



ROBECQ, 1915.

(From an Etching by Major J. Dickson, Huntly.)

# THE SIXTH GORDONS IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS

(WITH THE 7th AND 51st DIVISIONS)

BY

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With a Foreword by

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LATE COMMANDING THE 51st DIVISION

THE ROSEMOUNT PRESS  
ABERDEEN

1922

## FOREWORD

THE 6th Battalion Gordon Highlanders was one of the Territorial Battalions specially selected to be sent to France at the end of 1914 to tide over the anxious time pending the arrival of the Territorial and Service Divisions. The Battalion was engaged in all the principal actions in 1915. At Neuve Chapelle, its first fight, it justly earned a reputation which it maintained throughout the War. After a rest on the lines of communication, the Battalion rejoined the 51st Highland Division in the Neuville St. Vaast sector in the summer of 1916, shortly before the Battle of the Somme. From that Battle onwards, it took part in practically all the principal operations of the War until the Armistice in 1918. Smart and soldierly behind the lines, it fought scientifically and with great resolution and bravery. The big daylight raid carried out in the Arras sector in 1917 with complete success, under Lt.-Colonel Dawson, against a resolute enemy, must rank as one of the most daring and skilfully-conducted minor enterprises of the War. It would have been hard to find a better Battalion in France than

the 6th Gordons. What was the secret of their excellence? They were imbued with the highest regimental *esprit de corps*; they were proud of their Division; they considered themselves to be the best Battalion in the best Division, and they endeavoured to act up to that standard. It was no idle bombast when, in the anxious days of 1918, Captain Donald Clark, on receiving a message to retire, replied, "This Division does not retire." They were fortunate in having as Adjutant in peace time H. Pelham Burn, who for two years was their Brigadier in war; they were fortunate in having a succession of first-rate Commanding Officers, and, in consequence, the Company and Platoon Commanders were also good soldiers; but, lastly, their successes were due to the fact that their men were mainly recruited from Banffshire and Aberdeenshire, which, throughout the War, provided fighting material as good as any in the world. Scotland may well be proud of her brave 6th Gordons.

G. M. HARPER,  
Lt.-General.

## PREFACE

THIS little book does not profess to be a history of the World War ; it is intended to be a record, fairly full and completely accurate, of the life and battle-ventures of a gallant Territorial Battalion which for more than four years played a worthy part in the great struggle in Europe. The story has been compiled from War Diaries and other official records, supplemented by soldiers' letters, private diaries, and the personal recollections of the writer and his friends. Each chapter, as completed, was submitted to two or more officers or non-commissioned officers who served with the Battalion during the period described, and the narrative has been amended to meet their suggestions.

Such a manner of treatment has obvious disadvantages ; the story is detailed, plain, and matter-of-fact ; but while it would have been possible, by the selection of picturesque incidents and by a less scrupulous regard for truth, to produce a volume of greater interest to the general reader, it is believed that in its present form the record will approve itself to the men who served and to the relatives of our fallen comrades.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in compiling the Rolls which appear at the end of the volume. As a result of the frequent interchange of officers and men among various units in the field, official records are neither accurate nor complete. Much time and labour have been spent in tracing omissions ; many copies of the Rolls have been distributed throughout the Battalion area ; corrections have been invited from relatives and friends ; all omissions and inaccuracies reported have been investigated with care, and amendments have been made where errors have been discovered.

The story of the Battalion would have been incomplete but for the generous response given to requests for assistance. Grateful acknowledgment is now made to :—

The Chairman, Mr. Gordon-Duff, and the members of the War Memorial Committee of the 6th Gordon Highlanders ;

The Imperial War Museum, for permission to reproduce official photographs ;

Major J. Dickson, Huntly, for the use of his etching of Robecq ;

Captain B. Downie, Buckie, for the preparation of the sketch map which illustrates Chapter XI ;

Miss Mary Symon and Mr. John Foster, for permission to quote their poems on Neuve Chapelle ;

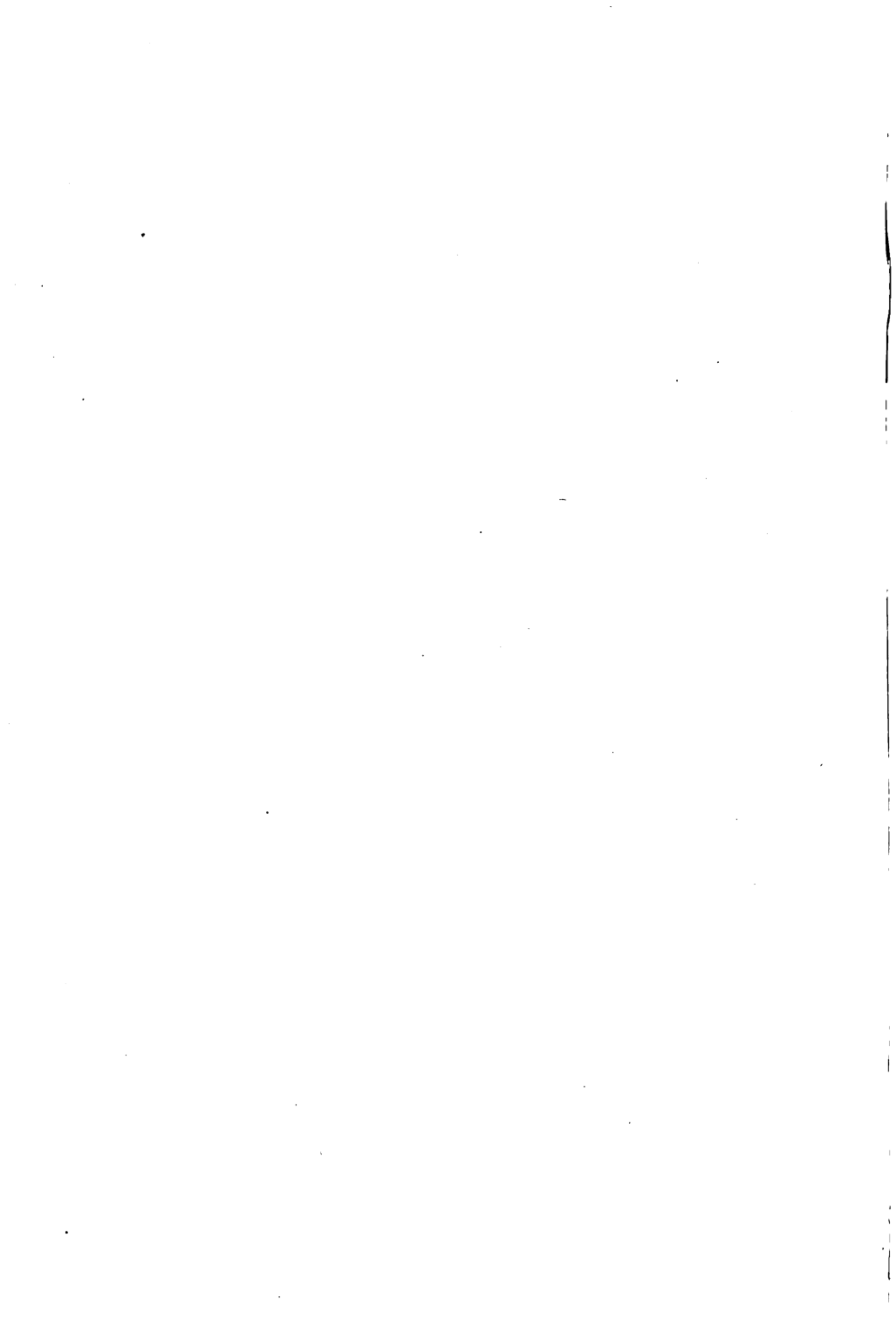
Mr. D. M. J. James, formerly of Huntly, for many valuable suggestions in the writing of the story ;

Captain F. W. Findlay, M.C., for much useful information and helpful criticism ;

Mr. Theodore Watt, of The Rosemount Press, whose interest in the publication has been more personal than professional ;

The many members of the old Battalion and their relatives and friends, who have contributed letters, diaries, and personal recollections ;

Most of all Lieut.-Col. J. Dawson, D.S.O., who has made all arrangements for illustrations and publication, at whose suggestion the work was undertaken, and without whose kindly guidance and sane judgment it would not have been completed.





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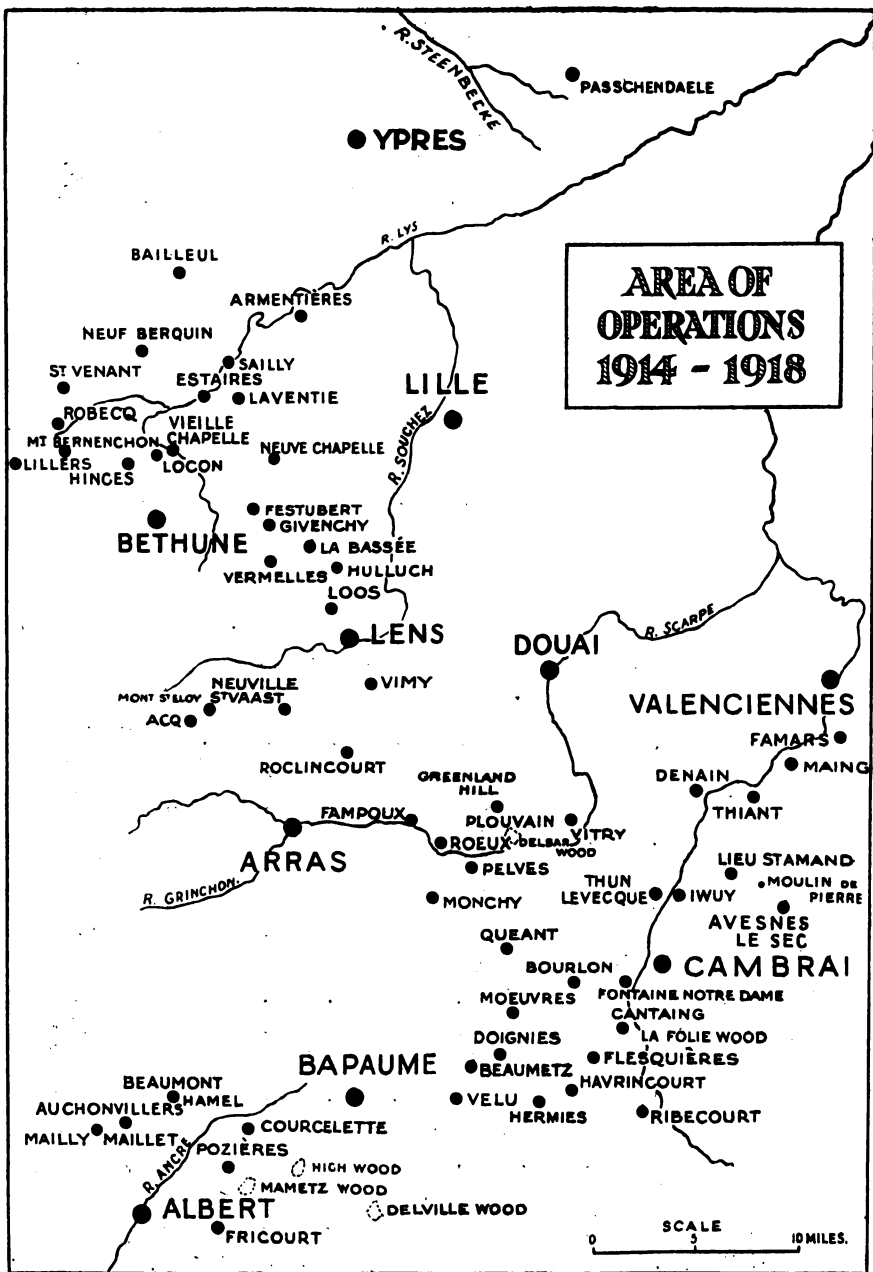
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## CHAPTER I

### MOBILIZATION

*August—November 1914*

OUTBREAK OF WAR—KEITH—PERTH—BEDFORD—  
TRAINING—REVIEW BY KING GEORGE

A casual visitor to the north-east of Scotland in the opening days of August 1914 could not fail to be impressed by the apparent indifference of the people to the general situation in Europe. Already the four greatest military nations of the world—France, Germany, Austria, and Russia—were at war ; at any hour the power of Britain might be hurled into the conflict. Yet little trace of emotion could be seen. Men and women went about their daily tasks without haste or excitement. Only the gleam in the eyes of eager youth or the anxious look of wife or mother betrayed hope or fear, and showed that beneath the well-ordered calm still pulsed that passionate love of freedom that never disdained to battle for the right.

At seven o'clock on the evening of Tuesday, the 4th of August, came the order " Mobilize." From the Moray Firth to the Cabrach, from Bucksburn to Tomintoul, the swift call sped and was swiftly answered.

Laird and crofter, clerk and trader, seaman and shepherd mustered at their Company Headquarters. The 6th Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders was under arms.

At Company Headquarters—Banff, Buckie, Keith, Dufftown, Huntly, Inverurie, Alford, and Bucksburn—the work of preparation was rapidly completed. Dress and equipment were inspected, and deficiencies were made good. The roll was called. The response was everywhere magnificent. In one company 135 men reported out of 136 on the books, the missing man being then at sea; in another there was but one absentee, who was seriously ill. An old Territorial volunteered, borrowed the sick man's uniform, and took his place in the ranks.

On the 6th and 7th of August the Battalion assembled at Keith. The nearer Companies from Buckie, Dufftown, and Huntly marched by road; those more distant came by rail. Their departure from Company Headquarters was watched by large gatherings of young and old who had assembled to bid them a hearty "God Speed." Everywhere there was an absence of jingoism and military parade, everywhere good humour and cheerfulness prevailed, but here and there among the crowd of onlookers a drawn look or a glistening tear revealed a woman's anxious heart.

Nearly a week was spent in Keith, where the men were billeted in the school and in private houses. Details of organization were completed, and on Tuesday, the 11th, the Battalion entrained at six in the morning

and moved south to Perth. Here the men were quartered in schools and in a granary.

On the 16th of August the Battalion left Perth and detrained at Bedford, in the south-east Midlands of England, where the Highland Territorial Brigade was stationed. The arrival of the troops was watched with great interest by the inhabitants of the quiet English town. Few of them had previously seen a kilted regiment or heard a pipe band, but admiration of the stalwart tartan-clad figures was tempered with anxiety when it became known that the soldiers were to be billeted on the civil population. These bare-kneed, picturesquely-garbed mountaineers provided an imposing military spectacle on the march or on parade, but their dress and strange speech called up vague memories of Highland feuds and barbaric customs. Many doubts were felt of their suitability as neighbours in a house, but patriotic enthusiasm was at its height. The heartiest of welcomes was given to the men. No effort was spared to make their billets comfortable. All that was required of the householders was to clear a room for the soldiers, but in almost every case a more generous view of their duties as citizens was taken. Often beds, tables, and chairs were provided, and hot water, tea, coffee, and sometimes even porridge were supplied. The men, many of whom had never before missed the comforts of home, were quick to note and appreciate this kindness, and their conduct during the three months is in itself a tribute to the consideration they received on every hand. Many lasting friendships were formed. Many of the men,

when on leave later from the battle front, spent a day in Bedford, and those who did so always found that they retained a warm corner in the kindly hearts of their former hosts.

The Battalion was quartered in the west end of the town, with billets in Beverley Crescent, Bromham Road, Cutliffe Grove, Cutliffe Place, Hurst Grove, Winifred Road, and Preston Road. Headquarters and the Battalion Stores were in the Pavilion of the Girls' High School playing-field, a fine open space which provided an ideal parade and training ground. On this parade ground most of the time was spent. Here, in the sweltering heat of an English autumn, the men went through the routine of recruit training. Arm drill, close order drill, and musketry filled their days, but as time went on, and as the men became proficient in elementary training, the work grew wider and more interesting. There were route marches through the quaint villages and along the winding lanes that bordered on the Ouse. The men applied the principles of musketry, learned so painfully on the parade ground, at the ranges of Harroden and Herring's Green. Sometimes there were night operations, and later some practice in field work. Into these the men entered with great keenness, for even a mimic battle thrills with the splendour and movement and shock of war.

Splendid weather and new surroundings gave a fresh zest to life. The flat enclosed country with its tall hedges and quaint brick buildings, the slow-moving river bordered by willows and alders, were in marked contrast to the hills and burns of the native land.



Amusement and recreation were abundant. There were the theatre and the picture-houses, football and boating—a new and joyous exercise. A Y.M.C.A. hut had been built, where there was quiet to read and write, and where a cup of coffee could be had. There was much to discuss—the new country, its people and products, the progress of the War, how the Battalion was “shaping,” how much better it was than any of the others, when they would go out to France, and what they would do when they got there—the glorious dreams of high-hearted dreamers.

Novel conditions of life created strange situations. Sentries especially were looked upon as “fair game,” and it was considered a duty to spring surprises on them. More than one officer who appeared suddenly from an unexpected quarter met his match, and in language which made up in force what it lost in politeness was ordered to say who he was. One sentry scored in his own quiet fashion off “Visiting Rounds,” when that officer asked him what he would do if he saw a Zeppelin coming towards him over the parade ground: “Weel, sir, I wad jist think it wis a miracle!” Some Bedford people still delight in the story of a raw lad who saw a large vegetable marrow on a coster’s cart. Mistaking the vegetable, he asked the coster, “How much for the big banana?” On learning that it cost only sixpence, he promptly purchased it and carried it to his billet, where the appearance of the “big banana” caused great merriment among his comrades and the landlady’s family.

For three months of good weather the strenuous

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training and hard life continued. The Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. C. McLean, and the Adjutant, Captain H. Pelham Burn, tireless and eagle-eyed, devoted themselves whole-heartedly to the work. Officers and men, fired by their example, found no task too hard and no toil too irksome. Gradually the Battalion was welded into a hardy fighting unit, and when reviewed by King George on the 22nd of October, the men marched past with the confident step and proud bearing of veterans. Meantime the First Battle of Ypres was being fought. France was calling. Reinforcements were urgently required, and every day seemed to bring nearer the hope of upholding the honour of Scotland in a foreign land.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FIRST WINTER

*November 1914—March 1915*

CROSSING THE CHANNEL—BLENDECQUES—SAILLY—THE  
TRENCHES—CHRISTMAS TRUCE

In the early days of November 1914 the first battalions of the Territorial Force were sent on service overseas. Among these were the 6th Gordons, who left Bedford on the 9th of November. Proceeding to Southampton, they embarked in the evening on the troopship "Cornishman," and crossed the Channel by the guarded route. Enemy submarines had already been busy, and vessels carrying drafts and fresh troops were usually escorted by destroyers, crossings being made at night, and all lights extinguished. For most of the men this was the first experience of a trip by sea, and to the novelty of the experience was added the possibility of the torpedo. The journey was quite uneventful. On the morning of the 10th the "Cornishman" entered the estuary of the Seine and anchored off Le Havre. A mist at first obscured the land, and expectant eyes eagerly awaited their first glimpse of France. Through the vanishing fog the spires and

buildings of the town became gradually visible, presenting at first a picture of great beauty, which the landing soon dispelled. The grimy docks, the wharves stacked with munitions of war, the piled disorder of supplies and packing-cases, the busy chaos of the landing-stage contained no romance. The men looked eagerly around, seeking new impressions, but there was little new except the diligent old Frenchmen busied with their tasks, and a few wounded "poilus" who came to marvel at the uncouth dress of the Highlanders.

When the troopship drew up at the quay, among the first to step ashore was the Pipe Major. He at once began to tune up, and soon attracted the attention of the natives, to whom the kilt and the bagpipes were still strange. Great amusement was caused among the men who lined the rail of the "Cornishman" when a small French child, some eight years of age, mistaking the Pipe Major for a wandering minstrel, came shyly up and offered him a copper. Then came the hurry and bustle of disembarkation, completed by four in the afternoon. The Battalion moved up to No. 1 Reserve Camp on the top of the hill behind the town, and there remained for two days.

At four in the morning of the 13th the Battalion paraded in camp, marched to the station, and at ten in the forenoon left Le Havre. Then began the tedious journey up the line. Troop trains consisted of cattle-trucks, horse-boxes, and goods-vans, most of them bearing the legend "Chevaux 8. Hommes 40." Into these the men were packed, as many as thirty-eight being crowded into one truck. The railway journey

was trying and exhausting, but the strange land stirred the interest of the men. The slowness of the train left ample time to study the country through which they were passing. At first there were the meadows of Normandy, but these gave place to a country which was everywhere cultivated. The little farms and crofts, the villages that straggled along the roads, the small plots which bore signs of the most painstaking industry, the orderly simplicity of the orchards were all subjects of animated discussion. Along the railway were guards from the French Reserves—old men with old-fashioned uniforms, their long, blue coats pinned carefully back from the knees of their red “pantalons,” their ancient muskets, with bayonet fixed, slung on their shoulders. At points along the railway, too, French civilians would wave and shout their good wishes, while children ran alongside, frequently able to keep pace with the train, uttering shrill cries of “Bully Bif!” “Bisket!” which rarely went unrewarded.

The long journey ended at St. Omer, which at that time was the General Headquarters of the British Army in France. For three weeks the Battalion remained near this town, billeted in the village of Blendecques. Here it received its final training before moving up to the fighting line. The period of active open warfare was now over, the enemy had been checked at Ypres and thrown back on the Marne, and both sides had already begun to dig themselves into winter positions in trenches which stretched from the English Channel to the borders of Switzerland. Training was

adapted to meet the new conditions, and while the Battalion still carried out its usual drill and attack practice, it also received some instruction in the relief of trenches, the posting of sentries, and other details of trench warfare. The men were keen, and their efforts were stimulated by the distant rumble of the guns from the battle line, then heard for the first time.

While the Battalion was training in this area, Lord Roberts, who had been on a visit to our army in the field, died at St. Omer. The sorrow of the troops was as keen as that of the people at home. The first part of the funeral ceremony took place in St. Omer. The 6th Battalion was selected, along with battalions of the Sikhs and Ghurkas, to take part in the official ceremony, and lined the streets, with arms reversed, while the cortège passed slowly through the town. A guard of honour from "D" Company, under Capt. (afterwards Lt.-Col.) James Dawson, was drawn up opposite the Mairie, into which the body was taken on the way to the station, while a funeral service was held.

On the 4th of December the Battalion left Blendecques and marched to Hazebrouck, leaving that town on the following day for Saily, which is situated on the river Lys, about six miles south-west of Armentières. This journey was made under most dispiriting conditions, in drenching rain and biting sleet. The hard, cobbled roads seemed to cut the feet, and the hot meal served from the cookers was frozen before it could be eaten. The completion of this march found the Battalion a unit of the fighting line—the first Battalion of the famous 51st Division to take its place in the

battle front. The 4th Seaforth Highlanders, who had left England before the 6th Gordons, had been passed on the journey from the coast.\*

As yet there was no 51st Division in the field, and the 6th Battalion was attached to the 7th Division and formed part of the 20th Brigade. This brigade was one of the finest in the army, being made up of two battalions of the Guards—the 1st Grenadiers and the 2nd Scots Guards—the 2nd Border Regiment, and the 2nd Gordon Highlanders. It was a pleasure to find that they were not to be altogether among strangers, and soon the men of the 6th and 2nd Battalions became fast friends.

Billets were found south-east of Sailly, with Headquarters near a cross-road, and the companies were scattered among the farms in the neighbourhood. This part of the country had been for a very short time in the hands of the enemy, and fields and roads bore the marks of shell-fire. Here and there a house, battered and roofless, showed the scars of war. Artillery—including 4.7-inch naval guns—was seen, and an occasional aeroplane, flying high, attracted much attention. Troops moving back from the line, mud-caked and worn, and the rattle of musketry were even more intimate reminders of duty. Pulses were quickened; hearts beat high with expectation; and now the men knew that all their courage, all their strength, and all their endurance would soon be put to the test.

The Battalion's introduction to the front line took

\* The Pioneer Battalion of the 51st Division, the 8th Royal Scots, went into the trenches a few days before the 6th Gordons.

place on the 6th of December, the dreariest and most dismal month of the year for a campaign. The short hours of sunlight, the long nights, the cold and the wet, the absence as yet of any promise of spring numbed the body and filled the mind with a sense of the hopelessness of life. During training days the men, burning with the zeal of Crusaders, had seen visions and had dreamed dreams. To their minds, filled with tales of Highland raids and feuds, war and battle were a magnificent and glorious experience, in which, with drums beating and pipes playing, masses of kilted warriors swept down with war-shout upon a foe who scattered before their fierce assault like chaff before the wind. The splendour of these dreams faded into the dull grey of the commonplace. The level, waterlogged plains of Flanders held no romance. Instead of the spirited charge and fierce mêlée were hard work with the spade, continuous discomfort, overhead an air filled with cold and rain, and underfoot a morass of deep and clinging clay.

At that time our line of defence consisted of one continuous trench, with various elements of other trenches behind it, and leading up to these from the roads and tracks behind, a few communicating trenches. In the fierce fighting of the early autumn our troops had taken up positions in hollows and along ditches which provided cover and gave some protection. As the line was stabilized, these hollows and ditches became the trench-line, providing at first tolerable defensive positions. The rains of late autumn soon poured into these trenches, and as winter progressed,



they were churned into open drains, half-filled with slimy, liquid mud. The country was so flat that drainage was impossible. Planks taken up to bridge the worst parts of a trench floated later on the surface of the mud, and became traps for the unwary. Everywhere the mud was knee-deep, in many places waist-deep. Progress was exhausting, trying, and slow. While one leg was being wrenched free from the embraces of the clay, the other sank deeper into it, and so the weary process went on. Two men of "A" Company—the first Company to go to the trenches—"laired" so completely in their first journey that, although they left billets immediately behind the trenches in the afternoon, they did not reach the front line until the next forenoon. To make matters worse, the 6th Gordons went into the line wearing shoes, spats, and hose. These were no match for the mud, which greedily seized them for its prey. Many men returned from a tour in the front line bare from the knee downward, and in at least three instances even kilts were lost. But these losses did not damp the spirits; rather they increased the anger against the enemy. One sturdy, stocky piper, after long wrestling with the mud, drew out a stained leg stripped of hose and shoes, and burst out with wrath, "The next German band that I see in Bucksburn, I'll ca' ma fit through the —— drum." At another time when the trenches were at their worst and troops were few, a senior officer came round the line, which was weak and thinly held. As there was no hope of reinforcement, he emphasized the need of holding on if an attack were made. The reply of the

Company Commander shows both the condition of the line and the quality of the Battalion. "We'll hold it to the last man, sir. We'll get them coming over there" (pointing to No Man's Land), "and those we don't shoot, we'll drown in the front trench."

Holding the line in such circumstances meant a weary and depressing struggle up to the front, four miserable days in a drain, where even untiring efforts seemed to effect no lasting improvement, and another exhausting and desperate struggle to get out again. Shelters scarcely existed. If a "cubby-hole" were dug in the side of a trench, it was certain to collapse soon on the soldier's head. Even the shelter of a waterproof sheet, rigged in a corner to keep off the rain, was forbidden. As time went on and as the trenches became worse, a series of "forts" about 100 yards apart were built immediately in rear of the front line. These were really short sections of a high command trench, built up from the ground in the shape of a crescent. They were constructed of sandbags, and earth was heaped up on the side facing the enemy. No fires or lights were allowed; no movement was permitted near them by day. Slight as they were and exposed to fire, the comfort they afforded and the escape they gave from the mud were worth the added risk.

As reliefs took place at night, and as the same men on returning to the line generally occupied the same posts, communication trenches were soon given up, and the men moved in and out over the open. Sometimes mistakes would occur, but they soon

became expert in recognizing, even in the dark, the boundaries of fields and other landmarks on their way, thus saving much time and effort. In spite of the depressing conditions, first experiences did not lack a certain grim fascination. By day there was the feeble outline of the enemy's trench, the continuous and generally vain search for the field grey of an enemy uniform, and the strange picture of "No Man's Land"—the narrow strip of country between the hostile armies—dotted with wreckage; here and there derelict farm implements, a dead cow, a shattered tree-trunk, or a thin belt of wire. There, too, lay unburied bodies of friend and foe alike, at one point two of them locked in a death-grip. With night came the ceaseless vigil; the blinding brightness of the enemy's star-shells, each lighting up the landscape with a dazzling brilliancy for hundreds of yards around; the ill-defined outlines of shapes in front that *would* move, although the dawn showed them harmless and inanimate; the breathless excitement of going over the parapet to inspect and repair the flimsy "aeroplanes" or strips of wire; and over all the brooding silence, broken only by the sharp report of a rifle or by the sudden blatter of a machine-gun.

The routine of trench life was very simple. Half-an-hour before dawn all stood to arms, remaining in their fire-positions until it was clear day. Rifles were then cleaned, or an effort was made to clean them; but the task was often impossible, for the mud ruled over all, and the men had not yet learned to use an old sock as breech or muzzle cover. The ration of rum

was issued. The share of each man was small—a thimbleful. A number of men abstained, some from principle, some because the stimulant was so strong that even a sip at first made a man gasp and clutch at his throat. Many well-meaning people at home raised a clamour against this deliberate encouragement of depravity—as they called it—but it is beyond dispute that after the ration had been issued, the miseries of the night vanished, a general air of cheerfulness was found on all sides, and many, exhausted by the labours of the night, were enabled to snatch a few hours of sleep, which otherwise would have been impossible. After this, preparations for breakfast went on. It was rarely possible to do cooking for a number, and two men joined together, lit a small fire with wood splinters and candle-ends, or used the “Tommy’s Cooker,” and on these brewed tea in a mess-tin. Then came the labours of the day. Each man in turn took over the duties of sentry, while the rest carried out whatever trench repairs were possible without observation by the enemy. Half-an-hour before dusk all again stood to arms until darkness had fallen and night sentries were posted.

Night brought greater activity. Parties were detailed to go back for rations. Work which by day would have been observed and would have drawn the enemy’s fire, was carried out. Repairs to the parapets of trenches, the building of forts, the construction and strengthening of wire entanglements in front—all demanded attention. Sentries were doubled, and at certain times a platoon or even a company would “stand to” in their battle positions and fire off three

or five rounds "rapid" to scare off any of the enemy who had ventured into the open either to work or to patrol.

Such was the dull routine of day and night. At first companies did four days in and four days out, but later it became two days in the line, two in support, and four out in billets immediately in rear. Little was seen of the enemy. By night he might be heard hammering at work; sometimes by day the top of a plank was seen as it was carried along his trench. Shell-fire was light, but at night machine-guns played, sometimes on the roads, sometimes on our trenches, and sometimes on suspected working parties and posts. This, as a rule, did little damage. By far the most deadly form of activity was sniping, which the enemy carried out from loop-holes in his front line or from concealed positions in rear. The many ruses which were reported on various parts of the front—dummy tree-stumps and cleverly "faked" carcasses of horse or cow—were not seen by the Battalion. In this form of warfare the enemy at first held a great advantage in the use of the telescopic rifle, as men were shot at apparently impossible angles and in seemingly safe positions. But as time went on, and as our men grew more accustomed to the ruses of the enemy and to the conditions of trench life, they became able to hold their own, and before summer came they mastered "Fritz" at his own game.

The four days of rest after a tour in the line were spent in billets immediately in rear. The country, which here had been entirely agricultural, was dotted

with small farms or crofts, from which the hardy French peasantry had with difficulty been persuaded to move. The farms nearest the trenches had been given up, and the barns and stables, which had not as yet been much damaged by the enemy's artillery, provided protection from the wind and cold and rain. In some billets straw was found, but in others the men lay on the bare floors—of earth or brick or stone—which, hard as they were, made a welcome change from the trenches.

Room was limited, and as many as twelve to sixteen were confined to the space of an ordinary living-room. Wood and coke were so scarce that fires were a rare luxury, but there was an ample supply of candles, which lent a cheerful brightness to the long evenings that were not spent in work. Then tales were told, experiences exchanged, and jests bandied. Newspapers, sometimes weeks old, were passed round, and an occasional game of cards was played. There was, of course, much "grouching"—no other word can express it—for a healthy soldier always "grouches." They "grouched" at their food—its lack of variety and quantity; they "grouched" about boots, mud, billets, the men who stayed at home—and some who didn't—the luck of the men in the transport, the irregularities of the mail, the weather, and life generally. But even a casual observer could see that this was merely a manner of speaking, and under it all lay an invincible spirit of cheerfulness and endurance that met danger and discomfort with smiling indifference.

Even from the first rumour was busy, and tales of the future—all rosy and more or less improbable—



R.S.M. Davidson, M.C., M.M.

Sgt. Piper I. Howarth, D.C.M.

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Capt. and Adj. R. Risk, M.C.

**KING GEORGE VISITS THE 6TH GORDONS.**

(Page 148.)



CLEANING UP.

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quickly passed from mouth to mouth. Sometimes they were to be sent back to guard the lines of communication ; sometimes they were to go to India or Gibraltar or Egypt—always a country where mud did not exist ; sometimes they were to be taken home to form—with their vast experience !—the nucleus of a new Division ; sometimes they were to be attached to the Engineers. Few, of course, believed these rumours, although all delighted in hearing and repeating them, adding frequently to their details. But they helped to pass the time and raise a laugh before they were dismissed and forgotten.

Nothing is a matter of greater concern to the soldier than his food, and in this respect men who had come from comfortable homes, and whose only previous experience of soldiering had been the holiday of a fortnight's camp in summer, suffered more than in any other. Fresh meat was rare. Bully beef and "Maconochie"—a tinned ration of chopped meat and vegetable—were generally supplied. These speedily became unpopular, chiefly because they were an almost daily issue, and because the men had no knowledge of how best to cook them. With experience came knowledge, and "bully" served as "rissoles" or fried in slices was a revelation, while "Maconochie" well watered became an appetizing stew. Bread was rarely seen. Instead there was issued the army biscuit, which in the early days was hard as a paving-stone and obdurate as a mule. Nothing less than six hours' soaking in water could soften it. Even strong teeth could make no impression on it, and after it was

broken, it had the taste of sandy saw-dust. Tea and sugar rarely failed, and the only complaint to be made against them was that, when portioned out, the sugar was mostly tea, and the tea had more than its share of sugar. One great compensation they had, however. Potatoes had been cultivated in this area, and the French peasants had fled, leaving supplies in "pits" and in the fields. These formed a pleasant addition to the menu, and it was considered no crime to take them, as otherwise they would have rotted unused.

In spite of the spirit of resignation and forced cheerfulness, there is no doubt that existence during that dreary first winter would have been impossible but for home. The memories of peace times, all the more enchanting because of their distance and of the contrast they made with the cheerless conditions in the field, were stirred by the kindness that was reflected in every mail. Letters, however commonplace or short, were read and re-read; a kindly sympathetic phrase or expression of affection and esteem made labour and privation lighter for days that followed. And after letters came parcels, packed with dainties. Cakes and shortbread, cigarettes and tobacco, scones and crumpets, sweetmeats and chocolate were feasts of luxury after bully and dog biscuit. The joy that in one section greeted a "pan" loaf—all that a poor mother could send her boy—exceeded all the rest. Here truly the "widow's mite" had its reward. With the unselfishness that only hard times can bring, the men shared their priceless gifts; care and misery were banished, and the future smiled again. Knitted

comforts, too, were abundant after a time, although at first the supply was inadequate. Balaclava helmets, scarves, mufflers, and socks became plentiful, and after a bath in tubs, which were made by cutting barrels in two, the cold and wet were set at defiance.

Out of the trenches it was not all rest and play. Before the War many of the men had been engaged in agriculture, and were accustomed to heavy manual labour. They soon made for themselves a reputation as workers that only increased their labours. At night there were frequent working parties, carrying stores and supplies forward to the line, digging new trenches, and building forts. By day, too, training was not neglected, but the nearness of the enemy limited its scope. It was as much as men could do to make themselves clean, to free arms, equipment, and clothing from the all-embracing mud, and to wage war on the parasitic louse, which found the pleats of a kilt the most comfortable of homes. The end of a period of rest found men clean, fit, and fresh, ready to return once again to the mud-bath of the line.

Only two incidents broke the dull monotony of the routine of winter. On the 17th of December a "demonstration" was made along our front in order to relieve the pressure on other parts of the line. The 20th Brigade took part in this demonstration, several of the units sending over parties into the front German trench. The 6th Battalion was in close support in trenches behind the front line, but took no active part in the operation. The experience was instructive, as it gave the men their first lesson in the confused uproar

and turmoil of battle. They heard for the first time the rapid hammer-like reports of the big guns, the screech of the shells overhead, and the continuous rattle of musketry along the line.

At Christmas 1914 there took place in some parts of the British line what is still regarded by many as the most remarkable incident of the War—an unofficial truce. During the winter it was not unusual for little groups of men to gather in a front trench, and there hold impromptu concerts, singing patriotic and sentimental songs. The Germans, too, did much the same, and on calm evenings the songs from one line floated to the trenches on the other side, and were there received with applause, and sometimes with calls for an encore. On quiet nights, at points where the trenches were quite near, remarks shouted from one trench-system were audible in the other. Christmas Eve the Germans spent in singing carols, and, the night being calm, they informed our men that they did not intend to shoot on Christmas Day, asking at the same time that we also should refrain from violence. “No shoot to-night, Jock! Sing to-night!” was one of the remarks they made on Christmas Eve. Little attention was given to this, but on Christmas morning, when our men were at breakfast, a cry was raised that the Germans had left their trenches. Springing to arms, they could scarcely believe their eyes when they looked over the parapet and saw a number of the enemy standing in the open in front of their trenches, all unarmed. Some of the enemy shouted “No shoot!” and after a little, a number of our men also got out of their trench.

Meantime Colonel McLean had come up on his daily tour of inspection, accompanied by the Padre, the Rev. J. Esslemont Adams, minister of the West United Free Church, Aberdeen. They had just completed a burial service over one of our men behind the line, when the Chaplain, looking up, observed the strange sight at the front trench, and drew the Commanding Officer's attention to it. Colonel McLean ran along the front line and ordered the men to come down, but they pointed out that more of our men further along were standing "on the top," and that a number of the enemy were out on their side and gazing peacefully across. The Chaplain, who had followed the Colonel, said to him, "I'm off, sir, to speak to the Germans; maybe we could get a truce to bury the dead lying in No Man's Land." Coming to a little ditch, which ran along the middle of the field between the lines, he held up his hands and called out, "I want to speak to your Commanding Officer. Does anyone speak English?" Several German officers were standing together, and one of them said, "Yes! Come over the ditch." The Chaplain hurried forward, saluted the German Commander, and began to talk to him and his staff. Almost at the same moment a hare burst into view and raced along between the lines. Scots and Germans leapt from their trenches and joined in the eager chase. The hare was captured by the Germans, but more was secured than a hare. The truce of God had been called, and the rest of Christmas Day was filled with peace and goodwill.

Dotted all over the sixty yards separating the lines

lay the bodies of the dead. Spades were brought out and soon each side set to work to dig graves for the fallen. The Chaplain had seized his opportunity and had urged both Commanding Officers to agree to a short religious service after the dead had been buried. This was arranged, and about four o'clock that quiet afternoon took place what must remain one of the most memorable Christmas services of all time. On one side of the dividing ditch were British officers, with soldiers in rank behind them; on the other, German officers with men of their regiments about them; between them stood the Chaplain, an interpreter, and a German divinity student serving with the Saxons. The Padre read the 23rd Psalm in English, the German student reading it after him in German. Then a short prayer, which the interpreter had translated, was read sentence by sentence by the student after the English form had been recited. At the close the Chaplain stepped forward and saluted the German Commander, who shook hands with him and bade him farewell. It was an impressive sight—officers and men, bitter enemies as they were, uncovered, reverent, and for the moment united in offering to their dead the last offices of homage and honour.

The spirit of friendship and goodwill did not end with Christmas Day. Both sides were only too glad to snatch a brief respite from the discomfort and misery of the mud-filled trenches. A friendly understanding was come to, by which they warned each other of the approach of any of the Brigade or Divisional Staff. On their appearance the "truce" seemed to vanish, and

trench routine became normal. A few rounds were fired well into the air, lest by accident a front-line combatant might come by harm. As soon as the Staff left the line, the truce revived, and friend and foe again swarmed into No Man's Land. The informal character of the truce sometimes created embarrassing situations. During one such visit the Brigadier, passing along the front line, looked over the parapet and saw a German fully exposed. Turning to the nearest rifleman, he ordered him to shoot the German down. The man, wishing to give the enemy a sporting warning, fired high. The German took no notice. The Brigadier became annoyed and ordered the private to shoot again. This time the soldier fired wide, but near enough to cause the German to look up in pained surprise. "Shoot again" ordered the Brigadier. The soldier obeyed, and so near was the bullet that the incautious enemy dived headlong into his trench.

A number of the Germans were fluent speakers of English—one said he had been a waiter in the Hotel Cecil—and conversation was always possible. The greatest friendliness prevailed. All kinds of "souvenirs" were exchanged—coins, buttons, and pipes; while quite a busy trade went on in barter. Bully beef and jam were in great demand, and were exchanged for sausage and chocolate; cigarettes and tobacco were the price of German cigars; and British rum purchased wine or cognac. In these beverages they pledged each other's health, and to all appearance the War was at an end. Strangest perhaps of all, and most abiding proof of truce, when it was discovered that

there were barbers among the enemy, a number of our men were shaved by them in No Man's Land.

The few days of quiet revealed in their own way the national characteristics of the combatants. The 6th Battalion, descended from forefathers for whom thrift and foresight had been a hard necessity and not a virtue, could not conceal its "canny" nature. Knowing that this situation could not last, many of the men took advantage of the "armistice" to fetch from the ruined buildings and fields near by supplies of firewood and potatoes against the days when peace and goodwill would be no more. Most of the enemy, though glad to escape the mud and to stretch their limbs in the open, still retained the optimism and truculence of the early days of the War, and were confident that they would be "Nach London" in three weeks. The few cases of war-weariness only threw into bolder relief the confidence of the many. One German, asked by an officer of the 6th whether he was tired of the War, looked up wistfully at his tall questioner and whispered in pathetic English, "Home, Sweet Home!"

The truce lasted from Christmas, 1914, to the 3rd of January, 1915. Its end had more formality than its opening. On the afternoon of the 3rd of January a German officer approached our lines, accompanied by an orderly who acted as interpreter. They asked for an officer. Capt. Dawson, of "D" Company, left the British trench and advanced over the open to meet them. The two officers gravely saluted, the German officer then informing Capt. Dawson that instructions had been received that the ordinary conditions of



warfare must be resumed. After some discussion of the time, watches were compared and were found to differ by nearly two hours ; it was then agreed that the truce would lapse after the expiry of an hour. That day only a few shots were fired, but on the following day, in obedience to orders, volleys were fired all along the line. A “ feu de joie ” passed from the 2nd Gordons through the 6th to the Guards, rifles being in the proper position, muzzles well in the air. Immediately after, a message passed right along the front, “ Pass it along—the Kaiser’s dead.” The truce was over.

## CHAPTER III

### EARLY EXPERIENCES

*November 1914—March 1915*

ESTAMINET CORNER—20th BRIGADE—SPIES—LETTERS

Over no period of the War does the memory linger so affectionately as over that first winter. Blendecques, St. Omer, La Cordonnerie, Shell View, Estaminet Corner, Sailly, each brings with it a train of recollections unblurred by the tempestuous warfare of later years. First impressions still remain most deeply imprinted on the mind, and already tale and incident are being built in a rich cluster round these days, like the traditional stories of the olden time. The rich flat plains ; the quaint methods of cultivation ; the slow canals, where women, in the stress of war, dragged barges, replacing the horses called off to the army ; the strange toy-carts drawn by dogs ; the stranger treadmill—like a miniature water-wheel—driven by a prisoned dog and so churning the butter ; the clamorous estaminets with their unfamiliar liquors, rich of hue and strange of taste ; the French peasants, frugal yet generous, industrious, voluble—all these crowd in on the mind.

The French always had a kind heart to the Scots. The striking Highland uniform at once attracted attention. "Qu'ils sont beaux, ces galants!" was one of the admiring remarks heard as they marched through a village. Long-forgotten tales of history which spoke of an alliance—300 years on end—between the nations were revived, and the tartan was an "Open Sesame."

Near Sailly the Germans had, for a very few days, overrun the country, but had not stayed long enough to begin their system of terror. Food and fodder had been requisitioned, and old people had been driven into strange hiding-places. In one billet in a loft the soldiers were surprised by the frequent visits of the farmer's wife. After they had occupied the billet for some time, and had gained her confidence, she explained, more by gesture than in words, the cause of her anxiety. They cleared away the bean-straw in one corner of the loft, and there found her precious china, carefully hidden away before the Germans came.

At another time an excited Frenchwoman entered the Quartermaster's Store at Estaminet Corner, and being quite unable to make herself understood after a rapid and excited harangue, seized the corporal in charge and dragged him off, the rest of the staff of the store following. Soon after, the interpreter, who had been out at the time, returned, and was sent by the Quartermaster to enquire into and clear up the situation. In a few minutes he returned, only remarking, "Lady's cow wanted to calve."

During these days the 2nd and 6th Battalions became close friends. The regular soldiers, who had

passed through the First Battle of Ypres, had much to tell to their inexperienced Territorial comrades, and were, indeed, flattered by the keenness and interest with which their tales and advice were received. The Territorials, too, profited by these meetings and talks, as they learned much of the enemy, his character, ruses, and habits, and also received many useful hints that made their life in billets and in the line easier and more comfortable. The good feeling then established continued as long as the Battalions served together, and even now there is no unit which holds so high a place in the hearts of the Territorials of Banffshire and Donside as the old "Ninety-twa."

With the other battalions of the 20th Brigade the same familiarity was not possible. The Guards—the mighty men of valour, with their great height, their magnificent discipline, and their confident carriage—towered above the Highlanders. To succeed the Guards meant work in the line, for their fire-steps were far too low for the 6th Battalion, and one or two sandbags were used to raise them. All units had a loyal link with the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards, with whom, at this time, the Prince of Wales was serving. He was often seen by the Battalion on the roads behind the line, and the only visit he made to Battalion Headquarters had its amusing side. It was a wet evening, just after dark. Tea was over. In the Headquarters Mess were three officers—the Colonel, the Padre, and one of the senior Company Officers, whom Col. McLean had often rallied on his shyness. A knock was heard. The door being opened, there appeared a

Colonel of the Guards, who asked to be directed to the Headquarters of the 1st Grenadiers. He was invited to enter, and while Col. McLean was showing him the position on a map, the Company Commander noticed another figure—evidently a young officer—standing in the downpour just outside the door. “Come away in out of the rain, my lad,” he said. The “lad” entered, refused a cigarette, and chatted until the elder officer had got his information. Then the two went out with the Commanding Officer. On his return Col. McLean turned to the Company Officer, remarking, “Well, well! C——, you have come out of your shell to-day. Do you know who you were talking to?”

“No, Sir! But I thought I’d seen his face before.”

C.O.—“I should think so! That was the Prince of Wales.”

Intercourse with their fellow soldiers—especially with the 2nd Gordons—and with the French civilians soon enlarged the men’s vocabulary, which was now a strange medley of the dialect of the North-East and of field jargon. Scots troops were “The Jocks.” The enemy was “Jerry” or “Fritz.” Comfortable became “cushy”—“a cushy job.” “A ‘cushy’ one” meant a slight wound. “Buckshee” meant surplus—a “buckshee” cigarette. One never went for a walk, he always took a “promenade.” “Drum up” was to make tea. “Wind up” has since passed into English slang. “Napoo,” originally “no more,” was distorted into a hundred kindred meanings. “It was ‘napoo’”—it was finished. “He ‘napooed’ the lot”—he ate up the whole. “He was ‘napooed’ by a shell”—was

knocked out by a shell. A "dud" was an unexploded shell, but came to be used of any useless person or thing. About this time, too, an old device in hand-fighting, the hand-bomb, was revived. Many of these were formed out of old jam-tins, which were filled with nails and explosive. One of the most common jams supplied was manufactured by the firm of Tickler, and the newly-formed bombers were termed, with humorous derision, "Tickler's Artillery." Plain "No" disappeared and became "Non." "Yes" or "Oh ay" gave place to "Ah oui!" So common did the use of these expressions become that they led on occasion to amusing mistakes. Some time later, when the Battalion was in trenches in the same area, Headquarters, situated in a support trench, was furnished with a guard. The sentry's orders were to challenge and halt anyone approaching. A sapper of the Royal Engineers—who are always called R.E.—came along the trench and was promptly challenged.

Sentry.—"Halt! Who goes there?"

Sapper.—"R.E."

Sentry (louder).—"Who goes there?"

Sapper.—"R.E."

Sentry (angrily).—"WHO GOES THERE?"

Sapper.—"R.E."

Sentry.—"Nae sae muckle o' yer 'Ah oui.' Fa are ye?"

It was to be expected that the strange situation in which the Battalion found itself so soon, would lead to strange mistakes and misunderstandings. When the age and inexperience of many of the soldiers—mere

lads—are considered, it is remarkable that the blunders were so few. Two cases are quoted, one in the trenches, one in billets. One night an officer in a communicating trench noticed in the dim light a figure wandering over the open near the trench. As the man seemed to have lost his way, the officer rapped out, "Where do you come from?"—only to get the pathetic answer in the unmistakable dialect of the Banffshire coast, "Fae Buckay."

Once, at Estaminet Corner, General French rode past, preceded by his lancer carrying his flag. It was noticed that the sentry over Headquarters did not turn out the guard. Knowing that the omission must have proceeded from ignorance, one of the senior warrant officers determined to sound the sentry, and put to him a leading question regarding the horsemen who had passed. "I think peace has been declared," replied the sentry. "They're awa' up wi' the flag onywy."e."

During the winter there were many spy scares and spy hunts. Most of these were the result of ignorance or inexperience, and were rarely well founded, but as the men always walked about in the area of their billets with rifle and bandolier, they were all the readier to look for and find traitors. This spirit of spy hunting created sometimes amusing, sometimes awkward situations. Over billets was placed a billet guard, and one of the sentry's duties was to challenge and arrest any suspected individual. Soon after the Battalion went out, a perfectly genuine officer of the Royal Artillery passed a billet on horseback. He was halted by the

sentry and asked to what unit he belonged. "Artillery" was the reply. "What artillery?" queried the sentry. "Royal Artillery" was the brusque response. Somehow the sentry's suspicions were aroused and he summoned the guard, whereupon the irritated gunner, impatient of delay, leapt the ditch by the roadside and galloped off over the fields before he could be stopped. Spies were looked for everywhere. An old farmer who ploughed with a white horse was long under suspicion, and it was confidently whispered that the direction of his furrow conveyed secret information to "Fritz." A peasant's wife, whose spirit of cleanliness led to constant washing, was also credited with being in league with the enemy, and there was much speculation as to the special significance of the various intimate articles of underwear that adorned her clothes-line. The spirit was to be found not only in newly-joined units like the 6th Battalion, but in all regiments. At that time there was serving with the Battalion an Englishman who had joined at Bedford, Pte. (later Lieut.) J. M. W. Poncione. Having lost his way once in the line, he found himself among some soldiers of another battalion. Being asked and having given his name, he was promptly put under arrest, his captors calmly informing him that a man with a name and an accent like that could not belong to the Gordon Highlanders.

One duty of billets was the writing of letters home. Sometimes letters were long and interesting, giving details of the life, the French inhabitants, impressions of the trenches and of the enemy. Information of the



place where the Battalion was stationed was, of course, forbidden. All letters had to be censored, or "censored," as it was popularly called. As a result many devices were tried to give information which might evade the censor's eye. One of the most common was to indicate the name of the nearest town by placing "dots" under the letters of the name in words widely apart. One result of the censorship was to cramp the writer, and most letters were brief, uncommunicative, and somewhat stilted. No genuine letter can be quoted, but an imaginary epistle, written in the Battalion, reproduces with very little exaggeration one of the most common types. All names are, of course, also imaginary.

Dear Brother,

I got your ever welcome letter yesterday. Sorry to hear Geordie Grant had an accident. Any word of young Geordie joining up yet? There's ower much profit in the groceries for that. How's Jean and the twins? Your last parcel was grand. Alex. Smith and Peter McKay got parcels at the same time, so we had cake a' roond in number 9 Platoon. I gied a pair of socks to Sandy Green. I have plenty myself. I am in the pink and lousey. Hoping you are the same.

Your loving brother,

FRANK.

Then there were the more tender missives of husband or sweetheart. These the censor, who had in all likelihood just written one himself, passed with a bare glance.

Reading matter was scarce and in great demand. Very few copies of an English daily reached the Battalion, and these rarely came into the hands of the men,

although later the Continental Edition of the "Daily Mail" became readily obtainable, and in quiet sectors even found its way up to the line. The post brought a few copies of local weekly journals, which were passed round and became the subject of much discussion. Of others, only "John Bull" and "London Opinion" were much to be seen, and indeed there was not much time for reading. Some of the more studious, both officers and men, brought a single volume of a favourite author, which was carried everywhere in the pack as a never-failing companion. One officer carried a copy of Burns, another Charles Murray's "Hamewith," a third Palgrave's "Golden Treasury," while a fourth—a Company Commander—had the solace of his Tennyson. Sometimes in quiet moments their merits were discussed, and Frank Farquharson, when he could find a kindred spirit, used to draw him into a secluded corner and there recall with long quotation his beloved Homer. Of composition there was little, and that little of no great merit. That it did exist, even amid the grime and toils and danger of war, the following sonnet shows:

TO A SKYLARK, SINGING OVER NO MAN'S LAND AT  
"STAND-TO."

Another morning grim! From far away  
The deep guns boom. The shrapnel screams o'erhead,  
The angry bullets krik: a hail of lead,  
Death-bearing, heralds in another day.  
Along our buttressed rampart, built of clay,  
Each at his post, the calm-eyed sentries stand,  
Each watchful, lest the foe from near at hand  
Should launch his sally at the opening day.

Yet, 'mid this world of death, undaunted springs  
The skylark, singing as she heavenward soars  
Full-hearted, praising Him Whom she adores,  
Till all the blood-stained earth with rapture rings.

She brings the promise of a better day,  
When wars shall cease, and peace and love bear sway.

Parodies were common. One of the most popular songs at this time was "The Little Grey Home in the West," and a parody entitled, "Our Little Wet Home in the Trench" had a great vogue. Many of the stanzas were composed in the 6th Battalion, and the three quoted deal most intimately with the life of the men.

#### OUR LITTLE WET HOME IN THE TRENCH.

There's a little wet home in the trench  
Where rain-storms continually drench ;  
There's a dead cow close by  
With her hoofs towards the sky,  
And she gives off a beautiful stench.  
Underneath, in the place of a floor,  
There's a mass of wet mud and some straw ;  
And the Jack Johnsons tear  
Through the rain-sodden air  
In our little wet home in the trench.

There are snipers who keep on the go,  
So you must keep your napper down low ;  
And there's star-shell at night  
Makes a deuce of a light,  
Which causes the language to flow.  
Then "bully" and biscuits we chew,  
For it's days since we tasted a stew ;

And with shells dropping there,  
There's no place to compare  
With our little wet home in the trench..

At dawn the command is "Stand-to,"

And we stick to our rifles till blue ;

But the cold gets a fright,

When the rum comes in sight

For the men who have watched the night through.

Then the rifles are cleaned well with oil,

And the billy-cans put on to boil ;

And our meal 'midst the clay

Makes us right for the day

In our little wet home in the trench.

## CHAPTER IV

### NEUVE CHAPELLE

*March 1915*

We'd a hefty second horseman, fae the braes on Deveronside,  
An' twa bit college birkies like to burst their breeks wi' pride ;  
There was Lauchin' Tam an' " Curly " an' the ane we ca'ed " The  
Loon,"

Wi' his sowf an' pech an' fosel, fit to wreck the hale platoon.  
An' they're a' deid or deein'—I've a gey b't clour mysel'—  
But I winner fat they're thinkin' i' the Glen o' Neuve Chapelle.

Man, I wish I'd seen the smiddy the nicht the news cam' in !  
The Bailie's beld head noddin', the Soutar clawin's chin,  
The country clashes fleein' as the sun gied doon the Lecht  
Till the paper geat comes skirlin' : " The Gordons in a Fecht ! "  
Losh ! I think I see them loupin'—" Gie's't ! " " Heely man, 't'll  
tear ! "

" Faur are they ? " " Read it ! " " Fat is't ? " An' the Bailie  
smores a swear

As he hicks an' mants : " H'm ! Fiech—It's—Wait—I'll need to  
spell "—

(It's a geylies chancy mou'fu' that Frenchy Neuve Chapelle).

Syne they'll read about La Bassée an' the red roofs o' Aubers,  
An' like kitlins in the kinkhost they'll try Armentières ;  
An' the smith 'll rax his weskit fae the nail upo' the wa'—  
" I'm dootin' that's Will Lowry's lot ; I'll gie the wife a ca'.  
Puir Will ! to lye oor Hielan' strath for (Lord !) a Street o' Hell !—  
I'll nae gie Jinse his full address, I'll just say New Shapelle."

Oh, sair o' heart they'll be, I ken 't'll pit them aff their brose ;  
 An' the bellman 'll be dichtin' mair than sneeshan draps fae's nose,  
 As the pumphels fill on Sunday, an' aside the pulpit stair  
 They'll see the Roll o' Honour, an' the names o' deid men there.  
 But the parson winna haiver ; I can hear the rafters ring ;  
 " They have garnered earth's best glory, who have died for Home  
 and King."

(He's the deil to spout, oor billie !) It's a slogan, nae a knell,  
 That'll soun' in gray Kiltairlie owre the graves at Neuve Chapelle.

MARY SYMON.

The coming of spring, with its longer day and better weather, put an end to the months of inaction that had been experienced during the winter. On the 3rd of March the Battalion left the neighbourhood of Saily, and marched to billets in Neuf Berquin. By day there was the usual training, enlivened by boxing and football competitions ; by night large parties hurried forward towards the line and dug assembly trenches. After four such days of " rest " they moved up to Estaires, there to learn that their qualities were soon to be tried in the heat of action, and that all the painful lessons of endurance and discipline would be put to the test. A great offensive had been planned. The 1st Army, under Sir Douglas Haig, was to attack and crush the enemy. The powerful positions, based on the Aubers Ridge and dominating all the plain to the west, were to be carried by a surprise assault. Under cover of darkness, guns, ammunition, stores, and troops were hurried forward towards Laventie and Richebourg-St. Vaast. The task of the army was a great one. In an order addressed to the troops of the IVth Corps, Sir

Henry Rawlinson said: "The attack which we are about to undertake is of first importance to the Allied cause. The Army and the nation are watching the result, and Sir John French is confident that every individual in the IVth Corps will do his duty, and inflict a crushing defeat on the German VIIth Corps which is opposed to us."

The spirit of the regular troops was high. The memory of the unequal contests of the autumn of 1914 still burned. The prospect of meeting the enemy on fair and even terms was welcomed with bold confidence. The Territorials, hitherto untested, were determined to show that what the regular army dared, they would do.

At four in the morning of the 10th of March there was unusual stir in Estaires. The drone of the bagpipes of the 6th Battalion could be heard to mingle with the shriller scream of the pipes of the Indians. Heavy iron-shod feet and transport early abroad clattered and rumbled over the stone-paved streets. The Highlanders, hastily roused, donned their battle equipment, and paraded along with the rest of the Corps Reserve in a field near the town, before marching off to their assembly positions. Scarcely had they moved off when a shell dropped harmlessly in the field of assembly, which a few minutes earlier had been filled with troops. A lucky escape! A happy omen! They marched for some distance along the La Bassée road, and, turning east before Pont du Hem was reached, they followed a side road which they afterwards left to avoid some batteries in action. As they

moved over the fields, a shell burst within ten yards of the column, but, muffled by the soft ground, it did no harm. The Battalion at once opened out into shallow columns—artillery formation—and reached the trenches they had come up to dig while resting at Neuf Berquin. These were in tiers close together, in an orchard off Cameron Lane. Near were two or three wretched cottages, one of them still occupied. Here, on the morn of battle, the thrifty peasants provided excellent coffee, and drove a busy trade with the men.

The rôle of the Corps Reserve, which included the 6th Gordon Highlanders, was a waiting one. They were not to take part in the opening assault, but were kept in hand, close behind the attacking troops, ready to exploit any success or to be flung into the struggle as the situation demanded. Excitement, tense and suppressed, held them as they awaited the opening of their first battle. Keen ears listened for any unusual sound that might herald the breaking of the storm. They had not long to wait. At 7.30 the first gun spoke. One long second of silence ! Then the massed artillery—greater in number than any concentration the world had yet seen—joined with one tremendous crash. Close at hand field-guns spat viciously ; further in rear the heavier pieces boomed, report following report like swift blows of a Titan's hammer. In front, the calm, unsullied landscape underwent a swift change. The German trenches were wreathed in a thick pall of dust and smoke, and the acrid fumes of lyddite, floating slowly back to our own men, produced a strange feeling of drowsiness.



In the sky there was great activity. Our aeroplanes, few but daring, had ventured up in the dawn to watch the enemy's lines. Each, in its journey, was soon surrounded by the woolly puffs of smoke, white or black, which studded the clear morning sky and showed that the enemy anti-aircraft gunners were at their posts. And to some purpose, too! Right above the Battalion a 'plane was seen to swerve, then suddenly dive, and crash to earth a few hundred yards in front. The destruction of enemy aircraft cannot be seen without sympathy; the death-crash of a friend gripped the heart.

To the right, on the La Bassée road, a continuous straggling mass was seen moving back towards Estaires. For a little time wonder reigned. Then the truth dawned. Prisoners! The attack must have succeeded. Confirmation of this came with the cheery, limping wounded. The front line had been taken, and rumour busily enlarged the gains. The spirits of the men rose higher and higher, and some received the news with loud cheers.

All that day and the night that followed the Battalion remained in Cameron Lane. They were not called on. At three in the morning of the 11th they paraded, and moved forward over the open fields, studded everywhere with shell-holes, and strewn with the bodies of the dead. They took up a position behind two farms, immediately in rear of our original front line. Here they sought what shelter they could find in the buildings and neighbouring "cornyards," crouching behind bits of wall or huddled in shallow trenches.

The enemy had now recovered from the first shock of surprise, and in the clear morning his artillery played on our positions with unfailing accuracy and relentless intensity. The air was soon black with clouds of shrapnel—woolly bears—that burst with their rumbled “woof-woof,” and scattered broadcast their destructive iron hail. The deadly whiz-buzz of the enemy field-guns pounded incessantly, varied only by the heavier crash of a Jack Johnson, as the high explosive was termed. Lumps of clay and bricks hurtled through the air. Shelter was poor. Casualties were numerous. All the men could do was to stay there, grimly “sticking it,” each wondering every moment when his turn would come. Throughout the long day they bore it without murmur and without complaint.

During occasional lulls in the shelling they would steal forward to the deserted stackyards, where straw was still abundant. Soon their flimsy shelters and cramped trenches took on a new air of comfort and ease. The night was quiet, and most of them enjoyed a brief rest. At four in the morning the enemy artillery renewed the bombardment, and the day of the 12th was a repetition of the impotent suffering of the 11th. So intense did the artillery fire become that, at four in the afternoon, the Battalion was ordered to move back to a hollow several hundred yards in rear. Shells dropped everywhere among and around the tiny groups as they wound their way north across the shell-pitted field, but little loss was sustained. This, without doubt, was due to the thick cloud of smoke from the

bursting shells, which screened the movement from the enemy.

In this sheltered hollow they enjoyed a quiet rest, with only one great discomfort—lack of water. After three hours the shell-fire slackened, and they moved forward to their old positions near the farms. The night was again quiet, but rest was not for the men. More than half the Battalion was employed in long and arduous carrying parties, bringing up rations and ammunition for the troops in the line.

The last of the ration parties had scarcely returned when, at 3.30 in the morning of the 13th, the Battalion fell in, with orders to move forward to the attack. No estimate of the action of this day can omit the experiences of the three days that went before. During all that time the Battalion had lain out in the open in shallow trenches, exposed to a punishing artillery fire that gave no rest by day. Night, when alone rest was possible, was disturbed by regular demands for fatigue parties. These meant hours of hard manual labour, carrying up large tins of biscuits and boxes of “bully” from the transport in rear to the troops in forward positions. Three such days and nights, exhausting and sleepless, might well sap the spirits of the best of seasoned troops; they could scarcely fail to depress and shake a Territorial unit, suffering, as the 6th Battalion was, from that worst of hardships—a dearth of water. But this first engagement stamped the quality of the Battalion. When the call came, toil, weariness, thirst were all forgotten, and the gallant little band, weakened in numbers, feebly supported, flung itself,

in the open day, alone, against the might of the German army, and stopped the crumbling gap in our line.

Unfortunately, there were several delays before the Battalion moved forward, and it was 4.30 when they crossed the original front line, held then by the sister Territorial battalion—the 4th Cameron Highlanders. By the time they reached the old German trench which was allotted as a place of assembly, day broke. The movement stood revealed. At once, in answer to the challenge, the enemy fire burst. Machine-guns and rifles poured a murderous enfilade fire, while the artillery, knowing to an inch the position of the trench, pounded it with unerring accuracy. The condition of the trench itself only added to the dangers of the situation. In many parts it had been blown in by our bombardment of the 10th; where it was good, it was already crowded, littered with dead and wounded, both German and British. In some parts it was flooded out, and there the men lay out in the open behind, suffering a silent martyrdom. The few shelters and dug-outs that remained were used as emergency aid-posts, and were soon filled with wounded.

Soon after seven o'clock Colonel McLean moved along the trench to inform the officers commanding "A" and "B" Companies what action they were to take, the Adjutant at the same time going to "C" and "D" Companies. Orders were quite definite. An attack was to be made. Directions and objectives were pointed out. Even at that time doubts were felt as to the real object of the attack. It appeared as if the Battalion were to make a single-handed assault on

the enemy. The real explanation is probably different. At this time there were gaps in our line. The enemy had been counter-attacking for two days, and these gaps were the most threatening source of danger, as through them the enemy might pass and cut off our most advanced troops. Such a manoeuvre must be frustrated. The gaps must be filled. To fill them was the task of the 6th Battalion.

After issuing orders to his Company Commanders, Colonel McLean observed a body of our own troops—the 2nd Gordons—on the right front. With the purpose of finding touch with them and securing their support during the advance, he moved over the open to their position. He had almost reached it when he fell, mortally wounded. Seeing his Commanding Officer fall, Lieut. A. S. Pelham Burn\* at once rushed forward to his assistance, and gave him some morphia tablets to dull the pain. Colonel McLean thanked him and sent him back—"And now, my boy, about your duty. Your place is with your Company." About the same time the Adjutant, Capt. Campbell, having left the trench to re-assure the men, also fell with wounds from which he never recovered.

Thus, almost at the same moment, fell the only regular officers of the Battalion. Orders were none too clear. The situation was trying and difficult, but it was met with promptness and decision. Capt. James M. Cook, Alford, on whom, as senior Captain, the command had devolved, took instant action. He immediately dispatched Capt. Smith to Brigade Head-

\* Captain George Smith of Pittodrie also went out to Colonel McLean.

quarters to report the death of the Commanding Officer and to verify the orders for the attack. The reply was quite definite. The 6th Gordons would attack at 9.30. Orders were immediately issued. " B " Company, supported by " C," was to attack on the right ; " A " Company, supported by " D," on the left. At 9.30 they scrambled out of the trench. It was broad day. There was no movement anywhere within sight to distract the enemy, and the Battalion at once became the target of every rifle and gun within range. High explosive, shrapnel, rifle and machine-gun bullets hailed upon the thin lines that rose from the blood-stained trench. Even this fell blast of steel did not make them waver. Forward they pressed, comrades falling at every step. The survivors, decimated but undismayed, advanced in good order and with great speed, found touch with the 2nd Gordons and filled the gap on their left, swinging a full hundred yards in advance of their position.

The enemy were seen retiring in front. Rapid fire was opened. An attempt was made to advance further, but casualties had been heavy, and the few survivors were spent. The enemy fire was so intense that any movement meant annihilation. The gap had been closed. There was nothing to gain by seeking to thrust feebly forward at enormous loss. The position was put in a state of defence, and manned for the remainder of the day.

Great as had been the trials of these four days, they were as nothing to the agony that followed the attack. In the heat of action the mind was wholly

bent on the task in hand, on pressing forward to close with the enemy. The heavy toll of life, the fall of friends and leaders, were mere passing incidents. But, the attack once over, the mind returned to its normal reflective calm. The situation was seen in its cold reality. The fields and trenches were strewn with dead and wounded. Everywhere could be heard pitiful cries for water and stretchers ; and here and there a feebly moving arm would wave a silent summons. Medical officers and stretcher-bearers, helped by volunteers, worked with swift and silent endurance. During the night most of the wounded were removed, and those who were left were covered with greatcoats and well supplied with water. Before dawn on the 14th the remnants of the Battalion were withdrawn and moved back to billets—a sad return. The men who for four days had been in the Valley of the Shadow, who had faced privation, exposure, and death without flinching, came near to breaking then. Weak in numbers, exhausted, dazed, they straggled back, their path lit by the star-shells of the enemy, their stumbling footsteps hastened by the bullets that whipped all round them.

The conduct of the Battalion in its first great battle, the courage, endurance, and tenacity it displayed, filled the regular soldier with wonder and admiration. The sincerest and most welcome tribute came from the rank and file of other units of the 20th Brigade, who had themselves watched the unfaltering advance of the Battalion. The men were no longer regarded as raw and uninstructed recruits, but were freely admitted

into the comradeship of heroes. The Higher Command shared the feelings of pride and admiration. In a special Order the Brigadier-General commanding the 20th Brigade said : " The Brigadier-General commanding desires to congratulate all ranks of his Brigade on the part they have taken in the successful operations of the last five days round Neuve Chapelle. The heroism and devotion to duty of the regimental officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, have been beyond all praise. Where all have done so well, it is difficult to pick out one individual battalion, but the Brigadier was more than pleased to note the gallant conduct displayed by all ranks of the 6th (Territorial Battalion) Gordon Highlanders in the action of the 13th. Although joining a Brigade who were already seasoned to fighting, they showed themselves fully qualified to keep up the high standard which the 20th Brigade has justly earned for itself, and the Brigade is proud to have them with them.

" Although deeply deploring the loss of many comrades, the Brigadier knows that all ranks must feel elated at their victory over the Germans, and he feels certain that the troops will do as well in the future as they have done in the past."

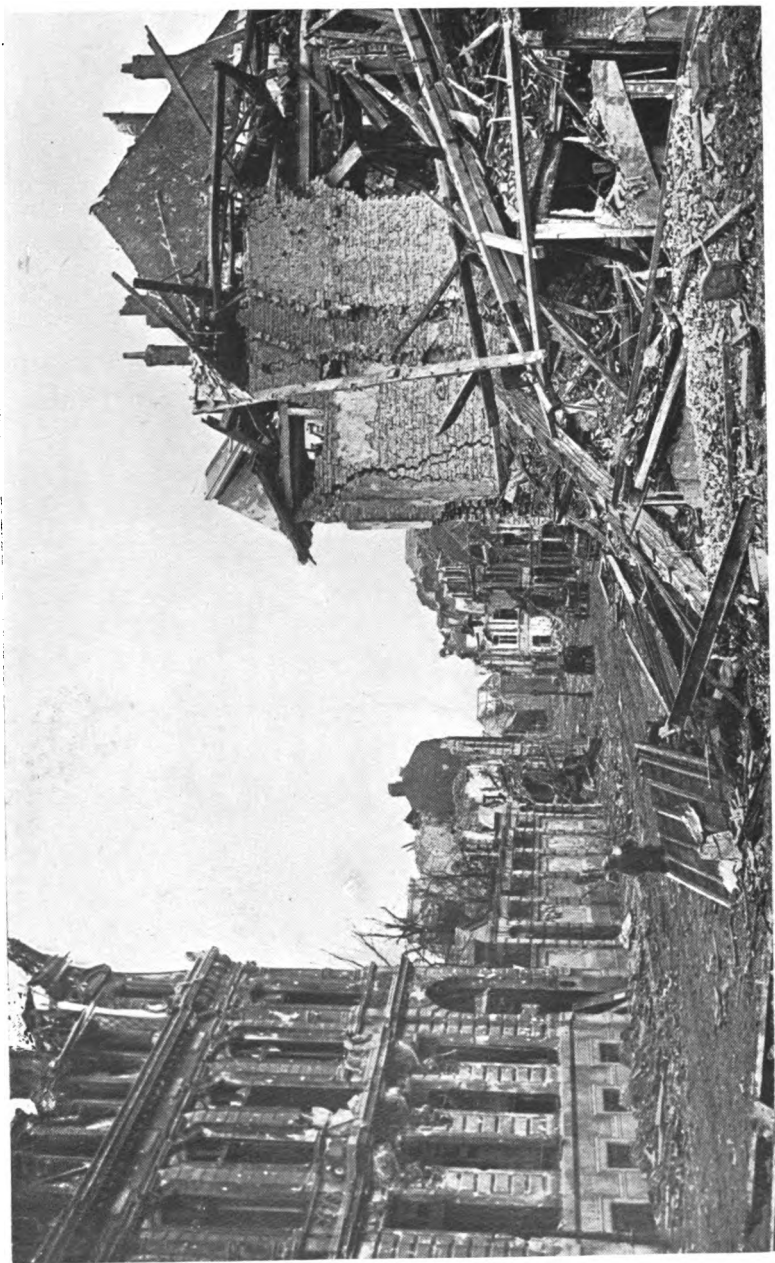
A special Order was also published by Major-General Capper. " The Divisional General has now received the reports on the action at Neuve Chapelle during March 10th to 14th. He desires to express his admiration of the gallant conduct of the 6th Battalion Gordon Highlanders on the 13th March. The Battalion made repeated efforts to advance under very heavy fire, and





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ARRAS CATHEDRAL.



ARMENTIÈRES.

*Given Copyright — Imperial War Museum.*

gained a considerable amount of ground. Its conduct was characterised by splendid dash, and was the admiration of the neighbouring battalions. This is the first occasion in which this battalion has taken part in an attack, and it behaved with great spirit and steadiness.

“The Divisional General regrets the loss of the Commanding Officer (Lt.-Col. McLean) and so many gallant officers and men.”

The losses of the Battalion were heavy. The death of Lt.-Col. McLean was much regretted; he thoroughly understood the Territorials and how to get the best out of them; he possessed their confidence and esteem as few regular officers did. His daily tour of the trenches at Saily in fishing waders was a feat of physical endurance of which few would have considered him capable, and demonstrated at once his interest in the men and the thoroughness of his work. In addition to the Commanding Officer, fifteen officers and 291 non-commissioned officers and men had fallen. Proud as the survivors were of the Battalion's part in the victory, their heads were bowed with a sense of deep personal loss. The comrades of their boyhood, their playmates in mountain glen and sea-side parish, who had shared with them the toil of training and the hardships of the winter, had passed. The knowledge of the heroic courage and uncomplaining endurance of their dead companions, and of the noble cause for which they had perished, alone brought comfort and dispelled the gloom of sorrow. They thought of the stricken homes in township, in strath, and by the sea.

“ His turn yesterday, yours to-day, mine to-morrow.”  
 They braced their bodies and steeled their minds with  
 the silent resolve that “ these had not died in vain.”

### NEUVE CHAPELLE

How slow the dawn ! Across the moor  
 The wild March cries,  
 Voicing the year of coronachs,  
 Dead dreams and sacrifice.

“ Wide-eyed I lie, yet dread the morn,  
 When ilka hour I'll see  
 The empty hill-road where he turned  
 To wave his hand to me.  
 I couldna try to keep him fra'  
 The man's road he wad gang  
 Wi' the colours o' the Gordons,  
 Though I kenned the road was lang.

“ I watched him gang, and kept dry een  
 Till he gaed east the gate  
 And left the shieling quiet (how quiet !  
 And me to work and wait.  
 But my heart went wi' my laddie  
 Ower the sea in French's line,  
 And it's buried near the trenches  
 Wi' him . . . Ah ! son o' mine.

“ Yet I maun thole. He's no alane—  
 The laird sleeps there as weel  
 Beside his gallant Gordon lads.  
 Proud, proud am I to feel  
 That when the King sought men to help  
 The weak against the strang,  
 My Colin wasna o' the breed  
 That could, but didna gang.”

An old Scots peasant mother ! Thine  
The slow tears of a race  
The anvil of the years has taught  
To look death in the face.  
No threnody for son o' thine !  
The hill-burns' voices raise  
Amidst his happy boyhood's haunts  
A quiet hymn of praise,  
This Gaudeamus to the hills,  
" The lad knew how to die,"  
And round the shieling stately pines  
Point proudly to the sky.  
And you, who could have gone, but watched  
Those others march away,  
Who help to swell the Cup-tie's roar  
And strike for bigger pay :  
Who, safe at home, have drugged your souls  
With sophistries and fears,  
And left your mates to struggle through  
Their task of blood and tears !  
Think ! When the Last Court-Martial sits  
And Honour's cause endures,  
*What shall ye say, when on that day*  
*Their calm eyes question yours ?*

JOHN FOSTER.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SUMMER OF 1915

*April—September 1915*

CHANGES—DEPARTURE OF THE GUARDS—REVIEWS—  
FROMELLES — FESTUBERT — GIVENCHY — CHURCH  
PARADE—AMUSEMENTS.

The battle of Neuve Chapelle had left the Battalion much reduced in numbers, and beyond details from the base and one draft in May, no large reinforcement was received until the beginning of September. As a result, the summer of 1915 was comparatively restful, and the Battalion was employed mainly as a Brigade Reserve. Several changes in command doubtless contributed to this. Capt. James Cook, Alford, who had taken over the command in the recent action, was relieved by Capt. Moss of the Grenadier Guards, who, in turn, was succeeded by Lt.-Col. (later Brig.-General) P. W. Brown, of the Gordon Highlanders. In July Colonel Brown went to command the 1st Battalion, and Lt.-Col. J. E. MacQueen, who had commanded the 3/4th Gordons at home, took over the Battalion command. Changes were not confined to the 6th Gordons, as on the 4th of August the 1st

Grenadier Guards left the 20th Brigade, followed four days later by the 2nd Scots Guards. The excellent relations that had existed between the Territorial Battalion and these veterans made the parting a genuinely sad one. The raw Scots "loons" had learned much from the magnificent discipline, steadiness, and "stoutness" of the Guards, while the latter—and more notably the Scots Guards—never hesitated to express their surprise and admiration that unseasoned Territorial troops could make so splendid an appearance on the march and on parade, and display so gallant heroism on the field of battle.

Life was brightened by the change of season. The longer day, the increasing warmth, the disappearance of mud and cold, the re-appearance of spring, recalling to life the greenery of a fertile country, soon dispelled the hard memories of winter.

During most of the summer the Battalion was in the neighbourhood of Béthune and Lillers. There the industry of the French peasants stirred a chord of ready sympathy in the hearts of the men, many of whom had a practical knowledge of farming. They laughed at the antiquated methods and the obsolete implements with which the peasant merely scratched the friable soil. They could not, at first, understand why he kept his cows always in the byre, only allowing them out for an occasional "bait" by the roadside. Yet when they found that thrift was the cause, that every square yard of the tiny holdings had to be cultivated, and when they saw old men, children, and women of all ages at work in the fields from dawn until

dusk, industrious, uncomplaining, accepting everything with the fatalist "C'est la guerre," they did not stand by and watch, but buckled to with a will. So it was no uncommon thing to see several sturdy Highlanders lending a willing hand with fork or scythe, and two are reported to have assisted in an early morning pig-stickin' in Robecq. True, they did not know much of the language beyond "Bon jour," "pang" (bread), "vin blong" (white wine), and "oof" (egg), but they had a wonderful way of making themselves understood.

During the summer the Battalion took part in three reviews. Field-Marshal Sir John French, then commanding the British Armies in the field, inspected the 20th Brigade near Estaires on the 19th of April; on the 27th of May Marshal Joffre reviewed the Brigade near Lillers, and the battalions marched past; on the 8th of July Lord Kitchener was in France, and the Brigade lined the road west of Lillers while the great soldier passed slowly down in his motor car. Neither Marshal Joffre nor Lord Kitchener spoke to the Battalion, but Sir John French's words of praise were proudly treasured:—

"Sixth Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders, I feel that it is impossible for me to express in words my admiration and gratitude for the splendid work you have done. In the recent action at Neuve Chapelle you took your share and suffered heavy losses. At least seven of your officers fell there, including your gallant Colonel, and there were severe casualties in the ranks. All of you are men who have given up some



calling at home, in many cases at great sacrifice. You came here at a time when the need for men was greatest. For that and for the part you took in the recent action your country is proud of you. I am proud to be your fellow-countryman. I wish every officer, non-commissioned officer, and man of this Battalion to take to himself personally my thanks for what you have done. Though few in numbers, you present a bold front, and I believe, if you are again called on, you will give as good an account of yourselves."

The summer was not, however, a period of languorous ease, with brief spells of manual labour. The great German gas attack of April provoked strong retaliation on our part. The first action of any importance was the unsuccessful attack on the Aubers Ridge opposite Fromelles on the 9th of May. In this attack the 8th Division was to make the assault, and the 7th Division to pass through the 8th and exploit its success. But the Germans were ready for the attack. The 8th Division, in spite of heroic gallantry, could not break an enemy who was forewarned and reinforced, and the 6th Battalion was withdrawn on the evening of the 9th with scarcely a casualty.

The failure of this action was undoubtedly due to leakage of information. Two officers of the 6th, a few days before the battle, visited an educated Frenchman in La Gorgue. This Frenchman explained what he understood was the proposed attack, and drew a sketch to illustrate it. The officers pooh-poohed the idea of the attack, as they had never heard of it, but when the plan was revealed a few days later, they were

astonished to find that the Frenchman's version was substantially correct.

A week later, on the 16th of May, the 7th Division took part in the battle of Festubert. The 6th Battalion was in support in this action, and although they did not take part in a direct attack on the German lines, they had a trying experience, being moved up little by little through a punishing shell-fire, ready to exploit any advantage gained. At dawn the Border Regiment and the Scots Guards led the attack with great spirit, and the men, inflamed by their knowledge of the latest German outrage at sea, drove their bayonets home with the cry, "That's for the Lusitania." One part of the enemy line was unbroken. Early in the afternoon the 6th Battalion was brought up to take it. The men had actually taken their places on the scaling-ladders when the order was countermanded, and instead of making a frontal attack over open ground, part of the Battalion was detached to work up on the right, where the enemy had already been driven in, and to close in on his flank. The effect of this movement was evident at dawn on the 17th. Through the haze of morning a large body of the enemy was seen approaching our lines. The men stood to arms. Some, indeed, opened fire before it was seen that the enemy were running forward to surrender, their hands above their heads. The order was given to "cease fire." But when our fire ceased, the Germans further in rear, either mistaking the movement for an attack by us or enraged at the surrender of their comrades, opened fire, killing and wounding many of their own men. As it was,

217 prisoners surrendered to the 6th Battalion, and the men came out with the proud conviction that they had taken an honourable part in the engagement.

A few days' rest in Robecq, a few days in the line at "Windy Corner," and into battle again. This time the Battalion fought alone. At Givenchy we held an awkward elbow or salient which was completely commanded by the Germans from a ridge a short distance in front. This ridge was necessary to enable our troops to "jump off" in the next big attack. The 6th Gordons would take it. "C" and "D" Companies, under Captain John Dickson, Huntly, were detailed for the operation. The men moved up under the most concentrated and deadly shell-fire they had as yet encountered. At the very apex of the salient a big mine had been prepared. Punctually at 9.30 in the evening it was exploded. At that very instant, Lieut. Frank Farquharson, who was to lead the attack, was killed. In most units this would have meant consternation, inaction, failure. Without a second's hesitation, Lieut. James Scott, Keith, dashed forward, shouted that he would lead the assault, and the men rushed in with the bayonet. Fifteen minutes' bloody work hand-to-hand; the position was ours, and forty-eight dazed German prisoners trickled back to Headquarters. Then all was peace; but it was the calm of ill-omen. Supplies, especially of bombs, could not be obtained. At two in the morning, the Germans, strongly reinforced, with ample supplies of bombs, and using their latest weapon—the trench-mortar—closed in from the trenches on all sides. Time and

again the men rallied, animated by the gallant conduct of Capt. Dickson and other leaders, but bullet and bayonet alone in a trench cannot fight showers of bombs from a hidden enemy. They were forced back to the crater lip, and there stood firm, losing in that glorious last stand one of their best and bravest, Company Sergeant-Major Alex. Archibald, D.C.M., who exposed himself fearlessly to stem the tide.

Apart from the actions just mentioned, the summer was an easy and pleasant time. In the line there were quiet spells of trench-holding and digging. These were, as a rule, uneventful, but fierce anger blazed up when Hindenburg defeated the Russians on the eastern front.

One morning, when light came at "Stand-to," the Battalion found a large board up on the German parapet, bearing this legend:—

" DECISIVE VICTORY OVER RUSSIA.

160,000 PRISONERS.

200,000 KILLED AND WOUNDED.

21,000 HORSES TAKEN."

The answer was brief, characteristic, and decisive. The men hunted out an old "dixie" covered with soot, and carved out the letters until the clear metal showed underneath. Then it was placed on our parapet with the laconic reply,

L I A R.

Out of the line, the hardships of winter were soon forgotten under improved conditions. The early morning and forenoon were devoted to training; the afternoon was spent in bathing in the canals or basking in the sun-flooded orchards of Robecq and Busnes. The only active enemies were the plagues of flies and of lice. In summer the latter were as persistent as in winter, and most men had to spend a part of the day in ruthless war against this parasite. Even in this matter the pawky humour of the Scot is seen in an incident at a bathing parade. At these parades the soldier handed over his shirt and received a clean (?) one in exchange. After his tub, one private was seen to approach the window of the Brasserie, holding the dirty shirt in one hand, the clean in the other. His careful scrutiny of the two shirts aroused the interest of a companion, who shouted out :

“ Onything wrang wi’ yer sark, Jock ? ”

“ Ay,” came the reply, “ I think I’ll tak’ my aul’ ane. I ken *them* better ! ”

In spite of these little drawbacks, the comfort of the men was incomparably greater. Food was more plentiful, and the army ration was supplemented by supplies from the French country folks, and by the numerous parcels from kind friends at home, which now came more quickly and more regularly. As yet there were no Expeditionary Force Canteens, and the rarest of luxuries was a drop of “ Old Scotch.” The sending of this comfort in parcels was forbidden, but the wife of one gallant officer got over the difficulty by a characteristically feminine ruse. In one parcel came

a mysterious chemist's bottle, full of an amber liquid, and bearing the orthodox chemist's label—

A——— B———, M.P.S.

and underneath in a female hand,

*THE MIXTURE.*

*To be taken as required.*

As the husband was in good health, he could not understand this item. The removal of the cork at once solved the mystery, and largely increased the number of invalids. In later parcels the medicine continued to come, but the label read—

*THE MIXTURE.*

*As formerly.*

The numerous ponds and ditches abounded with incredible numbers of frogs, whose unmusical croakings were a continual source of disturbance. This led the conversation in one company mess to a discussion of frogs as food. One officer stated that in a visit to France before the War he had eaten frogs' legs and found them excellent. At this time the mess waiter and caterer was a man of extraordinary ingenuity and resource, who was never at a loss in any emergency. Jack—that is not his real name—was present and heard the conversation. At dinner on the following day Jack came in to clear away after soup, and as he moved from one to the other, inquired solicitously :

“How did you like the soup, sir?”

“Very much indeed, Jack.”

“And you, sir?”

“Excellent, Jack.”

Just as he was leaving the room, one officer called after him :

“ What soup was that ? ”

“ Frog soup, sir ! ”

Sundays in billets were days of rest, with only one parade—Church Parade. These parades were sometimes held in a shady orchard, sometimes, when nearer the line, in a farm courtyard. In Flanders there is uniformity in farms. The farm-buildings form three sides of a square, the farm-house the fourth. In the centre is a large dung-pit or “ midden,” separated on all sides from the buildings by a paved causeway, some ten to fifteen feet wide. On this causeway, on three sides, the men were drawn up. The Padre, supported by a volunteer choir, took the fourth. The service was simple : two brief prayers, a short, manly, encouraging address, two or three old psalms or paraphrases, and a martial hymn like “ Onward, Christian Soldiers ” or “ Stand up, Stand up for Jesus.” There, when one heard the drone of the aeroplane overhead, the distant crackle of musketry from the line, the nearer boom of the guns, and looked round on the well-knit kilted figures and stern faces of the men, the mind was spirited back to the days of the old Covenant. The traditional strains of “ Coleshill ” and “ Stroudwater ” brought insurgent memories of mist-covered Scottish glens, where the forefathers of these men met, sword in one hand, Bible in the other, to seek Divine aid in that struggle for right and justice and liberty for which, on a foreign soil, their noble sons were ready to battle and to die.

There were many recreations during those warm summer afternoons and evenings. An occasional swimming gala in the muddy waters of the canal, or regimental sports, with contests in leaping, putting the stone, running, tug-of-war on foot and on horse-back, added variety to the normal inter-company cricket and football matches. But the constant sequel to a spell in rest-billets was the concert. When possible, it was held in the open air. The Commanding Officer generally presided. Sometimes a piano was found, and there was no lack of talent. The pipe band, under Pipe-Major Howarth, D.C.M., the evergreen and popular "Pipie," gave selections. A cornet—captured from the Germans at Festubert, a mouth-organ, and an extraordinary flute, made by the ingenious player out of a derelict bicycle pump, completed the instrumental section. The songs were mostly national or sentimental, full of haunting memories of home or abounding with martial ardour, as the "Hundred Pipers" and the "March of the Cameron Men." Humour was not forgotten, and an item which appeared in every programme with unfailing success—due as much to the grimaces of the singer as to the merits of the song—was

"Oh, ye'll niver, niver, niver thrive  
Lyin' in yer bed."

All these diversions charmed away the thoughts of war, braced the spirits, and tuned up the men. But war is not all recreation and amusement. Summer drifted into autumn. Stern work was at hand.



## CHAPTER VI

### LOOS

*September—November 1915*

VERMELLES—PREPARATIONS—BELLERIVE—ATTACK—  
COUNTER-ATTACK—CAMBRIN.

On the 2nd of September the Battalion turned south, and after being quartered for a night in the Orphanage of Béthune, moved forward to Vermelles. This village was some 2,000 yards in rear of our front line, and lay half-concealed on the western slope of one of those slight swellings which, in the plains of Flanders, are dignified by the name of hills. Vermelles had been for some time in the hands of the enemy, had been wrested from his grasp by the French, and as a result had been pounded by the artilleries of both armies. Many of the houses were in ruins. Those which had escaped serious damage were ingeniously patched, and gave protection from cold and rain, while numerous cellars, elegantly termed "funk-holes," afforded warmth as well as security.

In appearance the surrounding country differed from the orderly orchards and fertile plains to which the

Battalion had so far been accustomed. Vermelles is on the outskirts of the northern mining area, and the landscape was scarred by the ugly marks of human industry. Enormous slag-heaps stood out as bold landmarks, and shared with a few derelict haystacks the double duty of observation-posts for friend and registration-marks for the foe.

For nearly a mile to the east of the village the ground sloped gently down to our front line—old French trenches with real dug-outs—then sloped gently upwards for some 500 yards to the enemy's positions. These, as was the rule in the earlier part of the War, were sited on commanding ground, while our trenches ran along the low ground in front.

The Battalion remained in Vermelles for several days, and sent out large parties both by day and by night to perform the laborious tasks which are always necessary before a great attack. Much time was spent in clearing and widening the two main communicating trenches, Gordon Alley and Hulluch Alley; assembly trenches were dug, both behind and in front of our forward positions; tools and stores were carried up. The white chalk, hard and unyielding, was a new enemy, but the men, industrious and cheerful, worked with a will and soon completed their tasks.

On the 8th the Battalion moved back to the training area, leaving "C" Company behind in Vermelles. Whatever doubts remained as to what was intended were dispelled by the tasks that fell to this Company. Every night demanded exhausting and laborious working parties. Great supplies of ammunition, water, rations,

and tools were carried up and carefully dumped in stores near the front line. This could mean only one thing—a grand attack—and the men of this Company, when worn out by the unceasing toil of these preparations, consoled themselves with the vain hope that, in return for this grinding labour, an easy task would fall to them in the day of battle.

On moving back, the Battalion spent a pleasant week in the cluster of farms at Bellerive, midway between Robecq and Béthune. Companies were made up to strength by a large draft from home. Weather was delightful, billets were good, and food was abundant. Training, too, was interesting and varied. Close-order drill in the shady orchards gave place to vigorous attack practices and night manœuvres over the open stubble fields. With the good fare and good quarters, healthy exercise by day and rest by night, the men were soon fresh, fit, and keen.

On the 17th the Battalion marched to the southwest of Béthune, and occupied a camp in the woods around Fouquereuil. Here six pleasant days were spent in mild training and battle preparations, the only discomfort being the cold nights, from which the thin clothing gave little protection. On the 23rd the Battalion moved forward to Saily-Labourse in a heavy rain-storm. On the evening of the 24th they left their billets in a blinding lightning storm, passed through Vermelles, advanced with difficulty along the muddy chalk of Hulluch Alley, and reached their assembly positions in the boyaux behind the front line about two in the morning of the 25th. Here, in a

gentle drizzling rain, they lay down to snatch a few brief hours of rest.

In this battle the 6th Battalion was again to co-operate with the sister Battalion, the 2nd Gordons. The regulars were to assault the front system of German trenches ; the Territorials, following in close support, were detailed to join the 2nd Battalion, to carry the second and third lines of defence, to storm the village of Hulluch, and to press on, if possible, to the canal at Pont à Vendin, some four miles from the assaulting positions.

At 5.30 the men were roused. Rum was issued. A hasty breakfast was swallowed. Arms and equipment were examined. It was known that gas was to be used by our army, and care was taken that it should not take effect on our own troops. Gas helmets, of the earlier type with the projecting nozzle, had been issued. These had to be worn on the head, ready to be pulled down if need arose. The appearance of the men wearing these strange snouted head-pieces was so ludicrous that amusement relieved the strain of the tense moments of waiting before the attack. The men were fit and keen. No trace of excitement was seen, and just before moving off one man of the last draft was observed calmly twisting the butt of his rifle in the chalk at his feet, and was heard to inquire of his companion, " Is't lime, think ye ? "

At 6 the barrage opened. At 6.30 the 2nd Gordons leapt to the attack, and the 6th Battalion moved forward to the front trenches. So complete had been the surprise and so fierce the attack of the 2nd Battalion

that the German front line was taken at the first rush. Enemy artillery retaliation on our front lines was heavy, but without waiting for the time-table, or indeed for orders, the 6th Gordons scrambled up the short scaling-ladders and followed the 2nd to the enemy lines. These they reached without difficulty, but not without considerable loss, as they suffered severe casualties, especially on their left flank, from machine-guns in a strong point called "The Pope's Nose," which had not at that time been captured.

At the German front line the Battalion re-formed. The advance from this position is a proof of the splendid quality of the discipline of the men. They moved forward in one line, two paces apart, not at a fierce double, but in an orderly, methodical, quick-time or walking pace. Twice during the advance they changed direction in obedience to a whistle and signalled orders, in each case moving into the exact positions allotted. They passed Gun Trench, from which the German artillery had fled, leaving six field-guns in our hands, and joined the remnants of the 2nd Battalion on the Lens-La Bassée road, having advanced some 2,000 yards within seventy minutes of the opening of the attack.

At this road the advance was checked. Both Battalions had already lost heavily, and as they approached Hulluch and the trenches in front of it, they were met with deadly fire from German snipers so cunningly concealed that they could not be detected. The contour of the ground, too, helped the enemy. The Highlanders had now crossed the ridge and were

moving down the slope, their every movement exposed to the watchful foe. A general advance was no longer possible. Small parties were pushed forward, some along trenches, some over the open. In every case they met the accurate fire of a hidden enemy. A turn of a trench left them open to an undiscovered loophole. A belt of wire arrested them and left them exposed to enemy rifles at thirty yards' range. In some cases small parties pushed so close to the Germans that they had to lie concealed in the long grass or "sham dead" in the open, until the shadows of night allowed them to move. The slightest movement attracted attention and drew a deadly and well-directed volley. In the low ground in front, too, the enemy's activity was clearly visible. Batteries were seen "in action"; troops were everywhere hurrying forward to strengthen resistance and to reinforce threatened localities; and a battalion in fours, with an officer riding in front, marched into Cité St. Elie.

The check and pause at this point first revealed the extreme danger of the situation of the two Gordon Battalions. In the fierceness of the opening rush they had dashed straight at the enemy, without paying much attention to the troops on their flanks. They had now bitten deep into the enemy's defences. Both Battalions had suffered heavy losses. No reinforcements had come up. Their left flank was completely exposed, and it was late in the forenoon before troops came forward to find touch on their right. In front, the enemy was active and vigilant. Every hour he was growing stronger and sending forward fresh troops.

The Highlanders at once set about securing their gains and putting themselves in a position of defence. Here again the Battalion had the misfortune to lose a gallant and much-loved Commanding Officer. Lieut.-Colonel J. E. MacQueen, rising up to post some of his men, was shot by a sniper and instantly killed.

The Battalion, in this awkward situation, was fortunate in having as second-in-command an officer whose cool judgment and ready action were never so prompt and clear as in emergency. Major James Dawson at once took the situation in hand. Knowing that the enemy would attempt to drive in the successful Highlanders unless strong reinforcements were sent up, he organized the position for defence. A forward line was posted on the east of the Lens-La Bassée road, supports were placed in a quarry on the immediate west of the road, and Headquarters established in Gun Trench, situated just behind the ridge.

After dark, ration parties were sent off to bring up supplies of food and water. A party of the 2nd Border Regiment, the first supports to arrive, reached Gun Trench. With them came a small body of Royal Engineers, who at once set about wiring-in the new position. Stretcher parties moved forward and backward in the darkness, seeking out and bringing in the wounded. The men of the Battalion, tired out with excitement, toil, and lack of sleep, lay down to rest, or watched with languid interest the figures of sappers and stretcher-bearers that flitted ghost-like in the gloom in front of and around them. Silently at midnight the enemy moved up. One stretcher-party blundered

among them, only one man returning in safety. The alarm was raised. The men stood to arms. In the darkness engineers, stretcher-bearers, and Germans were intermingled and indistinguishable. At first our men hesitated to fire, lest they might shoot down their friends. The enemy pressed on in front and worked round the flanks. The whole line became a confused, shadowy, writhing mass of friend and foe. "A gey steer" one private called it. In such a situation order and discipline were impossible, and the leading companies withdrew to Gun Trench.

At Gun Trench all disorder ceased. The advanced troops, caught in their retirement, were packed behind the parados, where all available defenders were already in position. Ration parties, hastily warned, flung away their precious burdens, seized their rifles, and lined the nearest ditch or trench. On the faint, half-visible skyline could be seen the figures of the advancing enemy, vast, mis-shapen, moving like phantom horsemen through the gloom. Fire was withheld until all our men had returned. Then from hundreds of muzzles burst a flash of fire, one continuous stabbing flame. The enemy reeled and recoiled. A few bold spirits pressed on. A single German reached Gun Trench, was promptly disarmed and taken prisoner. The attempt had failed; the counter-attack was crushed; and the sister Battalions of the Gordons proudly maintained nearly all their gains.

Thus ended twenty-four hours of grim fighting, filled full of a swift succession of hopes and fears—the sudden and victorious advance, the swaying uncertainty of



the battle of outposts, the mysterious onrush of the enemy, the confused din of the battle at midnight, and the successful repulse of the enemy. Through all this, excitement, discipline, and the sense of victory kept spirits bright and courage high. The days that followed, with their privation and inaction, were much more trying. Dawn on the 26th revealed the bleakness and discomfort of the situation. To enable the men to advance quickly, all superfluous kit and clothing had been discarded. Caps, greatcoats, waterproof sheets, and all warmer comforts had been left behind. Weather was wet and bitterly cold. In Gun Trench there was no shelter except a few dug-outs. These, although excellent, were quite insufficient to protect more than a small fraction of the troops. Movement was impossible under the eyes of a watchful enemy. Even to well-fed troops such conditions would have been dispiriting, but in this situation neither food nor water was available. The ration parties, surprised at midnight by the sudden attack of the enemy, had flung aside their burdens, seized their arms, and gallantly rushed to the assistance of their comrades in the hour of greatest need. The rations could not be recovered. All that dreary day the troops lay inactive but watchful, mud-caked, shivering with cold, and ravenous with hunger. The German dug-outs were searched with eager care, and the scanty supplies of black bread, raspberry jam, and fat bacon discovered in their depths, were greedily devoured.

On the evening of the 26th the remnants of the Battalion were relieved by the Scots Fusiliers, and

returned to the boyaux in which they had assembled for the assault. Here they remained for three days. Each night they moved forward and dug communicating or support trenches. By day they rested in the sodden bays, cold and uncomfortable, but now amply fed, and watched the last phases of the battle that ebbed and flowed fiercely around the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Battalions moved up in artillery formation, deployed into skirmishing lines, swarmed up and over the giant slag-heaps like innumerable ants, sometimes grimly holding their gains, sometimes flung back by the accurate enemy shell-fire from positions that cost so dear.

Great as had been the valour and achievements of the Battalion in this action, the losses had been equally severe. In addition to the Padre, Major Yeoman, and the Medical Officer, Captain E. F. W. McKenzie, both of whom performed magnificent work and fortunately survived without injury, twenty officers had taken part in the battle. Of these, seventeen were killed or wounded. The casualties in the ranks were equally heavy. During the few months in which he had held the command, Lt.-Col. MacQueen had gained the confidence and affection of the Battalion by his consideration, urbanity, and personal courage, and the manner of his death only increased the sorrow at his loss. Many old and trusted comrades had fallen, breathing to the last the fine spirit of Territorial comradeship, none more generally mourned than gallant Sergeant Peter Thomson, who fell with the inspiring rallying cry, "Come on, lads! Donside for ever!"

In October and November the weakened Battalion returned to the old order of trench-holding, varied with spells of rest in billets. The strength had fallen so low that on their first visit to the line after the Battle of Loos the whole Battalion could man only a sector which had formerly been held by a company. For these two months they remained in the area around Béthune. In the first ten days of October they held the line south of the La Bassée canal near Cambrin, with the transport in the marsh slightly further west. Here they again encountered the most intimate form of trench warfare, with saps and mine-craters, hand-grenades and trench-mortars, which they had first met at Givenchy. Vesuvius and Etna, as two of the mine-craters were called, were within the Battalion sector. Talk, except in whispers, was discouraged, as it was certain to draw a salvo of rifle or hand grenades. Bad weather and the need for constant trench repairs limited the activities of both sides to this friendly exchange of explosives.

Later in October the Battalion moved to the north of the canal, and spent uneventful tours in the Keeps of Givenchy and Festubert, or holding the trenches near these villages. Continuous labour in the crumbling trench-lines enabled the men to defy the cold and wet, and an issue of sheepskin coats and leather jackets late in November added to their comfort.

When not in the line, the Battalion lay in billets in the Béthune area, sometimes in the town itself, sometimes in the villages of Le Quesnoy or Les Harisoirs. The rest and ease of these winter quarters, with

plentiful food and comfortable billets, were a welcome and much-needed change for the Battalion, whose thinned ranks were a constant reminder of the heavy toll of battle. Early in December it moved back to the straggling but sheltered and cosy farms at Bellerive.

## CHAPTER VII

### DOWN THE LINE

*December 1915—May 1916*

PICQUIGNY—CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES—LEAVING THE  
7TH DIVISION—LINES OF COMMUNICATION—DUTIES  
AND AMUSEMENTS—THE 51ST DIVISION.

With a battalion in the field news is always scanty, and the human thirst for information is usually quenched with fresh and abundant streams of rumour. At Bellerive the stream became a flood. The Battalion was much under strength, and there was little hope of immediate reinforcement. The Staff had shown unexpected solicitude after the last tour in the trenches. Instead of marching wearily back for thirteen miles from the line to billets, the men had made the journey by motor-bus. At last their hopes and dreams were to prove true. They were to go south, so the eager story spread, south to a land that knew no wet and cold and mud. They even selected their destination, and Paris being suggested, it soon passed into common belief that they would spend the winter in the outskirts of that city.

To the men's great joy, and also doubtless to their great surprise, rumour in this case had some solid foundation. They did not go to Paris indeed, but they were to leave the battle area, and on the 7th of December they marched to Lillers, there entrained, and left for Picquigny.

The journey was in itself something new after a year of marching, and in jollity and cheeriness the men resembled light-hearted children going on an annual picnic trip. There was little incident, but, as the train neared St. Pol, the sight of the hills stirred the hearts of the Highlanders, who had spent twelve months in the flat plains of Flanders, with a strange and pleasant wonder. Just before midnight the train reached Saleux. Here the men de-trained by the aid of a few naphtha flares, and had tea in a field near the station.

After tea they set out on the long march to Picquigny. The night was so dark that the road was scarcely visible, but soon the moon rose behind the watery clouds. The countryside was fast asleep, and the men, too tired to take notice of anything, marched on mechanically over the rolling down country that was so different from the valley of the Lys. The first faint glimmer of light was just creeping into the sky when the Battalion reached the hill which leads down to Picquigny, and the men, all weariness forgotten, broke into song as they marched cheerfully to their billets.

Picquigny is a considerable village lying at the foot of the southern escarpment of the Somme valley,

on the south side of the river, some eight miles from Amiens. It consists of a Grande Place, which is a mere widening of the main road, with two chateaux, the Mairie, and the Bureau des Postes overlooking it, a few streets, a dozen cafés and estaminets, and a railway station.

The three weeks spent there, marking the first real break from the battle area, are still regarded as one of the happiest times the Battalion spent in France. At first there was the usual cleaning up, and now, after a long interval, equipment was scrubbed and buttons were polished.

The forenoons were spent in the usual individual and collective training, and particular attention was paid to musketry. In nine days the men constructed a rifle-range for distances up to 300 yards. This was one of the first ranges built in France by fighting troops, and certainly one of the most complete. In addition to firing points, targets, and a markers' gallery, a stop-butt was constructed with enormous effort. Either the shooting was poor or the butt was not large enough, as bullets flew plentifully over it. Even this was turned to advantage, and a draft which had just joined was marched round in rear of the range and so taught the sound of bullets flying overhead!

The afternoons and evenings were generally given up to recreation and amusement. Football was, as usual, the favourite game, but some of the men varied this with clandestine fishing in the Somme, using Mills bombs instead of the usual tackle. This illicit pastime provides an excellent example of the hardness and

good condition of the men, for one soldier was seen to go into the river in a black frost to secure the catch of a comrade who was bombing a little further up the stream.

The Christmas season was celebrated in the traditional Scottish manner with holiday, song, and story. The most memorable of the Christmas entertainments was the concert given by the warrant and non-commissioned officers on Christmas Eve, when the Officer Commanding the 3/6th Gordons was present, and the N.C.O.'s of the 2nd Battalion were guests—one of North's "Noctes." The New Year was brought in with even greater zest. On New Year's Eve a concert was given in the barn used by the Divisional troupe of entertainers, who assisted in the programme. As midnight approached, the whole Battalion assembled in the Grande Place. The infant year was introduced by the music of the pipe band, pledged in steaming libations of rum punch, and welcomed by lusty choruses of old national songs that were continued until the wee sma' hours, much to the amazement and alarm of the French civilians, who had discreetly shut themselves up in their houses early in the afternoon.

The festivities of evening and midnight had not exhausted the energies of the Battalion, and a most successful sports meeting was held on New Year's Day on the top of the hill overlooking the village. After the first few events the games went with a tremendous swing, and were wound up with great enthusiasm and amusement by the ever-entertaining mule race.

Early in January news came that the Battalion was



to be placed on duty on the lines of communication. This decision was due to the heavy battle losses the Battalion had suffered and to the difficulty of finding sufficient reinforcements. At first the suggestion of a long rest seemed pleasant, but when it was learned that it meant a final separation from the 7th Division, the pleasure soon faded. For fourteen months the Battalion had been a unit in one of the greatest of fighting divisions. From the regular soldiers it had learned much—discipline, comradeship, and battle wisdom. By its native courage, endurance, and tenacity it had won the highest tribute the old soldier could give, a frank admiration and admission of equality. The union had been cemented in blood on the fields of Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, Givenchy, and Loos. The pleasant thoughts of ease and rest gave way to feelings of consternation and dismay. Had the men been consulted, they would have given an overwhelming refusal to purchase ease at the price of separation. Such was the splendid spirit that animated the Battalion, a spirit that placed comradeship and honour before personal comfort and selfish ease. And their worth was now known and valued. Divisional and Brigade Commanders strove to retain the weak Territorial Battalion. But the order had gone forth. The 6th must go.

From the 6th of January to the end of May the Battalion was on duty on the lines of communication. For the first three months Battalion Headquarters and "A" Company were stationed at Le Havre, "B" Company, and the Machine-gun Section at Abbeville,

"C" Company at Rouen, and "D" Company at Dieppe.

Although the duties of detachments in the various stations differed in minor details, they had much in common. The men were released from the hardships, exposure, and danger of the battle-line; were housed in comfortable billets, and had regular meals. Amusement and recreation were abundant, and work, which resembled duty in a peace station at home, was rarely irksome and never oppressive. At Le Havre they occupied part of a camp—"Cinder City"—on the low ground near the docks. They had to provide escorts for prisoners of war and for soldiers under arrest, and in addition, various guards for the docks, at which great supplies of ammunition, guns, rations, and timber were disembarked. These duties were neither exhausting nor monotonous, and the usual routine was one day's duty in three. Twenty-four hours on duty were followed by twenty-four hours' rest, and on the third day a little drill or a route march restored the smartness and gave the polish that are expected in garrison troops.

The work of the officers was more varied than that of the men. In addition to the usual tours of inspection, they found a never-ending series of courts of inquiry and courts-martial on which they had to sit. These courts did not arise out of offences committed within the Battalion. They were part of the usual routine of base camps, which, being composed of small detachments and of individuals from all arms and from many units, and having generally detention



*Crown Copyright—Imperial War Museum.*

6TH GORDONS WAITING FOR PRESENTATION OF MEDALS.



*Crown Copyright -- Imperial War Museum.*

THE "VILLAGE" OF BEAUMONT HAMEL AFTER BOMBARDMENT.

(Page 102.)

camps or prisons attached, were particularly productive of those offences which, in the army, are called "crimes." A regular succession of these, with their frigid formality and endless repetitions—the loud-voiced command of the Sergeant-Major, "Prisoner and Escort: Halt—Right Turn—Right Dress"; the insistent repetition of the evidence: "Sir, about 3 p.m. on the 25th, when I was on duty at....." often made the weary members of the court long for the liveliness of the line. One good effect the courts had—even the most ignorant gained a smattering of military law.

The duties of the other stations were similar, but varied with local conditions. Dieppe was much less busy than Le Havre or Rouen, and the number of troops in and around it was small. The quantity of war material that passed through it was much less than in the great ports on the Seine, and did not demand so many guards, except when special cargoes, such as nickel or petrol, were landed. Here, too, the men were occasionally called on for other work, roadmaking, dock-work, or coaling, but on the whole the work was easy and pleasant.

At Abbeville, particularly during April and May, there was greater variety. The usual guards over Headquarters, the railway station, and magazines were provided. In addition to these, there were frequent guards over ammunition trains—a sentry having a beat on each side—over Rest Camps for horse transport passing along the high roads, and over a factory in the town where French girls were employed in the manufacture of gas helmets. Numerous small

detachments were sent on duty to various rail-heads and junctions. Doullens and Abancourt were the chief of these, and at one time as many as forty of these small bodies were supplied from Headquarters in Abbeville.

The other duty that fell to the Battalion was the providing of guards for road-control. This arose presumably from the belief that many of the motor cars which were attached to the army in the field were, on occasion, used for purposes which were not strictly military. To check this "joy-riding," a small guard under an officer was frequently posted near the entrance to one of the larger towns at the base or on the lines of communication. The duty of the guard was to hold up cars, to take the name and rank of the occupant, and the number of the car. The duty was not always easy or pleasant, and attempts were frequently made to evade the guard or to confuse the information given. Mistakes were, of course, inevitable. Officers of the highest rank, from the Commander of a Corps upwards, fly on the car a small flag which distinguishes their rank. Such cars passed unchallenged, but it is recorded that one keen, young officer of the 6th, failing to observe the small Union Jack flown by a car which was approaching his post, stopped it, and thrusting his head inside, demanded of the officer who was half-hidden by the shadows in the corner, "Your rank and name, Sir?" The quiet reply, "I am the Commander-in-Chief," led to a crestfallen and precipitate retreat. Another version of this incident, which passed for truth afterwards in the Battalion,

and which was more readily accepted because of the quaint humour of the officer, is much more piquant. In it the officer opened the door, thrust in his head, and demanded the rank and name of the occupant. "I am Haig" came the answer. Thinking that this was an attempt to "pull his leg," the questioner drawled out in the broadest of Scots, "Oh, ay, and I'm Robbie Simmers fae Hatton."

To men who had spent over a year at the battle-front and who had taken part in all the important engagements of 1915, life at the base or along the lines of communication seemed at first a paradise. Comfortable and commodious quarters in camp or in billets were a luxury to men who had passed many months with no roof but the heavens above them, and no couch but the sodden, slimy clay beneath. Regular hot meals were princely feasts after the hard tack and occasional privation of the line. Instead of the shivering wait at "Stand to," was the cheery rouse of *réveillé*; instead of the eerie silent vigil at night, were bright lights and the gay clamour of tongues; instead of the unceasing watchful toil from dawn to dusk, and from dusk again till dawn, were regular hours and light tasks. Yet with it all, hearts often strayed back to the old life, stifling a longing again to stand side by side with the glorious 7th Division.

When it did not interfere with duty, liberal leave was given to the men to visit the towns in or near which their camp was situated. As always happened when the troops came near a town, shops were searched for quaint souvenirs to be sent home as a slight return

for the many gifts and comforts that had brightened hard and lean times. But although the spirit was willing, the means were often weak. The pay of the private soldier was, as yet, but a shilling a day. In many cases, where there were dependants, it was less. So long as the troops were in or near the line, when there was little opportunity to spend, the rate of pay mattered little. But when they came near a town, where countless shops displayed their glittering shows of comforts and luxuries, the daily pittance and the scanty savings vanished like snow in summer. Many a souvenir sent home—cheap, tawdry, intrinsically valueless—bears yet the stamp of greatest worth, self-sacrifice at a time when pence were priceless and when francs were few.

Apart from sight-seeing, there were many diversions and amusements. The cafés that were open to the troops were well patronized. Y.M.C.A. huts provided opportunities for reading and writing. The camp concert was as popular as ever, and excellent entertainments were given by special concert-parties from the home land. The detachment in Dieppe was specially fortunate in this respect, as the ladies of the English colony organized a series of concerts for the men. At Dieppe, too, it was possible to have a game of golf at a trifling charge, while at Abbeville roller-skating provided recreation and amusement.

During this period the men had more and better opportunities of seeing and knowing the native population than at any other time. The kilt, as usual, attracted much attention, and the performances of the



pipe band of the Battalion in the Grande Place of Abbeville were seen and heard with great enthusiasm by large crowds. At every station the men were complimented by the Commandant on their conduct, their bearing, and the performance of their duty, while in one detachment the lads were delighted by the remark of a retired French officer who declared they were "real soldiers."

On the 9th of April Headquarters and "A" Company moved from Le Havre to Abbeville. During May the concentration was completed. "D" Company joined from Dieppe on the 3rd of that month, and a week later "C" Company moved up from Rouen. On the 26th of May came orders to concentrate at Doullens. This move was completed by the 31st, when the Battalion left Doullens. After spending a night at Grand Rullecourt, it marched to Bray, a few miles north-west of Arras, and there joined a re-organized formation, as yet unknown to fame—the 51st (Highland Territorial) Division.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1916

*May—November 1916*

NEUVILLE ST. VAAST—THE SOMME—BEAUMONT HAMEL

During the month of June and the first half of July the 51st (Highland Territorial) Division held the south-west shoulder of the Vimy Ridge, a few miles north of Arras. Work was generally a regular system of reliefs; five days in the line, five days in support, and five days in billets immediately in rear at Acq, Bray, and Mont St. Eloy. Even seasoned troops found here a change in the methods of trench warfare. The whole of our positions were dominated by the Vimy. Communication trenches were longer, dug-outs were numerous and deep, and the system of successive lines of defence was more complete. Above ground there was little activity. Rear lines were shelled at rare intervals, and the front was regularly plastered with all weights of minenwerfer—rifle-grenades, the larger pine-apple, and, least liked of all, the heavy "oil-can." At night, particularly, these had a demoralizing effect. The low, dull "pop" of discharge, the light "iss—iss—iss," gradually swelling as it

neared, the curving trail of sparks that showed against the sky at night, and the thunderous roar of detonation at first disturbed even the phlegmatic Scottish Territorials. But a few days brought familiarity, and with familiarity came knowledge of a way of escape.

In the air great progress had been made. The numbers of aeroplanes on both sides had been greatly increased, and the skill and daring of the airmen attracted the watchful admiration of the infantry. Air-fights—usually duels—became daily spectacles. The rival 'planes, climbing, diving, banking in the manœuvre for position, the dull mutter of machine-guns from the clouds, the hurried flight of an enemy who had been outgeneralled, the helpless, lurching roll of the damaged 'plane, the long, thin trail of smoke, and the red flame thousands of feet overhead, were noted with breathless interest, and sympathy was not withheld even from a defeated enemy.

Underground there was ceaseless activity. Everywhere were to be found groups of Royal Engineers busied with their innumerable mine-shafts, and night parties dumping the "spoils" or carrying up ammunition. Scarcely a day passed without a mine "going up," accompanied by a muffled explosion, a trembling in the dug-outs, and the extinction of candles. The whole front was studded with the craters made by these mines, and usually one lip was held by our men, the other by the enemy. At night both sides did a little stalking by small patrols, in order to cut out advanced posts. In one of these night encounters a private soldier of one of the battalions of the Seaforth

Highlanders was wounded and captured by a German patrol immediately before the battalion was relieved by the 6th Gordons. Next day the Germans sent over several "dud" or blank rifle-grenades, each with a message attached, saying that the man had died. The message continued, "This brave soldier was buried by us with full military honours." This is the only instance of German chivalry experienced by the 6th Battalion during four years of war.

That grave of so many gallant Frenchmen, Neuville St. Vaast, in front of which our defences ran, was a shattered ruin with scarcely a cellar left suitable for an aid-post. Everywhere lay littered the wreckage of war, its solitary glory the glossy harvest of red poppies, its sole inhabitants myriads of rats. It did contain what was better than buildings or cellars, a series of enormous caverns. In their capacious depths a battalion could be housed, and there the men, when in support and free from working parties, enjoyed a safe rest, cleaning their equipment or playing interminable games of "House" by the light of a hundred guttering candles.

Two alterations at this time ruffled the Highlanders. The first was the introduction of the steel shrapnel helmet, popularly known as the "tin hat." It was designed to protect the wearer from splinters of shell and from shrapnel bullets, and during the next two-and-a-half years saved thousands of men from serious head wounds. Its great weight and the discomfort and headaches it caused in the blistering heat of summer at first made it unpopular. The flimsiest pretexts

were made for discarding it, and it was frequently put to uses that would have astonished its inventor. It did not take long for the ever-ingenuous soldier to discover that, stripped of the chin strap and rubber pad, it was the best of cooking-pots, while its cup-like shape, when inverted, supplied a most convenient carrying vessel. The men soon became accustomed to its weight, and practical experience of the safety it gave soon reconciled them to the unusual burden. The second change was even less pleasing. For some reason which satisfied the Higher Command, the kilt was discarded in the trenches in this area, and all ranks wore the ordinary service dress—khaki trews and square caps. The fondness for the Highland uniform was seen in rest billets, when the tartan re-appeared on the slightest of excuses.

Soon after this change the Division was relieved by London troops who had just arrived from England. At first these were sent into the line in small parties to learn trench routine. They were keen and quick to learn, but sometimes their rawness provoked the dry and pawky humour of the Scot. Each sap-head in front of our line was held by a "double sentry"—two men on duty together for a spell of two hours. When these troops were in for instruction, the double sentry was made up of one seasoned veteran of the 6th Battalion and a new hand from the English Division. The officer on duty, going round the line, came upon two such men preparing to go up to the sap-head to relieve the sentries there, and overheard the following whispered conversation:—

New Hand.—“ How far off are the Germans, Jock ? ”

Old Hand.—“ Files they’re a hunner yairds ; files they’re fifty ; bit man ” (with impressiveness) “ files they’re sae near that at nicht they’ll rax ower their han’ an’ tak’ aff yer bonnet.”

Yet that was the spirit that defied defeat, for it spelt the unconquerable soul.

The comfort of the troops had by this time been greatly improved by the establishment of the E.F.C. (Expeditionary Force Canteens), and many units set up smaller regimental canteens to provide comforts and little luxuries. The value of these canteens in keeping up the spirit of the troops was inestimable, and the variety of the goods they sold was as remarkable as their cheapness. Even small canteens that could boast of only one room—part of which was set aside for the serving of hot tea and coffee—presented a remarkable collection of useful things :—potted soups, quaker oats, biscuits, tinned herring, sardines, fruits, pipes, tobacco, cigarettes, cigars, pomade and pickles, brushes, razors, combs and sponges, tooth brushes and paste, tin openers, knives, forks, spoons, mirrors, toothpicks, chocolate, pencils, paper, and scores of other articles. Behind the lines, too, although prices were rising, they were still moderate, and two officers report having had an excellent dinner in Domart-en-Ponthieu in June 1916 : omelette, real roast beef, salad, and coffee, for 3 francs 50—approximately half-a-crown.

On 1st July began the long series of operations known as the Battle of the Somme, and in the middle of that month the 51st Division moved south towards

Albert. As the 6th Gordons passed through Doullens, they met the new Brigade Commander, Brig.-General H. Pelham Burn, who was Adjutant of the Battalion at the outbreak of war. By the 20th the battle area was reached, and the increased intensity and fierceness of the struggle were everywhere evident. Pause for a few minutes to consider the scene. In front lies a vast plain which appears a flat and lonely wilderness. Dotted over its surface are the ruined houses of its former inhabitants: some of them a mere heap of broken brick, others roofless, their blackened walls telling the tale of fire. In the immediate neighbourhood of these deserted homes may also be seen a clump of torn and tattered trees, which were formerly a smiling orchard. Some have been uprooted, while above them stand headless stumps, whose shattered and splintered stems point to a violent death. In the fields may be seen the familiar plough and harrow, standing where they were last used, now deserted and forming a landmark in an otherwise bare expanse.

Across the face of the landscape are tortuous, irregular scars, which cut up the surface into all sorts of fantastical figures. It looks as if some monsters, without guidance or control, had dragged a plough over the ground and thrown the soil into distorted furrows. Alongside these lines appear wide masses of wooden or iron struts and tangles of untidy wire.

In the foreground are traces of former crops, now growing wild and seeding themselves. Nature, the great healer, has decked the district with prodigal

hand, and covered the ground with a glorious blaze—a riot of colour—red poppies, cornflower, and mustard, a charming mixture which no domestic garden can equal.

In this vast expanse is no sign of man. The soil, which formerly carried so many people, now seems desolate. Yet, if closely inspected, there will be found a larger population than of old, only the altered conditions force it to live under, instead of on the surface. The thin brown and grey slits all contain men, of necessity temporary residents, with the twofold purpose of protecting themselves and killing the enemy.

Close at hand are the cross-roads, leading up to the valleys behind our lines. Near them are the heavy howitzers, and dotted here and there in front of these are guns of all descriptions—hundreds of them. These greedy monsters must be fed, and the thousands of infantry beyond require stores of all kinds as well as their daily food. The valley roads, out of sight of the enemy, are always filled with traffic of every description, continuous streams proceeding in either direction. Suddenly, out of the still atmosphere, comes the shrieking of shells, which indicates the cunning of the enemy in picking out a vital corner. In an instant the orderly calm becomes a seething turmoil. The air is black with clouds of bursting shrapnel; the soil leaps into tall, grey columns as the hail of high explosive crashes into it, claiming many victims. Riderless horses gallop away; driverless teams by some miraculous guidance drag their rocking limbers back past the yawning shell-holes. A team of six has



lost all its drivers, except one, and that not the leader. Yet it is marvellous to see this man, by voice and whip, pilot his charge to safety. Broken wagons, dead men, and dead horses litter the roads for many yards. All that can move waste no time in getting away from the cross-roads while the shelling lasts, but, given a short respite, the road is cleared, and the traffic rolls on as formerly, for the risk must be faced.

For the last week of July the Battalion lay near Ericourt, in Caterpillar Valley, and in Mametz Wood, and every night supplied carrying-parties to the lines in front. By day the men rested in old German trenches, or tried to escape the intense heat in such shady nooks as the shell-torn trees still provided. But the enemy had not forgotten the lines of trenches he had given up, and each day, at an unexpected moment, he rained down on selected areas short but hurricane bombardments. The men soon learned to expect and avoid these, and as soon as the shriek of the first shell was heard, advanced some little distance into the wood, and watched in calm and safety the vain fury of the enemy. Through it all the men never lost their spirit, and much amusement was caused in one platoon when they found, on returning to their little section of trench, that the equipment and clothing which they had left behind at the first warning, had been caught by the bursting shells, and that the tattered remnants were dangling gracefully on the tops of the neighbouring trees. At this time "D" Company had in its ranks a humorist called Tam.

After dinner one sweltering day Tam took off his boots and hose and was busily "paring his corns" when the warning shell-scream told that the German gunners had opened fire. Without a word all doubled forward into the wood, followed by Tam, whose bare feet, unaccustomed to the prickly undergrowth, made slow progress. Just as he approached their new place of shelter, his companions were surprised to see him drop to the ground convulsed with laughter, and asked him what was wrong. "Weel!" said Tam, "I wis jist thinkin', if my aul' grannie saw me, she wad say, 'Ye're a bonnie sodger, Tam!'"

On the 1st of August the Battalion moved into the front line at High Wood. Attempts to carry this wood had failed, and we were hanging on desperately to the western edge. The position of the enemy was unknown. By day there was no trace of him, except when a scout or small patrol blundered into our positions. By night he came closer. At dusk it was rarely possible in the forward positions to venture over the parapet without encountering a well-aimed rifle shot. At several points he came close in after dark and tried to bomb our posts. Both by day and by night patrols were out to find touch. The work of these patrols was hard. They knew nothing of the enemy except that he was near. The tangled wreckage of trees, the twigs and branches that crackled in spite of the greatest caution, and the bloated bodies of the dead, swollen by the blistering summer sun to superhuman size, made each step a tense and nauseous ordeal. The idea of a frontal attack was given up.

Saps were thrust forward into the wood like giant fingers. By night the sap-heads were joined up by shallow trenches and wire was thrown out in front. This policy of "nibbling," although slow, was sure, and cheaper in blood. It gained ground at little cost.

During the holding of High Wood occurred one of these daring incidents of individual gallantry of which the Battalion is justly proud. One morning, just after dawn, a rifle was seen moving feebly from a shell-hole in the open to the south of the wood, some 250 yards from our line. Field-glasses were put on it, and it was thought that the rifle was being waved by someone who had been wounded during an attack which had been made on that front four days before. Disregarding the possibility of an enemy ruse, Sergeant Alexander Russell, Rothiemay, of "C" Company, determined to go out. Partly by crawling, partly by swift leaping from shell-hole to shell-hole, he made his way out, found a badly-wounded private of the Black Watch, bound him up and carried him back, zig-zagging from cover to cover, and stumbling with his burden from one shell-hole to another. During the whole time he was exposed to continuous fire from the enemy. Even as a feat of physical strength and endurance, with no enemy near, it would have been magnificent. The rescued man lived, and Russell, for his bravery, received the D.C.M.

After five days in High Wood the Battalion was relieved. In the Somme operations the total losses were 23 killed and 137 wounded. These were due more to shell-fire than to any other cause, although

there were frequent collisions between the outposts. The intense heat, the lack of cover—either from the sun or from enemy fire—and the limited supply of water were more exhausting than contact with the enemy.

On relief, the Battalion again moved north with the Division towards Armentières. There it remained for six weeks, training near Bailleul, in Divisional reserve in the town itself, or holding the line immediately to the east. This sector of the line was quiet, weather was excellent, and the trench system in good repair, the Battalion being in trenches continuously from 1st to 19th September. The only incident of note was a raid made on a salient in the German line from a salient in our line, which, from its shape, was called the "Mushroom." This was on the night of the 22nd–23rd September. A previous attempt had to be cancelled owing to the Bangalore torpedoes, used for blowing gaps in the enemy wire, not being strong enough to be placed in position in time. The raid on the 22nd–23rd was carried out with great gallantry, but was only partially successful, the German line being entered at one point and bombed at two others.

Activity was not confined to the front line. Near Battalion Headquarters was a large farm, little damaged, called Square Farm. This was used as an observation station, and commanded an excellent view in all directions. In particular, it was discovered that it gave direct observation on the cross-roads in the village of Perenchies, lying within the enemy's lines some two miles away. Owing to the quiet time

in the line and the good weather, the Medical Officer had little to do, and was one of the most industrious of observers. Fully imbibing the "offensive spirit," he got in touch with the neighbouring artillery, fixed up a connection between the O. Pip (Observation Post) and the guns, arranged a code of signals, and sat long and patient hours watching the cross-roads. Whenever a suitable target was seen, the bell was pushed, and a salvo at once went straight to the mark, disturbing the leisure of the German Medical Officer on the other side.

Good times rarely last long, and on the 1st of October the Battalion was again on the march south towards the Ancre. The first part of the month was spent training in delightful weather in the open stubble fields near Bus-en-Artois, Louvencourt, and Colin-camps. The nature of the training—continuous battle practice—left no doubt as to its ultimate purpose. After a short spell in the line in front of Puisieux and Serre, the Brigade moved some two miles south towards Mailly-Maillet and Auchonvillers (popularly pronounced Oceanvillers), and held the line in front of Beaumont Hamel, with Headquarters in the celebrated chalk caves of White City.

While the Battalion was in the line, a small incident occurred which brought with it some encouragement. At dawn one morning a German was seen approaching. He was at once covered by the rifles of the nearest sentry group—a Lewis-gun post. The corporal in charge shouted out in question, "Kamerad?" Immediately the German put up his hands, said

“Kamerad,” and came in to surrender. On examination, he stated that he had just had a letter from his parents at home, telling him of the miserable conditions they had to endure, and added that he had made up his mind to fight no longer for a people who allowed old parents to starve at home while their sons were fighting at the front. Following this, the Battalion made a reconnaissance in force on the German line, to test the morale of the German troops. The Germans were found quite watchful and resolute ; the officer in charge of the patrol, Lieut. J. Morrison, of Gamrie, was badly wounded, but was brought back through the tangled wire and morass by the devotion of his N.C.O.s, chief of whom was Sergeant Russell, who had shown such gallantry on the Somme.

Preparations for an attack were being pushed forward with great activity. Old trenches were cleared, deepened, and repaired. New trenches were dug. Great quantities of stores of all kinds were carried up : picks and spades, bombs and wire, rations, ammunition, and water. A great part of this heavy work fell to the 6th Battalion. Continuous rains, which turned trenches into impassable quagmires, delayed the day of attack. For a time it was thought that no advance could take place that winter, but by the end of the first week of November weather improved, preparations again went forward, and the assault was launched on the morning of the 13th.

The Battle of Beaumont Hamel, which takes its name from the village in the centre of the enemy

position, was more completely successful than any operation the British Armies had yet undertaken. The task of the 152nd Infantry Brigade, of which the 6th Gordon Highlanders formed part, was to capture this strongly fortified key-position. Three battalions were allotted to the task, the 6th Gordons being close up in reserve. At 5.45 in the morning of the 13th November the attack was launched. The air was heavy with a thick mist, which partly helped and partly hindered our movements. Punctually at zero hour the barrage opened, tanks moved forward, and the infantry closed on the enemy's defences. Owing to the boggy nature of the ground the tanks did not achieve much, but nothing could withstand the dash and resolution of the Highlanders, and by seven o'clock a great part of the village was in our hands. One part—a piece of high ground on the south—still held out, and was a source of great danger, as it dominated all the gains of the Brigade. "A" Company and part of "B" Company of the 6th Battalion were ordered up to secure this position. Their task, unsupported by artillery, against an enemy who was now fully on his guard, was no easy one, but, although they lost heavily in closing with the garrison, they were successful in isolating and clearing the position. Two bombing teams, each made up of one non-commissioned officer and eight men, showed great initiative and boldness. In addition to other casualties inflicted on the enemy, one team captured seventeen men, and the other, led in person by Lieut. J. H. Matheson, M.C., Gamrie, who displayed marked resource and

gallantry throughout the whole operation, took two officers and thirty-four men. The part played by the Battalion in this action was of vital importance, as it secured a strong position which was a menace to our troops, and so ensured the complete success of the operations of the Brigade. Our losses were two officers and twenty-two other ranks killed, one officer and seventy-five other ranks wounded.

On the evening of the 13th the remainder of the Battalion moved forward to the east of Beaumont Hamel, and there consolidated the position by digging a new line. After a brief rest of two days the Battalion again returned and held the village and defences for six days. This gave time for a detailed inspection of the stronghold. The elaborate system of earth-works clearly indicated that the enemy intended to stay, and the more closely these were examined, the greater appeared the achievement of the 152nd Brigade in capturing the position. Popular belief, fostered by misleading reports of newspaper correspondents, accepted the story of enormous caves of early origin under the township. Here and there, it is true, portions of caves remained, but the intricate system of underground defences was almost entirely the work of German engineers, and it is generally accepted that these defences were more elaborate and complete than those of any other captured position, even Thiepval not excepted.

Each sector of the town was provided with an enormous dug-out, which ran under the battle positions of the defenders. Some of these dug-outs had



as many as seven entrances, all connected by a gallery, so that, even if four or five were blown in or captured, the garrison could still come out and deliver a counter-attack from those which had escaped notice and capture. The galleries and dug-outs were so deep and well-constructed that only in a few instances had the hurricane of 8, 9.2, 12, and 15-inch shells damaged them. In some cases the stairs leading down to the dug-outs had as many as thirty or forty steps; in others there were two "storeys," one some fifteen feet underground, and another lower still. It was estimated that one of these enormous "burrows" could hold as many as 300 men. Comfort as well as safety had been considered. Nearly all were fitted with beds; in some, kitchens were installed, and electric light was supplied by a power station established in the village itself. Headquarters were palatial in comfort. One Company Headquarters, within 100 yards of the original front line, may serve as an example. It was roofed with iron rails, similar to those which form the permanent way of railways, placed close together. Above these were rows of tree-stems, then many feet of earth; above this again, a foot of concrete covered by more earth. Outside, at the entrance, a verandah with bricklaid promenade looked out on an obelisk, a carefully constructed memorial to the German dead. The lobby leading down to the interior was lined with wood, and contained a walking-stick rack. Inside were five chambers—a living room, an office, accommodation for the Feldwebel or Sergeant-Major and for orderlies, and a kitchen,

which had a serving window opening into the living room. The living room was floored and panelled throughout—walls and ceiling—with wood. A table, two beds, a telephone, electric light, and a stove contributed material comfort and business efficiency, while a frieze of dark green cloth, some fifteen inches deep, and a few pictures gave artistic relief to the bare walls.

In another, probably a Battalion Headquarters, was found the Commander's bedroom, with chest of drawers, mirror, four-posted bed, a small table, and an electric switch within easy reach, enabling the distinguished soldier to perform his arduous duties without undue risk or fatigue.

In the village were found a bakery, an armourer's shop, and great supplies of arms and ammunition of all kinds. Large quantities of stores were discovered in a canteen :—tinned beef and sardines, cigars, cigarettes (including Wills's Gold Flake), and matches, coffee beans—pronounced by an expert to be Turkish—soda water and lager beer, a piano, a cat-o'-nine-tails, and, most treasured of all by the finder, the gallant officer who then commanded " B " Company, a lady's white slipper.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE BATTLE OF ARRAS

*December 1916—July 1917*

WINTER 1916-1917—COURCELETTE—HAUTVILLERS—  
RETURN TO THE LINE—DAYLIGHT RAID—BATTLES  
OF ARRAS

During December and the first fortnight of January the Battalion lay near Albert, either holding the line north of Courcellette, or resting in hutted camps—Bruce, Wolseley, and Ovillers huts—and in billets at Bouzincourt. Weather was bad. This area, the battlefield of the Somme, was a waste of mud and débris. In La Boisselle and Ovillers scarcely one stone was left standing on another ; in Pozières some two square yards of one of the walls of the church alone remained. The ground was strewn with wreckage. Derelict tanks, broken aeroplanes, and all manner of damaged stores lay piled up on the sides of the roads. Trenches were impassable, generally waist deep. The innumerable shell-holes, filled brim-full of thick mud by the heavy rains, were, except in broad day-light, indistinguishable from the sodden earth. It was not uncommon for men and stores to disappear into

their treacherous and slimy depths. A party of another battalion, moving up by night to relieve a post of the 6th Gordons in the front line, had actually to be dug out by the men they came to relieve. The conditions were as depressing and miserable as during the winter of 1914, and the area under shell-fire was deeper. So exhausting was the effort to move over two or three miles of such country that even strong men, whom no enemy could daunt, while moving back to billets after 72 hours in the line, have been seen to sink down exhausted and in tears. The indefatigable efforts of the Quartermaster to prevent frost-bite and "trench feet" by supplying dry socks, whale oil, and trench cookers, alone made existence bearable.

On the 2nd of January, 1917, the Battalion was withdrawn after two tours of duty in the line. Ten days were spent near Albert in general fatigues and rest billets, and the Division then moved back towards the coast for a rest. Abbeville was reached on the 16th of January, and the 6th Battalion settled down in and around the village of Hautvillers, some four miles north of that town. Here it remained until the 5th of February. The time was spent in general training and battle practice. The men were housed in cottages and barns. Weather was bitterly cold. Even in billets they woke up to find shaving-brushes, sponges, and the water in their mugs frozen to masses of solid ice. Fuel was scarce, but the memory of the hardships in the line made these discomforts seem trivial. A Battalion canteen was established, a football ground

was laid out, occasional visits were permitted to Abbeville, which had been one of their centres during the previous winter ; and the period of training, short as it was, gave a rest to the body and a healthy tonic to the mind. On the 5th of February began the march back to the battle area.

This return march, which occupied six days, was carried out over hilly country under almost Arctic conditions. The ground was frozen hard. Recent falls of snow, crushed by traffic, had transformed roads into glassy and dangerous sheets of ice. Biting head-winds increased the difficulties of the march. The progress of the infantry was slow and exhausting, but as nothing compared with the struggle of the transport. Bare and slippery patches were a constant source of danger, especially for the mules. These hardy animals staggered and slipped, sideways and forward, sat down on their haunches, got up again, only to repeat their uncertain movements, as if engaged in an intoxicated dance. But all difficulties were surmounted, thanks largely to the energy of the Transport Officer, Capt. Charles McCombie, of Alford, whose cheery good-humour, practical knowledge, and devotion to the Battalion were always evident in a difficult situation. On the 11th the Battalion reached Ecoivres, north-west of Arras. Six days later it moved into trenches at Roclincourt, four miles north-east of Arras—a very quiet part of the line.

By this time larger operations were preceded in all parts of the line by smaller actions, known as raids. A raid was an attack made on a small, well-

defined part of the enemy's position, and was carried out for definite purposes. One of these was to inflict damage on the enemy, to affect his morale, or make him nervous by sudden and destructive inroads on his trenches. An even more important object was the gaining of information about his troops, their distribution, power of defence, and general fighting qualities; while the capture of prisoners usually provided useful information as to the enemy's intentions, the spirit of his army, and conditions in the interior of Germany. The execution of these raids was invaluable in training our men, in getting them accustomed to moving over the open, and in circumventing the defences and ruses of the enemy.

One of the most successful daylight raids was carried out by the 6th Gordons on the 5th of March. Its success was largely due to the care and completeness with which all the preliminary arrangements were carried out. Artillery and trench mortars cut gaps in the enemy wire, but did not confine their attentions to the area to be attacked, as this would have put the enemy on his guard and rendered surprise futile. For ten days before the attack observers from the Battalion were up in our own front line, studying all day with field-glasses and periscopes the enemy's position, the progress made in wire-cutting, any new defences, and the probable position of machine-guns. Maps were enlarged from aeroplane photographs. On these all details were entered, and each private soldier knew, from a study of them, where and how far he had to go, what ditches, banks, and trenches

he would have to cross, where danger was most likely to be expected, and how best it could be avoided. All ranks who were to take part in the raid went up in small groups to see the positions by daylight and to pick out landmarks that would help them to keep their direction, while an exact copy of the German line was laid out in tapes in the training area east of Maroeuil, and the troops practised the assault over it.

Thirteen officers and 300 men, with Capt. Ian G. Fleming and Capt. Donald G. Clark in command, were told off for the task. This force was divided into eleven groups, each under the command of a subaltern, and each group was again divided into three or four squads with a non-commissioned officer in charge. The utmost keenness prevailed. The men were in position in a disused French trench in front of the regular system half-an-hour before the time fixed for the assault. Hot soup had previously been provided by the Quartermaster, who personally supervised its distribution, then took up a position in front of our line, and was only prevented by the most explicit of orders from joining in the raid in person.

At 6 came daylight. At 6.9 the barrage crashed. One minute later the first wave of the raiders left their cover, wound through the dog-leg gaps in our wire, rushed across the snow-powdered No Man's Land, and dashed into the front German trench. Fifty yards behind them came the second wave, whose objective was the German second line, some seventy

yards behind the first. The surprise was everywhere complete. Sentries were shot down or overpowered. In some cases the German troops had left their dug-outs and fought with the courage of despair. One small group held a straight bit of trench and defied approach, until one of our officers, approaching stealthily over the open behind the parados, dropped a bomb among them. "What happened?" he was asked in hospital twelve hours later. "No more Boche!" was the curt reply. Everywhere the same stubborn resistance was encountered. Groups and pockets held out until destroyed by bomb, bullet, and bayonet. Round the entrances of dug-outs, as well as in the trenches themselves, the battle was fought with grim and unrelenting ferocity. The imprisoned Germans strove hard to force their way out. A shower of bombs thrown in produced only a volley in reply until stronger measures were employed. Large mobile charges of ammonal and Stokes bombs were used to wreck the shelters. In some cases, tins of petrol provided beforehand and perforated by the bayonet were flung down the dug-out stairs, followed a second later by a phosphorus bomb, which ignited the petrol and made the dug-out a blazing inferno. In one instance a private soldier found himself alone to deal with two exits, up both of which the garrison were trying to climb. By running from one to another and dropping a bomb now into one, now into the other, he kept them at bay until assistance came. Within a very few minutes the only Germans left alive in the area were imprisoned in their flaming shelters underground.



The enemy fought with resolute courage. In only one instance—that of five men who came out of a dug-out—was a voluntary surrender made. But two cases of treachery on surrender occurred. One party encountered a German officer in the act of loading his revolver. At first he put up his hands, but, on being approached, he took a step backward, and shot two of our men before being killed. At the door of one dug-out a man was standing with his hands up, when a shot was fired from a group on the stair behind. The shot did not take effect on any of the raiders, but the man in front was killed and fell back on his companions just as a Mills bomb exploded in their midst.

In half-an-hour the whole area was overrun, every corner explored, every German killed or captured, and every enemy weapon dismantled or destroyed. By 6.40 the raiders returned to Fish Tunnel, and after a short rest moved back to billets. In the afternoon Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig inspected them near Haute Avesnes, some six miles north-west of Arras. The men paraded in the dress and equipment they had worn in the early morning. The Field-Marshal congratulated all ranks cordially on the success of their enterprise.

Twenty-one prisoners, including one officer, were captured. They belonged to the 2nd Bavarian Infantry Regiment, and had come into the trenches only some six hours before the raid took place. Our casualties were one officer and sixteen men killed, five officers and thirty-two men wounded; the majority

only slightly. Sixty-six enemy dead were counted in the trenches or at dug-out doors, and many more must have perished on the stairs or inside the dug-outs. One machine-gun was captured, two more were destroyed, and twelve hours after the raiders had returned, the smoke of the burning shelters was seen clouding the evening sky.

During spring many raids were made on all parts of our front. These were merely the prelude to the great attacks of 1917. Preparations went forward with feverish haste. Artillery and supplies were pushed up, new roads were made, and old roads were improved. In the air there was even greater activity. During the early months of the year the enemy had clearly established superiority. The famous "circus" of Baron Von Richthofen was daily taking a heavy toll. Early in April a change took place. New machines and experienced pilots came out from home. In two days the black cross was swept from the sky, and only an occasional German airman, greatly daring, would venture across our lines in the early dawn or closing dusk. To the infantry in the line the differing characters of the opposing airmen were very evident. When the Germans held the upper hand, our pilots went out daily, undeterred by losses, observing and offering battle in spite of the heavy odds against them. When our aeroplanes had obtained the mastery, scarcely a German 'plane or air formation dared to take the sky.

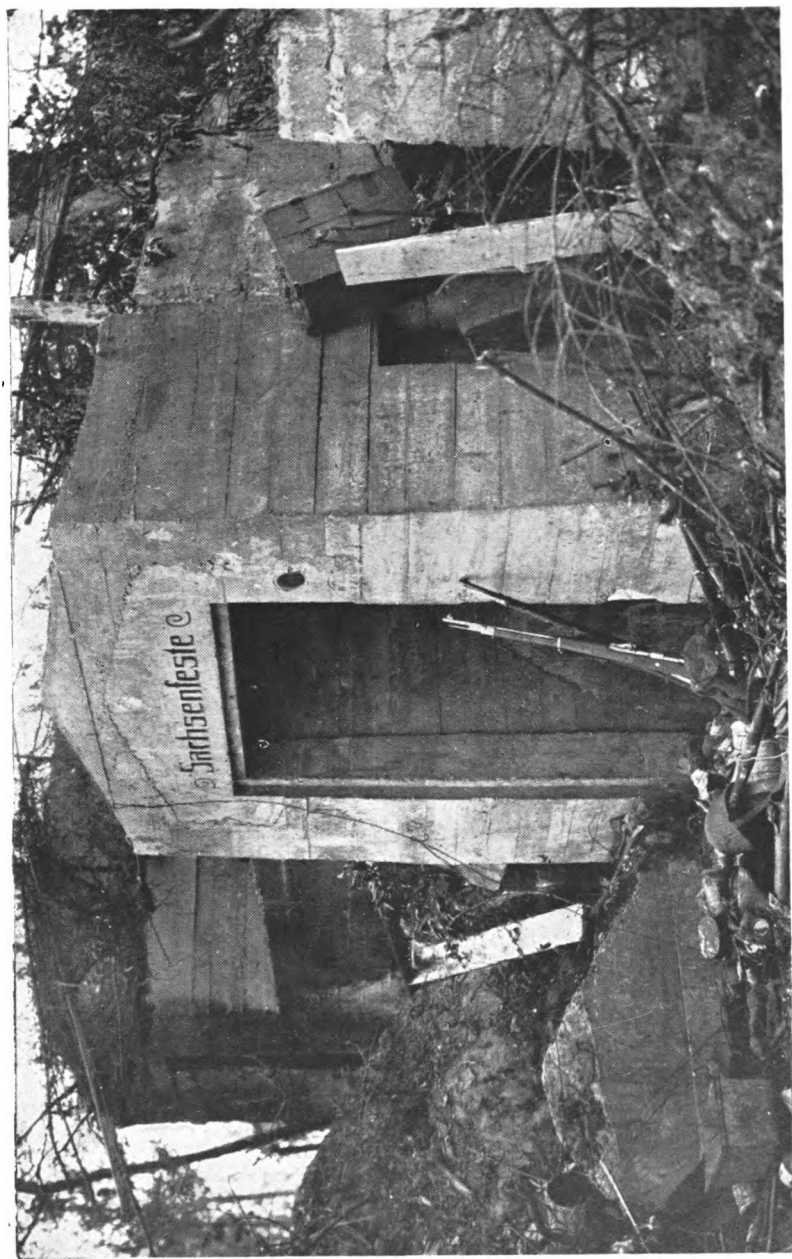
In the campaign of 1917, which opened on Easter Monday, the 51st Division was engaged during the

months of April and May in the series of actions commonly called the Battle of Arras. The 6th Battalion took part in three phases of this battle—in the opening attack on the 9th of April; in the attack on Roeux on the 23rd of that month; and in the successful repulse of a German attack near the same village on the 15th and 16th of May.

In the opening attack of the 9th of April, the 6th Battalion joined in the first assault, and part of it moved over the same ground as it had covered in the raid of the 5th of March. Three lines were allotted to the Battalion, and all objectives were carried. The enemy's defences were so complete and everywhere so well organized that strong opposition was encountered. At many points fierce hand-to-hand fighting took place, but within half-an-hour all resistance was overcome. The bold spirit of the men and the excellence of their training stand out clearly in this operation. The third wave, "C" Company, not content with capturing the third line, swept forward, captured and held a fourth line which was outside their programme; while a platoon of "B" Company, which had lost its officer and non-commissioned officers in moving across No Man's Land, was taken charge of by an enterprising private soldier, under whose leadership it carried out successfully and completely its share of the attack. Only one disconcerting incident occurred. A minenwerfer ammunition dump, situated in a deep dug-out near the enemy third line, was exploded, whether by the heroism or treachery of the German garrison or by accident is not known. The explosion

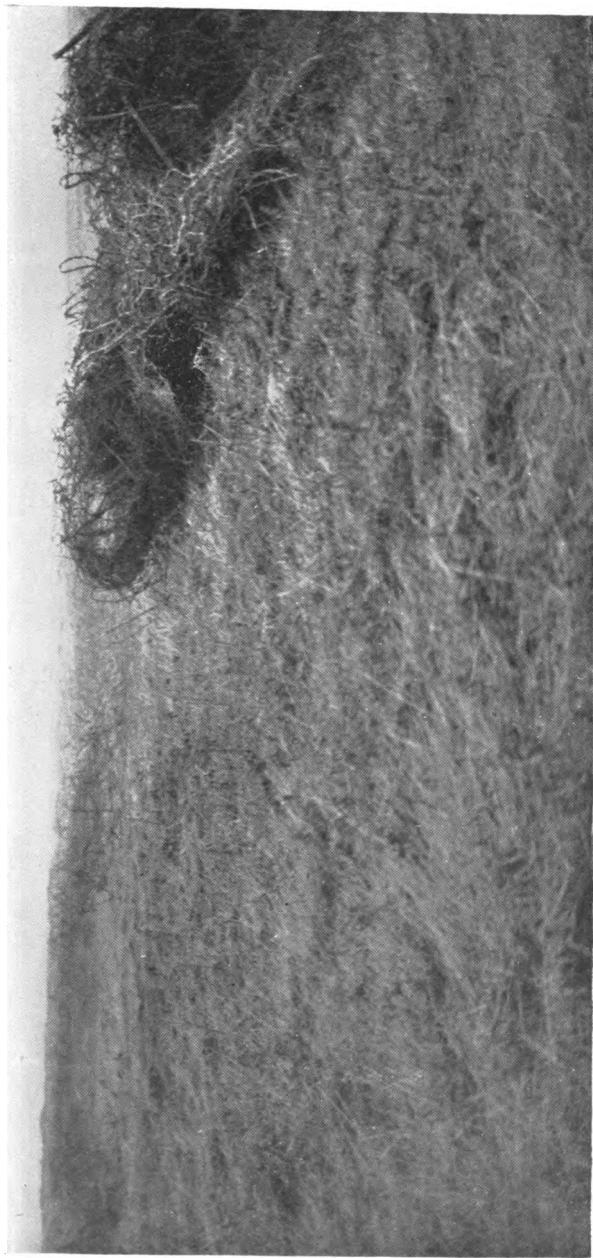
formed an enormous crater, some twenty-five feet deep, and killed or wounded twenty of the Battalion, in addition to a number of the enemy. Half-way down the side of this crater lay the dead body of a Battalion signaller, still bearing the tiny wicker cage in which rested a carrier pigeon, also dead.

Great care was required to search thoroughly every cranny which might conceal an enemy. One Company Commander, having gone round the sector captured by his men, retired to a dug-out and began to write his report. To him entered, some minutes later, an orderly. Hearing a slight noise, the orderly brought his rifle to the ready, and shouted, "Come out." The words might not have been understood, but the tone was unmistakable, and two trembling Germans crawled out from behind a bed concealed in a recess, put up their hands, and marched off obediently to the prisoners' cage. In another part of the line, during the "mopping up" which always followed an attack, a soldier descended a dug-out carrying an empty Very pistol—a heavy, clumsy weapon used to discharge star-shells. On reaching the foot of the stairs he lit a candle, and suddenly found himself confronted by two burly Germans. Without a second's hesitation he covered them with his perfectly harmless and unloaded weapon, shouting "Hande hoch" ("Hands up"). The command was instantly obeyed; the two captives obediently filed up the stairs, followed by their captor, whose appearance was greeted by the laughter of his comrades. In addition to the usual stores, three machine-guns, a



GERMAN "PILL-BOX."

(Page 123.)



*Crown Copyright--Imperial War Museum.*  
GERMAN WIRE ENTANGLEMENT ROLLED UP BY TANKS.

number of trench-mortars of varying sizes, and over 100 prisoners were captured.

For a week after this action the Battalion rested in Arras, another martyred city. Although even then deserted by the French inhabitants, many quarters were little damaged. Houses and shops, locked, barred, and shuttered, still contained valuable goods and rich furniture. In other districts great havoc had been wrought. The town was well within the range of the enemy's artillery, and at any hour of the day or night the shriek of shells was followed by the rending crash of timber and the rush of falling masonry. Some streets were but irregular mounds of brown rubble, and such walls as remained gaped with circular shell-holes. The famous cathedral, splintered and roofless, its tall pillars pointing an appeal to Heaven, presented the silent, widowed majesty of our own old abbeys; while in the sheltered vaults and cloisters echoed the busy hum of Quartermasters and their staffs, like the voices of them that bought and sold in the Temple.

On the 23rd of April the Battalion was lent to the 153rd Infantry Brigade in order to exploit an attack made by it on the Chemical Works near Roeux. The plan was that the leading battalions of this Brigade should capture the defences in front of and in the Chemical Works, and the 6th Gordon Highlanders and 6th Black Watch, moving an hour later in small columns of some twenty men, should advance through the enemy barrage to the Works, there deploy, and capture the enemy defences further east.

The Battalion, led in person by Lt.-Col. J. Dawson, D.S.O., who advanced with the leading half-platoon, executed the first part of the movement with machine-like precision, the little columns weaving their way through the shelled area with comparatively few casualties. No sooner had they emerged from the dust of the hostile barrage and approached the enemy's original front line than they were met by a devastating and concentrated rifle and machine-gun fire, which inflicted heavy casualties and forced the survivors to cover. The Commanding Officer fell, severely wounded, urging his men to "push on"; of the twenty men who accompanied him, only one was unwounded. Observation showed that the enemy still held some of his original positions in great strength, although no report to this effect had been received at Headquarters. A frontal advance without artillery over level ground would have meant the complete destruction of the Battalion. A tank seen some 600 yards in rear was signalled up. While it engaged the enemy in front, the flanks moved forward. The enemy, who had so far delayed the advance, were either killed or captured, and the Chemical Works were taken with little resistance. Captain Hutcheson, on whom the command had devolved, pushed out posts to the east of the village. Every effort was made to get reinforcements and to find touch on the flanks. No supports were forthcoming. The Battalion was completely isolated. It was exposed to a galling machine-gun fire, both from Greenland Hill on the north and from the village of Roeux on the



south. Numbers were too small to hold the place against a determined counter-attack, which was seen to be in preparation, and at noon it was decided to withdraw to the west of the Chemical Works, leaving a strong post in the Quarry near them. This position was strengthened and maintained until the Battalion was relieved.

The Brigadier-General commanding the 153rd Infantry Brigade writes of this action :—" I deeply regret the heavy loss sustained by the 6th Battalion Gordon Highlanders, and especially that of Lt.-Col. Dawson, who was severely wounded. The Battalion advanced magnificently, and, had the Black Line been taken as had been expected, I have no doubt the Brown Line would have been reached. . . . As it was, the 6th Gordon Highlanders did most valuable work in reaching the Chemical Works in spite of the heavy loss. The Higher Command is very pleased with the day's operations . . . as the enemy suffered extraordinary losses in their counter-attack. Its advance in artillery formation with the 6th Black Watch was perfect, and one of the most imposing sights I have ever seen."

After this action the Brigade was withdrawn to the west of Arras to re-organize, rest, and train. Lt.-Col. the Hon. W. Fraser, D.S.O., M.C., took over the command. Meantime the battle had been continued by other troops ; the village of Roeux and the Chemical Works had been cleared of the enemy, and posts were established immediately east of these villages. On the 10th of May the 6th Battalion

returned to Arras, and three days later moved into a position in support a few miles east of the town.

About 11 p.m. on the 15th a message was received by telephone ordering the Battalion up to relieve companies of the 5th Seaforths and 8th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who were holding the forward positions near the River Scarpe, extending from Roeux to the railway cutting east of the Chemical Works. The ground was extremely rough, the night was intensely dark, and a bombardment of gas shells, which inflicted several casualties and compelled all ranks to adjust their gas helmets, greatly delayed and confused the forward movement. By 2.15 in the morning of the 16th the leading companies had reached the Headquarters of the 5th Seaforth Highlanders, where guides were waiting to lead them to the advanced posts. The leading platoon had just entered Roeux when a barrage, the most intense the Battalion had experienced, burst over all the area between the railway and the River Scarpe. In spite of this the small parties pressed forward, some over the open, some along shallow communication trenches. The enemy had launched a powerful attack against our position. He had pushed forward along the railway and the river, had entered Roeux, and was forcing his way west. The leading companies extended, took up fire positions in shell-holes and half-dug communication trenches, and opened fire. Even this unexpected resistance did not, at first, break the enemy. At one point a German officer entered a communication trench and called on some men of "A" Company to surrender.

He is buried there. The attack was first checked, then broken, and by seven o'clock the enemy's assaulting troops had either taken cover or retired.

He had made some gains. The Chemical Works and the village of Roeux, as well as the trenches between them, were in his hands. A counter-attack was ordered. While the 6th Seaforths attacked and drove the enemy from the Chemical Works, a mixed force of 5th Seaforths and 6th Gordons, under Captain Donald Clark, was detailed to restore the rest of the line. This operation, the immediate counter-attack, is the most difficult in war, and requires the greatest initiative and boldness on the part of the Commander, and the highest resolution and resource on the part of the men. Both rose to the occasion gallantly. The enemy was everywhere driven in and rolled back, except in Roeux itself, where our men, after reaching the western edge of the village, found further advance impossible owing to a heavy enemy barrage and incessant fire from machine-guns concealed on the south bank of the River Scarpe. Captain Clark wisely decided to consolidate his position, sent out patrols, and thinned out his line to avoid unnecessary casualties. But the enemy was unwilling to let the situation remain in our favour unchallenged. At 3 p.m. he began to mass in the eastern end of Roeux. Part of "C" Company was moved up to strengthen our line, the artillery was called on, and the enemy concentration melted away without attempting to move forward. The attack was over. The Corps Commander wired his appreciation: "Heartiest con-

gratulations to you all on the fine work on 15th and 16th, and especially to General Burn and 152nd Brigade, whose tenacity and pluck saved an awkward situation."

Thus ended the Battalion's part in the battle of Arras. In all three phases of the action it had borne a heavy share ; in all it had shown its magnificent fighting qualities—resolution and dash in the attack, boldness and resource in meeting unexpected difficulties, and dourness and grim tenacity in the face of determined assaults in overpowering strength.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1917

*June 1917—March 1918*

#### THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES—BATTLE OF CAMBRAI— WINTER 1917—1918

Nowhere are life's changes more rapid than in war. A single action may reduce a unit by half; a series of actions may leave only a handful of veterans to rebuild a regiment, to train fresh troops, and to inspire them with the glories and traditions of past achievements. In the months of April and May, the battle casualties of the 6th Battalion, excluding all cases of sickness, were 632. During April, May, and June 836 reinforcements were received. The losses in officers and N.C.O.s had been particularly severe, and June and July were devoted to training and recuperating. The gallant behaviour of the Battalion in engagements later in the year is in itself the highest proof of the ability and energy shown by the training personnel—old and new—in restoring and maintaining the high spirit and resolute action which had distinguished the conduct of the Battalion during the preceding two-and-a-half years.

Contrasts, too, are startling in their rapidity and suddenness. One summer day would see troops clinging desperately to a forward line in scattered shell-holes, blistered by a scorching sun, sharing a hard biscuit and a mouthful of tepid water, nauseous with chloride of lime. Twenty-four hours later they might be found, amply fed, reclining in the grateful shade of a well-ordered orchard or bathing in the cooling depths of a green-bordered stream.

Such was the contrast between May and the months that followed. The Battalion moved back to Foufflin and Ricametz, some five miles south-east of St. Pol; marched north by easy stages during June to St. Omer, spending twenty-four days near that town at Ganspette and Booneghem; and returned, after a short visit to the line, to Lederzeele in the same neighbourhood for sixteen days in July. There, in delightful weather, in a beautiful, well-watered country unscarred by war, the toils and privations of the campaign were forgotten. Good billets, excellent fare, bathing, concerts, and boating restored the body and refreshed the mind. The self-esteem and national pride of the men were heightened by a tribute from an unexpected quarter. A German document was captured at this time, giving, as a warning to German soldiers, a list of the *most-to-be-feared* British troops. In this list the first place was given to the 51st Division.

Great attention was given to training, particularly to musketry, and in June the Battalion won the Brigade Falling-Plate competition. Wood fighting was practised, and in the end of July elaborate battle

rehearsals showed that soon the kilted battalions would once again be involved in the smoke and dust of battle.

July had seen the Battalion's first experience of the celebrated Ypres sector, and the character and strength of the enemy's defences made thorough training and co-operation between all arms essential for success. In addition to his usual trench defences, the enemy had, in this area, turned every farm into a fortification, and had constructed a number of mutually-supporting strong points or pill-boxes, built of reinforced concrete and protected by machine-guns. To deal effectively with these a large increase of heavy artillery was necessary, tanks were employed to destroy strong points, and the infantry had special training in the use of the Lewis-gun and rifle-grenade, in order to cover the advance of the men with the rifle and the hand-bomb. To ensure prompt support in action an elaborate system of communication was provided. Ground flares and panels gave information to the "contact" aeroplanes flying overhead; runners and telephones sent back reports of progress; carrier pigeons were taken forward and released on the capture of objectives, and signal dogs were occasionally used as messengers. One of these animals accompanied "C" Company on the 31st July, but had so far imbibed the fighting spirit of the Battalion that, when the objective was reached and the message attached, the dog was with difficulty persuaded to start on its journey homewards.

With the machinery of war so complicated, confusion would appear to be the natural result.

Fortunately, during the period of rest in July, ample time was given to train all men thoroughly in their duties. A full-size practice course was laid out, on which the attack was rehearsed. All arms took part in the practice attacks—trench-mortars, machine-guns, and aeroplanes; and before the end of the month each man knew exactly what he had to do and exactly where he had to go.

The Third Battle of Ypres opened on the 31st of July, and the operations in which the 152nd Infantry Brigade of the 51st Division took part were directed against the River Steenbecke, some three miles north-east of the famous Cloth Town. The assault was timed to begin at 3.50 a.m., when the 5th Seaforth Highlanders attacked and carried the first objective. The enemy appeared to be suspicious, and just before four o'clock shelled the front line. To avoid casualties, the Battalion moved forward, first into No Man's Land, and later into the positions captured by the 5th Seaforths. Shortly after five o'clock "A" and "D" Companies and two platoons of "B" Company advanced close under the barrage. So thorough had been their training that direction was everywhere maintained, and the men went straight to their objectives. The main opposition encountered came from concealed machine-guns, but rifle-grenades, Lewis-guns, and occasional assistance from tanks, combined with the irresistible dash and resource of the troops, soon destroyed the guns and killed or captured the crews. By 5.30 Ascot Cottage, Newson's House, Minty's Farm, Kitchener's House, and other



fortified localities were in the hands of the Battalion.

Meanwhile " C " Company, which had been detailed for the most distant objective, some 3,000 yards from its assembly position, had gradually moved up. At 6.30 it advanced, and, brushing aside the same opposition as the others had encountered, established itself at 8.30 in two lines about 250 yards south-west of the River Steenbecke. While the men were putting their positions into a state of defence, hostile aeroplanes, flying low, located them, and flew back to report. No sooner had they gone than the Company Commander, Capt. J. Hutcheson, moved his front line 100 yards forward, withdrew his second line the same distance, and consolidated new positions. His foresight and prompt action were rewarded. The enemy artillery opened a destructive fire on the positions we had just given up without inflicting any damage, and when the Battalion was withdrawn two days later, this Company's total losses in the battle were two killed and ten wounded.

Ready decision and rapid action do not belong to Commanders alone. While this Company was preparing its position for defence, two hostile machine-guns across the Steenbecke opened fire at close range, and threatened, not merely to delay the work, but to stop it altogether. Pte. George McIntosh, Buckie, grasping the situation, went out against them alone, armed with a revolver and a bomb. Although always under a deadly and well-directed fire, he dodged from cover to cover, and crossing the Steenbecke, which in

the drought of July had dwindled to a sluggish, muddy rivulet, advanced in all some 200 yards. When he approached the enemy's position, he hurled his bomb, rushed the emplacement, killed two Germans, wounded a third, and carried both machine-guns back to our line. For this gallant action and for his courageous and inspiring example at all times during the attack Private McIntosh was awarded the Victoria Cross. His quick grasp of the situation and the utter fearlessness and rapidity with which he acted undoubtedly saved many of his comrades, and enabled the work of consolidation to be carried through.

No praise is too high for the dash and spirit of the men in this action. Even the heavy rains which fell later in the day of the 31st, and turned the ground, pitted everywhere with enormous shell-holes, into a vast sea of mud, could not damp their ardour. When things were at their very worst, a message was received from the Company Commander just mentioned, giving his dispositions and adding, "Water two feet deep, but spirits very high." When the Battalion was withdrawn on the night of the 1st-2nd August, one man in the darkness fell heels over head into one of the mud-filled shell-holes, but, nothing daunted, began to "quack" loudly, to the amusement of his comrades, who all "quacked" their way back to camp. These were men who had gone without sleep for 60 hours, had fought a severe battle, had marched fourteen miles, and were soaked to the skin. Such was the indomitable spirit of the Battalion, which neither foe nor privation nor hardship could overcome.

During August and September the Division remained in the Ypres sector, but the Battalion took part in no further battle operations. One or two tours of duty in the line near the Steenbecke, numerous working and carrying parties, and periods of rest and training in the hutted and canvas camps in rear filled the two months. St. Janster Biezen, Dirty Bucket, and Siege Camps were temporary quarters. Here strenuous cleaning up and camp repairs, continuous exercises and field training were varied with inter-platoon competitions—football, tug-o'-war, and other sports. Camps and billets in rear did not now mean peace. The quiet was disturbed by visits from enemy aeroplanes. These, flying low by night, dropped bombs on billets which had been carefully located by day. As a rule they did little damage to life and to material, but they were not to be ignored or despised, for they disturbed the rest of the troops, restricted movement, and limited the use of lights. The night of the 30th September was one of the worst the Battalion experienced. Commencing at 8.15 in the evening, enemy aeroplanes bombed Siege Camp, returning again and again after short intervals until two in the morning. Fortunately no bombs fell within the Battalion's lines and only one casualty was sustained, but one of the nearest battalions suffered severely.

In the end of September the 51st Division was transferred to the VIth Corps and moved south to the Somme area, the 6th Battalion detraining at Bapaume on the 1st October. From the 17th to the 30th of that month it held some 1,400 yards of the

front near Heninel. Weather was pleasant, and the trenches, which were part of the Hindenburg system, were excellent. Our men had never been slow to admit the extraordinary industry of their enemies and the skill of their engineers. Here they saw with admiration one of the famous tunnels. It was very deep—at least 40 feet underground—with numerous exits and entrances. It was lined throughout with wood and fitted with electric light. Its length, which could not be definitely discovered, as only part of it was in the Battalion's sector, and as the enemy still held one end, was popularly estimated at 17 kilometres, or  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles. A small part of it formed a safe, comfortable, and commodious shelter for a company, with ready access to fire positions in the event of alarm. A fortnight here, and the Battalion moved back to Dainville, where the hard training and the study of a model of the enemy's positions, made by the officers of the Battalion, foretold an early grapple with the foe.

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On the 20th of November opened the celebrated surprise attack in front of Cambrai. In many ways this battle differed from earlier engagements. Hitherto it had been customary to destroy systematically all enemy defences, posts, villages, and wire by a deliberate bombardment several days in advance. This could not fail to warn the enemy of our intentions. In the Cambrai battle no preliminary bombardment took place. In many cases the guns, carried up secretly

on the night immediately preceding the assault, opened fire for the first time at zero hour. To make up for the usual destructive work of the artillery, tanks were employed in large numbers, 36 being allotted to the 152nd Infantry Brigade, six of these to the 6th Battalion. Their task was not merely to engage enemy strong points and to destroy fortified localities, but to make a passage for the infantry through the wire. Their great weight crushed the obstacle into the soil, or rolled it into heaps, leaving a track along which two men could move abreast. In front of most of the main lines of German defences were belts of wire 30 to 60 yards in depth. The success of the infantry, and indeed of the whole operation, depended on the ability of the tanks to pierce these formidable entanglements and to open up the way.

The 51st Division attacked on the south-west of Cambrai, and the operations of the 6th Battalion concerned the area in and around the villages of Flesquières and Fontaine-Notre-Dame, a few miles from that town. As on the 31st of July, the Battalion was not in the attack on the German front system, but formed part of the troops detailed to carry the second or Hindenburg Support Line. As a rule, an attack on a front system is easier and simpler than the attack on more distant objectives. More is known of the area to be taken, the distance is shorter; there is little risk of loss of direction, surprise is easier; while troops penetrating deeper into the enemy's lines plunge into an unknown country and encounter obstacles, difficulties, and surprises that demand the

greatest boldness, the readiest decision, the most unflinching resource, and the most unflinching promptness of action.

The keenness of the men, the importance of secrecy, and the novelty of the attack combined to make the night before the battle of Cambrai one of great anxiety and suspense. The great numbers of tanks moving forward to their assaulting positions at midnight, the sound of their engines, only partly drowned by the pre-arranged fire from Lewis and machine-guns, their unmistakable tortoise shape silhouetted by gun-flash or Very light against the sky line, and only partly disguised by the fascines they carried, the rattle of innumerable guns moving forward over the newly-metalled roads, the ceaseless snakes of infantry winding forward to their positions of assembly, and above all the gentle southerly breeze, blowing in the direction of the enemy, made discovery at any moment possible. But the enemy took no notice. The Brigade front remained perfectly quiet until from the dawn leapt the cataract of flame and death.

At 6.20 the barrage fell ; the tanks crossed the enemy wire ; and waves and tiny columns of infantry followed. The 6th Battalion remained in its assembly positions, but excellent liaison had been established with the Seaforths in front. Soon the news came back, "Objectives all taken: casualties few." Prisoners began to stream in ; the men were keen ; everything pointed to success. At 7.30 the Battalion moved off in section columns, crossed the first, second, and third lines already taken by the 5th Seaforth

Highlanders, caught up the six tanks allotted to them, and went forth "into the blue" towards their far objective, about three miles distant. So complete was the surprise that little opposition was encountered. A few machine-guns gave trouble, but a Nieuport Scout, flying low, silenced them.

The swiftness of the attack, the capture of the first system of defence, and the terror inspired by the tanks had disorganized the enemy's power of resistance. In many cases he evacuated his positions without attempting to strike a blow in their defence. Meantime the patient French villagers and country folk, who had been crushed and harried by the merciless oppression of three years, saw with unbelieving eyes the hasty departure of their persecutors, and hurried forward to meet their deliverers. Old men, old women, and children—all able-bodied adults had been carried off to slavery—gaunt, ragged, emaciated, carrying baskets of potatoes and other vegetables or bundles of clothing, stumbled eagerly westward to France and liberty. But the troops pressed on. The green fields, unmarked by the ravages of war, the half-hearted defence and hasty flight of the enemy made the advance seem like a practice attack on manœuvres. "We thought we were marching straight to Berlin," said one private soldier, and his remark reflects the high spirits of his comrades. On they swept. The 6th Battalion crossed the railway some 1,000 yards west of Ribecourt, and, following the tanks, began to climb the ridge to the east of Flesquières, on and behind which lay the Hindenburg Support Line.

The defences of this Support Line showed the enemy's unfailing ingenuity and cunning. As soon as the tanks reached the crest of the ridge, and before they could crush their way through the belts of wire, one by one they were knocked out at point-blank range by direct hits from a German Field Battery concealed behind the ridge. One gallant Tank Commander, unable to advance when his tank was put out of action, climbed on top of it, and continued to fire his Lewis-gun until the barrel became too hot to fire any more. "B" and "D" Companies of the 6th Battalion, following closely, strove vainly with their wire-cutters to force a way through the wire. In three minutes they had suffered 60 casualties. Further effort would have destroyed the whole Battalion without piercing the wire. The Battalion immediately put itself in a position of defence. A defensive flank was formed against the village of Flesquières; the sunken road running from that village to Ribecourt was occupied, and section posts were dug in front of the enemy wire. Meantime, at point-blank range across the dividing belt of wire, an active duel went on between the German Field Artillery and the Battalion's Lewis-guns. One corporal of "D" Company did particularly good work, pouring a hail of bullets on the battery while it was loading, and time and again flinging himself down under cover just before it fired. The battery was silenced and the gun-crews destroyed.

No further advance was possible by day, but night concealed movement. "A" and "B" Companies, moving somewhat to the right or east into the



area captured by the 11th Battalion of the Essex Regiment, advanced with no supporting tanks, under a light barrage of field guns, at 6.15 in the morning of the 21st. This difficult and delicate manœuvre of assembly at a strange rendezvous, extending fanwise from a narrow to a wide front, and advancing over unknown country in a new direction by compass in the darkness that precedes the dawn, was everywhere successful. The whole of the Hindenburg Support Line was ours ; all objectives had been taken.

Soon other troops passed through to exploit the victory. Meantime the Battalion was re-organized and re-equipped. The men, flushed with success, were keen as ever, and as they lay down to rest they saw Cambrai a mile or two distant, and almost fancied they could strike the spires with a stone.

The rest was brief. Further north the village of Fontaine-Notre-Dame had been taken, and had been lost. The 152nd Infantry Brigade would re-take it. Near midnight came orders. Before six in the morning the Battalion was in position. There was neither time nor opportunity to study the position or to arrange a detailed plan, and a minor operation by day draws the fire of every enemy arm within range. At 10.30 the Battalion, along with the 6th Seaforth Highlanders, advanced in excellent order, passed with little loss through the hostile barrage, and approached within 500 yards of the village. Here a deep valley had to be crossed. It was swept by machine-gun fire from the neighbourhood of La Folie Wood on the south-east and from the ridge north-east of Fontaine.

A few daring men struggled across the valley and worked forward to within a 100 yards of the village, only to be met by a devastating fire from the southern edge, every house of which seemed to bristle with machine-guns. One or two supporting tanks did enter the village from the east and from the west, but, having spent their ammunition and being under heavy fire from armour-piercing bullets, soon returned. An enemy counter-attack, coming from the high ground to the north-east of Flesquières and meeting a heavy and well-directed fire, melted away without reaching the Battalion's position. The enterprise was abandoned; the Battalion dug in, and was relieved during the night.

The failure of the last phase of the attack does not detract from the splendid success of this operation; rather it enhances it by showing the powerful obstacles and determined resistance which had to be overcome. In three days the 152nd Infantry Brigade captured some 1,200 prisoners, and the 6th Battalion, in addition to a number of machine-guns, secured two 5.9 inch and three 4.2 inch howitzers.

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After the Battle of Cambrai the Battalion spent a few days near Albert, resting and refitting, and then moved up to the area around and in front of Bapaume. Here it remained until the end of March. The work was the usual routine of trench-holding—part in the line, part in support, and part in reserve, resting and training. Weather was very trying, being subject to sudden changes. Heavy frosts and snow were

succeeded by milder periods of thaw, after which a sudden fall in temperature would transform the country into a sheet of ice.

In the line the work of repairing the captured positions was pushed forward. New trenches were dug; old lines were deepened and improved. The sudden change in weather added greatly to the difficulties. Sometimes the cold was so severe that little could be done, the ground being, on occasion, frozen to a depth of twelve inches; while after a sudden thaw parts of the work which had not been fully completed would crumble and subside in the most disheartening fashion. In spite of these difficulties great progress was made. The Battalion, which had originally been drawn from an agricultural district, had, in the early days of 1914 and 1915, built up an enviable reputation with the engineers as one of the finest work-producing units in France. One of the magic formulas for winning the War had been "the two D's"—Digging and Discipline—and the 6th Gordons were as redoubtable with the spade as they were formidable with the rifle and the bomb.

In the 51st Division this important side of the work was not neglected. Major-General G. M. Harper, the maker of the Division, was himself a Royal Engineer, and under the direction of his technical skill and practical experience, the working qualities of the Highland units were developed and applied with the greatest success. So hard did the men work that at times it was impossible to bring forward enough pickets and wire to keep them busy.

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At one time as many as 500 to 1,000 coils of wire were used daily, and during a mist on the 4th of March a belt of wire, 1,100 yards long and 24 feet wide, was completed by a Company 90 strong, in addition to other parts which were thickened and improved. On the 3rd of January the Battalion dug 400 yards of a new corps line in eight hours, while on the night before the German attack in March, a new line was completed along the whole Battalion front, each man's share being a section three feet long, six feet deep, and five feet wide at the top. At first there was little interference from the enemy, only two men being wounded in the first visit to the trenches. But as spring drew nearer, the enemy fire became more harassing, and the work grew increasingly dangerous and difficult.

Out of the line, most of the time was spent in the neighbourhood of Fremicourt, some two miles east of Bapaume. Life in camp, at first cold and uncomfortable, became easier. It was disturbed by the usual long-range gun-fire and night bombing. On the 11th of January the two best horses in the Transport, which had won the first prize in the Divisional Transport Show of the previous summer, were killed. As a protection from bombers, trenches were dug under the floors of the huts occupied by the men. Nothing tends more to lower the spirit and fighting qualities of troops than inaction and discomfort. Every effort was made to combat these. Huts were improved, stoves were built, football pitches were laid out, and the untiring efforts of the Quartermaster, backed by

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the support of the many friends and working parties at home, provided ample supplies of warm clothing and good food. On New Year's Day, 1918, for dinner all had soup, beef, plum-pudding, and other delicacies sent out from home, and at tea "haggis" was provided.

While physical needs were thus supplied, mental stimulus was not forgotten. The forenoons were devoted to training, part of it necessarily of the more rigid and formal type—close-order and gas drill, musketry, wiring, digging, and trench construction; part of it demanding individual initiative—practice in attack, counter-attack, and wood-fighting. The afternoons, as a rule, were given up to games and sports, in which keenness and rivalry were stimulated by inter-platoon and inter-company competitions. Football, tug-o'-war, cross-country running, and other tests of skill and prowess were popular. Brigade sports were held on the 6th of February, and in these the Battalion carried off a good share of the honours, winning four first prizes for

(a) Best Drilled Platoon.

(b) Rifle Grenade Competition (No. 24).

(c) Transport Race (1st and 2nd Prizes).

(d) Best Turned-out Squad of one Sergeant, one Corporal, one Lance-Corporal, and one Private.

In the last contest it was remarkable that after a Battalion competition, all the representatives selected came from "D" Company—Sergeant Sutherland, Corporal Richardson, D.C.M., Lance-Corporal Pyper, and Private Smith. Competent judges declared that

they were the best turned-out men they had ever seen. Of these four gallant men, none came through 1918 unscathed, and only one, Sergeant Sutherland, survived.

The opening of the campaign of 1918 saw many changes both in the Battalion and in the Brigade. In April, 1917, Lt.-Col. J. Dawson, D.S.O., had been severely wounded. He was one of the few officers of the original Battalion who had survived, was the first to set foot on the shores of France, and, except for a few months when recovering from wounds received at Neuve Chapelle, had served continuously with the Battalion from the outbreak of War. He was succeeded by the Hon. W. Fraser, D.S.O., M.C., who remained until February, 1918, when he was appointed to command the XVIIIth Corps School. Another Gordon, Lt.-Col. J. G. Thom, D.S.O., M.C., of the 8/10th Battalion, took over the command, while in August, 1917, Major A. A. Duff, C.I.E., M.V.O., became second in command, relieving Major J. W. Adams. Death had removed many familiar figures. Among others were Captain I. G. Fleming, M.C.; Sergeant A. Burnett, D.C.M.; Captain J. H. Matheson, M.C.; Captain G. Minty—massive and genial; the Rev. John Grant, B.D., M.C.—one of the three clergymen who were killed as combatant officers with the Battalion. He died as he wished to die, at the head of "B" Company, rushing, careless of danger, to help some of his men who were held up on Easter Monday.

On the 4th of February, when Brigades were reduced from four battalions to three, the 8th Argyll

and Sutherland Highlanders, the comrades of the Battalion on many a bloody field, were withdrawn from the Highland Division, leaving the 5th and 6th Seaforth Highlanders and the 6th Gordons in the 152nd Infantry Brigade.

On the 7th of April, Brigadier-General H. Pelham Burn, C.M.G., D.S.O., left the Brigade which he had commanded for nearly two years. The Battalion had always been bound to this gallant officer by a tie of deep personal attachment. Their Adjutant at the outbreak of war, he had done more than any other during the Bedford days by his thoroughness, efficiency, and untiring enthusiasm to make out of a raw Territorial unit the magnificent fighting force whose behaviour on parade and in the field in 1914 extorted the surprise and admiration of the seasoned veterans of the 7th Division. They had shared with him the privation, the danger, and the glory of the Somme, of Beaumont Hamel, of Arras, Ypres, and Cambrai, and in parting from him they felt that they had lost, not only an inspiring Commander, but a considerate friend.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE GERMAN ATTACK

*March—April 1918*

ATTACK NEAR BOURSIES—SERGEANT IMLAH—VISIT OF  
KING GEORGE—HAM-EN-ARTOIS—ATTACK NEAR  
VIEILLE CHAPELLE—"A" COMPANY'S DEFENCE  
OF VIEILLE CHAPELLE

On the 20th of March the 6th Battalion was in the line on the Bapaume-Cambrai road, around and in front of the village of Boursies, which lies nearly midway between these towns. "C" Company was in the front line; "B" Company in support, with its headquarters in a quarry to the south of Boursies; "A" Company was in what was called the Intermediate Line; "D" Company in reserve. The energy with which defensive preparations were hurried forward, the continuous digging of new positions, the construction and repair of wire defences, and the laying of a mine-field of 60lb. bombs in No Man's Land as a protection against enemy tanks, showed that the Higher Command suspected an enemy offensive. No unusual movement or preparation was, however, detected on the Battalion's front. The



enemy's artillery was apparently less active than usual. Heavy gunfire had been heard both to the north and to the south. On the 16th and 17th the situation was reported "quiet." On the 18th the enemy were registering on our artillery positions around Boursies, but up to the morning of the 21st everything was normal.

At 4.45 on the morning of the 21st the enemy opened a bombardment of the utmost intensity against our positions. Front, support, and intermediate lines were obliterated by a blinding hurricane of high explosive. Strong points, assembly positions like the quarry, and artillery lines were deluged with 5.9, 8-inch, and gas shells. So destructive and accurate was the bombardment that heavy losses were inflicted on all arms. The artillery suffered so severely that they could offer little support to the infantry, who, blinded and dazed, were left to the protection of their own weapons. But the enemy was to learn that the Highlanders, weak, decimated, unsupported, were as terrible in defence as they were irresistible in attack.

At dawn the enemy's attack was launched. The garrison of the front line, almost annihilated but undismayed, clung to the shattered remnants of their defences until the few survivors were withdrawn to the support line at 9.15. Meantime, on the north, outside the Battalion area, the enemy had succeeded. He had entered Boursies and Louverval Wood, and was making for Doignies, directly in rear of our support lines. Time after time the enemy attempted to

debouch from Boursies. Time after time he was flung back, losing in the village hundreds of men. Once, following the road, he strove by weight of numbers to reach Doignies. A prompt counter-attack by "A" Company checked him and left him in the open exposed to the rifles and three Lewis-guns of "B" Company, which poured a murderous fire on his flank and brought him to a standstill. Having failed to effect anything against the Battalion over the open, he next tried to force a way down the main communication trench—Sturgeon Avenue. Here repeated attacks supported by flame-throwers were beaten off. So fierce was the attack that a number of men had their equipment burned by the flames, but even this new terror could not daunt their spirits. A shortage of bombs compelled the defenders, on three occasions, to withdraw some 80 yards, but at the end of the day "B" Company stood fast in its original positions near the quarry.

Meantime "A" Company and two platoons of "D" Company in the Intermediate Line found that the troops on their left had been driven in. They could find no touch except with the enemy, who was steadily forcing his way westward and threatening to take them in rear. To avoid envelopment, keeping touch with "B" Company on their right, they swung back their left to face the enemy and formed a defensive flank south of Doignies, which the enemy had entered during the afternoon.

The situation of the Battalion on the evening and night of the 21st was extraordinary and hazardous

in the extreme. They formed part of a narrow salient running right into the enemy's lines. They were surrounded on three sides—north, east, and west. Only one small outlet to the south-west remained open. While defences everywhere had crumbled and fallen, they had the proud distinction of having maintained a considerable part of their original positions intact, in spite of continuous and determined attacks in overwhelming force for twelve hours on end. They did not withdraw until ordered to do so at 1.30 on the morning of the 22nd, and so near were the enemy that the retirement had to be conducted with cat-like caution, almost on tip-toe.

After being withdrawn on the morning of the 22nd, the Battalion occupied a number of defensive positions without coming into close contact with the enemy until the 24th. After holding a line east of Velu, at 1.30 on the afternoon of the 22nd they moved to a position north of the Cambrai-Bapaume road, covering Beugny. At 5.30 they held the railway embankment north of Fremicourt, facing Beugnâtre, and at noon next day—the 23rd—took up a position at Millcross, facing Lebucquière. This position was shelled continuously by the enemy on the afternoon of the 23rd and on the morning of the 24th, but at 10.30 a.m. on that day they were relieved and moved back to Riencourt.

There are limits to the endurance of the strongest, to the courage of the stoutest. The events of these three days had exhausted the strength of the men, even if, as the 24th proved, they had not sapped their

resolution or quenched their fighting spirit. Rest was at no time possible. By day there was the exhausting marching and counter-marching, and the incessant heavy shell-fire. By night the intense cold, from which they had no protection, not even a great-coat, was felt all the more bitterly because of the labours in the bright sunshine of the day. As a result, the men were sleepless, exhausted, hungry, and footsore. Many of their most trusted leaders had fallen. But they still had their trusty rifles, ammunition was plentiful, their spirit was unquenched.

On arrival at Riencourt the Battalion received orders from the Officer Commanding the 154th Infantry Brigade to form a line east of the Bapaume-Peronne road in front of Beaulincourt, there to act as reserve for his Brigade. Hardly had this position been taken up when information came that the Division in front, which was at that time in touch with the enemy, was to withdraw through this line. About four in the afternoon the troops of this Division retired. They had been closely engaged with the enemy, had suffered severely, and as a natural result part of their retirement lacked order and control. The backward movement of these troops reacted on part of those who manned the covering line, and when the enemy appeared, the Battalion again discovered itself in the dangerous position of having its left flank in the air. Meantime the enemy had occupied Villers and Le Transloy, having brought field-guns as far as the last-named village. Under covering fire from these and from numerous machine-guns, he commenced to

advance. So confident was he, that at one time he left Le Transloy in column of fours on the road. "C" and "D" Companies on the right, and "A" and "B" Companies on the left, did great execution on the targets thus presented, two Lewis-guns of "C" Company firing thirty magazines within a very few minutes. This held up the enemy for a time, but he altered his formation and still came on. Under cover of some huts and a small wood that obscured part of the front he assembled for the assault.

On the left "A" Company's flank was totally unprotected. "C" Company was in touch with troops on the right and was holding the enemy, but soon after five o'clock a message came from the Officer Commanding the next Brigade saying that he had been outflanked and was preparing to withdraw. The message was passed on to "B" Company, but the messenger, in delivering it, used the word "Retire." "Go back," was Donald Clark's spirited answer, "and tell him that this Division never retires."\* To remain now meant being surrounded, and it was decided to move back to new positions.

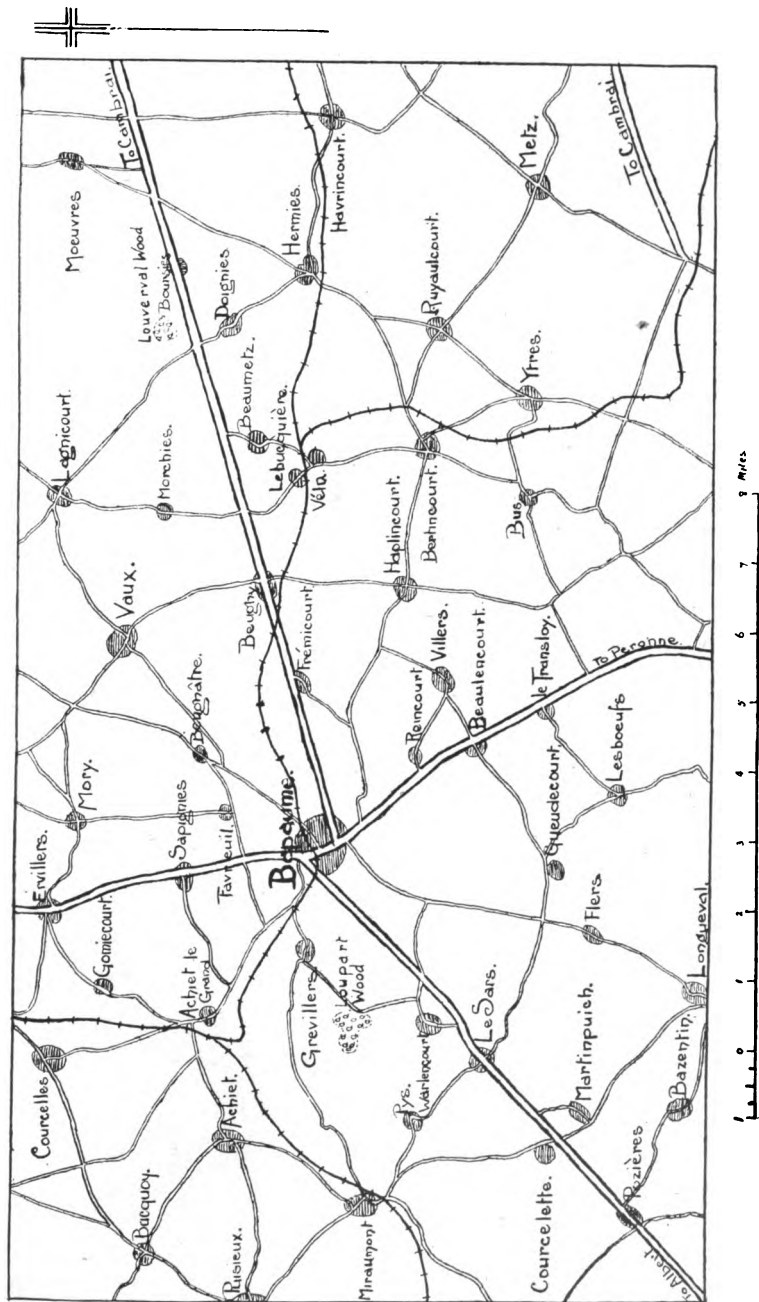
While this fight was going on, Major A. A. Duff, who had assumed command when Col. Thom was wounded on the 23rd, had collected all remnants

\* Early in the war some confusion arose between "Cease Fire" and "Retire." German officers were also believed to have used the command "Retire" in order to induce our men to give ground. As a result this command was at one time forbidden, and when the word "Retire" was used, it meant a disorderly retreat, whereas to "Withdraw" meant to execute an orderly and methodical movement to a position in rear.

and stragglers from other units and formed with them a line some 500 yards west of Beaulincourt. To this and to a supporting position on the high ground 600 yards in rear the Battalion withdrew in excellent order, one section moving back at a time, while the others kept up a steady fire and prevented the enemy from interfering with the movement. Here the enemy's advance was brought to a standstill.

At 7.30 p.m. the Brigade was ordered to man a new position near Loupart Wood. The Battalion assembled at Thillooy Wood, passed through Warlencourt at 10.20, and occupied part of a line about the sunken road that runs north from that village in the direction of Loupart Wood. By mid-day the enemy was again seen advancing. At one in the afternoon the Officer Commanding the battalion on the right informed the Commanding Officer that he could not hold on any longer, as the enemy were in great numbers on his right flank. A gradual withdrawal, commencing from the right, then began. "B" Company covered the withdrawal of the rest of the Battalion, and when the enemy came within 100 yards, withdrew by sections.

The Commanding Officer had been wounded; the Adjutant and many of the best officers and non-commissioned officers had been put out of action; the Battalion was reduced to a shadow of its strength. The men were utterly exhausted, overcome with exposure, fatigue, and loss of sleep. Many were scarcely fit now to crawl, much less to march. Food was uncertain, ammunition was short, and when,



THE BATTALION'S AREA OF OPERATIONS, MARCH-APRIL, 1918.



*Given Copyright—Imperial War Museum.*

**KING GEORGE AND CAPTAIN D. G. CLARK.**

(Pages 145, 148, 157.)



after brief halts in defensive positions at Irles and Puisieux, the Division was relieved by the Australians, the toil-worn, mud-stained, grimy, nerve-shattered remnants of the 6th Battalion lay down to rest in the bivouacs of Pas.

The gallantry of the Battalion, particularly its magnificent stand in the first day of the attack, is illustrated by many individual deeds of devotion and heroism. Of many, none but the Germans know, yet the records of no battalion can furnish a finer story than that of Sergeant Lewis Imlah, Aberlour, of "D" Company. During the night of the 21st March the enemy had established on the Beaumetz-Morchies corps line a number of strong posts, one of which completely cut off communication with the battalion on the left across the Cambrai road. Sergeant Imlah went forward and carried into No Man's Land three boxes of bombs. Along with his officer and one man, both of whom were soon killed, he bombed the enemy until the supply of bombs was exhausted. Then with his rifle he completed the task of clearing the trench, killing several of the enemy, and returning to our line with eight prisoners.

On the morning of the 23rd, after he had re-organized two platoons, his position was heavily attacked in front and flank, and he was forced to effect a withdrawal. He personally supervised the withdrawal, sending his men back by sections, and was himself the last to leave the position, keeping up covering fire with a Lewis-gun to allow the others to get back in safety. In the next position

he again re-organized the men and held up a strong enemy attack for the remainder of the day.

On the 25th, when the enemy attacked the Battalion's positions near Loupart Wood, he was forced to withdraw from the ridge owing to retirements on his flanks. Re-forming his men in the valley, he led them in person in a counter-attack against the ridge, killing a number of the enemy and recapturing the position. Later in the day this very gallant sergeant was killed while re-organizing a position in front of Miraumont.\*

For three days the Battalion rested in the village of Neuvillelette, some four miles north of Doullens, and then marched on the 29th to Frevent to entrain for the area around Béthune and Lillers. While the Companies were having dinner near the station at Frevent, a motor-car was seen to approach. Quick eyes soon discovered that King George was in the car. The men rose up, rushed to the roadside, and raised a continuous and tumultuous cheer. His Majesty was evidently touched by the spontaneous tribute. The car stopped and the King entered the field, shook hands with a number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, spoke in terms of highest praise of the 51st Division, expressed kindly sympathy with

\* As all the officers and nearly all N.C.O.s of "D" Company became casualties in this battle, no authentic report of the magnificent heroism of Sergeant Imlah could be found at the time in order to recommend him for the Victoria Cross. This account is based on the testimony of five N.C.O.s of "D" Company, all wounded in the action, who later sent from hospital independent versions of Sergeant Imlah's conduct. These independent versions corroborate each other.

the Battalion in the hardships they had just passed through, and admiration of their gallant conduct in the past and in the recent great attack. Meantime the Commanding Officer and the Brigadier arrived. The Battalion formed up and marched past, His Majesty taking the salute. Before leaving, he again expressed his admiration for the appearance of the Battalion and his pleasure at having seen it. His homely and sympathetic manner and the entire absence of pomp and ceremony made a deep impression on all ranks.

The next ten days were spent in an area with which, in 1915, the Battalion had been familiar. Bilets were occupied at La Beuvrière, three miles south-west of Béthune, and quite near Choques and Fouquereuil, where the Battalion had lain just before the Battle of Loos; at Lapugnoy, a mile further south; and at Ham-en-Artois, two miles north-west of Lillers. Quarters were excellent, and this cultivated and well-populated agricultural district was a welcome change from the desert of the Somme. A large draft of young soldiers joined, equipment rolled up from ordnance to replace recent losses, and training went on so actively that the Battalion soon regained its old efficiency, keenness, and confidence.

These qualities were suddenly and speedily put to the test. The particular area to which the 51st Division had moved was reputed quiet. It was thought a suitable district for a worn Division to rest, re-fit, and train. But the enemy thought otherwise. His offensive being brought to a stand-still on the Somme,

he suddenly launched another fierce attack in the north, effected a surprise at Armentières, and broke through. The 51st Division was rushed up to stem the tide.

At 5.35 on the morning of the 9th of April, when the Battalion was in billets at Ham-en-Artois, orders were received to "Stand to." The alarm was sounded, the men were hastily roused, battle equipment was got ready, and breakfasts were prepared. By eight o'clock the Battalion was marching east to Busnes, where 'buses were waiting to carry them forward to Zelobes, a village on the Béthune-Lestrem road, some twelve miles east of Busnes, and one mile west of Vieille Chapelle. Owing to the heavy shelling of the roads the 'buses could not approach within a mile of Zelobes, but the Battalion advanced across the open, and by one in the afternoon had taken up a defensive position immediately west of the village, in support of the 5th and 6th Battalions of the Seaforth Highlanders. At 4.20 p.m. "A" Company (Captain J. R. Christie) was sent forward to hold the bridge-heads at Vieille Chapelle. In the evening the remaining three Companies were moved back some 1,000 yards, and by night dug a new defensive position. During the night cooks were brought forward, and all the Battalion had a hot meal except "A" Company, to which, however, rations and a supply of ammunition were sent.

During the 10th the enemy's fire increased in intensity, and he succeeded in effecting a passage over the Lawe Canal, about a mile south of Vieille Chapelle. Early in the afternoon orders were received

to send up a company to the 6th Seaforth Highlanders to deliver a counter-attack and capture two farms near the west bank of the canal. "D" Company was sent forward, and at 4.30 three platoons attacked the positions as ordered. The first house was captured; another was taken some 50 yards further south. As two platoons were preparing to assault a third farm, they encountered heavy machine-gun fire from the flanks, while a party of some 60 of the enemy, coming from behind the farm, advanced to attack them. This and a second enemy attack they defeated with heavy losses, but having suffered very severely, they were withdrawn at dusk to the line held by the 6th Seaforth Highlanders. Their prompt and vigorous action succeeded in arresting for a time the enemy's forward movement, and prevented him from throwing more men across the canal. Their losses bear testimony to the fierceness of the struggle and to the resolution with which they carried it out, for only fifteen out of ninety-seven who took part in the counter-attack returned unwounded.

Meantime the enemy had succeeded in crossing the Lawe to the north, and at 10.45 p.m. he was reported 1,000 yards north of Zelobes. Brigade orders were quite definite. "He must be stopped by you and driven back to the canal." The two remaining companies, "B" and "C," were moved forward and formed a line in front of Zelobes, facing north-east. At dawn the enemy advanced with great determination, but was met by the stoutest resistance. "C" Company, which was most closely engaged, did heavy

execution and drove off repeated attacks of the enemy, who left fifty dead in front of their position, and eleven prisoners and two machine-guns in their hands. Meantime "B" Company, which prolonged the line to the left of "C" Company, reported its left unprotected and our troops on its left-rear withdrawing. To avoid envelopment, the line was moved back to the positions dug on the night of the 9th. Here the enemy was engaged and checked, but the troops on the right being withdrawn, another line was occupied before dusk, some 1,500 yards in front of and parallel to the La Bassée Canal. This line was held until the afternoon of the 12th, when the Battalion was withdrawn to the south of the Canal, and as it moved out, it had the pleasure of seeing the familiar tartan of the 1st Battalion, which had come up to carry on the fight.

This battle differed in many respects from the battle on the Somme. The enemy, in spite of his surprise attack, in spite of his overwhelming numbers, made little progress. During the three days in which the 6th Battalion was engaged, the enemy's advance on its front amounted to 4,000 yards, and that was achieved with losses which were out of all proportion to the ground gained. On several occasions he succeeded in piercing the line and almost effected a break-through. At one time he surrounded and captured the Headquarters of the 152nd Infantry Brigade, but time and again battalions, companies, platoons, sections, and even individuals, finding themselves threatened with isolation and capture,

fought their way clear, re-organized, and flung out the formidable thin line of tartan that barred further progress. The gallant Irishman who had for eighteen months been the Medical Officer of the 6th Battalion found himself in an area occupied by the enemy, and was for ten minutes entirely surrounded and a prisoner in their hands. The enemy, keen on pressing their attack, left him, as a non-combatant, alone, and taking advantage of their absence, he slipped away and succeeded in working his way back to our own troops.

The heroic resistance of the Division, the repeated selection and holding of fresh positions, the resolute counter-attacks, and the heavy losses inflicted on the enemy gradually wore down and finally broke his attack. The conduct in this action of the large reinforcements of 18½-year-old boys, none of whom had ever seen action before, cannot be forgotten. In spite of unceasing fire from artillery, rifles, and machine-guns, although robbed of rest and sleep, they behaved with the firmness of veterans. Fortunately food was never scarce. As they moved back through a country which had been occupied and cultivated, plentiful supplies were at hand. The more our men consumed the less the enemy would get, and the gallant Quartermaster, Capt. F. W. Findlay, who, with the instinct of an old soldier, always "marched to the sound of the guns," supplied a hot meal on the night following each of these strenuous days.

During the operation it will be observed that the

enemy succeeded in crossing the River Lawe both to the north and to the south of Vieille Chapelle. The defences of that village and the crossings over the river remained in our hands. This was a key position, and its retention was one of the main factors in breaking up the enemy's attack. At this point the river Lawe sweeps northward with a large sickle-like curve to the east. At the most easterly point in the curve, and on the west bank of the river, lies the village, its cluster of houses dominating the low ground in all directions. In front of the township were two strong bridges, and there was no other suitable crossing for wheeled or heavy traffic within a mile either up or down the river. For our troops to hold this position for days or even hours meant delay, congestion, disorganization of plan for the enemy. The heroic defence of the village is the glory of "A" Company of the 6th Battalion and a handful of King Edward's Horse.

At 4.20 on the afternoon of the 9th, "A" Company had moved forward to hold the river crossings. One platoon was held in support in the village, the remaining three were distributed in section posts on the east of the river. On the right, touch was obtained with the 6th Seaforth Highlanders; on the left, with the 5th Battalion of the same regiment. The enemy, finding unexpected resistance, pushed forward reinforcements, and all afternoon a bitter struggle for superiority of fire went on between the three platoons with a handful of cavalry—the only troops on the eastern bank of the river—and the ever-increasing



enemy concentration. Finding an infantry advance impossible against such determined resistance, the enemy turned his artillery on the position, and during the night of the 9th-10th and the day that followed the village and neighbouring defences were turned into an inferno with shells of all calibres. But orders were definite. The position was to be held to the last.

On the 10th the enemy made repeated attempts to push his way forward, at times approaching within fifty yards of our posts. But the Hotchkiss-guns of King Edward's Horse and the Company's Lewis-guns, backed by accurate rifle fire, took a ghastly toll of the assaulting troops. Our losses were heavy. One Lewis-gun team was completely destroyed, another continued firing from a farm building until the enemy artillery brought the house in ruins on their heads. Yet every post was held. Not one foot of ground had been given up.

The night of the 10th showed that the enemy had crossed the river to the north and was enfilading our positions from the left. To prevent the village falling into his hands the left flank was withdrawn, leaving one bridge only partly protected. Three sappers had come up, and under their direction the overwrought men made journey after journey to an explosive dump, and mined the bridge, which they blew up and destroyed at dawn.

The morning of the 11th found the left and left-rear completely cut off. Then the troops on the right withdrew, and the enemy was seen streaming across a footbridge some 800 yards to the south. On this,

as on every other target, the Lewis-guns were turned. The whole Company was withdrawn into the village. They were completely isolated, and twenty-four hours after they had been cut off, the rattle of musketry alone proclaimed that they were holding on.

The further fate of this gallant Company has been told by survivors who have returned from Germany. Hemmed in on all sides, having held their posts for two days and two nights in face of overpowering numbers, with nothing now left to fight for, as the enemy had succeeded in crossing the river to the north and to the south, they resolved to cut their way through the enveloping cordon. Every attempt only brought them nearer the enemy, who poured fire on them from all sides. Assembling at a farm, they determined on a final effort. So intense was the fire that scarcely a man could discharge his rifle without being hit. One enemy machine-gun at close range was especially harassing. Six men in succession manned a loophole in the endeavour to silence it. One by one they fell. As a last resource the Company Commander, Captain J. R. Christie, went out to reconnoitre a way of escape. No sooner had he left the farm than he fell with a bullet through the knee and crawled back. He was bandaged by the Company Sergeant-Major and set out on a second attempt, only to have his arm shattered. Twenty men, mostly wounded, remained out of over 100 who went into action. They had accomplished their task ; further resistance was suicide ; they accepted the inevitable.

Great as had been the achievements of the Battalion and of the Division, their losses were correspondingly high. After the action, the remnants of the 6th Battalion were formed into one company—150 strong. Many heroic and resolute comrades had fallen. Among these was Captain Donald G. Clark, D.S.O., M.C., of Alford. His long service in the field, his handsome appearance on parade, his gallant conduct in every action, and the charmed life he seemed to bear, had made him a hero with all ranks.

Here, too, fell the Adjutant, Capt. John Archibald, M.C., Huntly, strong, silent, efficient—who had gone forward to clear up the situation and to stiffen the resistance. And with them, by the Cambrai road and the still waters of the Lawe, rests a goodly company of heroes.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SECOND BATTLE OF THE MARNE

*April—July 1918*

RETURN TO NEUVILLE ST. VAAST—PATROLS—SUCCESS  
OF THE PIPE BAND—THE BATTLE ON THE MARNE—  
TRIBUTE BY GENERAL BERTHELOT

For two days after the battle of Armentières the weakened Battalion lay at Busnes. All ranks had been completely worn out by the trials and hardships of five successive days, and even at Busnes the atmosphere of constant alarms gave little rest. On the 16th of April the Battalion marched to Witternesse, seven miles north-west of Lillers. This and the neighbouring villages were full of refugees who had fled in front of the latest advance of the Germans. Accommodation was limited and billets poor. Here they remained until the 5th of May. Reorganization and training were carried out; special attention was given to musketry, and first one half of the Battalion and later the second went for six days to the First Army Musketry Camp at Matringhem. In this camp there were long hours of strenuous training, but the men were well housed and well fed, and their instructors spoke highly of their progress and efficiency.

On the 5th of May the Battalion moved by train to Acq, and found itself in the area in which the campaigns of 1916 and 1917 had been fought. The line had now been advanced to the east ; the formerly deserted villages of Anzin, Maroeuil, and Mont St. Eloy were re-peopled by civilians ; and Neuville St. Vaast—that shell-smitten, rat-infested ruin—had become a hutted camp.

In this area the old routine of trench-holding was carried out. Spells in the line were followed by tours in support and in reserve in Ecurie Wood Camp. The Battalion was still weak, only 403 of all ranks going into the line on the 6th of May, but reinforcements gradually arrived. These were chiefly boys, but the continuous working-parties, engaged in repairs to the trench system and in the construction of a new front line, experiences in the forward area, and the strenuous training that accompanied a period of "rest" in reserve soon inured them to the hardships and hazards of war. Unfortunately, the battles of March and April had taken a heavy toll of the "old hands." This made the work of reorganization more difficult, as the spirit of youthful daring and occasional rashness had to be leavened by the caution and steadiness of experience. By the time that Lt.-Col. Thom resumed the command in July, however, the Battalion was up to strength, fit, keen, and well-trained.

The two months spent in this sector were quiet and uneventful, or, as the man in the line expressed it, "cushy." Occasional artillery bombardment by the enemy, and the not infrequent brushes with his

patrols in No Man's Land, showed that he was still watchful and alert. The frontage allotted to the Battalion was large—at one time nearly 2,000 yards ; but at most points the enemy's positions were 600 to 1,000 yards distant. Such a situation demanded a great deal of activity in front of the line, and both by day and by night men were out to guard against surprise. By day movement was more restricted, and usually confined to a few Battalion scouts, but every night patrols were pushed forward to find touch with the enemy and to watch his movements and work. This task was invaluable in training the men, and the spice of danger made a strong appeal to their spirit of adventure.

On one occasion an officer and a sergeant went out during the afternoon to reconnoitre the ground for a proposed raid. They unexpectedly came on an enemy post. The sergeant, surrounded by the enemy, could not get away, but the officer escaped through a fusillade of bombs. At another time a patrol of one officer\* and ten other ranks went out by night to cut off a suspected post. As they neared the position the enemy became suspicious, opened fire, and threw bombs. The patrol returned the fire, and the leader, after shooting the machine-gunner, was himself hit. The patrol withdrew after a fruitless search for their wounded officer. Forty hours later he crawled back to our lines, badly wounded, but still strong and fit to give a good account of the patrol's adventure. A raid, made by seven sections of the 6th Battalion

\* 2nd Lieut. W. F. Proctor.

and six sections of the 6th Seaforth Highlanders on the 9th of July, was remarkable for the extraordinary dress of the men. The kilt was discarded. Faces, hands, and legs were blackened. A few men wore shorts, a few wore service-dress jackets, but a number went over wearing only a shirt, with equipment above. The parties assembled in a sharp thunderstorm with vivid lightning and heavy rain. They reached their objective — Kent Road — after encountering many difficulties with the wire, but no enemy could be found, and the raiders returned with only one man slightly wounded. Whether the disappearance of the enemy was caused by the warning given by the wire, or by the strange apparitions that were bearing down upon them, has never been ascertained.

On the 10th of June the Battalion had an object-lesson in the use of gas. At one in the afternoon, 4,300 cylinders were released by our troops immediately to the north of the Battalion front. Under a favouring westerly wind the cloud bore down on the enemy's positions, and after it had passed, from Oppy Wood northward, as far as eye could see, for three miles everything green had been bleached. For three days afterwards not a shell or a bullet came from the enemy in this part. Everything was perfectly quiet and still, except for the ceaseless movement of stretcher-bearers coming forward to succour any who had escaped death from the fumes.

Casualties were few, and the Battalion was soon up to strength. The only serious weakening came from what at first was called a "mysterious malady,"

which later was found to be the epidemic of influenza, which at that time spread over most of Europe. As it was quite neutral and visited friend and foe alike, it gave no temporary advantage to the enemy.

The quiet time in the line was varied by equally quiet and enjoyable periods of rest, disturbed only by occasional long-range gun-fire. Recreational training, sports, and games in the afternoon were followed by evening entertainments at the Divisional Cinema, or by the diverting performances of "The Balmorals." These were a troupe of amateur actors, recruited from the Division. The excellent make-up, the clever acting, and the daring topical patter, which spared neither General nor private soldier, proved a healthy tonic. At this time, too, the pipers and drummers of the 6th Battalion gained a notable success. In a contest promoted by the Canadians they won the 1st Prize and Silver Challenge Shield out of 25 competitors, and were selected to go to Paris for the procession on the 14th of July.

On the 11th of July the Battalion was relieved by the Canadians and moved back to St. Michel, on the eastern outskirts of St. Pol. There it expected to remain for some weeks, and great was the surprise when on the 13th it was told to be in readiness for a forty hours' move. Rumour, ever a busy and lying jade with an army in the field, soon circulated a thousand explanations, more or less improbable. In such a case a unit generally selects the story which accords best with its hopes and desires, and soon it was accepted by all ranks that they were bound for



Italy. The first part of the journey seemed only to confirm the rumour. On the 14th they marched to Pernes, ten miles north of St. Pol, entrained there, and left at 4.20 on the morning of the following day. The journey was long and the weather disagreeably hot, but as dinner and tea were prepared in cookers on the train, conditions were not so uncomfortable as they might have been. After passing through Paris at midnight, they halted and detrained about noon on the 16th at Romilly-sur-Seine, which is situated, as its name shows, on the river Seine, and is about 65 miles E.S.E. of the French capital. Marching to a wood on the north of the town, they bivouacked. Here came the news that soon dispelled all rose-coloured dreams and left no doubt of the Battalion's destination. The Germans had attacked near Rheims, and although their attack had, on the whole, been checked and held, they had made some progress west of that town. But a soldier lives in the present, and the cool waters of the canal and the umbrageous shade of the poplar trees banished the memory of past and the thought of future discomfort.

On the 17th the Battalion began to move north towards Rheims. French motor transport carried them as far as Le Mesnil, eight miles south of Epernay, from which they marched four miles up the bluff to the village of Gionges. Here the Brigade was concentrated, and "C" Company, which had been left behind as a loading party, rejoined the Battalion after experiencing one of those little misadventures which at the time appear tragedy, but which memory

reveals as comedy. After being dumped at a cross-roads by the French transport, this Company awaited guides to lead them to the Battalion. The Company cook got his "dixies" ready and began to prepare tea on the side of the road. His preparations were almost complete when a motor-lorry, driven by a Frenchman, dashed up, and before any warning could be given, scattered the improvised "Cookhouse" and spilt the precious liquid. Under an impulse of generous folly the Frenchman drew up his waggon. In a flash he was surrounded by a mob of angry Highlanders, to whom he offered an unintelligible explanation in rapid French with many gesticulations, while they expressed a forcible and unanimous opinion of his conduct in a dialect which is understood only north of Aberdeen.

From Gionges the Battalion marched north, crossed the Marne at Epernay, and, climbing the steep northern slope of the river, reached the village of Chapillon on the southern edge of the Forest of Rheims.

Before the action of the 51st Division and of the 6th Battalion can be understood, it is necessary to review briefly the situation in July. On the 15th of that month opened the Kaiser Battle, the last German offensive on the western front. The plan was to attack both on the east and on the west of Rheims, to encircle that town, and then, turning west, to push on to Paris. This ambitious undertaking was entrusted to a fresh and picked army under the command of the German Crown Prince. Fortunately the French, by continued raids, had obtained information

of the enemy's intentions. East of Rheims the attack was completely broken, and the enemy did not penetrate into General Gouraud's main positions. West of the town the enemy gained greater success. He crossed the Aisne, the Vesle, and the Marne, and approached within a few miles of Epernay. While strong French counter-attacks between Soissons and Chateau-Thierry forced back the western arm of the salient the enemy had thus made, fresh troops were hurried up to Epernay and Rheims to drive in the eastern arm. Among these troops was the 51st Division.

The country to the south and south-west of Rheims was different from any area in which the Highlanders had yet fought. Hitherto they had been accustomed to the level plains and sluggish canals of the north; in this district the landscape was rugged and hilly, with steep valleys and many streams. The southern hill-slopes were chequered with the fruitful vineyards and tiny holdings of the peasantry, all bearing traces of the most careful husbandry. Great tracts were covered by forests, thick with an impenetrable jungle of undergrowth, through which progress could be made only along the straight rides or the rare and tortuous forest paths. Such, at least, was the character of the wood, some ten miles south-west of Rheims, in which the 152nd Infantry Brigade operated—the Bois de Courton—from the north-eastern edge of which the open ground shelves steeply to the river Ardre.

On the 20th of July the 153rd and 154th Infantry

Brigades attacked. The 6th Gordons, moving up later in the afternoon, bivouacked for the night in the woods near Nanteuil. Early in the following morning orders were received to advance through the Bois de Courton, to form up on one of the rides in the wood, and to attack at 8 a.m. After a hot meal the Battalion moved off at 6.45 and advanced by the rides or drives. Either the exact position of the enemy had not been discovered, or some error had arisen owing to the use of French maps, for while platoons were advancing in fours and were still some distance from the position in which they were to deploy for the attack, they encountered small bodies of the enemy in the rides and tracks. The Battalion then took up an assembly position some 700 yards in rear of the position ordered.

At eight o'clock the advance commenced. The dense undergrowth made communication impossible. Each little unit pressed forward along the track allotted to it, each fighting a battle in miniature. At some points the enemy was taken unprepared, and German officers riding about the tracks on horseback were encountered and shot down. At most points the enemy was on his guard and had made elaborate preparations. Snipers and machine-guns were mounted on trees, and straight lengths of path and ride were enfiladed by cleverly-concealed machine-guns and trench-mortars. The destruction of these was accomplished by the skilful handling of Lewis-guns and by the cunning stalking of the riflemen. To achieve this they had to leave the tracks and force a way through the tangled

brushwood—an almost impossible task. Before the day ended, most of the men's knees were wholly skinned and swollen to twice their normal size, and there was scarcely a man who was not compelled to undo his puttees to relieve the pain of the swelling. In such a confused battle strange encounters took place. Highlanders, emerging with difficulty from the clinging brake, suddenly found themselves face to face with bodies of the enemy, and bombs were thrown, rifles and revolvers discharged at point-blank range.

The advance made by different companies, and indeed by different platoons of the same company, varied greatly in proportion to the difficulties encountered. Some found it impossible to gain more than 500 yards, while others forced a way almost to the western edge of the wood, only to find themselves too weak to drive out the superior forces opposed to them. Heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy. Several machine-guns and seven trench-mortars were captured.

Later in the day the enemy attempted to filter through the gaps in our line, but the line was strengthened, the most advanced troops were withdrawn, patrols were thrown out, and any bold groups of the enemy who ventured forward were scattered and driven back.

This position the Battalion maintained until the early morning of the 23rd, when, on relief by the 8th Royal Scots, it moved to the right to join in an attack by the 152nd Infantry Brigade over the open ground between the Bois de Courton and the river Ardre.

Owing to the short warning given, only three companies reached the assembly position in time to join in the attack. The opening of the friendly barrage at 6 a.m. brought disaster. Part of it crashed into the waiting Highlanders, who suffered many casualties, including all the officers of one company. Nevertheless the troops advanced with great gallantry, in face of heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. The advance was greatly helped by a number of swift "whippet" tanks, which silenced the fire of the numerous nests of machine-guns that infested the northern edges of the Bois de Courton. Even with the assistance of the tanks, the attack stopped short in front of the village of Espilly. Outposts were thrown forward; a position in depth was organized, manned, and held until the 26th.

On the 26th a battalion of the 187th Infantry Brigade relieved the 6th Battalion. These fresh troops advanced to the attack on the 27th. The enemy was driven in, and the 6th Gordons, moving forward in the afternoon, threaded a dangerous way through the crumbling ruins of Chamuzy, which was being shelled impartially by friend and foe alike, established a line of outposts 500 yards west of the village, and found touch with patrols of the Australian Light Horse. The enemy had been flung back across the Vesle.

The resolute character of the attack, the stubborn resistance of the enemy, and the fierceness of the struggle for mastery in this the last great German attack, may be judged from the losses our troops sustained.

In fifteen days the 6th Battalion lost 68 killed and 276 wounded. Great as was the cost, the gains were equally great. Nothing but the direst need induced the French to call in the aid of British Divisions to crush this dangerous thrust. And the French Higher Command was quick to appreciate the promptness and efficiency with which the call was answered. General Berthélot, under whose command the 51st Division had been placed, paid a glowing tribute in an Order of the Day :—

“ . . . Your Army Corps, harassing the enemy, keeping close upon his heels for ten days of bitter fighting, has made its own the valley of the Ardre. Highlanders, Yorkshire lads, Australian and New Zealand cavalry, all of your officers and men of this Army Corps, so brilliantly led, have added a glorious day to your history. Marfaux, Chamuzy, the Montagne de Bligny are names which can be inscribed in golden letters in the battle honours of your regiments. Your French friends will ever remember your bravery and your unfaltering comradeship in battle.”

On the 30th of July the Battalion was withdrawn from the advanced positions, and after spending three days in bivouac near Nanteuil and Oiry, entrained at Avize on the 3rd of August. Passing the northern outskirts of Paris, it proceeded up the valley of the Oise and moved into reserve in the area west of Arras.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BATTLE OF THE HUNDRED DAYS

*August—September 1918*

RETURN TO ARRAS—EMBANKMENT—ATTACK AND  
COUNTER-ATTACK—PATROLS

On returning from Rheims, the Battalion enjoyed a fortnight's rest before again being flung into action. The men had now returned to an area which earlier stages of the campaign had made familiar. From the 4th to the 18th of August they were in billets at Caucourt, where "D" Company had been quartered in the early spring of 1917. Weather was warm and pleasant. Drafts soon filled the thinned ranks, and the forenoon parades, with musketry, physical training, and close-order drill, soon restored the Battalion to its old efficiency. The afternoons, as usual, were given up to games, baths, and recreational training, and on the 17th they had a most successful sports meeting, with races, five-a-side football, a driving competition, and a wrestling match on horseback between drivers and grooms, in which the grooms gained the victory.

Just as July had seen the last German offensive, August marked the opening of the great allied attacks—



the Battle of the Hundred Days—which drove the enemy steadily eastward and forced him, in the end, to sue for peace. On the 8th of August Field-Marshal Haig launched a powerful assault to the east of Amiens. In three days he inflicted enormous losses on the enemy, regained the old 1914 line, and freed Amiens, which had been under the fire of the German guns since March. After a pause the battle was resumed on the 23rd. By the 1st of September the enemy had been driven from one side of the Somme battlefield to the other. During August the British Armies alone captured 57,318 prisoners, 657 guns, 5,750 machine-guns, and over 1,000 trench-mortars. The operations in which the 51st Division was engaged during the month took place in the immediate east of Arras.

On the 18th of August the 6th Gordons left their billets and moved up by light railway to Anzin, from which they marched in small bodies to their position in support in front of the village of Athies, with their right resting on the river Scarpe. They were quartered in huts in the lee of a huge embankment, some 70 feet high. There they enjoyed the ease and comfort of billets in rear. Physical training and gas drill were carried out in perfect safety, and when not engaged in these exercises, the men enjoyed the luxury of bathing in the lakes on the north bank of the river.

While lying in this position, they could see the unceasing effort to harass the enemy and to press him back from Arras. On the 19th the Liverpools, advancing on the south of the Scarpe, drove the

enemy from the face of the hill, but failed to dislodge him from the crest. On the 20th the 5th Seaforths, who held the line immediately in front of the 6th Battalion, carried two enemy positions and crushed a counter-attack in the late afternoon. Next day came the turn of the 6th Gordons. "B" and "D" Companies, moving forward by moonlight to the positions manned by the 5th Seaforths, attacked at 1.30 in the morning, and seized, with few casualties, two more lines of trenches. They captured a number of Germans, killed more, took three machine-guns, handed over their gains to the Seaforths, and returned to their aquatic amusements behind the embankment.

Three days later the 153rd Brigade attacked on the left and brought their gains in line with those of the 152nd. Later on the same day the 6th Battalion moved up to the forward positions. In these it did not enjoy the same protection. The enemy, as if resolved to stay the advance at any cost, lashed the already brown, pock-marked soil with an unceasing hail of shells, using mustard gas with great effect. In two days more than 100 men had to be sent down suffering from this latest form of poison. The injuries were rarely severe, but even slight cases had to be sent away for a fortnight's treatment.

Still the enemy gained no respite. On the 26th the Canadians attacked on the south of the river, under cover of a tremendous bombardment, and calmly walking into the German positions, seized the commanding ground on the right. At 10 a.m. the 51st Division pressed their attack on the north of the

river. The 153rd Brigade gained a great part of Greenland Hill, and the 152nd, operating in the lower ground near the river, seized the enemy positions for which they were detailed. The 6th Battalion, with "B" and "D" Companies again leading the attack, captured three trench-mortars.

The enemy had not lost his courage or resolution. About mid-day on the 27th he launched a determined counter-attack along the railway and drove in part of the troops on the left. The front Companies of the 6th Battalion, who were not so heavily engaged, held firm. At 2.30 our barrage again fell, and the 6th Seafortths, advancing gallantly behind it, robbed the enemy of the small gains he had made, and drove him back with heavy loss.

The spirit the enemy showed during these days earned the admiration of even the most seasoned veterans. Battered by shells of all weights both by day and by night, harassed and dazed by a series of swift and unexpected blows at a hundred different points, he fought back with resolution and courage. Given a few hours' respite, he gathered his scattered companies and tried to regain the ground he had lost. And the courage of individuals bore the same stamp as that of their commanders. During the counter-attack of the 27th one German was seen standing fully exposed, calmly picking out targets and firing from the shoulder.

On the 28th the Battalion was released from the continuous cut-and-thrust of the battle and moved back to Balmoral Camp. While it rested there, playing

energetic games of football, enjoying the luxuries of the baths, or laughing at the pointed quips of the "Balmorals," the 154th Brigade carried on the good work in the line, and breaking down the enemy resistance, pushed forward beyond the crests of Delbar and Hansa woods, and gained the outskirts of Plouvain.

After the tense and unceasing "nibbling" of the second half of August, September was a month of comparative peace. Each day brought reports of victory. The successes of the Armies in France, in which the 51st Division had borne a share, raised the men's spirits and stirred their pride, while the news from other fronts soon made it certain that the end was near.

During September the Battalion spent only nine days in the battle line. Six of these were passed in support at Roeux, which now began to yield the secrets of its long and determined resistance. Its tunnels and galleries made it a warren, easy of defence and well-nigh impregnable. Its caves were vast storehouses of every form of military and engineering device. Engines, boilers, dynamos, great quantities of ammunition, and thousands of bombs lay hidden in these murky depths, and helped to explain the failure of so many costly assaults.

After six days of work and exploration in these ruins the Battalion moved up to the forward positions, with outposts east of Plouvain, and supports near Hansa and Delbar Woods. The exact position of the enemy was not definitely known, and while the Battalion constructed a new front line, patrols were pushed

out to find touch with the enemy, to locate his defences, and to prevent surprise. The work of a patrol is always exciting, even when no enemy is met and little happens. When the enemy is met, incident follows incident with bewildering rapidity. On the early morning of the 10th a patrol went out to see that the enemy had not retired, and, having approached near enough to draw fire, returned with the information. At 2.30 in the afternoon of the same day a small day-patrol of three—Lieut. T. D. Thomson and two men—went out between the river Scarpe and the marshes close to Biache. Here they encountered a party of some fifteen of the enemy out on the same mission, and the two parties opened a lively fire, each trying to stalk the other. The enemy, having discovered that he was the stronger, attempted to cut off the Highlanders. After a desperate struggle the three Gordons fought their way clear, killing three of the enemy and wounding several more. All three were wounded, the men slightly, the officer more seriously, having five bullet wounds and several from bomb splinters.

On the 11th the Battalion was relieved, and marched back to Athies. After a meal of hot porridge and hot rum-punch they moved by light railway to Chateau de la Haie. Here they lay for ten days in Army Reserve, spending the pleasant autumn days in the usual training and recreation of rest-billets. On the 22nd of the month they returned to Duff Camp, where they heard the news of the great victories in Bulgaria and Palestine. Even the most jaded and war-weary, seeing now the prospect of a speedy end of the War,

entered into field practices with the zeal of recruits, and the exercises in attack and pursuit were carried out with marked keenness and spirit. On the 29th they moved forward into reserve near Plouvain, where four uneventful days were spent in pleasant weather before they were withdrawn on the 2nd of October to billets at Frevin Capelle.

Compared with the heavy casualties in the July battle near Rheims, the losses of the 6th Battalion in the first phases of the " Battle of the Hundred Days " were light. In August the total loss was sixteen killed and 247 wounded, a large number of these being slight cases of gas-poisoning. In September the figures were almost incredibly small, only two being killed and eleven wounded. But, although victory was reported from every front, although each day, with its gain of ground and its tale of prisoners and guns, seemed to show that the overthrow of the enemy was imminent, much yet remained to do. The enemy, if weakening, was far from broken. Much blood had yet to be shed, and October, with its bitter assaults and relentless pursuit, exacted a heavy toll.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE LAST PHASE

*October 1918*

#### THE 6/7th GORDONS—ATTACK EAST OF CAMBRAI— ATTACK NEAR FAMARS

The few days of peaceful training at Frevin Capelle brought with them another of those rapid changes which, in the drama of the field, are effected without surprise and are accepted with calm. The losses in all units which had been closely engaged with the enemy had been heavy, and battalions were often reduced to little more than half their strength. The 6th and the 7th Gordons were in this situation, and, to ensure one strong Battalion, the two units were amalgamated from midnight on the 5th-6th October. From this time forward the united Battalion was called the 6/7th Gordon Highlanders. The change meant less to the 6th than to the 7th Gordons, as Headquarters and the administrative services of the Banffshire and Donside Battalion remained substantially unchanged and took over the same duties in the new unit. Fortunately the change did not create dissension or jealousy in the ranks. Both Battalions

had fought together for two-and-a-half years in the 51st Division, and both had proudly cherished and gallantly upheld the honourable traditions of the regiment.

Whatever secret dissatisfaction may have existed was speedily calmed by the rapid march of events. The Higher Command, encouraged by the successes in every theatre of war, was pressing the enemy in inexorable and relentless pursuit. Before the union of the 6th and 7th Gordons was twenty-four hours old, the new unit was being whirled in rocking 'buses east towards Cambrai. Before midnight they had reached Quéant, not without misfortune. While the men were moving into billets, an enemy aeroplane appeared and dropped several bombs, killing six outright and wounding thirty-eight. All the Headquarters of "B" Company became casualties except two; and it is remarkable that one of these two was Company Sergeant-Major James Craib, Keith, who had served continuously with the Battalion ever since it had landed in France, who had taken part with distinction in the heavy fighting of four years, and who had passed through the whole War unscathed.

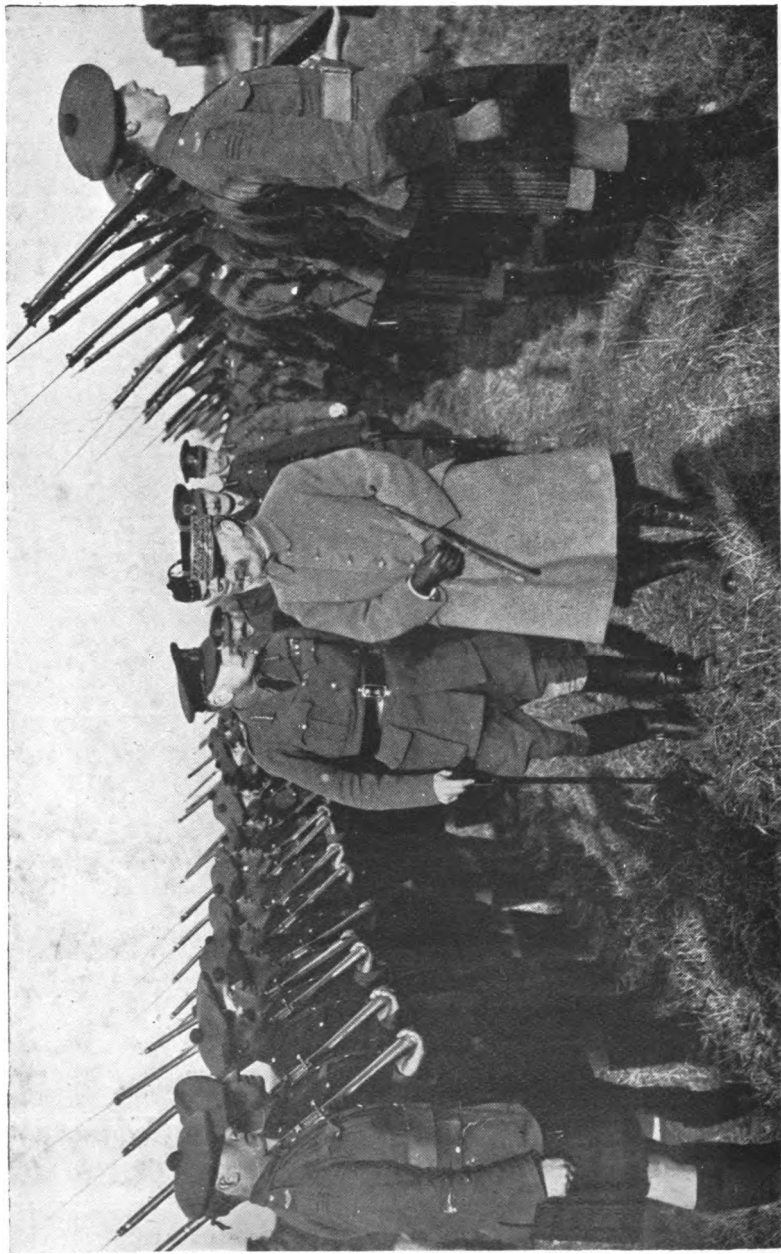
For four days they lay in trenches and dug-outs near Quéant, ready to move at an hour's notice. The time was spent in cleaning equipment and in gas training, varied by unpleasant tasks of salvage in rainy weather. Derelict rifles, ammunition, and all kinds of military stores were collected into dumps. This cheerless and uninviting task was heartened





"THE BALMORALS."

*Crown Copyright—Imperial War Museum.*



*Crown Copyright—Imperial War Museum,*

**MARSHAL FOCH INSPECTS GUARD OF HONOUR OF 6TH GORDONS.**

(Page 188.)

by the good news that came from the front. On the 9th of October it was reported that the enemy were evacuating Cambrai, and the Battalion closed in on the town. On the 10th they reached Bourlon Wood, where they rested the night in shacks and dug-outs. The enemy continued to retreat, and were now reported clear of Cambrai and retiring well beyond it. On the 11th the pursuit was continued, and the 6/7th Battalion advanced to Escadœuvres, about a mile north-east of Cambrai. The keenness of the pursuit was seen in all the roads leading towards the enemy. Everywhere troops, guns, and ammunition waggons were hurrying forward to press their advantage over the retreating enemy. When teams returning empty were met, or where an overturned waggon choked the way, inextricable confusion and exasperating delays followed. Yet everywhere the word was "Forward," and teams and troops, disengaging themselves from chaos, again resumed their march to the front positions. By 2.30 in the morning of the 12th the Battalion had taken over the line beyond Iwuy.

Morning revealed a beautiful picture. Eastward stretched a gently rolling, rich, agricultural land, bearing everywhere the proof of industrious tillage, showing no signs of the ravages of war. The country was open, scarcely a hedge obstructing the view. Dotted over the peaceful landscape were trim farms and neat copses. To the north, nestling in a hollow, lay the village of Lieu St. Amand, its tall church-spire rising gracefully from the tiled roofs that glowed

red in the bright autumn sunshine. At ten the distant howitzers boomed; the nearer field-guns spat venomously. The peaceful landscape vanished; farm and village became a ruin of falling masonry shrouded in brown-grey dust. The active infantry slipped cautiously forward, feeling their way round farm and belt of wood, and by mid-day the Gordons, meeting little opposition, had established themselves on the road leading from Lieu St. Amand to Avesnes-le-Sec, with Headquarters in a windmill, Moulin de Pierre, some 200 yards in rear.

The advance of the first day, which had been over open country, had cost little. The ground to be assaulted on the 13th was much more difficult. In the centre of our front was a considerable wood, some 600 yards long and 300 yards broad in the centre. It was flanked on the north and west by small copses, while in rear, to the east, ran a railway line, always easy of defence. The enemy did not fail to turn these natural advantages to the best use. After a heavy artillery bombardment the Battalion again advanced. Small groups pressed forward to seize the wood and the railway, but everywhere were met by the deadly fire of concealed machine-guns. The enemy artillery swept the approaches with a prodigal expenditure of high explosive and gas shells. Undismayed, the resolute infantry pushed forward from front and flank. A number of the men forced a way to the outskirts of the wood, but losses were so heavy that they had not the weight to drive the attack home. Leader after leader fell. Lt.-Col. Thom,

observing and directing the attack from the top of the windmill, fell wounded, and by noon the weakened remnants trickled back to their assaulting positions.

On the 14th our artillery again bombarded the enemy positions heavily, and a patrol of twenty men, under Sergeant Stables, was sent out to explore the wood and report on the situation. The patrol, advancing with great caution, passed right through the wood and located many of the machine-gun nests and strong points. But although they had reached their objectives and had gained valuable information, they found that their retreat was cut off by watchful machine-gunners and snipers. One man worked his way back by daylight, but the patrol had to lie concealed until late in the afternoon, when they cut their way out through an obstinate enemy, losing two men killed and three wounded in the struggle.

After dark the Battalion was relieved by the 6th Seaforths, and moved back to the northern outskirts of Cambrai. Eight days were spent in Iwuy and Thun St. Martin reorganizing and refitting, the enemy disturbing the period of rest by long-continued gas-shelling. Meantime the battle had been continued without pause. The enemy was steadily driven eastward, and on the 24th the 153rd Infantry Brigade forced the crossing of the Ecaillon River. The 152nd Brigade moved up and took over the forward positions immediately south of Maing, and prepared to resume the attack on the 25th.

At seven in the morning the attack was continued.

Under a creeping barrage the men moved rapidly forward across a mile-and-a-half of open, rolling country, stalking cautiously the machine-gun positions and rifle-pits that offered resistance. Dipping suddenly into a sharp defile, "C" and "D" Companies seized the railway embankment. "A" and "B" Companies, following closely, climbed the steep eastern slopes of the ravine, encircled Caumont Farm, Old Redoubt, and Rougemont, and established themselves on the commanding ground to the east. This sudden advantage the enemy did not leave unchallenged. At dusk, after a heavy bombardment, he delivered a determined counter-attack against our most advanced positions, and drove the tiny groups that manned them, back towards the strong line of the embankment.

The enemy's gains were short-lived. On the 26th a general advance was again ordered. Once again the Highlanders stormed the heights, regained all the high ground around Rougemont, and, pressing their advantage, destroyed or captured the machine-gun crews that vainly tried to stop their progress, swept through Famars, and established a line east of that village, some three miles south of Valenciennes.

The enemy, harassed and broken at every point, did not yield without a stubborn struggle. The captured positions and the roads and villages behind them were raked with unceasing shell-fire. It almost seemed as if the enemy gunners, determined that their dumps should not fall into our hands, were squandering their ammunition with aimless and reckless prodigality. Their fire was sometimes better directed

than they had a right to hope. It had been arranged that the advanced Companies, "C" and "D," were to be relieved after dark. But the relieving troops, caught in a blinding shell-storm, suffered so severely from gas that they were unable to carry out their task. For twenty-four more hours the two gallant Companies had to hold their gains, and in this, the last of their great battles, they showed the dour mettle of their race. All next day, the 27th, the enemy shelled their positions heavily, and in the afternoon he pushed forward a counter-attack to capture Famars. A few of his bolder troops gained a footing in the village. Not a Gordon post gave way. Forming a defensive flank on the left, the two Companies turned their Lewis-gun on the entrances and approaches to Famars, and held the assaulting troops at bay until a vigorous attack by the battalion on the left drove the enemy back, broken and confused. With darkness came the welcome relief, and on the following day the Battalion moved out by easy stages to billets in Thun Levecque, a few miles north of Cambrai.

Thus, on the 28th of October, virtually ended the active part played by the 6th Gordon Highlanders in the World War. For three months a relentless and ever-changing attack had forced the enemy back. At first, in August, he had yielded ground slowly. In October, hustled and harassed by our eager and confident troops, his morale weakened by the gloomy despondency at home and by the reports of disasters in the Balkans and in Palestine, he had retreated rapidly. On the 9th of October he was evacuating

Cambrai ; on the 26th of that month the 6/7th Gordons had carried his positions nearly twenty miles beyond that town, and every inch east of Iwuy had been gained by the 51st Division. Rapid as our advance was, the retreat had never become a rout. When, pressed by our daring and resolute infantry, the enemy had retired to new positions, he flung out skeleton rear-guards of machine-gunners, who fought with the stubborn courage of despair. Positions of great natural strength were maintained with skill and determination, as the failure of our attack on the 13th October showed. Commanding ground was never yielded without a struggle, and even when it was lost, the grim attempts to re-take it testified to the boldness of the enemy's commanders and the courage of his men. The losses of the 6/7th Battalion during this month are, in themselves, a proof that the enemy, if beaten, was not yet broken. During October the total decrease in the strength of the Battalion was 671, and of these nearly 600 were battle casualties. No brave man derides a fallen adversary. The courage and endurance of the enemy's infantry earned the respect even of the 51st Division, a respect shared by the sturdy Territorials of Banffshire and Donside, not the least valiant of that glorious company.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE ARMISTICE AND AFTER

*November 1918—April 1919*

THUN LEVECQUE—THE ARMISTICE—AMUSEMENTS—  
REVIEWS—TRIBUTE TO THE 51ST DIVISION—  
DEMOBILIZATION—HOME

On the 30th October the Battalion settled down in the village of Thun Levecque, on the western bank of the Canal de l'Escaut, a few miles north of Cambrai. Here for a fortnight the usual training was carried out. Rumour was busy as ever. The experiences of the previous month, the ever-increasing haste with which the enemy was driven back, the daily tale of guns and prisoners that fell into the hands of the Allies, the German suggestion of an armistice, all indicated that the end was near. But until the enemy was overpowered or a truce was arranged, the army in the field must keep fit and ready for action. Thus for ten days the men had the usual routine of billet life, with its cleaning and scrubbing, its range practice and field exercises, its inspections and church parades.

The 11th November changed all. News of the armistice came through at eleven in the forenoon, and was at first received with little outward demonstration, although not without relief and satisfaction. A general holiday was observed. Feelings found visible and audible expression. The "Balmorals" gave a concert to the Brigade in the concert hall at Thun Levecque, and their ever-popular programme was received with boisterous enthusiasm. A great bonfire was built and lit at 8.30 in the evening, and even the cheerless drizzle could not chill the men's cheerful hearts.

For nearly two months after the armistice the Battalion was quartered in Thun Levecque. Slackness and unreadiness could not be permitted, but so long as efficiency and fitness were maintained, parades were curtailed and training was modified. Lt.-Col. C. J. E. Cranstoun, who had acted as second-in-command from the end of May, and who had commanded the Battalion after Lt.-Col. J. G. Thom was wounded, had already won the respect and admiration of the men in the field. His wise tolerance and firmness now earned their goodwill and hearty co-operation, and they were careful not to betray by any want of discipline the trust reposed in them. Strenuous battle-training was abandoned. A little salvage work was carried out. The colours were brought out from home, and short parades, frequently ceremonial, were held in the forenoon. The afternoons were given up to recreational training and games, and numerous sports meetings, cross-country runs, "Hares and

Hounds," and football matches ensured the fitness of all ranks. An educational scheme was organized and was made specially attractive by interesting and instructive lectures on a wide range of subjects, including "Agricultural Organization," "Rhodesia," "The Ballads of Scotland," and "The Daily Press." The "Balmoral" entertainments and the Divisional Cinema were supplemented by jolly concerts organized by Battalion artistes, and jest and song and story in the evening followed the gentle training and strenuous games of the day. Thus mind and body alike were trained and kept fit, and the monotony, boredom, and unrest of dull winter-quarters were prevented.

Special occasions demanded special treatment and a special holiday. St. Andrew's Day, Christmas, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, the anniversary of Beaumont Hamel on the 13th of November, were celebrated with exuberant enthusiasm. Each holiday had its sports meeting, its concert, and special fare. In honour of St. Andrew the evening meal was porridge and rum-punch. On New Year's Eve the concert was prolonged until midnight, when "Auld Lang Syne" was sung and the pipe band played round the village, just as it had done three years earlier in Picquigny.

Distinguished visitors did not forget the 51st Division. On the 19th of November Prince Albert came. The Battalion, after some exercises in arm drill in mass, marched past, and the Prince expressed his admiration of the bearing and smartness of the men.

On the 15th of the same month Marshal Foch,

accompanied by Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, also visited the Division. The pipe band and "C" Company, as Guard of Honour, marched to Iwuy, where they were inspected and complimented by both Commanders, a compliment which was repeated in a letter received by the Commanding Officer :—

" The Commander-in-Chief was very well pleased  
 " with the turn-out of " C " Company of your unit,  
 " which formed the Guard of Honour for Marshal  
 " Foch. He said that this Company was the equal  
 " of any Company which he had seen in pre-war  
 " days, and was certainly one of the best he had  
 " seen in France. Your pipers and drummers gave  
 " great satisfaction, and, instead of being dismissed  
 " with the Company, were retained to play during  
 " lunch."

Smartness on parade is not the real test of a soldier, but alertness and keenness in training usually go hand-in-hand with courage and ardour on the field of battle. That both qualities were combined in the Highland Territorials is most easily seen by comparing Field-Marshal Haig's appreciation of the smart appearance and bearing of the men with the generous and eloquent tribute paid by the French to the part played by the 51st Division in the desperate conflicts of 1918 :—

" The need was great and your spirit was greater ;  
 " therefore we asked of you that supreme proof of  
 " your readiness to make any sacrifices that might be  
 " demanded for the common cause. We knew that if  
 " it were in human power to stop this enemy avalanche,

“ the Highlanders of the 51st Division were the men to do it.

“ Nobly did you respond to the call. In spite of all you had gone through in these days of darkness and anxiety, you fought on against the best troops the enemy could put in the field. For three days in succession you faced the hordes of Boches, and you faced them with splendid success. On that occasion you saved the whole line, and in saving the line you did much to save the whole Allied cause from a set-back, if not from a disaster. France and Humanity are your debtors for ever, and they will never forget what they owe to your magnificent heroism. In the name of Humanity we salute you as soldiers of the common cause, who have fought with the spirit of the gods of old.”

In spite of the light work and the very energetic and highly successful efforts to make life interesting and attractive, the longing for home grew steadily stronger. The need of rigid discipline and military order and routine did not now appear to exist. More abundant leave only strengthened the longing, and the plans of demobilization, excellent as they were, seemed only too cumbrous and slow, once the homing instinct was stirred. Men who had served long in the field and who, in three or four years of grim fighting and continued exposure, had enjoyed but two or three brief glimpses of the comforts of home ; men who had domestic or business responsibilities and even the more recent recruits looked forward with eager impatience

to the time when saluting and guards and drills would cease. One pathetic incident illustrates how strong an appeal home made to the men, and how keenly they felt the loss of it, even in another's case. Captain W. J. C. Fleming, whose care and consideration had worthily earned the esteem and affection of his men, proceeding on leave in December, caught a chill and reached home only to die. Even seasoned veterans, with grim memories of many a blood-soaked field, felt here the touch of poignant sympathy.

On the 7th of January the Battalion moved into Belgium and was quartered in Houdeng-Aimeries, some ten miles east of Mons. Soon active preparations for demobilization began. The first large draft of 110 men left for home on the 3rd of February. The break up, once begun, continued rapidly. Men who were to remain in the army of occupation were drafted off to other units. Every week parties, some large, some small, proceeded to the base. The transport animals followed. On the 25th of March the Battalion moved five miles further east to Fayt. Here surplus stores were checked and handed over, and the Battalion was reduced to cadre strength—about 50 of all ranks. The cadre entrained at Manage on the 6th of April, and on the 8th reached Dunkirk, where the men were bathed and all clothing carefully disinfected. They embarked on the 10th in the "Koursk," and on the 12th of April, 1919, reached Southampton, whence they had sailed on their great adventure 53 months before.

## CHAPTER XVI

### TRANSPORT AND SUPPLIES

The achievements of the Battalion related in the foregoing chapters have been the story of the training and battle fighting of the ordinary men-at-arms, but no account can be complete if it fails to do justice to the splendid service given by the departments of the Quartermaster and the Transport Officer. The duty of the man-at-arms was to keep himself fit, to keep his arms clean and serviceable, and to fight the enemy. To the Quartermaster and the Transport Officer fell the ceaseless task of supplying food, clothing, arms, ammunition, and equipment to a body one thousand strong, always hungry, generally fighting, and never more than a few days in the same place.

In both departments the Battalion was unusually fortunate in possessing men who knew their work thoroughly and took a pride in doing it well. Captain Charles McCombie, Alford, was Transport Officer from 1914 to 1918. Himself a farmer with a practical knowledge of horses and vehicles that proved invaluable, he had little difficulty in selecting from

Banffshire and Donside men of the right type for the work. In Sergeant Alexander Philip, Leochel-Cushnie (afterwards Lieutenant and Transport Officer), and Corporal John Matthews, also from Leochel-Cushnie, who died a prisoner of war from wounds received in April, 1918, he had non-commissioned officers whose knowledge and skill were second only to his own.

The Transport train consisted, officially, of 19 vehicles—water-carts, cookers, mess-cart, and medical equipment cart, in addition to limbers and G.S. waggons for ammunition, tools, and other stores. The grouping of waggons and limbers, and indeed the purposes for which they were employed, varied greatly with circumstances, and were affected by the progress of the War. One fact, however, was unaffected by any circumstance whatever; no matter what numbers were laid down by regulations, the 6th Gordons always regarded them as a minimum, and in practice invariably kept one or two waggons or carts in reserve. There was, of course, no need to provoke higher authorities by indicating this fact on paper; indeed, it is extremely doubtful whether any one except the Transport Officer and his N.C.O.'s knew precisely what the establishment was and how far it was exceeded.

One interesting "buckshee" member of the Transport was a farm or box cart, which went out to France with the Battalion, played a useful part all through the campaign, and, returning with the cadre in 1919, was duly demobilized, and is now reported—unofficially—to have resumed its pre-war occupation somewhere in Strathdon. Another equally interesting



and even more bizarre unit of the baggage train was a special mess-cart—unmistakably French—which was picked up near Festubert for 50 francs—less than £2. Its good condition—perhaps also its low price—encouraged thrifty Scotsmen not to inquire too closely into the “bona fides” of the seller.

The establishment of horses was normally 55—9 heavy draught, 29 light draught, 6 pack, and 11 riding ponies. The same safe principle of keeping a little in hand which was adopted in the case of the waggons, was also applied to the horses, and the establishment was always fully maintained. It was natural that, in a long and severe campaign, occasions would arise when horses would run masterless, and the men of the 6th Gordons Transport always took care that a good horse should not fall into the hands of a bad master. If a good “stray” was encountered, and if any markings that might betray his identity could be speedily obliterated, he was at once adopted; but the spirit of honest dealing was not entirely forgotten, and in place of the newcomer there was released another mount whose quality was better suited to a master who had not the wit to keep a good horse when he had him. There was no doubt of the men’s affection for horses—especially for good horses—and there was no fear of the quality and efficiency of the Transport of the 6th Gordons in the hands of some forty gentle “horse-coupers” from Speyside, Strathbogie, and Strathdon.

In the earlier years of the campaign, when the War was stationary, and when the enemy’s

destructive powers were not fully developed, the duties and dangers of the Transport were comparatively light. Horse standings were situated in orchards or open fields, and the men found billets or bivouacked near by. By day supplies were brought up from Ordnance Stores, dumps, or depots further in rear; when the Battalion was holding the line, rations were sent forward to an appointed rendezvous at night. This last duty was the most hazardous, as enemy machine-guns and artillery played on road-junctions, straight and exposed parts of the chief tracks behind our lines, and on suspected dumps; but the men were animated by the right spirit, and their unfailing appearance with the rations proved that their own safety, and even the safety of their horses, was to them of little consequence compared with the importance of sending supplies regularly up to their comrades in the line.

Even early in the War they had to face dangers other than hostile gun-fire. Roads, especially the roads leading up to our communicating trenches, were broken and pitted with shell-holes, so that the risk of waggons being overturned was an ever-present cause of anxiety; the bridges over streams, canals, and ditches were frequently narrow and frail, and a constant menace in the darkness. These dangers were all the greater when the Battalion moved into a new area, and when, owing to the short warning given, time was not left to explore the roads with care. This is well illustrated by one of its early experiences. In moving up towards a new position before the attack



ROAD SCENE NEAR FRICOURT.

*Crown Copyright—Imperial War Museum.*



on Aubers Ridge in the beginning of May, 1915, the Transport had to cross a bridge over a canal. The bridge was so narrow that even in daylight the crossing was difficult ; in the starlight it was doubly dangerous. One of the water-carts, drawn by a pair of good horses, was overturned, and into the canal plunged cart, horses, and driver. After a struggle the horses were cut free. The driver was rescued, but, owing to the steepness of the banks, no landing place could be found for the horses, and after swimming for nearly an hour both were drowned.

Two similar accidents with more fortunate results are recorded. One took place at Le Havre some eight months later, when the horse with the mess-cart plunged into the canal, but succeeded in scrambling ashore. The other occurred early in June, 1915. Along the banks of the La Bassée Canal ran tow-paths, which were used as roads, wide enough for one waggon, but too narrow to permit two to pass. One of the travelling kitchens—of the old, heavy, clumsy type—in moving along this road attempted to pass an artillery limber which already filled the path. One wheel of the kitchen went over the edge of the bank, and into the Canal toppled cooker, horse, and driver. Fortunately help was at hand. A number of artillery-men came to the rescue ; one of them dived into the Canal, and after considerable effort was able to release the horse, which was successfully dragged on to the bank. The kitchen was salvaged next day, the only comment of the optimistic cook being, " Oh, weel, she was needin' a clean onywee ! "

The progress of the War brought with it an improvement in the shelter provided for the animals. The severity of winter, and especially of the winter of 1916-1917, when thousands of valuable animals were lost owing to exposure, compelled the Staff to devise better shelters if the Transport service were to be maintained in the efficiency its important duties demanded. Open standings were generally abandoned, and in their place appeared Transport Stations. These were improved as time went on, and became almost permanent, one Division or Brigade handing them over to another on relief. They varied greatly with local circumstances, but generally they had a firm floor, built of brick. They were roofed, when possible, with corrugated iron; sometimes walls of sandbags, some four feet high, were erected, and the shelter was completed with sheets of corrugated iron, tarpaulins, and even sacking. These stations protected the animals from the severity of the weather, kept them in good condition, sheltered them from flying splinters of bomb and shell, and without doubt kept alive thousands of horses which otherwise would have perished.

As if to compensate for the increased comfort, such camps brought with them added risks. Their size made them ready targets for the enemy's artillery and bombing planes, and both in their stations and in their journeys up with rations the Transport suffered from the expansion of the enemy's artillery. This first became evident on the Somme in 1916, when horse standings well in rear of our front line were

heavily shelled. The condition of the roads and the accuracy and intensity of the enemy's gunfire have already been described in Chapter VIII. For weeks the Transport of the Battalion had to run the gauntlet through "Happy Valley" with supplies, and never failed once. Owing to the intense heat there was a constant demand for water, and the water-carts plied continually between the rear lines and Mametz Wood. The coolness and daring of the drivers, who carefully studied the enemy's time-table of hurricane bombardments and galloped their carts and limbers through the danger zones, saved both men and horses. But one water-cart was caught. The cart was wrecked, and horse and driver were killed.

Even more exciting than the nightly adventure with the ration limbers were the occasional diversions created by abnormal situations. When roads were impassable owing to bad weather, or when the progress of an attack carried the infantry beyond the area of good roads, wheeled transport was given up for a time, and pack ponies were employed. They carried up the usual rations and water, frequently ammunition and tools, and occasionally even bombs and gas cylinders. These night trips were laborious and anxious, and the ill-defined tracks, with their numerous pitfalls of shell-holes, trenches, and loose strips of wire, made progress slow and uncertain; while the heavy shell-fire that was a common experience made a stampede of the animals possible at any moment. The success which invariably followed these hazardous expeditions brought out very clearly the determination

of the men to keep their comrades in the fighting line well supplied.

Not less evident was their care of their horses, which is well illustrated by an incident during the attack which opened near Ypres on the 31st of July, 1917. On the night of the 1st-2nd August, eight pack ponies were sent up, each carrying eight two-gallon petrol tins filled with water. They had almost reached the rendezvous near Minty's Farm when a number of heavy shells burst all round them, causing the ponies to plunge and rear, the jangling din of the banging tins adding greatly to the confusion and almost drowning the sound of the exploding shells. After order had been restored, one animal was found imbedded in a deep, mud-filled shell-hole, and the driver was seen sitting on his heels on the lip, holding the pony by the bridle and coaxing it out with a soothing, "Come awa' noo, lassie! It winna touch ye!"

From the Somme onward the same danger attended the nightly journey of the Transport when the Battalion was holding the line or engaged in any of the numerous offensives, and the smallness of their losses was due mainly to the skill and judgment of the personnel, although they themselves ascribed it to luck. The same good fortune befell them in the many visits of the enemy's "night-hawks" or bombing 'planes. While most units paid a heavy toll, the 6th Battalion Transport escaped lightly, and the only time they suffered seriously was in January, 1918, when they lost the two best horses, which had won the First Prize in the Divisional Show of the previous year.



Unpleasant and dangerous as was the transport of rations and supplies, it was less exacting than the labour of sudden and unexpected moves from one area to another, which taxed the resource and capacity of the men and the strength and endurance of the horses to the uttermost. Mention has already been made of the journey from Hautvillers to Arras, in the beginning of February, 1917, when hilly country had to be traversed for six days over ice-bound roads. The piercing headwinds, the steep gradients, and the glassy surface made even short journeys seem impossible ; but the devotion and ingenuity of grooms and drivers and the stimulating energy of Capt. McCombie overcame all obstacles.

The exhausting character of a long move is best illustrated by the "trek" to the Marne in July, 1918. The Battalion, after detraining and resting in Romilly-sur-Seine, was carried off towards Rheims in French motor 'buses ; the Transport, with the Regimental Stores and the Quartermaster's staff, was left to follow at its own pace. A map of the new area was handed to the Quartermaster, who was informed that, as the destination was at a considerable distance, it would be best to take two days to the journey. Soon after six the Transport moved, and except for a brief halt at mid-day to feed and water the horses and to prepare the men's dinner, they kept on until five in the afternoon, when they halted near Sezanne. The field selected for the Transport was well chosen, having a good water supply and good shelter for the horses. It was well that it was so, for towards midnight the

blustering wind increased to a hurricane, rain fell heavily, and the night was declared to be the worst that had been experienced in France. Fortunately, on the opposite side of the road were a few large open sheds, used apparently for drying white clay bricks ; in them, as the storm increased in fury, some of the men found partial shelter from the raging storm outside.

After a cheerless night that gave little rest either to men or horses, they set out at 8.30 on the following morning. As the men of the Battalion were without rations, it was of the first importance that the Transport should overtake them within twenty-four hours. With only one or two brief rests to feed and water the animals, they pressed forward and reached their destination at midnight, having covered a distance of 85 kilometres—about 53 miles—in two days. This was the longest journey ever undertaken by the Transport, and when the weight of the loaded waggons and the slow rate of progress are considered, its successful accomplishment is in itself the most eloquent tribute to the efficiency of this arm of the service.

While the Transport was chiefly engaged in the conveyance of stores, the Quartermaster and his staff were responsible for the indenting or ordering of supplies and for their division and distribution to the men. In this department the Battalion was fortunate in having, during the whole period of the War, two officers of long service and tried ability. Quartermaster and Hon. Major F. W. Cooper brought to the unit on mobilization, when knowledge of army

methods was most essential, an unrivalled experience, and to him, in large measure, were due the rapidity and smoothness with which the mobilizing and equipping of the Battalion were carried through. In France, too, during the first winter, his knowledge and experience were of inestimable value to a Battalion which was tasting active service for the first time, and the importance of his work is all the greater when it is remembered that many men, a score of years younger, considered themselves fit only for duty at home.

In April, 1915, Major Cooper was succeeded by Captain F. W. Findlay, who was Quartermaster until the end of the War. Over twenty-one years' service in the Gordon Highlanders—seven of them as Regimental Quartermaster-Sergeant—guaranteed a thorough knowledge of the most abstruse mysteries of "Q" department. Scarcely a day of four strenuous years passed but the Battalion had cause to thank the resource and devotion of the Quartermaster. And to this resource were added conspicuous honesty, a determination to secure the efficiency and comfort of the Battalion, and an equally resolute determination to achieve that efficiency without undue cost to the British taxpayer.

These two officers had the support of three efficient Regimental Quartermaster-Sergeants:—James Kellas of Inverurie, who came home in June, 1915; Alex. Shearer, who died suddenly in September, 1916; and George S. Reid, Huntly, who was R.Q.M.S. for the last two-and-a-half years of the War. After these, as

a connecting link between the Quartermaster's department and the Companies, were the Company Quartermaster-Sergeants. At first these non-commissioned officers remained with their Companies, went into the line with them, and accompanied them into action. This meant that, in addition to acting as the Company's secretary and treasurer, and arranging for food, clothing, ammunition, equipment, and pay, the C.Q.M.S. had to perform the duties of an ordinary fighting N.C.O. The double duty was too much for any man, and the losses of Neuve Chapelle showed the costly folly of exposing men whose death or injury plunged the administration of the Companies into inextricable confusion. After Neuve Chapelle the Company Quartermaster-Sergeants never went into action, and after June, 1915, they rarely accompanied the Battalion into the line, although each C.Q.M.S. reported to his Company Commander daily or nightly with the rations, whatever the situation was. The care and success with which they carried out their arduous and exacting duties ensured the comfort of the men, and were of great assistance in promoting the efficiency of the Battalion. During the four years there were ten Company Quartermaster-Sergeants. Three of these, in addition to R.Q.M.S. Reid, went out in 1914 in a lower rank and remained until the end :— William Joss, Kennethmont; Charles McDonald and John Murdoch, both of Strathdon. Their long and devoted service is shared by the Battalion Mess-Sergeant, John Begg, of Dufftown.

The duty of the Quartermaster was to act as

universal provider for the Battalion. From him came all supplies of food and clothing, and all renewals of arms, kit, and equipment. The Store moved with the Battalion. Sometimes it was housed in a barn; frequently it had no more than the shelter of one or two tarpaulins; occasionally it occupied a hut; and when none of these shelters was provided, it made use of the waggons, in which supplies had been brought up.

The first task was naturally the provision of food supplies. When the rations were brought up to the Store by the Transport, usually early in the morning, the work of distribution commenced. Each C.Q.M.S. had a note of the number of men in each of the four platoons of his Company; the correct allowance of meat, tea, sugar, bread, jam, butter, rum, and sometimes fuel was then calculated, and the supplies for each platoon were packed in sandbags with the number of the platoon carefully marked on each. When the Battalion was in a part of the line where no fires were allowed, meat was cooked at the Store before being sent up, and frequently tea and even porridge were prepared in rear and taken up in food-containers. The mail was sorted out and sent up to platoons nightly along with rations.

When evening came, the Transport set out for the appointed rendezvous, accompanied by the Quartermaster and the four C.Q.M. Sergeants. The attentions of the enemy's artillery, machine-guns, and fixed rifles made the nightly journey far from safe or easy, and not infrequently they had to pass through a slow road-barrage. On arrival at the rendezvous the

duties of the Transport ended. Rations and stores were unloaded, and waggons and limbers set out on the return journey. Not so the "Q" department. At the rendezvous were met ration-parties from the various Companies. Sometimes trench tramways helped them to take the loads to the Companies in the front line, but as a rule all supplies had to be carried forward. While the Quartermaster reported to the Commanding Officer at Battalion Headquarters, the C.Q.M. Sergeants accompanied their bearer parties to the Company Headquarters, there handed over supplies to platoon sergeants, reported to the Company Commander, and received the outgoing mail. After that they were free to return, and they considered that they had had an easy night if they found their way back to the Quartermaster's Store by two in the morning.

Very often they did not return until daylight, as delays were not uncommon. Heavy shelling or congested roads might hinder the progress of the Transport; rendezvous were mistaken in the inky darkness; and means of transport sometimes broke down. An illustration of this is found when the Battalion returned to Neuville St. Vaast in May, 1918. In this area rations were sent forward from Ecoivres by light railway. On the night of the 24th of May they were hours late, and did not reach the Battalion until long after midnight. Their arrival, late as it was, relieved anxieties, but nothing could appease the anger of a naturally wrathful band consisting of the Quartermaster and four Company

Quartermaster-Sergeants, who had helped to *push* the train for part of the way and had completed the ten miles' journey in six hours !

This little incident illustrates the spirit that animated the Quartermaster and his staff. Their job was to keep the Battalion well fed and well equipped in every situation. No obstacle was allowed to bar their way. And their determination and devotion to the Battalion is best estimated by the fact that only on two nights during the whole four years did the supply of rations fail to reach the men. The first of these occurred at Loos about midnight on the 25th-26th September, 1915. Just as the ration-parties were moving up, the Germans delivered a sudden counter-attack to recapture the guns they had lost in Gun Trench. Rations were dumped, and the men, rushing to the support of their comrades, lined bank and ditch and opened fire. The second occasion was in the Battalion's last engagement in 1918, when Famars was carried. Owing to the uncertainty of the Battalion's position and the heavy enemy gunfire, food supplies did not reach the men at the usual hours ; but, later on, three hot meals were on the ground at the same time, and one cooker came within 300 yards of the Battalion.

Although the men regarded the supply of food as the most important function of the Quartermaster's Stores, many other important duties fell to this department. From it came all renewals of arms, clothing, kit, and equipment : from boots to steel helmets, from pull-throughs to Lewis-gun magazines, from

identity discs to leather jerkins, from rum and lime-juice to whale-oil and "fags." And the Quartermaster supplied not only new clothing and equipment; he had also a repair department. He kept both a tailor's shop and a shoemaker's shop, where kilts and tunics were altered or repaired, and where worn-out boots were cobbled. Every new situation with its fresh demands was met with unfailing resource. When the first German gas attack was made in May, 1915, the tailors were at once set to make a rough-and-ready gas mask—this, indeed, was the occasion of the grouping of the tailors in the Q.M. Store, as formerly one had been attached to each Company. When he saw that a system which allowed or compelled each man to wash his own shirt was unsatisfactory and wasteful, Capt. Findlay instituted a Battalion washing department under his own care. One or two of the oldest men in each Company, who were unfit for the march or the work of the front line, remained at the Stores and acted as "washerwomen." This custom, which was more cleanly and more satisfactory, continued until the establishment of Divisional baths in 1916 made it no longer necessary.

An even better instance of the resourcefulness and maternal care of the Quartermaster can be found in December, 1916. At that time the Battalion was holding the line in front of Courcelette under conditions of cold, wet, and mud that were even more severe than those of the winter of '14-'15. No cooking was possible in the six days' tour of the front and support trenches, and only a cold cooked ration could be sent up every



night. A small supply of solidified alcohol—a whitish, soapy substance which burned well and could very quickly make water boil—was provided by the Division, but the supply was quite inadequate. This set the Quartermaster and his staff hard at work to manufacture a substitute, and after long and careful experiments, they were able to send up every night to each man a small tin filled with their new compound and sufficient to brew tea twice a day. The exact composition of this improvised “cooker” has never been divulged, but it is known that it contained rendered fat, paraffin, and “dubbing,” with shreds of sandbags and rifle-rag—“four by two”—intermingled. The use of “dubbing” was a profound secret, and sorely puzzled the Supplies department, who wondered what strange fit of boot-cleaning had overtaken the 6th Gordons. In addition to the “cookers,” dry socks and an ample supply of whale oil were sent up nightly, with the result that the Battalion had less than half the cases of frost-bite of any other unit of the Brigade.

Two other departments which were under the charge of the Quartermaster still fall to be noted. One was the supply of water. Owing to its many impurities, water could rarely be issued to the men without first being “treated.” For this purpose five water-duty men were attached to the Battalion, nominally under the orders of the Medical Officer, but in practice taking their instructions from the Quartermaster. On the march and in billets, and sometimes indeed in the line, the water-supply was provided by two water-carts, the contents

being frequently generously treated with chloride of lime. In the trenches, too, the water-duty men had to look after pumps and water-tanks, while in hot weather they were responsible for providing a supply of their chlorinated poison in petrol tins.

Another exacting but very necessary duty, which for long fell to the Quartermaster, was that of billeting. When the Division moved into a new area, a certain district was allotted to each Brigade. This, in turn, was portioned out by the Staff Captain among the various units of the Brigade. The Billeting Officer had then to go round the Battalion area, estimate the accommodation, not infrequently cajole unwilling householders, and allot buildings for Headquarters for each Company, for the Transport, and for Stores. In the execution of this work the Quartermaster, and later the Billeting Officers, had an indispensable ally in Sergeant James M. Dalgarno, of Stoneywood. This non-commissioned officer had for a number of years travelled in France and the Netherlands on business, and had a thorough knowledge, not only of pure French, but of the various *patois* of the north. Quite often he was successful in obtaining concessions and privileges which would have been denied even to a French interpreter, and he was invaluable in smoothing over the many little misunderstandings that arose between *M. le patron* and his Highland guests. His knowledge saved the Battalion many thousands of francs, for the French—and more particularly the Belgian—peasantry, when times grew hard, did not scorn to turn a dishonest penny out of the British

Treasury. At first, during 1914 and 1915, before lean times came, they would give the soldier liberally and cheaply. Eggs, bread, wine, and coffee were supplied at moderate prices, and some officers in the early days had a cup of coffee in bed before the work of the day began, or a generous café-cognac to refresh them after the toil of training. Later, when the Battalion left a billeting area, it was often followed by a heavy bill for all manner of damage—sometimes real, more frequently imaginary. The usual complaint was that valuable timber, such as doors, fences, and furnishings, had been burned by the men. At first the bills were paid with a grumble, but when they were obviously excessive, Sergeant Dalgarno usually settled them at one tenth of the original charge.

Such, in outline, were the duties of the Quartermaster, but the men of the Battalion look back with gratitude, not on the performance of these routine tasks, but on the tireless energy and unflagging devotion that supported them when things went ill. When weather was worst, when conditions were most wretched, when the men were nearest despair, then the Quartermaster rose supreme. If human ingenuity could devise comforts, if wheedling or bullying could squeeze them from Supplies, then the 6th Gordons had them. Were they floundering in three feet of mud in "boots gum thigh," they received dry socks every day; had they fought for two days on an iron ration, hot porridge and rum punch greeted them as they limped painfully back to rest; had they to go over the top at dawn on a shrewd winter morning,

there was an ample special breakfast, and, if it could be done, a mess-tin of hot tea to wash it down ; did they keep the Boche at bay for a long April day on the banks of the Lawe, night brought the fragrant cookers and the refreshing meal. The greater the test, the more gallantly did the Quartermaster meet it. Never was Battalion better served.

# BATTLE HONOURS OF THE BATTALION

## 1915

NEUVE CHAPELLE  
AUBERS RIDGE  
FESTUBERT  
GIVENCHY\*  
LOOS

## 1916

THE SOMME  
POZIÈRES RIDGE  
BEAUMONT HAMEL

## 1917

ROCLINCOURT\*  
ARRAS  
FIRST SCARPE  
SECOND SCARPE  
THIRD SCARPE  
YPRES  
PILCKEM RIDGE  
CAMBRAI 1917

## 1918

FIRST SOMME 1918  
ST. QUENTIN  
BAPAUME  
THE LYS  
ESTAIRES  
HAZEBROUCK  
THE MARNE  
TARDENOIS  
SECOND ARRAS  
THE SCARPE  
HINDENBURG LINE  
CAMBRAI 1918  
THE SELLE

\* Givenchy and Roclincourt were minor operations.

# Roll of Honour

## OFFICERS

2nd Lieut. H. A. ANDERSON.  
2nd Lieut. E. ANTON.  
Capt. J. ARCHIBALD, M.C.  
2nd Lieut. A. S. PELHAM BURN.  
Capt. D. G. CLARK, D.S.O., M.C.  
2nd Lieut. J. SMITH CLARK.  
2nd Lieut. A. H. COLLYER.  
Lieut. D. C. COOPER.  
Capt. J. G. COWIE.  
2nd Lieut. R. R. CRICHTON.  
Lieut. G. DONALDSON.  
2nd Lieut. J. DRYSDALE, M.C.  
Lieut. W. DUFFUS.  
2nd Lieut. G. S. DUNCAN.  
2nd Lieut. A. EMSLIE.  
Lieut. F. L. FARQUHARSON.  
Capt. I. G. FLEMING, M.C.  
Capt. W. J. C. FLEMING.  
Lieut. H. C. GLOSTER.  
2nd Lieut. J. G. GORDON.  
Capt. A. GRANT.  
Lieut. J. S. GRANT, M.C.  
2nd Lieut. S. E. HART.  
2nd Lieut. J. A. HARVEY.  
2nd Lieut. R. HENDERSON.  
Lieut. R. S. HENDERSON.  
2nd Lieut. T. A. HENDERSON.  
2nd Lieut. D. J. L. M. HENDRY.  
2nd Lieut. H. M. INGLIS.  
2nd Lieut. W. H. KAY.  
2nd Lieut. W. J. KELLY.  
2nd Lieut. L. B. KILBORN.  
Capt. H. D. LAING.  
2nd Lieut. W. D. LATTO.  
2nd Lieut. T. A. MACK.  
Capt. J. H. MATHESON, M.C.  
Capt. M. A. MATHESON, M.C.  
Capt. G. MINTY.

2nd Lieut. P. H. MITCHELL, M.C.  
2nd Lieut. R. A. MONKHOUSE.  
Capt. R. W. MOODIE.  
Lieut. J. G. MORRISON.  
Lieut. H. M. W. MCKAY.  
Capt. K. MCKAY, M.C.  
Lt.-Col. C. MCLEAN.  
Lieut. J. S. MCPHERSON.  
Lieut. A. N. MCQUEEN.  
Capt. P. M. MACKENZIE.  
Lt.-Col. J. E. MACQUEEN.  
Capt. A. REID, M.C.  
2nd Lieut. G. REID.  
2nd Lieut. H. REID.  
2nd Lieut. W. J. REID.  
Lieut. R. M. RIDDEL.  
Capt. A. M. ROBERTSON.  
Lieut. J. SCOTT.  
Lieut. J. SIM.  
Lieut. R. F. SIMPSON.  
2nd Lieut. F. J. SMITH, M.C.  
Capt. G. SMITH.  
Lieut. F. C. STEPHEN.  
2nd Lieut. A. STEVENSON.  
Lieut. H. A. WARK.  
2nd Lieut. J. G. WATT.  
2nd Lieut. W. J. WATT.  
2nd Lieut. R. F. WILSON.  
2nd Lieut. W. WRIGHT.

## OFFICERS ATTACHED.

Capt. J. A. L. CAMPBELL,  
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.  
Major J. W. ADAMS,  
Royal Scots.  
Major C. E. CORNWALL,  
South African Defence Force.

NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	ADAM, WILLIAM, b. Aberdeen.	L./Cpl.	BEVERLEY, ALEX., e. Turriff.
"	ADAMS, ALEX., b. Aberdeen.	Cpl.	BEVERLEY, ANDREW, e. Keith.
Cpl.	AIKEN, JAMES, e. Bucksburn.	Pte.	BEVERLEY, GEORGE, b. Keith.
Pte.	AINSLIE, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	BINNIE, DAVID, b. Grangemouth.
"	AITKEN, WILLIAM, b. Tranent.	"	BIRNIE, JOHN A., e. Aberdeen.
"	ALANACH, WILLIAM, e. Keith.	"	BISSET, ALAN, e. Aberdeen.
"	ALEXANDER, JAMES, e. Huntly.	"	BISSETT, DUNCAN, b. Inverurie.
"	ALEXANDER, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	BLACKHALL, EDWARD, b. New-
Cpl.	ALLAN, DONALD, e. Edinburgh.		machar.
Pte.	ALLAN, JAMES, b. Pollokshaws.	"	BLACKHALL, GEORGE, b. Grange.
"	ALLAN, JOHN, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	BOOTH, ALEX. b. Keith-hall.
"	ALLAN, WILLIAM, e. Buckie.	Pte.	BOOTH, WILLIAM, b. Aberdeen.
"	ALSOP, LESLIE, e. Keith.	"	BOTHWELL, ADAM, e. Inverurie.
L./Cpl.	ANDERSON, GEORGE, e. Inch.	L./Cpl.	BOW, ALBERT, Macduff.
Pte.	ANDERSON, GEORGE, b. Lauder.	Pte.	BOWIE, HENRY, e. Buckie.
"	ANDERSON, JAMES, e. Huntly.	"	BOWMAN, HERBERT, b. Huntly.
"	ANDERSON, JOHN, e. Kintore.	"	BOWMAN, JOHN, e. Glencorse.
"	ANDERSON, WILLIAM, e. Huntly.	"	BOWMAN, JOSEPH, e. Clydebank.
"	ANDERSON, WILLIAM, e. Rothie-	"	BOYCE, GEORGE, b. Norfolk.
"	norman.	"	BOYD, ROBERT, b. Glasgow.
"	ANDERSON, WM., b. Banchory.	"	BOYD, WILLIAM, b. Greenock.
"	ANGUS, JOHN, e. Duftown.	"	BRAIN, ERNEST, Aberlour.
"	ANGUS, WILLIAM, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	BRANDER, WILLIAM, b. King
"	ANNAL, JOHN, Orkney.		Edward.
C.S.M.	ARCHIBALD, ALEX., Huntly.	Pte.	BREMNER, JAMES, Portknockie.
Pte.	ASHER, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	BREMNER, WILLIAM, b. King
L./Cpl.	ASHLEY, GEORGE, Somerset.		Edward.
Pte.	BADENOCH, ALEX., e. Keith.	"	BREWSTER, WM., e. Bucksburn.
"	BAGLIE, JAMES, e. Huntly.	"	BRODIE, JAMES, e. Glasgow.
"	BAIN, JOHN, e. Inverurie.	"	BROWN, ANDREW, e. Bucksburn.
"	BANKS, JOHN, e. Aberlour.	"	BROWN, DAVID, e. Leith.
"	BARCLAY, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	BROWN, JAMES, b. Keith.
L./Cpl.	BARCLAY, JOHN, e. Glasgow.	L./Cpl.	BROWN, JAMES, Newmill.
Pte.	BARCLAY, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	BROWN, JAMES, b. Edinburgh
"	BARNETT, DOUGLAS, e. Inch.	Pte.	BROWN, JAMES, b. St. Josephs.
"	BARNETT, WILLIAM, D.C.M., e.	"	BRUCE, JAMES, b. Keith.
"	Inverurie.	"	BRUCE, WILLIAM, e. Aberdeen.
"	BARRIE, ALEXANDER, Keith.	"	BUCHAN, BERTIE, e. Keith.
"	BARRON, HENRY, e. Keith.	"	BURCON, JAMES, b. Bradford.
"	BARRON, JOHN, e. Newcastle.	Sgt.	BURNETT, ALEXANDER, D.C.M.,
"	BEEDIE, GEORGE, e. Perth.		Cullen.
"	BEGG, GEORGE, e. Glasgow.	Pte.	BURNETT, JOSEPH, b. Old-
Cpl.	BERRY, JOHN, Huntly.		machar.

b.=born.

e.=enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Cpl.	BURNETT, ROBERT, b. Gamrie.	Pte.	COUTTS, JOHN, b. Crathie.
Pte.	BUXTON, GERMAN, e. Bedford.	Sgt.	COWIE, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
"	CAIN, ALEX., b. Edinburgh.	Pte.	COWIE, GEORGE, e. Keith.
"	CALDER, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	L./Sgt.	COWIE, JAMES, e. Keith.
"	CALDER, GEORGE, Alnwick.	Pte.	COWIE, JOHN, e. Keith.
"	CALDER, JAMES, e. Berwick.	"	CRAIG, NORMAN, b. Kinellar.
"	CALLUM, CHARLES, Alford.	"	CRAVEN, REGINALD, e. Bradford.
"	CAMERON, ALASTAIR, e. Aber- lour.	"	CRAWFORD, RICHARD, e. Glas- gow.
"	CAMERON, GEORGE, Glenlivet.	L./Cpl.	CRICHTON, ROBERT, e. Keith.
"	CAMERON, KENNETH, e. Aber- deen.	Pte.	CRUICKSHANK, ALEX., e. Keith.
"	CAMERON, JOHN, b. Dufftown.	"	CRUICKSHANK, GEORGE, e. Inch.
L./Cpl.	CAMPELL, JOHN, e. Hamilton.	"	CRUICKSHANK, JOHN, b. Helens- burgh.
Pte.	CAMPBELL, PETER, e. Stirling.	"	CUMMING, JAMES, e. Huntly.
"	CAMPBELL, WILLIAM, b. Dum- fries.	"	CUTT, THOMAS, b. Lerwick.
"	CARMICHAEL, MALCOLM, Greenock.	L./Cpl.	DALLAS, GEORGE, e. Inverurie.
"	CARRICK, THOMAS, e. Paisley.	Pte.	DALRYMPLE, ROBERT, b. Edin- burgh.
"	CASSIDY, STEPHEN, e. Coat- bridge.	"	DARROCH, JAMES, e. Stirling.
"	CAMPBELL, JOHN, b. Dufftown.	L./Cpl.	DAUN, JAMES, e. Huntly.
"	CHALMERS, JAS., Macduff.	Pte.	DAVENPORT, WM., e. Man- chester.
"	CLARK, ALBERT, e. Aberdeen.	"	DAVIDSON, ALEX., e. Keith.
"	CLARK, ANDREW, e. Keith.	"	DAVIDSON, CHARLES, e. Keith.
"	CLARK, DAVID, b. Belhelvie.	"	DAVIDSON, JAMES, b. Keith.
"	CLARK, GEORGE, Portessie.	"	DAVIDSON, JOHN, e. Dufftown.
"	CLARK, JOHN, b. Aberdeen.	"	DAVIDSON, JOHN, e. Huntly.
"	CLARK, JOHN, Buckie.	L./Cpl.	DAVIDSON, ROBERT, e. Aberdeen.
"	CLARK, PETER, e. Keith.	Pte.	DAVIES, JAMES, e. Falkirk.
"	CLARK, ROBERT, e. Dumfries.	"	DAVY, REGINALD, e. Inverness.
"	CLARK, WILLIAM, e. Keith.	"	DAWSON, JOHN, e. Strathdon.
"	CLYNE, ANDREW, e. Aberdeen.	L./Cpl.	DAWSON, WILLIAM, e. Mansfield.
"	COCHRANE, THOMAS, b. Inver- gowrie.	Pte.	DEAN, JAMES, e. Huntly.
"	COLQUHOUN, ARCH., e. Glasgow.	"	DENOVAN, WILLIAM, e. Stirling.
"	CONNON, GEORGE, e. Rothie- norman.	"	DEVINE, FRANK, Buckie.
"	COOPER, JOHN, e. Stirling.	"	DEWAR, PETER, e. Perth.
"	COOPER, ROBERT, b. Bradford.	Cpl.	DIACK, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
"	CORBETT, JAMES, b. Cornhill.	L./Sgt.	DODDS, RALPH, e. Kinross.
"	CORBETT, ROBERT, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	DOLEMAN, ALEX., e. Glasgow.
"	CORMACK, GEORGE, e. Keith.	Cpl.	DON, GEORGE, b. Strathdon.
"	COUPER, ISAAC, e. Glasgow.	Pte.	DONALD, ALEX., e. Dundee.
"	COURT, JAMES, e. Glasgow.	"	DONALD, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
"	COUTTS, GEORGE, e. Aberdeen.	Cpl.	DONALD, JOHN, M.M., b. Old Deer.
	b.=born.	L./Cpl.	DONALD, STUART, b. Macduff.
		e.=enlisted.	



<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Cpl.	DONALD, WILLIAM, b. Banff.	L./Cpl.	ESSON, ALEX., e. Aberdeen.
Pte.	DONALDSON, EVAN, M.M., e. Dumfries.	Pte.	EWEN, JOHN, b. Peterhead.
"	DORRAN, JAMES, e. Keith.	"	FAGAN, DANIEL, e. Paisley.
"	DOUGLAS, WILLIAM, e. Huntly.	Drmr.	FALCONER, JAMES, e. Banff.
"	DOW, GEORGE, b. Glass.	L./Cpl.	FARQUHAR, ROBERT, e. Keith.
"	DOW, WILLIAM, e. Bucksburn.	Pte.	FARQUHARSON, LENNOX, Huntly.
"	DOWNIE, ENOS, Buckie.	"	FELLOWS, HARRY B., e. Bradford.
"	DOWNIE, JAMES, e. Greenock.	"	FERGUSON, ARCH., e. Edinburgh.
"	DUGUID, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	FERGUSON, GEORGE, e. Paisley.
"	DUGUID, WILLIAM, b. Kintore.	"	FERGUSON, JOHN, e. Keith.
Sgt.	DUGUID, WILLIAM, e. Keith.	"	FERGUSON, WILLIAM, Huntly.
Pte.	DUNBAR, GEORGE, e. Banchory.	"	FERRIE, DANIEL, e. Glasgow.
"	DUNBAR, JAMES, Strathdon.	"	FERRIES, WILLIAM, e. Banchory.
"	DUNBAR, JAMES, e. Bucksburn.	"	FINNIE, EDWARD, b. Kininmonth.
"	DUNCAN, ALEX., e. Aberchirder.	"	FLORENCE, JOHN, b. Aberdeen.
"	DUNCAN, ALEXANDER, e. Huntly.	"	FORBES, JOHN, e. Alford.
"	DUNCAN, ANDREW, e. Keith.	"	FORDUN, ALEX., e. Aberdeen.
"	DUNCAN, CHARLES, b. Boyndie.	"	FORDYCE, JAMES, e. Banchory.
Cpl.	DUNCAN, DONALD, e. Keith.	"	FORREST, CHARLES, e. Keith.
Pte.	DUNCAN, DOUGLAS, e. Inverurie.	"	FORSYTH, JOHN, b. Methlick.
Sgt.	DUNCAN, GORDON, Ballindalloch.	"	FORSYTH, JOSEPH, b. Aberlour.
Pte.	DUNCAN, JAMES, b. Fordyce.	Sgt.	FORSYTH, LAUCHLAN, e. Edinburgh.
"	DUNCAN, JAMES, e. Keith.	Pte.	FRASER, ALEXANDER, e. Stirling.
"	DUNCAN, JOHN, b. Kintore.	"	FRASER, CHARLES, Dufftown.
"	DUNCAN, JOHN, e. Aberchirder.	"	FRASER, JAMES, e. Glasgow.
"	DUNCAN, JOSEPH, b. Gamrie.	"	FRASER, JOHN, Aberlour.
"	DUNCAN, MURRAY, e. Banchory.	Sgt.	FRASER, JOHN, e. Aberdeen.
Sgt.	DUNCAN, ROBERT, b. Huntly.	L./Cpl.	FRASER, SYMON, b. Kirkmichael.
L./Cpl.	DUNCAN, ROBERT, b. Oldmeldrum.	Pte.	FRASER, WILLIAM, b. Alvah.
Cpl.	DUNCAN, WILLIAM, b. Grange.	"	FRASER, WILLIAM, b. Banchory.
Pte.	DUNCAN, WILLIAM, e. Huntly.	"	FRASER, WILLIAM, e. Glasgow.
"	DUNN, RANDOLPH, e. Inverness.	"	FULTON, DAVID, e. Glasgow.
"	DUNN, ROBERT, e. Aberdeen.	"	FULTON, GEORGE, b. Banchory.
"	DURNION, GEORGE, e. Coatbridge.	"	GARBETT, WILLIAM, b. Barking, Essex.
"	DURNO, JAMES, e. Inverurie.	Cpl.	GARDEN, JOHN, e. Buckie.
"	DUSTAN, WILLIAM, Banff.	"	GARDINER, JOHN, Cullen.
"	EASON, WILLIAM T., e. Bradford.	L./Cpl.	GARDINER, WILLIAM, Cullen.
"	ELLIS, BENJAMIN, e. Aberdeen.	Pte.	GARROW, ADAM, e. Dufftown.
"	ELLIS, GEORGE, e. Keith.	"	GARROW, PATRICK, Aberlour.
Cpl.	ERSKINE, ABRAHAM, e. Falkirk.	"	GAULT, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
Pte.	ERSKINE, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	GAULT, CHARLES, Inverurie.
"	ESSELMONT, ALEX., b. Stirling.	"	GAVIN, THOMAS, b. Newmachar.
"	ESSELMONT, JOHN, Buckie.	"	

b. = born.

e. = enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	GEDDES, WILLIAM, Keith.	Pte.	GRAY, DANIEL, b. Govan.
"	GERRARD, ALEXANDER, b. Tyrie.	"	GRAY, GEORGE, e. Huntly.
"	GERRIE, FRED, e. Aberdeen.	"	GRAY, JOHN, b. Fordyce.
"	GIBB, FRANK, e. Southampton.	"	GRAY, JOHN, b. Bathgate.
"	GIBB, THOMAS, e. Paisley.	"	GRAY, WALTER, Huntly.
"	GIBSON, ANDREW, e. Keith.	"	GRAYSON, RAY, b. Glasgow.
"	GIBSON, FRANK, e. Banchoory.	"	GREEN, WILLIAM, e. Keith.
"	GIBSON, WILLIAM, b. Dundee.	"	GREENFIELD, BERTIE, b. Devon-
Sgt.	GILBERT, JAMES, D.C.M., Alford.		port.
Pte.	GILL, DOUGLAS, Buckie.	"	GREGOR, JOHN, b. Drainie.
"	GILLON, JAMES, e. Stirling.	"	GREGSON, ROBERT, b. Lum-
"	GILPIN, HERBERT, e. Leeds.		phanan.
"	GLASS, JAMES, b. Leochel-	"	GREIG, JOHN, e. Banff.
"	Cushnie.	"	GRIEVE, WILLIAM, b. Edinburgh
"	GLEN, HECTOR, Argyllshire.	L./Cpl.	GRIFFITHS, ANDREW, b. Cumber-
"	GLENDINNING, JOHN, e. Clyde-		land.
"	bank.	Pte.	HADDEN, JAMES, Banff.
"	GOLD, JOHN, b. Duns.	"	HALKET, JAMES, b. Kirkcaldy.
L./Cpl.	GOODALL, JAMES, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	HALLET, CHARLES, e. Bedford.
"	GOODALL, WILLIAM, b. Fraser-	"	HARLEY, ANDREW, b. Dyce.
	burgh.	Pte.	HARPER, ANDREW, e. Aberdeen.
Pte.	GORDON, ALEXANDER, e. Keith	Cpl.	HARPER, JOSEPH, Alford.
"	GORDON, GEORGE, b. Kenneth-	Pte.	HARRIS, JOHN, e. Glasgow.
	mont.	"	HARRIS, JOSEPH, b. Monte
L./Cpl.	GORDON, GEORGE, b. Macduff.		Video.
Pte.	GORDON, PETER, e. Keith.	"	HARVEY, ALBERT, e. Birming-
"	GORDON, ROBERT, e. Keith.		ham.
L./Cpl.	GORDON, ROBERT, b. Newhills.	Sgt.	HARVIE, ROBERT, b. Stone-
Pte.	GORDON, SAMUEL, b. Dumfries.		house.
L./Cpl.	GORDON, THOMAS, e. Keith.	Pte.	HENDERSON, GEORGE, e. Keith.
Pte.	GORDON, WILLIAM, e. Dufftown.	"	HENDERSON, JAMES, b. Kirkin-
"	GRADY, WILLIAM, e. Huntly.		tilloch.
"	GRAHAM, ALBERT P., e. Barrow-	"	HENDRY, ROBERT, e. Huntly.
	in-Furness.	"	HENDRY, ROBERT, e. Keith.
"	GRAHAM, WILLIAM, e. Glasgow.	Cpl.	HENDRY, THOMAS, b. Kintore.
"	GRAHAM, WILLIAM, e. Dumfries.	Pte.	HENDRY, WILLIAM, e. Huntly.
"	GRANT, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	HEPBURN, ALEXANDER, Buckie.
"	GRANT, FREDRICK N., e. Edin-	"	HEPBURN, STUART, Buckie.
	burgh.	"	HEUGHAN, ROBERT, b. Nairn.
"	GRANT, GEORGE, b. Aberdeen.	"	HINCHLIFFE, CHARLES, e. Leeds.
"	GRANT, JAMES, e. Elgin.	"	HOGG, JOHN, e. Hamilton.
"	GRANT, JAMES, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	HOWELL, GEORGE, e. Aberdeen.
"	GRANT, JAMES, Glenlivet.	Pte.	HOWIE, CHARLES, e. Strichen.
"	GRANT, JOHN, Glenlivet.	"	HOWIE, WILLIAM, Alford.
"	GRANT, JOHN, Keith.	"	HOYLE, THOMAS, e. Bradford.
L./Cpl.	GRANT, LEWIS, e. Keith.	"	HUGHES, ANDREW, e. Paisley.

b. = born

e. = enlisted.

# ROLL OF HONOUR

217

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	HUNTER, ALEXANDER, e. Dunfermline.
"	HUNTER, ANDREW, e. Kirkcaldy.
L./Cpl.	HUNTER, ANDREW, e. Kirkcaldy.
Sgt.	HUNTER, JAMES, e. Aberdeen.
Pte.	HUNTER, WILLIAM, b. Falkirk.
"	HUTCHEON, GORDON, e. Keith.
"	HUTCHESON, FREDERICK, b. Fraserburgh.
Sgt.	IMLAH, Lewis, M.M., Aberlour.
Pte.	INGLIS, ALEX., e. Inverurie.
"	INGLIS, PETER, e. Keith.
"	INGLIS, ROBERT, e. Keith.
L./Cpl.	INGRAM, JOHN, b. Leslie.
Pte.	INNES, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
"	INNES, CHARLES, b. Rothies.
"	INNES, GORDON, e. Hawick.
"	IRONSIDE, ALBERT, e. Banchory.
"	IRONSIDE, ALEX., e. Alford.
Sgt.	IRONSIDE, CHARLES, Keig.
Pte.	IRVING, JOHN, b. Kilpatrick.
"	IVERS, COLIN, e. Inverurie.
"	JACK, JAMES, e. Perth.
L./Cpl.	JACKSON, JAMES, e. London.
Pte.	JAMIESON, JAMES, b. Leslie.
"	JAMIESON, WILLIAM, b. Rathven.
"	JARVIE, GEORGE, b. Leith.
L./Cpl.	JOHNSTON, GEORGE, e. Huntly.
Sgt.	JOHNSTON, JAMES, Cullen.
Pte.	JOHNSTON, JAMES, b. Inverurie.
"	JOHNSTON, JOHN, b. Oyne.
"	JOHNSTON, JOHN, b. Tyrie.
"	JOHNSTON, ROBERT, e. Glasgow.
"	JONES, ALBERT, e. Reading.
"	JOSS, GEORGE, b. Woodside.
"	KAIN, ALEXANDER, b. Woodside.
"	KAYE, ARTHUR, e. Bradford.
"	KEAN, MICHAEL, e. Stirling.
"	KEELEY, ALBERT, e. Lerwick.
"	KEIR, ROBERT, b. Deskford.
"	KELMAN, JOHN, e. Glenrinnies.
"	KEMP, ALEX. M., b. Tullynessle.
"	KEMP, JOHN, e. Buckie.
"	KEMPT, ROBERT, e. Bucksburn.

b. = born.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
L./Cpl.	KERNSHAW, WALTER, b. Middlesex.
"	KERR, JAMES, e. Keith.
Pte.	KERR, WILLIAM, e. Keith.
"	KIDD, DAVID, b. Dundee.
"	KING, JAMES, b. Edinburgh.
Sgt.	KIRK, JOHN C., e. York.
Pte.	KISSACH, JOHN M., b. Chapel of Garioch.
"	KNIGHT, JAMES, e. Banchory.
L./Cpl.	KNOWLES, JOHN C., b. Rathven.
Pte.	KNOX, DAVID, e. Keith.
"	KNOX, JAMES B., e. Kelso.
"	LAIRD, GEORGE, e. Glasgow.
"	LAMB, WILLIAM, b. Belhelvie.
"	LANG, EDWARD, e. Stirling.
"	LAW, DAVID, e. Bucksburn.
L./Cpl.	LAWRENCE, ALEX. M., Craigellachie.
Cpl.	LAWRENCE, CHARLES, Keith.
L./Cpl.	LAWRENCE, JOHN RAE, D.C.M., e. Peterhead.
Pte.	LEDINGHAM, ALEXANDER, e. Aberdeen.
Cpl.	LEMMON, JOSEPH, e. Inverurie.
Pte.	LESLIE, GEORGE, e. Aberchirder.
"	LIMOND, JOHN, b. Ayr.
"	LIND, ARTHUR, b. Kilmaurs.
"	LINDSAY, ALEX., Stranraer.
"	LINDSAY, GEORGE D., e. Aberdeen.
"	LISTER, THOMAS, e. Kirkcaldy.
"	LITTLEJOHN, WILLIAM, b. Oldmeldrum.
"	LIVINGSTONE, ISAAC, e. Buckie.
Cpl.	LOBBAN, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
Pte.	LOBBAN, ROBERT, Alford.
C.S.M.	LOGGIE, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
Pte.	LOGIE, JOHN, e. Aberdeen.
"	LONG, JOE, b. Bradford.
"	LOW, ALEXANDER, e. Buckie.
"	LOW, ALEX. B., e. Bucksburn.
"	LOW, JOHN, e. Glasgow.
"	LOWDON, ALEXANDER, e. Buckie.
"	LOWE, ARTHUR, e. Leeds.
"	LOWE, GEORGE A., e. Keith.

e. = enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	LOWRIE, DAVID, b. St. Andrews.	L./Cpl.	MENNIE, JOHN, Dufftown.
"	LUMSDEN, JOHN, e. Strathdon.	Cpl.	MICHIE, GEORGE, e. Keith.
"	LYALL, WILLIAM A., b. Gamrie.	Pte.	MIDDLETON, JAMES, e. Alford.
"	LYON, FRANCIS, Buckie.	"	MIDDLETON, WILLIAM J., b. Tarland.
L./Cpl.	LYON, HUGH, b. Alloa.	"	MILLER, CHRIS., e. Clydebank.
"	MACKIE, ALBERT, b. Kintore.	"	MILLER, JOHN, b. Port Glasgow.
Pte.	MACKIE, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	MILNE, ALBERT D., e. Stenhousemuir.
L./Cpl.	MACKIE, ROBERT, e. Bucksburn.	Cpl.	MILNE, ALEX., b. Aberlour.
Pte.	MAILER, JAMES, b. Edinburgh.	Drmr.	MILNE, ALLAN, Inverurie.
"	MAILEY, JOSEPH, b. Methven.	Pte.	MILNE, JAMES, b. Keith.
"	MAIN, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	MILNE, JAMES, e. Aberdeen.
Cpl.	MAIR, ALEXANDER, e. Portsoy.	L./Sgt.	MILNE, JOHN, b. Kintore.
Sgt.	MAIR, THOMAS, Buckie.	Cpl.	MILNE, WALTER, e. Bucksburn.
Pte.	MAIR, THOMAS, Portknockie.	Pte.	MILNE, WILLIAM, Glenlivet.
"	MAIR, WILLIAM, e. Inverurie.	Cpl.	MILNE, WILLIAM, b. Leslie.
"	MANN, ALEXANDER, Keith.	Pte.	MILNE, WILLIAM, b. Ordiquhill.
Cpl.	MANN, GEORGE, e. Aberdeen.	"	MILTON, GEDES, e. Buckie.
Pte.	MARSHALL, ALEX., e. Glasgow.	"	MILTON, JOHN, Buckie.
"	MARTIN, ALEXANDER, e. Huntly.	C.S.M.	MILTON, PETER E., e. Aberlour.
"	MARTIN, HARRY S., b. Crieff.	L./Cpl.	MILTON, W. S., Huntly.
"	MARTIN, HENRY, e. Bedford.	Pte.	MINTO, JOHN, b. Udhny.
"	MARTIN, JAMES, e. Perth.	"	MITCHELL, ALEXANDER, Keith.
"	MARTIN, JOHN A., b. Troon.	"	MITCHELL, ALEXANDER, Gamrie.
"	MARTIN, MATTHEW, b. Edinburgh.	"	MITCHELL, CHARLES S., b. Dundee.
"	MASON, ALEXANDER D., b. Oldmachar.	"	MITCHELL, GEORGE A., e. Huntly.
L./Cpl.	MASON, JOHN, e. Edinburgh.	"	MITCHELL, JOHN, e. Keith.
Pte.	MASSIE, LESLIE, b. Alford.	Cpl.	MITCHELL, ROBERT, Huntly.
"	MASSON, JAMES L., e. Huntly.	Sgt.	MITCHELL, THOMAS K., Huntly.
"	MASSON, JOHN, Ballindalloch.	Pte.	MITCHELL, WM. B., b. Glasgow.
"	MASSON, ROBERT J., e. Aberdeen.	"	MITCHELL, WILLIAM, e. Alloa.
"	MASSON, WILLIAM, e. Inverurie.	"	MOIR, DAVID G., b. Dundee.
"	MATHIESON, GEORGE B. F., b. Lochee.	"	MONK, NORMAN, Glasgow.
"	MATTHEW, ALFRED, e. Strathdon	Cpl.	MORGAN, ALBERT, e. Huntly.
Cpl.	MATTHEWS, JOHN, M.M., Leochel-Cushnie.	Pte.	MORGAN, ALEXANDER, e. Buckie.
Sgt.	MATTHEWS, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	MORGAN, WILLIAM, b. Aboyne.
Pte.	MAXWELL, JOHN K., b. Kirkwall	"	MORRICE, WM., b. Peterhead.
"	MEARNS, ALEXANDER, b. Rayne.	"	MORRISON, ALEXANDER, e. Insch.
"	MEARNS, WILLIAM J., Keith.	"	MORRISON, GEO., b. Kinellar.
Drmr.	MELDRUM, JAMES, b. Newhills.	L./Cpl.	MORRISON, JAMES, e. Portsoy.
Pte.	MELDRUM, WILLIAM, e. Alford.	Cpl.	MORRISON, JAMES, e. Aberdeen.
"	MELLON, JAMES, b. Glasgow.	Pte.	MORRISON, JOHN, e. Huntly.
"	MELVIN, JOHN, e. Bucksburn.	"	MUIRHEAD, JOSEPH, b. Perth.

b. = born.

e. = enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	MUNRO, JOHN, e. Keith.	Sgt.	McDONALD, WILLIAM T., e. Bucksburn.
"	MUNRO, ROBERT, e. Perth.	Pte.	McDONALD, WILLIAM P., Elgin.
"	MURPHY, DENNIS, e. Glasgow.	"	McDOUGALL, HUGH, b. Islay.
"	MURRAY, ALEX., e. Portsoy.	"	McDOUGALL, JAMES, e. Inverness.
Sgt.	MURRAY, JAMES, Keith.	"	McFARLANE, ALEXANDER, e. Glenrinnies.
Pte.	MURRAY, JOHN, Alford.	Cpl.	McFAYDEN, NEIL, e. Glasgow.
"	MURRAY, MATTHEW, Huntly.	Pte.	McGARVA, WILLIAM, e. Ayr.
"	MURRAY, RODERICK, Stornoway.	"	McGEE, JAMES, b. Peterhead.
"	MURRAY, THOMAS, b. Dumfries.	L./Cpl.	McGLASHAN, ALEXANDER, b. Keithhall.
"	MURRAY, WILLIAM, Glenlivet.	Pte.	McGOWAN, DANIEL, e. Buckie.
Cpl.	MURRAY, WILSON, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	McGRECHAN, PATRICK, e. Glasgow.
Pte.	MYRON, JAMES, e. Dufftown.	Pte.	McGREGOR, ALEX., e. Keith.
"	MACDONALD, DUNCAN, e. Inverness.	"	McGREGOR, JAMES, e. Keith.
"	MACDONALD, KENNETH J., e. Dornoch.	"	McGREGOR, JAMES, b. Aberlour.
"	MACDONALD, THOMAS, b. Aberdeen.	"	McGREGOR, WILLIAM, e. Alford.
"	MACKAY, ALEXANDER C., Glenlivet.	"	McGREGOR, WILLIAM, e. Keith.
"	MACKEAND, THOMAS G., e. Glasgow.	"	McGUIRE, ANDREW, Argyllshire.
"	MACKINTOSH, GARDEN H., b. Banff.	"	McGUIRE, ARCH., e. Falkirk.
"	MACRAE, JAMES, b. Kiltarlity.	"	McINNES, ANDREW, e. Glasgow.
"	MACRAE, MARTIN S. A., e. Elgin.	"	McINNES, PETER, e. Keith.
"	MCALLAN, ALEX. B., e. Alford.	"	McINTOSH, GEORGE, e. Keith.
"	MCALLISTER, PETER, e. Keith.	"	McINTOSH, JAMES, Buckie.
"	MCALPINE, WILLIAM, e. Stirling.	"	McINTOSH, JAMES, Huntly.
"	MCBEATH, JOHN, e. Aberlour.	"	McINTOSH, JAMES, e. Keith.
"	MCALL, THOMAS, e. Keith.	Sgt.	McINTOSH, WILLIAM, b. Kintore
"	McCANN, WILLIAM, e. Aberdeen.	Pte.	McKAY, ALEXANDER, b. Leith.
"	McCOMBIE, CHARLES, e. Huntly.	"	McKAY, JOHN, Glenlivet.
"	McCOMBIE, JOHN, b. Rayne.	"	McKAY, JOHN, e. Keith.
L./Cpl.	McCONNACHIE, JOHN, e. Forres.	"	McKAY, JOHN M., e. Keith.
Pte.	McCORMICK, DUGALD, e. Glasgow.	"	McKAY, SINCLAIR, b. Enzie.
"	McCULLOCH, JAMES, e. Paisley.	L./Cpl.	McKELVIE, BERNARD, e. Keith.
"	McCUTCHEON, EDWARD J. C., b. Sussex.	Pte.	McKENZIE, JAMES C., b. Glasgow.
"	McDADE, JAMES, e. Glasgow.	"	McKENZIE, JOHN, b. Tullynessle
"	McDIARMID, DONALD S., e. Perth.	"	McKENZIE, PETER, e. Glasgow.
L./Cpl.	McDONALD, JOHN, Aberdeen.	"	McKENZIE, PETER, b. Aberlour.
"	McDONALD, MALCOLM, e. Keith.	"	McKIDDIE, CHAS. I., e. Forfar.
		"	McKIMMIE, WILLIAM, Portsoy.
		Sgt.	McLAREN, EDWARD, Keith.
		Pte.	McLAREN, PATRICK, Forghen.
		"	McLAUGHLAN, WM., e. Lanark.

b. = born.

e. = enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	McLAUGHLIN, THOMAS, e. Aberdeen.	Pte.	PARKER, JOHN, b. Kirkcaldy.
"	McLAY, ANDREW, e. Paisley.	"	PARKER, JOSHUA, b. Durham.
L./Cpl.	McLEAN, DUNCAN B., b. Glasgow.	L./Cpl.	PATERSON, DAVID, e. Glasgow.
Pte.	McLEAN, JAMES, e. Keith.	Pte.	PATERSON, GAVIN, e. Hamilton.
"	McLEAVY, JAMES, e. Glasgow.	"	PATERSON, GEORGE, b. Huntly.
"	McLELLAND, ARCHIBALD, e. Edinburgh.	"	PATERSON, GEORGE G., b. Aberdeen.
"	McLEOD, JOHN S., e. Aberchirder.	"	PATERSON, WILLIAM, Portknockie.
"	McNAB, ALEXANDER, b. Paisley.	"	PATERSON, WILLIAM H., b. Aberdeen.
"	McNAB, GEO. S., e. Peterhead.	"	PATON, JAMES, e. Huntly.
"	McPETRIE, JOHN S., e. Alford.	"	PAUL, JAMES, e. Keith.
L./Cpl.	McPETRIE, WILLIAM A., Huntly.	"	PEEL, ROBERT, e. Glasgow.
Pte.	McPHERSON, JAMES, b. Alvah.	"	PENNY, JOHN C., e. Inverurie.
"	McPHERSON, JOHN, Glenlivet.	"	PETRIE, GEORGE, e. Keith.
"	McPHERSON, PETER, e. Turriff.	Cpl.	PETRIE, JAMES H., e. Alford.
"	McPHERSON, THOMAS, e. Keith.	Pte.	PHILIP, ADAM M., e. Inverurie.
L./Cpl.	McROBBIE, WILLIAM, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	PHILIP, GEORGE, b. Corgarff.
Cpl.	McROBERT, JOHN, Strathdon.	Cpl.	PHILIP, JAMES, e. Alford.
L./Cpl.	McROBERT, WM., Strathdon.	Pte.	PHIMISTER, WILFRED, e. Inch.
Pte.	McWHIRTER, WILLIAM H., e. Greenock.	"	PHIMISTER, WILLIAM, e. Elgin.
L./Cpl.	McWILLIAM, CHAS., e. Huntly.	L./Cpl.	PICKFORD, THOMAS, b. Drumoak.
"	McWILLIAM, JOHN, e. Portsoy.	Pte.	PIGGOT, WILLIAM, b. Forfar.
L./Cpl.	NAIRN, JOHN, e. Leven.	"	PIRIE, ALEXANDER, e. Huntly.
Pte.	NEISH, GEORGE, e. Keith.	"	PIRIE, LINDSAY, e. Keith.
"	NELSON, JAMES, e. Edinburgh.	"	PIRIE, JAMES, b. Dunnottar.
L./Cpl.	NESBITT, WILLIAM H. L., e. Glasgow.	"	PIRIE, ROBERT, b. Aberdeen.
Pte.	NEYLAND, JAMES L., Australia.	"	PIRIE, WILLIAM, e. Keith.
"	NICOL, JAMES, e. Keith.	"	POLSON, PETER, e. Nairn.
L./Cpl.	NICOL, JAMES, e. Keith.	"	POTTS, ARCHIBALD, e. Glasgow.
"	NICOL, PETER, b. Strathdon.	"	POZZI, IAN, Buckie.
L./Sgt.	NICOL, WILLIAM, e. Keith.	"	PRIEST, ANDREW, e. Banff.
Sgt.	NICOLL, DAVID, b. Lumphanan.	L./Cpl.	PROSSER, WILLIAM, b. Alloa.
Pte.	NICOLL, JAMES, e. Forfar.	Pte.	PURVES, JOHN, e. Coatbridge.
C.Q.M.S.	NIVEN, CHARLES, Strathdon.	Cpl.	PYPER, ALEX. G., e. Peterhead.
Pte.	NIVEN, GEORGE, e. Strathdon.	Pte.	PYPER, WILLIAM, b. Aberdeen.
"	NORMAN, WILLIAM, b. Dumfries.	"	RAE, THOMAS, e. Aberdeen.
"	NORTON, JOHN D., Aberdeen.	Cpl.	RAEBURN, GEORGE E., e. Keith.
Cpl.	OGG, ALEXANDER, e. Huntly.	Pte.	RAFFAN, GEORGE, e. Buckie.
Pte.	OGG, FRANK, e. Keith.	Cpl.	RAIT, DAVID M., e. Forres.
"	OGG, JAMES, e. Keith.	Pte.	RAMSAY, CHARLES, e. Keith.
"	OGG, JAMES, e. Paisley.	"	RAMSAY, JOHN, b. Forfar.
"	O'NIEL, JOHN H., e. Keith.	"	RATHIE, HECTOR, Keith.
		"	REID, ARCHIBALD, e. Huntly.
		"	REID, CHARLES, b. Marnoch.

b. = born

e. = enlisted.

# ROLL OF HONOUR

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<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Sgt.	REID, GEORGE, c. Keith.	Pte.	ROSS, JOSEPH, c. Huntly.
Pte.	REID, GEORGE, e. Keith.	"	ROSS, ROBERT, e. Glasgow.
Sgt.	REID, JAMES, Keith.	L./Cpl.	ROSS, THOMAS, b. Cambus-
Pte.	REID, JAMES, e. Ellon.		nethan.
Sgt.	REID, JOHN, b. Tullynessle.	Sgt.	ROSS, WILLIAM, b. Glenbuchat.
Pte.	REID, JOSHUA, b. Bo'ness.	Pte.	ROSS, WILLIAM, b. Leslie.
"	REID, ROBERT, b. Monymusk.	"	ROWAN, GEORGE, e. Perth.
Cpl.	REID, WILLIAM, Cullen.	"	ROY, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
Pte.	RENNIE, CHARLES, e. Bucks-	Cpl.	RUNCIE, JOHN, Banff.
	burn.	Sgt.	RUSSELL, ALEXANDER, D.C.M.,
"	RETTIE, JAMES, c. Keith.		M.M., Rothiemay.
"	RICHARDSON, FREDERICK G., b.	Pte.	RUSSELL, GEORGE, e. Dufftown.
	Portsmouth.	"	RUSSELL, WILLIAM, b. Leith.
Cpl.	RICHARDSON, ROBERT, D.C.M.,	L./Cpl.	SAINSBURY, Wm. J., e. Aberdeen.
	e. Kirkcaldy.	Pte.	SANDISON, JOHN, e. Dufftown.
Sgt.	RIDDEL, JOHN, b. Kintore.	"	SCATTERTY, WILLIAM, e. Huntly
Pte.	RIDDELL, JAMES, b. Fyvie.	"	SCOBIE, JAMES, e. Glasgow.
"	RIDDELL, PETER, e. Keith.	L./Cpl.	SCOTT, ALEXANDER T., e. Keith.
L./Cpl.	RIDDLE, ALEXANDER, M.M., e.	Pte.	SCOTT, GEORGE, b. Fordoun.
	Aberchirder.	"	SCOTT, JAMES, b. Dyce.
Pte.	RIDDOCH, ALEX., e. Huntly.	Cpl.	SCOTT, JAMES, e. Keith.
"	RIDDOCH, ANDREW, e. Aberdeen	Pte.	SCOTT, JOSEPH M., b. Govan.
"	RIDDOCH, WILLIAM A. C., b.	"	SCREEN, PATRICK, e. Glasgow.
	Drumblade.	L./Cpl.	SEIVWRIGHT, JOHN, e. Huntly.
"	RITCHIE, GEORGE, e. Alford.	Pte.	SHAND, WILLIAM, e. Alford.
C.S.M.	ROBB, JAMES, Newmill.	"	SHAW, CHARLES, e. Aberlour.
Pte.	ROBB, JAMES, e. Bucksburn.	R.Q.M.S.	SHEARER, ALEXANDER, Keith.
"	ROBBIE, ANDREW, b. Maud.	Pte.	SHIRES, HERBERT, b. Birstall,
L./Cpl.	ROBERTS, SAMUEL, e. Stoke.		Yorks.
Pte.	ROBERTSON, DAVID, b. Echt.	L./Cpl.	SHIRHAN, JOHN, e. Alford.
L./Cpl.	ROBERTSON, DAVID E., b. Cluny.	Pte.	SHIVAS, ALEXANDER, Ballindal-
Pte.	ROBERTSON, GEORGE, b. Strichen		loch.
"	ROBERTSON, JAMES, e. Huntly.	"	SIEVWRIGHT, JOHN, b. Drum-
"	ROBERTSON, JOHN, b. Fordyce.		blade.
"	ROBERTSON, WILLIAM, b. Gartly	"	SIEVWRIGHT, PETER, b. Forgue.
Sgt.	ROBSON, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	SILVER, FRANK, b. Fettercairn.
Pte.	ROBSON, JOHN, e. Alford.	"	SIM, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
"	RODDEN, WILLIAM, e. Stirling.	"	SIM, ALEXANDER, e. Banchory.
"	RODGER, JOHN, e. Lochgelly.	L./Cpl.	SIMPSON, ALEXANDER, Cullen.
"	ROSE, FRANCIS, b. Aviemore.	Pte.	SIMPSON, ALEXANDER, e. Inch.
"	ROSE, WILLIAM, e. Aberdeen.	"	SIMPSON, GEORGE, Aberlour.
"	ROSS, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	SIMPSON, JAMES, b. Kinneff.
L./Cpl.	ROSS, ARCHIE, e. Keith.	"	SIMPSON, JOHN, e. Keith.
Pte.	ROSS, CHARLES, e. Bucksburn.	"	SIMPSON, WILLIAM, e. Hamilton.
"	ROSS, JAMES, Dundee.	L./Cpl.	SIMPSON, WILLIAM, e. Huntly.
"	ROSS, JAMES, b. Nigg.	"	SINCLAIR, THOMAS S. P., Inver-
			urie.

b. = born

e. = enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Ptc.	SINGER, JAMES A., b. Cruden.	Ptc.	STEWART, JOSEPH, b. Dundee.
"	SKINNER, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	STEWART, THOMAS, e. Greenock.
"	SLATER, EDWIN, Portknockie.	"	STEWART, ROSE, e. Keith.
"	SLORA, WILLIAM S., b. Aberdeen.	Cpl.	STEWART, WILLIAM, e. Alford.
L./Cpl.	SMART, PETER, e. Keith.	Ptc.	STILL, Colin, e. Portsoy.
Ptc.	SMITH, ALBERT E., e. Leicester.	"	STRACHAN, ALEX., b. Keith.
"	SMITH, ALBERT C. M., e. Huntly.	"	STRACHAN, CHARLES, b. Keith.
"	SMITH, ALEX., b. Findochty.	"	STRACHAN, JAMES, b. Peterhead.
"	SMITH, ALEX., Ballindalloch.	"	STRATHDEE, JAMES, b. Keith.
L./Cpl.	SMITH, ALEXANDER, Forfar.	"	STRATHDEE, JOHN, Ballindalloch.
Ptc.	SMITH, ALEX., Glenlivet.	L./Sgt.	STRINGFELLOW, HARRY V., e. Inverness.
"	SMITH, ALEXANDER, Portessie.	Ptc.	STRONACH, CHARLES, e. Huntly.
"	SMITH, AND. D., e. Peterhead.	"	STUART, ALEXANDER, e. Alford.
"	SMITH, CHARLES, e. Strathdon.	"	STUART, CHARLES, Glenlivet.
"	SMITH, DAVID B., e. Perth.	Sgt.	STUART, DONALD, Fordyce.
"	SMITH, FRANK, e. Huntly.	Ptc.	STUART, DOUGLAS, e. West Hartlepool.
"	SMITH, FRED, e. Keith.	"	STUART, JAMES M., Macduff.
"	SMITH, GEORGE, e. Keith.	"	STUART, JAMES, Dufftown.
Sgt.	SMITH, GEORGE, b. Inverurie.	"	STUART, WILLIAM, b. Rhynie.
Ptc.	SMITH, JAMES, b. Forfar.	"	SUTHERLAND, JOHN, e. Keith.
"	SMITH, JOHN, e. Keith.	"	SUTHERLAND, LAWRENCE, b. Lerwick.
"	SMITH, JOHN, e. Ellon.	"	SUTHERLAND, MALCOLM B., b. Aberdeen.
"	SMITH, JOSEPH, e. Keith.	L./Cpl:	SUTHERLAND, WILLIAM C., Findochty.
"	SMITH, LEONARD F., Stoke, New Zealand.	Cpl.	SUTHERLAND, WILLIAM, Huntly.
L./Cpl.	SMITH, LEONARD, e. Bedford.	Sgt.	SWANSON, ROBERT, Cullen.
"	SMITH, ROBERT, e. Inverurie.	Ptc.	TAIT, JOHN G., e. Leith.
Ptc.	SMITH, ROBERT, e. Paisley.	"	TANNER, THOMAS, e. Hull.
"	SMITH, THOMAS R., e. Dufftown.	Cpl.	TAYLOR, DUFF, b. Clatt.
"	SMITH, WM. R., e. Bucksburn.	"	TAYLOR, FRANKLIN, e. Keith.
"	SMITH, WILLIAM, e. Perth.	"	TAYLOR, GEORGE, e. Huntly.
"	SMITH, WILLIAM, e. Glasgow.	"	TAYLOR, JOHN, e. Huntly.
"	SMITH, WILLIAM, e. Aberdeen.	"	TAYLOR, PETER, b. Marnoch.
"	SOUTER, CARLOS, e. Alford.	Ptc.	TAYLOR, ROBERT M., e. Keith.
"	STABLES, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.	"	TAYLOR, WILLIAM, b. Old Machar.
"	STAINS, WILLIAM T., e. Glasgow.	"	TAYLOR, WM., b. St. Nicholas.
L./Cpl.	STEEDMAN, GEORGE, b. Dunblane.	"	TAYLOR, WILLIAM, e. Stirling.
Ptc.	STEPHEN, ARTHUR, e. Huntly.	"	TAYLOR, WILLIAM, e. Glasgow.
"	STEPHEN, ROBERT, e. Keith.	"	TETLEY, EDGAR, e. Bradford.
Cpl.	STEPHEN, WILLIAM G., Keith.	"	THAIN, GEORGE, b. Sandhaven.
Ptc.	STEPHEN, WILLIAM, b. Nigg.		
"	STEPHEN, WM. C., b. Dundee.		
"	STEWART, ALEXANDER, b. Banff.		
"	STEWART, CHARLES, b. Towie.		
"	STEWART JOHN J., b. Dundee.		

b. = born.

c. = enlisted.



<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	THIRD, JOHN, e. Alford.
Cpl.	THOM, JOHN, e. Huntly.
Pte.	THOM, WILLIAM, e. Keith.
"	THOMSON, ALEX., e. Aberdeen.
"	THOMSON, ALEX., Glenbuchat.
"	THOMSON, GEORGE, e. Keith.
"	THOMSON, JOHN, e. Keith.
Sgt.	THOMSON, J. G., Fochabers.
"	THOMSON, PETER, Leochel-Cush- nie.
Pte.	THOMSON, ROBERT, b. Slains.
"	THOMSON, WILLIAM, e. Keith.
Sgt.	THORNE, ED. W., e. Inverness.
Pte.	TOCHER, CHARLES, Banff.
"	TOCHER, EDWARD, Banff.
"	TOSH, ALEX. G., b. Dundee.
"	TOSH, GEORGE, e. Bucksburn.
"	TOUGH, GEORGE, e. Huntly.
"	TOUGH, HARRY W., b. Auchend- oir.
Sgt.	TOUGH, JAMES, b. Aberlour.
Pte.	TRAVERS, PETER, e. Kilmar- nock.
"	TROUP, FRED., e. Aberdeen.
L./Cpl.	TRUELOVE, EDWARD J., b. Clerkenwell.
"	TULLOCH, DAVID, e. Kirkcaldy.
"	VAUGHAN, WILLIAM, Middlesex.
Pte.	VEITCH, EDWARD D., e. Edin- burgh.
"	WALKER, ALEX. B., e. Perth.
"	WALKER, ALEX., e. Paisley.
L./Cpl.	WALKER, JACK, e. Aberdeen.
Pte.	WALKER, JOHN, Lancashire.
"	WALKER, JOSEPH R., e. Hawick.
"	WALKER, JAMES, b. Kemnay.
"	WALKER, JAMES, e. Glasgow.
"	WALKER, JAMES, e. Paisley.
"	WALKER, WILLIAM, Bucksburn.
"	WALKER, WILLIAM, Tillyfour.
"	WALKER, WILLIAM, b. Chapel of Garioch.
Cpl.	WALKER, WILLIAM, b. Montrose.
Pte.	WALSH, ROWLAND F. B., Staffs.
"	WARMAN, PERCY, e. London.
"	WATSON, ALEXANDER, Keith.

b.=born.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	WATSON, ALEXANDER, b. Govan.
"	WATSON, CHARLES, b. Grange.
L./Cpl.	WATSON, JOHN, Cullen.
Pte.	WATSON, JOHN S., b. Montrose.
"	WATT, ALEXANDER, Aberlour.
"	WATT, ALEXANDER, Huntly.
"	WATT, BASIL W., b. Paisley.
L./Cpl.	WATT, GEORGE, Crovie, Banff.
"	WATT, GEORGE H., Gardens- town.
"	WATT, JAMES D., e. Huntly.
Sgt.	WATT, PERCY GEORGE, Keith.
Pte.	WATT, RICHARD G., e. Inver- urie.
"	WATT, ROBERT, Newmill.
Cpl.	WATT, WILLIAM, Aberlour.
Pte.	WATT, WILLIAM, b. Greenock.
Sgt.	WATTIE, JOHN, Strathdon.
Pte.	WEBSTER, ALEX., b. Boharm.
"	WEBSTER, JOHN, Alford.
"	WEBSTER, THOMAS, Rothiemay.
L./Cpl.	WHITE, GEORGE, b. Fordyce.
"	WHITEHEAD, ROBERT B., e. Stirling.
Pte.	WHYTE, WILLIAM, Aberdeen.
Cpl.	WILL, GEORGE, b. Huntly.
Pte.	WILL, JAMES, e. Bucksburn.
"	WILLIAMSON, JAMES, Fordyce.
"	WILLIAMSON, THOMAS, e. Glas- gow.
"	WILLIAMSON, WILLIAM M., e. Peterhead.
"	WILSON, ADAM, Bankhead.
"	WILSON, ALBERT, Huntly.
"	WILSON, ALEXANDER, Forgue.
"	WILSON, ALEX. J., Cornhill.
"	WILSON, ALEXANDER, e. Keith.
"	WILSON, ALEX., e. Jedburgh.
"	WILSON, ALEXANDER, e. Camp- beltown.
"	WILSON, EDWARD, e. Keith.
"	WILSON, JAMES, e. Leith.
"	WILSON, MATTHIES D., b. Aber- deen.
"	WILSON, RICHARD G., e. Stirling.
Sgt.	WILSON, ROBERT F., e. Inver- ness.

e.=enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	WILSON, WILLIAM, Aberlour.
"	WINSTONE, HENRY T., e. Croydon.
"	WINTON, GORDON, Macduff.
"	WISEMAN, ALEXANDER, Macduff.
L./Cpl.	WRIGHT, ALEXANDER, Clatt.
Pte.	WRIGHT, JAMES, Dumfries.
"	WRIGHT, ROBERT, Banff.
"	WRIGHT, WILLIAM, e. Acton.
Cpl.	WYFFER, WILLIAM B., e. Keith.
Pte.	YEATS, HUGH, e. Aberdeen.
Cpl.	YOUNG, CHARLES, Inverurie.
Pte.	YOUNG, EDWARD, e. Paisley.

Attached  
1st GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Cpl.	CALDER, GEORGE, b. Fife-Keith.
Pte.	CAMERON, HARRY, b. Mulben.
Cpl.	CAMPBELL, WM., b. Tullynessle.
Pte.	CLARKE, ROBERT, b. King Edward.
"	GARDNER, JOHN, e. Turriff.
"	GIFFORD, GEORGE, e. Buckie.
Sgt.	GRAY, ROBERT, b. Australia, e. Keith.
Pte.	GREENLAW, ROBERT, Cullen.
L./Cpl.	JAPPY, JAS., b. Buckie.
Pte.	MILNE, WM., b. Boharm.
"	MORRISON, ALEX., b. Cushnie.
"	RIDDOCH, GEO., b. Culsalmond.
"	SHIRRAS, THOMAS, e. Culsalmond.
"	SMITH, ALEX., e. Keith.
"	SMITH, JAS., b. Glenrines.
"	TAYLOR, ALEX., e. Tarland.
"	THOW, HERBERT V., Bucksburn.
"	WATT, JOHN A., b. Keith.
"	WINCHESTER, WM., b. Keith.

Attached  
2nd GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	BUCHAN, GEORGE, e. Huntly.
"	BURNETT, CHAS., e. Banchory.
"	CLARK, GEORGE, b. Keith.
"	DYKER, GEORGE, e. Aberdeen.

b. = born.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Sgt.	KEITH, JAMES, Alford.
Pte.	ROBERTSON, GORDON, e. Keith.
"	SHAND, JAMES, Tough.
"	SMITH, JAMES, e. Inverurie.

Attached  
4th GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Sgt.	ADDISON, JOSEPH, Portknockie.
L./Cpl.	CALDER, JOHN, e. Keith.
Pte.	CAMERON, JOHN, b. Huntly.
"	COWE, JOHN, e. Alford.
Cpl.	COWIE, WM., e. Keith.
Pte.	DOUGLAS, GEORGE, e. Huntly.
L./Cpl.	FARQUHAR, ALEX., e. Keith.
Pte.	INNES, ALEX., e. Huntly.
Sgt.	MITCHELL, CHAS., Huntly.
Pte.	MORRISON, ALEX., e. Huntly.
"	MARTNEY, WM., e. Keith.
L./Cpl.	MCLEOD, WM., e. Aberdour.
"	REID, JOHN, b. Oyne.
Pte.	RIDDELL, JAS., e. Aberdeen.
Sgt.	SHAND, JAS., M.M., Newmill.
Pte.	SIMPSON, JOSEPH, e. Keith.
"	SMITH, ALEX., e. Inverurie.
L./Cpl.	SMITH, JOHN, M.M., e. Buckie.
"	STEWART, ROBERT, e. Buckie.
Pte.	WILSON, EDWIN, b. Uday.

Attached  
5th GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	ALEXANDER, DANIEL, e. Banff.
"	CALLUM, JOHN, Keith.
"	CHISHOLM, THOMAS, e. Huntly.
"	HENDERSON, JOHN, e. Keith.
"	KEMP, JOSEPH, b. Grange.
"	MCROBBIE, ALEX., b. New Pittsligo.
"	RENNIE, ALEX., Cullen.
"	RIDDOCH, JOHN, e. Keith.
L./Cpl.	ROSS, WM., e. Inverurie.
Pte.	SHAND, JOHN, e. Alford.
"	SHEARER, WM., Forgue.
L./Cpl.	SIMPSON, ALEX., b. Peterhead.

e. = enlisted.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Sgt.	SIMPSON, OGILVIE, D.C.M., Buckie.
Pte.	SIMPSON, ROBERT, b. Cairnie.
L./Cpl.	THOMSON, ALEX., e. Keith.
Pte.	TURRIFF, ALEX., b. Crimond.

Attached

7th GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	BOOTH, WM., b. Aberdeen.
"	BURGESS, WM., b. Buckie.
"	DANIEL, MATTHEW, e. Inver- urie.
"	DINGWALL, GEORGE, e. Huntly.
"	FLETT, PETER B., Findochty.
"	HENDERSON, JOHN, b. Aber- deen.
"	MCRAE, WM., e. Inverurie.
"	PATERSON, HENRY, e. Huntly.

Attached

4th (Res.) GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	MORRISON, ALEX., e. Alford.
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Attached

2/6th GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	YOUNG, CHARLES, b. Inch.
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6/7th GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	BURGESS, WM., b. Shipley, Yorks.
"	DAVIDSON, JAS., e. Keith.
"	ELLIS, JOHN, Aboyne.
"	FALCONER, WM., e. Huntly.
"	GORDON, BARRON, Inverurie.
Sgt.	MITCHELLHILL, WILLIAM, e. N. Shields.
Pte.	MURRAY, JAS. M., e. Aberdeen.

b.=born.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	McKAY, JOHN, M.M., e. Buckie.
Sgt.	McKENZIE, JAS., Buckie.
Pte.	SCOTT, LEITH, Aberdeen.
Sgt.	STEWART, CHAS., D.C.M., Mid- mar.
Pte.	URQUHART, JOHN G., e. Aber- deen.
"	WOOD, ROBERT, e. Huntly.

Attached

9th GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	BALLANTYNE, JOHN B., e. Keith.
"	McCURRACH, CHARLES, Newmill.

Attached

8/10th GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

Pte.	DAVIDSON, LEWIS S., b. Knock- ando.
L./Cpl.	DUNCAN, JOHN, e. Banff.
Pte.	GRAY, WM., e. Alford.
"	LAW, GEORGE, b. Inverurie.
"	McKERRON, ROBERT, Aberlour.
"	RITCHIE, GEORGE, Clatt.
"	SIMPSON, JAMES, Macduff.
"	SMART, JOHN, b. Huntly.
"	SUTHERLAND, ADAM, Tullynessle
"	WILSON, ALEX., Inverkeithny.
"	WISHART, JAS., e. Glasgow.

Attached

KING'S AFRICAN RIFLES.

Sgt.	HOGG, ANDREW, Huntly.
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Attached

WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT.

Sgt.	THOMSON, ALEXANDER, J., D.C.M., Buckie.
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e.=enlisted.

# ROLL OF OFFICERS AND MEN WHO PROCEEDED TO FRANCE ON 9TH NOVEMBER 1914 \*

## OFFICERS.

Lt.-Col.	C. McLEAN, Alford.
Major	W. A. MacDONALD, Inch.
"	G. A. WILSON, Keith.
Major and Q.M.	F. W. COOPER, Keith.
Capt.	J. M. COOK, Alford.
"	J. G. COWIE, Keith.
"	J. DAWSON, Aberdeen.
"	I. G. FLEMING, Keith.
"	J. KELLAS, Inverurie.
"	E. J. REYNOLDS, Keith.
"	G. SMITH, of Pittodrie.
"	W. B. WELCH, Huntly.
Lieut.	L. S. P. DAVIDSON, Cullen.
"	H. C. GLOSTER, London.
"	A. GRANT, Alford.
"	C. McCOMBIE, Alford.
"	G. STEPHEN, Keith.
2nd. Lieut.	A. S. PELHAM BURN, Surrey.
"	D. G. CLARK, Alford.
"	G. E. GORDON-DUFF, Drummuir.
"	F. W. PETRIE HAY, Keith.
"	F. C. MITCHELL, Huntly.
"	W. H. NEWSON, London.
"	Sir J. SETON, Alford.
"	P. KYNOCH SHAND, Keith.
"	M. MCKENZIE WOOD, Cullen.

## MEDICAL OFFICER.

Major BARR STEVENS.

The Chaplain, Rev. J. ESSLEMONT ADAMS, B.D., Aberdeen, who had been in France earlier, joined the Battalion on 16th November, 1914.

The Adjutant, Capt. J. A. L. CAMPBELL, of Jura, who had been in France earlier, joined the Battalion on 29th November, 1914.

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\* Where it has not been possible to trace the home address, the address of the next of kin has been given.

## "A" COY.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	AITCHESON, J., Huntly.	Pte.	HARPER, D., Portsoy.
"	ALLAN, D., Aberdeen.	L/Cpl.	HENDRY, W., Macduff.
Cpl.	ANDERSON, F., Aberchirder.	Pte.	HUTCHESON, J. A., Aberlour.
Pte.	BARCLAY, R., Banff.	"	HUTCHEON, G., Banff.
"	BARRON, W., Portsoy.	"	INGLIS, R., "
"	BELL, J., Aberchirder.	"	KILOH, W., "
"	BLACK, J., Macduff.	"	LOWE, F., "
"	BLANCHARD, W., Banff.	"	LOWE, G. A., "
"	BOW, A. G., Macduff.	"	LYALL, W. A., Macduff.
"	BREMNER, J., Banff.	"	LYON, W., Marnoch.
"	BREMNER, W. C., "	"	MACKIE, J. S., Banff.
"	BROWN, J., Huntly.	"	MAIN, D., Portsoy.
"	BRUCE, J., Banff.	L/Cpl.	MAIR, A., "
L/Cpl.	BURNETT, A., Cullen.	Pte.	MAXTONE, R., Banff.
Pte.	BURNETT, A. J., Macduff.	L/Cpl.	MILNE, J., Aberchirder.
"	BURNETT, G., "	Pte.	MITCHELL, G., Portsoy.
L/Cpl.	BURNETT, R., "	L/Cpl.	MITCHELL, J., New Deer.
Pte.	CARNIE, A. J., Gamrie.	"	MORRISON, J., Portsoy.
"	CHRYSTALL, A., Banff.	Pte.	MURDOCH, J., Banff.
"	CRAWFORD, W., London.	"	MURRAY, W., King Edward.
"	DANIEL, W. J., Portsoy.	Sgt.	MCADAM, J., Aberlour.
Sgt.	DONALD, G., Banff.	Pte.	MCCONNACHIE, F., Portsoy.
Pte.	DONALD, A., "	"	MCGREGOR, J., Banff.
Cpl.	DONALD, WALTER, Banff.	"	MCINTOSH, G. H., Banff.
Pte.	DONALD, WILLIAM, "	"	McKAY, N., Portsoy.
"	DUNCAN, ALEX., "	"	McKIMMIE, W., "
"	DUNCAN, ALEX., Aberchirder.	"	McLAREN, P. H., Forglen.
"	DUNCAN, C., Banff.	"	McLEOD, J. S., Blacklaw.
"	DUNCAN, G., Grange.	"	McPHERSON, J., Edinburgh.
"	DUSTAN, W., Banff.	"	McWILLIAM, J., Portsoy.
"	EDWARDS, W., Macduff.	"	OGG, F., Banff.
"	ELDER, J., Ellon.	"	PORTER, A., "
"	FARQUHAR, W., Cornhill.	"	PORTER, J., Portsoy.
"	FARQUHARSON, H., Macduff.	"	RAINNIE, H., Banff.
"	FENTIE, W., Banff.	"	REID, C., Marnoch.
"	FORDYCE, W., Marnoch.	"	RITCHIE, F., Macduff.
"	FRASER, J., Banff.	"	ROBERTSON, J., Portsoy.
"	FRASER, W., Marnoch.	"	ROBERTSON, T., Banff.
Sgt.	GEDDES, A., Buckie.	Cr. Sgt.	ROGER, O., Keith.
Pte.	GEDDES, W. J., Fordyce.	Pte.	ROSS, A., King Edward.
"	GEDDES, R., Banff.	"	RUNCIE, A., Banff.
Cpl.	GIBSON, W. J., "	"	RUNCIE, J. J., "
Pte.	GRAY, JOHN, Portsoy.	Sgt.	SHARP, M., Forfar.
"	GRAY, JOSEPH, Marnoch.	Pte.	SHEARER, L. J., Banff.
"	GREIG, C., Aberchirder.	"	SIM, C., Macduff.

# 228 THE 6TH GORDONS IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	SIMPSON, A., Macduff.	Pte.	TURNER, T., Banff.
"	SLATER, W., Glasgow.	"	WATSON, A. P., Macduff.
"	SMITH, F., Portsoy.	L/Sgt.	WATT, D. K., Alford.
"	STEPHEN, H., Banff.	L/Cpl.	WATT, J. G., Portsoy
"	STEPHEN, P. W. R., Macduff.	Pte.	WATT, W., Banff.
"	STEVENSON, W., Banff.	Cpl.	WEBSTER, G., Alford.
"	STILL, C., Portsoy.	Pte.	WEST, H., Portsoy.
"	STUART, A., Deskford.	"	WEST, J., Gardenstown.
"	STUART, J. M., Macduff.	"	WHYTE, J., Macduff.
"	TOCHER, C., Banff.	"	WILLIAMSON, J., Glassaugh.
"	TOCHER, E., "	"	WILSON, H., Aberchirder.
"	TOPP, J., Portsoy.	"	WISEMAN, JAS., Macduff (1545).
"	TOPP, W., Banff.	"	WISEMAN, JAS., " (1552).
"	TURNER, W., "	"	WRIGHT, R., Banff.

## "B" COY.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
L/Cpl.	BAIN, A., Aberlour.	Pte.	McDONALD, C., Aberlour.
Pte.	BEGG, J., Dufftown.	"	McDONALD, D., "
L/Sgt.	BOOTH, H. M. S., Aberlour.	"	McFARLANE, H., Glenlivet.
Pte.	BRAIN, E., Aberlour.	"	McGARTHLAND, P., Glenrinnies.
"	CAMERON, A., "	"	McKENZIE, G., Dufftown.
"	CAMERON, G., Kirkmichael.	"	McLENNAN, J., Rothes.
"	CAMPBELL, G., Aberlour.	"	McMANN, J., Dufftown.
"	DAVIDSON, J., Craigellachie.	Cpl.	ROSS, W., Aberdeen.
Sgt.	FORBES, J., Inch.	Pte.	RUSSELL, G., Aberlour.
I/Cpl.	FORSYTH, J., Aberlour.	"	SHAW, C. W., "
Cpl.	FRASER, J., "	"	SHAW, F., "
Pte.	GARROW, P. J., "	L/Cpl.	SHAW, J., "
"	GORDON, A., Carron.	Pte.	SIMPSON, G., Aberlour.
"	GORDON, W., Alford	"	SMITH, A., Glenlivet.
Sgt.	GRANT, R., Craigellachie.	"	STEWART, R., Aberlour.
Pte.	HAY, J., Carron.	"	STEWART, W., "
"	HAY, G., "	"	STRATHDEE, J., Ballindalloch.
"	INNES, G., Dufftown.	Sgt.	SWANSON, R. C., Cullen.
Cr Sgt.	JEFFERSON, J., Alford.	Pte.	TOUGH, A., Aberlour.
Pte.	KEIR, R. H., Aberlour.	"	WALLACE, T. S., "
"	LEITCH, A., "	"	WATT, A. F., "
"	MACKIE, W., "	L/Cpl.	WATT, G., "
Sgt.	MITCHELL, T. K., Huntly.	Pte.	WATT, W., "
Pte.	MUNRO, G., Carron.	"	WILKIE, R., "
"	MURRAY, W. G., Aberlour.	"	WILSON, J. A., Craigellachie.
"	McBEATH, J., Rothes.	"	WYLLIE, G. F., Aberlour.
"	McCONNACHIE, A., Ballindalloch		

## "C" COY.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	ALLAN, D., Aultmore, Keith.	L./Cpl.	LESLIE, C., Dufftown.
"	ANNETT, WM., Banchory.	Pte.	LOBBAN, G. J., Fife-Keith.
"	BARRIE, A., Fife-Keith.	"	MANN, A., Keith.
Trans.Sgt.	BLACK, JAS., Keith.	"	MEARNS, W. J., Fife-Keith.
Pte.	BLACKHALL, G., Grange.	"	MILNE, JAS., Keith.
"	BORTHWICK, J. R., Fife-Keith.	Staff-Sgt.	MOIR, H. J., Aberdeen.
"	BOUSE, TOM, Keith.	Pte.	MORRISON, W., Keith.
"	BOYNE, A. J., "	Pr. Sgt.	MURRAY, JAS., "
"	BROWN, JAS., Newmill, Keith.	Pte.	MURRAY, W., Fife-Keith.
"	BRUCE, JAS., Keith.	"	MCDONALD, A., "
L./Cpl.	BURGESS, H., "	"	MCDONALD, I., Keith.
Pte.	BURNS, JAS., "	Cpl.	MCDUFF, D., Boharm.
"	CLARK, G., Boharm.	Pte.	MCINNES, W. J., Newmill, Keith
"	CORMIE, W., Newmill, Keith.	"	McKAY, R., Keith.
Sgt.	CRAIB, JAS., "	"	McLAREN, J. D., Keith.
Pte.	CRAN, GEO., Fife-Keith.	Dr.	McLAREN, R. B., "
L./Cpl.	CRUICKSHANK, C., Keith.	Pte.	McLEAN, W., Fife-Keith.
"	CRUICKSHANK, W., "	Sgt.	McQUEEN, A. N., Macduff.
Cpl.	CUMMING, J., Archiestown.	Pte.	OGG, ISAAC, Keith.
Pte.	DAVIDSON, JAS., Grange.	"	PIRIE, JAS., "
"	DEY, ARTHUR, Aultmore, Keith	Sgt.	RAFFAN, C., "
"	DUNCAN, A., Keith.	Pte.	REID, A., Newmill, Keith.
L./Cpl.	DUNCAN, D., Fife-Keith.	"	REID, GEO., Fife-Keith.
Pte.	DUNCAN, TOM, "	L./Cpl.	REID, J. S., Keith.
"	FINNIE, ALEX., Keith.	Pte.	RETTIE, JAS., "
"	FORBES, W., Fife-Keith.	Cr. Sgt.	ROBB, JAS., Newmill, Keith.
"	FORREST, C., "	Pte.	ROBB, W. J., "
"	FORREST, G., "	"	ROBERTSON, R., Keith.
"	FRASER, JAS., Forres.	"	RONALD, R. C., Fife-Keith.
L./Sgt.	FULTON, G., Bankhead.	"	ROWATT, J., "
Pte.	GAITENS, H., Keith.	"	RUSSELL, A., Rothiemay.
"	GEDDES, G., Newmill, Keith.	"	RUXTON, W. S., Keith.
"	GEDDES, W. A., Keith.	"	SELLAR, ANDREW, Keith.
Sgt. Mjr.	GORDON, A., "	L./Cpl.	SHEARER, A., Canada.
Pte.	GORDON, J. R., "	Pte.	SIMPSON, GEO., Fife-Keith.
"	GORDON, W., Fife-Keith.	Cpl.	SMITH, A. F., Huntly.
"	GRANT, JOHN, "	"	STEPHEN, W., Fife-Keith.
"	GRANT, W. A., Edinburgh.	Pte.	STEVENSON, G., Boharm.
"	HAY, JAS., Keith.	"	STRACHAN, A., Fife-Keith.
"	HENDRY, W., "	"	STRONACH, W. G., Edinburgh.
"	INNES, C., "	"	SYMON, ADAM, Newmill, Keith.
"	INNES, R. M., "	"	SYMON, J., Keith.
"	KINDNESS, N., Aberdeen.	Dr.	THOMSON, ADAM, "
Sgt.	KIRKPATRICK, B., Keith.	L./Cpl.	THOMSON, A. M., "
Pte.	KNOX, DAVID, Fife-Keith.	"	THOMSON, H., "

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	TOUGH, JAS., Keith.	L./Cpl.	WEATHERHEAD, JAS., Fife-Keith
"	WATSON, A., Fife-Keith.	Pte.	WEBSTER, A., "
"	WATSON, C., Keith.	"	WEBSTER, F., "
"	WATT, J. S., Inverurie.	"	WHYTE, GEO., Cairnie.
"	WATT, R., Newmill, Keith.	"	WILSON, W., Grimsby.

**"D" COY.**

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
L./Cpl.	ADDISON, J., Portknockie.	Pte.	KINNAIRD, H., Buckpool.
Pte.	BAIN, R., Cullen.	"	KNOWLES, A., "
"	BLACK, W. S., Buckie.	L./Cpl.	KNOWLES, J., Buckie.
"	BOWIE, H., "	Pte.	LIVINGSTONE, I., Buckpool.
L./Cpl.	BOWIE, J., Buckpool.	Cpl.	LOGIE, G., Buckie.
Pte.	BROWN, R. D., Cullen.	Pte.	LOW, W., "
L./Cpl.	BUTTRESS, W. H., "	"	LOWDEN, A., "
Pte.	CALDER, B., Buckie.	"	LOWDEN, A. W., "
"	CALDER, J., "	"	LYON, F., "
"	CHILDS, S., Portessie.	"	LYON, J., "
"	CLARK, G., "	"	MAXWELL, C., Rathven.
"	CLARK, S., Buckpool.	"	MECHAN, T. L., Wick.
"	CORBETT, J., Portgordon.	"	MILNE, A., Buckie.
"	COWIE, R. C., Buckpool.	"	MILNE, C., Buckie.
"	DEVINE, F., Buckie.	"	MILTON, G., "
L./Cpl.	FARQUHAR, A., Findochty.	"	MILTON, J., "
Pte.	FARQUHARSON, J., Dinnit.	L./Cpl.	MORGAN, A., Portessie.
"	FINDLAY, W., Cullen.	Sgt.	MCDONALD, C., Strathdon.
"	FLETT, W. J., Buckpool.	Pte.	MCGOWAN, D., Buckie.
"	FORBES, G., Buckie.	"	MCINTOSH, G., Portessie.
"	GARDEN, J., "	"	MCINTOSH, G. I., Buckie.
"	GARDEN, W., "	"	MCINTOSH, J., "
"	GAULD, G., Portknockie.	"	McKAY, W. K., Cullen.
"	GAULD, J., Buckie.	"	McKENZIE, J., Buckie.
L./Cpl.	GEDDES, A., "	Sgt.	McLEAN, J. C., Buckpool.
Pte.	GOLDIE, F., Glasgow.	Pte.	McLEAN, N., Buckie.
"	GORDON, W., Buckie.	Sgt.	MCRAE, R., "
"	GORDON, W. J., "	L./Cpl.	McWILLIAM, G., Portsoy.
"	GRANT, R., Rathven.	Pte.	NEWLANDS, J., Buckie.
"	HEPBURN, A., Buckie.	"	NICOL, J., "
"	HORNE, J., Huntly.	Cpl.	PATERSON, A., "
L./Cpl.	IMLAH, A., Buckie.	Pte.	PIRIE, W., "
Pte.	INNES, W., "	"	RAFFAN, G., "
Sgt.	IRONSIDE, C. M., Tullynessle	Sgt.	REID, J., "
Sgt. Dr.	JACK, S., Cullen.	Cpl.	REID, W., Cullen.
Pte.	JOHNSTON, A., "	Pte.	ROBERTSON, J., Forres.
"	JOHNSTON, J., "	"	ROSS, J., Aberdeen.
"	KEMP, J., Buckpool.	"	ROSS, W., Buckie.



<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	SCORGIE, W., Buckie.	Pte.	STEELE, A., Keith.
Cr. Sgt.	SCOTT, G., "	"	STEWART, E., Buckie.
Pte.	SCOTT, J., "	"	STEWART, P., Buckpool.
"	SIMPSON, A., "	"	SUTHERLAND, J., Banff.
L./Cpl.	SIMPSON, A., Cullen.	"	THOMSON, A. J., Buckie.
"	SIMPSON, W., Buckpool.	"	WATSON, P., "
Piper	SMITH, A., "	"	WEST, A., "
Pte.	SMITH, A., Portessie.	L./Cpl.	WEST, M., Buckpool.
"	SMITH, A. C., "	Pte.	WILSON, A., Cullen.
"	SMITH, E., Buckie.	L./Cpl.	WILSON, A., Aberlour.
"	SMITH, F., Cullen.	Cpl.	WYPER, W., Glasgow.
"	SMITH, W., Buckie.	L./Sgt.	YOUNG, H. B., Insch.
"	STABLES, A., "		

**"E" COY.**

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	ABEL, A., Port Elphinstone.	Pte.	FRASER, R., Inverurie.
L./Cpl.	ALEXANDER, R., Drumoak.	"	GALL, W., "
Pte.	ALSOPI, L., Inverurie.	"	GAULT, C., "
"	ANGUS, W., "	"	GEILS, J., Kintore.
L./Sgt.	ANTON, E., Huntly.	"	GERRARD, J., "
Pte.	BAIN, J., Inverurie.	"	GRANT, F., Inverurie.
"	BARNETT, G., "	Cpl.	HENDRY, G. A., "
L./Cpl.	BEVERLEY, A., "	Sgt.	HENDRY, J. D., "
Pte.	BISSETT, W., "	Pte.	HENDRY, K. A., "
L./Cpl.	BOOTH, A., Keithhall.	"	HENDRY, R., "
Pte.	BRAND, C., Inverurie.	"	HENDRY, T. R., "
"	BURNETT, B., Port Elphinstone.	"	HIRD, A., "
"	CATIO, J., Kintore.	"	HOSIE, A., "
Sgt.	CHRISTIE, J. R., Turriff.	"	HOSIE, J., "
"	CORMACK, J., Keith.	"	JAFFRAY, A., "
Pte.	CRAIB, W., Insch.	"	JOSS, J., "
"	CRAIG, D. B., Inverurie.	"	JOSS, R., "
"	CRAIGIE, W., "	R.Q.M.S.	KELLAS, J. B., "
L./Cpl.	CRAN, J., Keithhall.	Pte.	KERR, J. S., "
Pte.	CRUICKSHANK, W., Inverurie.	"	KERR, W., "
"	DAVIDSON, H., "	"	LAW, G., Kintore.
"	DAVIDSON, W., Aberdeen.	Pte.	LOW, J. C., Port Elphinstone.
"	DUNCAN, A., Keithhall.	"	MACKIE, A., Kintore.
"	DUNCAN, E., Inverurie.	"	MAITLAND, W., Inverurie.
"	DURNO, G. F., Rothienorman.	"	MEARNS, A., "
"	DYCE, G., Inverurie.	Piper	MILNE, A., "
"	EMSLIE, J., "	Pte.	MILNE, L., Stonehaven.
"	EWEN, J., Port Elphinstone.	Sgt.	MILTON, J., Portsoy.
Cpl.	FARQUHARSON, F. L., Keith.	Pte.	MITCHELL, J. B., Inverurie.
Pte.	FORSYTH, H., Port Elphinstone.	"	MITCHELL, W. T., Port Elphinstone.
"	FRASER, J., Kintore.		

## 232 THE 6TH GORDONS IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	MUTCH, J., Inverurie.	Dr.	ROBERTSON, J., Port Elphinstone.
"	MCGLASHAN, ALEX., Keith-hall.	Pte.	ROGER, J., Inverurie.
"	MCGLASHAN, ANTHONY, Keith-hall.	"	SINCLAIR, T. S. T., "
"	MCGLASHAN, J., "	"	SINGER, C., "
"	MCINTOSH, A., Inverurie.	L./Cpl.	SMITH, A., Findochty.
Cpl.	MCINTOSH, W., Port Elphinstone.	Pte.	SMITH, G., Inverurie.
Pte.	McLACHLAN, J. D., Aberdeen.	"	SMITH, J., "
L./Cpl.	McLAREN, E., Keith.	"	SMITH, J. D., "
Pte.	MCLEOD, J., Inverurie.	"	STEWART, C., Midmar.
"	PATERSON, J., Inverurie.	"	STUART, A., Port Elphinstone.
"	PENNY, A., "	Cpl.	SUTHERLAND, W. F., Huntly.
"	PETRIE, D., "	Pte.	THOMPSON, A. S., Inverurie.
"	RAE, G. S., "	"	WALKER, W. T., "
"	RAEBURN, G. E., Aberdeen.	"	WALLACE, G., Culsalmound.
Cr. Sgt.	REID, J., Inverurie.	"	WATSON, J., Ardmiddle, Turriff.
Pte.	REID, W., "	"	WATSON, J. P., Aberdeen.
"	RIDDEL, J., Kintore.	L./Cpl.	WATT, J. M., Port Elphinstone.
"	RIDDEL, R. M., "	Pte.	WILSON, ADAM, Bucksburn.
		"	WILSON, J., Inverurie.
		"	WOOD, R. T., Darlington.
		"	YOUNG, C., Inverurie.

### R.A.M.C. Water Duty (Attached).

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Pte.	CHALMERS, L., Banff.	Pte.	MILNE, J.
"	GAVIN, R. K., "	"	ROBERTSON, P.
"	MARK, A.		

### "F" COY.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Cpl.	ALEXANDER, A., Alford.	Pte.	DON, A., Alford.
Pte.	ANDERSON, A., Alford.	"	DON, G., Strathdon.
"	BERRY, J., "	"	DONALD, J., Alford.
"	BROWN, C., Keig.	"	DOW, R., Glenlivet.
"	BROWNFIELD, C. S., London.	"	DUGUID, J., Strathdon.
"	BUXTON, G., Coventry.	"	DUNBAR, G., Mossat, Alford.
L./Cpl.	CALLUM, C., Alford.	"	DUNBAR, JAS., Strathdon.
Pte.	CAMPBELL, W., Tullynessle.	"	DUNBAR, JAS., Lumphanan.
"	CHISHOLM, J., Glenlivet.	L./Cpl.	DUNCAN, P. S., Crathie.
"	COOPER, G., Aberdeen.	Cpl.	DUNCAN, W., Deskford.
"	COOPER, W. M., "	Pte.	ESSON, A., Tough.
"	COUTTS, A., Glenlivet.	"	FARQUHARSON, J., Glenlivet.
"	CRAIG, A., Alford.	"	FLEMING, C., Ballindalloch.
"	DAVIDSON, J., "	"	FORDYCE, W., Port Elphinstone.
"	DAWSON, J., Strathdon.		

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	FYFE, H., Tough.	L./Cpl.	McROBERT, J., Glenbuchat.
"	GILBERT, J., Alford.	Pte.	McROBERT, W., Glenbuchat.
"	GORDON, G. T., London.	Sgt.	NICOL, D., Tough.
"	GRANT, A., Alford.	Pte.	NICOL, P., Alford.
"	GRANT, C., Glenlivet.	Cr. Sgt.	NIVEN, C., Strathdon.
"	GRANT, G., "	Pte.	O'BRIEN, W., "
"	GRANT, J., "	"	PETER, L., "
"	GRAY, W., Leochel-Cushnie.	L./Sgt.	PHILIP, A., Leochel-Cushnie.
"	HALLET, C. A., Huntingdon.	L./Cpl.	PHILIP, G. R., Corgarff.
"	HARPER, J., Alford.	Pte.	PHILIP, G., Strathdon.
"	HARVEY, E., Tullynessle.	"	PHILIP, J., Alford.
"	HARVEY, G., Montgarrie, Alford.	"	PONCIONE, J. M. W., Huntingdon.
"	HOWIE, W., Alford.	"	REID, A., Glasgow.
"	JONES, A. E., Bedford.	"	REID, JOHN, Maryculter.
Sgt.	KEITH, J., Alford.	"	REID, JOHN, Tough.
Pte.	KEMP, A., Leochel-Cushnie.	Sgt.	REID, JOHN, Alford.
"	KEMP, A. M., Montgarrie, Alford.	L./Cpl.	REID, JOHN, Corgarff.
L./Cpl.	LAW, J., Alford.	Pte.	ROBB, A., Arbroath.
Pte.	LOBBAN, A. F., "	"	ROGER, G., Alford.
"	LOBBAN, R., "	L./Cpl.	ROSS, W., Glenkindie.
Pte.	LYALL, D., Dunecht.	Pte.	SHAND, J., Glenbuchat.
"	MATTHEWS, J., Leochel-Cushnie	"	SMITH, C. A. P., Lumsden.
"	MILNE, J., Lumsden.	"	SMITH, J., Strathdon.
"	MILNE, W., Glenlivet.	"	STEWART, C., Glenkindie.
Cpl.	MURDOCH, J., Strathdon.	"	STEWART, F., Alford.
L./Cpl.	MURRAY, A. K., Alford.	L./Cpl.	STEWART, W., "
Pte.	MURRAY, J. W., "	Pte.	STRACHAN, A., Lumsden.
"	MURRAY, W., Dornoch.	"	STUART, P., Aberlour.
"	McCOMBIE, W., Montgarrie, Alford.	"	TAYLOR, J., Strathdon.
"	McDONALD, R., Alford.	"	THOMSON, P., Leochel-Cushnie.
"	McKAY, J., Glenlivet.	"	TURNER, C., Alford.
"	McKENZIE, J., Alford.	L./Cpl.	WATTIE, J., Strathdon.
"	McLAUGHLAN, P., Glenlivet.	Pte.	WESTLEY, C. A., Northants.
L./Cpl.	McPHERSON, W., "	"	WIGHT, J., Selkirk.

**Army Service Corps (Attached).**

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name.</i>
Dr.	FORREST, A.,	Dr.	MACKIE, J. B.
"	IMRAY, G. F.	"	MARSH, D.,
"	LEISHMAN, J. C.	"	SIM, WM. MCH.

**"G" COY.**

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	ANDERSON, C., Bucksburn.	Pte.	BAIN, A., Bankhead.
"	ANDERSON, J., Woodside.	"	BANNERMAN, W., Woodside.
Sgt.	ARCHIBALD, J., Huntly.	"	BEVERIDGE, J. E., Bucksburn.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	BIRNIE, A., Bucksburn.	Pte.	MELDRUM, G., Bucksburn.
Piper	BIRNIE, J., (967) "	"	MELVIN, J., Woodside.
Pte.	BIRNIE, J., (961) "	"	MENZIES, T., Bucksburn.
"	BISSET, G., "	"	MIDDLETON, W. S., Stoneywood.
"	BREWSTER, W. D., Woodside.	Dr.	MILNE, C., Woodside.
"	BROWN, A., Stoneywood.	Pte.	MILNE, W., "
"	BROWN, J. C., "	"	MITCHELL, J., Bucksburn.
"	BURNETT, J., Woodside.	"	MITCHELL, J. E., Peterculter.
Sgt.	CAMERON, J., Bucksburn.	"	MORGAN, J., Woodside.
Pte.	CARTER, W. J., Stoneywood.	"	MORGAN, W., Bucksburn.
"	CATTO, J., Bucksburn.	"	MORRISON, A. R., Woodside.
Sgt.	CLARK, R., Bankhead.	"	MORRISON, W., "
Pte.	COUTTS, J., Bucksburn.	L./Sgt.	MORTIMER, J., Inverurie.
"	COUTTS, W., "	Pte.	MORTON, C., Drumoak.
"	DALGARNO, J., Stoneywood.	"	MURRAY, J., Woodside.
"	DAVIDSON, J., Bankhead.	"	MCGREGOR, F. M., Aberdeen.
"	DEANS, A., Woodside.	"	McHARDY, A., Bankhead.
L./Cpl.	DONALD, J. S., Oyne.	"	McKENZIE, A., "
Pte.	DOW, W., Bankhead.	"	McKENZIE, D., Woodside.
"	DUNCAN, A., Bucksburn.	Sgt.	McLEAN, J., Bucksburn.
"	DUNCAN, W. J., Woodside.	Pte.	McPHERSON, G., Bankhead.
"	EDMOND, J., Woodside.	L./Cpl.	PARR, A., Bucksburn.
"	EDWARDS, J., Bankhead.	"	PIRIE, W. A., "
"	FORBES, J., Bucksburn.	Cpl.	REID, C., "
Cpl.	FORSYTH, C., Dyce.	Pte.	REID, D., Bankhead.
Pte.	GALL, C., Bucksburn.	"	RENNIE, C., "
"	GALL, D. M., Dyce.	"	ROBB, J., Bucksburn.
"	GAMMIE, W. C., Bucksburn.	"	ROBB, J., Woodside.
Dr.	GRAY, E. F., "	"	ROBIE, J., Stoneywood.
Pte.	GREIG, A. C., Woodside.	"	ROSS, C. A., Bankhead.
"	HARLEY, A., Bucksburn.	L./Cpl.	ROSS, J., "
"	HENDRY, A. G., Bankhead.	Pte.	ROSS, W. G., "
Sgt. Piper	HOWARTH, I., Bucksburn.	"	SCOTT, J., Dyce.
Pte.	INGRAM, R., Woodside.	"	SCOTT, L., Aberdeen.
"	JAMIESON, A., Bankhead.	"	SCOTT, R., "
"	JOHNSTONE, J. G., Bucksburn.	"	SIM, J. F., Dyce.
Cpl.	JOHNSTONE, W., "	"	SIMPSON, A., Cruden.
Pte.	KILGOUR, J., "	"	SIMPSON, J., Bucksburn.
"	KNOWLES, T., Aberdeen.	Cpl.	SMITH, E., Bankhead.
"	LAW, D., Bucksburn.	Pte.	SMITH, W., Woodside.
"	LAW, JOHN, "	"	SPENCE, W., Bucksburn.
"	LAW, JAS., "	"	STEPHEN, W. D., Bankhead.
"	LITTLEJOHN, W., Woodside.	"	SUTHERLAND, J. C., Bucksburn.
L./Cpl.	MAITLAND, J., Bucksburn.	"	SUTHERLAND, W. F., "
Pte.	MALCOLM, J. A., "	Cr. Sgt.	TAYLOR, A., Inverurie.
"	MARSHALL, R., "	Pte.	THOM, A., Dyce.
"	MATTHEW, J., Aberdeen.	"	THOMSON, J. H., Stoneywood.

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	THOMSON, W. G., Bankhead.	Pte.	WALKER, J., Stoneywood.
"	THOW, H. V., Stoneywood.	"	WALKER, W., Bucksburn.
"	TOBIN, T., Bucksburn.	Cpl.	WIGHT, J., Huntly.
"	TOSH, G., Bankhead.	Pte.	WILL, J., Stoneywood.
"	TURNER, W., Bucksburn.	"	WILSON, J., "
"	TYTLER, R., Aberdeen.	"	YULE, W., Bucksburn.
Sgt. Cook	URQUHART, J., Bankhead.		

**"H" COY.**

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Pte.	ANDERSON, C. L., Glasgow.	Pte.	FRASER, W., Huntly.
"	ANDERSON, G., Kennethmont.	"	FRASER, JAMES, "
Sgt.	ARCHIBALD, A. S., Huntly.	"	GAVIN, J., Inch.
Pte.	BELL, D., Aberdeen.	"	GORDON, G., Port Erroll.
"	BERRY, GEO., Huntly.	"	GORDON, GEO., Inch.
"	BERRY, JOHN, "	"	GORDON, G. M., Premnay.
"	BISSET, G., Huntly.	"	GRANT, J., Huntly.
"	BOOTH, W., Kennethmont.	"	GRAY, W., "
"	BOWIE, W., Huntly.	L./Cpl.	HOSIE, G., "
L./Cpl.	CÆSAR, H., "	Pte.	INNES, A. S., Premnay.
Pte.	CÆSAR, W., "	"	INNES, ALEX., Huntly.
"	CALDER, F., "	"	INNES, J., Kennethmont.
"	CASTELL, W. P., "	"	JAFFREY, J., Inch.
"	CHALMERS, J., "	L./Cpl.	JOHNSTONE, C., "
Cpl.	CHAPPELL, F. C., "	Pte.	JOHNSTONE, J., "
Pte.	CHREE, J., "	"	JOHNSTONE, W., Inch.
"	CHRISTIE, A., Inch.	Cpl.	JOSS, W., Kennethmont.
"	COOK, H., "	Pte.	LOGGIE, JOHN, Huntly.
"	COWIE, R., Huntly.	"	LOGGIE, JAS., "
L./Cpl.	DAVIDSON, G., Oyne.	"	LUMSDEN, J., Castle Douglas.
Pte.	DAVIDSON, G. R., Huntly	"	MACKIE, W., Huntly.
"	DAVIDSON, J. M., Aberdeen.	Dr.	MAIN, J., Aberlour.
"	DAVIDSON, R., Huntly.	Pte.	MARR, A., Huntly.
L./Cpl.	DIVERI, A. B., "	"	MAVOR, A., Keith.
Pte.	DIVERI, C. B., "	"	MEARNS, F., Premnay.
"	DOW, G., Glass.	"	METCALFE, A. M., Huntly.
"	DUFFUS, B., Huntly.	"	MILNE, F., Inch.
"	DUNCAN, J., Inch.	"	MILNE, W., Huntly.
"	DUNCAN, R., Huntly.	Pte.	MILNE, J., Fergue.
"	FARQUHARSON, L., "	"	MILNE, W., Clatt.
"	FERGUSON, W., Glass.	"	MILTON, J., Aberlour.
"	FINDLAY, J., Oyne.	"	MILTON, W., Huntly.
"	FITZPATRICK, T., Huntly.	L./Cpl.	MITCHELL, R., Huntly.
"	FORBES, WALTER, "	Pte.	MITCHELL, W., "
"	FORBES, WM., "	"	MORGAN, A., "
Cpl.	FRASER, F. M., Inch.	"	MURDOCH, C., "

<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>Name and Address.</i>
Sgt.	MURRAY, B., Huntly.	Pte.	SIEVEWRIGHT, P., Innerleithen.
Pte.	MURRAY, M., "	"	SINCLAIR, W., Daviot.
"	MCANDIE, J., Grange.	"	SMITH, ANDREW, Rothiemay.
"	McCULLOCH, N., Huntly.	Sgt.	SMITH, ALEX., Bucksburn.
"	McCURRACH, T., Banchory.	Pte.	SOUTER, W., Drumblade.
Sgt.	McDONALD, W., Bucksburn.	L./Cpl.	STEPHEN, A., Huntly.
Pte.	McINTOSH, J., Huntly.	Pte.	STRONACH, GEO., "
L./Cpl.	McKENZIE, J., "	"	STRONACH, J., "
Pte.	McMANN, F., "	"	STRONACH, W., "
"	McPETRIE, W. A., "	"	STUART, C., "
"	McROBBIE, A., Inch.	"	STUART, J., "
"	McROBBIE, J., "	Cr. Sgt.	SUMMERS, J. B., "
"	PHIMISTER, W., "	Pte.	TAYLOR, GEO., Findochty.
"	PHIN, D. B., Huntly.	L./Cpl.	THAIN, J., Huntly.
"	PIRIE, A., "	Pte.	THOMSON, JAS., Huntly.
Cpl.	PIRIE, W., Drumblade.	"	THOMSON, P., Inch.
Pte.	RAEPER, J., Keig.	"	THOMSON, R., "
"	RATCLIFFE, A. C., Bedford.	"	WALKER, J., Maud.
Sgt.	REID, G. S., Huntly.	"	WALKER, W., Glenmuick.
Pte.	REID, J., "	"	WATT, A., Huntly.
"	REID, J. P. O., "	"	WATT, J. D., "
"	RIDDOCH, A., "	"	WATT, W. R., "
"	RIDDOCH, G., Inch.	"	WATTERS, JAS., "
L./Sgt.	SANDERS, S., Coventry.	"	WILSON, ALBERT, Huntly.
Pte.	SANDISON, W. R., Gartly.	"	WILSON, ARCHIBALD, Elgin.
"	SHEARER, A., Huntly.	"	WINTON, W., Forgue.
"	SHERIFFS, G., "	L./Cpl.	WRIGHT, W., Huntly.
"	SIEVEWRIGHT, J., Innerleithen.		

# DISTINCTIONS GAINED IN THE FIELD

## V.C.

Pte. G. McINTOSH

## C.M.G.

Major Rev. A. R. YEOMAN, att.

## D.S.O.

Capt. J. R. CHRISTIE

Capt. D. G. CLARK, M.C.

Lt.-Col. C. J. E. CRANSTOUN

Lt.-Col. J. DAWSON

Lt.-Col. HON. W. FRASER, M.C.

Major J. HUTCHESON, M.C.

## M.C. and Bar.

Capt. J. ARCHIBALD

Capt. D. G. CLARK, D.S.O.

Capt. D. M'KELVEY, R.A.M.C. attached

Capt. D. MACKENZIE

Capt. J. S. RIDDELL

Capt. R. RISK

## M.C.

Lt.-Col. Rev. J. ESSLEMONT ADAMS,  
D.S.O., att.

Lieut. C. G. BLACKLAWS

Capt. A. J. W. CARNIE

C.S.M. J. W. CHALMERS, D.C.M., M.M.

R.S.M. H. DAVISON, M.M.

2nd Lieut. J. DRYSDALE

Capt. & Q.M. F. W. FINDLAY

Capt. I. G. FLEMING

Lieut. J. S. GRANT

Capt. H. GRAY

Lieut. A. W. GREGOR

2nd Lieut. A. R. GROSE

2nd Lieut. F. HALL

Lieut. A. G. PETRIE HAY

Lieut. J. HECTOR

Major J. HUTCHESON, D.S.O.

Lieut. W. K. LEGGATT

Lieut. G. J. LOBBAN

Capt. J. MATHESON

Lieut. M. A. MATHESON

2nd Lieut. A. D. MILLER

Capt. H. J. MILNE

2nd Lieut. P. H. MITCHELL

Lieut. I. O. MORISON

Capt. C. M'COMBIE

2nd Lieut. E. C. M'DONALD

Capt. N. M'ICKING

Capt. K. M'KAY

Capt. E. F. W. M'KENZIE, R.A.M.C., att.

Major W. H. NEWSON

Capt. A. REID

R.Q.M.S. G. S. REID

2nd Lieut. G. RUTHERFORD

2nd Lieut. F. J. SMITH

Lieut. T. D. THOMSON

Lieut. J. S. B. WARD

Lieut. W. WEIR

Major W. EMSLIE, att. M.G.C.

Lieut. P. GEDDES, att. London Regt.

Major F. W. PETRIE HAY, att. M.G.C.

Capt. J. D. LESLIE, att. 9th Gordon Highlanders

## 238 THE 6TH GORDONS IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS

### **D.C.M. and Bar.**

Sergt.-Piper I. HOWARTH

### **D.C.M.**

Sgt. A. ARCHIBALD	Sgt. C. RAFFAN
Pte. W. F. BARNETT, M.M.	Pte. A. RALPH
Sgt. W. BENFIELD	L/C. R. RICHARDSON
Sgt. A. G. BURNETT	Cpl. A. RODGER
C.S.M. J. W. CHALMERS, M.C., M.M.	Sgt. J. ROSS, M.M.
C.S.M. J. CRAIB	Pte. G. RUNCIE
Cpl. J. CUMMING	Sgt. A. RUSSELL, M.M.
Sgt. G. DYCE	Sgt. C. SHAND, M.M.
C.S.M. J. FORBES, M.M.	Cpl. C. STEWART
Pte. J. FRASER	Sgt. W. STEWART
Sgt. J. GILBERT	Pte. J. STRONACH
Sgt. W. GLENNIE	Sgt. A. J. THOMSON
C.S.M. R. HARVEY	Pte. J. S. WATT
C.S.M. J. JEFFERSON	Pte. W. R. WATT
L/C. J. R. LAWRENCE	Pte. C. A. WESTLEY
L/C. W. MACKIE, M.M.	Sgt. R. T. WOOD, M.M.
Sgt. T. MENZIES	Pte. J. D. WYLIE
Sgt. J. MONTEITH	Sgt. O. SIMPSON, M.M., att. 5th
L/C. J. M'GREGOR	L/C. A. WILSON, do.
L/C. W. S. M'INTOSH	Pte. J. L. GOULD, 6/7th
L/C. P. M'LEAN, M.M.	Sgt. J. Low, 6/7th
Sgt. A. M'ROBBIE, M.M.	Sgt. G. STABLES, M.M., 6/7th
Pte. D. PETRIE	Sgt. V. VALENTINE, 6/7th

### **M.M. and Bar.**

Cpl. B. BATLEY	Cpl. G. SMART
L/C. G. LAWSON	Sgt. J. STEWART
Cpl. J. A. MITCHELL	Pte. A. WOOD
Cpl. C. MOSELEY	Pte. H. FITTON, att. 4th
Cpl. D. MUNDELL	L/C. A. RIDDOCH, do.
Sgt. D. M'DONALD	Pte. F. WATT, 6/7th

### **Bar to M.M.**

Pte. F. SKELTON

### **M.M.**

Pte. R. M. ALLAN	L/C. D. BELL
Sgt. C. ANDERSON	Cpl. P. BEWSHEA
Cpl. G. ANDERSON	Sgt. P. BIRD
L/C. G. ANGUS	L/C. G. BISSETT
Pte. J. AUSTIN	L/C. W. BISSETT
Pte. H. BANCROFT	L/C. C. BOLAN
Pte. W. F. BARNETT, D.C.M.	Sgt. A. J. BOYNE
Pte. G. PARRON	Pte. A. BROWN



**M.M. (Continued).**

Pte. F. M. BROWN	Pte. R. HESLOP
Pte. J. BROWN	L/C. J. HOLLAND
Pte. J. CAMERON	Sgt. L. IMLAH
Pte. J. CATTO, att. 4th	Cpl. J. IMRAY
C.S.M. J. W. CHALMERS, M.C., D.C.M.	Pte. G. A. INGRAM, att. 4th
L/C. S. CHILDS	Pte. A. INNES
Cpl. H. J. CLARK	Cpl. T. M. INNES
Cpl. H. R. CLARK	Pte. A. E. JONES
Sgt. J. COLLIE	Sgt. G. KILOH
Cpl. G. COOPER	Cpl. W. LAIRD
Pte. A. CORBETT	Pte. A. S. K. LAMB
Cpl. J. COWIE	L/C. J. LEATCH
Pte. W. COWIE	Cpl. A. LEITCH
Pte. J. G. CRUICKSHANK	Pte. D. LOCKHART
Sgt. W. CRUICKSHANK	Pte. R. LOCKHART
Sgt. G. CUMMING	Sgt. D. LYALL
Pte. A. DAVIDSON, att. 4th	Pte. W. MACKIE, D.C.M.
Pte. C. DAVIDSON, att. 1st	Sgt. D. MAIN
Cpl. G. DAVIDSON	Pte. G. MANN
L/C. W. DAVIDSON	Cpl. J. MATTHEWS
R.S.M. H. DAVISON, M.C.	Pte. A. MATTHEWSON
Pte. D. DENOON	Cpl. W. MESS
L/C. J. DONALD	Pte. D. H. MILLER
Pte. E. A. DONALDSON	L/C. T. MILNE
L/C. J. DUNCAN	Pte. J. B. MITCHELL
Sgt. P. S. DUNCAN	Pte. A. E. MITCHELHILL
L/C. G. DYKER, att. 2nd	Pte. A. MORGAN
Sgt. T. FERRIER	Cpl. W. A. MORGAN
Pte. A. FINNIE	C.Q.M.S. J. MURDOCH
Pte. A. FLETT	Pte. J. MURRAY
C.S.M. J. FORBES, D.C.M.	Pte. G. MUTCH
L/C. W. FORDYCE	Pte. H. M'CONNACHIE
Pte. A. FOTHERINGHAM	C.Q.M.S. C. M'DONALD
L/C. W. GAMMIE	Pte. T. M'DONALD
Pte. J. GAULD	Pte. W. M'DONALD
L/C. R. K. GAVIN	L/C. P. M'EACHERN
Pte. W. GODSMAN	Pte. J. M'KAY
L/C. A. GORDON	L/C. N. M'LEAN
L/C. J. GRAHAM	L/C. P. M'LEAN, D.C.M.
L/C. A. GRANT	Sgt. J. M'PHERSON
Sgt. C. GRANT	Pte. A. M'ROBBIE, D.C.M.
Pte. J. GRANT	L/C. W. M'ROBERT
Pte. C. GRAY	Pte. J. OLDMAN
Sgt. R. GRAY, att. 1st	Pte. A. RAEBURN
Pte. W. GUNN, att. 4th	Pte. A. C. RAMSAY
Cpl. T. V. HALL	Cpl. W. RAMSAY
Pte. D. HARPER	Pte. A. REID
L/C. G. HAY	Pte. G. REID

**M.M. (Continued).**

Pte. J. REID	Cpl. W. TAYLOR
Sgt. A. RHIND	Pte. J. TENNANT
L/C. A. W. RIDDELL	Sgt. A. THOMSON
I./C. A. RITCHIE	Cpl. H. THOMSON
Cpl. J. ROBB	L/C. L. TORRIE
Sgt. J. ROBIE	Pte. T. VEITCH
Sgt. J. ROSS, D.C.M.	Sgt. T. S. WALLACE
Pte. J. ROSS	Pte. A. S. WATT
Sgt. A. RUSSELL, D.C.M.	Pte. G. WATT, att. 5th
Pte. W. R. SANDISON	Pte. J. WATT
Cpl. C. SHAND, D.C.M.	Sgt. J. M. WATT
Sgt. J. SHAND	Pte. A. WEST
L/C J. SMITH (266,246)	Sgt. J. WEST
Pte. J. SMITH (265,042)	Pte. WILL, att. 5th
Pte. J. SMITH (265,093)	Pte. H. A. WILLIAMS
Pte. R. B. SMITH	Cpl. S. WILSON
Sgt. G. STABLES, D.C.M.	Sgt. D. WINTON
Pte. C. H. STEPHEN	Pte. G. WISELY
Pte. C. STEWART	Pte. R. WOOD
I./C. J. M. STEWART, att. 1st	Sgt. R. T. WOOD, D.C.M.
Sgt. E. L. STRACHAN	Pte. G. WRIGHT, att. 4th
Cpl. J. SUTHERLAND	

**M.S.M.**

Sgt. J. B. CORMACK	Sgt. J. ILLINGWORTH
Sgt. W. S. CUMMING	Sgt. A. PHILIP

**FOREIGN DECORATIONS.**
**Order of Danilo—Montenegro.**

Lt.-Col. J. DAWSON, D.S.O.

**Order of St. George—Russia.**

C.S.M. J. JEFFERSON, D.C.M.	Pte. W. R. WATT, D.C.M.
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**Croix de Guerre—France.**

Lt.-Col. C. J. E. CRANSTOUN, D.S.O.	Sgt. C. RAFFAN, D.C.M.
Capt. H. GRAY, M.C.	Pte. J. SMITH, M.M.
CAPT. D. MACKENZIE, M.C.	Sgt. V. VALENTINE, D.C.M., 6/7th
Sgt. F. MILNE, M.M.	Cpl. D. MUNDELL, M.M.
Lieut. I. O. MORISON, M.C.	

**Medaille Militaire—France.**

C.S.M. J. FORBES, D.C.M., M.M.	C.S.M. R. HARVEY, D.C.M.
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**Croix de Guerre—Belgium.**

C.S.M. P. E. MILTON	Cpl. J. M'PHERSON, M.M.
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**Bronze Medal for Valour—Italy.**

C.S.M. J. CRAIB, D.C.M.

**Mentioned in Dispatches.**

Lt.-Col. Rev. J. ESSELMONT ADAMS, D.S.O., M.C.	Major J. HUTCHESON, D.S.O., M.C.
Sgt. R. ALEXANDER	Sgt.-Drummer S. JACK
Sgt. A. ARCHIBALD, D.C.M.	L/C. W. JOHNSTON
Pte. J. CHREE	C.Q.M.S. W. JOSS
Capt. J. R. CHRISTIE, D.S.O. (2)	Sgt. J. MAITLAND
Capt. D. G. CLARK, D.S.O., M.C.	Sgt. C. MITCHELL (2)
Lt. Col. C. J. E. CRANSTOUN, D.S.O.	Pte. W. MORRISON
Sgt. D. DALBY	Cpl. A. M'EWEN
Sgt. J. M. DALGARNO	Cpl. J. M'GINN
Lt.-Col. J. DAWSON, D.S.O. (3)	Pte. G. McINTOSH, V.C.
Major A. A. DUFF, M.V.O., C.I.E.	Capt. K. M'KAY, M.C. (2)
Pte. J. ELDER	Lt.-Col. J. E. MACQUEEN
Capt. F. W. FINDLAY, M.C. (3)	Major W. H. NEWSON, M.C.
Capt. I. G. FLEMING, M.C.	C.Q.M.S. C. NIVEN
Capt. W. J. C. FLEMING	Sgt. A. PHILIP
C.S.M. J. FORBES, D.C.M., M.M.	R.Q.M.S. G. S. REID
Sgt. J. W. FORSYTH	L/C. J. ROBB
Lt.-Col. HON. W. FRASER, D.S.O., M.C.	Lieut. J. SCOTT
Lieut. A. G. PETRIE HAY, M.C.	Capt. P. KYNOCH SHAND
Major F. W. PETRIE HAY, M.C.	Pte. J. STUART
2nd Lieut. T. A. HENDERSON	Cpl. J. THOMSON
	Pte. J. TOPP

**To be Brevet Lt.-Col.**

Lt.-Col. J. G. THOM, D.S.O., M.C.