns also in that locality have been devastated, in fact the entire country is torn to tatters. It is difficult to conceive and almost impossible to describe the desolation that exists there. That beautiful area is turned into a howling wilderness.

The battle field is covered with myriad pieces of exploded shrapnel, with thousands of old craters, with helmets and boots of dead men, and with all the paraphernalia of a long, bitter series of battles. When I tell you that 100,000 French soldiers lie buried in the field, and that as many more of other Allies were also killed there, you can form some conception of what Vimy Ridge means.

We visited Arras and Ypres, which have been torn to pieces with shot and shell; and on our way along the front we passed through hundreds of villages and scores of towns which have been smashed utterly. Even the great city of Amiens, which had 90,000 people, we found in partial ruins. Only a few pallid, scared-faced old men and women and a handful of children could be seen here and there looking furtively from the grated windows of cellars.

## At Verdun

We motored to the historic battle ground of Verdun—slept for two or three nights, 80 feet underground, in that wonderful old fortress which is the greatest on earth. We spent a day or two inspecting the outlying forts of Souville, Vaux and Douaumont.



An Ammunition Loading Point.



## NOTICE—MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917

### REGISTRATION OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS

Male citizens of the United States living in Canada of AGES 21-30, both inclusive, MUST REGISTER BY REGISTERED POST with the Registrar under the Military Service Act of the district in which they live, during the TEN DAYS NEXT FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 28th, 1918; and such CITIZENS OF THE AGES 19, 20 AND 31-44, both inclusive, must so register during the TEN DAYS NEXT FOLLOWING OCTOBER 12th, 1918. It must be emphasized that THIS INCLUDES AMERICANS LIVING IN CANADA OF THE ABOVE AGES, MARRIED AND SINGLE, and includes ALSO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE SECURED DIPLOMATIC EXEMPTION OR HAVE REGISTERED WITH AN AMERICAN CONSUL, or HAVE REGISTERED FOR MILITARY SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES.

Registration letters may be handed to local Postmasters for despatch to the proper Registrar, under the Military Service Act.

MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH.



## NOTICE—MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917

### MEN EXEMPTED AS FARMERS

Having in view the importance of leaving a sufficient number of men on those farms, which are actually contributing to the National Food Supply, notice is hereby given as follows:

1. ALL MEMBERS OF CLASS I POSSESSING EXEMPTION AS FARMERS which is expiring and WHO WISH TO REMAIN EXEMPT should communicate with the Registrars under the M.S.A., of their respective districts, REQUESTING AN EXTENSION IN TIME OF SUCH EXEMPTION. Questionnaires will thereupon be issued to these men by the Registrar and they will receive further exemption upon furnishing satisfactory proof that they are contributing sufficiently to the National Food Supply.

2. In order to facilitate productive employment during the Winter months, MEN EXEMPTED AS FARMERS SHOULD APPLY TO THE REGISTRARS FOR PERMITS TO ENGAGE FOR THE WINTER IN SOME OCCUPATION OF NATIONAL INTEREST, SUCH AS LUMBERING, MUNITION WORK, ETC. Such permits will serve to enable exempted farmers to pursue other useful occupations for the months during which farming operations cannot be carried on.

MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH.

## Order Plow Shares NOW!

Prices Will Advance

12-inch, each	\$3.25
13-14-inch, each	3.65
15-16-inch, each	3.95

We guarantee every share to fit, and to wear as long as those supplied by plow manufacturer. We have shares for every plow. Order today. Give size and number of old share. Order shipped same day as received.

THE JOHN F. MCGEE CO., 78 Henry Avenue, WINNIPEG.