

NOISES AT FRONT RECALL FAMILIAR SOUNDS HEARD ALONG ST. JOHN RIVER

Sergt. Allen Otty, of Gagetown, Writes of Life in Trenches With Draft From 55th

Machine Guns Like Motor Boats, New German Shells Like the "Whistler" Duck—Gathering Walnut Harvest Under Difficulties—"Lonely" in the Front Trenches.

The following letter from Sergeant Allen Otty, of Gagetown, who went over with the Reinforcement Company from the 55th battalion, and is now with the 1st battalion, tells of life under fire, and is not without amusing touches:

France, Sept. 22.

My dear folks at home—

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We are holding out in a bunch of oaks, and overhead a steady stream of shells from both sides kind of breaks the monotony, after our rather lonely time in the front line. As I write, a Taube is getting a plaster of some two hundred shells. It's rather interesting to watch, and not many get away.

We all got here safely, after various journeys by boat, rail, and route march. The whole country from here back looks exactly like the Dykeman interval, combined with Grand Lake meadows, and is dotted with ruined villages and crumbling farm houses. In every village the church seems to be the mark, and they are now mainly a broken mass of masonry. Not one has a spire, and the towers are all caked on the corners. It's wonderful, though, to note the prosperity of the country under existing circumstances. Farmers harvest and plough, while shells burst in adjacent fields, and the women travel along the roads with their market baskets, as if nothing unusual was going on.

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DEATH FOR THE BULL MOOSE

All hands then donned the skeleton outfit, which contains our rations for forty-eight hours, entrenching tools, and enough ammunition to demolish all the bull moose in Queens county. Over this outfit we hang by shoulder-strap a knapsack containing all our artilery belongings. At the invitation of the officer in charge of the party—who, by the way, is a lieutenant from Sussex—I called the roll to be sure all were present. After a march of a certain length, two p.m. saw us lunching in a deep wood where shells screamed overhead and stray bullets slipped through the leaves or whined away skyward, after striking the beach limbs.

I remember we all had a small tin of jam that day, and the way the curses ascended was remarkable to hear. I investigated, and found that the wasps had discovered it. Those wasps are the torment of our lives here, and are the cause of more profanity than bullets are. We also have mice, and the rats are as big as musquash, and then there are other "animals" which bother us—especially about 4 a.m., when they must be changing guard, or something. After we had rested at this point for a few hours, we got issued with rations, and also got a bunch of tobacco and cigarettes sent out by the Montreal Gazette.

By perfect moonlight we moved by a path to our communication trenches. On the way, we passed many graves of former comrades, marked by a simple white, wooden cross. On one was a water bottle, and on the left cover a deep slash showed where the bullet had traveled to its mark.

We were all greeted cheerfully by those whom we were relieving, and we all marvelled greatly at the general aspect, which was not a bit like what we thought it would be.

Now, here I wish to say a word about the Frenchman. He is certainly some artist—the way he decorates the interior of his dugout with pictures from the Daily Mirror and cigarette cards, the cooking of his meals over a fire about as big as your fist, and the hundred and one ingenious devices of convenience he has invented. I have never seen his equal anywhere—the soldierly look, clean chin and bright buttons has long since departed, and he can "carry out" with an outfit you could put in your pocket. The only person I can recollect anyway like him was an old chap I used to hunt with up on Portobello—he had the air laid down on very nearly the same lines.

"HERE LIES A FAITHFUL FRIEND"

It's very amusing to see some of the objects the Tommy rigs up in idle hours. On top of one dugout I saw a complete wireless station. It was all there, even to the lattice-work towers. Another place, I saw on top of a burst sand bag, a grave in miniature, while on a cross three inches high, was inscribed an epitaph to "Souls"—a mouse, who had been a faithful comrade in the front line for many weeks, and had been found dead in a mess-tin. No doubt the mixture in that particular tin had overcome him, as some of the new hands aren't just what you would call chaps.

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AN IRISHMEN'S HUMOR

I looked in a dugout a few nights ago, and in it was a comrade with his shirt spread on the floor. He was on his knees, and was holding a queer little insect between his thumb and finger, and blowing smoke on it and saying, "Now, damn ye, I have ye with yer respirator off!" Needless to say, he was Irish.

Well, I can't tell you where we are, for the censor won't allow it, but we are all having a big time. All the Gagetown boys are together, who came in this bunch and we are all in the best of health and spirits. The other boys, who came out first are not far from us, and in about ten or twelve days we can get over to see them. I was called away just now by one of the boys, who said someone wanted to see me out at the road. I went out and there was Babbitt. He looks fine and fit and is as red as a brick. We had a big pow-wow right there on the road and exchanged all we knew, and were shortly joined by Edwards, Ashburne and Murray. So the world isn't so large, after all, is it?

Well, this has been quite a long letter, but I thought you would like to know how we carry on. These rocks you sent are sure some gift, and I appreciate them so much. I will be on the lookout for those laggards, as they are in A.T. for this work. My address now is No. 444,007, Sergt. Allen Otty, 1st Battalion, 1st Company, 1st Brigade, C. E. F., France.

OBITUARY

James Loane.

Bellefleur, N. B., Oct. 3.—After a brief illness of a few days from pneumonia, James Loane, a much respected resident of Bellefleur, passed away at his home on Sunday morning, Oct. 3. The deceased was born here, where he lived for 77 years, winning many friends by his kindly, pleasant manner. He was a member of St. Luke's, Presbyterian church, having been a member for a number of years. Besides his wife he leaves to mourn the loss of a kind, loving father, two sons, Thomas and Walter, at home, and two daughters, Mrs. Charles Miller, of Dalhousie (N. B.), and Ellen, at home; three brothers, Albert, of Bathurst; William, of Woodstock (N. B.), and Abram, of Fort Fairfield, Maine; also three sisters, Mrs. Woodside, Bathurst; Mrs. Doran, Winnipeg; and Mrs. J. S. Chalmers, of this place, also survive him.

The funeral service, which took place at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, was conducted by Rev. W. McN. Matthews, and was largely attended. The pall bearers were J. Gordon Chalmers, Will. J. Chalmers, J. Hamilton Chalmers, John Black, Chas. Miller, and Robt. Willis.

Mrs. Henry Wadman.

The many friends of Mrs. Henry Wadman will regret to learn of her death which took place Thursday, Oct. 7, at North Carolina (P. E. L.). The funeral was held Saturday, services being held at the house, conducted by Rev. E. Rice, Summerville, and at the Victoria Methodist church by the Rev. G. M. Young. Mrs. Wadman was in the 70th year of her age and leaves to mourn four daughters, Mrs. N. R. Wright, Summerville; Mrs. Peter Newton, Charlottetown; Mrs. D. L. Lowther, North Carolina; and Mrs. L. Lovther, Kensington, also two sons, B. W. Wadman, C. E. L., and Rev. W. Wadman, D.D., of Honolulu, Hawaii. Rev. Dr. Wadman is well known in St. John, having been pastor of one of the churches here some years ago. Miss Winifred Wadman, grand-daughter of the deceased, also has many friends in St. John.

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A couple of amusing incidents occurred a few days ago. About noon, the Germans decided that a certain old house, which, by the way, was only a house from the window-sills down, was harboring an English maxim, and they placed a few well-directed shots along the cellar wall. "One result" was that a flying brick fell into a mixture one of the boys was cooking. All hands had gathered around in anticipation of a savory meal, when they viewed the wreckage of that meal horrid discord just "poisoned" the air.

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