

But the bridge on the Aisne was a menace; our safety
demanded its fall:

"Engineers,—volunteers!" In a body, the Royals
stood out at the call.

Death at best was the fate of that mission—to their
glory not one was dismayed.

A party was chosen—and seven survived till the
powder was laid.

And *they* died with their fuses unlighted. Another
detachment! Again

A sortie is made—all too vainly. The bridge still
commanded the Aisne.

We were fighting two foes—Time and Prussia—the
moments were worth more than troops.

We must blow up the bridge. A lone soldier darts
out from the Royals and swoops

For the fuse! Fate seems with us. We cheer him;
answers—our hopes are reborn!

A ball his visor—his khaki shows red where
another has torn.

Will he live—will he last—will he make it? *Hélas!*
And so near to the goal!

A second, he dies! Then a third one! A fourth!
Still the Germans take toll!

A fifth, *magnifique!* It is magic! How does he
escape them? He may. . . .

Yes, he *does!* See, the match flares! A rifle rings
out from the wood and says "Nay!"