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## Starved in German Hospital

### Gordon Territorial's Experiences as Wounded Prisoner

Many and pathetically sad evidences of the war are to be seen on the streets of Scottish towns just now. Bandaged heads, arms in slings, and crippled legs, along with the distinctive blue uniforms of the hospitals, tell the tale of the heavy toll which the world-war is exacting among the manhood of the country. The principal streets of an afternoon seem to be the common rendezvous of these maimed and broken soldiers, and as they bumble along on the sunny side of the thoroughfares, or pass in motor car or bus, many compassionate glances watch and follow their movements.

Frequently, I am glad to note, the men are in charge of some good Samaritan, who it may be is entertaining them to an hour or two in the pictures or to a breath of fresh air at the beach, with copious supplies of cigarettes and cigars thrown in. These outings are greatly appreciated, as we can all well understand, and it says much for the kind hearts that beat in our country that such a mode of remembering Tommy in his affliction and suffering is so well practised.

**A Maimed Territorial.**  
I met one of these shattered heroes the other day. He is not attached to any of the local hospitals, but is staying at his own home, and although he is now fully convalescent, he is, sad to say, minus his right arm. Private A. P. Duncan is his name. A fine, well set up young fellow, he is married, intelligent, and of buoyant spirit, one whom pain and tragedy of war, not to speak of his permanent incapacity as a wage earner, have not saddened unduly, if at all, although naturally he feels his misfortune acutely, and the handicap which service to his country has inflicted upon him.

**Hurried from America to Enlist.**  
Duncan is a private in the 4th Gordon Highlanders—a Territorial. He is a stonecutter by trade, and at the outbreak of hostilities was employed in a big granite works at Vermont. Prior to leaving for America, I must mention he was connected with the 4th V.B.G.H. Like many another Scot, far from Bonnie Scotland, he heard the clarion call of the mother country for recruits. The giving up of a good situation, with a substantial wage, meant a great sacrifice to a working man, but Duncan entertained no doubts as to the course of action required of him, and in the early months of last year, in February to be precise, he landed in Aberdeen. Shortly afterwards he offered himself and was accepted for the 14 Gordons, put in the necessary training, and towards the end of August was drafted to France.

**The Great "Push."**  
In his case, he told me, he and his companions had hardly crossed the Channel when they found themselves at the front and in the trenches. The 25th September, the date of the great "push" at Loos, saw them at Hooge surrounded with the 1st Gordons, the Royal Scots, and other battalions, Major Lyon, in the absence of Colonel Ogilvie, was in command of the Fourth.

The attack of the 25th September they will never forget—the uproar of the big guns, the mad rush on the German trenches, the sanguinary fighting, and his own terrible injuries. The cannon poured a tornado of shot and shell for fully half an hour before the command to "Charge!" was given. A few minutes after four in the morning the Fourth went over the parapet of their trench like one man, and the 50 yards or so that separated them from the Huns being soon covered, they were in and amongst their enemies almost before they were aware of the fact. The first trench being cleared they pressed on to the second, to the third, and ultimately to the fourth—all in three or four hours.

Then a shell struck Duncan, shattering the flesh and bone of the right arm just under the muscle. The terrible impact sent him reeling to his knees. For a minute or two he was dazed, not realising what had happened, and then seeing his bleeding arm he poked himself up and attempted to regain the British lines.

He had not gone far when he met Lieutenant Sangster, who applied a tourniquet to the injured limb, thus lessening the flow of blood, and gave him a drink from his flask. This relieved somewhat Duncan continued his retreat. Unfortunately, however, he took a wrong turning, which brought him to a German trench held by a few Gordons. There Lieutenant Walker came to his assistance. The

officer, seeing his terrible condition—not only was he weakened from loss of blood, but he was literally caked with mud from head to feet—made him sit down, and sought to strengthen him by supplying him with a stimulant. In this kind service he was interrupted by a rush of the Germans. Then it was every man for himself. The order had been to seek refuge in a wood in the rear, and each man did his best to obey. Duncan scrambled up the parapet as best he could, and fell over on the other side; thereafter in running for the sanctuary of the wood he was shot in the left leg, and was precipitated among a lot of bare wire.

**Under Shot and Shell.**  
There he lay. He was so sick and weak that further effort was beyond his powers, and he gave himself up as lost. The shells were falling fast all around and beyond him. They continued to do so throughout the day, and all the time he found himself unable or unwilling to rise, not caring what happened to him—indeed, sometimes wishing that a bullet or a shell would end his sufferings. To make things worse rain began to fall, and soon it was coming down in torrents. A crumpled up heap of agonised humanity, he lay among the torn and jagged wire.

Night and darkness came. But the firing went on, and poor Duncan, now more dead than alive, was beginning to wonder how long he would last, when, to his dulled senses, there came a cheering shout from the trench from which he had so precipitately projected himself so many hours before.

**Saved by a Hun.**  
The shooter was a German. In excellent English he asked Duncan, "Are you wounded?" Raising himself Duncan replied, "Yes." "Then come over here," the Teuton said, "else you will get killed." Crawling in the direction of the sound Duncan came to the trench and was hauled over. By his enemies he was treated very decently. They gave him to drink and to smoke. At the dressing station, where he found himself amongst quite a bunch of other wounded prisoners—and Germans, the doctors also were exceedingly kind, and after patching them up in a rough and ready fashion, gave orders for their removal to the hospital at Courtrai. That haven was reached about four o'clock in the morning; or 24 hours after the start of the charge.

Next day, after an examination of his injuries, the doctors declared that they could not save the arm. "Believe us," they said very earnestly, "we would retain it if we could, but no—it must come off." Duncan was not surprised. The operation was skillfully performed, as can be understood when it is said that five days afterwards he was able to get out of bed and enjoy a little exercise in the ward. All the wounded were exceptionally well treated. Belgian nurses used to visit the institute, bringing to the patients cigarettes, tobacco, oranges, apples and chocolates. Unfortunately Duncan was not permitted to remain long in this hospital. Other cases came pouring in, taxing the accommodation to its utmost, and as soon as they could be removed patients were forwarded to Cologne.

**Poor Food.**  
Duncan remained at Cologne until he was exchanged and sent home, which happened early in December. I was interested to know how he was treated at this great establishment. He told me that at "showed up" badly when contrasted with Courtrai. The doctors were all right, kind and attentive, but the orderlies who took the place of nurses were scandalously careless and brutal. After his blood boiled at seeing the way they behaved to poor fellows who were helpless and could not look after themselves.

"What about the food?" I asked. "I'll tell you what we got day after day," he replied. "You've seen what is called a 'pan loaf'?" Well, about three inches of such a loaf, only it was black, coarse, and heavy, were cut off and given to each patient in the morning. That had to last the whole day. A mug of black coffee, without sugar or cream, was supplied for breakfast. We used to swear it was not coffee at all, but just dirty water. Then for dinner we got a bowl of potatoes, sometimes with apple sauce, or prunes, or red cabbage spread on top of the potatoes. The apple sauce with potatoes was the limit; I could never stomach it, but the cabbage was all right. At four o'clock in the afternoon there was more coffee. Nothing else, however, and here it was that the morning

bread, or what was left of it, came in."

"Any butter or margarine?"  
"At first we used to get as much butter as would cover a two shilling piece, and about a quarter of an inch thick. That, however, was stopped, and they substituted honey. Honey! I used to call it brown sugar boiled, because if you let it stand for a minute or two it became hard. Later we got a bowl of soup. At least it was called soup, but I think it was the water that boiled the potatoes earlier in the day."

"You hadn't got fat on such a dieting?" I asked.  
"No," was the answer with a smile; "no chance of that. But it was thought (anything was) good enough for men who were called 'Scotlander swine' or 'Englander swine.' The Germans don't like the kilts, and still less do they love the Gurkha."

"There's do doubt about it that it is the parcels from home that keep the poor fellows alive in Germany."  
"But if you were very ill or weak, they surely supplied you with more sustaining victuals than those you have mentioned?"

"If the doctor thought you required it you would get a small slice of bread with one or two small bits of polony sandwiched between. But you had to be very bad before you got that."

"Were you allowed out of hospital at all?"  
"Not beyond the grounds. There was an exercising court to which you could go at any time. All lights had to be out shortly after eight o'clock at night."

**Non-Coms. Badly Used.**

"Rather. We were taken to a sort of clearing house, where we were brought before a medical Board for examination. The tram cars were used to convey us there—no ambulance vans. I was passed at once. One poor sergeant, although permanently disabled, was turned back because he was a good interpreter, and they said that, seated in a chair, he would be useful to drill recruits. Other two non-coms.—a sergeant-major and a sergeant—would have been served with the same fate had they not torn off their tunics the crown in the one case and the stripes in the other before going before the Board. The Germans have never been known to pass a man who showed the stripes."

"Now that you have lost your arm, and your arm at that, what do you intend to do, Duncan?" I asked.

"Well, I don't know. I'm waiting orders. I'll be fitted with an artificial arm, of course, and perhaps some kind of a job will be found for me. Meanwhile I am practising with my left hand to write and do other things. But it's a slow business, I can tell you. I'm very awkward, but with patience and perseverance I may manage to get along fairly comfortably."

### Took 45 Shots To Sink Freighter

GENOA, via Paris, March 7.—Silvio Potenzani, commander of the Italian steamship Giava, which was sunk by a submarine on March 1 in the Mediterranean, while on her way from Leghorn to Greek ports with passengers and a cargo of cement, gives further details of the destruction of his ship.

The commanding officer of the submarine refused to tow the boats with the crew and passengers to the neighborhood of the coast of Milo, the nearest land.

On account of the nature of the cargo, no attempt was made to torpedo the vessel, the big submarine employing for the destruction of the Italian vessel the two 3-inch guns which the war craft carried.

It required forty-five shots to send the freighter to the bottom.

The captain affirms that he stopped his vessel at the first warning shot from the submarine, but that the latter continued to fire.

The sea was calm and the transfer of crew and passengers to the boats was accomplished without difficulty.

They were soon discovered by a British steamship and taken to the island of Milo, where they found six hundred survivors from the French auxiliary cruiser La Provence.

The British vessel before reaching Milo sighted a submarine which began preparations to attack her, but was frightened off when a British destroyer showed up in the distance.

"My books are to me like old friends."  
"Yes, I notice you make a practice not to cut them."

Judge—You are charged with contempt of court. Can you give any reason why sentence should not be passed upon you?  
Prisoner—Yes, your honor. The charge is false. The court is utterly beneath my contempt.

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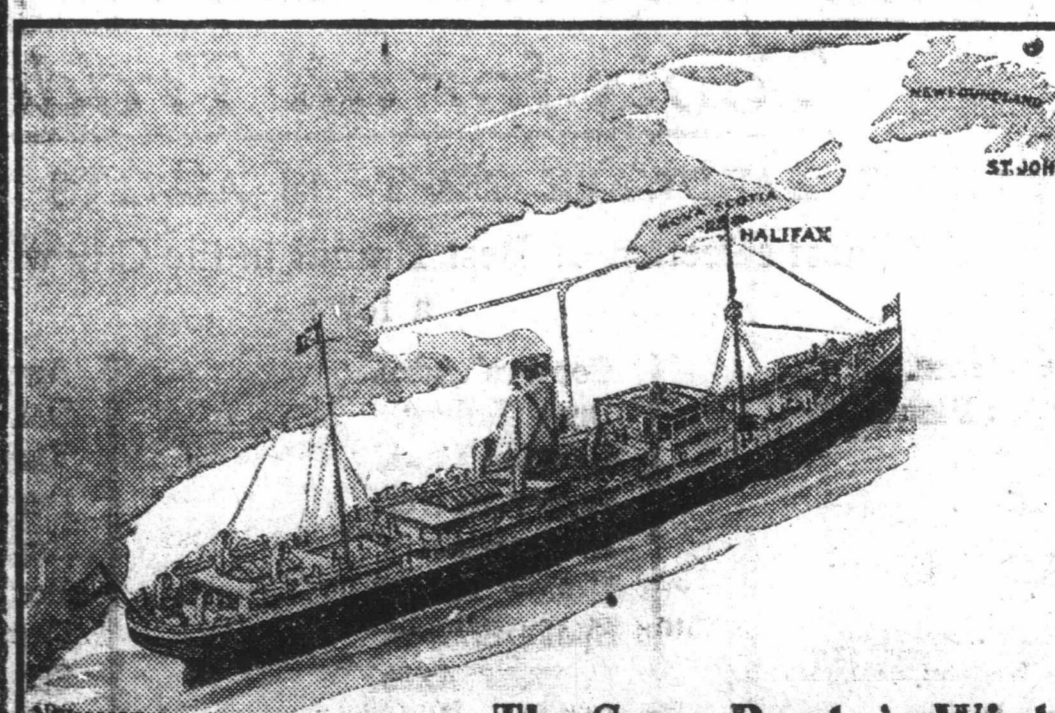
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