

# The Western Scot

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## MINING AND TUNNELLING.

In the present wars these terms are practically synonymous, and we will use the word "mining" to refer to any and all operations and methods of work under this heading—the sinking of a shaft, the running of a tunnel or series of tunnels or laterals from the bottom of a shaft, cross-cutting and intersecting each other, driving a tunnel into the base of a hill under fortifications, gunpits or trenches, and all such operations where a shaft is not required. All of these we will include in the title "mining."

Of the many new types of service that are being brought forward in this struggle none is so remarkable as the work of the miner. In the wars of the past the miner and his work was not given even a secondary consideration. The Germans were the first to recognise his importance in warfare. They called to their aid the professional man and the co-operation of the skilled miners of Germany. To offset this move on the part of the Germans we had to counter attack by the same forces, and to-day, by what we can glean from the Press and the statements of officers and men who have been to the front, the Germans have no superiority over us. The writer firmly believes that the British and Canadian miner can beat and outwit the German at every turn of the game beneath the ground.

We must understand that mining operations must be carried on at the front under extreme difficulties, in most cases under heavy artillery and machine gun fire; oftentimes the trenches are not more than from 40 to 100 yards apart. On our side of that piece of ground called No Man's Land shafts must be sunk to the required depth. It is better to sink two or more shafts, for by doing so you have no trouble in regard to ventilation. Besides, you have two ways of getting out. (This is one important matter should the enemy discover you.)

In driving tunnels the practised ear of the miner seldom fails him. He can tell by listening how close the enemy is to him should they be counter mining towards him or to the right or left of him. Of course, the sounds depend entirely upon the strata for intensity, from the dull thud of the pick in clay or the more pronounced sharp rap upon rock.

In the 67th Battalion Western Scots we have as skilled miners as it is possible to find anywhere—men who have given years of work and study in the mining fields of British Columbia and Alaska; miners who have worked under the most difficult and trying conditions in the frozen placer gold fields of Alaska and in the slum or silt faces encountered underground in the placer fields of British Columbia.

It is an admitted fact that the slum or quicksand cap saturated with water overlying the gold-bearing gravels in the placer fields of British Columbia, and capped to a depth of from 30 to 100ft. by volcanic mud, exerting a terrific pressure on the slum and water underlying, has been pronounced by experienced miners from all over the world to be the most difficult ground they ever saw to work.

We have also the hard rock miners from the Kootenay and the coal miners from Vancouver Island. If the

tunnels or shafts need timbering we have in the 67th experienced timber men to follow the miner. We have experienced powdermen too; yes, men to whom it would be presumptuous to offer information regarding the proper placement of powder, the amount to use, the lines of least resistance, and how to get the maximum of destruction with the minimum of powder, as well as tamping, detonating and firing. It is needless to explain to the miner what this work is for. He well knows what he is doing—he is going to demolish some gun emplacement or some enemy trench, or to frustrate any operations carried on by the enemy, and get there ahead of him.

The tools to be used in mining operations at the front should be the ordinary tools used by miners. To be successful and to hurry on the work you must have the proper tools, and the proper tools are the ones used by miners the world over.

As I said before we can place implicit confidence in the Canadian and British miner, and in the ranks of the 67th Battalion are the very best of the best.

JAMES MURPHY, No. 3 Co. 67th Battalion Western Scots.

## ENJOYABLE CONCERT.

Due to the efforts of C.S.M. Duffet, Aldershot Command Physical Training Staff, a most enjoyable impromptu concert was given in the Y.M.C.A. Hut by the Battalion on Wednesday night. There were a large number of men present from the Pioneers and a good proportion from other units in the division. From start to finish the concert went with a swing, and the various performers were greeted with rounds of well-earned applause.

Second-Lieut. Woodcock, of the 15th Service Batt., West Yorkshire Regt., now on duty at Bramshott, won the favour of the men with four splendid songs. Lieut. Woodcock was introduced by the chairman as an old member of the Quinlan, Covent Garden, and Beecham Opera Companies, and certainly showed the result of his training in grand opera. The men certainly appreciated his kindness in volunteering to sing, and showed it by lavish applause.

Our brass band, in several splendidly-rendered selections, came in for much commendation. The band never sounded so well, and was undoubtedly one of the features of the programme.

In a series of comic recitations Drummer Orr, of the Pipe Band, kept the house rocking with merriment, and had to respond to several encores.

Pipe-Major Wishart and Pipe-Corpl. H. MacLean Angus played a stirring march and a strathspey and reel which roused the enthusiasm of even the least Scotch of the audience. Sergeants Rankin, McGraw and Young and Ptes. Cavanagh and Dobbie showed that the Battalion has plenty of good singing talent. Pipe-Corpl. MacLean Angus and Drummer Allen accompanied the singers.

Altogether the concert was a huge success and the announcement that others would be given in the future was heartily applauded.