

"We are now in a much hotter quarter than we were in before. It was quite close here that your compatriots so distinguished themselves a few weeks ago, and you and all the other Canadians in the office have every reason to feel proud of them. Not only our own men out here, but also the French and Belgians whom we have come across, speak very enthusiastically about them.

"We moved from our old part of the line about a fortnight ago. We had a four hours' night march down to the base, where we were reviewed by Sir John French, and another four hours' march to this part of the line next day. The town itself, which we came through on our way into the trenches, is a sight which I shall never forget. The whole place had been systematically shelled, and there is hardly a house left standing, nothing but huge pits in the ground and heaps of debris. The road was being shelled as we came along, so it was a case of lying flat when we heard a shell coming and then going on again at the double. To-day (8th) the Germans have been shelling us in the trenches off and on the whole day with both shrapnel and high explosives, commonly known as 'coal-boxes'. Against the latter there is no protection at all, as they make huge pits in the ground. One can only sit tight and hope for them to miss. The nearest one to me landed about a dozen yards away and almost buried me with the earth thrown up."

PRIVATE W. H. GOODALE, of the Wadena branch, writes under date of 6th June, 1915, as follows:

"I must send you a few lines to let know that I am O. K. and that the Huns have not got me yet. We have been out here a month now and have had our 'baptism of fire' four days, as the casualty lists will have shown. I could write much about those four days, but the censor would not like it, perhaps.

"It is really extraordinary how small the world is. In a square mile of French Flanders, several weeks ago, I met practically all the fellows I knew in the first contingent from Brandon and other places. They all got through the Ypres affair, and through this last one too, as I have seen them continually since. Glasgow, who came out about two weeks before me, I have seen several times. From what I gathered he had some very close shaves in this last affair; his battalion suffered very heavily.

"We have just had a church parade, but it was a very extraordinary one on account of the possibility of a shell interrupting the service.

"My brother and I had quite an interesting experience the other night. We went for a stroll into an adjacent village into which the Huns dropped a few shells every evening about 7 o'clock, but of that fact we were unaware. We had just come out of a little 'Estaminet' at the corner of the square and had gone about fifteen yards up the street when, biff! one came about thirty yards behind us. I must confess I was more scared than at any time in the trenches, it was so unexpected, and the yapping women and old fogies quite unnerved me. About thirty seconds later another one came, this time much nearer, two glasses, etc., fell all around me; an old chap standing near me got his cheek cut and the toe of his slipper, but I wasn't even scratched. If my brother had accepted my offer of another drink in that little pub (which if you knew my brother you would think most probable) we should just have been about coming out of the door and the tale would run differently. So in future when we curse this awful stuff they sell as beer out here we must remember it once did us a good turn."