

there for the past week, while it was doing its rest after a spell in the trenches. That rest meant that we worked all night and slept all day, doing perhaps more actual labor than we would in a fortnight in the trenches. But that was over and to-night the Battalion was going into the fighting line.

"We were waiting for the rest of the Battalion to pass. It had been quartered at B. Camp farther back toward Poperinghe and consequently, since we were the last company in the Battalion it had to pass us on the way up the line. It was growing dark while we waited and the flares were beginning to soar out there in the dusk over those long, irregular ditches, the trenches. Every now and then there would be a crash and then a rumbling noise like a street car. That would be one of our own guns hurling its projectile against the enemy miles away.

"Most of us in No. 13 Platoon were quite new to the game. "Thirteen" had suffered several casualties in the last trip in the trenches, and consequently its ranks had to be filled from the new drafts that had come up from Le Havre, where we had been training. Charlie Darling and I had been placed in Ernest Barss' section. Brigden, Forbes, De Breuil and several others were distributed among the other sections of the platoon.

"At last the first three companies had filed past, and so after an interval we followed them, rifles slung across our shoulders, shrapnel helmets pressed down on our heads and held underneath the chin by a leather strap. Each platoon kept a distance of about 150 or 200 yards between it and the next. Why? Because when a shrapnel shell bursts it has an effective zone about 50 yards wide and 200 yards long, and if a shell did burst above one platoon, it could only harm that one if the others kept their correct distance.

"On we marched over the rough cobbles and the shell-shattered roads. At length we were entering a village. Collins, who was marching next to me, pointed to a corner ahead. "That is Hell-Fire Corner" he said. 'Hardly a day passes but the Allemands place a few shells