Patrick Robert Hardinge,

The Cameronians.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

DIARIES & LETTERS

— OF —

PATRICK ROBERT HARDINGE,

BORN, FEBRUARY, 1893,

KILLED, JUNE, 1916.

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1917.

PATRICK ROBERT HARDINGE, the only child of the Hon. Robert Hardinge and Mrs. Robert Hardinge, was born on February 11th, 1893. He was educated at Tyttenhanger Lodge and took a scholarship into Wellington College. From there he went in 1910 to Magdalen College, Oxford. He took Honours in History and was gazetted to the Cameronians the day War was declared. A fortnight later he went to the Front and was wounded on December the 21st, 1914. He returned to France on April the 12th, 1915, was promoted a Captain in May; and on November the 1st became temporary-Major and was sent as second in command to the 10th Scottish Rifles. He commanded the Regiment in action in January, 1916, for which he was awarded the Military Cross. He died from wounds received at the Hohenzollern Redoubt, on June 17th, aged twenty-three.

He was an all-round sportsman, a keen rider to hounds, and was well known with the Heythrop and Cotswold packs.

The following are extracts from his letters and diaries which were not written with any idea of publication and are, for that reason, incomplete.

THE LOST SEASON

(A POINT OF VIEW).

Farewell to the stretches of pasture and plough;
And the flicker of sterns through the gorse on the hill;
And the mulberry coats, there, alone with them now;
To cheer when they're finding, and whoop at the kill.
Farewell to the vale and the woodland forlorn,
To the fox in his earth, and the hound on the bench.
Unheard is the pack and unheeded the horn,
So loud and so clear are the bugles of French.

For the line of blood hunters is gone from the stalls;
And the host of good men to the millions that meet;
For grim is the huntsman, in thunder he calls,
And continents roar with the galloping feet.
There's a country to cross where the fences are steel;
And though many must fall and the finish be far,
There is none shall out ride them in heart, hand and heel,
Who have gone hard and straight in the "Image of War."

(With acknowledgments to Mr. Punch.)

Extracts from Diaries.

1914 August, 1914.—I was not very long mobilising. I got my commission the day war was declared and spent the next few days flying to London to get uniform and flying to Oxford to take a degree. I felt I might face the enemy better thus prepared. I blissfully imagined I was to go out with the 1st Battalion, but it was not to be, and I had to go to Hamilton.

On the 19th I took a draft of 30 men over to Nigg, a fearsome train journey of about fourteen hours, and did not find things very downy on arrival, the mess being the vestry of a church and the food indifferent. Was received very hospitably by the 3rd Battalion. Nigg wasn't a bad sort of place, extremely pretty with lovely views over the sea; but rather far removed from civilisation and with nothing to do but entrenching. However, being on the square, I didn't do much digging, and Gordon and I went down to Cromarty most afternoons and ate enormous teas at the Royal Hotel, crossing the sea by the ferry. I had a grand ride one day in Tate's motor boat, travelling at an appalling speed —a most exhilarating feeling about it. Amid much disgust, I saw Hewlitt's draft go off, but only had four days to wait. At last I was awakened by the welcome news and, much to the indignation of Tommy Dodd, the ninety men were handed over to me.

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On the 30th we started at 7 p.m. On way to station saw Gerald Hay signalling to me, he having arrived at the 3rd Batt. Black Watch. I travelled down with Nolan, B.W., who wrote immense numbers of letters all the way and seemed to be disposing of half the landed property in Ireland. The journey contained plenty of incident and was quite a Royal Progress, as anywhere along the line where human habitations existed, the people were lined up cheering and waving Union Jacks. On arrival at Southampton, Nolan, Lumsden and I went and foraged for provisions and, knocking up Hudson's managed to get a few. Dined quite well at the chief hotel and embarked about midnight.

September.—Went along well for first twenty-four hours; then fog came on and we were fog bound for nearly two days. Rate only 4 knots; hence much behind time; private provisions ran short and no arrangements made to feed us on board. Nolan induced a reluctant steward to provide a few things for two shillings a day. A fellow in the 9th on board, called Graham, on Staff of Duke of Connaught in Canada. He is in charge of 850 miscellaneous horses. Reached St. Nazaire, the Base. A string of ships waiting to put ashore. Orders soon came to go on to Nantes, up the Loire. Lovely journey through rich grass meadows with wonderful keep. It is the great horse breeding district of France. Arrived at Nantes about 7.30 p.m., evidently arrival not expected, but Staff Officer and Naval Commander turned up at last and the latter told us we were to disembark the horses and take them up to the racecourse; then return to the ship and go back to St. Nazaire. What an order!! It was about 11 o'clock before we got the horses disembarked; we only had 300 Highlanders and 100

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Cameronians to take them along and some of the Highlanders were frightened to death of them. No one knew where the racecourse was: we were told it was three miles, and some of the fools started riding up into the town before we had got all the horses out. I seized hold of the Sergeant of Police, a stage Frenchman, and tried to explain our difficulties; but it was my first real essay at practical French and not a success; however, I managed to get him to put one of his men at my disposal and he and I led the ludicrous procession of lumbering uncontrolled horses and helpless men up through the town. The way was a very twisty one, and quite a number of horses managed to get loose, both by accident and design; however, at last we, at the head of the procession, reached the "Petit Paul." It was a sandy plain and the racecourse a grass track with birch fences, but there was a capital stand where the officer in charge of affairs was living. After a protracted hunt I found him; it was now about 1 p.m.; and he was a dishevelled object in pyjamas and a British Warm. He explained with some heat that he had 50 men, no fodder, no halters, and no real place to tie the horses up. However, there it was! The horses kept coming in and as they came in, they were turned loose and left to look after themselves. Then Nolan, Lumsden and I decided that since the last horse was not likely to arrive for several hours, our best course was for everyone to make his own way back to the Armenian as quickly as he could. Accordingly, we started back. What sights we saw! Highlanders tumbling off their horses and running after them, picking themselves out of the gutters and jumping up again; the inhabitants of Nantes in every variety of night attire, standing at their doors with bottles and jugs of wine; groups of

1914 Highlanders proclaiming their desire for tobacco and wine in no uncertain voice to groups of ecstatic Frenchmen who were marvelling at their kilts; drunken soldiers, and some sober ones too, but not very many. It was all like a nightmare, but a ludicrously absurd nightmare in spite of it all, and one couldn't help howling with laughter the whole time. I think Caran d'Ache could have done justice to the scene. When we got back to the Armenian, only about half the men were on board. I was so dead tired that I went straight to bed.

September 5.—Black woke me up and said he was going to shop in Nantes, and as Nolan and Lumsden were also in the town trying to beat up stragglers, I should have to stay in charge of the ship. I still felt very rotten, but got up and went out: found that one of my men had fallen overboard trying to dodge the picket by slipping down a rope. Went to see him and found him still as drunk as a lord. By 4 p.m. managed to get all the men back, except about thirty, of which fifteen were, of course (!) mine. Started back to St. Nazaire and got back there just too late to get in with the tide, so I had a good night's sleep.

September 6.—Waited till 11 a.m., having hoisted signals, but as these were disregarded, Nolan, chief officer and I went ashore in a boat and tackled the disembarkation officers, who were rather surprised to see us, the Armenian being noted as having passed en route for Southampton! However, we persuaded them to send a tug to take us off. Nolan and I had an immense déjeuner at the Hotel Bretagne. Landed at last about 3.30, and after making various arrangements, arrived at rest camp about 5.45. Things much in confusion

1914 here, scarcity of tents, men have to sleep à la belle étoile . Black and I got hold of a summer house in a little garden belonging to a French reservist and passed a capital night. Next day spent trying to straighten matters out with help of Sergeant Metcalfe: men and officers confined to camp, but officers can get passes out. Horrible night: poured with rain, summer house leaked abominably; got very wet and was glad to see morning light. Shared tent, after summer house misadventures, with Purves, in 93rd. Early morning bathe in the sea, then route march, lunch, another route march; then if possible, a journey to St. Nazaire for dinner, usually taken at a most attractive little café in the Rue du Bois Savary, with the cheapest and most delicious dishes; or else, in a mess composed of Colonel Nason, Major Lowndes, Captain Haig, Townshend and myself. Except for tediousness of route marching and the vexations of bad weather, things went very well. Returning one night from town, met a man who wanted to know the whereabouts of R.A.M.C. Colonel; showed me a message for him and saw the name of Hardinge at the bottom of it. On investigation I discovered that it was a cable from Uncle Charlie to enquire nature and progress of Ed.'s wound. I hadn't the vaguest notion he had been wounded; but went down to Australian hospital next day to see him, and found him getting on very well. He said it was near Bergy, and the first time he had gone into action. He was fighting a dismounted action with his troop, trying to save the Munsters who were receiving a German attack with a blinding hailstorm straight in their faces. He was wounded by a machine gun from the top window of a cottage just below the elbow joint of the right arm, and suffered agonies on his return journey, losing a lot of blood.

ARMENTIÈRES. 1915.

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(I hear—September 26th—that he has got the D.S.O.)

September 14.—The weather has been getting worse, and to add to our discomforts, they moved our Brigade over to the other side of the road: then came immense floods bringing with them quagmires and the perpetual drip of the canvas.

September 17.—At last my turn came and our train, with about 1,400 troops on board, left St. Nazaire about 8 p.m. I managed to slip off and buy some bread for the men and biscuits and sardines for myself. Complete ignorance as to our destination. Only two other officers in my carriage, so comparative comfort sleeping at night. Train crawled very slowly, first stop Sable: discipline on the train something awful: directly we neared any station, the whole front of the train (mostly Irish regiments!) leaped like one man from their trucks, and made a B. line for the refreshment room or any place where drink could be got. They were followed in close succession by the officers who spent their time in breaking bottles and driving men to their seats.

September 18.—Destination first believed to be Villeneuve St. George, reached this afternoon of 18th but passed through it. At dark, two R.A.M.C. officers with bundles of luggage and provisions scrambled into carriage and being now five officers, four valises and two packing cases, passed a thoroughly uncomfortable night.

September 19.—Morning of 19th arrived at Neuilly where sound of guns first heard. Met many trains of wounded on our way up. Finally disembarked at Braisne. 19th Brigade reinforcements received orders to proceed at once to Septmont

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where they would be billeted. From this moment my campaign really begins.

After bagging captured German motor lorry to carry baggage, we started to march about 6.30. Got guide from the Maire, a very worried individual. All went well for an hour: guide then left and Purves went off to get "local" from Greys and 12th H.Q. Pitch dark, but he carried a small lantern in front of column. Roads in fearful condition and wrong turns, so progress very slow. Did not reach Septmont till 1 a.m. On arrival were met by Gunner Officer who informed us that Welsh Fusilier Colonel couldn't find billets for his own men, so we should have to sleep outside. No sign of valises and ground very wet, but fortunately fine. Nothing but Burberry to sleep in, and was so cold had to get up and walk about, and only got an hour's sleep.

September 20.—Went down to village about 5.30, and found lorry with valises had been there all night, had arrived about eleven, but couldn't discover our whereabouts. Capital breakfast of tea, bread and jam inside lorry on straw. Cleared up about 9 and acting on orders, paraded to march off to trenches to join our units; but 19th Brigade stopped at last minute and told to await arrival of Brigade who were coming to billet in village that night. Met Wood, Cameronian Quartermaster, and had big lunch with him at château in village. Spent boring afternoon and evening waiting for arrival of Cameronians. They arrived so late that had to sleep out again. Nearly shot by one of my own men who thought, owing to my electric torch, that I was a German spy using flash signals.

September 21.—Marched into billets at Septmont and handed that infernal draft over at last.

1914 After a good breakfast (the first eaten in comfort for some time) and in the light of a fine day, Septmont is a very pretty village, with a beautiful XIIth Century château, inhabited by a stern baron, who has a chilly greeting for intruders and regards the rapacities of the English troops as equal to those of the Germans. My billet very comfortable indeed, for though we sleep five in a room, I am very comfortable in my sleeping bag and valise spread on straw. Posted to B Company; Company Commander, Captain Lee.

October 3.—We have been living absolutely the life of a vegetable. In the morning we do work by Companies, either trench digging, route marching, or platoon training; in the afternoon and evening we amuse ourselves in various rather unsuccessful ways, such as walking out to forage for eggs, hacking on transport horses, sleeping, or beating for Major Oakley and Capt. Riddell Webster.

Compelled to rise every morning at 4.30 in order to stand to arms between five and six. The idea of it all is that, should we be called upon to move up to reinforce or to fall back, this is the hour when we should most likely be needed, and so, at this hour, we are to be found ready.

A story, practicaly official, is bruited that the French Marseilles and Toulon Divisions were called up to take part in Alsace fighting, but on battlefield they refused to attack, saying their job was coast defence only. Next morning 400 officers and men were shot and remainder told that the French guns were trained on them and if they refused to attack, would mow them down. They charged like lamplighters.

1914 Our Battalion although it has not lost a single officer or man killed and only a few wounded and missing, has had great experiences: apparently it formed the rearguard of the British Army at Le Cateau and had the narrowest of shaves of being wiped out.

Every day one sees fresh casualties in the paper. Up to date, four of my Oxford friends have been killed. Volly Heath, Inigo Jones, Gilbert Houldsworth and Geoffrey Polson. I see, too, that Christie Miller and Cakes Banbury are both casualties. How it recalls memories of old "Sprinkleme": never saw him but he was a real good 'un, and never out of the first flight at Sandown and Aldershot. It really did one good to see him ride. I remember Banbury so well, always riding old Patrick at Oaksey. Well, seeing all this, I am fairly disgusted with myself: here are things being done and people one knows doing them and a real chance to do something, and here we are vegetating in billets. Its a funny experience to go out shooting partridges and pheasants while, over the range of hills, less than four miles away, they are shooting men, and the sound of the guns reminds you of it all day long.

October 5.—At last comes the order to move. The Company had finished digging and practised occupying the trenches, which we were due to hold in reserve: they were quite the last word in trenches with roof-planked shelters to contain supports. At twelve o'clock we got the order to return to the village at once, received somewhat sceptically as such things had happened before and without result; but this time it was genuine. Our orders were to march at dusk. Had a capital bath in a two-foot tub; then we ate all the food we could

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lay hold of by way of reserve, paraded and marched off at 7.30 p.m. A few drops of rain falling, but fine afterwards and a good moon. Moved fairly steadily, though at the usual night-march shamble, about S.E. through Ecury, passed through Hartennes, Headquarters of 2nd Cavalry Division. Then began to take a S.W. course, and at 1.30 a.m. bivouacked in a wood just outside village of St. Remy. Rose and I discussed Hobbs and Rousseau part of the way. Near St. Remy we met about 25 lorries filled with French troops seeming to be travelling in a Westerly direction. Evidently there is something in the air.

October 6.—After a quiet day spent in wood (but I was outside on the road with pickets stopping all civilians—rather a cold job), we moved at 7.30 p.m. Went at quite a nice pace in spite of being rear Batt. of Brigade, moving by St. Remy to Corcy, thence to Fleury and on to Villers-Cotteret. We passed through this beautiful old town in direction of Crepy but turned N.W. just outside and reached Vez about 4 a.m.

We passed through the most beautiful country imaginable. Just near Fleury saw the most wonderful meteor: we all gasped in amazement: personally I looked on it as an omen. Had had so little sleep that I was dreadfully sleepy on march. Halted for half an hour near Fleury and I fell so fast asleep on the roadside that I had to be forcibly awakened and was very nearly left behind. Capt. Lee thinks we shall march to Compiègne to-night. It is fairly certain that a turning movement on German right flank is the objective; hence the secrecy of our movements, our concealment in woods during the day time, even the transport waggons being covered with branches; the whole thing

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being the result of the reconnoitring abilities of aeroplanes in modern warfare.

October 8.—Slept very little yesterday as we got the order to move at 5.30. Brigade moved off at 5.45, taking a direction slightly North of East, following the course of the river d'Automne. We passed through Le Presson, thence to Pontdron and then through a line of villages, chief of which were Béthancourt and Ourroy. Finally, at Béthisy-St.-Pierre, we left the road and went into our woods. Our bivouac was at first sight very promising; a long and very deep dingle; one would have thought that it would give the shelter of a house: got my great coat and blanket and prepared for a rare night; but the cold was simply piercing. Was beautifully warm down to my waist, but from there onwards bitterly cold. Discovered this morning there had been several degrees of frost. That our objective is against the German right seems pretty certain, and we are due to start about midday and march about six miles to entrain—but whither? Am eagerly awaiting parcels from home, but they don't arrive: woollen gloves are the most urgently needed. Salmonson bagged Capt. Lee's blanket last night and was fairly well cursed this morning.

October 10.—Oxford terms should have begun yesterday. Left Béthisy-St.-Pierre by two o'clock in the afternoon and did a short march to Pont-St.-Marence, about 8 miles. Everyone believed we were going to entrain there, but we didn't. On the way, being rear platoon of Battalion, I saw no less than five men from my late draft fall out, just as I imagined they would. Passed through Pont-St.-Marence, turning to the right, our direction thus

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changed from due West to due North, and bivouacked in field outside. Rooke and I went off and got some wood, milk and jam from a farmer. Very cold night. I fortunately, insisted upon taking out my valise and so had a capital night's sleep, but those who slept with a waterproof sheet and a blanket fared ill.

Marched to Estrées-St.-Denys: there we bivouacked: had a grand wash in the wood and an enormous lunch; then heard that A, C, and D Companies were to entrain at 6.30, and ourselves at 10.30 p.m. Rooke left behind to come with us with 30 men of C Company. Had dinner with Lee and Rooke at Inn near station. Interpreters were both there boozing away. Lee presented me with pair of woolly gloves which were no small joy to me. Rather a good dinner, and entrained in nice time. Men 40 in a truck, poor devils! Lee, self, Newman, Rooke and Salmonson managed to get capital first-class carriage; slept awfully well; destination utterly unknown. Passed through Amiens about 4 a.m. and got a cup of soup. Found we were travelling in direction of Boulogne. On reaching Etaples, the Staff Officer met us saying we had a further three hours journey.

Situation as follows:—Strong force of Germans endeavouring to get round French left flank as far North as Lille and St. Omer; the only force opposed to them are French Reservists; hence our job is to go and hold them off at all costs to the last man; so it seems that we are properly in for it at last.

October 12.—The train crawled very slowly in the direction of Boulogne but branched off in the direction of St. Omer. This we believe to be our

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destination, but owing to a bridge blown up by the Germans, we detrained at Blendecques, and marched N.W. to St. Omer, whither we heard that the remainder of the Battalion had preceded us. Marched into town but could get no news of them. Considerable confusion resulting from removal of major part of British Army to the left wing. Lee went off to find Brigade Headquarters. Inhabitants ladling out drink as usual. Made a few purchases, chief of which were a pair of mittens and a little chocolate for the men. Fortunate arrival of Major Oakley who informed us of Battalion's whereabouts. Marched out in Easterly direction and arrived at Renescure, where rest of Battalion was billeted. No billets for officers or men, so both had to bivouac. Had a capital dinner at picturesque old château serving as officers' mess. Next morning marched about three miles slightly South by East to Lynde; entrenched ourselves, barricaded road and placed outposts, Uhlans being reported on road to Hazebrook. No fires allowed, so could hardly see to eat anything for dinner. Made frequent visits to outposts during night. Marched off to join Brigade at Ebblinghem, and turning Eastward, found ourselves part of A.G. to 6th Division. Moved out east, towards Hazebrook; had alarm of Uhlan patrols, so magazines charged and swords fixed, but they did not appear. On arrival in Hazebrook heard stories of slaying of children by Uhlans, and positive assertions that they were at Pradelle. Much gun firing heard, no breakfast and little food or sleep last night.

October 14.—Moved on to village called Borre where we believed we should billet, but such not being forthcoming, bivouacked in a very nice field. Coming through village,

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saw Captain Tanner riding at the head of his squadron, looking extraordinarily immaculate and fearfully pleased with himself. Heard subsequently that the 19th had had a brush with some Uhlans, shooting five and capturing one—a capital little affair. Slept first rate in my valise except that Money threw a pillow at my head because I snored so heavily. Paraded at the gentlemanly hour of 7.45, marched on to Rouge Croix. There we heard we had become part of the 6th Division, replacing a Brigade which had been badly cut up. It appears that they took up an outpost line, being told that the French were supporting their right. At dawn the mist cleared away, and large columns of troops were seen on their right, sure enough, but they were Germans, not French!!

Weather very miserable, pouring with rain: halted in a ploughed field so couldn't sit down and impossible to keep dry. Very heavy gunfiring was in progress. About 1.30 p.m. we heard that the German left extended beyond Les Trois Femmes through Vieux Berquin to Neuf Berquin; hence a renewed attack was to be made, very heavily supported by artillery. Batteries galloped up from all directions and were mainly pushed forward in the direction of Bleu, whence the greater resistance was offered. About 7 o'clock, billets in Rouge Croix were announced and we were marched off and told that we should be rested for a few hours and then attack at dawn. Men allotted to their barns and officers to the farm house; slept on a bed though unfortunately not inside it; so with a prospect of really getting a go at the Germans at last, went to bed extremely happy. Up at 3.30, breakfasted and ready at 5.30 to receive orders. They never came! Our expected attack at dawn never came

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off; for the enemy had been successfully driven back from Bleu. At about 8 o'clock the Colonel arrived, bringing the intelligence that the Germans were being heavily reinforced and that instead of attacking we should probably have to entrench ourselves —a cheerful prospect! Meanwhile we await our orders.

October 16.—At about 11 o'clock they arrived with inopportune swiftness, for as we fell in on the road it was pouring with rain. We then heard that an attack was really contemplated, and the 19th Brigade was to take part in it; but as the frontage allowed us was so small, only the R.W.F. and 93rd would get a chance of attacking; the Cameronians, strange to relate, remaining in reserve! However, there was quite a good chance of our seeing a bit of fun, so I marched off with a certain anticipation. Our objective was Bailleul, which the 6th Division was to attack frontally by Meteren, and the 4th if necessary to turn the Germans' northern front.

October 18.—We reached Meteren about three o'clock, but when we got there we found the birds had flown, so off we went in pursuit. Marched into Bailleul: traces to be seen everywhere of Germans having left in immense hurry, leaving everything in utter confusion. Marched through the town in the direction of Nieppe, but owing to heavy engagement of Cavalry in front of us with Uhlan patrols and dusk coming on, we turned back and bivouacked in a ploughed field. Slept in straw, but no blankets. Men slept with magazines charged and fixed swords, and we with our accoutrements. R.W.F. on our left had a bit of a scrap and killed ten Germans. About midday a mail came out: to my intense joy I got a letter and parcel from M, also let-

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ters from Gambles, Dick B, and Mimi. Gambles writes to say that Magdalen Hall has been turned into a territorial billet and that only a thousand undergraduates are going to be at Oxford this term. Recalled off observation post about 4 o'clock and told we were going off to billets in Bailleul. Found very promising billets had been selected, but to our horror, we were marched into a field and told to be ready to march off in an hour's time! Awful blow! Officers repaired to the estaminet and had coffee, bread and butter. It was a delightfully clean little place and even possessed a bath, I believe. Fancy what we missed! At 8 o'clock we marched off: very dark: was feeling fearfully sleepy and could hardly keep my eyes open or prevent myself from falling down on the march from sleep. However, we only went about six miles and bivouacked at Steenwerk. Very thick mist, no blankets, no straw. None of us could sleep at all and were mostly up and about.

Owing to my early rising (!) I got an excellent breakfast. Mist still very thick, a pretty miserable sort of morning, the kind when one would have fears of hunting. Did a very cold wash. Saw the Church of England Padre returning with an Uhlan prisoner —very enterprising of him. Mail arrived and turned out to be an immense one. I got two splendid parcels, one from M., and one from Aunt D. Orders about 11.30 to be ready to march about 12.45. Marched by Steenwerk, Neuve Eglise, Kemmel and Dikebusch to Vlamertinghe, a distance of about 13 miles. Arrived 7.15. No billets provided for B Company officers; but Lee, acting with great decision, went into a house and refused to move from it. The house was beautifully clean, but we were slightly cramped for room. Slept with

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great comfort in my valise. Newman and Salmonson provided the usual pantomime by disputing as to who had most of the bed.

Got up about 6 next morning. Company messes once more instituted; certainly a great relief to get away from Headquarters. There it was nothing but a perpetual wrangle: one was eternally uncomfortable for one was either under the suspicion of taking too much room or too much rations!

This, Sunday, morning something very original took place. The Battalion was ordered to practise a movement in motor 'buses, with a view to their being employed as a mobile column. Such a thing was hitherto unheard of in the British Army. Received the news with much joy as there seemed a prospect of our seeing the maximum of fighting with the minimum of effort. We accordingly paraded about 11 and the 'buses began to arrive. Regular London ones with Dewar's White Label, Maple's Easy Chairs, and Potash and Perlmutter on them. We entrained on them with very little effort, 25 men per 'bus, and went for a ten-mile joy-ride, throroughly appreciated by the men. Rate pretty slow, about 10 miles an hour, but a considerable advance on the pace of infantry.

October 19 (Monday).—The only order received is that we are to be ready to move at half an hour's notice. The weather is very fine and pleasant. The sound of the cannon's roar is far removed and in its quaint Dutch way, all seems peaceful.

For the first time for ages—I can't think since when—I rose at the luxurious hour of 7.15! and

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washed and breakfasted. Am orderly officer, but fortunately under present circumstances, the duties are pretty well nominal.

October 21.—All this peace was rudely interrupted by the arrival of an orderly telling us to move off at 1.15—just an hour's notice. We gulped down some food hurriedly and spoilt what would have been a most excellent lunch. The great question then was, were we going to move in motor 'buses? It was fortunately soon decided in the desired manner and the arrival of the first 'bus about 2 p.m. was heralded by that of the Radical Whip, Geoffrey Howard in his Rolls Royce. We got into our motor 'buses nice and quickly; we were then told our route and discovered, much to our satisfaction, since it was about 20 miles, that whereas we were going to ride there at our ease, the rest of the Brigade were going to walk Progress was slow at first owing to various stoppages, and we didn't spin past the Brigade exactly at the pace we wanted to! We travelled back by Kemmel, Neuve Chapelle and Steenwerk. Just after the last named, we encountered a motor supply column on a narrow and bad road and had to get out of our 'buses to pass. Everything was all right till we got to Estaires; but there we had to halt in the village until a bridge was repaired, and unfortunately, French supply trains and large bodies of French Cavalry chose the same moment to pass through: the result was rather a block and confusion. However, the bridge being able to bear us, we went on about 8 o'clock and arrived at Laventie, our destination, about 8.20.

Next day (Tuesday), got a sudden order to march in the direction of La Boutillerie, which was

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only weakly held, about 4.30. Got to Fromelles: very heavy firing heard ahead in the direction of Lille. We heard that the 6th Division was on our left, but the front was weakly held by Chasseurs d'Alpins. Bivouacked in a field outside village; men slept with equipment and rifles beside them, with swords fixed: heavy rain. Walsh and I made a capital fire and had a decent sleep: firing heard all night. Marched off at 7. Direction roughly that of Bois Grenier. A good deal of firing heard ahead.

Our position extends in an outward curve from La Boutillerie to Fromelles; the Cameronians being on the left, the Middlesex and 93rd in the centre, and the R.W.F. on the right. On our left is the 6th Division, on our right the 3rd Army; the latter is heavily engaged. The 93rd at Le Maisnil were slightly engaged this morning, but being reinforced by the Middlesex, repelled the attack. Meanwhile we are lying in a ditch by the roadside; the reason for this uncomfortable position is that a battery has opened fire just to our left front and the usual result is that the German fire is drawn to this particular locality.

October, 22.—At last I really have something definite to report. I really have been engaged and with a vengeance. Quite a short time since I wrote these words, Jack rode up and said: "The General wants a Company to go up and support the Middlesex." Lee said: "That's us," and we fell in at once. Jack himself cantered up with us and directed us against the village of Le Maisnil. When about 500 yards from the village, we came under shell fire, and we could see quite twenty shells a minute bursting in the village. I turned

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and said: "They are having hell there, aren't they Sergt. Bury?" little thinking how soon I was to test the truth of my remark. When about 300 yards from the village we formed from single file into lines of platoons. Halted just in front of village and Newman sent into it to protect left flank. But as his orders were of the vaguest he sent word by C.S.-M. Cox to ask what to do. The latter construed it into a request to be reinforced. I, on hearing this, took half my platoon and went into village to reinforce him. Found Newman's platoon lying in a kind of farmyard. Shells very soon began to burst all round, and one of his platoon was hit in the stomach.

October 23.—Lee now came up and ordered us to take up a position on our left. He directed Newman's platoon first, who doubled off rather quickly and when I had got my half platoon into the street and up to the cross roads, there was no sign of them, and Lee having left me, I hadn't the vaguest idea where to go to. Up a street to my left I saw a barricade of wagons; I doubled my men up to it and told some of them to get down behind it and the rest to get down into the ditch to its left. Shells began to burst in earnest; Sergt. Bury pointed out some of the men retiring through a gap in the hedge so, fearing to be cut off, I retired on the main cross roads. There I providentially met Lee; he showed me the way Newman had gone, and told me to bring my men on after him. He and I walked on in front. At the cross roads, there was a Sergeant in the 93rd doubled up with pain: Sergt. Bury, though I didn't know it at the time stayed behind and carried him back. Meanwhile Lee and I met with what I can justly call perfect hell. Our way lay by the church, the cus-

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tomary mark for German gunfire: while we were going down, quite 15 shells burst straight over our heads. It would have made one roar with laughter at any other time to see us doubling and twisting out of their way. The fact that Lee and I were both unhit I can only attribute to very bad shells; however, the men behaved exceptionally well and we got out of the village in quite good order. We then inclined to the right and I extended on Newman's right, facing up the road and towards the right. There the shells began to find us too; worse still, there was heavy barbed wire in our line of retreat: Newman and I turned back to find a way out. Then I turned back towards the platoon and at that moment two shells burst, as I thought, right over my head; I ducked pretty quick and was rather frightened: one of their shrapnel bullets struck Sergeant Brown on the head and he had to be taken back to the rear. At this moment the Middlesex appeared; there were about two Companies of them; most of the men were crouching in ditches by the roadside and had made the most hideous little pieces of head cover of hay and straw to protect themselves! We decided to extend along the line of the road to cover their retirement if necessary: it was now about 6 o'clock and darkness had quite set in. We were pretty safe from infantry as there was another Company of the Middlesex in front of us, but still got a few shells. Hayward soon rode up with orders to close on the the road preparatory to taking up a position for the night further on. I discovered, to my annoyance, that Graham had been hit on the ankle, thus leaving me without a servant: also, about four other men in the half platoon; but none killed save Sergt. Staines, in Newman's platoon. The Brigade now joined us and we retired slowly in the direction

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of La Boutillerie. After about three quarters of an hour's march we halted and took up our positions for the night. B Company's position was in a large dyke providing a natural shelter, which just about took our numbers nicely. Lee sent me out with a reconnoitring patrol; things were quite quiet in front and we returned unscathed. Slept quite decently by snatches; the left hand post and a few men pulled off during the night, but fancy it was at nothing. Stood to arms at 5 a.m. of course, but nothing happened. About 6.15, General and Staff came up and made reconnaissance: about half an hour later, orders to retire. The R.W.F. came up to take our place, and the Cameronians, passing through La Boutillerie, took up their positions. We have to be very careful of our left flank since it is there that the 19th Brigade joins on to the 6th Division. As we lie in a dyke (i.e., No. 6 and 8 platoons united under the command of Capt Ritchie) our work was not to dig ourselves in, but to improve the dyke. A rise in the ground above prevents its being used as a fire trench: hence, our sole mission is should the Germans succeed in forcing our trenches, to charge them with bayonet, to which they have a notorious objection. We had the devil of a lot of shelling yesterday, but I fancy more from accident than design.

Soon after taking up our position I was sent off on my first reconnaissance; my orders were to locate the exact right of the 6th Division. Out I went with a few men and about the first person I came across was John Francis. His regiment, York and Lancasters, was on the extreme right of the 16th Brigade. I discovered at once that the right of this Brigade was really very weakly held; only a few platoons of the York and Lancasters; how-

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ever, the interval was not wide and they announced their intentions of joining on to our left as soon after dark as they could. I returned and reported to the Colonel: he then sent me back to Brigade Headquarters in the village of La Boutillerie to report to the General. I found him in a cottage with the Staff, chatting and smoking peacefully: he was very calm and unruffled, quite like a Hardinge! My report evidently tallied with his information, for after a few moments comparison with his sketch, he dismissed me and I underwent a brisk examination from the Staff, who wanted to know all sorts of things I couldn't tell them. As I came back by the road, felt several twinges of funk, as the bullets were whistling about pretty freely. Afternoon inclined to be wet; Ritchie and I sat and talked and slept quite peacefully. About 4 o'clock the usual tea-time cannonade began: I was sitting on the edge of the trench when one burst quite close in front and the shrapnel bullets came whistling past my hands. About 5.30, as there were several intervals in my platoon, I decided to close them in to the left a bit. This I proceeded to do: most of them were asleep and Corporal Eady seemed very difficult to wake up. After one or two shakes, the truth occurred to me and a match struck confirmed my suspicions. His head was covered with blood: he had evidently been struck with shrapnel during the afternoon and was stone dead. This is one of the incidents that make one think when one is unused to the gentle art of war. To be perfectly frank, I have not really been very much frightened by shell fire so far; it very seldom takes one unawares, one usually hears it coming and is prepared; but bullets rather put fear into me. They make a nasty noise, like a bird singing out of tune, and you never know where you are: they are all

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round you. However, if taken in the right spirit, you can put up with both of them. After this small disquisition I may mention that between 6 and 7 p.m. the Germans made, what seemed a pretty fierce attack all along the line, tremendous firing heard all round us; our artillery did jolly well, fairly plastered their lines of advance. I must confess I kept pretty well down in the trench during the attack; there were too many bullets flying over one's head to be pleasant. Still, I don't think I shall often have such a shave as when Ritchie and I were talking and a shell burst almost in the trench and interrupted conversation. We both felt the heat from the explosion. After the night attack, matters went quietly and got quite a nice bit of sleep. A bit of sniping early in the morning. About 6 a.m. Major Darling came up and told Capt. Ritchie that as poor Rose and Macallan were both missing, he would have to take over C Company, and that he must go up into their trench; and Capt. Becher would relieve him here. At the same time he told me to repeat my reconnaissance of previous day and see whether the 6th Division had effected the junction they had talked of. This time I went by myself, feeling much happier not to have men with me. I worked my way up level with C Company's farm house; there I found the expected trench, but it was a very small one. I marched in gaily and asked for the officer in charge: I was told that there was no such thing; more, that they had not seen an officer for days. I repeated this for about four trenches (the bullets were beginning to fly a bit) and discovered things to be as follows: From the road at intervals of 40 or 50 yards, there were four or five trenches; the first four contained a section each; they had no officer in charge; they did not even know where the trenches next to

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them were; they were running short of ammuunition: the fifth owned to having had an officer, but he had gone off early in the morning to see about rations and he had not come back. I had just grasped this rather deplorable state of affairs when I saw an attack being made on a trench about 200 yards to my left. Short, grey-coated figures ran forward through the roots, but in no kind of order; there seemed about fiftv or sixty that I could see. As they ran, they stopped to fire at intervals, some from the shoulder, some from the hip; they also cheered in very fine style: the only word I could distinguish was the word Truppen. As far as I could see they got within about 25 yards of the trench and then lay down in a dip firing. The men each side of me swore they had got into the trench, but I didn't believe it. I was longing to get a shot at them, but the angle was too oblique to fire: this also masked the fire of the men in the trenches; so, knowing the great value of what I had seen, I started making the best of my way back. When I got past the level of the farm house, I saw about ten Cameronians crouching in a ditch by the side of the cart track. I asked them what the devil they were doing. They said they belonged to one of the platoons that had gone out with Rose as a covering party. They had lost poor Rose, their two Sergeants and several men, and had several wounded. Four or five of these were with them in the ditch; but they had lost their heads so completely that, though their own trench was only 40 yards in front and the wounded were perfectly capable of walking, they had neither attempted to rejoin their Company (though they could have done so almost under cover) nor to send their wounded back to the dressing station. I sent one up to Capt. Ritchie with a note explaining things and sent bearers off to show

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wounded way back and pick up any more there were about. Got back safely to H.Q. and made report. Major Darling and I sent off immediately to Brigade H.Q. to report: got on signallers' push bikes (on mine was a fixed wheel so I took two crashing falls off it!) H.Q. had been moved further back since yesterday, but in spite of this there were plenty of shells bursting round it. We went into the room where Gen. Gordon was sitting with Hayward, Jack and Churchill. He seemed even calmer than usual! Major Darling told him I had made a reconnaissance, and the General told me to report. I told him what I knew, illustrating it on his rough sketch map. The General said to me: "Thank you very much for your admirable report." Tried to show gunner officer on the way back where to direct his fire to find Germans advancing on those trenches. There were some shells going over our trenches when I got back. Breakfasted well off bacon, bread, jam, rum and water: then heard that York and Lancasters had retired from their previous position and the Germans had occupied the line of trenches; but the 6th Divisional reserve was being brought up and we were to support with a Company of the 93rd. So I am anxiously hoping to hear that the trenches are retaken. A lot of shells flying over our trench. Had a capital lunch, as allowed men to make a small fire and had—joy of joys—some tea! Am feeling quite happy, except that I long for a wash. Am expecting we shall soon go up and relieve C Company in the firing line.

October 24.—But we haven't to-day. Things have been pretty quiet. The greatest excitement was between four and five, when the Jack Johnsons came flying over us. One burst only one wil-

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low's distance from the C.O.'s headquarters. Goodwin returned with a large bundle of straw in the middle of the night. Shave—with a bacon sandwich! and so things went swimmingly. Better still, I got a wash. The trenches are a very idle existence.

October 25.—But at the same time not a very restful one. Goodwin was sent up into the supporting trench of C Company with 15 of my men; so Capt. Becher and I were left alone in our trench; consequently, as one of us had to be awake all the time, I only got three hours sleep. There was a fairly heavy fight starting about 7: and lasting to about 8.30. As the result of it the Cameronians had two men slightly wounded. I must say a night attack is a tremendously impressive thing; it has all kinds of beginnings; either there is a single shot breaking the silence, or a regular volley of musketry rattles out, or it may be the hammering of a machine-gun that first gives the alarm. Then developments usually follow quickly; rifle after rifle speaks in all directions: presently, too, the big guns begin to join in, for they are the most sleepless of them all, and the sky is lit up by the frequent flashes of the ensuing burst. The great thing about a night combat is the experience of the troops taking part in it. With those unaccustomed to it, the volume of fire may spread to amazing proportions for wholly insufficient reasons, for they have not the nerve necessary for waiting till the psychological moment arrives; that is, the moment when they get a real view of the enemy. Too often they fire at distant flashes or vaguely, at an enemy's imagined whereabouts; for a night attack is a terrifying thing to the uninitiated. The firing seems to come from all round you; you cannot see clearly

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enough to distinguish the issue of the fight until the enemy is within rushing distance, or till his musketry ceases. But the old hand in the trenches treats a night attack with the utmost sangfroid: he reserves his fire; he does not lose his head, or send back wild reports. To confirm what I say about false alarms, I may say that two nights ago, we had a continuous rattle of musketry and deafening noise of cannon, and from reports received next day, no more than 10 Germans had been seen at all.

October 26.—We had the most appallingly wet night, and before morning the trench had become an absolute quagmire. I slipped and stumbled and fell into holes going my various rounds and plastered myself with mud. Very little sleep was possible and we all felt very miserable, bedraggled objects in the morning, the sole consolation to most of us being that the Germans must have been as badly off, if not worse. Becher proposes to capture the Kaiser and make him put in a week of the trenches with rain every night and no waterproof sheet or Burberry. Poor devil!

Heard from M. this morning. She seems dreadfully depressed and seems to think the Germans are going to invade England end of month. Also, very delighted to hear from Ronnie, who wrote a very charming letter. I think I can thoroughly realise how miserable Oxford must be now. It seems so quaint to think of Kenneth and Herbert and Guy all soldiering; they all seem to have taken to it in the most amazing way and to have become exceedingly military. A fearful lot of shelling this morning from the Jack Johnsons; about twenty of them came flying over the line of willows of communicating trench: two men killed.

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About 11.30 three Companies of Germans reported to be advancing against C Company, on left flank; but at present it seems a canard.

October 30.—Things have been happening apace: we are hanging on to a line here, four times its normal extent for our strength, e.g., whereas on the Aisne a Battalion held a frontage of three hundred yards, we are holding one here of about 1,200 yards, and the Brigade in proportion. The Germans have been making numerous attempts to break through—all at night—but are getting more than they bargained for; but last night they really had a big show on. The order of the day in our trench is that directly any heavy firing is heard to our front or left flank, we close on the right and stand to. Last night was a perpetual repetition of this and it was rendered many times worse by the appalling wet weather, the trench again becoming a quagmire.

October 31.—There are few more uncomfortable things than sitting in a very wet trench in a very cramped position with bullets whistling pretty close over your head. Anyhow, my sleep was considerably curtailed. On the 30th the Germans made their first really determined attack. Capt. Ritchie behaved in the most gallant manner. Determined to reserve his fire till the last moment and reap the greatest possible advantage therefrom, he drew his revolver and threatened to shoot the first man who fired without orders. Resolved to have complete control of the situation, he stood on the parapet of the trench and when he heard the Germans approaching, driving sheep in front of them (the method they frequently employ for a night attack) he waited until they were within 150 yards

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and then cried: "At the waiters! Rapid fire!" The result was most effective: about 40 Germans were killed and the Lord only knows how many sheep, and about 30 Germans wounded. Money, with machine-gun, did much execution. Ritchie was wounded in the thigh: at the moment he ordered "Fire" he fell back off the parapet. Two shells had been put into their farm house and they were followed rapidly by others: they had lost about 20 during the night in killed and wounded. When dawn broke, lines of German skirmishers were seen advancing against their left flank: men were being sniped at continually and the Germans were beginning to entrench themselves about 150 yards in front: but both in the Company and at H.Q. everybody was perfectly calm. Came up into firing line to relieve Newman with other half Company.

The General is awfully pleased with the Cameronians. He said to Major Darling, "I have never soldiered with your Battalion before, now I hope that I shall never soldier far from them again"; and in an official letter to the Colonel, "I wish to express my sincere admiration for the splendid spirit shown by all ranks of the 1st Cameronians."

November 1.—Made an early reconnaissance in the fog with L.-C. Grant, and got within 15 yards of the German trenches, and lay down watching a few men digging; but don't believe them strongly held in the day time. On our way back, captured (!) a field gun shield which had been left in their night trenches.

November 27.—There is a great gap in the entries; but I can't say much water has passed

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under the bridges since that date. We were relieved from our trenches at La Boutillerie on the 13th: we then had three days rest in billets at Bac-St.-Maur, and then returned to trenches again. This time we are just outside Armentières, East of that town and between it and a village called Frelinghem. This village the Seaforths actually held until they were shelled out of it by mortars and it is now in the hands of the Germans, though in a very battered condition. Its principle use in our days is to form cover for sniping. Our trenches are well sighted, with a nice field of fire of about 200 yards, and the Germans, with due regard to this fact, and because we have a fine wire entanglement in front, let us alone so far as attacks go. In fact the place has got the reputation of being the safest spot for 30 miles! A good deal of sniping takes place: our trenches are enfiladed from the brewery of the village which provides convenient cover for snipers, but they don't really trouble us a great deal: most of it takes place from a farm, just in front of our trenches, about 200 yards, and sometimes they are too close to be pleasant. We are going to be relieved by the R.W.F. in five days' time and go into reserve billets. Our night watches are now not very severe; we have got quite a nice hut in which a capital fire is kept going and the officer of the watch usually sits in front of this, only making periodical excursions outside. I feel that I am doing it all out of pure kindness of heart! as Major Darling told me at Bac-St.-Maur that I was to take on the transport, so by rights I should have left my Company; but the Brigade order having come that all transport officers are to rejoin their units, I see a bit of trench life all the same.

We have just heard to-day that the Russians have gained a great victory at Lodz. An advanced edition of the paper that the General had got said that 45,000 Germans had been captured. If this colossal number is correct, it can't help making some difference in the duration of the war. We spend most of our time speculating how long it is going to last and making wild bets about it.

November 30.—I hear we are going to be relieved in three or four days time—a jolly good thing too. The first lot has gone away on leave. Major Oakley is in command.

December 14.—Back in the dear old trenches again. We went into billets at Houplines from 3rd to 11th and then we relieved the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders. The night we came in was a most ghastly experience: the trenches were in a hopeless state, the platoon guides were such idiots that they took everyone by the longest way I came up early to take over. H.Q. bagged our dug-out and told Salmonson to get another one dug. He thought he'd be smart and took over their telephone shelter, digging them another place for a telephone. Result: I arrived, installed our belongings in the telephone shelter. It then came on to rain and the night was pitch black and the worst night imaginable for taking over trenches. Lee had hardly arrived, very late, when H.Q. put their own servants and orderlies into the telephone place and told us to go into a small dug-out recently inhabited by two stretcher bearers. Lee was furious and so was I, almost to the extent of being insurbordinate! Still, there was nothing to do but to make the best of it. The trenches were L shaped and nobody could make out their front or

where the enemy were. What a chance for the Germans to have attacked us! The next morning I received the news that every Second Lieutenant in the regiment had been promoted excepting myself, Hill and the Rankers. Cheery! Also, it poured with rain. So, for the first time in the campaign, I wrote a depressed letter home. However, this morning we hear rumours of a real move. The French artillery is extraordinarily active and is believed to be gaining ground on the Messines Ridge. The order has come to us to snipe the Germans as hard as we can, so all officers are turned on to "observing." This I enjoy immensely with a really good pair of glasses trained on to the right spot, one can have a lot of fun. This afternoon I did nothing more than just put a couple of "sighting" shots into a mined farm house which the Germans had walled-in with canvas. Our guns very active about 3 p.m., and shelled the line of German trenches to our left front in fine style.

December 15.—Another typical trench day; but luckily the rain has more or less held off. Had it pretty hot "observing" this morning. A sniper near the three gabled house, I think, put in twelve shots all round. I kept moving along the trench and back again, which was just as well as he put a couple just into the spot where my head had been and about half-a-dozen made the earth fly in front of me. Finally, one whizzed by about a couple of inches from my ear. At this timely moment, Salmonson arrived to relieve me. Our trenches take a most peculiar form just here in the shape of an L; and the German trenches conform to them. The left of the Brigade rests on the Lys at Frelinghem and runs rather East of South for the frontage of two Battalions; then near Houplines it bends S.W. at

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right angles for 300 yards, 150 of which is half B Company; then turns abruptly again and resumes its original direction. My bit of trench is in the last named section and it is infernally wet. One great disadvantage of being in the immediate vicinity of H.Q. is that when they are short of occupation, or feeling livery, they walk out and pick holes in one's trenches! At the present moment I am sitting in the "kitchen" keeping warm by our coke fire: unfortunately, coke is the most impossible stuff to get to light. Xmas is only ten days off. Won't it seem queer to spend it in the trenches?

[Here there is a break in the diaries for, on the 21st December, Lieutenant Hardinge was wounded and went to England, first to hospital in the Isle of Wight, then home on leave, then to Nigg. His diary is taken up on his return to France in April, 1915.]

1915

April, 1915.—On Monday, April the 12th, at 4.30 a.m., the good ship Antonia left Southampton bearing amongst others, Capts. Hyde Smith, Hunter, and Lieuts. Sim, Hardinge, Rooke and Maitland, of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). The crossing was sufficiently calm even for Rookie and myself; in fact I don't believe a single officer succumbed. When I got on board I went more or less straight to the smoking-room, and when I entered found a Second Lieutenant, holding forth to what the "Daily Mail" calls an animated circle. As I entered he turned towards me and I saw it was Harold Farquhar: he was taking out polo sticks for Hobber and the other fellows in the 2nd L.G.

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We all landed at Havre in safety and R. and I, who had both (for personal reasons!) deferred our morning meal till arrival, went straight off to déjeuner at the Hotel Tortoni. Afterwards I took him off to see Dick Briscoe, whom we found installed in rather nice "digs." I should think he's heartily sick of Havre, and no wonder. He has been there nearly five months, but its a far more sensible job for him to take on than joining the Army which he wouldn't be cut out for at all. Dick gave me tea at an excellent patisserie, where I ate so many Babas that I felt glad I hadn't another crossing to face. When R. and I went to the Base Commandant's office we saw Money's father, who fills some post represented by most of the letters of the alphabet: he was very civil and asked us to dinner; but we had to go on to Rouen at 6.19, so we had to refuse. Travelled up with one Balfour in the 60th—very nice fellow who also possessed the qualification of having a hamper stocked with eatables of a good many kinds, fizz, port and brandy. I drank his Giesler in M.'s collapsible cup with great gusto. Arrived in Rouen at 10 p.m. in pouring rain; we there hailed a decrepit cab and went off hotel-hunting: drew four coverts blank but found a seasoned fox in the fifth; i.e., we managed to get three very comfortable beds for the night. We spent most of yesterday getting things moved up to the camp at Bruyère, and traversing most of the streets of Rouen. At tea we had a long conversation with two rather charming French ladies; at least I did, as Rookie is not an expert. One of them had a Canadian friend from whom she had not heard for nearly three weeks: "Il n'a pas de parents: il n'a que moi, seulement": was what she said. I advised her to try Lord R. Cecil's bureau: she suggested that he had forgotten her. Of course

I said "No, impossible." But even Canadians are fickle. Dined with a very amusing Major Taylor, friend of R.'s father.

We arrived here in a large limousine taxi, about 10 p.m., and found the floor of our hut very hard to sleep on. You can judge the type of officer they have had here by the fact that Rookie and I were shown a large printed notice telling us we mustn't be seen with ladies of doubtful virtue, or make a noise in the lines after 10 p.m.

April 15.—An absolutely perfect day, just like this day last year, which was Burton I think. If only I were there again!!

April 19.—Here I am once more back with the Cameronians. I got the very welcome order to leave Rouen on the 17th, but leave Rookie behind, much to his disgust. We were an enormous train of re-inforcements, commanded by Jack Wingfield. I had a high tea with Balfour in Rouen before starting and the train went off at 6.45. I got to Steenwerk at 12.30 p.m. Found Wood's trap waiting for me at the station. It didn't seem like war a bit. The country looked green and peaceful with only a very occasional rumble of guns. It took about an hour's drive and we then arrived at the Battalion billet, just outside Erquinghem. The groom had just told me "This is B Company's billet, Sir," when I heard a shout behind me and saw Lee dashing up the road after my trap. I don't think I have ever known anyone so pleased to see me, or so perfectly charming as he was. He insisted on my coming into luncheon with them at once and immediately began bewailing the fact that he couldn't have me back in his Company, as he was

full up with officers. Just as I finished luncheon Major Darling rode up with the news that I was to go to D Company. I also heard that, ten days' before, they had had to appoint a transport officer, so had given the job to Wright. Imagine my feelings! However, I collected my remnants of cheerfulness and went off to Streaky Bacon Farm, where C and D Company officers are now quartered. The Battalion is now five days out and five days in; and goes back into the trenches on Tuesday.

This afternoon Lee, McClellan and I went for a very nice hack. I borrowed Wrightie's horse; went along the river bank towards Nieppe and had a very nice spin on the grass. Lee's mare and Wrightie's both moved well; then slowly back to Armentières, where we had tea at an excellent tea shop with lovely cakes. Armentières is much changed since I last saw it: then it was the exception, now almost the rule for shops to be open; then a few of the bolder inhabitants and an occasional Staff officer were the only people to be seen in the streets; now it has become a kind of fashionable promenade for all and every kind of officer; even has a Cinema and "The Follies." We saw Hobkirk and the Colonel: H. says the affair North of Messines is developing and the Colonel says the 8th Division contemplate another attack. We also hear that the 4th Division is expecting a move.

April 21 (Tuesday night).—Just back in the dear old ditches again; but, mon Dieu! what a difference! Before, in the dark days of November and December, we used to struggle knee deep in mud, into a channel of water, with a parapet between us and the Germans, which was continually falling in and which cost us infinite time and infinite

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trouble to keep in any kind of repair. Now, we follow a well beaten track, carefully marked out with white posts, which lead us to a real trench, an affair of planks and sand bags innumerable, with brick floors, deal rifle racks and every contrivance for comfort and convenience. In fact, in contrast to what I have been accustomed to, coming into these trenches is like coming into Harrod's Stores. Everything has become excessively scientific: instead of a muddy orderly dashing along preceded by shouts of "Gangway," a knock is heard at the door of the mess hut and a pink paper is handed in with the message, "fresh from the Buzzer."

April 24.—It is really far better being in the trenches now-a-days than out of them, excepting only for the fact that one can't get a ride. A most beautiful communicating trench (it seems almost an insult to call it that!) leads back to Bois Grenier. At its entrance it is flanked on either side by green tubs of evergreens, and is appropriately labelled Shaftesbury Avenue. Foster and I went out along this on the 21st and 23rd · I having succeeded in getting an afternoon off. It is so broad that Riddell Webster could get very nearly up to H.Q. on his bicycle. Anyhow, Foster and I having reached the end, thought we should like to see what was doing, so got up on the gunners' hayrick to observe. You get quite a good view from the top, from the Rue du Bois on one side, round nearly to La Boutillerie on the other. The English and German trenches seem only about 20 yards apart: the German trenches are generally conspicuous owing to the very white sand bags they use (and after all we have been told about concealment of trenches!!)

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Behind the English lines one can see little black dots of men walking about, and on both sides, smoke of fires rising: now and then a shell whistles over, and bursts perhaps over a house, perhaps over a line of trenches. It is quite a Dress Circle seat in fact. I came back and had tea with B Company. Lee was in great form and fed me off hard boiled eggs and potted meat. They have a very nice mess hut with plenty of room to sit, even a box in front of the stove for their pet cat.

I went out on reconnoitring patrol on 22nd with Sergeant Hill and Sergeant McGowan: my "enterprise" (this seems to be the stock phrase for it now-a-days) went off successfully, except that while endeavouring to get through our own wire entanglement I stept into the stream up to my knees. We got to about 150 yards of the enemy trenches and lay very quiet, but could discover no sign of activity whatever. When we got back I had to take a three hours' fatigue party out to dig a communicating trench. Yesterday on my walk with Foster, we tried to find a house to observe from: one we went into we found inhabited by a poor old woman and her daughter, who had been there since the beginning of the war. We both gave them five francs as they must be dreadfully in need of money; she regaled us with some café-au-lait and talked volubly, but had so few teeth that my understanding of her French was rather defeated. After this, I went on to tea with Minchin. He has a beautiful mess. They started shelling the 5th Battalion just on our left, but though I think they upset some of their wire, no more damage was done. Gen. Paget, R.F.A., with Dunne as his A.D.C., came up into the trenches yesterday, and there is a talk of bringing up an 18-pounder quite close behind our trench:

1915 altogether, there is blood in the air, as Hill says. I hear that Vez Macquart, between us and Houplines, is where they mean the move to take place. I spent most of this morning observing. The Germans put up a cap on the parapet: Sergt. Hills put a couple of shots through it, but when he missed his mark, they waved a white and blue flag derisively.

May 3.—On the afternoon of the same day as the last entry, about 1.30, we got a message, "Be ready to show activity by rifle fire this afternoon, to attract enemy's attention." We all sat and waited dutifully until about 4.26, when we got a long detailed fire order, the start of which was timed for 4.30. We opened our fire 8 minutes rapid by half Companies simultaneously with the rest of the Battalion. We then had an interval and then 10 minutes deliberate fire. The men's shooting was very good; I watched from the M.G. emplacement and they seemed to hit the parapet every time. Of course we couldn't see the net result of our fire; but we had ten casualties ourselves. A. and D. Coys. one each, and B. Coy. eight—the result of two shrapnel bursting right over the trench. The operation made our tea rather late and I had no time to write my letter home. The remainder of our time passed quietly and we went back to Streaky Bacon on the 25th. The only two events of interest during these days were that Hunter and Loder Symmonds came over from the 2nd Batt. and one day the Cameronians (Majors Chaplin, Darling, self and Lee) played the gunners and got badly beaten.

May 10.—I have had abominable toothache which finally brought me to the 19th Field Ambulance, where this entry now finds me. It was the

1915 4th or 5th, I forget which, when I left the trenches and at 4.10 a.m. that same morning, our territorial artillery proceeded to put a salvo of six shells all round the officers' mess dug-out of D. Coy. Two went through the roof, making large holes, and smothering Capt. Hamilton, who was sleeping inside, with dust and dirt; three landed in front of the parapet, and one entered Sergt. Bunker's dug-out where he was asleep, removed his sleeping cap, turned upwards through the roof and burst on the parapet. So no damage to human life was done, though this was not the fault of the territorial artillery. Capt. H. reported it at once, and up came a gunner observation officer, who, being a regular, seized at once on the opportunity of having a go at the territorials and started drawing up an immense report.

It has been very peaceful here, although the last two days has seen the beginning of a great movement all along the line, which is in progress at the present moment. It is a contemplated attack on Fromelles, which Loder told me of when he came over. The idea is to attack Fromelles in force, capture it and then make a wheel to the left, with the intention of taking the Radinghem ridge in flank. The importance of this ridge is that it commands Lille. On the night of the 8th, the 6th Division was ordered to stand to, with a view to supporting this attack if necessary or holding off a counter attack. On this night, too, a big movement of motor and horse transport took place in this locality but our general belief is that it was intended as a blind to deceive the Germans as to the real moment of attack which actually started yesterday morning, the 9th, at about 6 a.m. A report received here at 12 (noon) yesterday, says

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that the 6th Division was progressing favourably, the first line of trenches on a frontage of 1,200 yards had been captured; but later intelligence reports them held up by machine guns. If true, this forecasts, I fear, many casualties. The French are said to have massed 280,000 men and 2,000 guns (each provided with 1,000 rounds) with a view to breaking through near Arras and our attack at Fromelles is intended to coincide with this. The enemy's attention is also being engaged all along the line.

Near Ypres, our 28th Division are said to have lost a kilomètre and the 2nd Army report heavy shelling North of Hooge but all attacks so far have been repulsed successfully. Also, the French are said to have captured 6 German field guns.

I went into Armentières on Saturday, and saw Pickles Cable there who was in Boy's Batt. of the Rifle Brigade: he said they were going to lead the proposed attack on Fromelles. It seems so quaintly incongruous that one should be eating fancy cakes and drinking China tea in a restaurant a few hours before what has seemed lately like an almost certain death; but it is the same sort of spirit which has pulled us and the French along so successfully up till now; and I am sure it is just that spirit that is lacking in the Germans.

Last night I dined with C. Coy., it is the first time I have been "out to dinner" in France, and with fizz, too: it seemed quite like Oxford. Wrightie was there, too.

This morning I was sitting out in the sunshine by the side of one of the many streams which run

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through the meadows near the church. Everything looks very peaceful. All round me, there are cows being milked, and the corn is coming up well; one can almost see it grow. The noise of the aeroplane engines overhead might almost be the separator in the dairy at home. The only thing to disturb the peace is the low muttering of the guns to the South where the great battle of Fromelles is still being fought out.

May 26.—I am going to try to describe this military operation.

This morning we were besieged by Staff. They came moving along the trench, halting from time to time, to make frequent use of periscopes and maps. I slowly got the drift of their ideas—to bring up a field gun into the trenches. About 12 o'clock I left them still puzzling about the whereabouts of the German machine gun emplacements, and met the Brigadier of the 147th Brigade and his Staff. He wanted to know how far our left M.G. would traverse. About 3.30, Major Darling and Major Butler, R.F.A., came up and decided to put in the gun emplacement to the left of the left-hand stream. Butler was a charming person, not one of those gunners who think that the infantry are under a perpetual and unrepayable obligation to them. The sappers soon started hacking away at the parados and the work went on till dawn. Next morning the question was raised as to how to get the gun away after firing and there were many suggestions. For instance:

A fatigue party of about 20 men to pull it with drag ropes up to the line of willows to the road. This, however, would have exposed them to a heavy rifle and machine gun fire if discovered.

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Bringing a couple of horses up the communicating trench, hooking the gun in directly it had fired and galloping it away down the line of willows. A jolly sporting idea, as it only risked the lives of one man and two horses, but if they were killed, either the one or the other of them, the gun might be left exposed all day to the German fire.

But we fortunately got the news that the affair was to take place between 8 and 9 p.m., this making the concealment of getting it away an easy matter. So we decided to dig a road for it and run it off to C. Coy. where it may stay under cover and be removed at discretion.

The Colonel told me that the affair in prospect was the taking of a house by the 4th K.O.Y.L.I. on our right: two Coys. were to go and dig in in front of this house: at dawn one of them was to come and live behind my parados for the remainder of that day and on the night of the 23rd they were to go forward again, finish their digging and occupy the trenches: they were to be supported by artillery and by our own M.G. and rifle fire. Duly on the 23rd, at dawn, they arrived behind my parados. Of course they struck a pouring wet morning when the trench was nearly flooded. Butler had finished his gun emplacement and the previous night we had, without much difficulty, brought Frightful Fanny in and got her into position. The General wished no one to be within 50 yards of the gun, so I made arrangements to put 14 platoon back in the supporting trench.

Captain Lee was to take command of the right section; that will be D. Coy., and 4 machine guns.

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Pery Knox Gore was to come up and take over command of the machine guns and both he and Evans were to be under Lee's direct command. Next morning Lee came round and we examined the positions and found that No. 13 platoon on the extreme right was the only one that could bring an effective cross fire to bear. Most of the day we spent filling sand bags. At 7.30 we stood to arms and at 8.30 the bombardment began. We had about 60 guns firing and, so far as could be seen, their shooting was very accurate. The German gun fire was of course drawn; but fortunately for us, though we did get a certain percentage of their shells over our trench, the K.O.Y.L.I. came in for most of it. Punctually at 8.50, when the High Explosive bombardment began, the two Coys. of K.O.Y.L.I. detailed for the movement, jumped over the parapet and established themselves. Except in the centre, near the house, the one essential point, without which the rest was useless. Here they were checked, for though the whole force got over the parapet without casualty, the Germans had been so little affected by the bombardment and were keeping so good a look out, that they opened a rapid M.G. and rifle fire when they had hardly left the parapet. Also, there were a few snipers in the house who opened on them too. Directly their first burst of rapid fire opened, 13 platoon replied in similar style, but this didn't really have the desired effect, and by sending up flares and opening a momentary burst of rapid fire, the Germans completely succeeded in preventing the K.O.Y.L.I.'s centre from moving forward. About 20 minutes later, their second in command came along and asked Lee to sweep the German parapet with the machine gun to prevent them from getting their heads up: Bill Knox Gore didn't want to do this, as

he said it would give the position of M.G.'s away, and in case of a German counter-attack they would be smothered, but Lee insisted; so the next flare they sent up, three of our M.G.'s opened rapid. That soon shut them up and when I went along, at Lee's order, to find out how things were going, they told me that they had got into the house, bayoneted 40 Germans there, and dug themselves in in front of them.

Meanwhile Lee, by the excellence of his reports, had received a congratulatory message from the C.O. and the General.

Had the K.O.Y.L.I. contented themselves with holding this new trench thinly during the day, they would certainly have suffered far less heavily; but they crowded as many men as possible in, so the Jack Johnsons inflicted a good deal of damage and the whole operation cost them in all 200 men.

With Pulteney as Corps Commander and the Colonel as Brigadier, we shall "lack nothing in the way of handling," as they say in the Racing World.

———:o:———

[Here the diaries come to an end. It is a matter for regret that they were not kept through the ensuing year; but the monotony of the life in the trenches made the record of the days very irksome to one of so keen and active a temperament, and so they were unfortunately discontinued.]

LETTERS.

November 2.—This morning I can't help thinking of the hunting, for it is the Opening Day, and longing and wondering when I shall get my next day's hunting.

You will be pleased to hear that the Brigade and the Cameronians in particular, have been very highly praised; and French sent a special congratulatory wire to the Brigade; and our Brigadier Gen. Gordon, wrote a special letter to Col. Robertson:—"I wish to express my sincere admiration of the splendid spirit displayed by all ranks of the 1st Batt. Cameronians: it is evident from every report I read and from all I hear and see." The shelling is very brisk at the present moment.

November 7.—We have really suffered heavily in men—about 250—but only two officers killed: Capt. Rose and Hewitt. We have now been in trenches for 16 days without being relieved and have beaten the record of any brigade in the British Army in any war. The German artillery woke up this morning and we had 28 shells over the trenches in three minutes. Not one of them did any damage, didn't even kill the pig they landed near! I am so sorry to hear Prince Maurice of Battenberg is killed. I am afraid of putting on too much weight sitting still in the trenches.

November 10.—We are still in the trenches and have beaten the Guards' record.

November 13.—I see some of the German prisoners are billeted in the Newbury racecourse stables: those boxes are a jolly sight too comfortable for them. Poor Gordon had rotten luck; he was in the trenches exactly one day; early next morning he got a nasty shrapnel wound in the shoulder.

The Indians have been fighting first rate lately: they can't stop them. I see Gerald Hay is wounded; I trust not seriously: I could never imagine how anyone could miss him.

November 14.—I am Mess President of my Coy., which is pretty difficult in war time when all provisions in towns and villages are fearfully scarce. To-day I have been told, as our Batt. transport officer has got a Staff job, I must take over his work: that means I have got to manage about 60 horses and 20 carts and wagons; see that the carts are brought up to the places ordered, and generally to look after all the transport arrangements. When we get on the move I have a lot to do; anyhow, it's a responsible job and a great compliment being given to me. No, I don't think I will have a fur-lined bag to sleep in: with all this mud about a sack is more in my line.

November 16.—I am so glad, whatever else has been affected, steeple-chasing is still going strong. I have just been trying a couple of horses this afternoon; one had been picked up in a deserted village. I heard from Mrs. Rawnsley to-day: she tells me the 12th charged the Germans with the bayonet. It must be an absolute record for a Cavalry regiment. No, I can't say I was in that bayonet charge

the other day. I wish I had been. Never mind! I may have better luck soon. The rest I have had in billets here has put me to rights. I feel absolutely fit. I am quite the recognised interpreter in the Batt. now: even the Colonel makes use of me. I am going to bed now to get a good night's rest: by the way, there are awful complaints about my snoring!

November 19.—We are very close to the Germans, but between us is a net work of barbed wire: so neither of us can do much in the way of attacking the other, only sniping. I hear Sydney's Div. Gen. is an absolute madman: he is gallant to such a pitch that he insists on riding round the firing line trenches on horse back every morning, and he gets very annoyed if his Staff does not take equal risks. Isn't it sad about poor Lord Roberts?

November 21.—Thank you most awfully for the parcel for the men. As the snow was on the ground and it was freezing hard when it arrived, you can understand how much it was appreciated. Frightfully cold and would certainly stop hunting in England. Am so sorry to hear about Cadogan. Am glad Hobber was only slightly wounded. We sleep in shelters dug into ground and, with all our woolly caps and mufflers, look more like polar explorers than soldiers.

November 28.—I believe we are going to come out of these trenches soon for a rest in billets; so I shall be able to have another look at my horses. I shall call one Xerxes and my second horse Artaxerxes. I can never take my boots off all night; or any of my clothes, so I usually put my feet into the sack and get into the sleeping bag. I am with

my own Coy. in the trenches; that is, Capt. Lee and Salmonson and myself. We divide into three watches; first from 5 to 10; next from 10 to 2; last from 2 to daybreak, and being three, all take it in turn. Lee has a thermos, so we make some tea and take a drink during the night. I am overwhelmed with parcels: just got one of French prunes, hunting chocolate and peppermint lumps from Betty Bateman, so am much spoiled.

December 5.—The King was at Armentières and the Prince was with him, and we sent an officer and a few men to represent the Batt. I hear he wasn't looking well. Our transport officer has done particularly well and was mentioned in despatches: whilst all the other Batts. in the Brigade lost their transport in the retreat from Le Cateau, he lost none of ours. His name is Riddell Webster. This is a spare Brigade and not in any Division; but forms a reserve, and when any part of the line is threatened, or any reinforcements particularly needed, they call on us. We are liable to be moved anywhere at any moment. This Brigade is composed of 1st Cameronians and 2nd Welsh Fusiliers, Argyle and Sutherland, and Middlesex.

Just out of the trenches and having a good rest and clean up in billets.

December 9.—It will seem funny spending my Xmas in the trenches. I hope you are going to send me a Xmas pudding, but I am sure you will, so look forward to it with great expectations.

December 13.—The annoying thing about these trenches is that nothing ever happens in them. If the Germans attacked us or we attacked them

there might be some interest in them, but there seems nothing but a prospect of endless mud in front of one. Rumours of some terrific movement are on, but I don't believe in them, and fancy we shall stay here permanently.

December 17.—Our Coy. leaves the trenches to-night for three days in billets; but as they have been out most of the night digging communicating trenches, it doesn't seem much of a rest.

Had a line from Gambles last night: he has 18 soldiers billeted in his house.

December 18.—Capt. Lee has just arranged our spells of night digging most triumphantly, so that nobody goes on after midnight. This billet is only a quarter of an hour from the trenches. Capt. Lee has a lovely bedroom upstairs and we other three have a very large one downstairs to sleep and live in. I haven't slept in a bed since I have been in France except just a few days before Le Maisnil at a place called Rouge Croix: there I slept on, but not in one. We have a very good house and large tubs, but no bath. Just before going into trenches this time, I had a splendid bath in Armentières: but now the brutes have shelled the place and broken the bath-room. To-morrow I am going to ride over to lunch with Gen. Lawford at Fleurbaix. A fellow in the W. Yorks Regt. told me this morning that a shell had come into his bedroom last night, but fortunately he wasn't hurt. A pocket edition of Jorrocks has just arrived, so I am happy.

The trenches we go into on Sunday are best in the Brigade; there is quite a nice little shelter for officers' mess; and each officer has a dug-out to

sleep in. In spite of cold and wet, I never felt better. Mummy wouldn't like this billet as our guns fire from the field close by. Please find out something from Mrs. Upton about Jacky. I wanted so much to send you something: here is the best I could get: all the shops in Armentières are shut owing to shelling.

December 21—I got wounded this afternoon!! We were looking through a periscope to spot the Germans, but unfortunately they spotted us. A German sniper was clever enough to hit the looking glass with a bullet: some of the glass cut me in the shoulder: the injury is trivial. I shall probably withdraw from the trenches to-night. This letter is being written for me by my obedient servant, one Wright; the Gay Lothario of the Bridge of Earn, whose writing I hope you will be able to read. I have just eaten your Xmas cake to-day: it was excellent.

December 28.—Osborne. I am going on first rate and can now write with my right hand: the wound was slightly septic in Boulogne; but now is quite clean. I can hardly see out of my eyes, but they have given me a shade to wear over them. Isn't it too dreadful about Eddy? I heard nothing of it until I was in hospital at Bailleul: it is too perfectly awful for poor Uncle Charlie. I spent Xmas Day in Lady Sarah Wilson's hospital at Boulogne; I can't say I enjoyed it much, my eyes were too bad. I am very comfortable here in the most palatial surroundings and an atmosphere of limousines, velvet carpets and marble baths!! but am longing to get away and to see you again.

February.—Nigg. Of course you will have seen the full list of the 2nd Batt. casualties, and have realised how terribly heavy they are. The attack was preceded by a 3 hours' bombardment by 500 of our heavy guns on a frontage of German trenches barely 440 yards in length: it would therefore appear that our artillery was bad, for under these conditions there should be nothing left to attack. Their Brigade appears to have had quite a long notice of the attack and the guns stopped punctually at the hour named for it to be delivered; but the German trenches were under 100 yards away and the Middlesex, on our right, had the German trenches in front of them slanting away from them, so that in order that the attack might coincide, the Scottish Rifles were told that they must not run, but walk. There was a good deal of wire uncut and the attack was made in broad daylight. As the German trenches slanted back from our line, they exposed us to an enfilade fire. The poor Scottish Rifles were simply mown down: the Coy. of the Scottish Rifles on the right, nearest to the German machine gun were practically wiped out—nobody left to take the German trenches; but the other three Coys. did take the trench but were dreadfully shattered.

This story may have been inaccurate, but I think it is in the main true: anyhow there is one officer left and I don't know how many men. It does seem funny when they talk of it in the "Times" as a model operation. Loder Symmonds and Simpson have been ordered off to France to-day. I am next on the list to go out.

April 15.—Rouen. No sooner had I got on board than I ran across Harold Farquhar. He was taking over half a dozen polo sticks for the use of

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Hobber and other officers of the 2nd L.G. We got to Havre about 11 am. Rookie and I went off at once to our déjeuner, then I took him to call on Dick Briscoe; had tea with him. A fellow called Balfour, in the 60th, travelled up here with Rookie and myself: he had a large hamper which Capt. Drummond had presented to all the 60th officers: it contained tongue and eggs, apples, cheese and fizz, so we made a good meal. We installed ourselves at the Hotel de France rather a nice old-fashioned sort of place: in the evening we both dined with a Major Taylor at the Hotel d'Angleterre. He is a friend of Rookie's father; he was in the Indian Army and used to give Uncle Charlie some pig sticking sometimes: says he remembers giving Lords Annesley and Sefton a go: the former did a record by killing his first pig at fifty-six. This is a beautiful camp, quite near the racecourse. Evidently some of the officers here have been rather queer sorts of customers, as Rookie and I were both presented with a large printed warning, saying officers were not expected to be seen in company with ladies of doubtful virtue or to make a noise in the lines after 10 p.m.

Rookie and I are both very disgusted at reading French's Despatch to-day and seeing that there is no praise whatsoever of the Scottish Rifles.

April 18.—Cameronians. I must say it is perfectly splendid to get back here to-day. I was met at the station by the Quarter-Master's trap and my coming back did not seem like war a bit. We are in billets and go back to trenches Tuesday night. As I got up to the billets Lee rushed out and ran after the trap and was simply delighted to see me; made himself quite charming, as indeed did all the people whom I was out with here before.

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But I have just missed getting my transport job back by a week. Wright has got the job. I go to D. Coy. commanded by Capt. Hamilton. The trenches are dried up and thoroughly comfortable: everyone has his own dug out. They tell me that Armentières has been a very gay place: there is even a troupe of entertainers who call themselves "The Follies." You can imagine I shall be going to see them as soon as I can.

April 21.—Here we are again, as they say, but what a change! Everything is sand-bags. They use a lot of wood now, both to floor the trench and to build up the sides. There is a telephone communication between all the Companies and H.Q. so *that all our orders and messages are handed in on slips of pink paper. What with the periscopes and hand grenades, flare pistols, sliding loop-holes and artificial drainage, the soldier has become an absolute bag of tricks altogether.*

May, my servant pro tem, has been awarded the V.C. for bringing in Graham at La Boutillerie. Our mess dug-out is lined with linoleum and we get a wash every day. A little shelling this morning. The Saxons are a very cheery crowd. The other night when they came in opposite — Brigade they shouted out, "Here we are, here we are again! We are the Saxons.. Are you the Leicesters? Have the Buffs come back into the trenches yet?" So there isn't much they don't know. Please send a few packets of mustard and cress seed to grow in the trenches: they would be very nice for tea.

April 22.—General Kerr is coming round the trenches this afternoon, so everyone has a wash and tidy up. I spent the morning making myself a dug-out. It looks out at the back of the trenches

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in the direction of Fleurbaix, and might have quite a nice view, if it were not for all the battered houses in the foreground. Outside I am going to plant the mustard and cress seed you have sent me. I am going to put up hunting pictures inside.

April 23.—Foster and I went up on a hayrick to observe and got a very good view of the English and German trenches: they looked so funny only 20 yards apart! We were turned off by a gunner Major who said we were giving their place away, so we had to go to one of the houses in the village: there we found a poor woman and her daughter who had stayed there during the whole war, even while the village was being shelled to blazes. Wasn't it gallant of them?

April 25.—We go out of the trenches to-night. I hope to get in to see the "Follies" in Armentières and to get a ride or two. I have just had a visit from Lee, who sends you his kind regards. It is splendid for Boy to get mentioned in Despatches.

April 29.—I meant to go to Armentières yesterday, but Capt. Darling asked me to play Polo for the Battalion against the gunners: so for the honour and experience of doing so, I put my trip off. Our team was Major Chaplin (back), Capt. Darling (3), myself (2), and Lee (1). Major Chaplin had not played for about 10 years, Capt. Lee for 7, Capt. Darling 3 or 4, and I, as you know, had never done more than knock a ball about. I can't imagine why Capt. D. asked me to play as I have never pretended that I could play in the least and there are several other people in the Battalion who had played before. Of course I was no good at first, though I did improve a good bit before the

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end. They beat us, but as they were far better mounted and had practised for the last three weeks, whereas none of us had touched a stick, it was hardly surprising. We had only chargers and transport horses to ride. The ground was hardly a mile behind the firing line: one shell came over, but was fortunately blind: rather an amusing experience, isn't it?

I think Jacky's letter sounds much more cheerful, don't you? I was very much frightened by seeing in the "Times" that 10 English officers at Halle had been placed in solitary confinement.

May 5.—At the present moment I am in the 19th Brigade Field Hospital with toothache and an abscess in my tooth: I am in the Curé's house and have a room to myself: luckily I am not feeling bad as a big gun, 300 yards away, fired six rounds at luncheon to-day.

May 12.—You will be pleased to hear the mustard and cress has come up beautifully, and will soon be fit to eat. My garden is quite one of the sights of the place. The Colonel always has a look over it when he comes round in the morning.

May 13.—I am very depressed to-day as we have heard that the 2nd Batt. have had a bad time of it again, losing about 5 officers killed and 6 wounded; and what distresses me most is poor old Loder Symmonds is among the killed. It appears they were covering a retirement near Fromelles at the time. He was quite one of my best friends. I hoped we might have some good hunts together in peace: he had a presentiment of disaster. Doesn't it all seem terribly tragic? Rather anxious to know

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what may have happened to Boy as that Battalion of the Rifle Brigade seems to have suffered very heavily.

May 20.—The last three days we have been preparing for co-operating for a movement to be made by the next Battalion, and as D Company is on the flank, I have been extraordinarily busy. As the position on this flank was of extreme importance and entailed the handling of four machine guns, under the command of Bill Knox Gore, Lee came to command the right section. The operation was a complete success and Lee has got great kudos from the C.O. and the General for his information, etc. I will assert myself, that there is absolutely nobody that I would sooner serve under in any way. Very sorry about poor old Hobber. Mind you write to me anything you may hear. It does seem iniquitous about the racing. There are jolly few officers out here, sportsmen or otherwise, who aren't jolly sick about it; but I suppose they think we don't matter.

May 28.—Went out for a ride with Wright and for another with Lee this afternoon. We had tea at our shop at Armentières, where I met Kenneth Mackenzie, who is in the 5th Camerons now. Would you buy me a good respirator as this gas goes 7 miles behind the firing line and it makes one rather keen to have a good one. We are getting some polo sticks out and have some practice.

May 31.—I rode over to see the 2nd Battalion with Wrightie: there are only four regular officers left, Carter Campbell, Stirling, Hyde Smith, Sandilands. This last action at Fromelles seems to have been an awful muddle. Nobody knows what did

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happen, and why anything happened and what anyone ought to have done. I couldn't help laughing at the idea of people in London having respirators; they will probably become very much the thing; fancy patterns in fashionable shades.

June 1.—The latest thing in the trenches are gongs, which we beat if we want to sound the alarm for a gas attack by the Germans.

June 3.—I think I am getting on pretty well with commanding the Company, as Major Chaplin when inspecting our kit the other day, told me he was very agreeably surprised. Yesterday, when we had a respirator alarm, he told me we were much the best Company.

June 6.—We have been issued with gas helmets to-day. Had some good fun this morning. Wrightie put up some fences, and I went down and schooled some of the horses. One of them performed rather well, but most of them were not flyers.

June 8.—The Germans blew in some of their own parapets this morning and their second line trenches; then proceeded to fire into their first line, so it looks as if someone had made a mess of things. We are all very much amused by a letter which the Germans threw into one of the British trenches, which said among other things, "If you have advanced all the kilomètres your papers daily proclaim you have, you must be in Berlin by now." I do hope Fritz Renton is going on all right.

June 10.—Christie, the one person whom I had anything in common with in my Company, has

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gone off with tonsilitis. The sort of day when I feel one ought to follow Dick R.'s maxim when he says: "In this war one must never think of one's own sorrows, but only be thankful that one is alive from day to day."

June 12.—Just going out of the trenches to-night. The Germans bombarded us with trench mortars and rifle grenades last night, and killed one of the best men in my platoon, and wounded two others; and they have been shelling us a good bit to-day.

June 15.—There are only three jobs on the Staff I could take, but I don't suppose I shall ever get any of them. I seem completely stuck.

June 16.—Hurrah! Its all right over the promotion. Major Chaplin told me this evening that they had orders to make two temporary Captains in the Battalion, and that I am to be one of them. Was up at the top of a thick tree with a good powerful telescope, watching the German trenches; spotted about half a dozen altogether walking about, and it was very tantalising not to be able to shoot them; but we don't snipe from this particular tree for fear of giving ourselves away.

June 18.—Major Chaplin makes a splendid C.O. Altogether we are very lucky. I see by our summary that after an hour's bombardment near Hooge our infantry captured two lines of trenches, but only managed to keep the first line. This is really typical! When the French have such an affair on, they plaster the country with shells—what they call a preliminary bombardment—for five days. Then they have a concentrated bombard-

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ment of at least five hours, and then the infantry attack. This means, instead of blowing in merely the first line trenches like we do, they smash the second line, and communicating trenches too, and shatter not only the nerves of the men holding the trenches, but of their reinforcements as well.

LETTER TO MR. GAMBIER-PARRY.

June 19.—My dear Gambles. How are you. Just a line to tell you I am still in the jolly old trenches and very fit. It does seem extraordinary to think that this time last year was just the end of my Oxford career and the beginning of Commem! Do you remember how blank and empty 65, High Street, looked on that last Monday? When I think, I remember you and Mackers coming in to see us. The only Oxford friend I have seen since I have been out here this time is Kenneth, whom I saw in the tea shop at Armentières. He said he would come over and see me in my billet next day, but he never came. He seemed awfully well and quite the veteran soldier! Just as I am writing this, your letter of the 16th arrived. Thank you so much for it, Gambles. Yes, Cowls is disgracefully slack; he never writes me a line at all. I will certainly send you more F.S. post cards; most people are apt to regard them as a sort of joke! I remember meeting Fitzwygram once with Pat Kennedy; he seemed an awfully nice fellow. No, I think the list of serving members of the University would be too bulky for my modest wardrobe! At the present moment I am living quite a life of peace, in a support trench with a lovely flower garden and a trench cat. The country all round looks really beautiful, and, luckily for us, we have a peace-loving type of German opposite us. I spend a good deal of my day

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up in a thick tree watching the German trenches through a telescope. If you ever see Cooker please give him my love and say I am not dead yet. With love from

PAT.

June 19.—We come out to-morrow night for another two nights in billets: then back again into our original trenches.

June 20.—Poor little Rookie was killed out on patrol—shot in the heart, and Grey was badly wounded; afraid he won't live. We were terribly upset over Rookie: he was such a nice little fellow and so gallant: he was out for blood last night, trying to do for a German patrol; but they heard him coming in the long grass. Rookie was one of the few friends of my own standing that I had left out here in the Battalion and I feel awfully depressed at losing him. He came to tea with us yesterday evening, not long before he went out, and was so light-hearted. I am sure no one ever went to his death expecting it less, which is a great comfort to me; and we were able to get his body in. It was a most gallant way to die.

I am going to lecture to a Kitchener's Army Battalion.

June 23.—The Colonel has got the Brigade, so Colonel Chaplin commands us. Just back in our old trenches which is rather nice. I believe we may stay in there some time. I had my usual ride with Lee; had a ride round and finished up in a tea shop in Armentières, where I had two plates of strawberries and cream and five cakes. I went out yesterday morning to lecture to a Company of Kitchener's Army about the trenches, etc. The offi-

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cers were very nice indeed—just the right stamp of fellow; and the men were just the right sort too. They were all jolly keen. The Censor has returned a letter to me because he didn't appear to care for some of the things I said in it. Gott strafe the Censor!

July 6.—Just heard that Wrightie has got a horse for me at last, so I shall be very keen to see what he is like when I do go back into billets. I wish I was getting him with a view to hunting him. Jorrocks still accompanies me about in my pack, and in any moment of depression is always pulled out; and my servant Whittle, who by the way is an excellent man, knows that the most serious crime he can commit is to forget to pack up the Jorrocks calendar when I move in or out of the trenches! It was just a year about now that we went to London for our jaunt, wasn't it? It gives one an impression of time and space to think of it now. I am still waiting for your one and only perfect fly exterminator.

July 16.—I ought to be made a temporary Captain any day now. Don't worry about me if I get a cold or chill because if I am ill there is, what is known as the Dog's Home in Armentières, a kind of convalescent hospital.

July 18.—I am giving this letter to one Private Ward in D Company to post in England when on furlough. The 19th Brigade is going to move. We heard only yesterday so are now, of course, full of preparations. It is the first move the Brigade have made for over six months. We are going to leave the 27th Division, to which we have been attached since the 6th Division went up to Ypres, and are

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going to be attached to the 8th Division, to which our 2nd Batt. also belongs. The position of our new trenches is, as accurately as we can make out, at present, just in front of Fromelles; that is to say, just north of Neuve Chapelle, and more or less the same trenches where poor Boy and Loder S. were killed. The idea of this move I think, is to put us on the extreme right flank of the 3rd Corps (commanded by Pulteney), so that being an odd Brigade we don't interfere with the arrangements for the relief of other Brigades in the Division. That is to say, purely a Staff arrangement. We go out of these trenches to-morrow night and march about nine miles (fortunately I ride) to a village the other side of Sailly-sur-La Lys. There the Brigade remains in billets for about three days; then crosses the Lys, and the Cameronians go into billets, somewhere between Laventie and Fromelles, while the R.W.F. go into the trenches.

The arrangement in the Brigade always is that we and the R.W.F. relieve each other out of the trenches; and the Argyles and the Middlesex also take turn about. Its rather a blow leaving our own trenches, which we had made so awfully good; but I suppose the change is really rather good for us, and we were getting rather rooted here.

Most of the Regiment had its letters opened by the Base Censor and there was a good deal of trouble about what was in them: so I am sending these photographs in this one. One is of Wrightie and one is of me, on Hamilton's charger.

It is thought wiser not to mention polo as the Base Censor might, if he opened the letter, report it to the Corps or the Division, and they might say we weren't taking life seriously enough! Fools!! So in future, when I want to tell you about polo I

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shall allude to it as recreation, e.g., "I had some good practice at recreation yesterday with Lee." That'll puzzle the Censor. One of the polo ponies is a horse of 16, 3.

I fancy we shall hold the line at Fromelles for quite a long time, and its been very quiet down there lately. I am awfully well myself, and really in very good form. I still think there is a very good chance of the war being over by October and then we should go back to the "Image" and leave the real for a bit, or rather I mean for a very long time. Goodnight.

July 20.—We got into billets early this morning. I am very lucky as D Company has got a jolly good billet in a kind of farm house just off the road. We may stay a week to give us a complete rest. The country round here is the most English-like I have yet seen in France, near Bailleul; it is quite hilly and with hop gardens. I must say I enjoy being right back from the trenches very much, and not hearing the sound of shells and machine-guns at all. This afternoon I went for a ride with Lee and Wrightie round by Bailleul. If we stay over Friday I hope to get over to see Dick, who is coming pretty close.

July 23.—We move to-night into Division reserve more advanced billets. Gen. Robertson says the 27th Division had given our Brigade a great reputation for trench digging. Pulteney's inspection went off very well yesterday. He looks a real hard bitten sort of nut. At the end he made a speech and ended up in a way sufficiently amusing to anyone with a sense of humour. "We Guardsmen are apt to become somewhat of a clique and to think no other regiment comes up to our own standard.

At the same time we are always glad to hear, especially from a fellow Guardsman, that some other corps is approaching our standard!" This was because Major Hayward had told him that he thought the Cameronians were a very good Battalion.

July 24—We have got a shocking bad billet, dirty and very little room in it. Minchin is going off to the Flying Corps, so that means that I have practically only got Lee, Wrightie and Gordon to talk to in the Regiment. It is rather depressing what the Regular Battalions have come to; but I suppose we are rather exceptional in that way.

I rode over with Wrightie to-day, with a view to seeing Edward Stanley, but I found that his Brigade was in the trenches. All the Indian troops are near here and the effect of their uniforms along side of, say, a French Gendarme, and a Highlander is most picturesque.

July 26.—Major Hamilton and I are dining with the G.O.C. 8th Division to-night. He is sending his motor for us. Whittle has been washing his pup; otherwise there is nothing to report.

July 27.—My dinner went off quite well last night. Divisional H.Q. is in a very nice château. As we drove up the avenue in the General's limousine, we might quite have thought we were going out to dinner "Somewhere in England." They gave us a very good dinner and our three pipers played very well. The General had asked us to take them along with us. Wrightie and I had some recreation this afternoon; then we had a bath in a convent which, in this particular place, the French nuns give to all and every English officer quite free.

August 7.—You mustn't either of you count on leave too much. It is really very doubtful: however, I am glad to hear the tennis court is receiving attention. I hacked over this afternoon to try to see Rupert Somervell, whose K. Battalion is only a short way off; but unfortunately he had gone into trenches for instruction. Oddly enough, I met Capt. Egerton Leigh, who used to live at Broadwell and had hunted with the Heythrop all his life; so of course we knew dozens of the same people. He said he didn't know Daddy, but remembered him for years coming out hunting looking very immaculate in his swallow tails. At present moment I have got a very good billet, best I have had in France; quite a big sort of villa with big rooms, and its the first time I have been up to my bedroom since I left England. I promptly pinned a card on my door, just as if I were in barracks at home.

We are not far back from the trenches, but everything looks very peaceful with the harvest going on. It seems chiefly old women who are working.

August 8.—I have got rather tired of this particular part of the line, so I shall be glad when we move on. This country is all so much the same and down there is all quite different.

As Daddy says, I have no regrets about the 60th, and as you say, no regiment can have done better than the Cameronians. P.S.—Aunt Dow says she hopes I am having a rest out of the trenches, at the Base, or something like that.

August 11.—I have had official notice of the move. I saw in the paper yesterday that Herbert Garton was wounded, so I am very anxious to

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hear details. He had only just come out here and was blown up at Hooge; at least, most of his Battalion was blown up.

August 15.—A furious thunderstorm which makes the trenches in a beastly mess. I see in the paper to-day that John Nugee was wounded. How to get news of him I can't conceive. The men have done such good work in these trenches in the short time we have been here that they don't really want to leave them to-morrow night. I hear the Flight Commander at Tyneside was discovered to be a German spy. After one of the recent raids, a French aviator was being shown round the aeroplane sheds there, and recognised him as a well-known German spy. He was promptly taken out and shot.

August 18.—I only got your letter of the 12th yesterday, as that infernal fool of a Censor had kept it back owing to your putting 19th Brigade on it! Well, hurrah! I am a Captain at last! We go off at some unearthly hour to-morrow morning on our journey down South; but are then going to have a real rest, I believe, and be out of the trenches for about three weeks: that will be really very nice and will do us all a lot of good and smarten us up and get us out of the trench waddle. I have read "Jaffery" and I quite agree with your opinion of it. Fendihook and his visit is the most amusing passage ever written. I love the part where he insisted on keeping on his gloves.

August 20.—Wrightie and I rode into Béthune to-day which is a much better place than Armentières: at any rate, there are very many more shops open and an excellent hairdresser, quite like a

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London one. I am afraid our rest is off for the present and we go back to trenches on Tuesday. On our way here we marched past Lord Kitchener. He was delighted with the appearance of the Brigade and told our new Divisional General that he ought to be proud to have such a good Brigade in the Division. There is no question of his commanding personality and you never saw anyone look less burdened with responsibility.

August 23.—I rode over yesterday to see Gen. Lawford as he sent me a telephone message on Saturday night asking me to come over. His H.Q. are close to Béthune. He seemed awfully well and I stayed and had luncheon with him. Dick O'Connor I saw too: I remembered his having been at Wellington. Aunt Cissy sent me two cauliflower cakes from Dublin, which were most excellent. They have made Wrightie a temporary Captain too.

August 25.—The line here is most complicated, so it has taken some time to settle down. Behind the trenches here is an absolute maze of communicating trenches, all called after London streets—Harley Street, Edgware Road, Praed Street, Bond Street, Conduit Street, Park Lane, etc. It seems ridiculous, but of course it is quite invaluable as an aid to finding one's way about, which even then is rather difficult. I got lost in the trenches last night. At the present moment I am living in the dressing station by the kindness of the Doctor in charge. I have a sort of mattress and it is quite peaceful; but rather upsetting if matters were strenuous. Very much amused at the idea of Wall (the jockey) going into the Army.

August 26.—Just got back from a successful visit to Gen. Lawford. He is going to the War Office and is going to ask if he may have me: he is very keen that I should come; he says he has had it in his mind and eye for a long time, and that it would be almost certain to lead to something better. The thing seems pretty well launched—I mean one has done everything one can: there seems some reasonable chance and it will be bad luck if it does not come off. Saw James Patterson here this morning.

[At the end of August Captain Hardinge came home on leave.]

September 8.—I arrived tired and sleepy at 6.30 a.m. The crossing was most beautifully smooth, sea quite like a lake. I am in that good billet I was last in, the one with a stall for my mare, so I am looking forward to a good night's rest. You know I simply can't believe I have had eight days leave; it seems just the glorious and very real dream of a night. It was so splendid to come home to Brockworth and find everything looking so beautiful: and my room and everything just the same; and to see the hounds once again. But I feel I made the best possible use of my time and enjoyed myself in a way that I shall never forget. I am quite sure leave will be continuous now, and it won't be very long before it comes to my turn again. Lee and Wrightie are both very well. Col. Chaplin and Major Darling both very sympathetic about Staff job—said it was very hard luck.

September 12.—We go back into trenches tomorrow at Givenchy. I wrote to Vera Coleby to induce her to write to me. "Lonely, but useful

Captain of bright manners and refined appearance would like to correspond with a young lady." I think this may stir her up.

September 14.—We go into trenches after lunch, rather a confusing sort of line. I had to get my bearings and everything settled in; so had no time for writing. One of the peaches came in splendid order, the others were somewhat over ripe, but "cela n'empêche pas"—to make a bad joke.

September 15.—I expect we shall come out of the trenches in a couple of days time. The dug-out I live in is very safe, but its a long way under ground, which is not so nice as Bois Grenier view. Germans are fairly peaceful at present.

September 16.—The Germans have been busy lately blowing in my parapet with enormous Minnenwerfers; but in spite of scattering the earth, haven't touched a fly. Had a letter from Betty to-day describing the performance of a Trick Cyclist at the Coliseum; but as her writing is very difficult to read and she doesn't believe in stops, I can't make much out of it.

September 22.—Lee has appropriated a good bit of this letter. Ronnie Knox writes to say Guy Lawrence is ill, back from the Dardanelles. I see Hobkirk is wounded.

(P.S. Major Lee's letter).—Pat is very well and delighted to be back in the trenches: in fact we all are. I am thinking of growing a tail and becoming a rat: I am sure one would have more fun. One has a great game with me every night: it waits till I am asleep and then scratches all the

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earth from the root into my face. I am o.p.h. Goodnight. H.L.

September 26.—Things are very busy at present and somewhat exciting. Lee was wounded yesterday. He was looking over the parapet and they sniped at him and got him in the fore-arm. A very painful wound but not dangerous. I am sure Mrs. Lee will be thankful he is safely back. We got a whiff of German gas last night; but they didn't get much out of it: a few of the men were a bit affected, but personally I hardly felt it at all and am feeling very fit indeed.

September 28.—I suppose its no use disguising from you that we have been in the Loos battle, as you happen to know where I am. Just in front of us we have had no luck yet; their position is about the strongest in the whole Western line. Now Lee has gone I find that, even more than ever, Wrightie is my one consolation in life. I do pray that nothing happens to him. You don't know what a difference it makes to me having him here.

[Account of battle of Loos sent a month later.]

October 21.—Our admission of having used gas now makes it possible for me to write and give you some account of the operations which the papers call the Great Advance. I want to get this posted by ————, who goes off on furlough tomorrow so, owing to pressure of time, I shall have to be rather brief. Also, as it is about a month ago, I may be a trifle inaccurate in dates and times.

General Idea. Roughly speaking, the offensive of September 25th was to be undertaken by

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the 1st Army commanded by Sir Douglas Haig. This comprises Ist Army Corps (Gough), IVth Corps (?) I forget his name, and IIIrd (Pulteney). The zone of operations of Ist Corps extended from about Festubert to Fosse 8, that of the IVth Corps from this point to Loos. The XIth Corps and IIIrd Cavalry Division were in support.

Special Idea. The 2nd Division (i.e., the 5th, 6th and 19th Brigades) was to attack La Bassée frontally; but this should have been and I am certain was meant to be a holding attack only. The main work was to be done by the 9th Division (Kitchener's Army). This was the key to the whole position.

(I am afraid this requires really a military map, but I think you may understand it from a good ordinary one).

The reason for its importance is that the defences of La Bassée are far too strong for it ever to be attacked frontally. It has about 4 lines of defences in front of it. But if Fosse 8 can be taken and the attacking force can then push on to Haisnes, the German force holding the line in front of La Bassée finds itself practically sandwiched between two British forces and its communications. Hence capture of Fosse 8 and Haisnes were of supreme importance, and this they allotted to the 9th Division as being the Star Kitchener's Army Division.

The 19th Brigade was to attack immediately on the left of the 9th Division, and the real nut it had to crack was the village of Auchy, very strongly entrenched and wired, and almost every house with a machine-gun in it. Our two main objectives were first the trench immediately in front

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of Auchy and, secondly, the line of railway just beyond it. Meanwhile the 9th Division was to swing up from our right and we were to move forward together (having loosed the Cavalry if possible) and take La Bassée from the Southen flank.

Plan of Attack.—Beginning on September 21st there was to be a four days preliminary bombardment; all the enemy trenches were to be flattened and hammered as far as could be; then, on morning of 25th, after an intensive bombardment, our gas was to be released (its rising being concealed by the use of smoke balls). At the appointed hour of 6.30 a.m. the infantry were to advance and the guns were then to lift and fire both High Explosive and asphyxiating shells on to the German position until these had been taken. Then they were to fire still further over our heads; in fact the co-operation was to be complete in every way.

Part played by the 19th Brigade. You must not believe the papers in stating that the bombardment was utterly and completely annihilating. It certainly was better than I have ever seen our guns do before, but it did not approach either the volume or intensity of the French bombardment. Probably the one reason why it provoked such raptures in the papers is that the length of the whole battle front was so enormous, practically from the North Sea to Champagne, that the actual relative intensity of the bombardment was mistaken; but I will say that our guns played havoc with the enemy trenches during four days of bombardment. The 19th Brigade did not have a proper rest before the attack and it is surely an axiom that any troops before such an operation should have a week's complete rest and come into battle fresh. But the week previous to attack the Brigade was in the trenches,

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though each two Battalions relieved the other two at four day intervals. The attack was to be carried out by the Argyles and the Middlesex in first line, and the Cameronians and R.W.F. in second line, we supporting the Argyles, and the R.W.F. the Middlesex. On the night of the 23rd, the Argyles and the Middlesex relieved us and the R.W.F. It was pouring wet; we had to march five miles back to our billets in Béthune; we slept there that night and then marched five miles back at midnight on the 24th. Thus, when the attack was to take place we were tired troops. We got into the sidings where we were to spend three hours about 3 a.m. A and B Companies of the Cameronians were to be in first line of the Battalion, C and D in second line, C supporting A, and D supporting B; so I was to support Lee.

The morning of the 25th, as I have said, we arrived in the sidings about 3 a.m. A light rain was falling, and, the wind, which had been our anxiety for many days past, didn't seem too favourable. At any rate, it was a very feeble breeze. We were of course very lightly equipped: but I had managed to bring my Jorrocks with me and by the light of my Orilux I read "The Cat and Custard Pot Day," squeezed into a niche of the trench. Then Lee and Wrightie both came along and we talked till about 5.15. Then we had the rum issued, and then the intensive bombardment began. It was good, but not good enough as you will see. At about 5.45 we all put on our gas helmets and at about 6 the gas was supposed to be released. "It's going splendid" was murmured back and at this moment we moved up into the jumping off trenches. But of course the gas had shown the enemy what was up and a heavy bom-

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bardment, though I don't think there were many guns firing, was opened on all the communication trenches. The scheme of course was that of perpetual successive lines of men advancing. When the Argyles had got out, the Cameronians were to take their place; when B Company had gone, D was to take its place, etc. So at 6.30 our great anxiety was to know how the Argyles were faring. I suppose, if you ask me what the worse moments were for me, I should say the last ten minutes before we moved from the siding. However, it wasn't very pleasant moving slowly along the communication trenches and being shelled all the time. Word kept coming back that the 1st, 2nd and 3rd German lines had been taken, so we were all full of hope. When the leading platoon of D Company reached Boyau 17, where our jumping off trench was, the trench was occupied by the leading platoon of B Company waiting to go out. When they did advance over the open they suffered heavily.

It seems that the attack, so far as the Argyles and Middlesex were concerned, was an utter failure. The gas had not worked; i.e., it had no real effect other than preparing the enemy for our coming attack and they practically wiped out the first line of the Argyles and the Middlesex. So the attack had to be checked and D Company moved up to front line trench to cover either the advance or retreat on either flank by their fire. Just after we had moved up Lee, looking over the top at the situation, was wounded through the arm.

A and C Companies now moved up into front line on my right and left respectively, with the object of making a neck or nothing assault. Col.

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Chaplin was only given about half an hour's notice to make this fresh attack. Only D Company was then in position and he told the Brigade that it must be postponed for an hour. That is the only reason why I am writing these lines; for to attack an enemy fully alert, unshaken and in formidable strength, could only lead to annihilation of the Battalion. Thus our assault was indefinitely postponed.

This really closes the day of September 25th, so far as we were concerned. It was followed by three or four days of absolutely incessant rain which made the trenches a perfect sea of mud.

Meanwhile affairs had not been progressing well at Fosse 8. The 5th and 6th Brigade on our left gained a couple of lines of German trenches at Givenchy and Quinchy, but were driven out of them again the same morning. The 5th Brigade did succeed in getting up a large reserve of bombs, but these, at the critical moment when they were attacked, would not go off. The 9th Division on our right took Fosse 8 successfully, and pushing on, very nearly reached Haisnes; in fact one Battalion —Kenneth's I believe—did actually take Pekin trench, but the old tale of the New Armies being unable to consolidate came true, and they lost all the ground gained during the following days. The 7th Division and the 15th Division on their right did wonders (the capture of Hulluch and Loos as you know) but opposite the 19th Brigade was the only section of the line where the gas had no effect whatever. At Hulluch, our fellows are reported to have advanced over five lines of gassed Germans. Alas! it was not so with us.

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The 27th September The concluding "spasm" of the operations was the attempted gas attack on afternoon of 27th. This time the Cameronians and R.W.F. were to attack in front line, with two other regiments in support; but the assault which was timed for 4.30, was only to be made if the gas was effective. A and D (Wrightie and I) were to be in front line this time, with B and C in support. We were to discover the effect of the gas by sending out our bomb throwers to get up to craters and see if they were fired on. If fired on, they were to crawl back, if not, we were to advance. At 4 p.m. the gas was loosed, and at 4.30 out went our bomb throwers, and most gallantly too. But they could only prove to us how narrowly we had again escaped annihilation. About forty went out and only about ten escaped unhurt. Four who actually reached the German parapet and were then shot, were pulled in by the enemy. So ended our final attempt at assault, and on October the 2nd, caked with mud and very tired, we came out to billets in Annequin. On the following day we moved to reserve dug-outs behind Vermelles and two days later, we went back to our rest billets at Béthune.

Observations. 1.—The key to the section of trench the Cameronians were attacking were two craters, only 60 yards distant from our parapet and just adjoining front of enemy's parapet, which they had very strongly fortified. These had become regular forts and could enfilade us on both flanks. A number of heavy batteries should have been turned on to them to smash them up, gas or no gas: as it was they were only shelled with shrapnel, which did them no harm.

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2.—On the 25th, the gas failed opposite us. Our section required a due West wind whereas, on our left, a S.W. wind was most effective. For our attack, either successful gas or a very intensive bombardment was necessary: neither was forthcoming, so the attack could not take place.

3.—The New Army splendid beyond words in attack, has neither the training nor the experience to consolidate the positions it wins. This requires regular and seasoned soldiers, and people say that in the attacks of the future, Kitchener's Army will do the actual attack, and we, the Regulars, will do the consolidating.

4.—It did not seem to me that there was sufficient concentration of men or guns, particularly guns, on to the essential point, i.e., Fosse 8. The bombardment on days following 25th were good, but not good enough (I saw both them and also some of the advance there from an observation station in our trenches). We have not learnt the real co-operation of infantry and artillery arms like the French have to perfection. Nevertheless the enormous scale of frontage of this attack shows that our people have begun to think in large numbers—a step in the right direction and a great step.

October 1.—Another move. Wrightie and I were gaily counting on a few more days in billets, though they left something to be desired; but this afternoon we moved off in Divisional reserve and here we are in dug-outs not far behind the trenches, but quite comfortable. I had the greatest luck: the move took place in a great hurry: we had an early tea and when we arrived here, hadn't got any food; but

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most providentially, Nigger's parcel of food arrived by the mail, and we dined off shortbread, ox tongue, rum and water.

October 7.—I have seen two of my friends to-day, Prince of Wales and George Black. G. B. is commanding a troop of the 17th which is personal bodyguard to General Haig, and is living in a lovely château. He is coming to dine with me to-night in Béthune. H.R.H. is now on the Staff of the Guards Division and was very flourishing. He seems to have grown taller. He told me that poor Charlie Mills has been killed. When I tell you what really did happen I am afraid you will think that it was hardly worth all our losses. Pretty cold here and have taken to fires when we can get them.

October 9.—The Germans attacked near Loos; but were driven off everywhere with heavy loss. We are by way of being ready to turn out now at a minute's notice, so are confined to our billeting area—i.e., I can't go out for a ride and go into Béthune which is an awful nuisance and makes life rather dull. Have spent the whole morning on a Court Martial; there being only three Captains in the Battalion one's turn comes round fairly often. The enclosed bears out what I have always said with irritating persistence!! When shall we ever learn the use of artillery?

October 11.—Kenneth was certainly one of the very nicest fellows I have ever known. As I say, one gets callous enough out here, seeing people killed and wounded on so many days, and it is only when one loses a really great friend like Kenneth, that one realises how devastating the whole thing is. Heard from Dick to-day, who seems to be con-

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templating an exchange into the infantry. He says it is a melancholy thing belonging to a branch of the service that has proved itself obsolete.

October 13.—Wrightie and I dined in Béthune yesterday and he dines with me to-night. We always have two meals together every day when in billets. Gerald Hay is now on the Staff. Houston Boswell was wounded.

October 16.—Have just moved up into an advanced billet and have been having a great battle! —No! not with the Germans; but we found some beastly people installed in what were supposed to be our billets, and we set two Brigades and one Divisional Staff wrangling over it. In the end we, alas! had to turn out and find another billet; but not without some battle, I assure you! However, Wrightie and I got a room together so I am quite happy. Yes, I was very much in the last battle—at least the 25th September one. A mist yesterday, which makes the country look very grey indeed. One of my Company, a bomb thrower, has been recommended for a French decoration which pleases me very much as there are not many French decorations about.

October 20.—We are in the same trenches as we made the great attack from. I have got a very good dug-out here, roofed by a large boiler frame, but it is none too warm. Do you realise I have been just six months back with the Battalion yesterday? When one comes to think of how the best time of one's life is being wasted, its wonderful how quickly it passes.

1915

October 28.—The days have been appalling: torrents of rain from start to finish, regular Flanders weather. We were inspected by the King. We gave him three very good cheers.

October 30.—Yesterday I had a very nasty blow. Major Darling got an order to say I had to go to the 10th Battalion. They are commanded by Major Hyde Smith, a regular, from the 2nd Battalion. Beyond him, they have absolutely nobody of any service at all; so I shall probably go as second in command. This is in a way, promotion, but of an entirely unsought after kind. I feel absolutely heart broken at the thought of leaving the Battalion and it seems very hard that I should be called upon to do so after being out here for nearly a year with them altogether. Colonel Chaplin has been awfully nice about it; went to the Divisional Staff about it, and remonstrated; and they have forwarded an official protest to the Corps. Poor Wrightie and I are terribly upset at the idea of losing each other; however, we must only hope the outside chance may come off. Meanwhile I have been kept waiting a day and I detest this uncertainty more than I can say.

No! The Battalion have only got about half a dozen steel helmets at present which, owing to their weight, are not very popular. The French soldiers all wear them.

November 1.—I have got to go to Kitchener's Army. I feel too miserable to write any more. I go off to-day. A jolly fine "Opening Day" for me!!

1915

November 2.—I am sure you will be very much upset when you hear of my going to Kitchener's Army, but don't worry. The 10th Battalion is only about six miles from the Cameronians, so Wrightie and I hacked over here in the afternoon. I don't think I was ever sorrier to part from any one than I was from him: I can't tell you how absolutely splendid he is. We are such friends and never apart, and we lunched and dined together every single day when it was possible. He was splendid company and we had so many interests in common. He was such a thorough soldier, so stout hearted.

I was at Nigg with Major Hyde Smith, who now commands the Battalion. Only three of the original officers left.

November 3.—Last two days were incessant rain from dawn to dusk. I forgot to tell you that Colonel Chaplin was awfully nice to me when I left. He said:—"I am very sorry to lose you. I have been very pleased with the way you have commanded your Company." Of course I shall get over this feeling in time, but at present I am full of regrets; but I suppose I shall get more reconciled to things. I am realising now, every minute, what a really splendid Battalion the Cameronians is, and how the little things which seem so natural to me are really the outcome of a real regular soldier's training.

November 14.—You have exactly hit the nail on the head when you say the lack of experience of the men makes things worse than they need be. That is absolutely true. Very few of the men understand the system of the trenches, and, unlike the Cameronians, who are used to the game, they don't

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know how to look after themselves. Of these trenches our Corps Commander said to-day that they were the most luxurious in the whole line. If he wasn't trying to qualify for the staff of "Punch," I can invite him to spend a week-end with me in them and shall be only too delighted to put him up.

November 23.—I do hope Aunt Dux will send some more chicken soon. Our Company Officers' cook is not an expert and is too fond of the homely stew. I have got an awfully good billet here over a butcher's shop: the people the house belong to are awfully kind and hospitable. They told me whenever I was here again, I had only to send Whittle to say that M. le Capitaine had returned and my room should be got ready for me at once. They come from Valenciennes and talk real French, not the beastly patois most of these people talk.

November 24.—I must say I am glad to be second in command: one ought to learn things. Whittle is very delighted. It will be an awful pity if they don't have racing in Cheltenham: such a grand course thrown away, and so convenient to Brockworth Stables!!

November 25.—Nobody seems to have a cake and I feel a cake for tea makes all the difference to me. We go up to trenches to-morrow. I went up into them this morning to have a look at them: they are much better than our last ones; they might easily be that.

Isn't it amusing all the fuss going on about the Staff? As a matter of fact I think the heaviest charge against them at present is that ninety-five per cent. of them have had no practical experience

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of trench warfare, which is the thing they are supposed to be directing.

November 27.—I was feeling very done up last time in the trenches, and also for the first couple of days after we came out, and now I feel as fit as I have ever been.

November 29.—Bitterly cold last night and a black frost. All the regular Brigades and Regiments are being taken out of their own formations and mixed up with Kitchener's Army. Whittle says he would like some cigarettes and a small plum pudding for Christmas. Men would like cigarettes and handkerchiefs.

December 2.—We are just out of the trenches and our Headquarters are in the only house in a certain village that still possesses a roof. We sleep in a cellar on stretchers which may not sound comfortable but is, really. Yes! Whittle would like a pair of slippers: he takes size 8. Your parcels are tremendously appreciated. The honey is so excellent and the cakes are a class above any others that people get sent.

December 4.—The trenches are in an appallingly bad condition. Luckily we have an extremely good Headquarters. It is absolutely weather proof. Awful weather the last two days; nothing but pouring rain. On the 7th or 8th Colonel Hyde Smith goes off on leave for about ten days and I command the Battalion. On the 15th the Division goes right back in Corps reserve, about ten miles back into good billets, I hope, and will probably stay there for a month. The nuisance is that I have got a six days' course of instruction which will probably

1915

begin after the Colonel comes back. I have to lecture about trenches and all that sort of thing to young officers. That brings us up to Christmas Day, so I don't see how I can get off till 26th or 27th.

December 14.—I am afraid I shall be awfully unfit when I come home after nearly eight months in and out of the trenches: it's very difficult to regain one's former agility. Where we are now is a little mining village, a few miles from Lillers; only as its a mining village it has a lot of cottages and accomodation for billets. Most of the men have some sort of a bed to sleep on. Our H.Q. are excellent and my own billet is very comfortable indeed. The country is rather nicer than I have been used to out here, as there are hills and some woods and large chalk pits, but these mines rather spoil the scenery and the miners don't look very picturesque with their funny blue caps and their faces covered with coal dust. I shall probably ride over and see the 1st Battalion to-morrow: they are the other side of Lillers.

December, 18.—No, I didn't take myself too seriously when I marched off here. One reason was that the horses that were supposed to meet us at Lillers station went the wrong way and didn't turn up and all the mounted officers had to walk.

The Grenadiers say they have been giving Winston Churchill an awful time of it: the Colonel always makes him go round the trenches about three times during the night, up to his waist in water.

1915

December 21.—I took a ride on my five year old this afternoon. I would take on any horse here for any distance up to a mile, provided the going wasn't too deep.

December 22.—My leave is now definitely fixed for December 28th. Col. H. S. says that one gets to London about 3 or 4 p.m. ordinarily; so I ought to get down to Brockworth quite easily. Very wet at present and I am afraid the going will be very heavy. However, I now remember that you told me "Petone" doesn't mind that. How I am longing to see you both on the 28th.

[At the end of December Major Hardinge came home on leave.]

1916

January 6.—I am writing this in a little estaminet by the road side about four or five miles from where I think the Brigade is. Just on the other side of the road are the motor transport people with the men's blankets so, as they hear where they are going to halt, I can go on and get to them. My word! the crossing was about the roughest I have ever had: however, I did bring one thing off. I found Dick waiting for me at Boulogne and the boat arrived about 9 p.m. He was in great form and we spent a very comfortable night at the "Folkestone"—a jolly good hotel.

January 7.—I found the Battalion all right at last and we are now back in our comfortable billets at Rainbert. It was too rotten to go off on Tuesday. I did think it splendid of you to come and see me off. It was splendid seeing Aunt Cissy: didn't she look smart?

January 13.—We are in a small village south of Vermelles. Considering that it is pretty well bashed about, we haven't got a bad sort of billet. It is very cold and showers of sleet.

January 22.—I shall be commanding the Battalion for the next five or six days as Col. Hyde Smith goes off for an artillery course to-morrow. This Brigade certainly didn't get anything very great in the way of decorations as neither Brigadier, Brigade Major, nor any of the C.O.'s of the battalions which took part in the attack got anything at all.

January 24.—I got over to the Cameronians yesterday. I rode Col. Ussher's chestnut and had none too nice a time, as just as I got near their billets, three large shrapnel burst, one fairly close and the others near me. However, the old horse didn't much mind, though I was very frightened that he would get a shrapnel bullet in him, remembering the fact that he is not my horse! Last night we had a most splendid entertainment. George Grossmith, Henry Ainley, Henri Léoni, Leslie Henson and Arthur Prince. The place was packed and it was a most topping show. I haven't enjoyed anything so much for a long time. G. G. sang a lot of the best songs from "To-night's the night." It looked so funny to see them all in immaculate evening dress. You can't imagine what a lot of good a show like that does one. If only we could have it once a fortnight!

January 30.—I can't say anything at present, as you know, but we have had a certain amount of excitement this way lately, which did not turn out any too well for the Germans. At any rate, the

Battalion did very well, as you will see from what I hope to send you. It appears after all there may be a possible chance of my being made a temporary Major. Wouldn't it be a joke if I was?

[The following is the account of the engagement referred to above.]

SECRET.

IVth Corps,
47th Division,
Dismounted Division.
15th Division, No. 56/G.

1.—The report below has been received from Major P. Hardinge, the officer commanding the 10th Scottish Rifles, 46th Infantry Brigade.

The Battalion holds the front line between Posen Alley H.25.a.8.8. and Vendin Alley—H.19.a.2.8.

Casualties in the Battalion (according to reports received to-day) were eighteen killed and thirty-three wounded.

2.—Report by O.C. 10th Scottish Rifles on operations during evening of January 27, 1916.

(i.) In the afternoon of January 27th, hostile artillery was very active in this sector. It did considerable damage to both front and support lines, between Vendin Alley and Broadway. About three o'clock the fire died away, but at a quarter to four p.m. hostile bombardment began again. It rapidly became intensive, being mainly of very heavy shells, though

guns of every calibre appeared to be firing. At about 4.10 p.m. it seemed to reach its zenith. It was concentrated on both firing line and support line between Vendin Alley and Posen Alley. Both of these communication trenches were also heavily shelled from their junction with the firing line up to a distance of about 500 yards, to the rear, obviously as a "barrage."

(ii.) About 4.45 p.m. artillery fire slackened, and enemy began to send over trench mortars and bombs from catapults. At about 5 p.m. this stopped and enemy was seen to leave his trenches along the whole front of the Battalion. Rapid fire was immediately opened by us, by both rifles and machine guns. Opposite our right Company, it is generally agreed that enemy only advanced a few yards, and was then driven back to his trenches by our rapid fire. Opposite our left Company he made more progress, reaching a point about 30 yards in front of his wire; but his left flank was then enfiladed by the four machine guns placed in the salient in our line (H.19.c.8.8.) facing North, which completely stopped this attack. After this, no further attempt was made by the enemy to leave his trenches, and his attitude soon became inactive.

(iii.) An S.O.S. message was sent to the 46th Brigade at about 5 p.m. and 5 red rockets were fired. There did not seem much increase in the firing of our guns, but the field guns had been replying very vigorously to the enemy's fire ever since the beginning of his bombardment.

(iv.) Little damage was done to our front line from Posen Alley to the salient; but from that point to Vendin Alley a good deal of damage was done.

(v.) It may be noted that rapid covering fire on both flanks was opened by the enemy just before the moment of attack.

W. N. McCRACKEN,
Major-General,
Commanding (15th) Scottish Division.
28th January, 1916.

2.

15th Divisional Artillery.
C.R.E.
44th Infantry Brigade.
45th Infantry Brigade.
46th Infantry Brigade.

Forwarded for information. The prompt action of the Artillery and the gallant defence of the 10th Scottish Rifles reflect the greatest credit on all concerned.

H. KNOX, Lieut.-Colonel,
General Staff, 15th Division.
28th January, 1916.

Copy of message received.

To 10th Scottish Rifles.

Please inform all ranks that the Major-General is exceedingly pleased with their behaviour this afternoon, and he trusts your casualties will not prove to be so large as you anticipate. He wishes to convey his thanks to you and your Battalion.

The following received from Sir Henry Rawlinson.

Please convey to 10th Battalion Scottish Rifles my congratulations on their success in repulsing hostile attack. Their behaviour under very heavy shelling deserves high praise.

February 1.—We have got Lord Ellesmere attached to us for three days. He commands reserve Battalion Royal Scots and has been sent out here just to have a look round. Surely he is a great racing man? The cakes you send are always the admiration of any stray officers who come into tea. I hope to send you back a German bomb with all the explosive taken out of it.

February 2—I should like to see "Father Confessor" win the big race very much indeed. Thank goodness we go back into advanced billets to-morrow. Eight days in the front line is a jolly long spell in this part of the line.

February 6.—They are shelling a good deal round here this morning and we asked the old woman we are billeted on, if she wasn't frightened (house very close up). She said: "Ah non, messieurs, nos garçons qui sont a la guerre, ils n'ont par peur des obus." Rather splendid of her, wasn't it? We go back to Noeux-les-Mines and I hope to get my billet in the butcher's shop.

February 7.—My artillery course has begun and I am having a very easy time. Aire is an extraordinary quiet, dull sort of place but nice and clean and a contrast to most of the other towns I have been in lately. There are too many gunners

at the course; only myself and two Colonels are infantry, so we are considerably outnumbered in giving vent to our opinions. Langley Browning is here, commands a battery: he has the Military Cross. We recognised each other almost at once. We have seen so much in the papers lately about the Germans massing for an attack in Flanders that I can't help thinking it is all bluff here and they mean business elsewhere. I am billeted on the Chief Inspector of Police, so shall have to be very careful, shan't I?

February 11.—Just got back from Aire to find all your letters and parcels waiting for me. I was in command up to the evening of the 28th, when Col. Hyde Smith came back, so I did get the honour of being in command at the critical moment. Col. H. S. met Gen. McCracken in the street the other day and he said he was extraordinarily pleased with the way the Battalion had behaved and wished his thanks conveyed to me. Just had a most enormous parcel from Lord Ellesmere: they came in very handy for my birthday dinner. Do you see now I am a full Captain? This means I shall be made a temporary Major. Think of that!

February 12.—I think the report I send will give you most of the information: it is an example of very fine behaviour by rather raw troops under a very dreadful shell fire. I was very much interested to hear about Capt. Forrester and "Christmas Daisy." That shows that in a really fast thing, an ounce of blood is worth a pound of bone. Sorry I gave that bomb to Lord Ellesmere, but have now got hold of another which fell in the trench and failed to explode that same night: have had it detonated and will send it to you first opportunity.

1916

To-morrow I go back into the extreme Northern section.

February 14.—We are going to be in now for twelve days in front and support, which will be a pretty long spell. By the way, I never told you how one remark of one of the gunners was overheard the first day at Aire. He was talking to another gunner about an observing officer and was heard to say: "There was this poor devil living a dog's life in a dug-out with the infantry."

March 1.—It has been my day in to-day. Either the Colonel or I have to be there all day: not a very lively proceeding in a place like this, I can tell you. It is rather amusing to think that after the little affair on the Kaiser's birthday quite a number of decorations have been given to various men of other units who were involved in the affair; but although we recommended ten men, not one to us! Isn't it funny the way things are done? We go into a cellar again to-morrow: that being the H.Q. of the sector we are going into. It looks a very nice, clean cellar.

March 3.—We are quite safely installed in our cellar in the outskirts of Loos; a place, as you know, that is very much knocked about. It is a very promising cellar, as I think I told you, with two velvet-seated chairs and several looking-glasses; and a very safe looking cellar too! It is funny to think one looks on a cellar now as a kind of home of luxury. I sleep on the sofa, which is very comfortable.

Rather beastly sort of weather, muggy and rainy, but a good day for "Unting!"

1916

March 6.—I have just discovered that it was the 2nd Battalion Inniskilling Fusiliers, now attached to us, of which Uncle Bob was second in command. The Colonel seems to have a great liking for Uncle Bob. I think I ought to become a temporary Major in a few days. We ought to be getting our month's rest, starting on the 20th; but we don't hear anything yet about leave being reopened. I think a diplomatically dropped hint that I am very anxious to get some Staff work might be beneficial!

March 10.—Will you please send Jacky some cigarettes? I haven't sent him any for an awful long time. I am back in the original cellar at Loos at the present moment. What has disgusted me with the Germans more than anything before is that they bribed the American corn merchants to put small spiked forks in the bags of oats and have killed a lot of the French horses. Isn't it a rotten trick?

March 12.—It has been a lovely spring day, beautiful and warm sunshine, quite a day when hounds would have run well, I think. It is rather amusing—they recently decided to give code names to all units and formations. Our Brigade is known as Pig, and we are called Pork! The other regiments in the Brigade being called Sow, Ham and Bacon. This is to be used in all telephone messages a certain distance behind the firing line. Two trench mortar batteries have been called, curiously enough, Pat and Mimi.

March 19.—Just 2 months to-day since I rejoined the Cameronians. It does seem an age.

March 24.—Col. Ussher reported at H.Q. today and will take over the command of the Battalion in the 2nd Company. Two things may happen now. Col. Hyde Smith may take over the command of another Battalion; or he will stay here as second in command and I go back to command a Company. If he remains as second in command I shall apply to return to the Cameronians.

March 26.—Betty Bateman says they all went from Wellington to a Woman's Farm demonstration which delighted Mrs. Rawnsley enormously! She insisted on emptying a manure cart herself and spreading it about, after which all the party absolutely refused to go near her!

March 31.—We were inspected by the Brigadier to-day and my little horse looked very smart with his black head-rope. I had to do all the galloping about as his Adjutant couldn't persuade his horse to move—had a difference of opinion with him in fact! I hear the Scots Greys are getting up a Revue entitled "Wash your Neck," a parody of "Watch your Step." Very nice to have time to do these things, isn't it? You do seem to have had a terrible blizzard in England. I hope to get to Lillers or Aire on Sunday to see Wrightie, but am pretty busy at present as I have to look after the musketry, which means sometimes an all day job.

April 15.—I am afraid it seems rather a bad business about my getting a Staff job. A message came in to-day asking us to recommend a Captain as Instructor of the 1st Army School which is now being formed. I asked Col. Ussher to recommend me: after a slight demur he consented; but he happened to see the Brigadier this evening and the Brigadier said I was second in command and he couldn't possibly spare me, and so wouldn't forward my recommendation. So it doesn't look as if I possibly can get away.

April 20.—Col. Ussher rode my little horse last night and liked him very much. I must take care that he doesn't pinch him as his spare charger! We go into Béthune for the night of 24th and then into the trenches next day. I feel quite fit again to-day: rather enjoyed my two days in bed.

April 23.—Leave is re-opened; I hope to get away in about three weeks time. I think we shall probably be billeted in Béthune fairly often now we have got into this new sector (Hohenzollern Redoubt). Its been a lovely day: unfortunately I have been on a Court Martial, which seems rather unpardonable on Easter Sunday, so wasn't able to ride over and see Wrightie as I had hoped. I am full of hope about my leave and quite as excited as I was over my first leave.

[At the end of April Major Hardinge returned for his last leave home.]

May 7.—How miserably short leave is! I hardly seem to have got home at all, but I did enjoy this leave most awfully. I got my breakfast in the Pullman all right. My luck has not been in this side of the water so far, as Dick wasn't here and I couldn't get a lift on in the car, so am staying the night here. However, I shall be able to get in a pretty good night's sleep.

May 9.—I am safely back. I had a very peaceful night at the Boulogne hotel and got to Béthune about 7 o'clock. I found my horse ready to meet me and rode out to Sailly-la-Bourse, where I found the Battalion in billets. We go back into the line on the 11th for 16 days, back to Béthune for 8 days when the trip is ended.

May 11.—We got into the trenches quite safely this morning! On our way we went over the same fences that I jumped over the day before. Col. Ussher and I both being much delighted at having a leap before getting into the trenches. His old chestnut refused once or twice. Our line is rather a confusing one with some funny sorts of craters; but everything is very quiet at present. We haven't got any rats in our dug-out this time, thank goodness!

May 13.—A letter from Vera C. You can't imagine my amusement and delight at hearing that she and Daddy had gone off on the spree. I think it is too splendid altogether. The only thing I wonder at is that you did not take her off to supper at the Savoy and danced the Fox Trot afterwards! Apparently she enjoyed her evening very much. She is very down on me because I ragged her about her shoes and stockings. They were really very nice ones and I could see she thought so, which made me chaff her. Things have quieted down a good deal here. I have been too busy to re-read your letter, but will answer about it to-morrow. I have just heard that one officer of the Divisional Staff and another of the Army Staff have been arrested as German spies in the front line! At least someone saw them go round and recognised

them and told me. I expect there will be the devil to pay. Serve them jolly well right for not having come to report at our H.Q. first.

May 19.—Col. Ussher has done all he can about a Staff job for me, and with the other generals stirred up, we ought to be able to do something; but I am not too optimistic for I know only too well what little result these recommendations produce.

May 20.—I do wish I was at home to have a ride on "Sailor King." I must tell you about our battle the other day, but must wait a bit for that. There was a trench called Rabbit Run. The Bosche artillery devoted the whole of their energies to it, with the result that it was completely flattened out and had to be crossed at such speed that it thoroughly justified its name; in fact, never was any trench so well named.

May 24.—I have got rather a trying day tomorrow with a Divisional conference about the recent fighting, which will be rather a lengthy affair, I am afraid. I am feeling very fit at present, but shall be very glad to get out of these trenches.

May 30.—I am afraid the letter writing has rather gone amiss lately; but this is not my fault as we have had many sudden and violent moves. A deserter came over and said the Bosches were going to make a very big attack in this part of the line: he may be and probably is a liar, but meanwhile there is a great deal of excitement among the greater brains, and the consequence is we are not

in the billets we should be in. It is a great pity as otherwise it looks as if we should be having rather a pleasant time.

During the recent fighting in this part of the world, the fire of our heavy guns has been contemptible, mainly of course, because they have no shells at all. It does rather depress one, after nearly two years of war and being the richest country in the world, that we cannot reply in the same proportion to the German heavy guns.

June 2.—We go back into reserve trenches Sunday, 4th. Very good trenches they are too. One has been very tied down; in fact, my only amusement has been to go and school my horse over a certain battery's fences. I went over and saw the 1st Batt. yesterday: they have had a good many reinforcements in officers and men lately. Col. Lee seems to be very happy, doesn't he? I think he is very lucky to be in that part of the line. I wish I could change with him for a bit.

June 3.—Once again, I probably shan't be able to acknowledge your letter to-day, as Col. Ussher takes over acting Brigadier; Gen. Matheson going to the Division, and Gen. McCracken going on leave. I expect to be very busy this afternoon and shall be commanding the Battalion for the next ten days at least.

The weather keeps lovely and the Bosches very quiet; so I don't think the rumoured attack is coming off, unless he seizes the opportunity when I am in command.

June 4.—Well, what do you think about this tin cross of mine? I am very delighted to see that Col. Chaplin has got a Brevet as he deserves anything; but no other officer in this Battalion has got anything, so it looks as if this Division was very completely in the cold. I know that two C.S.M.'s in the 1st Battalion were recommended for medals; they have both been out since August, 1914, have risen from sergeants and have done exceedingly good work, but they have been disregarded; and a sergeant who has been looking after the horses at General Headquarters has got the Military Medal. At present the only thing you can tell from a D.S.O. or M.C. is that an officer has been in France, though he may not have been within a hundred miles of the firing line. It is better to be safe than glorious, but it is better still to be both. There is a good deal of humour about this war. Apparently there is much more gallant and distinguished service about being in a Remount depôt than being in the trenches, for I see that Col. ———, who has been in a very comfortable Remount depôt for about a year has got the D.S.O.

We have just got into reserve trenches with a beautiful Headquarters; in fact, I wish we were going to stop in it for all the sixteen days. The Colonel has just gone off and so now I shall be probably about three weeks in command. I am sure my horse will appreciate the golden syrup. I haven't got a name for him, but he is known amongst the grooms as Rubber because he is always bouncing about.

June 5.—Just been up to see the line we take over to-morrow; it isn't very grand.

June 6.—Yours of the 3rd with congratulations for which many thanks. I am very fit, which is a very good thing as there are only three other officers who really know anything about the trenches. They have sent round to ask if there are any officers with decorations who have not yet been invested; so I hope they will tell me soon that I can go home and get it. You will both have to come up and I shall have to invest in a pair of spurs in order to appear properly dressed.

June 7.—Whittle has sewn on a M.C. ribbon which Wrightie had sent me, having one to spare. Colonel Ussher is enjoying himself as Brigadier, I think, and looks better for the change already. It is a great thing not to be worried by the little things as the C.O. is.

Heard from Mary D. G. She certainly does write splendid letters.

June 9.—We have just had the only officer who knew anything about the trenches killed by a rifle grenade; so we are in rather a bad wav altogether. Had a great lunch at Brigade Headquarters with a salad and a glass of port afterwards. Tell Daddy the periscopes we bought are a great success.

June 11.—The trenches are in a worse mess than they often are in winter. Had a letter of congratulation from Aunt Cissy yesterday. We go back into reserve trenches for two days. I hope to get out and get a good bath, as one requires it at least once during sixteen days!

June 12.—We got back quite safely into reserve trenches this morning. Colonel Ussher probably comes back to the Battalion about 16th. I can't say I shall be very sorry.

June 13.—We go into front line to-morrow and then back into billets about 19th. I wish I could tell you when I shall be coming back to get the medal. My name has been sent in and I suppose I shall have to wait till they tell me I can go and get it. Anyhow, I hope it will be while I am in the trenches.

Rather an amusing message was thrown over from the German trenches the other day, it ran as follows:—"To the English trench mortars in Hohenzollern Redoubt. Dear old Stick-in-the mud. The German Minnenwerfer in the Hohenzollern send you heartiest greetings from the bottom of their 32 foot bomb dug-out." I think I shall wait till I get out of the trenches this time and then ask the Colonel if he will apply for me to be attached for Instruction to the Staff, as at present this job seems further and further away.

June 14.—If and when I do get home for the M.C., I am afraid it will not be for several months. The trenches are in a most undesirable state and we are not much relishing our five more days in the front line.

June 15.—The weather has providentially taken a turn for the better, and it really looks as if it might keep fine and the trenches might dry up. I had letters from Cooker and Dick to-day. The Canadians call a shell that doesn't burst a Yankee. Why? Because he is too proud to fight.

I shall be extremely thankful when we get out of trenches this time. It has been one of the worst trips I remember in every way.

June 16.—Great news from the Russians! They have got another 30,000 prisoners; so it looks as though we were a bit nearer the end of the war. I have suddenly taken a horrible panic about my legs and I am afraid this living in trenches is giving me bigger calves, making them more muscular, I mean, and absolutely spoiling my leg for a boot. Do you think I will get them back to my proper size when I get back? I tried to send a message to Wrightie by carrier piegon, but as I put "Come and stay with us. Dress bathing order," it was refused as being too frivolous.

Extracts from Letters Received.

From Lieut.-Col. Ussher, 10th Batt., Scottish Rifles:

17. 6. 16.

". . . . It is with the deepest regret that I have to write and tell you that Pat was severely wounded when out superintending the working parties last night . . . . . .

"Like the gallant young fellow he was, he was always trying to lead the officers and men by his fine example. He is a great loss to me and I only hope his youth and health will carry him through and that his valuable life will be spared to you all and to everyone else."

17. 6. 16.

"It is with the deepest regret we were informed that your dear son had succumbed to his wounds at 6.45 p.m. in the hospital at Béthune. It has cast a gloom over the Battalion. All Officers, N.C.O.'s and Men loved him; and his gallant conduct at all times was a splendid example to all ranks. Person-

ally, as you know, I was very fond of him and for one so young, it was really wonderful the knowledge he had acquired of his profession.

"I will miss him as my right hand man; his untiring efforts to see everything was properly conducted relieved me of much arduous work. Tomorrow he will be buried at Béthune. . . ."

From Brigadier-General Robertson, 19th Brigade:—

". . . Your son was a most splendid officer and the best of comrades and we can ill afford to lose such as he. I considered him an exceptionally promising officer and all the time he was with the 1st Battalion he did most excellently; and since joining the 10th I have heard very good accounts or him. He was loved by all ranks in the Regiment. . . ."

In speaking of him Brigadier-General Matheson, 46th Brigade, said that "He was an ideal young officer, the most promising he had ever had in his Brigade, and he has never had another like him; a great deal of the efficiency of the 10th Battalion was due to him; he considered him one of the finest leaders of men and deeply deplored his death."

From Colonel Chaplin, 1st Cameronians:—

". . . . Your boy was a splendid officer, one of the best I have seen in the war; and I was very sorry when he left us to go to the 10th Battalion. As soon as I heard he had been hit, I went with Major Hyde Smith to the Clearing Hospital. I saw him for a few minutes. He seemed quite cheery and did not seem to be in pain. All of us who could get away went to the funeral. All the men in his Company wanted to go; but it was not possible to allow more than thirty to do so. . ."

From Private A. Whittle, Soldier Servant:—

". . . He was buried on Sunday, the 18th, at 2 p.m., in Béthune Cemetery. He was buried with full military honours. Some of the chief mourners were Brig.-Gen. Robertson, Col. Chaplin, Major H. Smith, about a dozen officers from the 1st and several officers from the 10th. And I am perfectly sure every man and officer shares and mourns the loss of the Major. I feel it almost as much as you do. He was liked wherever he went, and there wasn't a braver man on the battlefield. He was a hero and a martyr to his King and Country. Since his death, the Regiment has been shrouded in sorrow and sympathy for him. He flinched from nothing and died a hero's death. I was with him from the time he was brought in up to his death. I am like a ship without a sail. We always got on so well together; not one cross word between us since we have been together. . ."

From Capt. Minchin, 1st Cameronians, attached R.F.C.

". . . We had much in common and I feel that I have lost one who would eventually have become a very great friend. He was such a good soldier, always cheerful, which is half the battle in the trenches and had all the respect of his men. . . . . The Regiment has lost a particularly efficient officer; those who knew him have lost a very charming and gallant friend. . . . ."

From Capt. Mackworth, 37th Divisional Headquarters:—

". . . . . I have lost a very dear friend, one of the best men I have ever known. . . . I only just want to remind you of the countless numbers who were proud to call Pat their friend and for whom his death makes a blank that can never be filled. . . . Of all Pat's friends, none will be so heart-broken as my oldest friend, Tom Gambier Parry. . . ."

From Madame Flahaut, Béthune.

". . . . Vous pouvez me croire, chère Madame, que votre cher fils qui couchait chez moi depuis 8 mois, fut bien regretté par toute ma famille. Il était chez moi très bien. Nous occupions le Mess de Messieurs les Officiers, et votre fils était parmi eux. Il mangeait et couchait chez moi. Ma maison était pour lui comme la votre.

Aussi, chère Madame, que de fois nous pensons à votre cher fils. Et soyez persuadé que nous prenons part à votre chagrin. . . . J'ai assisté au service funèbre, et j'ai accompagné votre cher fils jusqu'à sa dernière demeure, c'est a dire, au cimetière de Béthuné. Nous sommes allés bien des fois depuis son décés, sur la tombe de poser des fleurs et entretenir sa tombe. . . . ."

From Lieut J. T. Upton, 20th Hussars, Prisoner of War:—

". . . . During these long two years Pat always made time to write and to send things to me and in his letters his thoughts were never of himself, but always to ask if I was all right. . . I had no idea he was a Major, because he was so modest he never liked to speak of himself. . ."

Col. Luard, speaking of the time when he was in Scotland, sends a message to say:—

". . . . That he was a most splendid young fellow and that no harm could happen or be thought of anywhere he was; that he created more of an atmosphere for good than anyone, young or old, in the Army he had ever come across; and that to know him was to love him and to love everything that was good and to hate evil."

From Mr R. St. C. Talboys, Wellington College:—

". . . . I knew Pat all the time he was here and saw him constantly at Magdalen where he had so many friends and was radiantly happy, as I knew he would be . . . his name will be remembered and honoured here at Wellington always . . . he will always be one of the irreplaceable memories with me. . . ."

From Mr. Rawnsley, Well Vale:—

". . . . Amongst the many friends my son made at Oxford, there was no more delightful personality than Pat. . . We all loved him. It is not long since my wife received from him one of those charming breezy letters which always cheered and delighted everybody who received them. . . He was truly one of the most gentle and gallant spirits that ever drew breath. . . ."

From Capt. Herbert Garton, 9th Batt. Rifle Brigade:—

". . . . I was in digs with your son Patrick at Oxford and I am tremendously proud to think I was one of his great friends. He and I and Kenneth Mackenzie lived together at 65, High Street, and I am now the only survivor. . . . I knew him all the time I was at Oxford, and took schools the same time as he did, I went on the river with him, played tennis with him, dined with him, went to the theatre with him, and he and

Kenneth and I had the most glorious and unforgetable time. In this wretched war one gets callous and blunted and one's capacity for feeling things gets less; but Pat's death means for me the most appalling gap in my dreams of a future where we should all have met at Magdalen . . . It is no good becoming hopeless and sentimental at such a time as this and Pat's letters to me were splendidly cheery (I heard from him quite recently); and the glory of his career in a way leaves hardly any room for regret.

[Capt. Garton was killed in September 1916.]

From Mr. Cookson, Magdalen College, Oxford:—

". . . . Your son was only a short time my pupil at Magdalen, but I knew him very well and he used constantly to come and see me in the evening. I was very fond of him; indeed, everyone was, and his death is a very real sorrow. He was a gentleman "pur sang" and worthy of the name he bore. I do not know that it is possible to say more in his praise than that. I had watched his brilliant career in the Army with admiration. . . I shall always think of him with affection and respect and I am glad to have had such a friend. In happier times he would have lived to do even better service to his country than has been possible in his short life. I am sure that he made the sacrifice cheerfully and gallantly."