

trench sentry, and proud were the men who were told off as sentry, great interest being aroused as to who would be the first man to fire a shot for England. As far as I know, the matter was never definitely settled, the honour being claimed by no less than fifteen men. One thing that I am fairly certain of, and that is, that the bullet did not do much damage, most of the boys having what is known in Canada as « Buck-fever », and it is safe to say that the bullet pierced a cloud. It did not take us long to settle down, however, and by morning the majority of us felt quite like old soldiers. At daybreak, we heard a voice booming up the trench « Stand to Arms », and great was our excitement. Visions of going over the top, or at the very least repelling a desperate German attack flitting through our minds, and our disappointment can be easily imagined when our trench comrades told us that this was an every morning occurrence, to prepare against surprise, as the grey light of dawn is very favourable to attacks. Since then I have seen many cold grey dawns, some merely cold and some miserably cold and wet.

Nothing eventful happened during the day. We loafed and lazed around, the Yorks and Lancs treating us handsomely, and never allowing the tea to run low in the canteen, and when night fell we made our way back to our billets, passing on the way another company of our regiment, who were due for their initiation that night. I think we were to be excused if we held our heads just a little higher and swung by a bit more cockily, for we were veterans now, and they were still greenies.

Now, however, this is all changed. We are veterans in every sense of the word, and take our trips in the trenches as a matter of course, creeping along more like a school boy on his way to school on the morning a circus hits town, cursing every slip, and our officers also behind their backs when thought necessary.

After about a weeks stay in Armentieres, we moved south and relieved the seventh Division. We found ourselves on the north of Neuve Chapelle, facing the village of Vomelles, behind the German lines. It was while we were in rest billets here, preparatory to going into the trenches, that we had the sad duty of forming our first regimental cemetery; a duty which since then, sad to relate, has got to be an all too common affair.

Our billets were just a short way behind the trenches, and the enemy one day took it into his head to send us a few shells, the third