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Sergt. Lapp Tells of Visit to Scotland

The Wonders of Glasgow and Edinburgh Described in Sergt. Lapp's Graphic Style

Witley Camp, Surrey, Eng., Feb. 5, 1918.

Editor Ontario:

Dear Sir—Seven months ago I would have smiled incredulously if I had been told that in February, 1918, my letters would still be dated from Witley Camp, but such is the case, and though we have no definite date of leaving, we all feel that our stay here is drawing rapidly near the close. I think that most of the men will joyously welcome the move for seven to fifteen months spent in a training camp within a few miles of the greatest "show" the earth ever produced, isn't conducive to high spirits, and produces a feeling best described in the vernacular as "fed-up."

"Casualties" and men on leave from the front frequently tell us, when we pour forth our story of woeful waiting, that we shouldn't be

entertained in homes in the towns and country near the camp. Too much cannot be said of the people who so generously opened their homes to the boys and gave them a touch of that refining influence of home life which is so entirely lacking in a military camp. In camp, everything possible was done to keep the spirit of Christmas alive, and a dinner was served which will long be remembered. Turkey and plum pudding were the crowning items on the menu, with a host of dainties interspersed, such as our mess room had never seen. Discipline was relaxed somewhat, and long into the night songs and laughter could be heard with the wild notes of the pipes playing as reels and the Highland fling were danced.

My leave for Scotland started Thursday evening, December 27th, so I lost no time in getting to the "Big Smoke" (London), from whence I boarded a fast express for Glasgow, via Carlisle. I did not have much time to observe the coun-

ties. I am sorry to have to pass neighborhood. John Knox's house over one of the most interesting parts of our trip, but it would be better to write in detail of the Clyde and its wonderful ship-building, I saw but the fringe, but the huge scale on which everything is conducted appalled me. I saw something of the great munition factories which have brought a great prosperity to the city, besides supplying a substantial part of the material which is so surely wearing the Hun down on the Western front.

The shops on Saturday were thronged with shoppers, for the New Year is the great Scottish holiday. There seemed plenty of food, with the exception of bacon, butter and margarine. I saw two long queues waiting for a margarine shop to open.

Sunday was utilized in attending a service at the cathedral and visiting the great Western University, the Museum and Art Gallery. The latter is especially interesting, with masterpieces by many famous artists. This gallery is classed among the first five galleries of the world.

Monday morning we bade farewell to the city on the Clyde and in two hours' time were gazing on that magnificent thoroughfare of Edinburgh, Princess Street. Flanked on the north side by fine business buildings, on the south by the beautiful Princess St. Gardens, and with a background of the castle and the seven hills, no fairer sight could be found. In "A Summer in Skye" the view is fittingly described as follows: "What a poem is that Princess Street! The puppets of the busy, many-colored hour move about on its pavement, while across the ravine Time has piled up the Old Town, ridge on ridge, grey as a rocky coast washed and worn by the foam of centuries; peaked and jagged by gable and roof; windowed from basement to cope; the whole surmounted by St. Giles' airy crown. The New is there looking at the Old. Two times are brought face to face and are yet separated by a thousand years."

The Princess St. Gardens occupy the drained basin of the old Nor Loch and are divided by the "Mound", on which are located the Scottish Art Galleries and the Royal Scottish Academy. The East Gardens contain memorials to Scott, Livingstone, Adam Black, the publisher, and "Christopher North." That to Scott is the most distinguished memorial that I have ever seen. The "West Gardens" are a delightful blend of art and nature, with four splendid monuments. The Royal Scots Greys memorial to the men who fell in the Boer War is a beautifully executed equestrian statue mounted on a huge piece of granite.

Monday afternoon we spent in a tour of the Castle, which is best described by Burns as: "There, watching high, the least alarms, Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar; Like some bold veteran, grey in arms, And marked with many a seamy scar. The pond'rous wall and massy bar, Grim-visaged o'er the rugged rock, Have oft withstood assailing war, And oft repelled the invader's shock."

The interior contains many things of interest, but nearly all comparatively modern. The State prison, where Argyle, among other notable prisoners, was confined before his execution, first claimed our attention. St. Margaret's Chapel, the oldest building in the city, is nearby. Its walls are very thick so that the interior is considerably smaller than one would suppose from the outside. We visited the Crown Room but found that the jewels and regalia, which date from the time of Robert the Bruce, had been removed until after the war. Queen Mary's apartments occupy a position commanding an extensive view of the Old Town and the country beyond. It was here that Mary's son, James I of England was born. The Banquet Hall, which was the scene of many a noble spread, is now occupied by old armor and war accoutrements. The Douglas, Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell were among the notables who banqueted there.

Upon leaving the Castle, we started the tour of the "Royal Mile" the stretch from the Castle to Holyrood. The Lawnmarket, just below the Castle, was the site of the old city prison, better known at the time as the "Heart of Midlothian." Farther on is St. Giles' Cathedral with its crown-shaped spire. It dates from the ninth century, but little of the original building is to be seen now. Its history is closely allied with that of the city. From its pulpit John Knox shaped history, and behind the building his burial place is marked by a simple flat stone. Near St. Giles' we found the old Scottish Parliament Hall, with the Advocate's and Signet Libraries adjoining. Many historical and interesting spots are to be found in this

England in 1918

(By Phil Penn)

To Canadian men, England, at any time, is one of the most interesting and generally most delightful places in all the world. True the country is at war and at present struggling for a right to live. But when she has been mixed in war and the things of war for upwards of two years, the fact is apt to be taken as a matter of course.

Still, many old country Canadians, and genuine ones too, are asking, "What is England like these days?" Now, "England in war time," dear folks, has already been the theme of many brainy tomes and wordy discourses and I am inclined to think the one to adequately reply to the present query would be the biggest, the brainiest and the wordiest mud-dle of them all.

A year in the country is sufficient to demonstrate that England of today and England of pre-war times are two very different places. A thousand old things have passed away and an equal number have sprung from necessity to fill a more pressing need.

Can you imagine a country—outside a story book—in which the entire male population is in khaki; in which the women are doing all the men's jobs in sight, where they drive the buses, the busses and street cars, deliver your mail, bread, coal and produce, read your meter, inspect the plumbing, mend your roof, paint the back fence or clean the chimney? Or a farming country where comely maidens stride about in slouch hat, smock and breeches, whistling away at "chores" like any farm hand; handling a team, managing crops and driving to market with a load of produce for all the world as though they had been at it all their lives? Then that is England, town and country, at present.

But to continue, can you picture 25,000,000 people living under constant danger of being blown skyward by bag and baggage from air attacks night or day, still carrying on with cheerful, almost careless self-abandon. In these areas strictest measures are observed to prevent trouble and to protect property. At dusk all blinds must be drawn tight, no lantern-burning nor street lighting being allowed. An uncovered window or open fireplace is certain to bring a prompt call from the nearest police officer.

At Dover and many coast towns are public dugouts large enough to shelter the entire population from aerial attack. One of these subterranean shelters will afford protection to 700 people for days.

Another constant danger to coastal areas is that of bombardment, especially at night, from the sea. In these instances, as is usually the case with Hunnish depredations, women and children are always the ones to suffer most. And yet, mixing with these people, beyond the evidence of a few obvious precautions you'd never dream of their danger. The spirit is splendid, only second to that of their men in the trenches. As I write it is mid-January. We are favored with an occasional snow flurry. Between times are plenty of mud and black, dirty days when it is impossible to keep warm or dry either. Then comes an unexpected day of warmth and sunshine and all is bright and cheery again. There you have the spirit of England. Five months of disturbing happenings have thrown many a cloud across the sky of England, Russia, Italy; hospital ships, submarines, air-raids, Cambrai, enough to chill the heart of a bigger man than Thos. Atkins or that of "his wife at home. But along comes news of a Passchendaele and all is bright again. "Bells ring," whistles her praise and everyone feels better for all the while they know that Hais is making the phantom Hindenburg line look like Pat's fence.

Old England in 1918 is a country emerging from the severest fires of national trial. She will never be the same again—that is one of the things we should be thankful for. Her people are firm, hopeful, and determined to go to any length to see this thing through. They too, are changed. War is chastening, most of us; let us be thankful. In days to come her Litany may read "From all forms of Hunnish oppression, national shortsightedness and social injustice, good Lord deliver us." At would at least express the spirit of the times.

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A Hut Scene Christmas Eve in Witley Camp sent to The Ontario by Courtesy of Sergeant T. C. Lapp

too anxious, for our time will come and then we will think of Witley Camp as a very desirable place; but in spite of these ominous warnings, the spirit that animated the first contingent still lives, and there is not a man that does not long to get into the thick of the "scrap" and do his bit. This feeling was greatly accentuated the first week of the New Year when we cheered a sister battalion as they left for "over there." Nearly a hundred men of the old 235th were among them, which brought it very close to the 235th men in this battalion.

Christmas has come and gone, and through the efforts of the Y.M.C.A. nearly two thousand men from the camp were made happier during the afternoon and evening by being

try as most of the trip was made at night, but what I did see in the north of England was varied, with fertile plains, mountainous hills and stretches of moorland. After we crossed the Scottish border the country seemed more uniform, with a preponderance of pasture land, dotted here and there with flocks of sheep and long-horned cattle. The farm houses are plain, rough-cast structures, but looked very neat and clean. A real "Scottish mist" shut out the view for the remainder of the journey and held Glasgow in a shroud, so that my first impressions were of the great railway station and a young lady in nurse's uniform directing us to the soldiers' rest room. We soon found accommodations and then started forth on our explor-