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A Day with Our Boys In the Land of "Burns"

Letter from Hon. John Anderson, in which He Tells of a Pleasant Time Spent Among the Officers and Men of the Nfld. Regt. at Ayr

(To the Editor)

Dear Sir,—It is not my intention to write a diary, or to write about my travels since I left St. John's, via New York, for England and Scotland, but a simple narrative that I believe will interest the relations and friends in the Homeland; of what their boys are doing, how they look, by one who saw them and wishes them well.

Having left Edinburgh on Monday morning July 10th by the 9 o'clock train for Glasgow, I spent the day there, and then left for Ayr by the 6 o'clock train, arriving in Ayr at 7 o'clock. My next advance was towards the house where Lt. Col. C. W. Whitaker, Officer Commanding 21st Newfoundland Regiment, and his Staff were living. On my way I met Private Brookes, who very kindly escorted me to the residence of the O.C. and his Staff. The building occupied by the officers seemed to me to be in every way suitable for its purpose. In front of it is a public park, where the Newfoundland Band discourses splendid music three times a week (including "The Banks of Newfoundland" and "Stacy's March"), for the benefit of the public.

I arrived at the Officers' Quarters at 7.15 p.m. and asked for Major Rendell, who cordially invited me to dinner, and join the little band of officers. I did not meet Lt. Col. C. W. Whitaker this evening, but hope to see the gallant colonel in the morning at the Race Course Barracks.

Major Rendell occupied the chair. I sat on his right; and my old friend, Captain Greene, well known in St. John's, sat to my right. I was glad to meet many old friends in the land of my right. I was glad to meet many old friends in the Land of Burns, who described Newfoundland over a hundred years ago as a "place of dugs," one of which he was introduced to. He knew it was

W. H. Greene, 2nd. Lieutenants S. Gane, Geo. Emerson, Gus Summers, Max Churchill, Peter Cashin, Will Edwards, Ernest Churchill, and Lieut. Max Johnson. There were waiting at table, Corporal Butler, Pte. Wilson, Pte. Percy, Pte. O'Keefe.

I joined Major Rendell and Capt. Greene and went to the station to see the departure of three popular officers, who were leaving by the 3.30 train for the front, via London. They got a great reception at the station and a grand "send off." I refer to 2nd Lieutenants Geo. Emerson, Gus Summers, and S. Gane, the latter, who although an officer of the Newfoundland Regiment, is not a native of the country, is very popular with the boys. These three officers left in the best of spirits, well, and happy. I missed seeing Lieutenants Jack Clift and Laurie Baine, who on the previous Saturday had left Ayr with a draft of men, 150 strong, for "somewhere in France." Lieut. Jack Fox was on brief leave to London.

Tuesday morning, July 11th, 10 o'clock. On my way to the Ayr Race Course, I met the big-hearted lieutenant, Peter Cashin, who piloted me through the

"toon that ne'er surpasses For honest men and bonnie lasses."

What Peter does not know about the Banks and Braes of Bonnie Doon, my native shire, is not worth knowing. Peter and I took a car, and in ten minutes' time we arrived at the great practising battifield, where the boys of Newfoundland are training for the battlefield of the World's War. After paying my respects to the Adjutant, and getting the latest news from him, I passed on and was introduced to R. S. M. MacKay. His name portrays the real typical Scotsman, one of the best and the real Mackie. Every inch a soldier, he is beloved by the boys, but strict and firm as the Rock of Ages. I then visited the barber-shop and met H. Walsh, Wm. Taylor and Thomas Lawlor. My next department was the butcher's, where I saw stacks of beef, mutton, lamb, bacon, all of the best quality, and fit for gods. Here I met H. Picture of St. John's, a picture of health and a living example of the department he has charge of. Great loads of bread had just arrived and filled a large store. My next experience was to hear the band play. It was here for the first time I met Col. C. W. Whitaker, M.A. in his profession, a great but a little man, full of energy, every bit of him a soldier, and proud of the men under his charge, and prouder still of the part they played in the "Big Push" on July 1st. They shall for ever stand out in history as long as Newfoundland itself shall last.

I have heard so much about the Lt. Colonel that I was glad to meet him. It may not be generally known that he is a son of Joseph Whitaker, R.S.A., founder of "Whitaker's Almanack," established in 1868, than which there is no better authority in the world for information on all topics.

There is a very good story told between my friend Sir E. P. Morris and Lt. Colonel Whitaker, who is still a partner in the great business. Sir E. P., as we all know at home, is very fond of his umbrella, and it usually accompanies him upon all occasions, wet and dry rain or sunshine. On a very recent occasion, Sir E. P., visiting our boys at the Ayr Race Course, forgot his umbrella, and during the day it became very wet.

Colonel (to Sir Edward): "I thought you always carried your umbrella."

Sir Edward (to Colonel): "So I do, but I turned up Whitaker's Almanack this morning, and found there that it was to be a fine day."

Colonel: "You make a mistake, Sir Edward, that was yesterday."

Sir Edward: "Then, what about to-morrow?"

Colonel: "Sir Edward, you can always depend upon Whitaker's Almanack, if you make sure of the day and date; but in Scotland it is best to carry your umbrella all the time." Such is the man who has charge of

our soldier boys at Ayr. We can fully rely upon him to make good soldiers of them, fit for the battle of life, and the World's Great War.

I was delighted with the fine instrumental band; although all the players did not belong to Newfoundland, I found amongst them, Messrs. Wm. Norris, J. J. Oakley, Tilley, C. Ellis, C. Peet, Snow, T. Taylor, all belonging to St. John's, and Gus. Alcock, from GRIQUET.

It is now dinner time. I have been asked to dine with the men, an invitation I accepted with great pleasure. One could smell the good things cooking for dinner all over the Race Course. When the great gong sounded you could hear the march of men coming from all quarters to the Grand Stand, where the Chief Cook, the popular Frank Vaughan held sway. When I was introduced to him he knew me at once. I said, "The living here must be good." He replied, "Yes, indeed, Mr. Anderson, I'm the Cook; when I came here I weighed 150 lbs., now I turn the scales at 250 lbs., and am prepared myself to face three dozen Germans in fair fighting." Here is the list of menus for one week:—

- Sunday.**
Breakfast.—Bacon and eggs; tea, bread and butter.
Dinner.—Tomato stew; potatoes, cabbage; plum pudding.
Tea.—Tea, bread and butter.
- Monday.**
Breakfast.—Tinned beans; tea, bread and butter.
Dinner.—Roast; potatoes, cabbage; plum pudding.
Tea.—Jam (rhubarb) tea, bread and butter.
- Tuesday.**
Breakfast.—Liver and bacon; tea, bread and butter.
Dinner.—Tomato stew; potatoes, beans; bread pudding.
Tea.—Baked bacon; tea, bread and butter.
- Wednesday.**
Breakfast.—Sausages; tea, bread and butter.
Dinner.—Roast; potatoes, green peas; pickles.
Tea.—Tinned fruit; tea, bread and butter.
- Thursday.**
Breakfast.—Bacon; tea, bread and butter.
Dinner.—Tomato stew; potatoes, beans; bread pudding.
Tea.—Cakes; tea, bread and butter.
- Friday.**
Breakfast.—Fish; tea, bread and butter.
Dinner.—Roast; potatoes, cabbage; peas pudding.
Tea.—Sardines; tea, bread and butter.
- Saturday.**
Breakfast.—Sausages; tea, bread and butter.
Dinner.—Tomato stew; potatoes, beans; tapioca pudding.
Tea.—Gooseberry jam; tea, bread and butter.

I must again apologise to all private officers, or men of whatever military position they occupy, for my discourtesy in not giving them their proper titles. I know our boys are proud of promotion, and prouder still of being called by whatever office they hold; in any case I have found it impossible to do so, but I earnestly hope that some of our lads will win honours on the battle field and glory to their country. I extend my cordial thanks for kindness shown me at the Race Course to Lt. Col. C. W. Whitaker, Major Rendell, Capt. Greene, Sergeant-Major MacKay, and my young friends Jack Fox, Frank Bennett, Sandy Baird, John Bethune, and many others whose names will appear among those I had the pleasure to meet.

I will group them in districts, and leave it to you, Mr. Editor, as to how you will arrange the names. When I get to London I hope to visit the wounded, and at an early date I will forward you all the information I can get. The following are the names of the men I met at Ayr. Where so many were scattered about, it was impos-

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sible to see them all.

- St. John's.**
Frank Bennett, John Moakler, Edward Wellman, Robert Grimes, Charles Oake, John Vaughan, W. O'Dea, J. W. Bartlett, F. Watts, G. R. Heath, R. Leseman, Sandy Baird, Wm. Lewis, Geo. Reese, P. J. Murray, Wm. Cook, Fred. Sellars, Ed. Noonan (going home), E. Barnes, H. Peckham, Geo. Shortall, Peter Constantine, F. O'Toole, P. Walsh, Lloyd Woods, Harold Matthews, Gerald Ryan, J. McGrath, J. Crooke, J. Brace, Patrick Cleary, C. Robertson, G. Claridge, Geo. Bowring, P. Hoggan, G. Clark, S. J. Learning, R. Flemming, J. Nicholle, H. Noonan, W. Short, H. James, R. A. Smith, H. R. Parsons, W. Taylor, L. Thompson, P. Cooper, F. Cummins, M. Whalen, S. Cook, R. Penny, J. Sullivan, J. J. Kelly, G. Whitty, J. J. Goss, A. M. Keeping, D. Lewis, A. Rendell.

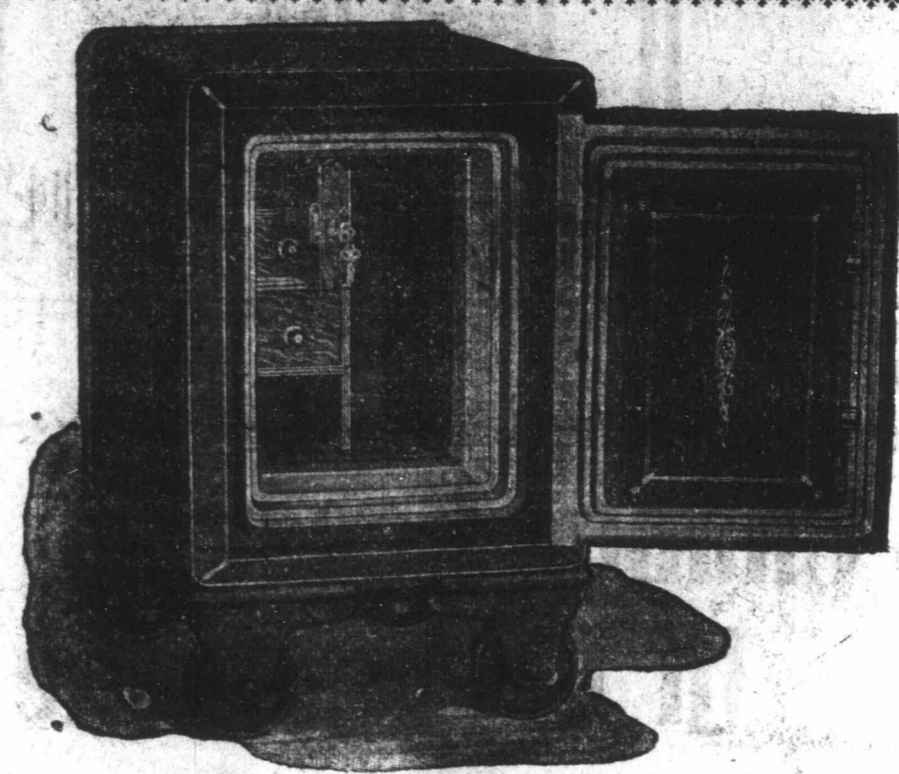
- Kelligrews.**—H. A. Butler, S. Bishop, Wesleyville.—Edgar Winsor. **Govtown.**—A. James. **Clareville.**—H. Pearce. **Long Island.**—P. Carravan. **Trinity.**—W. Bannister, T. Cook. **St. Peter's Beach.**—C. Brown. **Stephenville.**—W. Bennett, J. Curnew (Crossing), A. J. White. **Stephenville.**—W. Bennett, J. Curnew (Crossing), A. J. White. **Alexander Bay.**—Erns. Gulliksen. **Exploits.**—W. Manuel. **Broad Cove.**—E. Pinksten. **Botwood.**—A. Antle. **Bay Roberts.**—W. Parsons. **Bay Islands.**—A. Jesso, Chas. Pennell (Curling). **St. Pierre.**—J. Hagan. **Griquet.**—A. F. Butler. **Bell Island.**—W. George, W. Gladney, D.C.M., has won glory to Bell Isle.

- Bonavista.**—J. J. Gray, Jas. Miffen. **Fortune.**—S. Spencer. **Conception Hr.**—F. Dalton. **Carbonara.**—Wm. Penny, R. Saunders, W. Hawker. **Placentia.**—A. Whalen. **Chamneys.**—G. Walters. **Harbor Grace.**—Frank Taylor, H. Heater, H. Martin. **King's Cove.**—J. Brown. **Bay L'Argent.**—R. Grandy. **Grand Falls.**—P. McDonald, John T. Bethune. **Port Blandford.**—Ian Graham, G. F. Greening. **Flower's Cove.**—A. Cole. **Botwood.**—P. Pollard, W. Watkins, P. Pollard. **Trinity.**—Frank Somerton, H. Cooper, W. E. Penny. **Norris Arm.**—Leo Kennedy. **Codroy Valley.**—V. O'Quinn. **Bay Bulls.**—W. Quirk. **Heart's Delight.**—A. Bryant.

After saying "Good-bye" to our boys, until we meet again, a great chorus pealed forth: "Will ye no come back again?" I was accompanied to the Telegraph Office by my young friend Jack Fox; from where we sent the following message: (which Mr. Cowan, I have no doubt, has published): "Sincere sympathy Newfoundland's 'loss on battle-field. Spent to-day 'with Regiment; met many friends; 'Writing particulars for Press; un- 'animous message from Ayr boys; 'Our ranks are thin, come all who 'can and get revenge; great 'cheers."

In London, I hope to visit all our wounded boys, if possible, and get a message from them to their fathers, mothers and sweethearts. Many of the young men that I met at Ayr have since gone to the front. May they be protected by an All-wise Providence, bring glory, lustre, and honour to the Empire, credit to our country, and assist in bringing about the termination of this bloody war, that has brought sorrow and suffering to many homes in Newfoundland, is the sincere wish of.

Yours in sympathy,
JOHN ANDERSON.
London, 29th July, 1916.



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