

as to what I did for them. It was impossible for me to be with all my men but I was with a certain number of them in the front line. I never left the front line throughout one of the greatest battles in history. I remained all the time during the battle until I was ordered to retire. I have the "order" to retire the remnant of my battalion still in my possession and when we retired I was the last man to leave the trenches. I am only stating the facts. It is very difficult for a man to stand up and boast or blow about his own actions. These are not things that a man feels like boasting about to the public. It is not pleasant for me to think about them, and it was not necessary for me to go about the House blowing about the number of men I had slain. The scenes that I have witnessed are too terrible for me to speak of even to my best friends. As to this question of a dug-out, there were no dugouts. They were all blown up in fifteen minutes after the action started, just as the British are blowing up the dugouts to-day. They were only frail structures of mud. Therefore, that charge falls to the ground. I remained with my men.

The Government have in their archives the reports of other officers with regard to myself. They have the reports of the officer of the 7th who took command when Hart McHarg was slain; He reported to me and his report is in the Militia department. I was on the furthestmost line in the second battle of Ypres. I met the second in command of the 10th, who is now a brigadier-general, and he also reported to me. His men were being sent down to assist the remnant under me that was still holding out. At that time he had, out of a great battalion, something like 150 men left. He wrote in his report that he had reported to me, a moment later he was wounded and carried off the field. I was with my battalion then and that was only an hour or so from the time that we were ordered out. How could I have been away back four or five miles from the fring line?

The ex-Minister of Militia (Sir Sam Hughes) has done me justice on several occasions. I did not know that he had sent my name in for promotion. There is one thing that I have not sought and that is promotion. Because of political consideration or because of being a member of this House I never asked the minister for a single favour in the way of promotion. When I was going to Valcartier I went in to bid my chief good-bye. He said "Col. Currie, you shall have a brigade". I said: "No, Mr. Borden, I would prefer to go with

[Mr. Currie.]

the men I am bringing with me and I want to go as a colonel". In those days promotions were not as much sought as they are to-day. We all thought that the best place to win our promotion was on the field. Never, since I have come home, have I importuned with the Minister of Militia for any promotion. When I left France I was fifth in seniority of the first division. I was asked to come home by the Government, I did not ask to come home. I was asked to come home by the Government to give some information and to assist in recruiting here. I came home. Little did I expect that when I came I would find so much excitement in the country and that I would have to meet the charge of having run away from my men. I never asked the minister to give me any promotion. I was in the West for a month after he returned and did not know anything about those beautiful lies they were passing around about me. The minister told me that he was going to promote me as I should have been promoted automatically. According to the customs and rules of the service, whilst I was in the King's service on active service and had done nothing wrong, I was entitled to be kept in my position under the Militia Act. Promotion comes according to seniority. When they were giving promotion to others in the service my promotion should have come automatically. But my promotion did not come automatically. Others were put over me in the Militia List and others given command over me at home who were never at the war. Naturally, I did not feel that I was dealt justly with in that regard. Still, I make no complaint. I did not earn any subsequent promotion in the field and I do not think I should say anything about it. I have covered the question of my promotion, of my conduct in the field and of my service.

I tried to serve in accordance with the best traditions of the British House of Commons. I thought that if I did anything wrong it would be a big reflection on this House. I went to the war in the first place so that it could not be said, in so far as the House of Commons was concerned, that it was a nest of slackers that never gave any service to the war in contradiction to the fact that the British House of Commons has given over 150 members to the war. This House has given a number of members to the war but it has not looked to its ancient dignities and rights in the honours which it has conferred upon its members who have gone