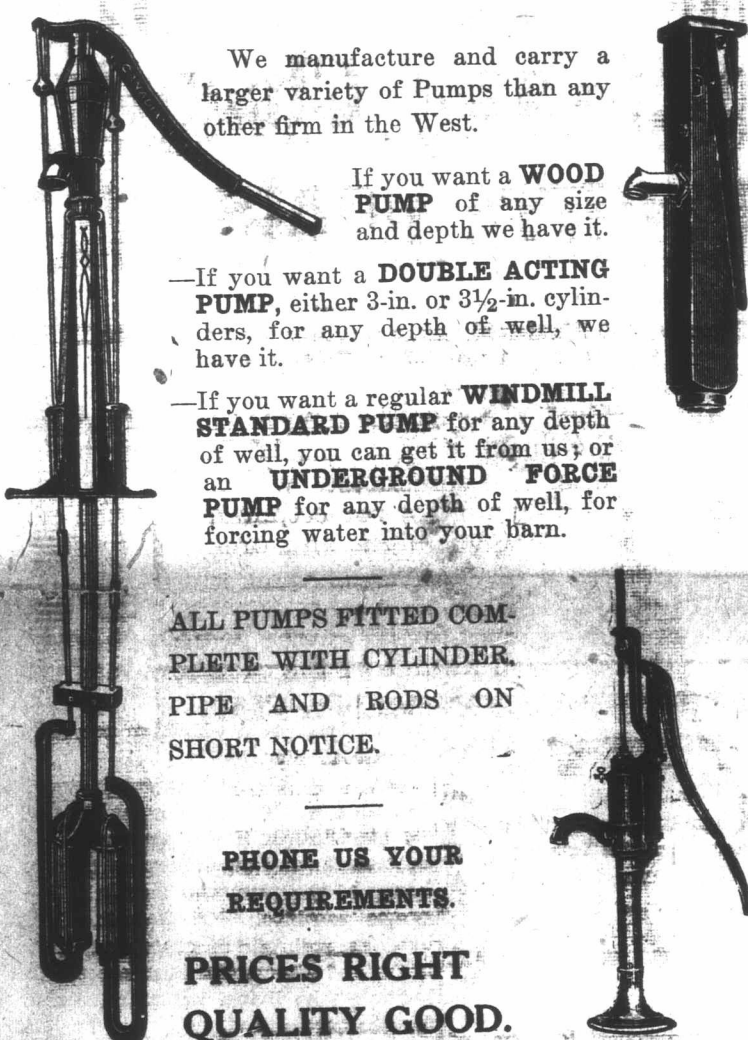


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PTE. W. CORISTINE WRITES FROM NEAR MONS IN BELGIUM

After Two and a Half Years' Service Would Like to Come Right Home

ALL KINDS OF MONEY

The following letter from a Brandon boy to his mother, dated Belgium, November 24th, may be of interest to Brandon friends. The writer, Pte. Wilfrid Coristine, was a student at the Brandon College at the time of his enlistment with other boys in the Tenth Field Ambulance Corps, for overseas service. He left here in February and landed in France in April, 1916, and has seen continuous active service with the 3rd Canadian Division, to which his unit has been attached.

"We have been having quite a time lately and its censoring has been practically done away with now, why, I might be able to make this a little more interesting. Well, we are at a town called Jemappes at present and have been here for about a week and a half now. It is just about four kilometres from Mons and is an historical place also. We have seen some great sights lately one way or another and have had continuous new experiences as we have been following up the Boche on his retreat and evacuation. He has left the country in a terrible state, blown up all bridges and railways for sixty kilometres past Mons, so it makes transportation very difficult for the present as the railway trains are just getting up to Mons. I was in Mons for an afternoon last week. It is quite a nice city and just larger than Brandon. I was surprised to see as many well dressed people and so much stuff for sale in the windows as what there was, but things are terribly expensive, eggs for 30c each and everything corresponds in this country for its size. The Belgians in this part are much better than those in Flanders around Ypres. They are fine people; they can't do enough for us; they have been almost starved to death for the last four years and yet they would give you the last bite that they have or sleep on the floor to give you their beds if you would let them. We are on the main Mons-Valenciennes road, along which was the great retreat in 1914. Every day for the last two weeks the road, which is about 35 kilometres long, has been used by one end to another by soldiers, women and children, carrying parcels and pulling all sorts of loads on carts, etc., back to their places. It is certainly a pitiful sight. Each day our prisoners of war have been coming back to us in a terrible condition. A person couldn't believe it unless they saw it themselves. They have been treated like slaves and are so thin and weak that they can hardly walk. Some of them have come 100 miles or so walking. They were turned loose from their cages to start back without a bite to eat and just had to get along the best that they could. As they would pass the Germans, they (the Germans) would throw all sorts of things at them. It's too bad we didn't exterminate them. They robbed the Belgians of everything, flogged many of them for practically nothing and fined them hundreds of marks for nothing.

It seems quite funny around these parts, as we use about six kinds of money, French, Belgian, German and English, mostly, German at present. I've got about two or three handfuls of coins of different kinds to bring back. In a few days we expect to move on again, perhaps through Brussels, Liege, Namur, etc., to a place called Coblenz, on the Rhine; it is quite a large city, I believe. Then we may go to Hamburg, but we don't know yet. It will be quite a nice trip, but it is a long march and the weather is getting pretty cold for sleeping out—we boys would rather be home. We are permitted to carry cameras now, so I may be able to get some interesting pictures. I have no films at present and may have to send to England for them.

It won't be long until Christmas now and I haven't sent away a card or anything, but we are continuously on the move and a fellow can't be broke, so I'll just try and buy a little souvenir here and there. We will most likely spend this Christmas in Germany, so if you don't hear from me very often don't worry, as it is often hard to write. You don't need to worry about me being sick. I was sick with that Spanish "flu" last summer and thought that I was going to die, as did a lot more. We had very high temperatures for several days and so many were sick with it at the same time that we couldn't even be sent to a hospital—just laid on the floor of a barn and trusted to providence to get better or die. We weren't caring a lot, either. I am in a very nice billet now with a couple of other fellows, and it seems great. Can't realize that the war is finished, no more windows darkened for airplanes, and street lights going. Well, I'll have to close for now. Love and a Merry Christmas to all; any of my friends, also.

WILFRID.

WILSON BELIEVED TO HAVE MODIFIED VIEW ON SEA POWER

President Not Expected to do Anything Likely to Disturb Existing Harmony

London, Dec. 24.—Without doubt the announcement of President Wilson's visit to London has greatly relieved the uneasiness of the British people, for it is felt that his dramatic change of plans can only mean that he comes as a friend bent on maintaining Anglo-Saxon unity rather than further widening the already dangerous divergencies of policy regarding sea power. Canada occupies a position both happy and responsible of being able to interpret to either party what may seem foreign and even obscure in the language of the other, and therefore it is not surprising that Borden will remain in London, abandoning the Christmas foregathering he had promised himself with the Canadian corps.

It is useless to disguise the fact that grave anxiety as to the Anglo-American negotiations in connection with the freedom of the seas threatened to cast a shadow over the holiday. A well-known British publicist spoke to me as follows:

Plans Probably Modified.

"We must recognize that elements exist for tension between Britain and America more strained than since the Venezuelan message, and of which a watchful enemy is waiting to make the most. The president's endorsement of the three-year naval program was received with dismay by our people, mistakenly or not, as throwing down the gage, and there was danger that he might pick it up in the same spirit. One can only surmise from the change in the president's plans that what he has seen has modified his views and he comes to study our case at first hand and to seek a common ground along which the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon dominion may advance in unison towards world peace and the safeguarding of civilization. He will receive a hearty and sincere welcome and will learn how he can count on our support in every direction short of menace to our continued existence as an island empire.

"It would be monstrous to suppose that any formula whatever could prove so rigid as to become a rock of dissension between us after we had passed side by side through the troubled waters of victory.

Would be Disaster to Civilization. "Such a disaster to civilization is unthinkable, and any statement will render every assistance to find a way out that will be satisfactory to both parties. In this, they will have the valued co-operation of the overseas ministers."

GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR CANADIANS

Canada has 27 fowls, compared with 100 in Holland, 166 in Denmark, 65 in Germany, two in Argentina and 32 in the United States. This is contained in a handy statement, plain to grasp at a glance, issued by the Canada Food Board. Increased production of live stock is of vital importance to Canada's future and is the most valuable reconstruction work that can be done.

In fifteen of the most important fowl states of the United States there are 196.4 fowls per square mile and a total of 203,000,000 fowl.

Britain normally imports 190,850,520 dozen eggs. She had a war shortage of 124,786,750 dozen. Sixteen years ago Canada exported 2,128,500 dozen, and up to October 31st, 1918, 3,861,359 dozen were exported. If Canada in 1919 exports as many eggs as she did sixteen years ago she will be living up to her egg opportunity.

Britain before the war imported 452,795,264 pounds of butter a year. The shortage of butter in Great Britain due to the war was 200,148,784 pounds yearly. Twelve years ago Canada exported to Great Britain 33,883,074 pounds of butter. Two years ago she exported 6,788,466 pounds of butter. Compared with twelve years ago Canada has not lived up to her butter opportunity.

MOOSE AND BIG GAME

HAVE CONTRACTED "FLU" Prince Albert, Alta, Dec. 23.—That big game in the area north of Prince Albert has become affected by the influenza and the possibility of its extension to domestic animals, is the somewhat startling situation created by the stories told here by hunters who have recently arrived from the Northern hunting grounds. One party just back from the woods brings the information that the lungs of three moose which had been shot were in such condition that they could not have run a mile.

Dr. Nichol, of Dohden, who is in the city and has had wide experience with influenza in the country around Pelican Lake and Witchehan Lake, two hundred miles north of Prince Albert, stated that it would not be surprising to find that the epidemic will attack animals, and he is of the opinion that if such is the case, domestic animals might also become affected. The menace to the food supply of the world thus hinted at is very alarming.

RETURNED MEN TO BE EQUIPPED FOR WORK ON FARM

Course in Agricultural Education to be Provided Soldiers Who Need It

Winnipeg, Dec. 23.—"To achieve success a man must be equipped for his work," was a comment of W. J. Black, of Ottawa, chairman of the Soldiers' Land Settlement Board, in speaking of the purpose of his present visit to the provinces. The chairman is accompanied by Col. R. Inglis, who is attached to the staff of the board as director of agricultural instruction. Believing that outdoor occupation will be beneficial and helpful to many returned soldiers, Mr. Black emphasizes that for them to be contented and successful they must be prepared for farm work and equipped with some knowledge of agriculture.

"Parliament has approved of land settlement, and made provision for training to returned soldiers sums of money for stock, implements and buildings," continued Mr. Black. "This help, however, would be useless and wasteful if the recipient is lacking the necessary knowledge to make use of these opportunities to a happy and successful life. It is, therefore, proposed to start courses of practical instruction right away, and my mission in the West is to elicit the co-operation of the provincial governments, agricultural institutions and other interested associations for the education of soldiers along agricultural lines, and the utilization of the provincial institutions for the purpose. Such a course is already in progress at the Ontario Agricultural College, and will be inaugurated at the Manitoba College next month. Arrangements are also made for similar courses at the Macdonald Institute in the province of Quebec, and in Nova Scotia. I am glad to say plans are about completed for inauguration of the same work in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The course will be intensive and very practical, drilling the student on each separate part of farm work, such as the handling and care of horses, the use of agricultural machinery, milking of cows, the nature of soils, etc. This will be continued for twelve weeks when the student will be placed with a farmer for a season, to assimilate instruction on the farm in the most practical manner.

"Care will be taken in the selection of farmers with whom the soldier students are placed. All recognize there must be a sympathetic understanding of the soldier's need, and the co-operation of farmers' organizations, the departments of agriculture and other associations will be asked in choosing a suitable place for the soldier. After this drilling and practical experience the returned soldier should be sufficiently equipped to make good use of the land he may select and become a successful and prosperous settler, and the government will have some guarantee that the moneys it may loan will be wisely conserved and become a profitable investment."

Mr. Black thought there would be plenty of suitable and desirable land available and that returned soldiers taking the course outlined could confidently approach the loan board and arrange to commence work on their own account. The purpose of the commission was to continue assistance and supervision for some years until the soldiers were well established. He reports that the commission has received splendid co-operation from the provinces and the different organizations and he was hopeful to have the whole scheme under way with the beginning of the new year.

TRAVEL IS HEAVY AND STILL GROWING

While there are no special excursions on the railways this year a large amount of travelling is being done, especially since the ban on Spanish influenza has been lifted. Travel to Western points is on the increase this year compared with last and it is expected that another big jump forward in this direction will be made the beginning of the New Year. Many people are waiting until after Christmas before leaving for the Coast or the South, to spend the balance of the Winter. Compared with last season passenger travel to Eastern cities has somewhat decreased.

There must be plenty of money in the district this year as farmers from the surrounding towns and the immediate Brandon district are doing a great amount of travel. Owing, however, to the mild weather which has prevailed, some have decided not to go on their annual trip this year, but to enjoy a Manitoba Winter instead.

Many students of Brandon College and the Wheat City Business College, will spend Christmas at their homes, and it is expected that from now until Christmas, passenger travel will increase daily.

A word to the foolish is always repeated.

A political ring has a beginning, but like other rings, it has no end.

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IMMIGRATION HALL TEMPORARY HOSPITAL

The free use of the Immigration Hall as a temporary hospital for influenza patients has been granted by the Deputy Minister of Public Works at Ottawa. A telegram to this effect was received on Friday by Mr. Robert Darrach, Honorary Secretary of the Brandon General Hospital.

DENY REPORT THAT LIEUT. COL. VILLAIN WAS SHOT
Basel, Dec. 25.—A denial has been received here of a report that Lieut. Colonel Henry Villaine, Chief of the French Commission sent to collect evidence concerning the conflict between the Ukraine and Poland, had been shot and killed by Ukrainian soldiers.

Any woman can keep a secret if she wants to; the trouble is to find a woman who wants to.

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