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may 17, 12

Coaker's Diary.

SOME CORRESPONDENCE IN RE-
LATION THERETO.

LONDON, July 10, 1919.
Editor Evening Telegram.

Sir:—I forward you herewith a
copy of correspondence which I have
addressed to Mr. Coaker, with a re-
quest that he publish it in his paper,
in which appeared the charge he
made against me in regard to Colonel
Franklin. He ought to receive it at
the same time as you.

Thanking you in anticipation,
I remain,
Yours truly,
MORRIS.

LORD MORRIS TO MR. COAKER.

LONDON, June 10th, 1919.

Dear Mr. Coaker—I beg to enclose
copy of a letter which I have address-
ed to Lieut.-Colonel Franklin, and his
reply. On perusal you will notice
the correspondence arises out of a
statement of yours published in the
Evening Advocate of April 4th, pur-
porting to be a portion of your diary,
published in that paper. The facts
dealing with the incident referred to
are all set forth in this correspond-
ence. I appeal to your sense of jus-
tice to give the same publicity to this
correspondence as to the charge
which has been made against me, by
inserting it in your paper at the ear-
liest convenient date.

There was never the slightest
ground for the charge as far as I was
concerned. Governor Davidson will,
no doubt, be able to speak for him-
self, but as far as I know I have to
acquaint him also of the charge you
have made against him.

As you know I never answer charges
against me in the Press, but this is
not the usual case, as it affects a
soldier who has fought valiantly for
the Empire.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) MORRIS.

LORD MORRIS TO LIEUT.-COL.
FRANKLIN.

LONDON, 12th May, 1919.

My dear Lt.-Colonel Franklin—I
do hope this will find you continuing
to permanently improve. The last
mail in from Newfoundland brings
me an extract from the Evening Ad-
vocate, of April 4th, purporting to be
a portion of President Coaker's diary,
published in the paper. In it the fol-
lowing occurs:—

"I met Lieut.-Colonel Franklin at
the Military Hospital at Shep-
herd's Bush, London. I gathered
from him by close questioning a
"little of the harsh, unreasonable,
"if not ungrateful manner in which
"he had been treated by Governor
"Davidson, and the Newfoundland
"Government under Sir E. P. Mor-
"ris. He was considered too
"strict and too much of a disci-
"plinarian for some who rushed at
"the beginning to become officers
"and he knew his job too well and
"was too much a master of it to al-
"low Governor Davidson, who had
"no training as a soldier, to boss
"him about, and he eventually en-
"countered the enmity of Governor
"Davidson, and eventually that of
"Sir E. P. Morris. The long and
"the short of it was that they made
"up their minds that Major Frank-
"lin was not to remain with the
"Regiment, but they lacked the
"courage to so inform him first or
"last."

I have no brief to defend Governor
Davidson, he is well able to speak for
himself, but as far as I remember,
and I speak entirely from memory of
events that occurred nearly five years
ago, whatever decision was arrived
at in your case, relative to the com-
manding of the Newfoundland Regi-
ment in Europe was only after con-
sultation and with the unanimous de-
cision of the Committee of the Pa-
triotic Association. For my own
part, nothing could be more unfair
or more unjust to me than for Mr.
Coaker to say that you "had incurred
my enmity." Notwithstanding that
Mr. Coaker, in the article in question
says that "he gathered these facts
from you by close questioning." I
still believe he must have misappre-
hended any statement purporting to
be made by you in the alleged con-
versation. I am not in the habit of
denying unfounded charges made
against me in the Press; they have
been going on for years, and I have
ceased even to read them. But the
one under consideration is not of the
ordinary character, and I cannot per-
mit it to pass unchallenged.

As you were connected with the
raising and training of the Royal
Newfoundland Regiment from its
inception to your leaving Newfound-
land, you are aware the Newfound-
land Government, as a Government
had nothing to do with the appoint-
ment of officers for the Regiment
or the granting of commissions. This
was all managed by the Committee
of the Patriotic Association in charge
of this particular branch of regimental
work. Your name or your appoint-
ment, or the circumstances which led
to your ceasing active connection
with the Newfoundland Regiment
never once came before the New-
foundland Government, directly or
indirectly. No member of the New-
foundland Government at that time
had any military training or techni-

cal knowledge which would have jus-
tified their granting commissions or
making appointments, even if they
had the authority; the Patriotic As-
sociation had all to do with the for-
mation of the Regiment, and the Gov-
ernment provided the funds. All the
Patriotic Committee did was approv-
ed and adopted at public meetings of
the Patriotic Association, of which
the minutes and reports were always
read.

The first intimation I had of your
ceasing to act with our troops was,
when I read it in the Press. Even
then I did not regard it as important,
for I assumed that those in charge
had a complete understanding with
you, and in this view I was borne out,
as apparently no protest was made
at the time, as far as I can remem-
ber, by you, or anyone on your behalf.
Under these circumstances it will be
apparent to you how unfair it is for
Mr. Coaker to make the charges against
me above quoted. As you know,
no one values more highly than I do
the work put in by you in the forma-
tion of our first five hundred, and
your work of earlier years in the
training of the C.L.B., which ultim-
ately contributed so much to the
training of our Regiment, and no one
lamented more than I did the serious
injuries sustained by you in your
valiant leadership at the Front.

On the various occasions that I
have visited you in hospital, and
when we have otherwise met, you
will remember, nothing could be
more cordial than our relations, as
well as your expressions of regard
for me, set out in your most appreci-
ated letters to me from time to time,
since I have been in England. Under
these circumstances I tell you will
agree with me that Mr. Coaker, at
least as far as I am concerned must
have entirely misinterpreted your
conversation with him.

From August 1914 to 1917 I was in
daily touch with Governor Davidson,
and I knew the value of the services
rendered by him to Newfoundland in
the matter of our Regiment. He was
in no way bound to assume the duties
he did—for four years acting as Min-
ister of Militia, and although mis-
takes may have occurred in various
branches of the Patriotic Association,
in connection with the selection,
training, equipment and commissions
of our Regiment, I believe him incapa-
ble of treating anyone in a harsh, un-
grateful or unreasonable manner.

The importance of this matter must
be my excuse for troubling you with
such a lengthy communication.

With best wishes and continued es-
teem and regard,

Believe me,
Yours very faithfully,
(Sgd.) MORRIS.
Lt.-Colonel Franklin, D.S.O.

(Copy.)
LIEUT.-COL. FRANKLIN TO LORD
MORRIS.

LONDON, 20th May, 1919.

My dear Lord Morris—Thanks for
your letter which reached me Satur-
day and I was glad to have the
chance the same afternoon of having
a chat with you.

It wasn't necessary for you to
write denying the trend of Mr. Coak-
er's remarks as regards yourself, but
it is extremely gratifying to have
such expressions of continued regard
and appreciation of my poor services
with the Royal Newfoundland Regi-
ment from you, both in your letter
and talk, many thanks for same.

The newspaper article was a sur-
prise, and I may say that if for a mo-
ment I had thought you had allowed
any "personal enmity" to me to in-
fluence you whilst Prime Minister, I
should certainly have threshed the
matter out with you the first time I
saw you. Neither have I ever thought
that Sir Walter Davidson was un-
friendly. No one appreciates more
than I do his energy and whole-heart-
ed work on behalf of the Regiment—
we had differences of opinion as to the
policy to be adopted—I, as you know
from the first, maintained that some
department of the Government should
be responsible and that the Patriotic
Association should be advisory, but
up to the time of the departure of
the "Blue Puttees" there was always
good feeling and regard between us,
and on my side respect.

In my talk with Mr. Coaker I said
nothing but what I have told you
often and may we leave it that Mr.
Coaker allowed his great heart and
sympathy to run away with him and
carried off a wrong impression of our
talk.

It's a long cry back to 1914, we all
had a lot to learn—I know I had—
and I take it we were all trying to do
all we could and if someone got hurt
thru our ignorance, and I happened to
be that one, what does it matter? We
have the joy of knowing our country
did well.

I cannot close this without thank-
ing you for your kindness, since I have
been hit.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.) WILL H. FRANKLIN.

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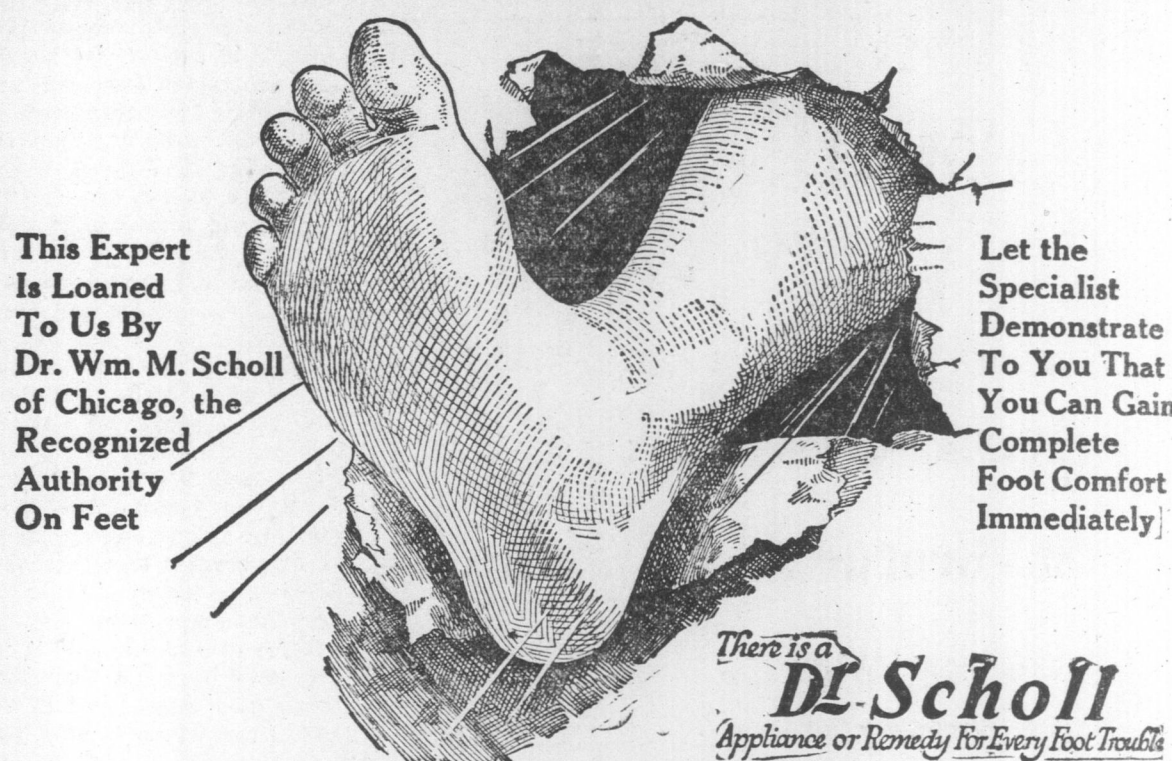
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If the war had lasted a little longer
the Germans would have had to face
one of the most terrible inventions of
the war—bomb-dropping aeroplanes
which carried no crews, and were
directed by wireless a hundred or more
miles away.

A month before the Armistice was
signed an aeroplane was flown without
a pilot or observer on board for over
a hundred miles, at the end of which
distance it landed in an aerodrome

just as though it were being piloted.
At any time during the flight, bombs
could have been released by wireless.
A dozen of these aeroplanes, loaded
up with bombs, could have been sent
over German towns allowed to drop
their bombs, and brought back again
for another attack unless brought
down by anti-aircraft guns or enemy
machines. Over the front line an in-
cessant rain of bombs could have been
kept up, the whole of the aeroplane be-
ing controlled by wireless within sight
of our own lines.

It is probable that the wireless aero-
plane will be sent up with special in-
struments on board in order to find
out the kind of weather there is thou-

sands of feet above the earth. We
don't yet know enough about the weath-
er conditions at the heights aero-
planes usually fly. That is where the
wireless aeroplane will be so useful.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

Correspondents are re-
quested to accompany con-
tributions with their real
names, not necessarily for
publication but as a guaran-
tee of good faith. In future
no correspondence will be
considered unless this rule is
adhered to.