

But ere the glory of Flanders fields, of poppies red and crosses white, must come the ordeal of Salisbury Plain for these fighting men eager to get at the foe. The Contingent arrived in England on October 16, about the hour when French—with the thinnest line that ever made good a forlorn hope—was clinging tight to that very Ypres front which was to become a legend and a saga for the First Division and all the Corps. The training in England was severe, but the conditions of living were worse, that cold and rain-drenched autumn and winter. Small wonder that many men stretched their none too frequent leaves to the limit of elasticity, or indulged in furloughs officially unauthorised altogether. Suffice it that they always came back, and, when the Division debarked at S. Nazaire on the 9th of February following, every man answered the muster except a few whom illness or death had evacuated.

What did England think of us Canucks at first, I wonder? She had seen isolated Canadians before, but I suspect that the word often conjured up memories of Mayne Reid, thoughts of camp-fires and bears, bucking bronchos and whimpering coyotes; a vision of trackless forests unreadable