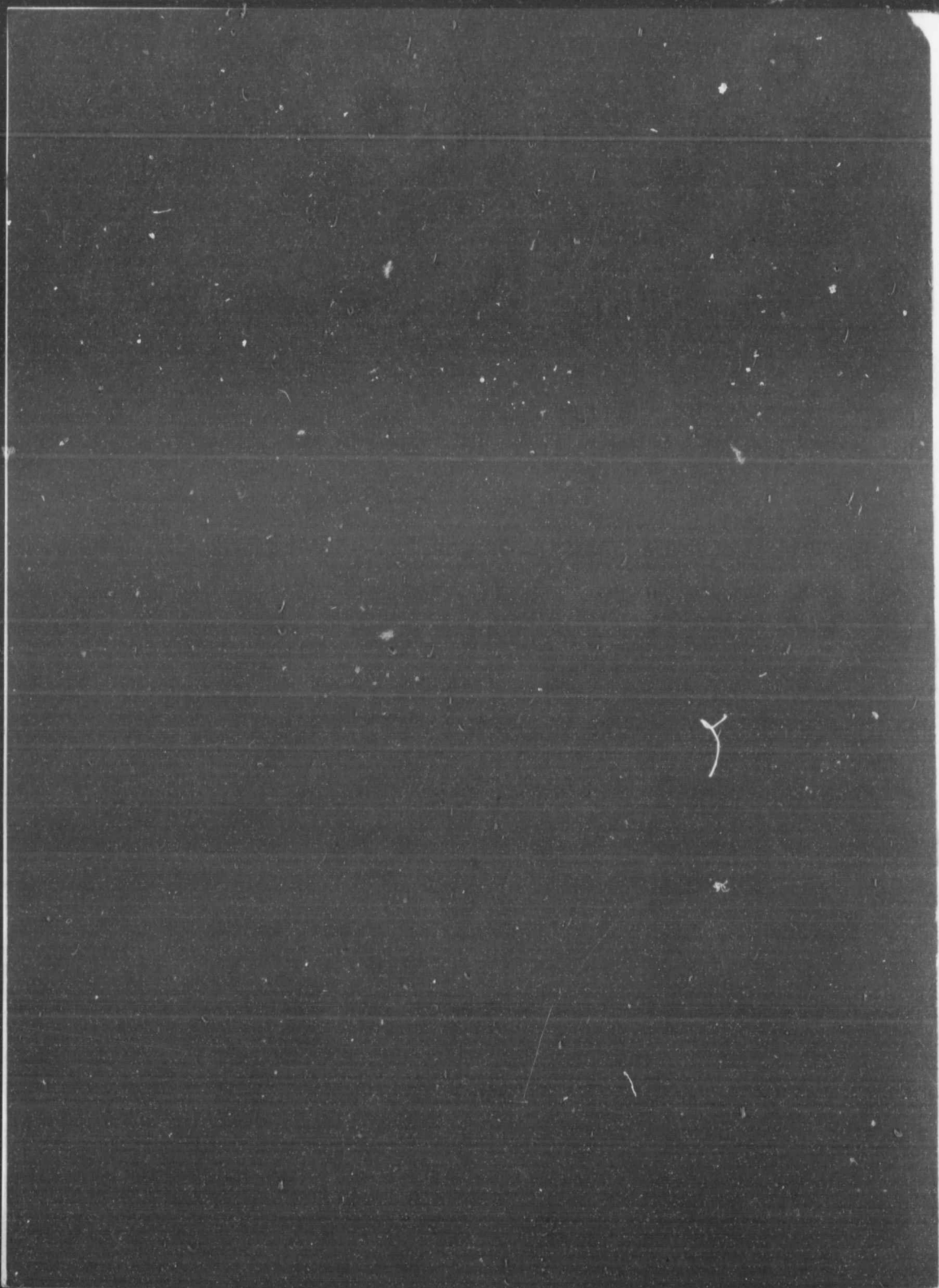




Göttingen



At Duty's Call







Langfiers London

*Portrait in the uniform of
The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.
December 1914.*

WILLIAM

Killed

Printed for Private

At Duty's Call
CAPTAIN
WILLIAM HENRY VICTOR VAN DER SMISSEN

QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES OF CANADA,
AND
3RD BATTALION (TORONTO REGIMENT)
CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Born at Toronto the 6th of May, 1893
Killed on Mount Sorrel in Flanders the 13th of June, 1916



HOISTING THE FLAG.

Printed for Private Circulation.

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Ille metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
Subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari.
VIRGIL. *Georgics II*, 491, *Seq.*

For the man who brings shame on his own people life is not worth living. . . .
Courage and honour are the best of all blessings. PLATO, *Menexenus*.

He who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living
or dying; he ought only to consider whether he is doing right or wrong—
acting the part of a good man or a bad. PLATO, *Apology of Socrates*.

He took the only way and followed it
Unto the glorious end, his work well done.
On faith and love he fed, and giving both
To others, led them on to Victory.
Truth, Duty, Valour, such his motto was,
Such be his epitaph. Hail! and Farewell!
W. H. V. D. S.

No hate was his, no thirst for fame,
When forth to death by honour sent;
Life beckoned sweet, the great call came;
He knew his duty, and he went.

Greater love hath no man than this,
That a man lay down his life for his friends.
John xv, 13.

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Foreword.



ON OBSERVATION POST.

THIS short sketch of the short life of CAPTAIN W. H. VICTOR VAN DER SMISSEN is written for those who knew him and for those who shall come after him, more especially for the winners of the Scholarships to be founded as a Memorial to him, in the hope that they may follow his example in doing their duty without fear as he did, even to the end.

A brief outline is given of such portions of the principal actions in which he and his Regiment were most directly concerned, namely:—St. Julien, Festubert, Givenchy and Mount Sorrel, illustrated by maps and plans.

The narrative is interspersed with such extracts from his letters as serve not only to provide a picture of life on the Canadian front in Flanders, but also to add the needed personal touch.

At the end of this sketch appear a number of letters and extracts from letters from his former Masters, from fellow Officers and others who knew him intimately, bearing further testimony as to the character and career of the young Officer.



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ARMS OF
RIDLEY COLLEGE



HIS SUMMER HOME.

Birth and Early Education.

WILLIAM HENRY VICTOR VAN DER SMISSEN, second son and youngest child of William Henry Van der Smissen, M.A., Ph.D., of University College, Toronto, was born in Toronto on the 6th of May, 1893. After the usual nursery education at home, he spent two years at schools for little children in England, France and Germany.

Schools and Colleges.

IN October, 1903, at the age of ten, he entered the Lower School of Ridley College, St. Catharine's, Ontario, under Mr. H. G. Williams. He passed in the regular course to the Upper School under the Rev. Principal J. O. Miller, D.C.L. After five happy years at Ridley he was sent to England for two years and attended



ARMS OF
RIDLEY COLLEGE.

Haileybury College until December, 1910, his House-Master being Mr. T. A. V. Ford, head of the house known as Le Bas. He joined the College Cadet Corps and trained with them in camp on Salisbury Plain in the summer of 1910, along with other O.T.C. units. Accustomed as he had been at home during his summer holidays in Muskoka and on the Georgian Bay to all kinds of water sports, he was a good swimmer, and won a swimming medal at the annual school games in the same year. During these years in England he spent his holidays on the Continent, thus improving his knowledge of French and German.

In January, 1911, he returned to Ridley College to finish his preparation for the entrance examination into the Royal Military College of Canada at Kingston, Ontario, which he passed successfully in the following May. His summer holidays of this year were spent on the Georgian Bay, where a bungalow had been built on land granted to his father for military services in the Fenian Raid of 1866, to Victor's great delight and pride.



ARMS OF
HAILEYBURY COLLEGE.

Military Training.

IN his first year at the Royal Military College, he submitted as a recruit with a good grace to the discipline administered by his seniors of the third year, and did his best to execute such absurd commands as: "Scramble like an egg," or "Form hollow square." In his second year he



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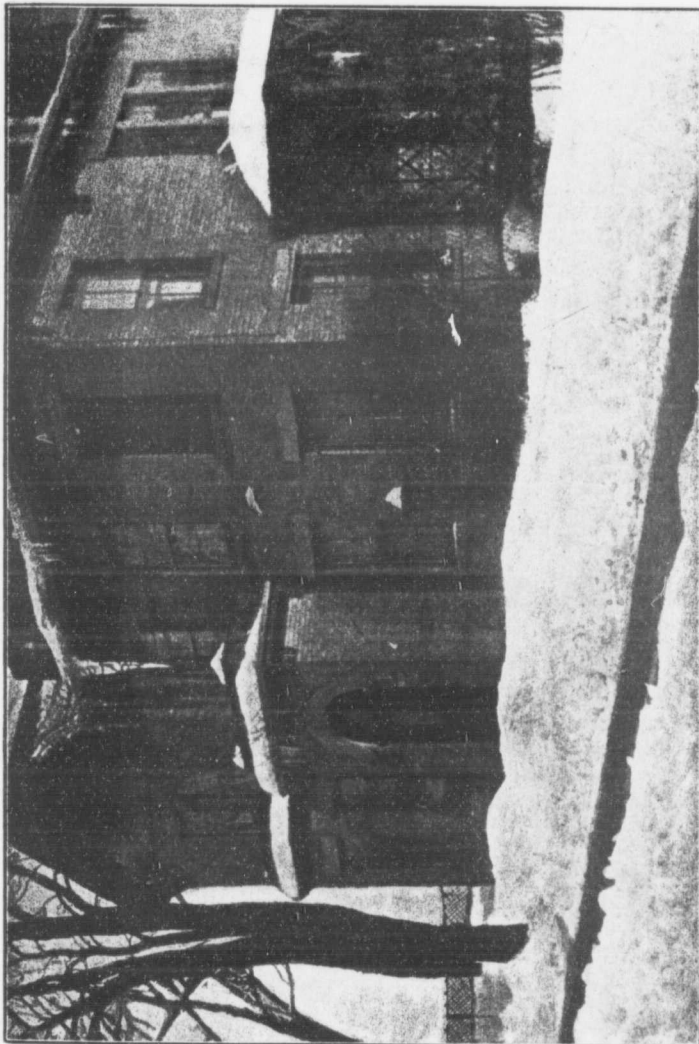
played in the College team in several football matches; his last year was naturally given mostly to study.

On the 28th of March, 1914, his most intimate College friend, Cadet Gilbert Fry, of Montreal, was accidentally killed, and Victor's diary records the deep and painful impression made upon him by this first experience of personal bereavement. In June he passed his final examination creditably, and in the annual water sports won two silver cups in the canoe races.

The following extract is taken from *The Stone Frigate*, the year-book of the class of 1914, containing a sketch of each graduating Cadet of that year, written by some other member of his class:—

“Nature has been kind to Vander in giving him a pair of shoulders that anyone would be proud of, and powers of endurance second to none in his class. This last statement is borne out by the reputation he has won in being the last to leave Lake Ontario before it freezes over in the autumn, and the first to enter it when the ice has opened up sufficiently to admit his body. . . . The Flying Dutchman may seem to take things pretty easily, but in reality he is one of the most consistent workers in the College, and certainly no one is more popular. The voice of the class is unanimous in wishing him the success he deserves.”

The summer of 1913 was spent, with the exception of a short visit to Venice, in various parts of Switzerland, where he ascended several peaks in company with a friend.



HIS HOME, 15, SURREY PLACE, TORONTO.
Built for his father in 1868.

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The Call to Arms.

WHEN the news of the declaration of war by England against Germany arrived, he was absent on a canoeing trip with his intimate friend George Mackenzie, who was killed on the 7th of June, 1916, six days before Victor fell. On his return to the cottage he was met by two telegrams, one offering him a commission in the Imperial Army, and the other asking if he would go with a contingent from the



Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto, his father's old regiment, in which he was entered for a commission. He decided to accept the latter alternative, preferring to be with his own people, and left for Toronto on the 17th of August. As he stood erect on the little wharf ready to depart, his eyes roved over the whole scene, seeming to take in every detail—the cottage, the rocks, the trees, the adjacent islands, the sunlit lake; although he spoke not a word, it was plain that in this last look his soul was making the great renunciation and bidding farewell to all he loved—parents, sisters, friends and the summer home in which he took such a pride.

Valcartier to Salisbury Plain.

ON the 22nd of the same month, he left Toronto for the training camp at Valcartier as a lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, afterwards called the Toronto Regiment. When it was definitely known that he was



not to be left behind, his father said to him: "You have taken the only way; follow it, and remember that you are an instrument in the hand of God to do His will," to which Victor merely replied: "Yes, I know." After a month's training at Valcartier, he embarked the 25th of September with his battalion on board the SS. *Tunisian*, reaching Plymouth on the 1st of October following, and thence to the camp on Salisbury Plain.

In the summer of 1906 during a canoe trip on the Georgian Bay, his father's gold watch, in passing from hand to hand, slipped into the deep waters of the lake. The accident was doubtless due to joint carelessness, but Victor assumed the blame and regarded the restitution of the watch as a point of honour. With his first pay he bought a beautiful gold watch in London and sent it home to his father with his card, inscribed "In loving memory of one that was drowned."

Apprenticeship in the Trenches.

ON the 16th of February, 1915, Victor embarked with his battalion on a transport at Avonmouth on the Bristol Channel for France, landing at St. Nazaire, at the mouth of the Loire, and reaching the trenches near Armentières on the 14th of the same month. In his first letter from the front he wrote that he was returning to the country of his ancestors. He had always been much interested in the genealogy and story

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ON BOARD H.M.S. "TUNISIAN."

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of his family, which originated in Brussels about the year 1400, and had belonged to the patrician families of that city. It was therefore for the country of his ancestors as well as for his own country and empire that he eventually laid down his life.

After the usual preliminary course of tuition in trench fighting with an English regiment of the 3rd Army Corps, his battalion took up its portion of the line assigned to the 1st Canadian Division under General Alderson, the battalion being under the command of Lt.-Col. Rennie.

As Victor had come fresh from three years' strenuous training at Kingston, he had acquired considerable experience in military practice and in the command of men. His physical condition was so perfect that he never lost an hour's duty on account of illness during the whole of his military career with his battalion.

His letters from the trenches give the usual pictures of the life there, suppressing, however, all mention of casualties, and of horrible sights and terrifying sounds, always giving the bright side only. In one of his letters he wrote:—"Nothing humorous has occurred lately, so I have really very little to tell." The following story from a letter written early in March may be quoted as a specimen:—"There was a ditch running from our trench to the German lines with the usual row of pollard willows on its banks. One night a sentry reported that he had seen one of these willows advancing towards our wire entanglements, and had promptly fired at the object, which he was sure was a German soldier in disguise, whereupon



AMONG THE SAND-BAGS.

the said willow beat a hasty retreat." How much of this story was fact and how much was due to the excited imagination of the sentry the writer did not say.

During the battle of Neuve Chapelle, the Canadians held a part of the line allotted to the 1st Army, and although not actually engaged in the main attack, they rendered valued help by keeping the enemy actively employed in front of their trenches.

Shortly before Easter, Victor was sent out from billets at Neuf Berquin, not far from Neuve Chapelle, in command of 150 men in motor lorries by moonlight to dig a new trench near the German lines. They reached their objective after the moon had set, and in the dark accomplished their task under very heavy fire from the enemy. The young officer, however, succeeded in bringing back his men without any casualties, the return journey being made on foot.

On Easter Sunday, the 4th of April, he attended the Anglican Communion service under strange and novel surroundings. The chapel was a barn, the officiating clergy were in khaki, the altar an empty packing case covered with a horse blanket, and the altar rail a waggon pole. Afterwards he was present at Mass in the church of the village in which they were billeted.

The Battle of St. Julien.

LESS than three weeks later the terrible and protracted battle began, commonly called the Second Battle of Ypres, but best known to Canadians under the name of St. Julien,

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the village near which they fought. This, of course, is not the place to describe that engagement at any length, and only such details are given here as are necessary to explain the part in it taken by the 3rd Battalion, and particularly by A Company in which Victor was acting as Subaltern.

On April the 22nd the Canadian Division held a line of, roughly, 5,000 yards extending in a north-westerly direction from the Ypres-Roulers Railway to the Ypres-Poelchappelle road, and connecting at its terminus with the French troops. The division consisted of three infantry brigades in addition to the artillery, the first brigade (which included the 3rd Battalion) being in reserve. At five o'clock in the afternoon a plan was put into execution against our French allies on the left. Asphyxiating gas of great intensity was projected into their trenches. The fumes, aided by a favourable wind, floated backwards, poisoning and disabling over an extended area, those who fell under their effect. The result was that the French Colonials were compelled to give ground for a considerable distance.

The 3rd Brigade of the Canadian Division was without support on their left, or, in other words, their left was in the air. It became necessary greatly to extend the Canadian lines to the left rear.*

In this battle the Canadian Division fought on for nine days and nine nights, though enormously outnumbered, for they had in front of them at least four divisions, supported by immensely

* See *Canada in Flanders*.—Vol. I, Chap. iv.

superior artillery, with their flank still dangerously exposed. The enemy immediately began to push a formidable series of attacks.

When the gas attack was first launched against the French Colonials (5 p.m., 22nd April) the 3rd Battalion was billeted at Vlamertinge, about four miles directly west of Ypres, having been marched northward shortly before. On receiving the order to advance, the battalion marched in the dead of night by way of Brielen, then across the canal and on to a point north-west of Wieltje.



MAP. SECOND BATTLE OF ST. JULIEN.—(Toronto Daily Star.)

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At 4 o'clock next morning, Colonel Rennie received a telephone message to despatch with all haste two companies to hold a line from the left of St. Julien to a wood 1,000 yards west. Major Arthur Kirkpatrick led *C* and *D* Companies to this position. It was a forlorn hope, but much of the glory earned by the 3rd Battalion was earned by this little force which stopped the gap between St. Julien and the wood, completely sacrificing themselves to allow of reinforcements being brought up to relieve the Canadian Division and save a crushing defeat. Their destination was about two miles north of the battalion trenches. Meanwhile, *A* and *B* Companies had moved up and entrenched. All the batmen and attachés of the Headquarter's Staff were ordered to the trenches under the command of Captain D. H. C. Mason.

From our trenches on the left could be seen tremendous forces moving on the trenches held by Major Kirkpatrick's command, but the reinforcing brigade was not near enough to render aid.

The remaining two companies of the 3rd Battalion (*A* and *B*) were all this time holding trenches in the rear and to the left, facing the enemy, now in force, who were apparently determined to break through.

While *C* and *D* Companies made their heroic stand up in front, *A* and *B* Companies were also busy, though in a less critical spot. At 8.30 a.m., April 24th, orders came for *A* and *B* Companies to move to the General Headquarter's line of trenches, to the left of the 3rd Brigade Headquarters. This movement was accomplished under heavy fire. The men

reached their destination without loss, and the trenches were immediately strengthened with sand bags, etc.

At this time the enemy occupied two large farms north-east of the trenches, about 700 yards. On the right, in front of the trench held by *A* Company, in which Victor commanded a platoon, the Germans were only 250 feet away. All day long these trenches were held. At 3.30 p.m., the Germans made a determined effort to drive *A* Company from their line of trenches. A heavy rifle and machine-gun fire was turned on them from the north-west, but the attacks were repulsed, and when reinforcements came up in the evening, *A* Company was still in possession.

Throughout the 25th, the trenches and area surrounding headquarters were thoroughly bombarded. At 5 p.m. the bombardment increased in intensity. That same evening the 3rd Brigade was relieved by British troops, but the 3rd Battalion, or what was left of it, was ordered to remain until other troops came up.

The right half of the battalion (*C* and *D* Companies) having been completely surrounded as indicated above, and having fired off all their ammunition, had been compelled to surrender, and were thus practically wiped out. Among the officers who had fallen in that action was Lieut. W. D. P. Jarvis, a schoolmate and intimate friend of Victor's at Ridley College.

A detachment of *B* Company, sent to the east of St. Julien as reinforcements for the 14th Battalion, having also been cut off, the remainder thus left to hold the trenches consisted now only of *A* Company and about half of *B* Company. This little force held the position for several days before it could be safely withdrawn.

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Letters from the Battlefield.

ON the 1st of May, Victor, who was now in temporary command of *A* Company, wrote from their rest billets :—

“After nine days and nine nights of rifle fire, gun fire, shell fire and hell fire, and one day’s rest, we are just able to sit up and take notice.” In the confusion and uproar of the battle, they had no conception of the great part they had played and the great service they had done. Even the statement by the Commander-in-Chief, that they “had saved the situation,” and that “their conduct was magnificent throughout,” was powerless to remove the impression that they had lost the day. It was not until after the 4th of May that the words of their own leader, General Alderson, reassured them and restored their confidence. On the 2nd of May, Victor wrote :—“*B*—arrived with a draft of fresh officers to-day, and the Germans celebrated the event by shelling us heavily fifteen minutes after their arrival.”

A little later Victor wrote of his personal experience in the fight in part as follows :—“Once upon a time (22nd April) there were five officers who were late for dinner because they had been watching an aeroplane fight. Their dinner was interrupted by the appearance of certain Wise Men from the East [The writer refers to the Belgian refugees from Ypres and vicinity] coming down the road with wagons, carts and vehicles of all kinds, laden with bedding, cradles and other household effects. So they sought where they might sleep. They marched off with their merry men and slept that night

in the ditch. After nine days and nine nights of hell fire and shell fire, two of the officers returned with what was left of their merry men. . . .

"While I was lying on my tummy trying to look as if I were in Canada or some other remote place, a bullet whistled over my head, and I heard a noise in my pack. When I came to open it, I found that the bullet had penetrated the heels of a new pair of socks and had also gone through my tooth-paste tube, so that I found my tooth-brush pasted ready for immediate use.

"Afterwards, when I was standing near the window of a dressing-station beside a stretcher, on which lay a wounded German prisoner whom I had brought in, a German rifle bullet was fired through the window. The stretcher-bearer wrung his arm, and the bullet fell at my feet. We moved the wounded man to a safer place and gave him a cup of tea; I don't believe that he thought much of *Gott strafe England* just then." Thus, after a short rest, he was once more able to make light of the dangers through which he had passed unscathed.

Carry On!

THE following account of his behaviour in this battle appeared without the knowledge or consent of Victor or any of his people, in the *Toronto Daily Star* :—

"A belated story about Captain W. H. V. Van der Smissen and the Battle of St. Julien is being told with great delight in local military circles in Toronto. The *Star* has it from one of the returned 3rd Battalion men, who told the tale originally. 'During the three-day action at St. Julien,' says this man, 'Lieut. Van der Smissen took five of us out to a little advanced trench. It wasn't really a trench, only a hole that sheltered

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us up to our waists. Lieut. Van der Smissen stood behind the five of us on a little raised platform exposed to the shells and flying bullets, only his legs from the knees downwards sheltered. He kept his glasses glued on an opening in the woods ahead of us, at which we five were to shoot whenever squads of Germans ran across it.

'It was warm work. The battle was at its height. Bullets flew around us, but our lieutenant, with the coolness for which we respected him, stood up calmly calling "Fire!" every once in a while. Suddenly one of the heavy German shells lit with a tremendous wallop in the mucky clay back of us, covering us with blue mud. We dropped to our knees and waited with tortured nerves for the brute to explode. It didn't explode. We looked up over our shoulders. There stood Lieut. Van der Smissen on his platform, serene as ever. He glanced back where the shell had lit. Then he looked at us squatting in the mud. He raised his field-glasses and said: "Carry on!"'

When this item was shown to Victor on his last leave, he could hardly be dissuaded from putting it into the fire, but he neither did nor could deny that it was true. Moreover, Lance-Corporal Hill, a member of his company, bore similar testimony to his officer's fearlessness in action, and said to a visitor at the Orpington Hospital, where his wounds were being treated:—"During a most terrific bombardment, when shells and bullets were falling like rain, while we men cowered and ducked, Captain Van der Smissen stood up straight and never flinched. We would have followed wherever he led, so much did we admire and love him."

Lt.-Col. Rennie wrote after the engagement that Victor was one of his very best and most valuable officers.

Machine-Gun Officer.

AFTER the close of this battle, Victor was appointed Machine-Gun Officer to his battalion in succession to Lieut. McDonald, who had been killed on the first day of that action, and he wrote:—"They have given me a horse, four sowing-machines and thirty men to play with." These toys he handled during the various subsequent engagements around Festubert and Givenchy (between the 14th of May and the 1st of July), known in the Canadian press as the "Orchard Battle," from an orchard near Festubert, which was the scene of much strenuous fighting.

On the 14th of May, the rest so much needed by the Canadians came to an end, and they advanced on the 17th to the firing line. On the 20th, the first attack was made on the orchard near Festubert by a certain battalion.

On the 21st the Toronto Regiment was moved up to the front to relieve them.

On the 31st of May the Canadians retired to the extreme south of the British line, where they remained until the middle of June.*

About the 14th of June they, including the Toronto Regiment, returned to the firing line and participated in the attack on Stony Mountain, near Givenchy. On the 1st of July, this series of engagements, as far as they were concerned, came to an end, and they once more returned to billets and the usual trench warfare.

* See Lord Beaverbrook *Canada in Flanders*—Vol. I, Chap. vi.

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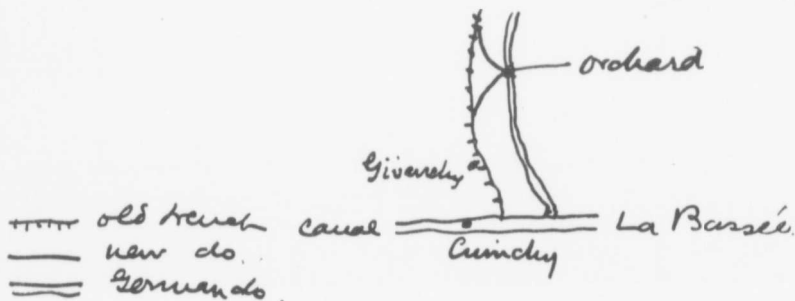
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Of the orchard itself, Victor wrote:—"We call it Muskoka in Belgium, on account of the trees, the strawberries we pick there, and the mosquitoes. It is a lovely place to go in and out of—especially out."

In reply to a request from his father that he would give some connected account of the part he had taken in these engagements, he wrote as follows:—

"26th October, 1915.

"The following rough sketch will shew you the location of the orchard (at Festubert):—



"The corner of the orchard was only about 50 yards from the Hun trench which at this point was very formidable and held up the advance of the 3rd Brigade, which endeavoured several times to rush the Hun trench from here. When the 3rd Brigade relieved the English at this point, they still had some 300 or 400 yards to go to take the orchard and the Hun communication trench running S. It was in one of these shows that Wilfrid [Mavor] got it. When we relieved the 3rd Brigade, the 3rd Battalion went into it hard and continued attacking the German stronghold opposite. These attacks were, however, only blinds,

and although we suffered heavily, they served their purpose and the 2nd Brigade on our right was able to make some progress. The machine-gun fire was intended to keep the head of the Hun below the Hun's parapet, and save the attacking company from flanking fire. The orchard was a distinctly unpopular place and could not be approached except at night. One of my machine-gun crews was buried no less than seven times in one day by Hun shell fire. At the end of nine days we were heartily glad to see the end of the locality.

"Just at present we find ourselves pretty busy altering the trenches to suit us. I don't know whether we are more picky than other troops or not, but we always seem to find a great deal to do in any new line we take over."

According to the testimony of a fellow-officer, who went through this series of engagements with him, Victor handled his "sowing-machines" most effectively, showing extraordinarily good judgment in the selection of positions for his guns, and in the use he made of them, always keeping a cool head, no matter how critical the situation.

Captain of *D* Company.

THAT his superior officers had a high opinion of his conduct in this command was shown by his promotion from Lieutenant to Captain commanding *D* Company of his battalion early in October without the intermediate step of a Sub-Captaincy. The remaining months of 1915 were uneventful, consisting of the usual trench fighting, without the occurrence of any important action in which he was concerned. In one of his letters during this period he wrote:—"There is always some-

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thing to be thankful for ; if it is a hand-grenade, you are glad it is not a bomb ; if it is a bomb, you are glad it is not a whiz-bang ; if it is a whiz-bang, you are glad it is not a Jack Johnson and so on and so forth."

In December, 1915, his former Commanding Officer, now Brigadier-General Rennie, M.V.O., D.S.O., C.M.G., wrote in part as follows :—" Victor has done splendidly. At no time has his command given me any cause for anxiety, as I always felt quite sure that where he was concerned the very best would be made of the circumstances. I trust he may continue to enjoy good health and return unwounded to reap the benefits of a brilliant military career."

During this period Victor's parents, thinking that he had earned a rest, or at least a temporary change to some less strenuous and dangerous occupation for a while, wrote asking the Minister of Militia for three months' leave to be spent in instruction work with some unit in Canada. When Victor heard of this, he happened to be on leave in London, and immediately went to the Leave Officer and cancelled the application. At the same time he wrote a letter home saying that, although he would take any post offered him in the regular course, he was resolute not to accept any favours. About this time he had been selected from his own regiment by his Commanding Officer for precisely similar work at home under a proposed plan to send one officer from each Canadian Battalion out to Canada for instructional purposes, but this scheme was abandoned. This he would have accepted, the other he refused.

Staff-Captain in the 8th Brigade.

INSTEAD of this his good service was further recognized by his appointment as Staff-Captain in a Canadian Infantry Brigade under Brigadier-General Victor Williams. From here he wrote:—"I now live in an atmosphere of Generals, polished brass and red tape, and have to wash my hands before meals and say 'please' and 'thank you' very politely, as if I were in the midst of civilization. . . . One has a very strenuous time when the brigade is in the trenches. I write the daily lie or summary of intelligence, which takes most of the morning, and spend the rest of the day drawing maps. In the evening there is always somebody to go up to the trenches. Whenever I went up I found it was usually about 2 a.m. before I could tear myself away from things. However, I managed to get home at about 3 and get up in time for breakfast at 8.30. However, we are at peace with the world just at present, enjoying a fairly decent fall of snow and wishing the Bosch ill-luck with a gas attack he is trying on about Ypres somewhere."

Return to his Regiment.

HE did not find this atmosphere quite as congenial as that of his own regiment, where most of the officers were his intimate friends and, moreover, more nearly of his own age. He therefore asked leave to return to regimental duty, taking the command of *C* Company, which he retained until his death.

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An officer who had served with him during these three months of staff work and was taken prisoner along with General Williams, wrote home on hearing of Victor's death, expressing his sorrow at the loss of so splendid a soldier, so capable an officer, and so pleasant a comrade.

On the 12th of April, he wrote in part as follows:—

“ My brigade came out of the trenches and the following day I found that my application to be returned to duty had gone through. . . . so off I went as soon as I had handed over, and was very pleased to get back to all my friends and relations again. I found them the same day in the vicinity of what is supposed to be Ian Hay's *Hush Hall*, and was posted to *C* Company.”

On the 4th of May, he wrote again:—

“ We are now earning our living in a somewhat uncomfortable but lazy fashion which seems to be the common experience of all infantrymen indulging in trench warfare, which at the present period of Hunnish frightfulness is a more or less exciting sport. At the present moment there are two planes in the air; one is very high and flying over Gheluvelt is being shelled and is British; the other is flying low over our lines and is a Hun and is not being shelled. The Hun looks as though he were waiting very peevishly to observe for some 5.9 inch battery, which cannot fire because our plane is anxiously looking for this same battery. So the Hun is flying to and fro over the lines wondering why his guns don't fire, and just keeping out of range of the anti-aircraft guns. The day has been fine and quite quiet, and our planes and theirs have been using the fine weather to the utmost. . . . At present I am sitting on a box of ammunition outside in

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my shirt sleeves enjoying the summer warmth and flies, which ought to have a very prosperous season spreading disease wherever they go except among those whom inoculation has made proof against the bacilli of the trench country."

On the 15th of May Victor arrived in England to spend what proved to be his last leave with his parents, who had recently come over from Canada in the hope of seeing him after nearly two years of separation. His physical condition at this time was excellent, his nerves seemed to be perfectly steady and wholly unshaken by the trials and dangers through which he had passed, and he was full of tender solicitude for his parents and his sister. On the 23rd following, he returned to the front, where there seemed to be a prospect of rest and quiet for some weeks to come, as shown by the following letter:—

“ 24/5/16.

“ MY DEAR MOTHER,

“ Here I am safe and sound in a château with F—— and of it he has drawn a charming picture. I had a sleepful journey up and walked a few odd miles. I found the Q.M. Stores and had a wonderful sleep until nine on a nice wooden floor, over which I laid my raincoat for a mattress. As someone is waiting to take this back, I must close.

“ Your loving Son,

“ VICTOR.”

He had his nerves so well under control that he was equally able to command sleep when and where he could get it without neglect of his duty, or to do without it for long periods when necessary.

His Last Battle.

THE rest which they were enjoying here was rudely broken on the 2nd of June by the sudden and temporarily successful attack delivered by the enemy on the positions held by a Canadian Division, and particularly on the Brigade of Canadian Infantry, in which Victor had so recently held the position of Staff-Captain. In this assault Major-General Mercer, who commanded the Division, was killed, and Brigadier-General Victor Williams wounded and taken prisoner along with most of his staff.

The succeeding ten days were occupied by the reorganization of the Canadian Division, as is usual after an enforced retirement, and the consequent heavy casualties, and for the preparation of a successful counter-attack. The battalions in reserve, including the Toronto Regiment, were kept busy with trench warfare and brisk patrol work. On the 7th, Victor's close friend, Lieut. G. L. B. Mackenzie, was killed.

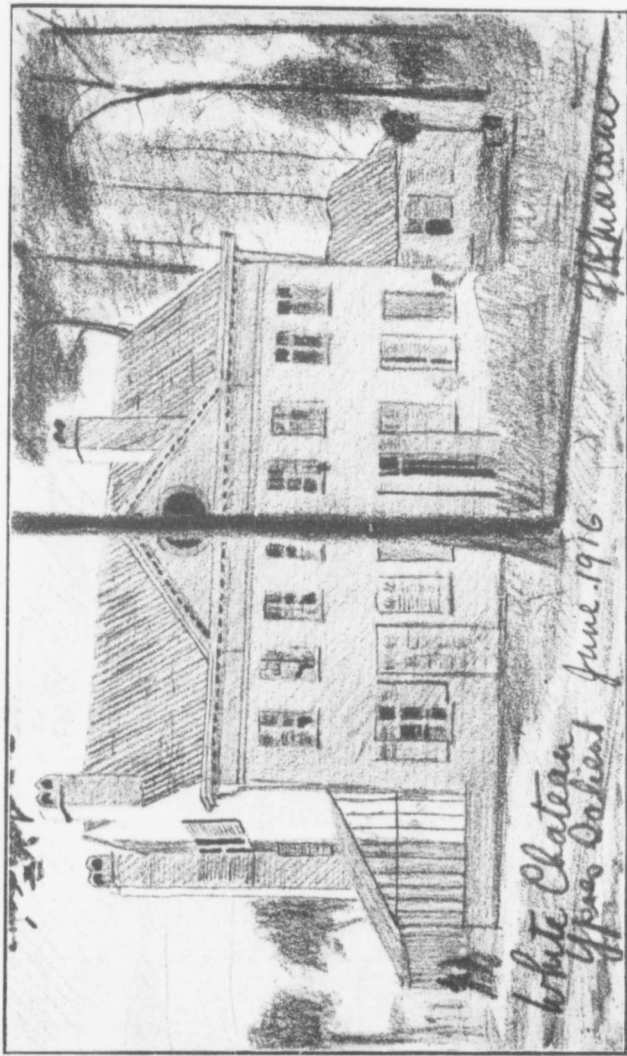
The last two letters which he wrote, follow:—

“MY DEAR MOTHER,

“10/6/16.

“Many thanks for your many unanswered letters; but for some time events moved rather more rapidly than was anticipated, and I imagine they will continue to do so for some ten days more, by which time I expect we shall have settled down to our regular routine again. . . .

“Poor George Mackenzie was shot through the heart a short distance behind my trench the other morning. He was dead, however, when the stretcher-bearer got to him. He had done some particularly good reconnaissance work the



HIS LAST BILLET.

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night before and unfortunately was killed with some of his valuable information still undivulged. . . .

"D—— and I had been up to the front line to look over a new bit of trench and passed an officer with an M.C. asleep in a shell-hole. On the way out about one hour later, he was still there, so D—— woke him with great difficulty and he (Trimmer) said: 'I'm very busy—I'm burying my wounded.' The moment he stopped talking he fell asleep again. With much difficulty he was placed on his feet and marched out of the trenches where he had a wound dressed and was fed at our battalion headquarters.

"There are very few tales to tell just at present. But I imagine I shall be able to spin quite a yarn before long, as something funny or amusing is always happening to somebody.

"Your sausage parcel was very welcome, and helped tremendously at just the right time, as we were living on bully beef and biscuits.

"Your loving Son,"

"VICTOR."

Note.—Capt. A. Trimmer, M.C., was killed in May, 1917.

The writer was fairly correct in his estimate of the period during which they were to be kept busy, but his own activities were destined to terminate much earlier.

The Higher Command now had the reserve necessary to make them secure in an advance.

On the day after the last letter quoted above, the 2nd Division was relieved by the 1st Division on the night of the 11th-12th, in preparation for the counter-attack which recaptured all the ground recently taken by the enemy. Just before going into action Victor wrote a short note to his Mother, being his last letter.

General Lipsett took command of the Battalions for the right attack, and General Tutford of the left attack, General Hughes remaining in Divisional Reserve.

The frontage of the attack was one of three battalions, Strong reserves were behind, and on both flanks demonstrations were to be made.* The accompanying map shows the disposition of our forces, and the great mass of infantry assembled for the purpose of retaking the lost position.

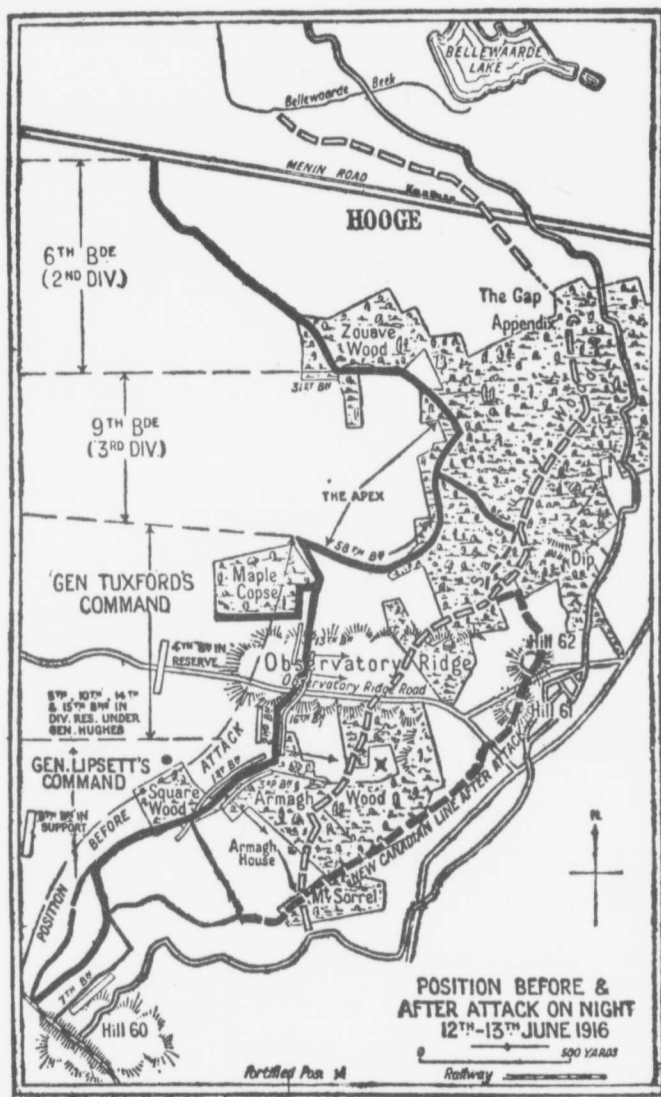
The Operation Order, a copy of which is given below, was found in Captain Van der Smissen's effects after his death; it defines the various objectives of the Toronto Regiment in this engagement, all of which were completely attained. Captain Van der Smissen was in command of C Company and led the left attack of his battalion.

OPERATION ORDER. No. A.

By LIEUT.-COL. W. D. ALLAN, D.S.O., Toronto Regiment.

1. The 1st Canadian Division will retake trenches 47-59 on night—date of which to be communicated later.
2. The Toronto Regiment will participate in the Right attack under Gen. Lipsett and will be supported by another Battalion.
1ST OBJECTIVE—German front-line trench from *Armagh House* to S.P. [strong or support point] 11, both inclusive.
2ND OBJECTIVE—New German support trench about 200 yards in rear.
3RD OBJECTIVE—Our old support lines 48-50. *Tube Trench* with posts in remains of our old front line.

* See Lord Beaverbrook, *Canada in Flanders*.—Vol. II, Chap. iv.



MAP FROM "CANADA IN FLANDERS," BY LORD BEAVERBROOK,
Vol. II, p. 227.

3. TIME OF ATTACK.—1 a.m. on date selected; attack to start simultaneously.
The artillery lifting by the watch.
4. ARTILLERY.—The artillery will carry out concentrated bombardments during the day. At 12.30 a.m. on the day of the attack there will be a concentrated bombardment, and at 1 a.m. the artillery will lift and the attack will be launched. The artillery will continue to bombard *Mount Sorel* until 2 a.m., when it will lift to the old German front line.
5. The Toronto Companies will assemble in the new trenches by 11.30 p.m. on the night of attack in the following order from left to right; the left flank resting at the junction of trench running north to *Rudkin House*. Each company occupying a front of approximately 200 feet.
 - C Company
 - A Company
 - D Company
 - B Company
6. EQUIPMENT.—In addition to equipment, the following special articles will be carried:—
 - MILLS GRENADES—2 by each man; 20 by each bomber.
 - SANDBAGS—3 per man to be rolled under the belt.
 - SHOVELS—Each third man to carry one.
 - WIRE CUTTERS—20 per company.
 - BATH MATS—3 per company.
 - Water Bottles to be filled. Iron Rations [emergency rations] carried.
7. ATTACK.—C Company will attack S.P. 11 (true bearing 86°) from left flank south to east and west road crossing trench at about 102° (true bearing).
 - A Company from right of C Company (true bearing 90°) from left flank to *Armagh House Road* (true bearing 130°).
 - D Company, *Armagh House* inclusive from right of A Company.
 - B Company to move in support and leave two platoons in first German trench to consolidate.
 - Two Lewis guns to go forward with attack on S.P. 11.

Two Lewis guns to go forward with attack on *Armagh House*.
Colt guns to go forward to German first line when it has been won.
After the first objective has been reached, the troops will be reformed and continue the advance on the final objective.

All officers are to make themselves familiar with the ground.

Scouts will cover the ground in advance and furnish reports by 12 midnight.

Watches to be synchronized at noon and 10 p.m.

8. Reports to Battalion Headquarters at junction of *X Trench* and *New Trench*.

WM. D. ALLAN, Lt.-Col.

The "bath-mats" referred to under EQUIPMENT above, consist of narrow strips of wood of a length corresponding roughly to the width of the trench-bottom and bound together with copper wire, leaving interstices, so that the mats may be readily rolled up and moved to the place where they are needed. They thus afford a fairly dry floor for the soldier in the trench and may also be used, as was no doubt the intention in the present case, in order to facilitate the crossing of soggy ground.

The final Order was altered in some minor details as to the extent of the front to be attacked and was carried out in every particular with the regularity of clockwork, and all the objectives were gained.

"They called on the old lot," wrote an officer of the 1st Division jubilantly, "to retake the trenches lost, and we did it; then we had to hold on."

As the guns lifted, the infantry charged on the right; Lt.-Col. Allan directed the advance of the Toronto Regiment from the telephone at battalion headquarters, with Captain

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H. R. Alley as Adjutant. This advance was led by Major D. H. C. Mason ; Victor, as already stated, had charge of the left attack and was one of the first two officers to reach the summit of Mount Sorrel. Another Battalion was close in support, occupying the trenches in front of them as soon as they were vacated by their predecessors. The weather throughout was of the vilest description, the rain coming down in torrents. So dense was the brushwood in Armagh Wood that in the first stages they went forward in the curious formation of sections in file. Advancing with great dash, they got ahead of the enemy's barrage before the latter could be turned on to our trenches and took the German front line. One of our fortified posts, then in the enemy's hands, turned a machine-gun and rifle-fire on them, but the fort was taken by assault and the garrison bayoneted.* This fortified post represented the left of the Toronto Regiment commanded by Captain Van der Smissen. The battalion rushed a position in the region of their old line on Mount Sorrel, and were the first of the attackers to signal with a red flare that the final objective had been reached at ten minutes' past two in the morning of June 13th, forty minutes from the commencement of the action.

Early in the morning of the 13th, Major Mason, who with his nephew, Captain F. H. Marani, had been severely wounded and had to be sent to the dressing-station, handed over the whole command to Victor.

A private of the Toronto Regiment afterwards said that his last recollection of Captain Van der Smissen was seeing that

* This account is taken from *Canada in Flanders*.—Vol. II, Chap. xi.

officer on the afternoon of the 13th administering stimulants and encouragement to a number of his men who had been partially buried by the enemy's shell-fire, and who could not be immediately extricated, as the remainder had to continue their advance.

Towards evening Victor, who had retained throughout the day the command of his regiment and of the accompanying units of Pioneers, etc., engaged in the attack, handed over to Lt.-Col. Creighton, commanding the relieving battalion, and retired with him and several other officers to a dug-out for much-needed rest and sleep. Shortly afterwards a high-explosive shell entered the door of the dug-out and instantly killed him, mortally wounding Lt.-Col. Creighton, and killing or wounding most of the other occupants.

Thus he passed with the flush of his recent success still upon him instantaneously and painlessly from the scene of his activities. Victory he had won; honour and promotion were awaiting him, for if he had lived a little longer he would have been decorated, probably with a Distinguished Service Order, the distinction he chiefly desired, and would have been raised to the rank of Major.

Personal Notes.

CHARACTER is made up of inborn and inherited qualities, as modified by education and training, and more especially by self-discipline.

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The strict discipline which he imposed upon himself, he felt entitled to require of those under him. The following story, related by a sergeant of his regiment, will serve to illustrate this point:—"Captain Van der Smissen was a very strict disciplinarian, but we liked and respected him all the more for it. One day when I was taking orders from him, a shell passed uncomfortably near; I ducked involuntarily, but the Captain stood erect and unmoved, saying sternly:—"Stand up properly, sergeant, when you are speaking to an officer.'" One night, when a more than usually violent bombardment was directed against the officers' quarters, Victor's batman came running to him and said:—"Shall I pack up, sir?" "No," replied his Captain, "Go to bed and go to sleep, and don't forget my hot water for shaving in the morning." He was gifted with a very keen sense of humour which helped him over many trials, and with which he often kept the mess-table merry.

"Victor," said a comrade of his once, "was the cheeriest thing you could have about you, but," he added, "no one could ever tell what was at the back of his mind." In other words, he kept to himself not only his deepest thoughts, but his troubles and anxieties.

Training and self-discipline enabled him to get his work done, and well done, at the right time, and to avoid hurry and worry, from both of which his temperament was averse. They taught him to make every preparation for coming events, and to take every precaution humanly possible against accident or surprise.

His fearlessness was the result, not of rashness or ignorance, but of that courage which is, as the Greek Philosopher says, "the endurance of the soul."

It was this self-discipline and this sense of duty which made him such a successful leader of his men, and made them ready to follow his example. "When I first came over," said a young subaltern of his regiment, "I was in a blue funk at the bare idea of even crawling over a field under shell fire, but when I saw Victor leaping over the same field as if it were on a peaceful countryside in Canada, I said to myself,—'Well, if he can do it, I can.'"

"Not for weight of glory, not for crown and palm" did he enter the Army, but from a sense of that Duty for which he gave his life.

In spite of his efficiency as a soldier he had no love for war in itself and had intended to enter the peaceful profession of a Civil Engineer. To one who thoughtlessly observed, when the outbreak was impending, how exciting it would be to have a war of our own, he said:—"Do not talk like that; war is too terrible to think of."

Of a gentle and affectionate disposition and thoughtful for others, he was very fond of children and loved to play with them, as they did with him.

Loyalty was, perhaps, his most distinguishing characteristic—unswerving loyalty to his King and Country, to his schools and school-fellows, his parents, sisters and friends—a perfect son, a perfect brother and, in the estimation of his friends, a perfect comrade in peace and war.

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Terar dum prosim, "What matter if I be used, if only I am of use," the motto of his school and of the martyred Bishop Ridley, and *Nec temere nec timide*, "Not rash but unafraid," the motto of his family, may be said to sum up tersely both his character and his career.



" PALS."

AT DUTY'S CALL

Copy of the Telegram sent by
THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN.

“BUCKINGHAM PALACE,

“30th June, 1916.

“The King and Queen deeply regret the loss you and the Army have sustained by the death of Capt. W. H. V. Van der Smissen in the service of his country. Their Majesties truly sympathise with you in your sorrow.

“KEEPER OF THE PRIVY PURSE.”

Copy of Telegram from the PRIME MINISTER (sent to Canada).

“The King commands me to assure you of the true sympathy of His Majesty and the Queen in your sorrow.

(Signed) “ASQUITH.”

From H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

“GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE, CANADA.

“DEAR SIR,

“OTTAWA. 20th June, 1916.

“I am commanded by FIELD-MARSHAL HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT to say with what deep regret he has heard of the loss you and the Dominion have sustained by the death of your son, Captain William Henry Victor Van der Smissen, in the service of his Country. His Royal Highness deeply sympathises with you in your sorrow.

“I am,

“Yours very truly,

(Signed) “ED. A. STANTON,
“Lieut.-Colonel.

“Governor-General's Secretary.”

Letters of sympathy and appreciation were also received from THE MINISTER OF MILITIA, the BISHOP OF TORONTO, the PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, the PRINCIPAL OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TORONTO, SIR JOHN M. GIBSON (formerly Lieut.-Governor of Ontario), and many others.

(From T. L. CHURCH, Esq., Mayor of Toronto)—

. . . . He (your son) was beloved by everybody who knew him for his many fine qualities of heart and head, and was beloved by his men. . . . He had a splendid career. . . . Everybody spoke so highly of your dear son. I was down at the commencement (at R.M.C.) a month before the war broke out, and he was one of the best students ever turned out of the College, and was very popular with everybody who knew him.

* * * * *

(From Brig.-Gen. RENNIE, D.S.O., C.M.G., etc., etc., formerly Commanding the Toronto Regiment)—

It is with deepest regret I learned of the loss of your brave son, Victor. Although separated for some months I had followed with much interest his work, and can assure you that all who knew him here held him in the highest regard. I have already told you how well he was doing, and now that he has passed from us we appreciate the more his sterling service.

Please accept my deepest sympathy in the great loss you have sustained. You have made a priceless sacrifice in this great cause—a struggle in which we are all doing a little—and I hope it will be of some comfort to you to know that Victor was a really splendid soldier. He was loved by his men, was a brave, fearless leader, and passed away as he had lived, most honourably.

* * * * *

(From Col. W. D. ALLAN, D.S.O., Toronto Regiment)—

18th June, 1916.

It is with deep regret and sympathy that I have to inform you of the death of your son Victor, by shell fire on the night of June 13, just as he was being relieved after capturing the northern edge of Mount Sorrel.

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Victor had command of the left attack and led his men with great dash and gallantry, being the second officer to gain the summit.

His conduct was an inspiration to his men, and had he lived he would certainly have been awarded a decoration.

Personally I feel his loss very keenly as he was with me from the first and his excellent qualities and gallantry were a source of strength to the regiment.

The sympathy of all his comrades is extended to you in your sorrow.

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) (Colonel) WM. D. ALLAN.

* * * * *

(From Lt.-Col. DONALD ARMOUR)—

I cannot express adequately to you my heartfelt sorrow at the sad news you have received. Nor could anything I might say mitigate your sorrow. I know how great your grief must be and how grievous your loss. We had grown so fond of Victor—so bright, so manly, so clean and pure of heart, so lovable and so brave. Since the war began no one's going has so touched my heart as his, and I feel a deep and personal loss.

Our consolation must be in the manner of his going—"he was perfectly wonderful all through the fight and was worshipped by his men." Such is the Epitaph sent me by one who knows and was there.

Though gone he will live in the hearts of those he has left behind. And you, I know, will thank God for every remembrance of him.

Sorrowfully yours,

* * * * *

(From Major D. H. C. MASON, D.S.O., *Toronto Regiment*)—

. . . You can feel very very proud of your great contribution to the cause that we are all working for. Victor's part has been no small one, and he did it well-nigh perfectly. He was one of the finest types of a soldier I have ever met, and I know the whole regiment (or what is left of it) will mourn his loss. We who have been with him through so much will feel his loss terribly.

He died as I know he would have wished to die—among his own men in the enemy's trench, in the hour of victory and with his duty done—and done well.

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(From Capt. H. R. ALLEY, *Adj. Toronto Regiment*)— 15th-19th June, 1916.

We have just come out of a most splendid fight—they called out the old lot to get back the lost ground, and we got it. Victor was simply magnificent; we attacked shortly after 1 a.m., and had the Huns driven right out into their own lines in less than an hour. Then we had to hold on.

Through the attack and throughout the day Victor was just an inspiration to everyone about him—cool-headed, absolutely self-controlled and without a sign of fear or nervousness. But just before we were relieved, a shell got him, and he died a soldier's death on the ground he had won and held. We shall miss him terribly. He was one of the very best—loved and respected by all of us, worshipped by his men. But he went out in a splendid and successful battle, knowing that he had succeeded, doing his duty and unafraid, the death he would have chosen. He was killed instantly. You must be very proud of him, and not grieve too much, for he had the finest death a man could have.

Everyone is awfully cut up about Victor—he was next the Colonel, I think, in everyone's estimation. . . . Col. Allan doesn't show his feelings much, but his voice broke and his eyes filled when he mentioned Victor yesterday. He was a magnificent soldier, and the best of comrades. . . . They say it was inspiring to see him leading his company up the hill to the second attack—we took two lines of trenches and when we got there he, next to D— [Major Mason], seems to have been the pivot of everything. D— was perfectly splendid, he and Victor were both beyond words.

Victor's company is just heartbroken over his death. I think every one of them would willingly have died in his place. They just worshipped him.

* * * * *

(From Lieut. W. E. CHATTERTON)—

I am writing to express to you and Mrs. Van der Smissen my sympathy for the loss of your son.

I was in his company for three months and I was with him during the greater part of June 13th.

He set us all a very inspiring example during the enemy bombardment, and it has never been my privilege to see a man so cool and cheerful under such adverse circumstances.

His coolness and absolute fearlessness had a most wonderful effect on the men.

I find it very hard to write this letter, but I thought you would like to hear what details I am able to supply. His death was instantaneous; I have enquired from the men who were with him. All the men left in his company, with myself, feel that we have lost a very gallant leader.

NOTE.—Lieut. Willoughby E. Chatterton, who had served in the Royal Navy, commanded a platoon in Victor's company, and was killed in the following September after splendid work during the Battle of the Somme.

* * * * *

(From Lieut. GORDON C. PATTERSON, *Toronto Regiment*)—

FRANCE. *January 22nd, 1917.*

. . . For the last three months I have been with the *Toronto Regiment* "in active service," and happened to be put in command of a platoon in the very same company that your son commanded. I got to know the men very intimately as a platoon commander usually does, and let me tell you the favourable opinion of the rank and file out here is a very genuine gauge of an officer's popularity and efficiency, and I want to take advantage of this opportunity to say that there was no officer in this battalion who was liked, and at the same time respected more by officers, N.C.O.'s and men than your son. He, I am informed by all, had that happy knack of being a scrupulous disciplinarian but at the same time a great friend of the men, always seeing them comfortable and well fed. I feel it an honour to have been able to get into a battalion like the *Toronto Regiment* and, believe me, we who are filling up the gaps, are doing our best to emulate the example of such predecessors as your son.

* * * * *

(From Captain ARTHUR W. M. ELLIS, C.A.M.C.)—

You do not need, I know, to have me tell you how beloved he was by officers and men in his battalion, for it is on everyone's lips. There isn't a man in France who has more nobly lived up to all that is best in the traditions of a British officer. He will indeed be sadly missed by everyone in the corps that knew him.

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(From the Rev. J. O. MILLER, D.C.L., *Principal of Ridley College, St. Catherine's*)—

. . . This morning at our last early Communion of the year, we remembered our old boys who have given their lives by name, in the latter portion of the prayer for the "Whole State of Christ's Church Militant here on Earth." Our list of casualties during the past week—3 killed, 2 missing, and 7 wounded—was read out in St. Thomas's Church at the 11 o'clock service, and we again had a Memorial Service in the College Chapel to-night. . . . I am convinced that these lives so gloriously given will not be without a great result upon the boys who shall come to Ridley long after you and I are gone, not to mention the present boys who are inspired by their example.

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(From H. C. GRIFFITH, Esq., M.A., *Head Master, Ridley College, Upper School, St. Catherine's*)—

Will you accept a word of very deep sympathy from one who feels a great personal loss in the passing of Victor. . . . Victor was one of those dear, quiet, honest chaps who made his presence felt by the great strength of character that was his, and in losing him I feel that Ridley has lost one of her truest sons. Deeply we mourn for him, but in our mourning there is also a feeling of comfort that, dear as life is to a boy like Victor, he placed duty first and gave up his life in the greatest of all struggles for the cause of humanity. What a treasured thing the memory of his sacrifice will be to Ridley! As long as the school lasts, his name will stand as an example and encouragement to all future Ridley boys, and how great the influence of his life and death will be, time alone will tell.

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(From H. G. WILLIAMS, Esq., *Head Master, Ridley College, Lower School St. Catherine's*)—

I have not written before because I could not. Even now I do not know what to say. Had my own son fallen, I do not think that I could have been more shocked than by Victor's death. I think that you and dear Mrs. Van der Smissen did understand something of the admiration and affection I felt for Victor, and you know, therefore, how great is my own sorrow, apart from the deep sympathy I feel for you and his mother. As I sympathised

with you in your pride, you must also let me enter into your sorrow. A noble young life and a noble end. His life and death were alike becoming, and I am sure that you who lavished upon him your pride and affection for so many years, find much comfort when you think of his splendid unstained young life and his unselfish sacrifice of it, though on the very threshold of his early promise.

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(From T. A. V. FORD., Esq., *Le Bas, Haileybury College*)—

. . . To my sorrow I had confirmation soon after writing you, that it was really Victor's name on the casualty list, and his name has been added to the school "Roll of Honour." The loss is indescribably sad to those who knew him as one of the best types of light-hearted, straightforward boyhood. It is a great satisfaction to know that he carried out—and more than carried out—his early promise.

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(From Lt.-Col. L. R. CARLETON, former Commandant of the Royal Military College, Kingston, Canada)—

I am so glad to have the copy of the splendid tributes to your very fine son. Great and inconsolable though your sorrow is, still such tributes from those who knew him so well and shared with him the greatest trials in life, are a great help and support, though they do show his greatness and charm still more clearly if possible. I knew him, but not intimately as a boy, manly, active, keen, generous and happy (as far as I could judge in such a short time, with so great a distance between us in age and position), and those men knew him springing straight from such a boyhood into the full man under the great test and development of war.

Unutterably sad though it is that he and so many other splendid young fellows have been killed in this awful war (I can hardly bear to think now of those fine young fellows at Kingston, so full of life and hope and all that is best in youth, but so many of them gone already), still their example and memory are a very great help to us all, and we know they did grand service for the Empire and for the cause of humanity.

They cannot be said to be really dead, and as time passes by and we can see these big events from farther off and more distinctly, we shall also see these men, their lives and their heroism more clearly and truly than we see them now.

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(From Lt.-Col. C. M. PERREAU, *Commandant, Royal Military College, Kingston*)—

I cannot express to you and Mrs. Van der Smissen the sorrow and sympathy I feel for you both and the members of your family in the loss of your most gallant son, Victor. I knew him so well here and had such a personal regard for him that I feel his loss keenly. He was the ideal type of Cadet, manly, straightforward, and popular with everyone, and his loss will be felt very deeply by all those who were with him here. I may tell you and I think you know, that I was anxious to get him on my Staff here, and this will show you how highly I thought of him.

It was like him to instantly recognize his duty and go to the front and, although he has been called upon to make the supreme sacrifice, his example and memory will never die and his record will be handed down to the future generation of Cadets.

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(From Miss OLIVE GAVILLER, *of the Canadian Convalescent Home for Officers, near Dieppe, France*)—

. . . While we have been here, so many officers, both Canadians and English, have told me over and over again how splendid he (Victor) was at the front; always bright, calm and fearless, and so popular among his men. There has not been a Canadian here that has not told me about the wonderful work he did; most probably you know this, but I wanted you to know that even over here he was loved and admired.

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(From Mrs. ADAM BALLANTYNE, *Toronto*)—

. . . I don't wonder that his men loved him; how could you help it? Always so sweet-tempered and unselfish, I always think if my boy grows up like Victor, I would be quite happy.

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(From D. W. OLIVER, *Esq., London Manager of the Bank of Montreal*)—

Please allow us to express to you our deepest and sincerest sympathy in your irreparable loss. Your son was undoubtedly one of the finest officers in the Canadian Contingent, and was beloved by the officers of the division, his regiment and also the men, especially those in his own company; he is spoken of most highly.

AT DUTY'S CALL

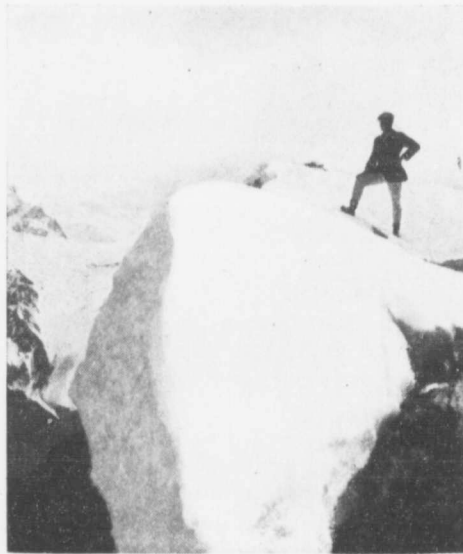
(From the Commandant, Royal Military College of Canada)—

IN MEMORIAM

OF YOUR VERY GALLANT SON.

R.M.C. KINGSTON, 1916.

Lo ! still for him high service waits.
God did not give that martial soul
To end at last in nought ;
That steadfast, soldier-heart was not
For this brief life alone—
'Tis as a soldier he will stand
Before the Great White Throne.



ON THE SUMMIT OF THE OBERROTHORN.

1916.

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