

TWO PICTURES CONTRASTED BY MEMBERS OF THE 26TH

The Well-Kept Despised Soldier in St. John and the Heroic Muddy Figure in the Trenches

Canadians Write Stirring Tales of Fighting in Belgium—Boys of 55th Enjoy Leave in London—Dr. McIntosh Goes Up the Nile.

The following letter, written in the trenches in Belgium, was recently received by Mrs. J. Fraser Gregory of this city, from Sgt. A. G. Gunn, of the 26th Battalion.

"I was delighted to receive the P. P. C. you sent along. I may say it was handed to me while I was in the front trenches, and really I could not but compare the difference between now and the times I spent in old St. John.

"I suppose you will have heard by this time of Sgt. Major Brooks being wounded. They say it was not serious, but we can never tell here until we get news from the man himself. What do you think of the 8th now? I should have said the New Brunswick regiment, the 'Fighting 26th'.

"Our regiment is right into it at last after the months of hard training and weary waiting, but a happier, harder fighting regiment was never produced in Canada, having already received the 'Well Done' order from the general.

"Mark my words, great things will be accomplished by this regiment before we leave our quarters in Berlin for our old home, the Army.

"We have lots of good men here, and I have seen many brave, self-sacrificing acts performed that will never be recorded; but this I will say, if it is my fortune to die here, I do not desire any greater honor than to go down as they went down.

"A writer has said: 'It is not the fact that you died that counts, but how you die.' I do not think you would recognize the 26th now. Pen and paper cannot describe the appearance of the regiment wading around in the trenches, does not in any way suit their personal beauty.

"I will draw you two pictures. The first: We stand at the corner of a King square and along marches a khaki-clad soldier. Smart in personal appearance, buttons brightly polished, swagger-stick under the arm, head well back, looking very brave and having a neat soldierly appearance. In fact, every inch a soldier and a man. As the lad goes by we overhear a lady in conversation say: 'Oh, that's one of the 26th, will they never get lost here?' We could always get a seat in the Imperial before the soldiers came." Then she throws a disdainful look in the direction of the young soldier.

"The second picture: Out in Belgium in the trenches. A well known battle front. A man peers at regular intervals over the parapet of a trench. He is the sentry on one of the 'bays.' On looking a little closer we are surprised at his general appearance and wonder if that can really be a British soldier. He is dressed in a torn, dirty, battered uniform that had been at one time khaki-colored. His uniform and equipment show traces of dark stains, a reminder that on the previous day he had assisted with others in bringing in wounded comrades amid a perfect hell on earth of German machine gun and shell fire.

"There is a six days' growth of beard on a dirty but cheerful face and he grasps his rifle and again looks over the parapet. He looks indeed a formidable antagonist. Although covered from head to foot in mud, wet through and cold, he smiles and his thoughts wander back to the rather disdainful remark of the P. C. on the day he passed her on King square and compares it with the 'Well done, 26th,' of the general.

"So much for comparing the past and the present. 'Companions, we are here to fight in mud, wet through and cold, he smiles and his thoughts wander back to the rather disdainful remark of the P. C. on the day he passed her on King square and compares it with the 'Well done, 26th,' of the general.

"I have a lot of fellows here with me, of course it is natural for me to say the best platoon in the battalion. I guess I am right at that, though. Their coolness under fire is simply wonderful.

The following interesting extracts are taken from a letter written by Private Stanley Flaherty, who is at present at Bramshott Camp, England, to his mother, Mrs. F. B. Fitzgibbon, 115 Elgin street.

"Private Flaherty is a native of Chatham but joined the colors in this city, where he has a large circle of friends. He says in part:

"Just returned from a six days' pass to London. It sure is a smoky city. It was a common sight to see soldiers on leave from the trenches with their harness and rifle strapped on them all caked with mud. The more mud you have on the letter they like you.

"I visited Madame Teneand's famous wax works. It certainly is a wonderful place with all the figures of the kings and queens and notable men. They have Sergeant O'Leary, who won the V. C., also Miss Cavell. Then there is the chamber of horrors, where you see all the criminals dated away back. They say if you can stay in this chamber one night you get 200.

"I also saw St. Paul's Cathedral, Tower of London, where the kings and queens of long ago are buried. It shows rooms all marked by criminals, also we were placed where the prince was murdered by Richard III. Then there is the Tower of Jewels, with all the crowns of kings, masses and orbs, etc. The sight just dazzles the eye.

"They have a Union Jack Club there for soldiers and sailors. It is a swell mansion. In fact they have a club for all over London. We Canadians get a great welcome when we meet an Australian soldier he holds out his hand and says, 'Hello, Canada I shake hands with you.' We strolled into a club one night and while there whom did I meet but Archie Walling, from Black River, Northumberland county. Chubb McLeans and I used to call on his home when we were out on leave. Walling has been to the front and was wounded once and was

GROUP OF OFFICERS IN 115TH



Left to right, top row: Lieutenant R. Ingleton, Lieutenant C.W.N. Stevens, Lieutenant McLeod, Lieutenant D. B. Clarkson, Lieutenant Roy Davidson, Lieutenant Ernie A. Marsh, Lieutenant Clair Gilmour. Front row: Cadet Henry Barker, Captain A. R. Sprenger (adj.), Major F. C. Jones, Lieutenant C. F. Sanford, Captain Dr. Wm. Warwick, Lieutenant K. Schofield, Billy Trifis, boy aid, in front.

through the Mediterranean, now the most dangerous of the war zones. Extracts from Dr. McIntosh's letter follow:

"I left Egypt several days ago and was glad to get away even to face the war zone. I have had a couple of rough days, but I feel much better now. We just had a destroyer to sea through a particularly dangerous narrow place. It has left us to go back to its escort at Sanna.

"I have passed hundreds of the thousands of islands, a very fine ground for submarine to operate, but we expect to reach port tonight. I may send some letters from there.

"Well, I am sure getting about some and seeing the end, and will experience some of the most dangerous part I could take without going into the trenches. It is sure some scrap out here.

Major Melville Coming Home. A report has been received at Florenceville, his former home, to the effect that Major W. W. Melville, who went to the front with the first contingent in command of the Brighton Engineers, has been granted a furlough and will shortly return home and visit his family at Florenceville. He has been on the firing line for almost a year continuously.

Missed the Trail. "I must tell you how I got wounded one night in the boot," writes Private Herbert Sutcliffe, of the 4th battalion, to his father in Warley, Yorkshire. "The sergeant-major and I had been crawling about during the day, taking stock of the enemy's wire defences, etc. and at night the idea occurred to me to get a little devilment for Fritz's diversion. We had a 100-pound shell which had come over and failed to go off. The idea was to take this over and try to blow it in the trench. So the corporal and myself started out, carrying the shell in turn.

"I had my pockets stuffed with gunpowder and in the trench we were waiting for the sergeant-major to get up to join the sergeant-major at our gunpit in front, but somehow missed our trail, and in the darkness mistook a wire netting towards the German lines, and were looking for the S. M. in our own way, thinking we were in our own way. I was hugging that old shell when I got to the trench. Still thinking we were in our own lines and that there was some mistake, I stood like a fool with that shell in my arms, and howled and screamed at these madmen, but without effect, except that they got more reckless with their ammunition. So I dropped the shell and lay down flat, a prescription the corporal had already taken. They knocked the dirt over us, and one bullet set a furrow along the head of my right boot, making the foot quite numb. With that slight casualty we escaped, and crawled into the nearest shell-hole. They seemed genuinely alarmed for they opened up rapid fire all along the line. We, in the security of our hole, coughed to get up, but still, we were banished in our scheme. A signal had been arranged in case anything went amiss—two star-shells sent up in rapid succession. These markings due time and gave us our direction, aided by a stenorian yell from the S. M. and the whistling of 'We Have a Navy' by others of the company. The sergeant-major was sitting out of the danger-zone and behind our own parapet. Such incidents vary the monotony of long waiting and watching, and although there is always an element of danger in the firing-line, one sometimes suffers from ennui."

Flooded Dug-outs. "The weather of late has been awful, and I have not been able to dry myself for over a week," writes Sergeant A. H. Fitzroy, 14th Battalion (1st Royal Montreal Regiment), to his parents in London. "The weather is quite cold—sharp frosts every night. We are in the trenches again after four days of brigade reserve, but I would sooner be here, as we have more opportunities of keeping warm. On our last trip here we had a 'glorious' time. We had had rain for two days. It cleared up one afternoon and after drawing rations I went into brigade relay station (signals) for a game of bridge. About half an hour after dark came only half, and continued for another half an hour. Two men passed outside where I was, and I heard one say, 'You go and get dry. There's a hot bath up.' I came in and said, 'The water is just up to your bunk (about 18 inches off the floor). I went outside to our dug-out. A dam had been built round the headquarters except ours and the dressing station. The dug-outs had been built in the bank of an old moat, which must have been dry these many years, but which fills up, as I suppose, every fall with the heavy rains. I went over the dam, and dropped in water half-way up my legs; and it was the same in our front line, the water being level with my bunk. The other two men who slept in the dug-out had built a dam round the top to stop more water coming in. I baled out what I could, and went to get a pump.

"The three of us worked hard, and by 1 a.m. we had the dug-out all in order again, and I was laughing all the time, as Mike, who is an Irishman, refuses to let anything damp his spirits. I remember, when he was carrying two full tubs to further down the dug-out, he tripped over his own feet, and the three of us disappeared under the water, stopped pumping, and then in the moonlight, out of the ice-covered water, I saw a broad, smiling face slowly appear through the dark. 'You are king and you are you.' That night we all slept in the top-bunks (the dug-out was made for six), which were about one and a half feet off the floor. At 4 a.m. we all woke together with a cold, wet feeling. The water was up level with our bunks, and only four inches from the top of the floor. We then agreed as to who should go out and make a hole in the roof for the others to get out and while we argued the water rose. 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