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ABSORBING LETTER COMES FROM
SIGNALLER IRVING APPELEY

The Men of the First Contingent a Changed
Body From What They Were at Valcartier—
The Effect of Discipline — The Salisbury
Plain Conditions

A member of the Times staff has received a long and interesting letter from Divisional Signaller Irving Appley, dated Butard Camp, Salisbury Plain, January 20. Much has happened since this letter was written and it is assumed that Signaller Appley is now in France, but the letter will nevertheless be read with deep interest. It is as follows:—

There are many men writing to their home papers and as the accounts and various versions of our work and daily life are published and returned to us in the batches of Canadian papers, one can only smile at the distorted exaggeration and conflicting statements which come to light.

Some go to one extreme, others to the opposite; our life is colored too vividly by some who suffer from an overabundance of optimism, imagination or emotion for I must admit that I have never seen groups of soldiers, clustered around a Union Jack with heads bared singing "God Save the King" and other patriotic songs, nor can anyone correctly describe our camps as "overbearing with one continuous burst of military songs" in the evening. All of this cheap sentimentality quickly brands itself as false when looked into by men who know the actual inner life of the volunteer on active service.

Before I go further into this strain, let me mention the other extreme. The English people lead a rather half-hearted support to a shameful periodical here under the very misleading name of the "John Bull" magazine.

The chief delight of this paper seems to be to encourage kicking and growling and even slander by Canadian soldiers. They run a few pages entirely devoted to this purpose and it is disgusting to see the columns and columns of unfair, diabolical assertions by the rank and file, against their officers and their treatment by them.

It is my chief intention in writing today, to correct false impressions and give to the readers of the Times the truth so far as I know it, regarding every detail of our present life and work that I think they would be most interested in.

Let me impress upon you first of all that there is no living creature that goes through so many startling changes as a volunteer on active service. How well I remember the days and nights in Valcartier (they seem years ago) when the

whole contingent seemed to have gone back to the days of their childhood. About all a man could think of then was childish pranks of divers sorts such as letting some one else's tent down as he lay asleep beneath it, sending comrades on fool's errands or wild goose chases, etc.

True enough, the camp reverberated with songs and music those days and the spirit of practically all was that of jolly abandon not unmixed with recklessness in many things. They resented the authority of their officers, flared up quickly and flew into rage at being reprimanded by an officer and then spent a few hours in sulks and foolish thoughts of revenge later on.

The old imperial sergeants who acted as drill-masters were hated and feared; those days and how often we heard the words: "If I had ever dreamed of such tyranny or abuse as this, they couldn't have dragged me from home with a chain."

This roughly represents the life of a volunteer on active service during his first month or two. He is a model of sickness, carelessness, uncleanliness, untidiness and his heart only knows two principal emotions—that of hilarity and exultation when things are going right and of dark anger and resentment when he feels the weight of the hand of British military law ever so slightly upon him.

Changed Now
Now let us consider the soldier of Jan. 1915 in the ranks of the Canadian contingent. It is morning and the bugle calls forth sweetly into the clear cold air. A little later the reveille is blown and a chorus of groans from each tent is the answer. This is a splendid beginning (I am not indulging in sarcasm) for the trained soldier who does not do his regular little bit of growling or "grousing" would be regarded with wonderment.

A few moments later the bugle blows a long commanding call, unmistakable to all ears; it is the "dress for parade" call. It elicits quick obedience from all for only fifteen minutes more elapse before the sharp little call to "fall in," rings out, penetrating successfully to every nook and corner of the camp and you find no lagging now for the Canadian "Tommy," if we may call them such, know what a command means.

How neatly they trot into place in a true line all properly spaced and "stand at ease" until the word "shun" is snapped out! Then there is a click as all heads are brought sharply together, the rifles are brought smartly to the side and there is strict silence and immobility.

Your strictest surveillance now could but show you the awful state of their feet and ankles with mud and filth; beyond that, you would find them cleanly shaved, washed, hair combed and not one shining button or badge missing, and if you cared to follow the stern keen-eyed sergeant after his command "for inspection, port arms," you would find bright gleaming rifles and bayonets, showing no trace of the great sham fight in the rain all day yesterday.

If by any chance the sergeant would discover an evidence of neglect about the rifle or uniform or person of one in that rank and demand an explanation, he would simply get "Nothing to say, sir" from a very cheerful looking pair of lips, belonging to a man who is apparently very cheerful and unconcerned.

Then perhaps he is ordered to appear before his section or company commander for the offence but the cheerful answer comes back "very good, sir," for the Canadian soldier has learned the real beauty of discipline and cheerful deamour.

No longer do we hear dire threats against the "tyrant sergeants" but on each man's lips is the "Good old Bill" or "Good old Jack" or whatever particular name or nickname he may bear among the rank and file.

We can easily recognize them now as our closest friends and feel more like blessing them for the having they gave us in Valcartier. It is to these very men, imperial army sergeants-instructors, that the nation must turn in her time of desperate need and say, "Here are our men, we commit them to your hands to learn the work of war." And yet in time of peace the old regulars are mocked and sneered at by a certain class who think the army merely the abode of men who are too lazy and useless to follow any other calling.

Midnight Shamfight
As to the present work of the men, you will best understand just what they are doing when I quote you my experience of last Wednesday night. At 11.30 at night I was crossing the black, trackless "downs" or prairies on my way from Enford Village to my camp at Butard.

It is nearly six miles with absolutely no guide but the wind, stars or instinct. The night it was pouring and a raw wind drove down from the southwest and I stumbled along with eyes half closed.

Suddenly I was seized from both sides and found myself a prisoner. I was given my liberty after assuring them that I was a headquarters signaller of the First Brigade, and just in the rear of this outpost guard, I came upon hundreds of men digging battle trenches with feverish haste.

They laughed and joked in low tones and seemed entirely unconcerned, regarding the cold, rain and darkness. Moreover they were very hungry. I don't know how long they stayed out there but at 12 mid-night tremendous rifle fire followed a burst of cheering, told its own story of infantry versus infantry and of a great bayonet charge which turned the trick.

They are getting their training all right and they are the men who can stand it, provided they have any kind of a show to take care of themselves after the big day's manoeuvres are over. But right there is the question and there is much to be said regarding it.

Men at the front fight human enemies and show lists of dead and wounded as a result. The Canadian Contingent has found in the elements a "foeman" worthy of their steel, and we can also show a list of dead, starting in size and a list of sick and diseased that would scarcely be believed if published.

Every man who has been home for the last three months has doubtless started his letter with the remarks "It is raining here, it is raining here, it is raining here, it is a sea of mud."

This little sentence is sufficient to tell you what a wet and cold time it is almost every day, almost every hour, since the Canadian Contingent arrived here and it gradually reaped its harvest from our ranks.

We have lived in mud, drilled in mud, marched in mud, have done everything but eat mud, and it is impossible for any man to be dry or warm in it. Some have worn rubber boots, when permitted.

"Great continental savants, like Virchow, Huesppe, Lehman, Eysenbourg, von Leyden, Mendel, Fraenkel, as well as physiologists, doctors and food experts of our own country as Prof. Robinson, Dr. Wiley, Dr. Woods Hutchinson, Prof. Altyn, Mr. Alfred Mc Cann and Dr. Goudiss have bestowed much attention on coffee and have recognized it as the cause of many cases of chronic caffeine poisoning.

Prof. Huesppe designates the symptoms as palpitations, tremor, fear, exultations, headaches, dizziness and insomnia.

Other scientists say that coffee drinking can be the cause of heart trouble, palpitations, dilatation of the heart and disease of the arteries (arteriosclerosis).

Any coffee drinker who feels the onset of ill health and discomfort, and is in doubt as to the cause, can easily find out if coffee has anything to do with it.

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Ten days on this famous pure food drink not only shows up coffee, but points the way back to old-time health and comfort.

Postum comes in two forms. Regular Postum which must be boiled—15c and 25c packages. Instant Postum the soluble form—made in the cup with hot water instantly—30c and 50c tins.

Both kinds are drug-free, delicious and the cost per cup is about the same.

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MAY BE TONED UP BY USING MILBURN'S HEART AND NERVE PILLS.

Mrs. John Harper, Toronto, Ont., writes: "I have used Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills for the heart and nervous system. I was confined to a grocery store for twelve years, and had to give up business, as I became terribly run down and nervous, and had heart trouble, and I am sure I am gaining very fast now. I feel that nothing did me any good until I tried your Heart and Nerve Pills, and I am positive they will cure me. The nerves of one hand would tremble and then seem to go numb so that I could not write or sew. Now my hand is quite steady, as you can see by my handwriting. This is a big change which delights me so much. I thought all was done that could be done. I was about to give up in despair when I tried this last remedy, and even after I had only taken half a box the change started to come."

Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills will restore the enfeebled, enervated, exhausted, overworked system to full constitutional power.

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to look at ordinary indications rather than lend a willing ear to every imaginative person who gallops in with a new scare-head.

If you knew the condition of the roads toward the front of battle, you would not wonder why we wait. A reliable person informs me that he could ed nearly 200 motor lorries helpless and abandoned in the frozen mud of a single mist of cold.

An army of necessity travels "on its stomach" so to speak, and what use is it to expect great advances by new millions of allied troops, great victories by our men, and swift progress toward the coveted goal, when it is almost impossible to haul food, ammunition or supplies to the men at present engaged?

I doubt if any of the anxious wives or mothers whom we have left behind us have anything to worry seriously about before May; this may sound unbelievable, but time will tell and I will willingly acknowledge myself in the wrong, when I am proven to be wrong.

I know that the military authorities here are well satisfied with simply holding the Germans at bay until the roads permit them to start the actual war, and the people who are always asking "Why don't they let our boys get at them?" must wait quietly and remember that if the Canadians were there now fighting, they would have a hundred-fold more hardships to endure than they will three or four months from now.

Today we are reading joyfully the story of the sinking of the "Blucher" and the sinking of the "Princess Royal" by our splendid blue-jackets.

Every loyal heart at home will beat with renewed interest when they are told that the "Princess Royal," which bore a noble part in this thrilling sea-fight, was one of our proteges during the dangerous voyage of the 1st Contingent.

With Cyril MacDonald
A glorious big fighting-machine, she glided up on our port side and sent a message to the admiral aboard the Charlydis, which lay a little to starboard, and a little ahead of us. Cyril MacDonald, my partner on signal duty aboard the Caribbean, was on the bridge with me when she hove in view and we eagerly awaited the announcement to the admiral that she would protect our left side from attack during the voyage.

How well I remember, word for word, the admiral's answer, by his signal, "Very good, Capt.," delighted to have the "Princess Royal" under my command, greetings to —, and then our "Princess" manoeuvred off gracefully to her position, while day after day we looked with pride upon her might and actually longed for a German attack so that we could see our big "lady" in action.

I personally received messages from her, also from the "Good Hope," which was since lost, and many of us were aboard the last battleship "Tiger" at —, port, England, and therefore this battle and victory has stirred up No. 2 section of the Div. Signal Company to a great extent.

I must in justice give great praise to the Y. M. C. A. for the labor of love that they have carried on among the men of our contingent since the first mobilization at Valcartier. They are still with us and are doing all they possibly can to cheer up the men and to help them spiritually and in many other ways. They are giving their best to us, without asking for expected reward or even appreciation and I firmly believe that they are obtaining splendid results of their efforts.

Their leader has been granted an honorary commission as lieutenant to assist him in the speaker carrying out of his plans and he will accompany us to the front and I would not be greatly surprised if I see him some day doing a man's work in the trenches.

We often wonder, these days, how the folks at home feel regarding their mighty neighbor to the south. We are greatly concerned here over the questionable attitude of the American nation at present, and have all the while been here to keep the civilians of the little villages from believing that the United States are actually preparing to strike a treacherous blow at Britain in the near future.

Little credence is given such rumors as these among our troops, only a few of surprise and disappointment not unmingled with disgust for their part in the "Hague" treaty seems to have been forgotten by them as easily as Germany's part was by the Kaiser's government.

The men who fight beneath the British flag are merely answering that call—the call to duty, and it matters but little what that call may yet involve; Britain will stand for the right until she triumphs or falls, if it takes the last man, the last dollar and the last acre of her kingdom.

Get a 10-cent box.
Put aside—just once, the Salts, Pills, Castor Oil or Purgative Waters which merely force a passage-way through the bowels, but do not thoroughly cleanse, freshen and purify these drainage organs and have no effect whatever upon the liver and stomach.

Keep your "insides" pure and fresh with Cascarets, which thoroughly cleanse the stomach, remove the undigested, sour food and foul gases, take the excess bile from the liver and carry out of the system all the constipated waste matter and poisons in the bowels.

A Cascaret tonight will make you feel great by morning. They work while you sleep—never gripe, sicken, and cost only 10 cents a box from your druggist. Millions of men and women take a Cascaret now and then and never have Headache, Biliousness, Severe Colds, Indigestion, Sour Stomach or Constipated Bowels. Cascarets belong in every household. Children just love to take them.

"Dan," a Scotch collie, made a 1,200-mile trip overland in nine days to get back to his old home in Omaha, Neb., from Yazoo, Miss. He was taken to Yazoo, the new home of his owner, G. H. Bole, by automobile. He was appeared in South Omaha, at the home of Mr. Bole's brother-in-law, he was gaunt and his feet were somewhat inflamed, but he showed no extremely ill-effects of his long journey.

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