

billet. The next day our billet was changed to a place farther back, and on the afternoon of the same day about 5 o'clock the German artillery opened a very heavy fire on the firing line, on the roads and farms, putting Jack Johnsons into Ypres (these shells make a hole five feet deep by about twenty feet in diameter). About this time we received orders to dig ourselves in on the canal bank and await further orders. At 6 p.m. the French began falling back and told us of the gas the Germans were using. At 8 p.m. we received orders to move forward, and we formed up on the canal road and moved to the right through Ypres, on the way crossing "Suicide Corner", a spot at the head of the canal. This place has been shelled every day for months. It was here that we had our first casualty, one man being hit in the side, three ribs being broken. We doubled through the town and on toward the firing line for about two miles. It was heavy work, as the men had on their full equipment and an extra hundred rounds. When we got within a half a mile of the firing line we extended in lines of half a battalion at one pace interval and lay down. We had been very lucky thus far, having only lost one man, for nearly everybody had been touched on the way up by bits of shells. Shortly orders came to take the trench on the left front. This time the shells had more effect. One I know accounted for two of my platoon and four of No. 12. We were now so close they could not shell us. Everything was fairly quiet in front except for an occasional burst of machine guns and rifle fire. When we were within three hundred yards of the trench we came upon a thick hedge, and after some delay we managed to get through. The fire was getting quite hot. From the hedge we made a rush of about fifty yards. By this time they had spotted us and the fire was awful, coming, it seemed, from all directions, making a steady roar. We pushed forward another hundred yards or so, and when the fire slackened for a moment the front line charged, followed by the second line about twenty yards in the rear. We bayoneted the Germans who remained in the trench and chased the balance who had make for the wood in the rear of the trench. It was here that we re-captured three 4.7 guns. After clearing the wood we were ordered into the trench. Here we found all sorts of German equipment, rifles, bayonets, packs, rations, drums, etc. We worked all night trying to make the trench shell-proof as possible. At daybreak they started shelling us and kept it up all day. It was an awful day. Men blown out of a trench was a common occurrence, leaving nothing but possibly a boot or a Glengarry. In one case a shell burst over the trench, wounding three of my men. One crawled out to the tall grass in the rear and made his way to the dressing station. Another who received eight wounds in one leg hopped across the open to the grass. The third was so badly hit he could not move, and his brother and pal volunteered to get him out. (All wounded stayed in the trenches until dark unless they were able to get out by themselves). Having no stretcher they had to drag him, and after working for nearly an hour in the open they got him to the edge of the grass when a sniper got him. The poor chap died an hour or so later, but both volunteers got through safely. That night we collected the wounded we were unable to get out the previous night. Some had been in the wood nearly twenty-four hours unable to get out. We found one of my platoon and a German both dead with a bayonet through one another's throats. As very few brought rations we lived on what the Germans had left as they were fairly good.

"The second day was much the same as the first. On the third at about 8 a.m. we were relieved. In getting out we had to crawl about four hundred