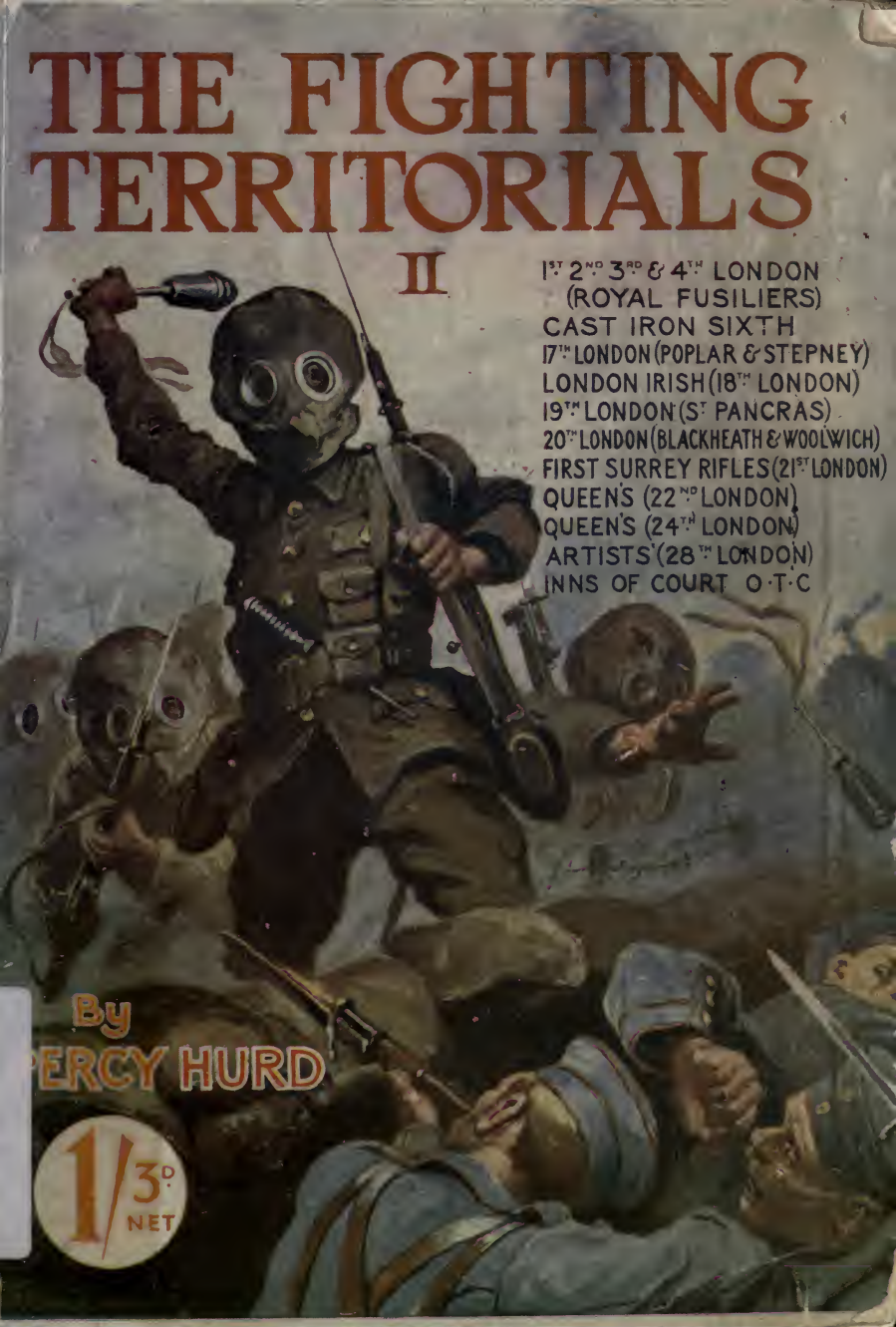
THE FIGHTING TERRITORIALS

II

1ST 2ND 3RD & 4TH LONDON
(ROYAL FUSILIERS)
CAST IRON SIXTH
17TH LONDON (POPLAR & STEPNEY)
LONDON IRISH (18TH LONDON)
19TH LONDON (ST PANCRAS)
20TH LONDON (BLACKHEATH & WOOLWICH)
FIRST SURREY RIFLES (21ST LONDON)
QUEEN'S (22ND LONDON)
QUEEN'S (24TH LONDON)
ARTISTS (28TH LONDON)
INNS OF COURT O·T·C



By
PERCY HURD

1/3D. NET

THE FIGHTING TERRITORIALS

Vol. I.

By PERCY HURD

This volume records the gallant doings in Flanders of the following Regiments :—

H.A.C.	**Kensingtons**
L.R.B.	**London Scottish**
Shiny Seventh	**Civil Service Rifles**
P.O. Rifles	**Queen's Westminsters**
Queen Victoria's Rangers	**Old Loyals**
	&c.

"I commend 'The Fighting Territorials' to all those who like tales of stirring deeds. It certainly ought to be in the hands of every recruit joining the London battalions. I have read it from the first to the last page with keen interest and many a thrill."—EDITOR, *The Regiment.*

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THE FIGHTING TERRITORIALS—II


COUNTRY
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LIFE

THE FIGHTING TERRITORIALS

BY

PERCY HURD

VOL. II

LONDON:

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NOTE

As this book was passing through the press a first official record of the fighting of the London Territorial regiments round Loos in September 1915 was published (May 20, 1916). This record appears in the Appendix on page 134.

THE FIGHTING TERRITORIALS

VOL. II

INTRODUCTION

THE Battle of Loos has been declared on competent authority to be " by far the greatest battle ever fought in British history." It lacked some of the dramatic features of earlier engagements, such as the second battle of Ypres, and it failed of its full purpose by reason of the late arrival of reserves from the New Army, the 24th and 21st Divisions. But no one, least of all the enemy, questions the conspicuous dash and valour of the 150,000 infantry engaged, and it is our especial pride in the following narrative to record the part taken by the London Territorials. The 47th (London) Division was on the right of the gallant 15th Division, while the 1st Division was on its left, the three divisions forming the 4th Corps to which the main attack was allotted. By all accounts, official and journalistic, the 47th Division even added to the renown which the London Territorials won in earlier phases of the present war. Had adequate support been forthcoming to take over their winnings, there would probably not be a German soldier in Loos or Lille to-day, and the end of the German possession of Northern France and Belgium would have been brought within reasonable distance. As it is, we have the satisfaction of knowing that London Territorial troops took their full share in sweeping through the lines and taking guns and prisoners from the army which had been the conquerors of three

great wars, the army of the hitherto invincible Prussian war machine.

In an earlier volume were recorded the doings of eleven London Territorial units; the H.A.C., the London Rifle Brigade, the "Shiny Seventh," the P.O. Rifles, Queen Victoria's Rifles, Rangers, Kensingtons, London Scottish, Civil Service Rifles, Queen's Westminsters, and "Old Loyals." The tale of the London Regiment is continued in the present volume, covering the salient doings of the other London Territorial regiments.

The narrative includes many stirring incidents of war in addition to the Battle of Loos. There is, for instance, the charge of the 3rd Londons at Neuve Chapelle. We see how, leaping over the slain strewn about the fields, they made a great bayonet charge, being cheered as they went by the Regular troops who witnessed their gallantry. The Germans fell before them, and as evening closed in they dug themselves in on the new lines they had won.

"As time goes on," said Sir John French of the Territorials after the fight, "I am still further impressed with their value. Several battalions were engaged in the most critical moments of the heavy fighting, and they acquitted themselves with the utmost credit."

In the hard fighting at Ypres the 4th Londons—most of them Hoxton men—were prominent in support of the 2nd Army, which was being sorely pressed. After a forced march of a score of miles they entrenched themselves during the night, and the following day, under a heavy bombardment, at close range, carried out their attack as if on parade.

On these and other occasions the London Territorials proved themselves as brave as they are capable, and in the less dramatic but not less essential work of keeping the line of trenches they have shown that they are the equals of the men of the Regular Army—and what higher praise than that could any troops desire? "I

would," said a General Officer of wide experience, "ask them to go anywhere and trust them to get there."

Yet only a few months ago these young men were the clerks and warehousemen of London Town. With a public spirit which has yet to receive its full record of recognition, many of them had for years devoted leisure hours to such military tasks as the Territorial force was permitted to undertake. But for their devotion to this public duty the fate of England would have been grave indeed in the days which succeeded the retreat from Mons and preceded the creation of the New Army. They filled the gap and held the line. They were the men who before the war wore their black coats and white collars, and divided their lives between quiet suburban homes and offices and shops of the Metropolis, without a thought that all this was but a prelude to participation in the world's direst melodrama of blood and death. Very many of them, as Mr. Philip Gibbs has said in his war correspondence from the Flanders front—

"pushed through the swing-doors into Government offices and did a few hours of leisurely and futile work about elementary schools and Board of Trade returns and had games of dominoes on tea-shop tables and discussed books and plays and the ideals of human progress and the suffragette problem and the Territorial system, till suddenly everything broke and England called upon her men of fighting age, and there happened—this!

"'Do you think fellows of your kind—men who have done clerical work—can stick it out as well as mechanics and agricultural labourers and men of outdoor life not requiring much head work.'

"'It looks like it,' said one of them simply. 'The Londoners did all right at Loos. On the whole our nerves are steady enough under bombardment, though we don't like it any better than other people. Pride helps—London Pride."

There are many well-to-do men in the ranks. The other day, Mr. Gibbs narrates, a private soldier, acting as orderly, waited upon an officer who had been his solicitor and had been glad to get his business. In some of the

battalions university men march shoulder to shoulder with actors, music-hall singers, commercial travellers, and shop assistants. All the types of London life are here in the ranks, and it is " London pride " that makes them good fighting men, quick to learn, and cool in action.

The task of a recorder of regimental doings while the war is still in progress becomes increasingly difficult by reason of necessary military restrictions and the large scope of the operations of modern conflict. Nothing in the way of war history can be attempted now. But what could be gathered from the headquarters of each unit and from actual combatants is here set down in a spirit of sincere admiration and a renewed faith in the high qualities of the London man. The writer's personal association with two Territorial units prompted this effort, and added to its pleasure.

Again cordial thanks are tendered to many enthusiastic friends and members of the London Territorial Force, and also to Mr. A. B. Tucker for his aid in the arduous task of gathering authentic information from so many widely scattered sources.

PERCY HURD.

May 1916.

THE 1ST LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

Three hundred years ago and more,
  Through our old London's spreading din
Came Bugler Duty, dressed for war,
  And blew a citizen's " Fall in."

The workman laid his tools aside,
  And rolled his crumpled shirt-sleeves down,
" I'll do my little share," he cried,
  " To guard the King and keep the town."

And thus they made a Fusilier
  Of horny-handed Dick and Ben,
And ever since that ancient year
  We've 'listed London's working men.

. . . . .

For when all Army Schemes are dust
  And " Little Englanders " are dumb,
Still in our workmen we shall trust,
  Still will they answer England's drum.

THESE verses, entitled " Private Citizen," were written and dedicated to the London Royal Fusiliers some ten years ago. They might have been written for to-day.

The 1st London had just gone into camp when the war broke out. It was at once recalled and mobilized. During the first month of war, August 1914, it was employed in guarding lines of communication between London and the South Coast. On September 4, 1914, it went to Malta and remained there until February, when it returned to England, arriving on the 20th. The story of Malta may be recalled with satisfaction, for it was of the 1st London and their comrades of other battalions of the City of London Fusiliers that the

Governor and Commander-in-Chief at Malta spoke when he declared in a special fortress order that:

"Their conduct has been excellent under trying conditions lately on account of the heavy and unceasing fatigue work they have had to perform. Their appearance in Valetta, the smart way in which the men salute, the alacrity of the main guard in turning out, all show the efficiency of the battalions."

The 1st London were relieved at Malta by the 2nd Battalion, which had been raised in September, and went out to Malta at full strength under Colonel T. C. Ekin. This 2nd Battalion has recently gone to another war sphere, and third and fourth battalions have since been raised.

It was on March 19, 1915, that the 1st Londons sailed for France. There they were eventually attached to the brigade comprised of the 2nd Berkshires, 2nd Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Rifle Brigade, and 13th London (Kensingtons), and within a week one of the companies, A Company, was at work strengthening trenches that had been taken in the battle at Neuve Chapelle. The next stage was a five-day stay in the trenches with the Lincolnshires. Billets in a cotton factory, a march with the Canadian Ammunition Column, and lessons in bombing and bomb-making were among the next experiences of the battalion. Of bombs a member of the unit, who by the way was a studious bank clerk in a City office before the war, says:

"A pound tin is partially filled with sacking and clay, and scraps of broken metal are put in the centre with reels of gun cotton drilled in the centre for a detonator and fuse. The fuse is a 7-second fuse, and the bomber, after lighting his fuse, hurls it four seconds afterwards. If he hurls it too soon the enemy may have time to pick it up and hurl it back."

Trenches in Spring can be most trying, and in the next trenches to which the regiment went the men were up

to their thighs in water. It was no compensation that they were close to a Chartreuse convent. Saxons were, however, in front of them and things were quiet. In another set of trenches they were shelled every day, and even a divine service had to be held to the accompaniment of shells. It was while in these trenches—they were then at Fleurbaix—that Captain Henderson fell on April 4, 1915, the first officer in the regiment to be killed. The next incident was the happy discovery of a laundry which provided baths, or rather tubs—a luxury after three weeks without a chance of a bath.

Of Captain Henderson, a regimental stretcher-bearer, in a letter dated April 26, wrote:

"I am sorry to say that Captain Henderson was shot clean through the head. He only lived a few hours. He will be greatly missed by this company, and the regiment in general, for he was a very popular officer. It fell to my lot to be one of the party to get him from the trenches. We had a rare job going along on our hands and knees, for he was wounded during the day and we could not stand up or we should have shown ourselves. We got him to a safe place behind the trenches, and the doctor thought that if he was left to rest there for a time he might stand a chance, though a very remote one. A corporal of the R.A.M.C. and I were left in charge of him until ten o'clock at night. When the regiment which took our place in the trenches arrived their doctor had Captain Henderson removed to the dressing-station. He was carefully placed on a motor ambulance and conveyed to the hospital, but died before reaching it. He was buried on Sunday in a churchyard close by."

About this time German trickery cost the battalion several men. A N.C.O. of the regiment who came home wounded, describing the life in trenches said:

"The Germans used to wave caps in order to make our men show themselves, and several men were lost in this way. Then the enemy had a way of trying to spoil a meal in the trenches. Wherever they saw smoke rise from the trench they would fire at the top of a sandbag, sending a shower of earth just where the men were brewing some tea. But this kind of compliment

could be returned, and our men took the keenest delight in putting out a German fire whenever one was lighted.

"We always knew that the Germans were up to something," said this N.C.O., "when they sent up no starlights, and then we were very watchful. One day there was a scare about a sap. The Engineers came up, but could not discover anything, although the noise went on. Three days later the noise was found to be caused by the wind through a number of old bottles. We had to be keen listeners, and the slightest unusual sound made us all alert. The trenches all had names—Bond Street, and so on, and the dug-outs were called Pine Cottage, and all sorts of names. At the Chartreuse Convent water was obtained from a pump, the only supply we had, and when the Germans blew up the pump we had to go three or four miles for water."

Later the 1st went into billets at Laventie, and suffered much from shell-fire. It was quite impossible to go out in the daytime. Among the regiment's billets were the stables where the last French Derby winner had been trained. Opposed to them were the Prussian Guards. At the rear of the trenches was a redoubt, and it was part of the duty of the 1st to hold it. From the trenches they could hear the Germans singing songs, and our men used to reply by singing English songs until singing in the trenches was forbidden.

We come now to the unhappily abortive attack on Aubers Ridge which was to gain the way to Lille—and Berlin—but did not. The 1st London went back to Bac St. Maur in May and joined their division ready for the attack at Aubers Ridge on May 9. Here valises and packs were given in to be stored. To each man were given two sandbags and 350 rounds of ammunition, and some carried small flags to be used as signals to the artillery. At midday on May 8 the battalion marched to the trenches at the rear of Aubers Ridge. The artillery opened fire at five, and soon afterwards a mine was blown up under the German trenches. At twenty minutes to six the infantry started to advance. In the front line were the Royal Irish Rifles and the Rifle

Brigade. Then in reserve came the Berkshire Regiment, the Lincolnshire Regiment, and the 13th London (Kensingtons), while the 1st London acted as supports.

The Lincolnshires and the Kensingtons got through three trenches, but the Royal Irish Rifles and the Rifle Brigade were held up by the barbed wire. The 1st London moved up into the firing line and were told to stick there. The Royal Irish Rifles having been held up on the barbed wire, the Lincolnshires and the Kensingtons were left with no supports. It was specially ordered that the 1st Londons should hang on where they were. Meanwhile the Germans were shelling them heavily. At length, at eleven o'clock, a retirement was ordered, and the division was relieved. The 1st Londons had to mourn the loss of their Brigadier-General Lowry Cole, a most popular leader. He was killed while encouraging his men. The regiment had suffered pretty severely. Immediately they left the support trenches to go forward, they were enfiladed by machine-gun fire. No. 1 Platoon, which led, had only eight men left, and other platoons who followed fared badly. But there was no hesitation on the part of the men. When the battalion got back to their trenches, it was then found that A Company had lost between seventy and eighty men, B Company had suffered much the same loss, and C and D had come out with comparatively slight loss. Private E. Brown was one of the day's heroes, and was afterwards awarded the D.C.M. in the following circumstances. He was shot in the leg, and as he was going back to our lines met a staff officer badly wounded. He stopped, took his message for him, and then carried him out of the firing line into safety. He then saw another wounded officer, one of the Royal Engineers, and saved him. He earned well the decoration which Sir John French himself pinned on his breast.

The story of Private E. Brown is thus told by a N.C.O. in a letter home :

"The chaps who were with him tell me how brave he was. He carried an officer on his back 150 yards out of the firing line after he was wounded, and the shot and shell were flying about just as if you were throwing a handful of peas at anyone. He and some more of our chaps have made a fine name for our regiment. The regular troops who were fighting with our regiment said that they never would have believed that we were Territorials, and they do speak highly of our good old regiment."

Another example of heroism was that of Colour-Sergeant Chudleigh. After the battle of Aubers Ridge, he was enlarging his dug-out when his pick struck an unexploded shell and he was mortally wounded. As he was being taken to the dressing-station, his thoughts were all for the regiment and he told those who were with him where everything that had been in his charge could be found. With his dying breath he gave information as to where regimental papers, etc., were.

Let the wish of the men of the regiment also be fulfilled and a word be said of the regimental doctor.

"He does not know what fear is," they declare. "He helped to carry in Captain Henderson when the latter fell, and at Aubers Ridge was under fire continuously. He was tireless in looking after the wounded, and on that occasion began dressing wounds at 6 a.m. on May 9, and went on practically without stopping until 8 o'clock next morning. On all occasions he was indefatigable in helping to bring in the wounded."

Men back from the front spoke of the marvellous escape of large crucifixes from destruction when all else round about was destroyed. More than one or two examples of this remarkable immunity from shells was quoted by them. And the fact seemed to appeal to their religious instincts. They could not think it was just chance.

Of the part taken by the 1st Londons in the operations of September 25–28, 1915, which we call the Battle of Loos, and which but for misadventure would have

changed the aspect of the whole war, the following report of a speech made by the G.O.C. of the division sufficiently speaks:

"Colonel Mercer, Officers, and Men of the 1st London Regiment.

"I come here this morning to convey to you personally my appreciation of your gallant conduct during the last few days.

"Your Brigadier tells me that your bombers did invaluable work in the German lines, both with the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the Rifle Brigade, that your machine gunners performed very good service under very trying circumstances and very heavy fire, and that the remainder of the battalion did everything that was asked of them, both in taking up bombs and stores to the new lines, and holding the front breast-work.

"By your work of the last three days you have upheld the reputation that I have always heard of you.

"I congratulate you, Colonel Mercer, on the smart and soldierly appearance of the battalion this morning on parade, I will not say 'in spite of difficulties,' for there is no necessity to say so, although you came in so late last night."

Originally raised in 1859 as the 19th Middlesex, the regiment later became the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, and when the Territorial Force replaced in 1908 the old Volunteers it became the 1st (City of London) Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers), being allowed in this way to keep its old traditional connection with the Royal Fusiliers. It supplied a Service Company under Captain Mercer (who is now Lieut.-Colonel Commanding the 1st Battalion) in the South African War.

The 1st City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) prides itself on its equipment; and if the Stores Department at headquarters in Handel Street, Bloomsbury, is any guide, this pride is well founded, for the department, under Sergeant T. Tutt, is an example of excellent organization. It has indeed been said that it could equip a brigade in a month. Sergeant Tutt, by the way, is an old member of that magnificent force, the Royal

North-West Mounted Police of Canada, who keep the peace in the best of British and Canadian ways in a territory equal in size to several European States, with a force of only 1,200 men. Many of its ex-members are now serving in some capacity or other with the British forces in the war.

THE 2ND LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

If the Londoner does not know and appreciate the virtues of the 2nd City of London (Royal Fusiliers) it is not the fault of that regiment or its eloquent friends. The recruit who recently narrated in the London press how he was induced to enlist in the 2nd London by Miss Olga Nethersole's persuasive pleading at a recruiting meeting in Trafalgar Square was one of many. The resource and up-to-date methods adopted by the recruiting section under Captain Rees are a model of their kind. Theatre queues, railway stations, swimming baths, and picture theatres have been systematically worked, and the appeals made in Trafalgar Square by Miss Olga Nethersole, Miss Violet Loraine, Mr. Harry Tate, Mr. George Robey, and other well-known people have been most successful. As a means of attracting a crowd to the meetings, what could be better than the drilling of a squad of men in the Square with the aid of a gramophone record?

As to its work at the Front, the 2nd London is one of those units which has been useful rather than ornamental. It has done its share of work in the trenches, but has not been in any big engagement. As we know, the essential work of the trenches exacts its toll of casualties, and entails suffering, both physical and mental, for even the strongest constitution.

When the war broke out the 2nd Londons had just gone into camp. No sooner had they begun to settle in, on the Sunday before the tempest broke, than they were

recalled and forthwith mobilized. For a time they were employed in guarding the line of the London and South-Western Railway near Southampton, during the departure of the Expeditionary Force. They arrived back in London on August 31, 1914. Under strength to begin with, the unfit for foreign service had now to be weeded out, and hence 600 men were needed to bring the regiment up to strength. These were speedily secured, and on September 4 the 2nd took their way to Malta. Here the battalion, which was more than half recruits, was trained, and the progress made in a few months won high commendation from Sir Leslie Rundle, the G.O.C. at Malta.

In the absence of the battalion a reserve battalion had been raised at the Depot in Tufton Street, Westminster, in a few days, and by the middle of December it went to Malta to relieve the 1st Battalion, which was ordered to France. Third and fourth battalions have also been raised. The 1st Battalion sailed to Marseilles and then went on a train journey of some forty-eight hours to Etaples. There it stayed three weeks and was fitted out, for it left its rifles and equipment at Malta for the use of the 2nd Battalion. In France the British Army keeps a wonderful store of equipment, and any new battalion arriving is supplied with everything it needs.

Their equipment being completed the regiment went eastward by stages to Armentières, arriving there on February 21. After a couple of days the officers and N.C.O.'s were taken to the trenches for twenty-four hours for instruction, and then companies went in by turns first for spells of twenty-four hours and then for forty-eight hours, and later for turns of four and six days—two companies in and two companies out.

In March the 2nd Londons took part in the affair at L'Epinette. In the dark and under fire, they had to dig the trenches, which were afterwards held by regulars, under heavy fire. Subsequently the 2nd themselves did their share of manning these trenches, and afterwards

went into trenches as a regiment at Houplines and there had a spell of no less than eight days.

Ypres was the next resting-place of the regiment after three days' march. Arriving early in June, they were billeted on the banks of the Yser Canal.

What tragic memories these two words, Ypres and Yser, now call up! The great bombardment of Ypres had begun six weeks or so before, when the first 42-centimetre shell fell into the Grande Place of that historic city, the pride of all Flanders. On that first day alone, fifteen children were killed as they played in the streets, and the 2nd London found all round them in their new quarters evidences of the wanton destruction of an almost daily bombardment which could have no military purpose.

"But a few weeks ago," writes a N.C.O. on June 12, "we certainly never thought it would be our luck to be brought up to Ypres, for our battalion has already had a warm time and lost rather heavily. It says something for the morale of our regiment that the whole long, momentous march to our new pastures was accomplished amid laughter and song, and already a few of those whose voices had lilted with the rest have made the sublime sacrifice and earned a military grave in unhappy Flanders.

"We hadn't been more than twenty-four hours in our new billets when we witnessed a most thrilling aeroplane adventure. A British Sopwith biplane, flying fairly low on an apparent reconnaissance over the German lines, was suddenly perceived in the midst of a number of 'shrapnel puff-balls.' We were hardly prepared for what happened; it is a common sight to see these aeroplanes defy the puny visitors from below, and a most uncommon sight to see one of them checkmated. In fact, some of our fellows hardly troubled to look at the machine even; and in consequence missed a most awe-inspiring sight. Without the slightest deviation from her course, the Sopwith forged ahead, but the usual quick deceiving swerve to safety never came, for simultaneously two shells struck the body in bursts of flame. What was happening up there can little be imagined, but the whole frail contrivance rocked unsteadily, dipped, fell, and then—with a beautiful recovery—righted itself, circled, and came swooping down to earth in a wonderful volplane quite

near our billet. We rushed over to the spot where the machine had landed, too late to help out the aviators, who already, cigarettes between lips, were surveying their wrecked machine from a few yards off, with grim smiles. I have seen some cool men in the last few months, but these two were sublime, and had I been wearing a 'civvy' hat I should have raised it to them. The aeroplane was nothing more than a lot of broken struts and canvas, a battered aluminium body and motor, all irretrievably ruined. That the pilot and observer had escaped unhurt was nothing short of miraculous, and we rejoiced accordingly that two such intrepid men should be spared to carry on the glorious work. Many of us have cut large pieces out of the canvas planes as mementoes, and I myself shall always preserve a piece as an unnecessary reminder of the 'thrill' of my life.

"A day or so afterwards we were ordered up to the firing line and for the first time in our lives we saw Ypres. In my wildest imagination conjured up by what I had witnessed elsewhere, I had never pictured such a sight. Not a house in all this large and one-time picturesque town had escaped the Hunnish rage. Nothing but black ruins and desolation remained in this town of the dead. Horrible smells, sensual witnesses of death, hung heavy in the air. Huge yawning holes made obstacles in the roadways, and as we filed slowly round them made us speculate wonderingly on the potentiality of the projectiles that caused this damage. The Cloth Hall, or rather what remained of it, was passed by on our right, and all we could see of it at the time was its large square tower surmounted by two tapering spires (it has only one spire now). The whole place beggars description—even a cinema would be inadequate to express half the horror of that smitten town. Except for us it seemed as empty as a sepulchre, yet still the Germans were sending over their shells. Jack Johnsons, Weary Willies, Swishbangs, and shrapnels—all were being used in wilful and wasteful profusion. What purpose was being fulfilled no one, least of all the Germans, knew, for the town cannot be wrecked more than it is, and one hardly knows how the work of restoration will be accomplished.

"There was much to see on our way to our shelter, but we were tired with our long march, and our spirits had become strangely subdued. Nevertheless our flagging spirits revived considerably when we came in view of our new billets. We climbed up a steep grassy bank, and on the summit looked down on the cool, placid depths of the now immortalised Yser Canal, Reflected in its historic waters were the flames of a hundred fires and candles, and as we looked across at the other bank we saw

the originals. This bank was honey-combed with dug-outs, whose black entrances shadowed the spaces within. The canal at this point was about 70 feet wide, and we crossed it by pontoon bridges, thrown across about every 150 yards. Everything looked wonderfully attractive and romantic, but I felt instinctively that the daylight of the morrow would reveal the primitiveness of our new home. But sleep was none the less sweet for this intuition, and with my valise as a pillow and my great-coat as a blanket, I was soon in mental and bodily repose."

Writing later the same N.C.O., in a letter dated June 20, said :

" The weather out here is now glorious, and the soldiers are commencing their ' summer holidays.' Under the genial influence of old King Sol the terrible experiences of an exceptionally severe winter are fast being forgotten and slipping into the dark backwood and abysm of time. Already we are finding many consolations in this life. Long service trousers have been cut down to shorts, tunics are discarded, and shirt-sleeves are rolled back above the elbows. The companies lined up ' in clean fatigue order ' present lines of unbroken health in khaki, well set off by uncovered brown knees, arms, and faces.

" We are apt to say things are very quiet here just now, yet all the time the artillery roars and the shells groan protestingly on their way. Only since last night have we missed the incessant rifle fire and the barking of the machine guns. Times are truly tranquil for us, and as I sit here I may write undisturbed. The Yser, sparkling under a tropical sun, flows sluggishly by. Between the pontoon bridges are hundreds of water lilies floating in graceful splendour, and the banks, reaching to the water's edge in thousands of reeds and rushes, are green and cool. A passer-by disturbs a moorhen which still nests imperturbably under the shell fire. A glistening green may fly flits here and there, and a silvery perch is drawn from the water by some unseen soldier anglers, sending long wave rings over the pellucid surface. In the distance a number of soldiers are rapidly disrobing, for the bathing hour has arrived, and soon the old canal will be stirred into activity. At present the ' samite white ' figures blend well with the green background, forming a delightful picture to any artistic temperament. An old home-made boat is being unmoored by some of the bathers, and will soon be paddled into mid-stream by the aid of two shovels. All this, and more, under the sombre shadows of Ypres.

" Yesterday I went down to the town to inspect the ruins. My way led along the old towing path—but twelve short months ago the shady walk for lovers. At this time a couple of regulars, rigged up in clothing probably found in one of the ruined farms near at hand, were cleverly burlesquing a young maiden and silk-hatted gentleman in amorous embrace, taking the old-time walk. The khaki puttees and regulation boots peeping out from the ' young lady's ' skirt, side by side with similar ambiguities under the gentleman's frock coat, looked a bit incongruous, but the histrionic performance, though humorous, possessed its usual pathos in ' what might have been.'

" It was not a long walk, and I soon arrived in the town. More capable men than I, by far, have failed ignominiously in endeavouring to describe the ruins of Ypres. It is one great horror, a hideous nightmare that cannot be banished from the mind, the eighth wonder of the world, and the grossest work of all ages, of the devil himself. Ruins, without a suggestion of shape, appal the eyes as long as they are open. The great fire of London must have been merciful in its course of destruction in comparison to this imbecile expression of Hunnish hate. Not a single building retains a vestige of entirety, and whole rows of houses have been demolished as completely as if the work was the labour of an army of house-breakers. Here a one-time spacious residence of some wealthy merchant exposes all its interior fittings and chaos to outside gaze. The front wall has fallen completely away, but the floors have miraculously kept their position even though the roof has fallen through. The litter of household effects is indescribable. Fine old beds, pictures, and china are smashed and covered with fallen brickwork and plaster. Private letters, documents, cheques, and bills have been ruthlessly thrown to the four winds of heaven. There, a less pretentious domicile, the life-toil of some labourer still stands pitifully with its skeleton roof, gaping empty windows, and its battered red-brick walls. How many people have lost their all here we shall perhaps never know; far worse, how many civilians must have lost their lives in their too-long delayed flight cannot be contemplated. Earthquakes such as plunged Messina into desolation would not have had such destructive consequences.

" Curiosity, of a morbid nature, led me to enter many of these ruined houses, and from one or two I rescued some valueless souvenirs. Not that I wanted any souvenir for myself, the picture of Ypres will endure ineffaceably in my mind, but there are those at home who will treasure these unhappy relics, and console themselves that these sacrifices have not been purposeless.

"The famous Cloth Hall and the Cathedral stand tottering side by side; they have lived and died together. No Britisher would like to see our much-revered Guildhall smashed to the ground, yet in comparison with the Ypres buildings, the damage would be slight. Out there one can easily see what a noble and honourable old place this Cloth Hall has been; yet hardly a square foot of masonry has escaped unscathed. In the courtyard between the two buildings the debris has made an awkward hill over which to climb, and then a pall of dust covers one in a few moments. Just outside in the middle of the square is a huge shell hole, large enough to bury completely the griffin at Temple Bar twice over. Hundreds of beautiful little statues in both Hall and Cathedral have been scattered over the floors, whilst the niches that had once been their homes have fallen down with the entire walls, sometimes many feet thick. The armoury is a litter of bricks and masonry, ancient drums, musical instruments, and old weapons. Huge supporting columns have crumpled up like match sticks, and the ornamental ceilings have crashed down into the parquet floorings. The fittings of the Cathedral, that must have been once world famous in their beauty, are now misshapen fragments. The high altar, with all its relics and ornaments, has become buried under tons of cement and stonework. Pulpits, organs, chairs, confession boxes, memorial tablets, hassocks, and drapings have all become mixed up in hopeless confusion. The few pieces of walls and galleries that do remain seem to be bowing to earth, and in danger of falling for ever. Above all the shrill of shells still sounds in sibilant mockery over this fallen splendour.

"Finis has yet to be written to the story of this terrible war, but the day will come when we shall be able to say 'Ypres has now been avenged.'"

Not much else of the doings of the 2nd London at this or any other period of its life at the Western Front is to be gained from letters home. A N.C.O. speaks with genuine sorrow of the loss of Lieutenant J. E. Richardson, "who was greatly liked by all who knew him," and of the wounding of "another well-beloved officer," Lieutenant E. E. H. Bate. The same writer says:

"On one of the days the Germans shelled the town in which we are billeted and sent over 152 shells, but beyond knocking a few houses about and killing one or two civilians, they did abso-

lutely no damage. Just behind our lines there is a small village which was once occupied by the Germans. In this village is a pretty little church with a rather prominent spire which the Germans used for a target for several days; eventually they succeeded in knocking it down, and killing an aged priest and several women and children who were at their devotions. This is a typical incident of the way in which the Germans conduct this campaign. Another instance of the infamy they practise is as follows: I was sent to hospital some time ago with a severe cold, and whilst there I made chums with a sergeant who was stone blind, through having had vitriol thrown in his eyes while making an attack. In spite of such things as these being known in England, I understand some people are advocating kindness to the enemy. They ought to serve their turn in the trenches and see some of the sights we have seen. Households ruined, whole villages laid waste, and the beautiful countryside laid bare. To hear the harrowing tales we hear, how they burnt an officer at the stake after capturing him, and in another case gouged a sergeant's eyes out and returned him to our lines; both these things happened in a regiment in our brigade. The 'peace' party would then say as we do, 'Wipe out the scum.'"

Tracing its origin, as a former Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, to the old Trained Bands, the 2nd London—of which, by the way, the King is Hon. Colonel—has, in common with other regiments claiming a like ancestry, the right to march through the city with fixed bayonets. In the Volunteer movement of 1859 the regiment came into being as the 46th Middlesex (London and Westminster V.R.C.). The old roll of the regiment at this time is still to be seen at the headquarters of the battalion in Tufton Street. When the Middlesex battalions were renumbered in 1880, it became the 23rd Middlesex. In 1883 it became the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. Then in 1908 when the Territorial Force was created to replace the Volunteers, the regiment was given its present title of the 2nd City of London Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers). Among the many distinguished men who have been officers in the regiment may be mentioned the late Right Hon. H. O. Arnold Forster, whose son is a

member of the regiment to-day. On March 2, 1900, the service company of the 2nd Volunteer Battalion joined the Depot at Hounslow, 215 years after that famous regiment was reviewed there on its formation by James II. On May 14, as part of the Fusilier Brigade under General Barton, they were the first troops to enter the Transvaal. The Service Company returned to England in June 1901. Behind them they left eight men buried on the South African veld, the silent witnesses to the devotion of the 2nd Volunteer Battalion to those principles which had been the watchword of the Royal Fusiliers since Monmouth's rebellion 230 years ago.

Let it be added that the Headquarters of the 2nd London at Tufton Street, Westminster, are among the most attractive of Territorial Headquarters.

THE 3RD LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

THE 3rd City of London (Royal Fusiliers) now has upon its records that password of heroism—"Loos." We know that high hopes were held of the consequences of that advance in the last week of September 1915, and we know also in part how far the reality fell short of those hopes. But the gain of territory and of morale was unquestionably great, and the 3rd London were sharers in the triumph.

An officer of the regiment describing their part in the battle says:

"Our division had to make an attack to cover the big advance farther south, and our brigade, the Garhwal, was the assaulting brigade. The attack was successful, and our men got through two and in some places three of the German lines. Lack of supports and a tremendous German counter-attack drove the brigade back with terrible losses. After the engagement our battalion was reduced to under 200 men. The Indian troops with whom we had been brigaded left France soon afterwards, and the 3rd London are now attached to the 47th Division. The battalion in January 1916 consisted of but one fighting company, which for active operations was attached to the 22nd County of London Regiment until it could with drafts be brought up to strength again. Since the Loos affair the remnant of the 3rd has held the first-line trench in the Hohenzollern Redoubt."

In old Volunteer days the 3rd London was known as the 3rd Volunteer Battalion (Royal Fusiliers). It was raised in 1859, and for many years had its headquarters in Edward Street. In 1911, when the old Paddington Rifles were disbanded, the 3rd Battalion London Regiment

—as the regiment became on the introduction of the Territorial Force—took over their premises in Harrow Road. These were rebuilt and completed in September 1914. In the South African War the 3rd provided a Service Company for the Royal Fusiliers.

When the Great War broke out the 3rd were mobilized before any other London regiment. On August 3, 1914, they were at full strength, and over 95 per cent. of the men had volunteered for foreign service. They were soon dispatched to Malta until early in January 1915, when they were relieved by the 2nd Battalion, and were dispatched to Marseilles, whence they proceeded to Etaples and thence to the trenches at the Indian village where they held the trenches for eight days. They were brigaded with the Garhwal Brigade of the Meerut Division with the 2nd Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment, and more Indian regiments. On March 9 the 3rd were moved up to the Estaires—La Bassée Road in front of Neuve Chapelle in readiness for the assault which took place on the following day.

Here the battalion was split up, and we must follow the fortunes of the different companies separately. C and D companies under Captain (now Major) H. A. Moore were ordered to proceed to Port Arthur, a fort made out of old buildings at the junction of the La Bassée Road and the Rue de Bois. Here they were ordered to assault some German trenches which had been assaulted by the 1/39 Garhwalis, who having slightly lost the direction found the barbed wire uncut and the German breastwork intact, this particular point having been seemingly overlooked by our artillery. The attack, after being postponed several times, took place in the afternoon at five. The companies in the meantime were partly in Port Arthur and partly in the communication trench. The Germans kept up a constant shell fire all day, and Port Arthur became an awful spot, full of dying and dead. That men could stand this hellish shelling

from ten in the morning until five in the afternoon, and then attack over 250 yards of open country against a breastwork strongly held, speaks volumes for their discipline and courage.

C and D Companies lined up at five ready for the assault. The ground before them was extremely exposed, and immediately in front of them there was a stream to be crossed, and huge shell holes and many old trenches. The German trench in front of them was a semicircle, so the enemy could fire from our left centre and right. On the right a machine gun enfiladed any advance.

At ten minutes past five the whistle blew and the men scrambled over the parapet. Immediately a terrific rifle and gun fire from the left centre and right met them and there was a continual hail of shrapnel. Men fell on all sides, but the rest went on undaunted. When a little more than half-way to the German trench, a pause was made for breath, the men taking whatever cover they could. Then the rush continued, and this time the German trench was reached, the men going through untouched barbed wire and over the breastwork. "The finest charge I have ever seen" is the phrase used by a general officer who was present, when describing this advance of C and D Companies. It was the work of a few moments to make prisoners sixty men and three officers who remained in the trench—the rest had bolted. These prisoners were sent back under escort, and every one set to work to reverse the parapet. This work was carried out at night under terrific shell fire. In the meantime a roll call had been taken, and it was found that half the two companies had fallen in the charge.

The Seaforth Highlanders came up on the left and 1/39th Garhwalis on the right, so the captured trench was now strongly held. The barbed wire was carried across the trench and put up on the enemy's side. Every moment was spent in filling the sandbags and strengthening the trench against a counter-attack.

At dawn on March 12 there were signs of movement on the enemy's part. All stood to arms and opened fire. As the daylight began, the enemy were seen to be advancing. Our rifle fire and machine guns mowed them down by hundreds all along the line, and the Germans got no farther than about 150 yards from our front, when each line that advanced was brought down to a man. The German casualties must have been very heavy. The 3rd continued to hold the trench until their brigade was relieved by another on March 14, when they went into billets at Les Lobes. The two companies, C and D, came out of the engagement very short of officers; Lieutenant Crichton was killed, and Lieutenant Morley was wounded. Captain Moore, it is pleasant to be able to add, was awarded the Military Cross and given his majority for his gallantry in leading his men in this splendid charge. Another officer—Captain E. V. Noel, a brother of Captain E. A. Noel of D Company—of A company, had a cigarette case—which had been given him by his fellow-officers on his twenty-first birthday—smashed by a bullet. Captain E. A. Noel, who had been in hospital, rejoined the battalion during the battle, and was seriously wounded within ten minutes of rejoining. One subaltern found at the end of the engagement that his coat had been riddled with shot, and that his cigarette case had been smashed by a bullet which he found in his pocket. He himself was untouched.

In the meantime A Company had been doing their share. Their orders were to clear the trench after the Leicestershire Regiment had charged, if the charge was successful. They moved up to headquarters near Neuve Chapelle, where they dug themselves in to the left of Port Arthur on the La Bassée road. After the bombardment they moved up to the second line of breastworks and there awaited orders. These came at nine, and they moved up to the first line to pick up extra ammunition for the troops already gone forward.

The orders were for them to attack the German trench on their right front in which the Germans had barricaded themselves and were doing a lot of damage by sniping. Captain Pulman and Lieutenant Mathieson and Lieutenant Stephens were killed. Captain E. V. Noel was wounded in the advance. The company was rallied by Lieutenant J. T. Reeves, the only officer left, and late in the evening they joined up with D Company. B Company had been engaged in carrying ammunition up to the firing line and in digging fresh lines of trenches under heavy fire, and had lost a good many men.

A N.C.O., writing of his experiences at Neuve Chapelle, said :

" I cannot put it in exact words. It was called a ' Street of Hell.' Well, we went into the reserve trench at night and lay there till daybreak. Then the bombardment commenced, and under cover of the guns we started. The company had orders to reinforce another regiment on our right, and we had a hot time in getting to the next lot of trenches. Then we were fetched away at dinner-time to another part which had been held since October 12. We were then told we were going to make a charge, as one part of the line was still held, and we had three hours' rest till tea-time. Time was up, and I can now see the officer seize his revolver, shouting ' Don't forget you are all Englishmen ! ' Then to the charge. There were obstacles galore. We had to climb a 7-foot wall of sandbags and drop down on the other side, and then we doubled about 100 yards, and into a trench of mud. The men were dropping all around me—a most sickening sight. In the next 100 yards were bodies and wire which we cleared all right ; then another trench, about 8 feet wide and full of water. I made the first plunge, but there being lyddite in it, I was green when I came out. But you don't wait to see if your hat is straight at such times. I got together all my men that I could, and called out ' Get ready to go.' And we did go. I was fourth. They turned the machine gun on us, but I was not hit. We kept on, and into the trench we went. Some of the Germans put up their hands ; and one of them, either an officer or a N.C.O., we caught putting his hand to his pocket, evidently to get his revolver to fire at our men. I was too close to him to fire, so I hit him with the butt of my rifle, and another finished him. What I did then

I don't know, because for the time I lost all reason. I was mad. I got my men together—all I had—and we went on the job at once of changing the front of the trench. We kept on working all night, and then they made a counter-attack; but we were ready for them. The sights in front were dreadful. I cannot tell you in writing; but even what I saw then is nothing to what I have seen since. During the engagement we sent seventy-two prisoners back with an escort. We lost two officers of our company, and in one platoon there were only eight men left."

The writer of this letter—a sergeant—was promoted to be sergeant-major on the field.

After the battle at Neuve Chapelle the 3rd did their turn in the trenches, or rather their double turn, for they could not be relieved because the Lahore Division went to Ypres and the Meerut Division had to work double turns.

About two o'clock in the morning on Sunday, May 9, the 3rd took up their position as a battalion for the big battle at Festubert, with its brigade in reserve. The bombardment began at 5.30 a.m. on May 9, and the assault took place shortly after. About two hours after the assault began the 3rd got orders to move up to the support trenches immediately behind the first-line trenches. This advance was made over open country under shell fire. Two separate assaults were made, the 3rd being in immediate support in the second. Neither assault was successful. The 3rd were ordered to stand fast and were not called upon to charge. That night they took over the first-line trenches from the regular battalion that had made the assault. The two regular battalions who had made the assaults had suffered severely. The 3rd had to sit down and hold the trench and build it up again, as it had been badly knocked about. They held this trench for days under shell fire all the time. Hundreds of dead were lying out in front of them, and the situation was horrible—indescribable in its horror. On May 15 a big night attack was carried

out, but this was also unsuccessful. After a special bombardment at eleven, the assault began at 11.30. The assault having failed, the 3rd were left in their trench. Another assault was ordered after dawn next day, but after four or five platoons had got over the parapet to make the assault, it was at once seen that the assault could not succeed and the men were ordered to retire. In the circumstances the regiment was fortunate in losing comparatively few. Major Moore, Lieutenant Hammerton, and Lieutenant Agius were wounded.

On the first day of the battle Company Sergeant-Major Murray of D Company, who had been awarded the D.C.M. for gallantry at Neuve Chapelle, was killed by a shell. Major H. A. Moore, in whose company Sergeant-Major Murray served, in writing of him says:

"He was beloved by us all, from the Commanding Officer down to the newest joined private—a splendid man and a splendid soldier—brave and courageous to a degree, and I shall miss him sadly."

The following excerpts from letters written by Sergeant Brabrook, who was afterwards killed in action, have a pathetic interest. Writing on March 15 he said:

"I shall be glad when it is all over. The noise of the guns and bursting shells makes one deaf and dizzy. We had to go through water up to our waists to get our position, and then sit and kneel about with clothes drying on us."

Another letter, dated "April 22 or 23," says:

"While people at home are in bed we out here are longing for daylight, for our busiest times are at night. At three in the morning we look into the heavens for break of dawn, for it is then that the Germans fire away for all they are worth. They send up starlights as fast as they can; it's like a display of fireworks. You can hear the skylarks singing in the air when there is a lull in the firing, and yet it isn't daylight. There is no

chance for any other bird to play around here, for every tree has been hit, and the place is a wreck. . . . I could do with a jolly fine sleep now; you don't get much time on this job; I wish I could forget it. . . . Water is too precious to wash with; you want all you can get to drink, and we hardly get enough for that. I shall have to go a week before I can get a wash. . . . I don't think I shall want to go to Hendon to see aeroplanes, I see too many of them here. They are up all day long here; it's very interesting to watch the Germans firing at them, but our boys show no fear. I have seen as many as fifty shot at them, but they never seem to get near enough."

Captain C. E. Rochford, writing to Mrs. Brabrook to announce that the gallant sergeant had been killed said:

"I am writing to express my very sincere sympathy with you in the death of your husband, who was killed by a shell while advancing in an attack on a German trench. He had been with me ever since we left England, so I knew him well. He was a splendid man and a splendid soldier."

An insight into life in billets is given in a letter written by a member of the regiment. He wrote:

"The French peasants are delighted with us, and they go out of their way, even without payment, to help us get anything we want in the way of food. Often and often they have given us what they had without asking a centime in return, but we always make it up to them when our money is paid. It is a common thing to see in a peasant's house tins of American meat, Australian rabbit, and Californian fruit. It is really funny to see the French children trying to learn English from the label of a cornbeef tin. Wherever it is insisted upon that a money payment shall be made—and we have to do more insisting than the French people—an order is written out by the officer in command and it is honoured by the first paymaster who comes along. I will give you an idea of the perfection of our Army Service Corps, and I hope that the soldiers' relatives are being treated half as well as their boys at the front. One day I and my mates got tired of stew and bully beef, and the usual menus we have had. 'Let us have a steak and chips,' said one man. 'Right-o,' shouted a crowd, and so I went down to the master-cook, and asked him to give me a steak and chips for six, but he merely swore at me. 'You can have your bloomin' steak,' he said, 'but

you will have to find your own —— chips.' I got two men to go into an adjacent field and dig up potatoes, and sure enough they went out under a hail of 'black marias' and 'coal boxes' and brought in a good quantity of spuds. Then right in the trenches we sat down to cook a meal, and I can assure you that the steak and chips we had on the banks of the Lys was better than any other we have ever tasted."

It is impossible within a brief chapter to do more than give an outline of the doings of a regiment which has seen as much fighting as this battalion has done, but enough has been said to show that the 3rd Londons have won a high place among the London Territorials as a fighting regiment in Flanders. Their spirit might be illustrated by a hundred instances. Let two suffice. One of the corporals of the regiment is fifty-two years of age. After failing to pass the doctor twenty-two times, he shaved, bought a new set of teeth, and was enlisted.

Captain Leslie G. Rix, of Crouch End, London, N., whose duty it has been to censor the letters of men of the regiment, writing in December 1915, says:

"Reading through their letters home one notices the same trait, never letting their wives and mothers know that they get soaked to the skin with rain, or frozen with cold at night; and I have even come across some letters written home where the family is in a poor way, urging them not to worry or spend the hard-earned pence in sending out cigarettes or parcels, as they can manage very well without.

"The spirit of the men is just marvellous to see. We are now in a small town, some way from the firing line, and although we arrived here all covered with mud and dirty, the next morning everyone turned out with shining faces and polished boots and buttons, just as if they'd never heard the roar of an H.E. or the scream of shrapnel, and were back again on the barrack square in old England."

It is not too much to say that those in authority have trusted the 3rd London as if it were an old and tried regular battalion.

A few words should be said of the excellent work done by the 3rd London Reserve Battalion, officially known as the 2/3rd London. This battalion was formed to reinforce the 1/3rd; but instead of serving as reinforcements was sent out to Malta as a unit to relieve the 1st battalion in December 1914, as already stated. The 2/3rd after staying in Malta for three months went to the Sudan to relieve the 7th Battalion Manchester Regiment. For six months the 2/3rd London was the sole British unit in the Sudan. From the Sudan it went to the Dardanelles, where it joined the 86th Brigade, of the famous 29th Division, at Suvla Bay. Ten weeks of fighting there in the terrible storm of November 28, 1915, reduced the battalion to four officers and forty-four men. This small remnant of the battalion formed part of the rear-guard at the evacuation of Suvla Bay, and was therefore one of the last to leave.

Thus the 3rd Battalion City of London has made a splendid name for itself in France, Malta, Egypt, and Gallipoli.

THE 4TH LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

FEW London Territorial regiments have seen more fighting or suffered more severely than the 4th (City of London) Battalion, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers). "The men," said an officer serving in the same brigade at the Front, "of the 4th London are magnificent." As is the case with a number of the London Territorials, not much has been heard at home of the doings of the 4th London, but at the Front they have earned an enviable reputation.

When war broke out the 4th Londons were in camp. They were immediately recalled and mobilized. At first they were employed in guarding the line of the South-Western Railway between London and Bordon. At the end of August they were brought back to London and on September 3, 1914, were dispatched to Malta. Here they underwent strenuous training—rendered necessary by the fact that there were a goodly number of recruits in the regiment. At Malta the regiment soon won praise for its smartness. Sir Leslie Rundle, the G.O.C., was highly pleased with it, and in December declared the regiment to be quite fit for active service. On January 3, 1915, the 4th sailed for Marseilles, being relieved by a reserve battalion which had in the meantime been raised at home. From Marseilles it went to Etaples and thence in stages to Ham-en-Artois, where it joined the Ferozepore Brigade of the Lahore Division. Brigades in which there are Indian troops consist of five battalions —not four as in the case of British brigades—two British regiments and three Indian regiments.

From Ham-en-Artois the 4th went to Neuve Chapelle via Calonne, and were in time to act as reserves at Richebourg St. Vaast on the last day of the battle of Neuve Chapelle (March 10–12, 1915). The battalion was heavily shelled and had many casualties. After the battle the 4th Londons continued to take their turn in the trenches and in making barricades, etc.

An insight into the doings of the regiment about this time is afforded by a letter from a private written on March 20. He says:

"The place from which I am writing is completely in ruins, and we are miles away from any people. We are right up in the thick of it now, and are being continually shelled by Germans, but they can't shoot straight for toffee; all they manage to hit is the village church. . . . A bit of excitement came to me last Thursday night. I was on the march to the trenches with the battalion when my machine [the writer is in the Cyclist Section] broke down owing to the heavy pack which was on it. I had to fall out and wait till the battalion had marched by, and then I got left behind. I lost my road and ultimately found myself in the midst of rifle fire, so I lay down in a ditch by the road and waited a while. Voices came to me from a distance. They proved to be the voices of three of the Black Watch, and so I got some food and a night's rest. In the morning I started off again and managed to get right up in the front trench, where I found the 3rd Battalion. There were heaps of dead Germans in these trenches which had been captured by our men. There were helmets and all sorts of stuff about, and I could see other German trenches. Some of the sights were too awful to mention."

The writer's next experience was a spell of ten days with no boots off—such is life at the Front.

A forced march of thirty miles to Vlamertinghe was another of the experiences of April 1915, and it says much for the condition of the men that very few fell out in that long tramp. They paraded next morning and were informed that they were going with the division to attack next day. They arrived at St. Jean, to the east of Ypres, at about 11 a.m. on April 26, and dug

themselves in. At 2 p.m. they received orders to advance to support trenches. Whilst advancing they had to cross open ground under terrific shrapnel and high-explosive shell fire. Here they met the retreating French Colonial troops, who had been badly gassed. In spite of everything the 4th went gallantly on without wavering. They took their place in the support trenches, which were in a bad state, and half the battalion had to dig fresh trenches. There they spent the night. Next day (April 29) at 12.20 p.m., they received orders to attack the German trenches 800 yards away. Most of the officers realised the hopelessness of the task, for there had been no preliminary bombardment of the German position, but they also knew that this attack was part of a predetermined scheme. The men advanced and extended magnificently under heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. To quote the words of an officer of the division, "The boys of the 4th extended as if on a field day." The distance to cover was long, and the men fell on all sides under a rain of shot and shell. One high-explosive shell dropped in the midst of them, and practically wiped out half a platoon. By this time the battalion had got within 100 yards of the enemy's trench, the ranks were so depleted that no further advance was possible. An officer wounded in the advance spoke afterwards with the warmest praise of the regimental stretcher-bearers, who went about attending to the wounded under heavy fire all the time.

At night time the 4th were relieved and went back to the reserve trenches and stayed there until May 3. After the battle it was found that the regiment, which had gone into action about 600 strong, could only muster some 200. But they had done what they were meant to do. The Brigadier informed them that the attack they had made, though appearing hopeless, was invaluable, as it was a feint, and had saved three divisions from the possibility of being cut up.

A N.C.O. in a letter to the *Territorial Gazette* gave a capital though brief sketch of the regiment's life at the Front. He wrote on May 29 :

" Though we have been out at the Front since January 5, nothing is heard of our doings. Other battalions have long accounts of their doings in all the papers, while for all people know the 4th Battalion has ceased to exist. We have been actually in action since March 10, when we were in reserve at Neuve Chapelle. We did not actually charge the enemy or anything brave like that, but we had the pleasure of being without shelter under heavy shell fire. It was here that our first casualties happened. We lost eighteen men wounded, but nothing has been mentioned about that little affair. From that date till April 25 we did alternate times with other battalions, both firing line and reserve. On April 24 the Canadians were cut up at Ypres, and we received the order to proceed there ; we performed the journey of thirty miles with only four hours' sleep in between. Nothing was mentioned about this little performance. On April 26 we went into action at Ypres and advanced under heavy shell fire to within 200 yards of the enemy's front line, but unfortunately, owing to the use of gas by the Germans, we were forced to retire, as we had no respirators. Here we suffered further casualties, including some officers and our Colonel, who was very badly gassed. On April 27 we were ordered again to attack a strong position of the enemy. Though we suffered heavily on the first day, there was no hesitation when the order came along the line. On this day we had to cross at least 1,000 yards of entirely open ground with no cover whatever.

" The Huns were throwing 15- and 17-inch shells at us as we advanced, and we came under a perfect hail of rifle and machine-gun fire. But the men never faltered, although comrades were falling all around us. It only served to spur us on. We got to within 100 yards of the enemy's line when they gassed us, and we had to retire. Our casualties numbered, at the very least, 200 N.C.O.'s and men, but nothing has been mentioned of this little performance. Incidentally I might mention that since we returned from Ypres the Brigadier made us a speech in which he stated that by our conduct on April 27 we saved three divisions from complete annihilation. Not bad for the despised 4th Battalion. After returning from Ypres we had a few days' rest, then off to the firing line again, where we are at the moment of writing."

A letter from a private in the regiment gives further incidents of the battle—incidents which show that the officers were worthy of the fine fellows whom they commanded. One passage in the letter is as follows:

"Captain Clarke with some thirty men, all that remained of the leading company, advanced to within 200 yards of the trenches. It was during this advance that Lieutenant Coates, who had carried out a useful reconnaissance of the position on the previous day, was killed whilst leading his platoon. Major L. T. Burnett, who was in command of the battalion during the whole of the operations at Ypres, decided that the advance could not be pushed farther except under cover of darkness. The two supporting companies under Captain Duncan-Teepe then advanced, and although their loss was heavy they successfully reached the advanced position. Captain C. R. E. Saunders, who was in command of D Company, fell mortally wounded during this advance, but cheered his men on, shouting as he fell, 'Never mind me, boys! Push on! Push on!' The heaviest casualties were, however, in the machine-gun detachment. To reach the position allotted to them a large stretch of open ground had to be crossed, and one by one the men were shot down as they advanced. Lieutenant Pyper, with one gun, nearly reached the position, but the remaining gunner was shot down at his side, the gun damaged, and he himself was wounded and compelled to fall back. Lieutenant Walker, with one of the remaining guns, managed to fire about 500 rounds before he was badly hit. One of the lance-corporals, a young fellow of about twenty, was ordered to get up ammunition which was badly needed. Although twice shot down by high-explosive shells, he pluckily carried out his duty. The number of those who lost their lives on this day would certainly have been greater but for the splendid work of Dr. Hurd, the medical officer, and of the stretcher-bearers. Corporal Fulford was promoted to the rank of sergeant by the Commanding Officer on the field of battle in recognition of his gallant conduct in organizing the carrying in of wounded men during the engagement, thereby saving many lives."

Another private—the men of the 4th are excellent letter-writers—writing home on April 30 said:

"To see the boys advance with Major Burnett was a picture, but I am sorry to say that we have lost about half the battalion.

We are not much good for action yet awhile. We had a draft of 100 men of our reserve from Barnet to help us, and they came straight from England to the trenches. Two got killed by a shell and eight were wounded, and the men said that they never realised what it was like out here until they came, and they were horrified at the awful sights. The Germans rained shell after shell, and set a church and a lot of houses round it alight. . . . It was wicked to see the French and our troops coming out of the trenches smothered in yellow powder and coughing through the fumes and looking half dead. Our Colonel had not been long in the trenches when he caught the gas and was carried out on an ambulance. We are now having a rest, and are taking off our boots and puttees for the first time for over a week."

A good story is also told by another private. He wrote on May 4:

"We went into action in that mad place called Ypres; it was either their breaking through us or us through them, and we did it, but we lost more than half the battalion. No. 11 Platoon was almost wiped out by a 'Jack Johnson,' which killed twenty and wounded ten; there are just a few left in the platoon. If I had been in my right place I should probably have been killed, but while we were advancing from the reserve trenches to the attack, I noticed that the Germans were sending 'Jack Johnsons' and shells to the house we had to pass, so when we got near the building I skirted it and escaped the shell which landed in my platoon and finished it. We got within fifty yards of the enemy's trenches, and the Germans went mad and stood on top of their trenches firing at us. While waiting for the Connaught Rangers and Gurkhas to come up on our left before we charged, a lance-corporal came and asked the officer for two volunteers to fetch in a wounded man. Another chap and I went and got him in. I took my rifle and overcoat, and my mate had his rifle only; with these we made a stretcher, and got him half-way across a field on which the Germans had a machine gun trained. Shells were dropping about, so we had to lie down in a ditch for about three hours, but we got our man in. It was no good going back to our battalion until night, and then when we tried to reach it we heard sounds of groans, so we spent two hours fetching in wounded. We had a sleep in one of our reserve trenches and the next morning found the battalion. I had not been in the trench more than ten minutes before the Germans sent over a shell that 'gassed' us. I couldn't see for

about half an hour, and I thought I had better make out my 'time-sheet,' but I got through all right.

"About dinner-time we heard some firing quite close, and on looking over the trench I saw our men's rifles pointing in the air. There was a German aeroplane over our trenches; it was rather high up until it got to our trench, and then it dipped to about 150 to 200 yards. We sent a volley at it, and brought it down like a wet sack; the observer was killed and the pilot captured; the machine was riddled with bullets. When we were released we dreaded going out of the trenches, owing to the continuous shelling of Ypres town, which we had to pass, but we got through all right. On arriving in the town, which was still being shelled, we found that one shell had caught a small transport of nine horses and a cart, the driver being wounded. The horses were in a ditch, but as it was impossible to get them out alive an officer gave orders for them to be shot. It fell to my lot to do this, but it was no easy job, for my rifle was very dirty. By the time I had put the poor beasts out of pain all the company had disappeared, and I was in Ypres town by myself! If I had been in a Brooklands motor race, I reckon I should have come in first easily when I proceeded to catch up to my unit."

The 4th Battalion, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) is descended from the Tower Hamlets Regiment of Trained Bands formed in 1643. In 1794 The Tower Hamlets furnished a Volunteer Regiment which was reorganized from the Trained Bands and ultimately, in 1877, the Tower Hamlets Rifle Volunteer Brigade became a Volunteer Battalion of the Rifle Brigade. In 1903 the battalion became the 4th Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers. In 1908, when the Territorial Force was established, the regiment kept its old number and became the 4th (City of London) Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers). It should be noted that the battalion supplied one officer and thirty-eight rank and file to the C.I.V. for service in South Africa, and two officers and sixty-one N.C.O.'s and men were attached to other units during the Boer war. Since the outbreak of the Great War the 4th has raised, besides the battalion already mentioned as serving in Malta, a 3rd battalion and a 4th.

THE "CAST IRON SIXTH"

(6th London)

"CAST IRON" is the name earned by the 6th City of London (Rifles) some few years ago while in camp at Salisbury, when the powers of endurance of the men called forth much commendation. It seemed impossible to tire them on the march, yet the regiment is largely recruited from the printing trade, from men who lead an indoor life. Living up to their reputation, the 6th Londons hold the record in the Great War of actual service in the trenches for ninety-three days.

The regiment can trace its origin to the formation of the Volunteer Force in 1859. The title was then the 25th Surrey Rifles. In 1864 the 48th Middlesex R.V. was formed and the 25th Surrey Rifles amalgamated with that regiment. At a later date two companies of the 4th London Rifles joined the 48th Middlesex. In 1874 the 2nd London Rifles was formed by Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode and named the Printers' Battalion; and soon after formation the 48th Middlesex amalgamated with the 2nd London. The Duke of Cambridge was Hon. Colonel, and after his death Earl Roberts succeeded. The title of the regiment became as it is now on the formation of the Territorial Force.

War came as a thunderclap to the 6th. On August 1, 1914, the regiment arrived in camp at Eastbourne. The same night they were ordered back, were mobilized on Wednesday, August 4, and remained in London until August 19, when they marched out 1,029 strong, and remained in training at Bisley, East Grinstead, and Crowborough, Watford, until March 1915, when they left for

the Front. On arrival in France their first billets were at Rimbert. On March 22 they were inspected by Sir John French and Sir Douglas Haig; and on March 24 marched to Bethune, where they were billeted in an orphanage that was more or less in ruins. On March 26 one company went into the trenches, and other companies had their first experience of trenches on the following days. Their baptism of fire was at La Bassée on their way to an inspection, and some days were also spent in digging new trenches under fire. On April 2 the first man to be killed in the battalion was shot in the fire trench. At this time the companies were taking turns in the trenches. On the 3rd the 6th lost their first officer, Major Myer, who was killed. Some days afterwards the battalion was moved back to Rimbert, where it practised trench digging and bomb throwing, etc. On the 18th they marched to Bethune and thence to Cuinchy, where for the first time they took over some trenches as a battalion. Then came days of more trench digging, route marching, and so on until May 4, when the 6th took over some trenches at Festubert.

On May 9 fire was opened by 1,100 guns on the German line at Festubert. Half the 6th were in the trenches and half in supports. They were instructed to hold the trench at all costs. A charge was made on their left, but the 6th remained in their trenches until relieved at 9.30 p.m. on May 10. They went into general reserve, but moved on May 12 to Gorre and supplied night working parties, etc. On the 16th they went into reserve trenches at La Plantain under very heavy fire. On the 17th some of the men counted over 200 shells sent at them by the Germans, but there was only one casualty. That evening the 6th paraded for the trenches, and, as happens too often, the getting into the trenches was not managed without casualties. All went well at first, but when at the bottom of the now famous Willow Road two " Jack Johnsons " fell among the men, killing 11 and

wounding 35, among the casualties being Captain Cotton, Lieutenant Gregory, and Lieutenant McLaughlin, all of whom were killed. After a day in billets the 6th again went into trenches at Gorre and again suffered some casualties, one shell killing one man and wounding six. On the 21st the Germans started shelling the Canadians, and some of the men of the 6th got blown out of their dug-outs. On May 22 the Germans began shelling the breastworks of the 6th at 5.30 in the morning and kept up the bombardment until 4.30 in the afternoon. Canadian wounded kept coming in from the trench in front, and the stretcher-bearers of the 6th were allowed no rest. Captain Booth and Lieutenant Garrod of the 6th were killed that day. On the 23rd the Germans made an attack at night, but it was repulsed.

Of the engagement which took place on May 25 and 26 at Givenchy a rifleman sent the following description to the *Territorial Gazette*:

"Just a few lines to let you know that the 'Cast Iron' 6th is still in existence. . . . As no doubt you know, our brigade took part in a recent big battle in which it suffered severe losses, and during a heavy bombardment by the Germans our communication wires got broken. Two men, Rifleman Layton and Rifleman Lambert, set out to mend these wires, but, sad to say, they never returned. The bombardment was growing more severe when Rifleman Burke, of the Signallers, volunteered to run a wire from the firing line to headquarters. This seemed almost certain death, as the road which he was to take was nothing but a death-trap. The road—the famous Willow Road—was being heavily shelled when he set out, but somehow he managed to get the wire through this 'hell of fire,' for which he has just been awarded a well-deserved D.C.M. Lance-Corporal Gordon, of the stretcher-bearers, worked for four days and four nights under heavy fire attending to the wounded, and also gave the Canadians a helping hand with their wounded and killed until he himself was badly hit in the face, but still his determined pluck would not allow him to leave off until ordered to do so by an officer. This is the spirit which prevails amongst the Terriers at this present moment, who for the past four months have borne the brunt of the fighting. The death of our Captain (Captain W. L. Booth)

caused deep regret amongst the company. Always known to be a man who at the most dangerous and exciting moments remained cool and collected—it seemed impossible for him to get flurried. I remember the last night he lived. We were expecting an attack by the Germans. He was sitting on a firing platform, calmly smoking a cigarette, and giving out orders to his officers and N.C.O.'s. His perfect demeanour gave his men confidence in him ; he always had a cheerful word for the man on the look out ; and his untimely death was a big blow to all."

But it was in the fateful battle of Loos in September 1915 that the 6th Londons, like other Territorials, had their severest test. For some time previously there had been indications of a big move on the front facing Loos and away to the left. A N.C.O. of the battalion who took part in the engagement tells us of his experiences in a narrative specially prepared for this volume :

" On the night of September 24 we found ourselves wandering from Les Brebis into our old position at Maroc. We had heard nothing but big guns for the last week, but close up to the line one had to shout hard to be heard. Very little reply was made by the German guns, and we wondered how much they were saving up for us.

" A Company were to take the first German line, B Company the second, C Company an intermediate line, and D Company were to bring up the rear with picks and shovels and get them into use with all speed. In the attack we had to change direction. Our first objective was left of the Double Crassier, and as we went over at a point facing right of the Crassier, it was a case for left incline, take the first line, right incline and carry on.

" About 6 a.m. on the 25th our guns started a tremendous bombardment—not that they had been silent previously. Gas was sent over in large quantities from our advanced trench, and smoke bombs with red-brown fumes were thrown out to give a better screen for the advance. The sight and noise can never be described with justice, shells of all sizes tearing through the air and bursting, trench mortars, in fact everything in the way of explosives all doing their best to kill or terrorise.

" Just before 6.30 a.m. the first line went over, and with the others following in splendid order the battalion made a grand show, but they certainly did not look like natives of heaven or earth. Grey gas helmets over their heads, loaded with bombs or ammunition, they advanced at a walk, with rifles at the slope. In the first thirty yards shell fire caused heavy losses, and the fire

of machine guns almost made a wall of lead that could be felt. None turned back, and soon it was a case of hand-to-hand fighting and a brisk exchange of bombs. It was a stiff fight, but in the end the Germans gave way and our objective was gained and held. C Company met with no resistance at the intermediate line, so carried on to the front and reinforced the front trench.

"Heavy covering fire from our machine guns in the houses at the rear must have caused much trouble to the German reinforcements; their big guns had a good search for the tormentors.

"It was a cheerful sight for the returning wounded to see the field-pieces limbered up and advancing along the road, which a few hours previously had been under severe rifle fire. The 15th Kitchener's Division and the 47th London Division can well be proud of the advance made on the right flank of one of the greatest battles in history.

"Perhaps it is out of place to mention any particular officers when all behaved in the usual splendid British manner, but for coolness and courage of the highest order Major Whitehead and Captain Goord have no superiors in the opinion of one who has seen."

Another N.C.O. who also went through the Loos engagement contributes this narrative:

"On Thursday, September 23, the battalion left Houchin, where, with the 7th and 8th Battalions, we had been practising the attack on a position marked out to represent the trenches in front of Loos, which we took by assault on Saturday, September 25. Thursday night we were billeted at Noeux-les-Mines, a mining town about six miles from North Maroc, where our trenches were situated.

"On the evening of the 24th at 5.50 the battalion fell in, to march to the trenches. Each man was carrying two days' rations, 250 rounds of ammunition, and his greatcoat rolled up in a bundle to be deposited in a schoolroom at Les Brebis, A and B Companies and C and D Companies marching together by platoons. All the boys were in the best of spirits, singing and joking with the inhabitants as they marched through the town. When we arrived at Les Brebis, greatcoats were stacked. D Company then drew picks and shovels and every man carried three sandbags, as this was the company detailed to consolidate the German first-line trench after it had been captured.

"Leaving Les Brebis, we marched to Grenay, where the entrance to the communication trenches was situated. Alternate men of A and B Companies following one another, C and D Companies following suit, we reached our objective about 1 a.m., after a

very tortuous journey. A and B Companies occupied our front line and C and D Companies the support line.

" The men then sat or laid down, some to sleep, others to talk of the coming attack. All the time the shells from our own guns were screaming over us and bursting with deadly accuracy in the German trenches. Rain began to fall, but it had no effect on the spirits of the boys, who realized that at last after many months of waiting they were coming to grips with the hated enemy. They were laughing and joking, with the everlasting ' fag ' on, and talking about incidents that had occurred since we had mobilized. A few short hours later and many of them had answered ' The Call.' Officers and sergeants then compared watches, as the attack was timed to take place at 6.30. A and B Companies were to go for the German second line, C Company the intermediate line, and D Company the German first line.

" Punctually at 5.50 a.m. our artillery opened a terrific bombardment. At the same time the R.E.'s turned on the gas and smoke, under cover of which we were to attack. The men then put their smoke helmets on and anxiously waited the time to go ' over the top.' Meanwhile the Germans were shelling our front and support lines furiously; their aim was perfect, the shells bursting almost on the edge of the trenches.

" At 6.25 a.m. the word was passed along, ' Get ready.' Punctually at 6.30 a.m. our officers shouted, ' Come on, boys,' and over we went. Pals began to fall all around us, but nothing stopped us—we intended taking the German trenches. The boys marched on at about six paces interval. All the time shells were bursting over and about us; machine guns on the Double Crassier (a big slag heap on our right, which the Germans had fortified) were pouring a deadly enfilading fire into us. We eventually reached the German trench, which was about 700 or 800 yards away from our own, and took the first line with very little resistance.

" Word was then passed for all to go on to the second line. By this time different units, the 7th, 18th, and 19th London Regiments were all mixed up. Officers and N.C.O.'s collected men and carried on; we captured the second line. The Germans in this trench put up a fight, but were no match for our boys, many surrendering, putting their hands up, crying, ' Bon Kamarad.' Many dead Germans were in this trench, some from our gas, but the majority from our shell fire, the condition of their trench testifying to the deadly accuracy of our artillery.

" About this time we began to feel the effects of the gas in the section of trench we occupied. I got out of the trench and was shot in the leg by a German officer. The Germans were

shelling our supports, the 8th Londons, who were coming over to our assistance. Eventually I crawled to our dressing-station in North Maroc."

Many duties are allotted to riflemen, apart from the time they spend in the actual firing line. There are fatigues, and they are divided into parties for digging, sandbag-filling, for trench improvement, rations, water, and ammunition carrying, barbed-wire cutting, and as runners, work often performed under the most difficult and dangerous circumstances. Then there are various details, such as machine gunners, trench mortar section, bomb throwers, and transport, all making perfect the organization, working separately but effectively in unison. There are also the patrols which go out at night. The N.C.O. already quoted relates how a German patrol advanced within 20 yards of the line of the 6th one night.

"To fire on them would have caused a commotion and danger to a working party not far distant from them, and so a lance-corporal, to cope with the situation, ordered huge boulders of blackened chalk to be thrown at the Germans, who mistook them for unexploded bombs and therewith crawled away, this good fortune to themselves being counterbalanced by a poisonous gas bomb, which had been thrown into our trench, not exploding."

To this may be added another little narrative:

"The 6th were entrenched, and were being heavily bombed from trench mortars, which were causing much damage. Sergeant Barrett stood near Lance-Corporal X, and when one of these deadly missiles came flying towards them suddenly interposed his body and pushed the lance-corporal away. The bomb burst, and mortally injured Sergeant Barrett, while the lance-corporal was knocked senseless. The latter was borne away rapidly to the dressing-station, then to the base, and home to England. He never saw his preserver again; but yesterday a stretcher-bearer, also invalided back, told him Sergeant Barrett's last words: 'Tell X I'm so glad I saved him.' The rescued man broke down and wept."

The 6th Londons, it will thus be seen, have done heroic service, and Fleet Street is proud of them.

THE 17TH LONDON (POPLAR AND STEPNEY)

THE records of the 17th London are a splendid illustration of the fighting qualities of the Cockney. It is recruited mainly from the working-class districts of Poplar and Stepney, and claims the distinction of having raised more recruits than any Territorial Regiment in the United Kingdom. Everywhere recruiting becomes more difficult; but so ready is the response in the case of the 17th, that it has provided drafts of men for another regiment. The East End is innately patriotic, and Captain W. Stableford, the Officer Commanding the Administrative centre, has known how to appeal to its patriotism and capacity for service. Poplar and Stepney are never allowed for a moment to forget that they have a regiment which is peculiarly their own, and which is locally known as "our own 17th"—and that it is their duty to see that it shall not want men. The type of men the regiment gets is of the hard sturdy working class—men who can go through a twenty-two mile route march without a complaint. Captain Stableford managed, with the assistance of Messrs. Bryant & May and Dr. Wilson Clyne and others, to equip a drum and fife band, and the excellent headquarters of the regiment in Tredegar Road, Bow, are as attractive as the headquarters of a Territorial regiment should be.

The 17th Londons, like many another battalion, were in camp when the war broke out. They were recalled and mobilized, and were sent for training to St. Albans

and then to Hatfield. Then, after another stay at St. Albans, they were ordered to the Front at the end of February 1915. Under the command of Colonel Godding, the battalion went out at full strength. Meanwhile a second battalion had been raised; and on the departure of the 1st Battalion for the Front, Captain Stableford started immediately to raise a third battalion, which by April 1915 was 600 strong. Captain Stableford set himself the task of raising 200 men a week, and by the middle of May drafts had been supplied to the 2nd Battalion to bring it up to full strength after it had supplied men to the 1st Battalion, and the 3rd was 1,000 strong. No sooner was the 3rd Battalion completed than the formation of a 4th Battalion was started.

The 1st Battalion landed in France 1,150 in numbers and proceeded to Winnezeel, and after being at Hurionville and Bethune went into trenches for the first time at Richebourg. A letter from Colonel Godding, received towards the end of March, pays a high tribute to the readiness of the men to uphold the honour of the British flag and to gain a reputation for themselves and the district from which they came. One of the men writing home in March spoke of the warmth of their welcome in France:

"The people gave us a magnificent reception, especially the children, who crowded round us for souvenirs in the shape of buttons, badges, and biscuits. The first billets were in barns and stables, within hearing of guns and sight of the bursting shells, especially at night. . . . I always thought France was a lovely place," adds the writer, "but give me Bow Road any day or even St. Albans."

On April 4 Colonel Godding writing to headquarters said:

"The battalion is in excellent condition. We are full strength; and our average non-effective from sickness does not exceed twenty. We, the officers, have had twenty-four hours in the

trenches for experience, and on Wednesday of this week we took the battalion up there for duty."

"The nights are bitterly cold," says a rifleman of the battalion, "and we are in broken-down barns and stables with only wet straw to lie on in most cases, but the health of the regiment is wonderful; not one case of sickness worth mentioning. It is not all lavender out here, you can bet, but you would be surprised at the way the lads have settled down. They are like old seasoned troops now—not much of the Saturday-night soldier about them. They will give a good account of themselves when the time comes. The food is good, but the cooking—well, every man has to do his own. The officers are not much better off. We do not get much money, and we could not spend it if we did. All we can buy is milk and as a great treat an egg now and again."

Before the end of April the 17th Londons were at work in the trenches. They were extremely lucky and had few casualties. Early in May Colonel Godding wrote:

"The men are contented and cheerful, and very keen and understand their work. They are the complete soldiers in every respect, and can do their job automatically, and never a word of 'grouse,' although that is the soldier's privilege. Recently we have been doing forty-eight hours in and forty-eight hours out, which has meant moving the whole battalion every two days, lock, stock, and barrel (which is no joke with all the transport and stores we now possess). It is all done quite readily, and goes quite easily, which shows the state of efficiency the men have arrived at."

A lieutenant writing home to his sister about this date says:

"We had great sport up in the trenches. Three of us put an old door, which we pulled off its hinges in the ruined village behind our lines, on top of the parapet and got on top of it with a rifle and 200 rounds of ammunition. As it was a bright moonlight night, the Germans could see us doing this and sent out a sniper to within 50 yards of our trenches, where he lay well covered in an old communication trench. We spotted him and poured 50 rounds each into his little home, and then crawled out to look for him, eventually finding him riddled with our

bullets and with his toes and face turned up to the beautiful, star-spangled sky. Meanwhile the artful devils had spotted us and turned a machine gun on us. We hurriedly retired crawling, and eventually, after a very hot half-hour, got back in safety. Of course we might have been killed instead of the other fellow ; but that's a different story."

Another picture is given by a transport driver of the regiment, one of those who are supposed to be immune from the perils of warfare.

" The transport," he says, " do not have to put up with hardships and risk their lives in the trenches, but they work jolly hard all day long in grooming horses and mules, cleaning waggons and harness, and are up late at night while the companies have a chance of resting. Ammunition and supplies have to be run up to the trenches during the evening, as it would be too risky to attempt moving a convoy during day-time, as the enemy's snipers are always active, watching the roadways. It is a very nervy job. Just about five or six hundred yards from the trenches is a village reduced to ruins, through which we have to pass. Shelter is found from bullets behind a few walls which are left standing, but a large open tract of land gives a good view of anything passing along the road to the enemy. You should see the mules dash for life past this road into safety. Even at night it is very dangerous, as bullets are whizzing through the air, hitting walls on the other side of the road. We have to duck our heads, hold our breath, and hope for good luck.

" The first day we arrived at the place where we are billeted (about two miles from the firing line) we had just tied our horses and mules and were preparing to put our lines down when all of a sudden a shell came over and burst in the roadway. A few French children were passing at the time. Immediately they lay flat on the ground whilst the shell burst a few yards from them. Two more came over, and dropped in a wood near to us, killing two horses. Another dropped on a farmhouse. We got quite used to it after seeing the first. . . . Last week one of our mules died, whether of a broken heart or worry I cannot say, but he certainly did not die of hard work. We gave him a military funeral. That is, we dug a hole, chucked him in, covered him over, and put a few flowers on the grave in remembrance."

" Of course we are at a dangerous game, what with shrapnel, snipers, etc," writes a N.C.O. about this time. " But for all

that our boys like the sport, and I can assure you that in such conditions the section or part of them enjoy themselves and are quite happy. The marvel of the hour was a church near-by the billets. It had been completely destroyed except for a large crucifix which is not in the least soiled even ; day by day there are shells after shells dropping round the bricks and the walls, but they fail to hit the crucifix."

The word Givenchy calls up tragic and yet glorious memories, and Givenchy was the next scene of the activities of the brigade of which the 17th formed a part. The firing line had to be strengthened, and the London Territorials were charged with the task. How they did it is shown by a special order of the day issued on May 27 to the brigade, which consisted of the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th battalions of the London Regiment. It ran thus :

" The Brigadier has much pleasure in announcing to the brigade (141st) that Major-General Barter, commanding the 47th (London) Division, personally congratulated him on the work of the brigade during the recent operations. The G.O.C. was especially desirous that all ranks of the brigade should be made aware of his great appreciation of all they did, and the way they did it. The Brigadier wishes to add that he is proud of having the honour of commanding them."

By this time the total casualties of the 17th amounted to 100, including Major Oxley wounded. Four days after Brigadier-General Nugent had issued the special order, quoted above, he was shot dead by a sniper, to the great grief of the 17th, as he was well known to the Poplar and Stepney Territorials through his presence at prize givings and other gatherings at headquarters.

In the first week in July news reached regimental headquarters that the 17th had been in the thick of the fighting. Colonel Godding wrote saying:

" We had a very unpleasant experience at midnight on Monday last. We were in brigade reserve about one mile behind the front line (and due to go into the trenches again on Thursday).

We are more or less surrounded by batteries, and we on our side had been subjecting the Germans to a very severe bombardment for an hour or two, when they replied, and a few of their shells fell together round one billet occupied by one of my companies, upsetting the masonry a good deal, and killing four riflemen and disabling by shot fifty others. These, of course, are incidents to which we are liable, and all ranks accept them in the right spirit, and continue their duties cheerfully while mourning the loss of their comrades."

Colonel Gidding kept in constant touch with the Administrative centre at home, and letters from members of the battalion, eloquent in their appeal to the men of the East End to join the colours, were always available at recruiting meetings, and from what has been already said these appeals in the East End have not been in vain. Much rejoicing was caused in July in Poplar and Stepney by the news that "our 17th" had been picked out for its smartness at an inspection held by the General Commanding.

Let it be noted here, as throwing a sidelight on the change that war makes on the denizen of cities, that in these summer months of 1915, rather than sleep in the billets provided for them, many of the men preferred the open air. Says one of the regiment, writing in July:

"At the place where we are now quite a village of tents has sprung up. Each tent has its own particular name. For instance, there are 'The Horseshoe Hotel,' 'Crabby Villa,' and 'The Criminals' Den,' which, by the way, exhibits a notice to the effect that for anything lost apply within. The row of tents has been named 'Petticoat Lane, E.,' and a signpost points the way to 'Hackney Empire.'"

The East Ender in war-time is indeed a revelation in many ways. Lieutenant F. F. Thompson, the senior subaltern, came home invalided in August, and he gave this verdict upon the regiment:

"I know them to be keen and intelligent with plenty of grit. The East Ender is self-reliant, cheerful under difficulties, and

absolutely unselfish. He is a veritable Mark Tapley. In the trenches the trouble is not to get him to face danger, but to keep him from exposing himself unnecessarily. When rapid fire has been the order of the day, we have actually had to pull a man away from the rampart because, regardless of exposure, he would keep on firing till his rifle was so hot we feared it would burst in his hands. His one anxiety is to get at the Germans. I remember when poor young Gilmour was struck down by a bullet, I threw my cloak over him, thinking he would be cold, and as he was carried away on a stretcher he never uttered a groan, though he must have been suffering great pain. The last words he said were, ' Give the beggars one for me, sir.' "

Lieutenant Thompson went on to say that the 17th had been engaged in trench fighting of a close and determined character. In some places the British and German lines were only 40 feet away from each other, near enough to permit of conversation going between the two. One day a man in the German lines shouted, " Anyone know Camberwell? " No one replied, so the question was repeated. This elicited a chorus of " Shut up." But the man would not be snubbed. " Does anyone there live in Camberwell? " he said. " I've a wife and two children in Camberwell." Then one of the men retorted: " If you don't shut up, there'll soon be a widow and two blooming orphans in Camberwell."

In the meantime at home recruiting has been going on merrily. Captain Stableford has not only raised a brass band for the 3rd Battalion, but has also established barracks for the single men who join the regiment, while training at headquarters.

This working-class regiment, which is doing so well both at the Front and at home, was before the days of the Territorial Force the 2nd Tower Hamlets V.R.C., which was made up of the 3rd, 7th, 10th Tower Hamlets Rifle Volunteers, all of which were raised at the end of 1859 or beginning of 1860. These regiments were subsequently amalgamated to form the 2nd T.H.V.R.C., which was attached to the First London Regiment.

The regiment transferred its headquarters from Whitechapel Road to Tredegar Road, Bow, in 1894. When the Territorial Force was formed in 1908, the regiment was amalgamated with the 15th Middlesex V.R. to form the 17th (County of London) Battalion, The London Regiment.

The 17th held a memorial service for those who had fallen in the war, at St. Stephen's Church, North Bow, on June 13, when Prebendary Mason, the Chaplain to the regiment, preached. The service was attended by 1,200 men of 3/17th London, and the occasion was one that will long be remembered in the East End.

THE LONDON IRISH

(18th London)

" We've seen the wedding and the wake, the pattern and the fair,
The well-knit frames at the grand old games in the kindly Irish air ;
The loud ' Hurroo,' we've heard it too ; and the thundering ' Clear the Way ! '
Ah, dear old Ireland, gay old Ireland, Ireland, boys, hurray ! "

" Dear Old Ireland "—one of the favourite Irish songs at the Front.

To have won four Military Crosses and eight Distinguished Conduct Medals is to have won an honoured place among British fighting regiments in the present war. It is the record of the London Irish. Their valour as shown at Givenchy, La Bassée, Marne, and above all Loos, as well as in other hot corners of the western front, proves that the Irish soldier of the Territorial Force is as fine a fighter as the Irish soldier of the Regular Army has always been.

The history of the London Irish Rifles goes back to December 1859. A public meeting was then held in London under the presidency of the Marquess of Donegal, for the purpose of starting the corps. The Irishmen in London came forward with great enthusiasm, and the chairman announced that among the first recruits was Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister. Samuel Lover was also one of the early members of the corps. Among other well-known men who have served in the regiment

may be mentioned Sir F. Carruthers Gould, a major in the corps, and Colonel Sir Robert Inglis, of London Stock Exchange fame. In the South African War the London Irish supplied the second largest contingent sent by any Volunteer Corps, and one of the officers, Lieutenant Concanon, who is now Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding the regiment, won the D.S.O. during the campaign.

When war broke out the London Irish had just gone into camp. Half an hour after their arrival they were ordered to " stand to " and soon afterwards came back to London and mobilized. They were in Chelsea—their headquarters are at the Duke of York's headquarters—for about a fortnight, and on August 14, 1914, went to St. Albans. There they stayed until November 1, when they were moved to Braintree, staying there a month and then returned to St. Albans, from which city they started for the Front on March 9, 1915. On landing in France, the regiment was inspected by Sir John French, who commented favourably upon the bearing and appearance of the men. They moved up almost at once to serve as Corps Reserve at Ypres, and here they were within sound of the guns. The regiment took their pipers with them, and on the first Sunday at Ypres they were played to church, and astonished the natives by their vigorous share in the singing of the hymns—it being the custom at this church to leave the singing to the choir.

From Ypres the London Irish went to Neuve Chapelle, and here they had their first experience of the trenches.

" We have," said a rifleman writing home on April 18, 1915, " just come out of the trenches after twenty hours in them. Before this we were for the same period in reserve. We had a pretty calm time of it during the day, only having one trench blown in with shell twice ; but at night we had a pretty warm experience. The Germans blew up a portion of a disused French trench to the right of us. We had to ' stand to ' from 3 to 5 a.m.,

waiting in case we were wanted in the actual firing line. It is a monotonous job. You can see nothing but trenches everywhere and are 6 to 7 feet below the ground."

It was during this first spell of trench work that one of the companies of the London Irish had the pleasure (a grim sort too) of seeing about fifty yards of German trenches blown sky high.

"How people at home have got hold of the idea that the German rifle fire is rotten," says a rifleman writing about this time, "we cannot quite imagine. Any undue exposure and a hail of lead comes dead for the mark, but for all that they cannot beat the British as marksmen, as no doubt the Germans could testify. As a proof of this you may be in the trenches for days and never catch sight of a single German."

From Neuve Chapelle the London Irish were moved to Quinchy and from here to Bethune, where they were in reserve. Then in May they went up to Festubert.

A son of Mr. H. E. A. Cotton, L.C.C., serving with the machine-gun section has given his account of the fighting at this period. He says:

"The London Irish have been in the firing line in many stiff engagements, and at one point they took over a portion of the line. We had a very hot time at Givenchy. This position was undoubtedly the worst we have had; for nineteen days we were subjected to an almost continuous artillery fire. Every night working parties were busy repairing the parapets and clearing the communication trenches. Our firing line had to be strengthened. The carrying out of this movement showed of what stuff the London Territorials are made.

"The Canadians charged first at Festubert; but failed to get through on account of the barbed wire. At the second attempt they swept through to the third line of German trenches. After a time they were bombed out of the third line, but held the first and second. When the time was ripe the Territorials went forward; this was their first experience. They got there and stuck there, and I don't believe anything on earth would have shifted them. The fire that was poured into the captured

trenches was simply awful, and it was not the number of casualties that surprised me, but that anyone should have returned alive. During these operations we were putting across covering fire, sending a constant stream of bullets just along the top of the enemy's parapet, causing them to keep well down, and hindering them as much as possible from opening rapid fire on our advancing men. I do not know how many thousands of rounds were fired; but we were on our gun for seventy-two hours, and poured in lead whenever a favourable opportunity presented itself. The gun was well hidden, and the Germans tried to find us with shrapnel and 18-pounders.

"The Germans evidently thought that the machine gun that was worrying them so was hidden in a dilapidated house about 150 yards to our rear, and they carefully battered the place to atoms. I hope they were duly annoyed when we blazed a final belt." The writer adds a compliment to German organization, "which seems to get every ounce out of everything."

An officer, in the course of a letter to a friend in Belfast, relates an interesting incident which took place at La Bassée:

"The Germans," he says, "had been more than exceptionally busy all day long on the left of the Irish Guards, and on the right the King's Royal Rifles replied very effectively, but the strategic value of the point was so great that another onrush from the Prussian Guard might be expected at any moment. It was necessary to reinforce the line, and the London Irish Rifles were selected for the job. This regiment of Irishmen, mostly resident in the metropolis of the Empire, had already been in action, but when the command was given to reinforce the Irish Guards and the K.R.R.'s, the compliment was lustily appreciated, and in a short time the London Irish were in the thick of it. I was put in command of the firing line in a particular trench, and discovered that amongst the men under my command were the pipers and buglers of the band. We have a splendid band of Irish pipers, and I really think that we are the only regiment with a band of any kind with the British Army in France. Many customs of the Army which people thought modern warfare had killed have been revived in this war, and I saw no reason why the courage and spirit of the brave men, who were firing shot after shot until the rifles were nearly red-hot, shouldn't be fired by the martial airs of our country. I accordingly ordered the pipers to play, and you should have heard the roars of

cheers right down the line as the strains of ' St. Patrick's Day ' wafted past the dug-outs and traverses. A new courage entered into the men of the firing line. The crack of the rifle and the ' whirr ' of the machine guns played their part that day, helped by the Irish pipers. The ' Minstrel Boy ' was the next response to the great encore. I never felt prouder in my life. The German trenches were only seventy yards away, and the war-like strains of the martial airs of Ireland could well be heard in the enemy's lines, and remind them once more of a united Ireland in defence of the Empire. The Germans evidently thought better, and the attack eventually ended up by a notice board appearing above their trenches with the words: ' Von Hindenburg is coming with 500,000 men, and then you are in for it.' The pipers reply was ' Garryowen.' Our men were splendid and earned warm praise from the officers of the other regiments."

The writer adds that much of the efficiency of the London Irish is due to Colonel Pakenham, who commanded the regiment for seven years, and is now in command of the South Antrim Volunteers in the Ulster Division. He is well known as the Unionist candidate for Londonderry City.

In an interesting booklet issued at headquarters regarding the doings of the regiment in the present war we find this incident:

" On one occasion our telephone linesmen happened to find two live cables on the ground in the rear of our trenches. No one knew to whom they belonged or whence they came; rumour had it that the generating station was somewhere in the German lines. Without asking leave from the German authorities, our linesmen promptly fitted wires and carried them to the battalion headquarters, the dressing-station, officers' dug-outs, etc. Lamps were found in the deserted houses of a village just behind, and for many weeks a first-class electric installation was in full working order, with power ' milked ' from Germany."

It is, however, in the memorable advance at Loos that the London Irish achieved their best feat. " You have performed one of the finest actions of the war," was the

message sent to them after that big advance. For some of the nights before the memorable September 25, 1915, they had been employed in the difficult task of digging trenches in advance of the regular first line. On the night of September 24 they received their orders and marched out to take up their allotted positions.

" What a sight ! " writes one of the men, " almost pitch dark, as light near the firing line must not be—just a few glimmers here and there to mark cross-roads, and those are lanterns, mostly on the ground in charge of one or more soldiers, according to the importance of the posts, whose job it is to control the traffic. Now and again a more or less lurid illumination comes from the star shells that are used between the trenches ; while search-lights sweep across the sky. Artillery flashes continuously and the roar of the guns is added to the crash and rattle of the traffic on the roads."

At a point in the march the Brigadier-General was standing to see them go by. He shook hands with every officer and told the men of the confidence placed in them. " The Empire expects great things of the London Irish—remember that—for you have been chosen to lead the whole division."

At about midnight the trenches were reached in pouring rain and the men settled down to the long hours of waiting until the moment to advance arrived ; and the infernal racket of the bombardment went on over their heads. " It's all right," said an N.C.O., " I've arranged with the Bosches' Orderly Sergeant for the show to finish in five minutes." Sure enough, it did, and then it was time for the gas to be turned on—much to the satisfaction of our men. The wind was slightly in our favour, and the gas drifted off towards the German lines held by the 22nd Silesian Regiment.

" Irish—up and over ! " came the order at 6.30 a.m. Over they went, by platoons, with a half-minute interval between each. In spite of the terrible fire which was

opened upon them, they formed up in four splendid lines before they charged for their objective.

Unknown to the officers some bright spirits had taken a football with them, and, to the utter amazement of the French troops on the right, the Irishmen kicked the ball right over to the German trenches. Surely the most famous goal in the history of football! During that famous football dribble in front of the German lines one of the London Irish looked round for his friend. He saw that he was killed beside him. "Hard luck," he remarked, "he had only one shot" (at the football).

The best account so far published of the London Irish charge at Loos is that given by one of the wounded in the affair and published in the *Weekly Dispatch*. In the course of his narrative, which in the following reproduction has been corrected in certain details, he says:

"One set of our men—keen footballers—made a strange resolution; it was to take a football along with them. The platoon officer discovered this, and ordered the football to be sent back—which, of course, was carried out. But the old members of the London Irish Football Club were not to be done out of the greatest game of their lives—the last to some of them, poor fellows—and just before Major Beresford gave the signal the leather turned up again mysteriously.

"Suddenly the officer in command gave the signal, 'Over you go, lads.' With that the whole line sprang up as one man, some with a prayer, not a few making the sign of the Cross. But the footballers, they chucked the ball over and went after it just as cool as if on the field, passing it from one to the other, though the bullets were flying thick as hail, crying, 'On the ball, London Irish,' just as they might have done at Forest Hill. I believe that they actually kicked it right into the enemy's trench with the cry, 'Goal!' though not before some of them had been picked off on the way.

"There wasn't four hundred yards between the trenches, and we had to get across the open—a manœuvre we started just as on parade. All lined up, bayonets fixed, rifles at the slope. Once our fellows got going it was hard to get them to stop, with the result that some rushed clean into one of our own gas waves and dropped in it just before it had time to get over the enemy's trench.

"The barbed wire had been broken into smithereens by our shells so that we could get right through—but we could see it had been terrible stuff, and we all felt we should not have had a ghost of a chance of getting through had it not been for an unlimited supply of shells expended on it.

"When we reached the German trench, which we did under a cloud of smoke, we found nothing but a pack of beings dazed with terror. In a jiffy we were over their parapet and the real work began; a kind of madness comes over you as you stab with your bayonet and hear the shriek of the poor devil suddenly cease as the steel goes through him and you know he's 'gone West.' The beggars did not show much fight, most having retired into their second line of trenches when we began to occupy their first to make it our new line of attack. That meant clearing out even the smallest nook or corner that was large enough to hold a man.

"This fell to the bombers. Every bomber is a hero, I think, for he has to rush on fully exposed, laden with enough stuff to send him to 'kingdom come' if a chance shot or a stumble sets him off.

"Some of the sights were awful in the hand-to-hand struggle—for, of course, that is the worst part. Our own second in command, Major Beresford, was badly wounded. Captain and Adjutant Hamilton, though shot through the knee just after leaving our trench, was discovered still limping on at the second German trench and had to be placed under arrest to prevent his going on till he bled to death.

"They got the worst of it, though, when it came to cold steel, which they can't stand, and they ran like hares. So having left a number of our men in the first trench, we went on to the second and then the third, after which other regiments came up to our relief, and together we took Loos. It wasn't really our job at all to take Loos, but we were swept on by the enthusiasm, I suppose, and all day long we were at it, clearing house after house, or rather what was left of the houses—stabbing and shooting and bombing till one felt ready to drop dead oneself. We wiped the 22nd Silesian Regiment right out, but it was horrible to work on with the cries of the wounded all round."

The German second-line trenches were the objective for the London Irish. They reached them, captured them, and set to work to reorganize them in a very short space of time. They did their allotted task magnifi-

cently, and were able to beat back the tremendous counter-attack which the Germans launched against them. It was for this that they were so warmly commended in the words above quoted. At the Front they are called "the lucky Irish."

An American impression of the London Irish at Loos is given to us in Mr. William J. Robinson's book: *My Fourteen Months at the Front: An American Boy's Baptism of Fire.* He is able to corroborate in a striking manner the glorious story of the London Irish:

"By all rights the entire regiment should have been wiped out, as the odds were against them, and they were running right into a death-trap. The fact that they went at it in such a devil-may-care way as to joke and play with footballs in the very face of certain death broke the Germans' nerve, and they gave way with practically no resistance at all. Instead of the regiment being wiped out, as it should have been, the men took the trenches with losses of under a hundred. It was wonderful."

Though London and Irish in origin and character, the London Irish keep an open door. A General from headquarters staff was walking through the trenches. Looking in at a dug-out he said to the Adjutant: "I presume you are all Irishmen?" The Adjutant replied, "Yes," but with a very Scottish accent. Making further inquiries of the Adjutant, the General found it necessary to summon the Orderly Room Clerk. "Corporal Levy, where are you?" he shouted. Of course neither the one nor the other was an Irishman; one was a Scot and the other a Jew. But the shrewd quality of the Irish pervades the regiment. When a trench was being held, one poor fellow was wounded and fell back. "When I have finished my ammunition and yours," said a comrade, "I will carry you back to the dressing-station." "No, you won't," replied the wounded London Irishman; "if you carry me on your back, I'll get a bullet in my neck

and you'll get the V.C.; we'll stop where we are." And they did.

Recruits have joined from all parts of the world. A man was attested recently who had come straight over from helping General Botha to turn the Germans out of South-West Africa. Other men from Canada, Australia, India, West Coast of Africa, the United States, and from Japan have crossed the sea in order to join the London Irish Rifles. Former members, living abroad and at home, too old for active service have sent gifts to their friends in the trenches. One man in China shipped a case of useful articles, "smokes," etc., with a covering note in which he said that he knew that the London Irish Rifles would be well to the fore. "He was right," says the headquarters booklet; "they were and they are at the fore, and they will be."

The splendid spirit of the London Irish Rifles is further indicated by a letter received in Belfast from one of the officers. He points out that a large percentage of the men in the ranks are of gentle birth—one a cousin of the Earl of Donoughmore, another a nephew of Lord Dunleath, while many were educated at Eton, Harrow, and other public schools.

"One soldier in the writer's company does not observe the regulation to make arrangements for the payment of the usual separation allowance to his wife, and when brought up for the breach the soldier explained that he had not thought his wife would require the allowance, as he already allowed her £3,000 a year."

A recruit in the 2nd Battalion in September 1914, who quickly rose to the rank of sergeant, is now a captain in the Scots Guards, and has been wounded whilst serving in that famous regiment.

One of the most heroic figures of the Army in Flanders is that of Father Lane Fox, who has been mentioned in dispatches—the chaplain of the London

Irish. He is in and out of the trenches all day long, risking his life, and shares the dangers of his regiment. He would not be denied his share in the charge at Loos, giving his blessing and absolution to the men as they fell on every side. It would be the worst blow that could befall the London Irish if anything were to happen to their Padre. He is the friend of all, whatever their denomination, and joins in all their joys and sorrows.

THE 19TH LONDON (ST. PANCRAS)

THE 19th is another of the London regiments which has done gallant work in the trenches in Flanders, and earned a high reputation as a regiment that can be relied on. It also shared the glories of the London Territorials at Loos.

In that battle the 141st Brigade consisted of the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th battalions of the London Regiment. After much preparation and a hot supper, the advance began at six o'clock in the morning under cover of smoke to screen the attack. The 19th were on the left, the 18th in the centre, and the 20th on the right, while the 17th were in reserve. The advance was made in open formation, four or five paces between the men, in three lines, the men with fixed bayonets and wearing smoke helmets. There was no running and no cheering, just a steady walk. A staff officer described the brigade as a perfect fighting machine. The men were self-possessed and their advance was a splendid sight to witness.

" We got," said an officer, " to the German first line and cleaned it up. When we reached the wire, we lost our colonel, Lieutenant-Colonel Collinson Morley (late of the Buffs), who had already been wounded, and other officers by machine-gun fire. Then the advance went on and the second line was reached. Here Bombing Officer Lieutenant F. L. Pusch (who was awarded the D.S.O. for his gallant work) bombed and bayoneted a great many Germans. [Lieutenant Pusch led a party of bombers, and going alone into a house captured seven Germans, one of whom wounded him badly in the face.] Then on again we went until we got to Loos and reached the position which General Headquarters had stated

to be our objective. We reached the position five minutes before the scheduled time. Then the battalion sat down to consolidate its position, and the others on their arrival did the same. The whole brigade reached the position up to time.

"For a time the left flank of the 19th had a very hot time, as they had to fill a gap unoccupied by British troops. Once in position, the battalion experienced a medley of fighting, digging in and holding on against heavy odds, as the Germans recovered from their surprise and brought up reinforcements. From then onwards until the fourth day of the battle, the battalion were scrapping hard. They lost no ground and held on until the brigade was withdrawn on the night of September 28, when they returned to billets for a rest."

A St. Pancras rifleman wounded in the Loos advance gave these further details to a representative of the *Daily Express*.

"We, in our division, were set the definite task of taking Loos and the 'Tower Bridge'—the twin shafts, coupled by a lacework of girders, which have formed so conspicuous a feature in our landscape for months past—and we did it in about a third of the time assigned for the job.

"'The Germans won't think we are such fools as to try to take Loos,' I heard a brigadier remark, and as our trenches were some 400 to 500 yards from the first German line at this point, while at other places the intervening distance was only eighty yards, they may well have thought this the last place for an onslaught against the murderous fire they could bring to bear.

"Remember that our own men had been in their trenches for six months past, just longing for an opportunity to move that never seemed to come. We had established a sort of proprietary right in those trenches, which we had dug and built ourselves. Latterly they had been comparatively dry and clean.

"On the Friday night (September 24), when we were marched up from reserve some four or five miles to our trench, we all knew that something big was to happen at last. All were on the tiptoe of expectation. Between half-past three and four the guns began a heavy bombardment. Still we had to wait. At 6.30 we had the word to advance, and the first companies were over the parapet like lightning. There was a rush for the ladders; every one wanted to be there first, but, except for the speed, everything was carried out as it might be on the drill-ground.

"Our colonel was hit while cheering the men on.

" ' *Come along, lads,' he was shouting, ' three shies a penny, and no milk in 'em !'*

" No sooner were we over than the German shell fire burst into the most furious bombardment I have been through.

" We could not stop for the wounded, who had to crawl back as best they could, or wait. Our orders were to go straight ahead, and we went. Every man was simply splendid.

" There were two rows of enemy trenches in front of Loos. In the second line the Germans fought desperately, and it was hand-to-hand grappling, with bayonets or anything we could lay hands on. I myself made good use of a spanner.

" Loos itself is only a small place. Its houses were little more than ruins when we got in about nine o'clock.

" Personally I did not see much sniping here by Germans, but I heard of men of ours who were hit from behind as they were passing on. Germans had been left behind us as we went ahead, and they were picking our men off.

" There was treachery, too. Four big Germans were holding their hands up to a man near to me. Suddenly one of them fired. I whipped out my revolver and shot the four.

" We made many prisoners fairly easily in the cellars of Loos, where we also took four big guns.

" There were women and children there, too. One woman had a bit of a shop, in the standing fragment of a house, and lived and slept below it in a cellar. She had with her a little girl. Poor little maid ! She was white as a sheet, and reminded me of nothing so much as a flower trying to maintain a starved life in a dungeon.

" Outside the church I saw four little boys. The women, whom we got out of the cellars and sent back behind our lines, were tremendously excited.

" One of my recollections is our breakfast on Sunday. There it was, served by our regimental sergeant-major and a company sergeant—fried bacon and hot tea. How they got it up to us was a marvel, for everything had to be brought up under heavy shell fire."

Mention may be made here of an act of gallantry, though it does not strictly belong to the narrative of the 19th Londons. Under the church tower of Loos the enemy had laid mines. In the midst of bursting shells Major E. B. Blogg, of the 4th London Field Co., R.E. (T.F.), cut the fuse and thereby saved heavy casualties which

the explosion of the mines would have caused. For this act he received the D.S.O.

In the four days' fighting the 19th Londons lost in killed and wounded 11 officers and 320 men. But the battalion had to their credit the capture on the first day of the battle a German 77 field gun and also a machine gun which was actually used by them later.

When the war broke out the 19th were all ready to go to camp, and had mustered at headquarters to go to the station. Then orders came cancelling the camp and for immediate mobilization. The battalion was short of full strength, but the men necessary to complete the number were raised in a few days. The complete battalion then went to Hatfield for training, and officers of the regiment speak warmly of Lord Salisbury's hospitality while they were there. From Hatfield the battalion went to St. Albans, and early in March 1915 embarked for France. Almost immediately after disembarkation they proceeded to the north of Flanders, and at length arrived at Festubert. Here officers and N.C.O.'s went into the trenches for instruction, and in a week or ten days the whole battalion took over a section of trenches. While winning praise for steadiness, the battalion earned a special reputation for capabilities as a digging battalion. At the battle at Festubert the 19th were in support and had to hold a redoubt. To reach this point the men had to proceed along a round under fire. Lieutenant Waterlow, who was in charge of the men in the redoubt, dug a communication trench which was the means of saving much loss of life, as it was used by all the troops moving up to this part of the line.

The 19th were next sent to Givenchy, where they were in reserve. They were not in the charge that took place on May 25–26, but they were badly shelled. One day the battalion was to have taken part in a charge on the German trenches.

"The charge," said an officer describing the doings of the 19th, "was timed for 8.30, but by some means best known to themselves the Germans anticipated the attack. At all events, five minutes before the time fixed for the British attack they exploded a mine under the trenches occupied by the 19th. The explosion of a mine directly under a trench, killing some and burying others, is calculated to try the strongest nerves. But the 19th kept cool, silent, and ready, for it was quickly apparent that the Germans intended to follow the explosion with a charge from their own side. The enemy were now seen to be climbing out of their trenches. Promptly Lieutenant Baker, with whom was Lieutenant Felix Cassel, gave the order for rapid fire, and the situation was undoubtedly saved by the splendid way in which the order was obeyed. The Germans were subjected to such a withering fire that they were only too eager to scramble back into the trenches which they had just left. The attack had signally failed and the Germans left a large number of dead behind them."

Lieutenant Cassel won the admiration of his men on another occasion, when instead of going to his dug-out he elected to remain with his men in the fire trenches and with them was shelled and shot at for at least two hours.

With officers like these, it is natural to expect the N.C.O.'s and men to render a good account of themselves; this they certainly have done. Again and again has the battalion been thanked by the General commanding the division. The patrol work of the battalion has been especially good and not without its excitements. Giving an example of this, the officer whose account has been quoted above relates the following incident. One night a patrol party of the 19th left their trench to confirm or disprove the report of one of the British aeroplane observers that the Germans had cut their own barbed-wire entanglements. It was important to verify the observation, as of course such action on the part of the Germans would signify an impending attack. The patrol party consisted of volunteers specially chosen—strong nerves are imperative in this work, as any firing of the rifle when surprised by a German patrol would

mean the extinction of the whole patrol by machine-gun and rifle fire, to say nothing of the failure of the reconnaissance. All fighting must be done silently with the bayonet or butt. The patrol of the 19th advanced. The barbed-wire entanglement to be examined was about 350 to 400 yards from the 19th's trench, but only about 10 feet from the Germans' line. The precise bearings of the entanglement had, of course, been taken in the day-time, and the patrol that night after the first hundred feet or so had to advance crawling in grass that was only about 2 feet high. A halt was called every few feet in order to enable the patrol to listen in the calm night, and also to look for any slight disturbance of the grass indicating the presence of an enemy patrol. The 19th men went right on by devious routes, investigated the barbed wire, and returned without being detected. The double journey of rather less than 700 yards occupied an hour and a half.

A description of this night's patrol work was given by an officer who took part in it, in a letter home. He wrote :

" We had a report that the Germans were concentrating in front of us, and had made gaps in their barbed wire to prepare for an attack. In consequence, our Commanding Officer decided to send out a patrol at night with one officer. Our last patrol has not yet turned up, so there is always a spice of danger about it. I immediately volunteered to go with three brave and true men and see what was actually taking place on our front. I took a compass bearing by day and picked my men. At ten o'clock we leapt over the parapet and went forward into the darkness. For the first 200 yards we could crouch along. After this it had to be done on all-fours. A ten hours' heavy rainfall had just stopped and the ground was sodden. Every few minutes a flare would be sent up and then a few shots followed. When out about 350 yards I gave the order to lie flat ; not a move. We were in ' diamond formation,' myself in the rear. We were just getting on the skyline, and it was here that great care had to be taken to evade a German covering party.

" We could now hear the Germans talking in their trench, but

this was not close enough for me, and after listening for a quarter of an hour, just to make sure that no one was trying to cut off our retreat, I gave the signal to push on another 100 yards. This was very tricky, and suddenly one of my men struck a tin can with his foot. I really thought the game was all up, as half a dozen flares went up immediately, and then a few shots. We were now about 450 yards out, and I could hear a German N.C.O. changing sentries, and their working parties hammering and talking on our right and left. It was quite evident that it had been a false report, as they were not concentrating. We moved right along the German front, but it was all more or less normal. At midnight we retired, and, with the exception of getting into some shell holes, returned safe and sound to the exact spot from which we had emerged. Can't say I was sorry to get into the trench again, as we always seemed to see figures in our rear, and, of course, if we had fired a shot a few minutes' machine-gun entertainment might have put an end to this exploit."

Every now and then some exciting little incident served to relieve the monotony of life in trenches and billets. Once while billeted in a farmhouse the 19th was—again to quote from the officer's account published in the London *Daily Express*—

" puzzled by the periodic tolling of a bell. The bell tolled at no regular intervals, but the significant discovery was made that it tolled always and only when the Allies' troops were passing. Obviously the tolling was done for the benefit of German outposts. The officer did not say what happened to the spy bellringer, but added, ' The discovery was promptly reported to the proper quarters.' "

On another occasion the 19th London had a strange experience. They saw a woman come out from the German trench in front of them and start to make her way towards them. She had not proceeded more than a few yards, however, before she was shot down by the Germans in the trench from which she had started. Who she was, what was her mission, and why she was shot remained a mystery.

Mention has already been made of the digging capabilities of the 19th, and pleased as the battalion is to

have earned a reputation for doing this arduous work so well under fire, it is equally gratified to learn that the regimental stretcher-bearers have greatly distinguished themselves. There is perhaps no more hazardous work than that of a stretcher-bearer. Moreover, he must run his risks in cold blood without any of the excitement of fighting. An officer of the 17th battalion related how four stretcher-bearers of the 19th did "one of the pluckiest things I have ever seen." These four men discovered an officer of another battalion badly wounded, and realised that from the nature of the wound it was imperative that he should be carried to the nearest dressing-station without a moment's delay, if his life was to be saved. The proper route to the dressing-station lay by way of a communication trench, a circuitous journey which would have occupied more than an hour. The short cut was a field of standing wheat at the rear of the 19th's trench, but the whole of this wheat field was being riddled with shrapnel and machine-gun fire. But these plucky stretcher-bearers did not hesitate over their choice. On the one hand was the long and comparatively safe journey through the communication trench, and on the other was the fire-swept short cut through the wheat field. The choice of the four St. Pancras boys was made at once. The life of the young wounded officer depended on the speed with which he could be got to the dressing-station, so the wheat-field route was chosen without hesitation. Placing him on a stretcher, they ran with him across the wheat field and brought him to the dressing-station still alive.

The conduct of the 19th London since they have been at the Front has been in keeping with their reputation at home as one of the best disciplined of the London Territorial Regiments. With the discipline is evidently combined a dauntless courage. One instance may be given. At Givenchy on the night of May 26–27 Lance-Corporal P. Dowling and Private Hiscock rescued

Lieutenant Wood of the 23rd Battalion from in front of a German captured trench after four men had been already killed in attempting the same act. Both won the D.C.M. for this act of devotion and bravery.

The 19th Battalion London Regiment (St. Pancras) is descended from the St. Pancras Volunteers of 1798. In 1859, when the new Volunteer Movement was started, the district of St. Pancras raised its regiment, which became the 29th Middlesex. In 1880, when the Middlesex battalions were renumbered, it became the 17th (North) Middlesex Rifles. In 1908, when the Territorial Force succeeded the Volunteers, the regiment became the 19th (County of London) Battalion, The London Regiment (St. Pancras) and ceased to be a Rifle Regiment. The regiment formed a Service Company for the C.I.V. during the South African War.

THE 20TH LONDON (BLACKHEATH)

"VERY many thanks from myself and all ranks of brigade to yourself and the 20th Battalion for your really stout and able co-operation during the recent operations. We shall always remember it with gratitude."

Such was the message sent after the fateful battle at Loos in September 1915, by the Brigadier-General to the Colonel Commanding the 20th Battalion London. In the great advance the unit played a conspicuous part, and now at the Front it is spoken of as the "Gallant 20th." The Territorials' own best comment is that it was "grand sport," for the true Cockney is one of the keenest of fighters. Their part in the historic fight is well told by members of the 20th who have written home letters giving their experiences.

A N.C.O. tells in simple language his own impressions of the battle. He writes:

"Day after day our artillery had kept up a fierce bombardment of the whole German position whilst we waited behind our lines for the time to strike. On the night of Friday, September 24, we splashed our way along the poorly made French roads. Every ruined homestead, almost every shell hole was familiar to us, so often had we marched this way to undertake spells in the trenches. This night the spirits of the boys were high. There was some prospect of an end to our long rabbit-like existence, the long wearisome waiting game, and throughout all ranks a spirit of great optimism prevailed at midnight, after a warm meal 'midst the ruins just behind our trenches. The battalion took up its position in the line in readiness for the attack early on Saturday morning. At 6 a.m. the fierce bom-

bardment ceased, and, as one of my comrades remarked, the quietude was like that of a restful English village. After a while the guns again spoke, the enemy this time replying fiercely.

" At 6.30 the first lines were over. There was nothing of the mighty rushing charges which history so proudly narrates. Except for the first fifty yards or so, accomplished at a rush, the rest of the distance was passed over in quick time, some of the boys even pausing to light a cigarette. I was with the heavy machine guns, and whilst our boys advanced we kept up a systematic overhead firing. Subsequently we heard with the greatest pleasure that our fire had hampered the enemy severely, and their defence was in consequence much weakened. Very little resistance was met with. In justice to our foe, let it be observed that there were individual acts of bravery, but generally speaking the Germans took to their heels or gave themselves up. Here I must refer to the splendid work of the bombers. They went coolly from house to house throwing their bombs while the enemy sniped from the upper windows. Some of the enemy actually threw out our bombs and then came out crying, 'Mercy, Kamarad.' But it must not be concluded that the enemy were an inferior force. The majority of the men were of fine physique, but they could not understand the dash of our men. Undoubtedly they lack that morale which makes us strong, and when once denied the comparative security of the trenches they lose heart entirely.

" From our gun position I gladly heard the tide of battle rolling away in the distance, and more quickly than we expected came the news that the objective had been reached, and an outpost placed on a mining crater just before Hill 70. There was one small copse on the right of our position which the enemy continued to hold, and we suffered from a machine gun hidden there. But on Monday, under cover of machine-gun fire, our men advanced and the copse was soon in our hands. The enemy left about 100 in this small place.

" As soon as the companies had taken the trenches, we moved our heavy machine guns up to the first German trenches in readiness for any counter-attack which might be attempted. The enemy had lost heavily, the grey-uniformed bodies lying thickly along the whole line. We found that the German dug-outs were reached by a long staircase joined some forty feet down, and two hours or so after we took up our position some of the enemy came sneaking out. We took some forty prisoners in this way in our immediate neighbourhood, and the majority stood before us in terror; they had apparently been told that there was no mercy to be expected from us. We made some of

them act as stretcher-bearers. Apart from the construction of the dug-outs, every step had been taken by the enemy which made for safety. The ground in front of the trench had been covered with barbed-wire entanglements of more than thirty yards' width, but thanks to the accuracy of our artillery fire the entanglements were smashed to pieces. This must have saved us hundreds of casualties.

" As I stood on guard in the small hours of the Sunday morning, and looked around the battlefield, I could not but feel proud of my battalion. The feeling of pride was certainly deeply mingled with sorrow as I saw the khaki figures lying still around me. I knew that not many yards from me were comrades I had mixed with for many months. Such is the toll of war, such is the cost of defending freedom and justice. But oh, what a cost !

" In view of our brigade's success, the enemy had brought up large reserves, and I hear that their positions on our right were much weakened in consequence, and we thus had the honour of helping our brave French comrades. The weather continued cold and with drizzling rain, and our boys, who were without any protection other than their waterproof sheets, dug themselves in, consolidated their position, and held on. Rations were brought up at the earliest possible moment, yes, and letters too, but it will be understood that at first there was little food obtainable. The privations consequent upon such experiences as such an action involves are such as the folks at home cannot possibly comprehend.

" There is much more that I could mention ; did time and space permit I could tell of many a plucky feat by our bombers, and by the officers and men in the various companies. I could speak of the amazing quickness with which our light machine guns went through with the attack, got into position, and caused a house full of snipers to disappear in a matter of moments. Many references could be made to the stretcher-bearers, who under a cowardly fire from the enemy's snipers and machine guns carried the wounded across the open. No doubt in due course some honours will be bestowed, but no list of honours can ever embrace all the brave deeds accomplished.

" We were eventually relieved on the Tuesday night, and left for some billets just behind the line. The following day we came back still farther for a few days' rest. In congratulating our battalion on its achievement our Brigadier-General remarked that he had never seen an attack undertaken in better order. The three cheers we gave him were the more hearty because we remembered that he had established headquarters in the village on the very night following the attack, a move involving no small

amount of danger, but giving a feeling of strengthening assurance to the whole line.

" In concluding I may say that in reading the Press accounts we notice an ominous silence concerning the work of the Territorials, the whole honour for the taking of Loos and Hill 70 being attributed to the New Army. In no way do I wish to minimize the work of the new forces, but it must be remembered that the 47th London Territorial Division played no less a part. Further, in no spirit of idle sentiment or egoism, let me say that no battalion played a higher or more important part, no battalion could have undertaken the important task allotted to it with greater courage than did the 20th on the morning of Saturday, September 25, and the days which followed."

A private, while in hospital wounded, in a letter home wrote :

" I happily escaped with a small wound in the hand and three in the back. We took four lines of trenches and the village of Loos, where it was hand-to-hand fighting. At the same time other divisions were charging right and left."

Another member of the regiment, writing of his experiences at Loos, said :

" For weeks we had prepared the advance, and we knew exactly what was wanted of us when we went over the parapets. We had practised the charge and taking the village several times, days beforehand. As we had nearly — guns behind our part of the line, you can tell what kind of a furious bombardment the Bosches were subjected to. For days our guns pounded the German lines and paved the way for our boys. Leaving billets in a town a few miles behind the lines after dusk, our battalion moved to the trenches in easy stages. We were in the firing line at about 3 a.m., and then came an anxious wait, for the charge was not to commence until after dawn. Just before dawn our guns cut loose again, and the Bosches' artillery responded strongly, the din being terrific. We shivered with the cold and rain, but if the boys felt at all nervy they did not show it, indeed everyone seemed cheerful. Yet it was a tremendous trial for our nerves, and we were all glad when the order came through to fix bayonets and don smoke helmets.

" Then came the sound of much heavy rifle and machine-gun fire, as one battalion of our brigade went over the top. Their

objective was the first two lines of German trenches. They went over in gallant style. Our turn was next. Dashing over the top without the slightest hesitation, our boys soon got into some kind of order. Our smoke helmets were pulled up and used as headgear, to be handy in case they were wanted. Once out in the open country the din was awful—shrapnel bursting all round, and at every moment men dropping, some never to rise again. Yet I must say it seemed a great relief and a pure joy to be out in the open. Our battalion went forward quickly towards our objective, which was more than 2,000 yards away.

" We jumped over the first line of German trenches wherein our men were slaying the Bosches opposing them. Then over the second line after cutting through barbed wire, and here again the battalion was fighting hard. The guns backed us up as I believe no infantry has ever been supported. Always were we nicely covered. My company now bore off to the right, and barbed wire caused our first slight check. We lay on our stomachs as the party in front of us got over, glad indeed of a few minutes' rest. Many of us lit cigarettes and had a pot at Bosches running away a good distance in front. When we got over that wire it was only in a few parts that our artillery had managed to sever it—we lined up as though doing extended order on the parade ground, and went forward smilingly and quickly. None of us seemed to care a hang, although rifle bullets crashed round us like a hundred circus whips being wielded at once, and shrapnel bursts sounded like tons of coal being slipped down an area grating.

" We continued in perfect order, reaching houses at the edge of a village, the best part of which our battalion captured by aid of bombs. We settled a few Germans in outstanding houses, and reached another line of trenches. But the Bosches had retreated further back, and on we went. Finally our company had to halt at the top of a ridge in front of which the Bosches stood tight in a copse, and barbed-wire entanglements prevented our getting at them. We got down on our stomachs and potted at the Bosches in the copse. Digging ourselves in, we remained on that ridge from something like 9 a.m. until 2 p.m., when we received orders to crawl back to the trench just behind us. This trench was a long German communication line and a long way beyond the second line of German trenches, where the battalion were now consolidating. Here as we strengthened our position we learned that the village just a little way to our right had been cleared of Bosches. It was a significant advance. Nearly all the boys were saying, ' This is grand sport,' and all were as keen as mustard.

" But the aftermath was horrible. Poor old Jimmy ! poor old G——! All of us lost pals. As a result of our charge the battalion in addition took ground far in advance. Our lads captured a couple of field guns which will one day be removed as souvenirs to our headquarters. Our casualties were not so great when one considered the hundreds of Germans dead, and our prisoners were very numerous. When we settled down and consolidated the ground we had taken many of us were very surprised at the extent of our advance. We were always ready for any German counter-attack, but the Bosches had had enough of us. We had many trying moments in the interval until we were relieved. Ah, it was hellish !

" I cannot express the feelings that came over one. All around us were German dead, indeed in the copse which our brigade subsequently captured I counted over one hundred dead. Much rain fell during the time we were holding on, and, with no sleep, no hot food, and much shell fire, it was a terrific test. German kit lay scattered about all over the place in the trenches I was in, and we smoked many German cigars during those remarkable days. On the night our relief turned up, rain fell in torrents, and we were drenched to the skin when we filed slowly out through open country to a village behind the lines wherein we billeted. As we marched through the darkness one felt almost sad, as though everything had been a failure, and most of us were quite bucked when a voice called out, ' Who are you ? ' ' The 20th. ' ' Bravo the 20th ! ' It was an artillery man. As we lined up this morning to be congratulated by our Brigadier—we are now some miles behind the lines re-equipping, etc.—some artillery passed us and the Colonel at the head of the column said as he passed, ' Well played ! '

" In a few days we are to be back in the fray. Already we have had experiences that will never be forgotten, but there are still more Bosches left. In conclusion I must mention that the whole of our division has been highly commended by those in the highest authority. I have related what our battalion has done, but I know that all the other battalions in the division did their work just as well as our boys. The Terriers scored a tremendous success."

Another member of the regiment wrote :

" Our brigade—the whole of it—went over the parapet. We captured three lines of trenches, Loos, the chalkpit, and spinney, Loos mine building, 600 or 700 prisoners, five field guns, lots of machine guns and stores ; in fact we had a glorious victory,

and, you will be pleased to hear, at comparatively small costs. The battalion did wonders. They captured three field guns. . . . The Colonel, Adjutant, and Major who led the battalion were untouched. The brigade was set an objective or objectives, and it captured everything it was told to do. Our fellows hung on like grim death, and we really and truly saved the situation. It's wonderful; all due to the General's and Brigade Major's topping fine work and orders to the regiments they have under them. I am afraid my company lost a lot of men and three officers out of five, but they were magnificent.

"We have been relieved now and are resting a bit. . . . The most wonderful sights I ever saw in my life were two I have seen during the last day or two. First, our brigade moving across open ground between trenches under a hail of fire—shrapnel, rifle, and machine gun. They just walked on. Oh! it was lovely. Second, the regulars coming over the hill on our left and behind to recapture the position lost; they came over in artillery formation, being infantry in small columns in fours. They came over in step, under the most diabolical shrapnel I or anybody else—our Major agreed, and he is a gunner—has ever seen. On they came. When they got under rifle and machine-gun fire they extended into lines and on they came again. Three or four times I saw one or two of these columns get a bit mixed up; they were halted by their officer, re-formed, and then on they came again. If anybody had stood and watched it and not jumped and yelled, as we all did, he must have been mad. Wonderful isn't the word for it. Both sights were too glorious to describe. Not a waver—not the least hesitation on any man's part, just left, right, left, right, until they reached their objective.

"When the first line was reached across the first enemy line, the men knew they had to take the second line, so they went, shoulder to shoulder, steady and strong, every man making for that second line; and they reached it, entered it, and captured it. This is not swank; it is true. Our losses I can't tell, because we are not allowed to do so, but compared with what we killed, and how much we captured, they are small."

When the war broke out the 20th had just gone into camp at Salisbury, and were promptly ordered back. When they reached headquarters they had been away just twenty-four hours. On the Wednesday morning following, the regiment mobilized at 7 a.m., and took up their duty on Plumstead Marshes guarding the

Arsenal and Magazines. It is claimed that the 20th were the first London regiment to be on their war station. Then came the business of filling up the ranks to bring the numbers up to full strength. This was done in three days, on one day there being 180 recruits accepted. With the surplus obtained through the rapid recruiting a second battalion was started. In April 1915 a third battalion was permitted to be raised.

Coming back to the 1st Battalion, we find that after spending a fortnight at Plumstead they were stationed at the Goldsmiths' College, New Cross, for another six days, and then went to Hatfield to join the brigade (17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th). In February the brigade went to St. Albans, and on March 9 left for the Front. The 20th's first experience in the trenches was at Cuinchy. Later they were in reserve at Neuve Chapelle.

A N.C.O. writing home in letters dated April and May said:

"We had our first taste of fire recently, a shell bursting near our billets. We went up to the reserve trenches last night, and are going up again to-night. To-morrow we go to the firing line. I did not feel at all jumpy and do not mind the sensation."

A later letter says:

"We are again in the firing line. . . . Last night volunteers were wanted to go out in front of our trenches and cut some trees down which were in the light. Eight other fellows and I went out, and we had some fine sport, though it was a bit risky. We had to crawl on all fours and then saw away for all we were worth. It was jolly hard work, as we had to sit in mud and water. One of us fell into the water up to his waist, and the others laughed until their sides ached. We all got through safely and were commended by our Major."

In a letter dated May 6 the same N.C.O. relates how he and six other men with an officer went out at night to reconnoitre, when it took them thirty-five minutes to crawl fifty yards owing to the danger. They had to

get through a light piece of ground, and then through a stream which led straight up to the German trenches. They returned quite safely " but very muddy."

At Givenchy the regiment distinguished itself. Particulars have been difficult to obtain as to the exact doings of the 20th in that engagement, but reference to the narratives of the other London regiments in the brigade gives an impression of the good work done. An officer, not of the regiment, said, " The 20th were splendid."

A private writing home said:

" While we were up in a captured trench we were practically isolated, except at night-time, and it was only under a certain amount of risk that anyone could get to us. We had no rations or anything to drink, and a fellow from another battalion came along with a can of cocoa for us. As it was a risky business, of course we appreciated it very much. Our doctor is a perfect brick. He fetched some fellows who were wounded in under fire, and when he heard that there were some men hit, he said he must go up to ' his boys.' He comes in the trenches every morning and says: ' Good morning, boys,' and yesterday it was: ' Good morning, boys. Cheer up, you are being relieved to-day.' It's such decent fellows like him who keep one going. This isn't the only illustration of his good nature. To-day the chaplain called in at our billet to chat with us. He is a brick, and I am told worked like a nigger in the dressing-station while up at the trenches. He asked us to sing a hymn, and then he prayed, and although it only lasted a minute or so, it was jolly fine. He is a fine chap, and everyone thinks well of him. It's Sunday again, and between now and this time last week we have had two days' rest and spent the remainder in the trenches.

" What a time we had! We went up on Tuesday evening, and part of our company had to help to push home an attack on the German trench. It was taken, but it was expensive work, and one of the platoons in my company lost most of its men. On Wednesday evening our platoon had to go up and hold it. The trench had to be made safe, as the Germans could snipe us from a rising piece of ground on the right, and sandbags had to be filled and stacked up to prevent it. Unfortunately we lost two men killed, the first in our platoon. It was awfully nerve-racking, and we had to stand it for twenty hours, with trench mortars, bombs, and snipers at us all the time. When

coming out after being relieved we had to go through a communication trench with water up to our knees. The next day part of the ridge from which the Germans were sniping was captured by our boys at a very little cost, only one man being killed, I believe. It was a grand piece of work, the Germans being absolutely bombed out of it. I am certain of this, that when the full story of this week's work is told the people will be proud of the 20th."

The 20th Londons who have thus won fame for themselves are the lineal descendants of the Royal Greenwich Fencibles, which was formed in 1798, and had the honour of acting as a guard of honour to Nelson when he visited Greenwich. In the officers' mess at the regiment's headquarters, Holly Hedge House, Blackmouth, there are preserved a button and a breastplate of the old corps. These bear the emblem, the horse, which is still the crest of the regiment. The two regiments inheriting the traditions of the old corps were the 2nd and 3rd, V.B. Queen's Own Royal West Kent, which on the introduction of the Territorial Force were amalgamated to form the 20th Battalion London Regiment. The 2nd and 3rd V.B. Queen's Own Royal West Kent, it should be added, each supplied Service Companies in the South African War. When the 20th London came into being it was allowed to retain the old Kent crest, but was not allowed, as were some of the Surrey regiments, or preserve in its title any reference to the famous regiment to which it was once allied. The association with the Queen's Own Royal West Kent is still preserved, however, not only in the crest, but also through the Adjutant, who is always supplied from the Queen's Own Royal West Kent.

THE FIRST SURREY RIFLES

(21st London)

THE 21st London, or, to give them the title they prefer, the First Surrey Rifles, had just started for camp when they were recalled and mobilized. They were sent to St. Albans for a few weeks and then to Harpenden. On March 15, 1915, they left England and proceeded to Richebourg, where they received some training in trench work from the Guards. On one occasion they were in the trenches for eight days. Afterwards they had seven days in billets ten miles behind the line. The brigade to which the First Surreys belonged had to make an attack at Festubert, and the 1st Surreys spent six days in the trenches there and lost nearly eight men, killed or wounded. For a long period they had no real rest, being either in trenches or in reserve.

A rifleman in a letter dated April 24, 1915, stated that his battalion had been in the firing line for some weeks, doing some useful work in relieving regular battalions, and supplying working parties, etc. The casualties had so far been slight. The men conducted themselves excellently, and took to the life readily. The trenches they occupied were only eighty yards from the Germans at one point, and one of the enemy shouted out, "We don't want to fight; we are Saxons." One day the 21st stuck a dummy carrying a flag on a post up above the trench, which rather annoyed the Germans, who started hurling bombs with a trench mortar, and these

all dropped between the fire trench and the reserve trench, throwing up mud but doing no damage to anyone. The ruin and waste, said this correspondent, was terrible. A cat sitting on the ruins of its old home, half starved, mewed piteously but refused to be touched. A dog also was in a village which it refused to leave, although it occasionally strolled across to the German lines.

After the engagement at Festubert the battalion were sent back to a village near Bethune, and were there for thirty-six hours, when they were moved into trenches at Quinchy. They were there for a week and then went back to Bethune. The great joy of Bethune was that it was possible to have a bathe every morning—a much-valued privilege.

On Tuesday, May 25, they were told to pack everything into overcoats and store them, and were to carry little else but ammunition and rations. It was understood that the brigade to which the First Surreys belonged was to make an attack on a frontage of some 500 yards at Givenchy. They moved up late in the afternoon and reached the trenches at six.

A sergeant in the regiment, writing home, gives the following account of the action at Givenchy on May 25–26, when a Territorial Division captured a group of German trenches:

"The action was the first in which Territorial troops fought without any assistance from the Regulars. After many days of duty in the neighbourhood of Richebourg, where somewhat heavy losses had been sustained while the big attack was in progress, the brigade moved southwards to a different part of the line. For the four days preceding Tuesday, May 25, the brigade had been divisional reserves, but at noon on that day the order was given to pack every spare article into the pockets of greatcoats. Only the rations, the unexpended portion of the day's rations for Wednesday, which were issued later, were to be carried in the pack.

"In the afternoon we moved off. At first the roads were familiar, but as we went along we struck what was, for us, new

ground. The trenches we were to occupy lay between Festubert and Givenchy. Soon the news spread that the brigade was to attack the German trenches that evening. Even as we moved up, the artillery was completing its work of battering down the German parapets in readiness for our assault.

" At a given hour (it was early in the evening and still light) our artillery ' lifted ' to the German supports, and the attack began. Then the Territorials ran up the scaling ladders over the parapet and on to the ' dead ' ground between the British and German lines. Many fell, but those who were untouched continued steadily towards the enemy's trenches. The first line was easily carried, those Germans who remained holding up their hands and appealing for mercy.

" Now it was the turn of the bomb-throwers, and right well they did their work. But the supply of bombs soon became exhausted, and word was sent back for more. The 21st Battalion, The London Regiment, which had so far escaped untouched, despite the heavy shelling of the support and communication trenches, now went up to reinforce. Meanwhile news had come through that the 23rd Londons had gained a hold on the Germans' second-line trenches. The leading company of the 21st were soon over the parapet, but had only gone a few yards before four of their officers were shot down. A gallant action by Sergeant Cave of the First Surreys was probably responsible for saving the life of one officer. Sergeant Cave fell with a bullet in his knee, and he had hardly been down a second when he received another ' souvenir ' in the ankle. He remembered crawling back to the old British front line, and on the way came across one of his officers, who had also been hit twice. The sergeant promptly got hold of him and brought him safely in.

" When darkness had set in much valuable work was done by those who still remained in the old British front line, in the way of carrying up ammunition and bombs. A party also dug a communication trench from the captured German lines back to our own. But the enemy evidently didn't intend to take defeat lying down, for a counter-attack was made, but was beaten off. This the Germans followed up by furiously shelling our new position. They inflicted heavy losses, but our men hung like grim death on to these captured lines. When they had apparently lost all hope of recapturing the trenches, the Germans retired to a ridge, from whence they brought heavy enfilade rifle and machine-gun fire to bear upon our lines. But still the London Territorials would not give way.

" Early on Wednesday morning there was a constant stream of wounded on the way to the various dressing-stations."

There the writer of the letter, who was wounded, while waiting to be attended to, was spoken to by a man who had had his arm shattered, and his head broken by pieces of " Jack Johnson " casing. " It was like hell let loose," he said, " and I count myself lucky to escape like this." There was just a touch of pride in his voice as he added, " I wonder what the good folk of London will think of their Territorials after this."

But the good folk of London had small chance of knowing.

In this engagement at Givenchy it was arranged for the attack to be made by the 23rd London on the left and the 24th London on the right, and the 21st were to support the 23rd. The French artillery was a little behind the lines. The attack began at 6.30, and within three minutes men of the 23rd were in German trenches. They made an attempt to get into the German second line, but were bombed out. Then the word came for the 21st to go up to reinforce. A gap had been made in the line, and the 21st had to get into it. The leading platoons were greeted with hot fire. The battalion lost four officers almost directly—Lieutenant Hull and Lieutenant Savel killed, and Captain Moberly and Lieutenant Mackay wounded. The men got to the gap, and those who had not been ordered to advance brought up ammunition and took back the wounded. The 21st held the trenches until early next morning. Later, when there was no possibility of a counter-attack, a few men were left to occupy the trench and the rest retired. Crawling back they reached a German post which had been causing some trouble. The Post Office Rifles captured the post and took forty prisoners. Later, men were sent up to reoccupy the captured trench. They found it, but it was still in the hands of their own men. The 21st were relieved that afternoon and went back to billets, being shelled on the way. When they had settled down they were ordered to clear out and

go farther back because of German shells falling near the billets.

The following message was sent to the brigade on its going into Corps Reserve :

" I take this opportunity of congratulating the brigade on its work during the last three and a half months, which it has spent almost continuously in the trenches. During that time it has made a gallant response to the demands upon it, as well in holding its line under galling conditions as in labouring hard, even when exhausted, and in successfully assaulting the enemy in spite of heavy losses. I am confident that it will take advantage of its position in reserve to rest well, play well, and train well, and that it will in a very brief period feel itself thoroughly braced in mind and body, and having overcome the drawbacks inevitable in trench warfare, will know itself as the first-class fighting machine that it is."

Here may fittingly be quoted from the trench magazine of the regiment, the *F. S. R.*, a picturesque description of life in billets behind the firing line. The writer says :

" As one has read, it is good to be on the hill-tops, to be near the sun, but the wine is in the little valleys. So, in war, is glory to be found in the trenches and between them, but the romance of war is hidden amidst the little hamlets which nestle deep in the shaded lanes of Northern France.

" The agony of fighting, the frightfulness of killing, crushes from the field of battle all semblance of beauty. And without beauty there can be little romance—that full-throated, flamboyant romance which appeals to the multitude and lifts even the soberest imagination to flights of almost drunken greatness.

" True romance there is of course—where death, the glorious death of a soldier is, there romance must always be—but that is romance so supreme that it is above interpretation in words. Certainly such art is beyond me.

" It is enough for me to find war romance—bizarre, picturesque, and glorious war romance—amidst the little hamlets of Northern France. In those little rooms, rough, sometimes unclean places, where fighting men foregather and smoke and drink and talk, sometimes to the lilt of the music of tin whistle or mouth organ, sometimes to the accompaniment of no other noise than that which comes from strong throats richly lubricated—in such places one finds romance, romance simple and comprehensible.

" There is a village some five miles behind the firing line—a place so small and obscure that so far it has escaped the mad-dog rage of the Huns. Even its tiny church is untouched by shell fire, and in the little house of Madame Adair one can for a moment forget there is a war. Madame herself is large and fat, a little ugly perhaps, but infinitely good-natured; also, being of the prosperous farm-worker class, she is—especially when heated—in appearance somewhat oleaginous. But always she is the good Adair, as her friends the four sergeants of French Artillery know, and as their friends—half a dozen English soldiers—also know. This good Adair—Madame of the café-au-lait. Rhum! Ah, Rhum is forbidden; but here is wine—red and white. Well, well! It is cold to-night—or is it hot?—and perhaps in the bottom of one small bottle there is a tiny drop. She is a kindly soul, and even the vilest Rhum is sweet—when it is forbidden.

" The fattest of the four fat sergeants sighs and smiles and accepts an English cigarette from an English corporal. He is English in his cigarette habit, and is becoming English in his speech. So he says, ' Een Inglees musheroom—très bon musheroom,' and then he slaps with one great paw his greater stomach, and contemplates with satisfaction the platter from which he has eaten. ' Een Inglees is très bon, good better, eh? Soon I say proper good morn, dam hot, eh? to Monsieur ze Inglees Capitaine, quite proper, eh? Bon, bon.'

" At this moment he swings from his chair, stands erect—a pleasing mixture of solid muscle and quivering fatness—and salutes. ' Eh bon! Now for the mewsich—the flute. It must be the march of the premier regiment, please.'

" The English corporal draws from his tunic pocket a yellow tin whistle. He is a serious-looking man, this English corporal; he has a habit of looking down his nose and on the floor as he plays the stirring air. Silently the Frenchmen listen to the swinging music of ' The British Grenadiers.' Then a French sergeant performs a great daring march on a small toothcomb covered with paper. After this there is a duet—the English corporal and the French sergeant. Then someone bursting into a chorus; and in the midst of the chorus the good Madame comes in, and more bottles are opened. As she pours out the wine, madame slaps the shiny bald head of one of the sergeants with her chubby hand. The injured warrior jumps to his feet, seizes madame in a fierce grip and kisses her on either cheek.

" The serious-looking corporal instantly leads off with ' The Wedding Bells are pealing,' and there is a great chorus of English

voices. The French sergeant and the good Madame seem to understand. Anyway she blushes a little and her eyes seem to sparkle; while the sergeant shouts 'No, no, no,' waving his hands and arms; finally he shrugs, and lighting a fresh cigarette sinks into his chair again.

"Then an English soldier tells of an attack he has just been in—he had many narrow escapes from death, and the fighting was terrible. From the story one gathers that practically the whole of the British Army was blown into nothingness, and only the sergeant escaped.

"Presently a French Artilleryman, who has long shown signs of great uneasiness, tells of a shell he has fired. First, of course, he loads his gun. In that little room he loads the gun, fires it, follows the shell in its flight, and becomes the shell itself as it strikes its object. Then he is the explosion; and after the explosion, the wrecked building, the wounded, and the dead; finally he becomes the harassed German Army itself. It is all good acting. This sergeant of Artillery is an all-round man, quite apart from his fatness. His weakness—and it is a weakness, I think—is that invariably after he has finished his yarn, while the applause is not yet dead, he starts on it afresh and tells the same story again from the very beginning; the second time in greater detail.

"But this is scarcely wearisome, since one need not listen. There are other things—some men in a corner are singing an attractive chorus; a French and an English soldier are cock-fighting in the centre of the great table, and Madame is flirting in her cheery fashion with three sergeants at once.

"In the distance is the noise of heavy firing. We can even distinguish the prolonged cackle of rifle music. Night has fallen; through the windows one sees flares and flashes—the flaming tongues of battle. There comes a silence in the little room. One thinks of yesterdays and to-morrows, of those things we have seen, and those others we have yet to live—God send it may be *live*—through. And then naturally there comes a longing—a great full-hearted longing for the end; for the homeland; for those hands we are longing to touch; those lips we are burning to kiss. We leave the little room and wander forth to that bare patch of earth we call our bed.

"Yes, it is war—the shells and the flashes and the noise of fighting tell us so. It is romantic in its way. In our way we are romantic—a part of the great romantic whole. But oh! for the Homeland! for England and Home; for the sight and touch of those we love. Ah well! meanwhile we are on the hill-tops and near the sun."

This convincing picture makes one think that the First Surrey Rifles has in its ranks men as skilful with pen and pencil as with the bayonet.

The regiment as it is at present came into existence in 1803, although in 1794 there had been a corps in Camberwell. The regiment was raised as the First Regiment of Surrey Volunteers. When in 1859 volunteers were again asked for, the First Surrey was raised and recognized, second in London and fourth in the whole kingdom. In 1881 the regiment was attached to the East Surrey Regiment and became the leading regiment in the East Surrey Volunteer Brigade. In 1908 when the Territorial Force came into being the regiment became the 21st Battalion London Regiment (First Surrey Rifles), thus preserving its old name. Detachments of the regiment served in South Africa, both in the East Surrey Regiment and in the C.I.V. Since the outbreak of the war the regiment has raised two other battalions. A distinguishing feature of the regiment is long service. It is no uncommon thing to find men of twenty and thirty years' service in the First Surrey Rifles.

A memorial service for the officers, N.C.O.'s, and riflemen of the First Surrey Rifles was held on July 11, 1915, at St. Giles's, Camberwell, when the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Southwark.

THE QUEEN'S (BERMONDSEY)

(22nd London)

THE 22nd Battalion London Regiment (The Queen's) is one of the South London Brigade and has its headquarters in Bermondsey. Originally raised in 1859 as the 10th Surrey R.V., it subsequently became the 3rd Volunteer Battalion, The Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. On the introduction of the Territorial Force the regiment was given its present title and was allowed to retain the subsidiary title, The Queen's, and the badge, The Paschal Lamb, in order to keep up its traditional connection with the famous Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. The old Volunteer Battalion supplied sections of men to the Regular regiment and to the C.I.V. during the South African War.

The 22nd were in camp at Salisbury, having left London on August 1, 1914, when the war broke out, and were recalled that night, and at once started mobilizing. On August 15 the whole of the 2nd London Division, to which the 22nd belongs, went to St. Albans and remained there in training for six months. On March 14 the regiment left for France and did excellent service in the trenches and in the reserve with very little said about them. It has indeed been very difficult to collect material about the regiment's doings. The story to be told of them is therefore of necessity brief.

The regiment on arriving in France went by train to Argues. After moving towards the area occupied by

the 1st Army Corps by easy stages two companies went into the trenches near Neuve Chapelle for instruction, the remaining two companies being in billets. The two companies in the trenches were in a bombardment early on the morning of Easter Saturday, 1915, and had some casualties. The remainder of the battalion were shelled out of their billets that afternoon, but stood their first experience of being under shell fire remarkably well. Subsequently the battalion took over a part of the line near the Rue de Bois, and were there for some five weeks, being present in reserve at the attack on the German line on May 9 at Festubert. Later in the month the battalion moved south, and on May 24–25 was in support of the 24th Battalion, which with the 23rd assaulted and carried the German trenches in front of Givenchy. The day before the attack, namely Whit-Monday, the trenches held by the 22nd were being enfiladed by German guns and the battalion lost heavily.

The attack as originally arranged was to have taken place on the night of the 23rd, but for various reasons was postponed until the night of the 25th. Owing to the delay and to the fact that the trenches from which the attack was to be made had been subjected to an almost continuous bombardment for nearly three days, the 22nd was somewhat exhausted and was therefore relieved on May 24—twenty-four hours before the attack took place.

From this meagre account, which does not do justice to the 22nd, enough can be gleaned to show that the regiment has taken its part well in whatever it was called upon to do. Indeed, on one of the days before the attack at Givenchy, on May 21, it easily repulsed a German attack, and when the Germans attempted to reinforce their fire trench the 22nd mowed them down. After Givenchy the battalion moved farther south with the division to which it belongs, and has since been employed in the usual trench warfare. Bermondsey knows

how to appreciate the steadiness and sterling qualities of its Territorials, who here, it should be added, gained two D.C.M.'s. It had also its gallant representatives at Loos, as is shown by the list of distinctions given in the Appendix to this volume.

While the 22nd has been earning a good name at the Front, the headquarters of the regiment at home have raised a 2nd and a 3rd battalion.

[The war experiences of the 23rd London (The "Old Loyals") were narrated in the first volume of "The Fighting Territorials."]

THE QUEEN'S ("SOUTHWARK'S OWN")

(24th London)

THE 24th (County of London) Battalion, The London Regiment (The Queen's), is proud of the fact that it is one of the Territorial Regiments to win the V.C. Lance-Corporal Leonard James Keyworth, of the 24th, was awarded the coveted honour for conspicuous bravery at Givenchy on the night of May 25–26, 1915.

"After the successful assault on the German position by the 24th Battalion, London Regiment," says the official announcement, "efforts were made by that unit to follow up their success by a bomb attack, during the progress of which 58 men out of 75 became casualties. During this very fierce encounter, Lance-Corporal Keyworth stood fully exposed for two hours on the top of the enemy's parapet, and threw about 150 bombs among the Germans, who were only a few yards away."

Nor was Lance-Corporal Keyworth—who has, alas, since been killed in action—the only hero of the 24th on the memorable night. "V.C.'s, D.S.O.'s, and Military Crosses," wrote an officer, "were earned by the dozen, but very few can get them." The 24th covered itself with glory at Givenchy, and the individual deeds of bravery done by members of the battalion will never all be told, and it is only possible—at the risk of seeming to make invidious distinction—to mention a few which have been chronicled by those who saw them performed.

When war broke out the 24th Londons were on the way to camp. They were on the point of entraining at the

station when they were recalled and mobilized at once. On August 15, 1914, nine days after war was declared, they left headquarters in New Street, Kennington, for St. Albans and went into training there until February, when they moved to Hatfield. On March 15 they received orders to go to the Front, and moved that day to Harpenden, whence they entrained for Southampton and arrived in France on March 17. They were then sent straight up to the trenches in the neighbourhood of Festubert. A private of the 24th who has since been killed wrote of his first experiences at the Front on April 21 :

"We moved again up to within a mile and a half of the line, a place the Dogs held a few months ago, and it is in a state—homes blown to pieces, a fine church ruined, and dead bodies blown out of their coffins. It is a terrible sight, and it makes your blood boil to see little children's coats and shoes lying about the streets. One half of our battalion has been in the trenches since Monday night, and we go in when they come out, which may be to-night. On Tuesday, at dinner time, the enemy started bombarding our billets or close to them, and we had to run to our dug-outs, but the shrapnel dropped within about ten yards of us, so we had to run for it. They kept it up for an hour, and they started again just as we were having our breakfast. Big guns are just by our house, and they almost deafen one. They are bombarding the Germans at this moment and I expect the Germans will start on us any minute. On Tuesday we went up to the trenches to repair a certain part, and rockets kept going up every minute to see if they could spot any troops, and they had a few shots at us. We were there till about two in the morning. It is jolly exciting being peppered by their shrapnel; no wonder they call it hell out here. It is the most uncomfortable night that I have spent, but we are getting used to it now a bit."

On May 9 the 24th had their first experience of a regular engagement during the advance made there on that date. They were in trenches acting as a covering party. The private whose letter is quoted above wrote on May 10 :

" I have had the time of my life and never expected to be as safe as I am at the present moment. It was arranged that five o'clock on Sunday morning our big guns would attack the German lines for forty minutes, and then the Regulars should charge, and we who were the second line were to follow up and help. I don't know what the papers will say about it, but three battalions charged, and there are not many left. Even now there are about two hundred lying between our trenches and the enemy's, and we can't get at them ; and the wretches keep potting at them, although I expect they are all dead. To-night our boys are going to volunteer to go out and fetch some of them in, if possible. Our battalion had about two hundred casualties, and after all we did not get the enemy's trench.

" It was a treat to see our brave British boys with flashing bayonets charging across ; it was a sight I shall never forget. The bombardment lasted for ten hours, with something like two or three hundred guns behind us. We were absolutely deaf, and my ears are still singing with the effects of it. We had respirators over our mouths in case they sent over any gases to us, but our guns have blown their trenches to pieces and them, too, in places. When our boys advanced, it was our place to give them covering fire. What I mean is that the Germans when they see them coming pop up and start shooting at them, so we who were left behind fire from over our trench at them and make them keep down. We fired at them till our rifles were red-hot, too hot to hold, and the bolt would not work as the steel got swollen, and our arms fairly ached with firing. But I feel I have, at least, put some under earth. Two small pieces of shrapnel caught me, but were spent and did no harm at all. I will keep them for luck. Still that is nothing, for they were sending over coal-boxes at us. The Northamptons, Black Watch, and King's Royal Rifles were with us and did the attack. I feel all right myself, but it has shaken my nerves up a bit."

One Sunday in the midst of all this carnage, and the next in more or less peaceful billets—a butcher's shop, in fact.

" It has been one of the best that we have had since we came out here—furniture complete, just as the refugees left the town."

There had been incidents on the intervening days.

" On Friday a shell dropped quite close to where we are and killed a young girl—nearly cut her in two."

On the night of May 25–26, the 24th won more distinction at Givenchy, and in winning it lost heavily. The artillery opened the attack on the German position at about six in the evening, directing their fire especially on a group of buildings that were known or suspected to be harbouring the enemy's machine guns. Amid the smoke and dust caused by the shell fire the 24th began to advance. Bayonets glistening in the sunlight as the smoke rolled away showed how true the line was kept. Heavy shelling soon made gaps in the line as men fell, but the ranks closed up, and Lieutenant Garner Smith was killed. He fell while calling to his men, "That's the way." No. 1 Platoon claim to have been the first into the enemy's trenches. They had a fairly easy crossing, and rushed through the remainder of the enemy's wire, which had been systematically cut to bits by our own and French artillery, and went over the parapet, and with a yell were amongst the enemy with bayonet and bomb. It was a magnificent struggle before the trench was finally cleared.

But the worst of the fight was yet to come. By this time most of the company officers were killed or wounded. The men were running short of sandbags and ammunition, and were digging themselves in with all their might so as to get a communication trench back to the old line. The Germans had been connected to one facing the other way, and when three counter-attacks were made the 24th beat them off.

"None of us," wrote an officer, "will ever forget the amazing sight between the lines. The moon was half full. Smoke from bursting bombs was drifting across the ground. There was a continual crackle of rifle fire, and all along our lines crumpled figures were lying. They were the bodies of our own men on the wires in front of our own lines. Numbers of wounded men were collected in small holes. Everywhere was the wreckage.

"The only officer left in A Company was Captain Figg. If anyone ever deserved the V.C. he did. He got out all right which is something to be thankful for. So hot were some par t

of the taken trenches, that you cannot in any way imagine them. The men at once nicknamed one spot 'The Bloody Angle.' Bombs fell here every minute, but the men did not seem to care. They went on filling sand-bags as if nothing was happening. Firing went on all the time. Millner's servant, Bridge, was hit five times in the legs, but is still alive."

The whole time the 24th Londons were in the lines they were being shelled without a pause. They were finally relieved and retired into dug-outs behind the lines.

Another officer, speaking of the number of acts of bravery done by members of the Regiment, mentioned the case of Company Quartermaster-Sergeant Sheen, who was shot dead because he would see personally to the bringing up of a water and rum ration which was badly needed. Private F. S. L. Knight was another hero of that memorable day. The telephone wires in front of the lines were being continually cut by shells and bullets. Without orders from anyone, Private Knight repeatedly went out in the open and repaired them. His name was forwarded for mention in dispatches. Unfortunately he was killed next day.

A letter from a N.C.O. writing from a hospital after the engagement said:

"Lance-Corporal French was struck on the head by shrapnel when his company made a famous charge on May 25 at Givenchy and took two lines of trenches after three other previous attempts. Fortunately, the gallant corporal was saved by the band of his cap and so did not sustain a serious wound. The day before French had performed as fine an act of bravery as any yet told. The Northamptons had made a charge and were repulsed. Many of them struggled back wounded, and one man in a state of collapse fell amongst our wire entanglements, and was lying helplessly exposed to the enemy's bullets. French crawled from his trench, and amid a hail of bullets coolly cut away with pliers the wire and brought the wounded man back to the safety of the trenches. He has received the congratulations of his colonel, and his company are hoping that something more than the stripe which has been given to him will be awarded to him."

How severely the gallant Queen's suffered in the charge can be gathered from a glance at their casualty list. The Colonel, it is said, was heart-broken when he learned of the regiment's losses. The heroism of two officers who were killed on May 25 is specially worthy of mention. These two, Captain Frank Malcolm Gill and Lieutenant W. H. S. Morrison, met their death while in the act of carrying the enemy's trench. "They died," wrote an officer, "like English officers. Willie Morrison and Frank Gill were heroes." The Colonel of the regiment in a letter to the parents of Lieutenant Morrison said:

"Morrison behaved with the greatest gallantry; carrying bombs himself, he led a dashing attack, running along the German trench throwing his bombs and directing his men in the same work. He was killed on the spot. His behaviour was simply splendid, and it was an achievement of which any regiment could be more than proud. The last time I saw your son was just as I ordered his platoon forward. He was carrying a rifle with fixed bayonet, and looked more delighted than I have ever seen him look, and the thought of action evidently roused him in the highest degree."

Company Sergeant Hodges, who was with the lieutenant, was soon afterward killed by a bomb thrown by a German who was concealed in a dug-out.

How Captain Gill was killed the Colonel told in a letter to Mrs. Gill. He wrote:

"His company was the first to charge and take the trench; and everyone behaved with great gallantry. He got over all right, and was directing his company at a place which was of the greatest importance to be held, but shortly afterwards he was shot through the head and died at once. It showed the splendid way your husband had trained his company that the remnant should have come out with a splendid spirit left."

Another officer describing the engagement said:

"The leading platoons got across without much loss. No. 1, under Morrison, dashed through the remains of the enemy's wire, which had been systematically cut to bits by our and the

French artillery, and were over the parapet and into the remains of the garrison with bayonet and bomb and rifle, with a yell. Will Morrison met a hero's death by running down the length of the trench with an armful of hand grenades, throwing them as he went along. Finally the trench was cleared; the next phase opened, and here the trouble commenced. Our men were digging themselves in like beavers along the line of the sunken road. They had hurriedly converted the German trench into one facing the other way, and had beaten off three counter-attacks with heavy loss, no one getting nearer than ten yards, the height of insult being M——'s picking up a German rifle and firing into them."

The original corps of the 24th London was the 19th Surrey (Borough of Lambeth) Rifle Corps, and it was established in 1859. In 1864 it moved its headquarters from South Place to the present buildings in New Street, Kennington, which have been considerably added to since. In July 1880 the old designation of the 19th Surrey was changed to that of the 8th Surrey. The title of the battalion was again changed in 1882, when it was affiliated to the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment and became the 4th Volunteer Battalion of that distinguished regiment. During the war in South Africa the battalion furnished strong contingents for active service with the Imperial Yeomanry, the C.I.V., and Service Companies of the Queen's Royal West Surrey. When the Volunteer Force was replaced by the Territorial Forces in 1908 the regiment became the 24th (County of London) Battalion, The London Regiment, and shortly afterwards, as a special concession, King Edward VII granted the distinctive title "The Queen's," thus maintaining its association with the famous old regiment, The Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. In 1909 permission was granted for the battalion to adopt the scarlet uniform similar to that worn by the Queen's Royal West Surrey, instead of the Rifle green uniform previously worn. The regiment has since the war began raised second and third battalions.

THE ARTISTS

(28th London)

"I ESTABLISHED the battalion as a Training Corps for officers in the field. The cadets pass through a course which includes some thoroughly practical training, as all cadets do a turn of forty-eight hours in the trenches and afterwards write a report on what they see and notice. They also visit an observation post of a battery or group of batteries and spend some hours there. A commandant has been appointed, and he arranges and supervises the work, sets schemes for practice, administers the school, delivers lectures, and reports on the candidates. The cadets are instructed in all branches of military training suitable for platoon commanders. Machine-gun tactics, a knowledge of which is so necessary for all junior officers, is a special feature of the course of instruction. When first started the school was able to turn out officers at the rate of seventy-five per month. This has since been increased to one hundred. Reports received from Divisional and Army Corps Commanders on officers who have been trained at the school are most satisfactory."

In these words Sir John French in his dispatch of February 2, 1915, announced the use he had made of the Artists' Rifles. Though the battalion at first felt some disappointment that they were to forgo the privilege of serving as a fighting unit, it was acknowledged that a high compliment had been paid to them. The regiment has long been famous as a most efficient body of men, and the fact that it is carefully recruited from professional classes is a guarantee that the men are well educated and fitted to become officers. Soon after its arrival in France, the regiment was so well reported on that Sir John French said that if the Artists went into the trenches and did better than any other regiment, they would

still be doing much more good by serving as officers. If they went into action as a battalion, they could not win a battle, but incorporated as officers in a division they could. Thus the Artists, without their name being mentioned in casualty lists or in accounts of fighting, achieved an enviable reputation, and became the Sandhurst of the battlefield. Indeed the Artists can claim that every regiment of Regulars except the Welsh Guards has at least one officer who has served in its ranks. Nearly 2,000 ex-Artists have obtained commissions in the Regulars and Territorials, and many of them have won distinction in every battle from Mons onwards.

At the headquarters of the Artists in Duke's Road, Euston Road, a record has been kept of the men who have been given commissions. This record is something of which any regiment might be justly proud, and stood as follows at the opening of 1916:

In Regular regiments (Foot, Guards, and Infantry)	477
Special Reserve	53
Territorial Battalions	410
New Armies	324
Royal Artillery	56
Royal Engineers	40
A.S.C.	73
Miscellaneous	84
	1,517

About a dozen of these ex-Artist officers have been made Adjutants of their new regiments.

While, as has been already said, the Artists do not figure as such in the casualty lists, the regiment has not been without its share of loss. The summary of casualties up to December 31, 1915, is as follows:

	Regulars.	Special Reserve.	Territorial.	New Armies.	Other Units.	Total.
Killed or Died of Wounds	84	5	8	3	1	101
Wounded (including Gas Poisoning) . .	113	2	4	3	2	124
Missing . . .	8					8
Prisoners of War . .	2					2
						235

One especial merit of the Artists is their versatility. Almost every profession seems represented. When the men were inspected at the depot, the general inspecting saw fifty men individually, and the first five to whom he spoke were chartered accountants. When recently the electric light in a French town failed, the commandant immediately sent to the Artists, and not one electrical engineer turned up, but a good half-dozen. It was the Artists again who fitted up a disused stable at Bailleul with empty vats and made it a comfortable bath-room for weary fighters from the trenches. At a memorable concert at G.H.Q. in the autumn of 1915 in which the Prince of Wales figured it was an entertainer from among the Artists whose clever skits full of topical allusions won most applause, while a corporal of the Artists charmed his audience by his ballad singing. A Leicester Gallery Exhibition of paintings and etchings by members of the Artists has shown how soldiers even in war time can retain their powers as professional artists.

The success of the Artist officers is due to the thorough training they have received, not only in France, under Colonel May's skilled guidance, but before they went there. It is a tradition in the regiment that the majority of the men should put in many years of service, and it is also a custom in the regiment that all officers should have served in the ranks. This no doubt helps to make

them the efficient officers they are, and fits them for the training of the new men who are now pouring into this Sandhurst at the Front.

The regiment dates back to 1859, when it was the 38th Middlesex, and on the introduction of the Territorial Force it became the 28th London Regiment (The Artists' Rifles). Originally it was largely composed of artists, architects, musicians, and other professional men. To-day, though the regiment is still very particular as to its recruits, the recruiting field is larger. Of course, public school and university education counts, but it is not essential if a man is otherwise considered a fitting person. Men of the right class from overseas, for instance, are encouraged to join.

On the outbreak of war the regiment mobilized some 650 strong, and within a week was up to full strength, and stopped recruiting. Then in September 1914 permission was given to raise a 2nd Battalion. When the 1st Battalion went to France the 2nd kept supplying it with drafts since so many men were obtaining commissions, and eventually in December orders were given to raise a 3rd Battalion. The 1st battalion having in process of time practically absorbed the 2nd, the 3rd Battalion became the 2nd. The 1st Battalion is doing duty at General Headquarters, besides undergoing military training, and for the visitor to General Headquarters in these strenuous war days there is no pleasanter feature than the smart London sentries upon the outskirts of the town who put you and your military car under their courteous but exacting scrutiny.

The writer has suffered gladly from their attentions on many occasions at G.H.Q. during the present war. "What part of London do you hail from?" he asked an Artist after a challenge upon one snowy night in March 1916. "I'm no Londoner," was the pleasantly phrased reply. "I hailed from Johannesburg before the war." "And I from Canada," said another of the little group. Thus

does the Empire meet in the old cockpit of Europe in the cause of freedom.

At the time of the first battle of Ypres the battalion at the Front was 723 strong. It was during this battle that the 7th Division suffered heavy casualties amongst its officers. One hundred Artists were at once taken from the task of digging trenches and became officers in the division, although still wearing privates' uniforms. Sir John French thereupon renewed the invitation to become an agency for the supply of officers. Fifty men received their commissions immediately, and were attached to various units, while another fifty went into training in a school of instruction extemporised on the spot.

In September 1914 Army orders were issued formally recognizing the 28th Battalion, County of London Regiment (Artists' Rifles), as an officers' training corps, and stating that suitable men of the age laid down for the unit might be recruited from all parts of the United Kingdom, and that the unit would remain a Territorial Force. The instructional staff consists of the C.O. (instructor in India for five years, at Sandhurst for four years, and three years Director of Military Studies at Cambridge when war broke out) and a dozen officers and a number of N.C.O.'s specially selected from the 1st Battalion in Flanders to form the staff at home. There are specialists in every department of military training.

Recently the Officer Commanding the 2nd Battalion formed a special company consisting mainly of professional men whose technical experience rendered them qualified for appointment as officers of the Royal Engineers and Pioneers, in which a knowledge of construction and civil engineering is especially useful in the conditions obtaining in modern war. It extends beyond ordinary field engineering, and include engineers' reconnaissance, building and repairing bridges and roads, work in connection with the embarkation and disembarka-

tion of troops, military sanitation and water supply, the construction of defensive positions, and other suitable instruction.

Sir John French, upon his departure from France, paid a striking tribute to the Artists' O.T.C., which furnished his guard of honour. He said:

"Officers and men, it is singularly appropriate, and nothing could give me greater pleasure than that your regiment, the Artists' Rifles, should be the last British troops that I shall see in France. You have done wonderful work since you came out, and you have furnished some of the finest leaders of the Army from your ranks, and in doing so you have suffered perhaps greater losses than any other regiment out here."

In no regiment is *esprit de corps* more jealously fostered than in the Artists, and it is to this that the regiment owes a great deal of its pre-eminence. The earlier membership included such famous names as Sir John Millais, Lord Leighton, G. F. Watts, Hamo Thornycroft, Sir E. Burne-Jones, Sir T. Brock, Val Prinsep, and those of other distinguished men. Among members who were not artists, architects, or musicians have been Sir L. S. Jameson and Sir Victor Horsley. All these served in the ranks to begin with.

With high traditions to live up to, and with a fine standard of excellence in training and equipment, no Territorial regiment can claim to have done more useful service than the Artists.

THE INNS OF COURT O.T.C.

THE Inns of Court Officers' Training Corps has not, of course, been to the Front as a unit, but it has supplied 4,500 officers to the Army and Territorial Force, and as we write another thousand officers are in the making. This in itself is a distinction that cannot be excelled by any other O.T.C. Before the war the ordinary strength of the Corps was 400. Now, despite the constant passing out of men to take up commissions, the ranks are considerably over strength. The demand for officers of the Public School and University type is ceaseless. Care has necessarily to be exercised in the selection of recruits, as the destiny of all is to become officers. Of the old Corps all have long ago been given commissions in various regiments, except a certain number of officers and N.C.O.'s who must stay with the regiment to train the recruits; and with such distinction have these old Inns of Court men served that the honours list includes 28 Military Crosses and 5 D.S.O.'s, while 50 members have been mentioned in dispatches. All the Corps except one company, which is at headquarters in Lincoln's Inn, are training at Berkhampstead. At Lincoln's Inn, Major J. A. Hay, who commands the Corps, and other officers are kept very busy examining would-be recruits and so forth.

Thus while the Corps has not been in any of the war areas as a unit, it is doing indispensable war work in support of the forces in the field, as may be judged from the heavy list of casualties among those who have been

trained in the Inns of Court Corps for commissions in other units.

The " Devil's Own "—a nickname given to the Corps, it is said, by the Prince Regent—was originally composed only of barristers and their clerks, and in ordinary times is recruited from the four Inns of Court; Advocates of Scotland; the King's Inn, Dublin; past and present members of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; past members of Public Schools and " gentlemen considered by the Commanding Officer as specially eligible." The Corps trains primarily for Cavalry and Infantry, but a large number of men who have undergone the course of training afforded by the Corps have been selected for commissions in the Royal Artillery, the Royal Engineers, the Army Service Corps, and other branches of the Army.

Before the war the course of training extended over four years, and members were under obligation to pass certain examinations. The certificates granted to the successful candidates counted for promotion in the case of men subsequently commissioned in the Territorial Force, and reduced the period of probationary training in the case of men commissioned with Special Reserve. Within a few days after the declaration of war all men with certificates took up their duties with other units as fully qualified officers. Since the war broke out the system of examinations and certificates has been suspended, but the fact that the Corps has been embodied has enabled the training to be more practical and thorough. The need of officers is so great that it has been found necessary to compress the whole course into a period varying, with the aptitude of the men, from a few weeks to about three months. It should be added, too, that eligible men who have been serving in other units and are ambitious of obtaining commissions may with the consent of their commanding officer be transferred to the Corps. Great numbers of men of the right stamp eager to serve their country, but impatient of the delay involved in obtaining

a commission, enlisted in the ranks, and are still serving as privates or N.C.O.'s, though they would be of much more service to their country if they could become officers. To such men the Corps extends a welcome. The only cash obligation to the Corps is a subscription of one guinea.

The " Devil's Own "—which before the creation of the Territorial Force in 1908, when it was constituted an O.T.C., was originally the 23rd Middlesex R.V., and afterwards the 14th Middlesex R.V.—traces its origin to the year 1584, when under Lord Ellesmere it served at Tilbury in land operations at the time of the Armada. Later in the Civil War, headed by Lord Lyttleton, it acted as the special guard of the person of Charles I at Whitehall. In 1745, led by Chief Justice Willes, it marched to Finchley to fight the Pretender; and in the Napoleonic Wars, we are told, it furnished " two valiant corps."

LONDON TERRITORIAL DISTINCTIONS FOR GALLANTRY IN THE WESTERN CAMPAIGN

THE following List makes no pretence to completeness. It has been compiled with difficulty from many scattered records.

1ST LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

Lt.-Col. Edward Gilbert MERCER—C.M.G.

Maj. Duncan Vaughan SMITH—D.S.O.

Sgt. D. FULFORD—Médaille Militaire of France.

L.-Cpl. T. J. FRENCH—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry whilst on an officer's patrol. The officer was mortally wounded, and L.-Cpl. French took charge and displayed great bravery and ability in handling the patrol.

Pte. E. BROWN—D.C.M.

For gallant conduct and devotion to duty on May 9, 1915. when, hearing that an officer was severely wounded, he left his shelter under a very heavy shell fire to find him. The officer made him take down his message in writing, and he then assisted to carry him in, later delivering the message. Pte. Brown had himself been knocked down by a shell earlier in the day.

Pte. J. A. HEATH, Army Service Corps (formerly 1st London)—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry when, in spite of being wounded by shrapnel on the evening of the previous day, he handled his section with great ability and judgment and displayed marked devotion to duty.

2ND LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

Col. J. Attenborough—C.M.G.

Capt. (temp. Maj.) Gerald Arthur Stanley—D.S.O.

Lt. (temp. Capt.) Lionel Reed Inglis—M.C.

2nd Lt. Beckwith—M.C.

Co. Sgt.-Maj. W. J. Husband—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and ability in the performance of his duties on all occasions. He has invariably exhibited great courage under fire, and devotion to duty, and set a fine example to all ranks.

Co. Sgt.-Maj. T. D. Williams—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and continuous good work as Company Sergeant-Major, and for organizing a most efficient sniping squad, himself accounting for a great number of the enemy. His devotion to duty throughout the campaign has been most marked.

Sgt. A. E. Agutter—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and ability in the performance of his duties on all occasions. He has invariably exhibited great courage under fire and devotion to duty, and set a fine example to all ranks.

Sgt. Leopold Macleod—Russian Cross of the Order of St. George, 4th Class.

Sgt. F. W. Mould—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and ability in the performance of his duties on all occasions. He has invariably exhibited great courage under fire and devotion to duty, and set a fine example to all ranks.

Act.-Cpl. A. Windebank—D.C.M. and Russian Cross of the Order of St. George, 4th Class.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty on March 15, 1915, in crossing open ground under heavy fire to go to the assistance of a wounded comrade. Acting-Corporal Windebank lay out in the open, with the wounded man, from 8 a.m. till dusk, thereby saving the man's life.

L.-Cpl. S. Alexander—D.C.M.

Pte. Henry James Coleman—Russian Medal of St. George, 3rd Class.

3RD LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

Capt. Alfred Victor Louis Benedict Agius—M.C.

Temp. Lt. Cecil Wentworth Hammerton—M.C.

Act.-Rgtl.-Sgt.-Maj. F. Godfrey (3rd Batt. Grenadier Guards attached 1/3rd London)—Médaille Militaire of France.

Act.-Co.-Sgt.-Maj. C. A. Murray—D.C.M.

For gallant conduct during the assault on the German trenches at Neuve Chapelle, on March 10, 1915, and again on the following day during the enemy's counter-attack.

Act.-Sgt. W. Allen—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry, ability, and resource, at Neuve Chapelle from March 10 to 13, 1915. He was in charge of a reconnoitring patrol on the night of March 13, and discovered three small bridges laid down by the enemy for their advance; these he removed, which resulted in the Germans being held up in their attack, and our machine guns being turned upon them.

Act.-Sgt. F. Newman—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry at Neuve Chapelle, on March 10, 1915, during our charge on the enemy's trenches. Although wounded he continued to encourage his men.

Act.-L.-Cpl. J. S. Brewster—D.C.M.

For gallant conduct during our charge on the German trenches at Neuve Chapelle, on March 10, 1915.

Pte. W. Bute—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry in helping under very trying circumstances to get the wounded out of a trench which was being bombarded by heavy bombs.

Pte. S. M. Butterfield—D.C.M.

For gallant conduct during our charge on the German trenches at Neuve Chapelle on March 10, 1915. On the night of March 12 he displayed great gallantry and initiative in crawling out under circumstances of great danger, to search for papers on the bodies of the enemy who had fallen.

Pte. A. H. S. Hale—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. When in full view of the enemy he dragged a wounded man to a place of safety, and remained with him for seventeen hours in a shell hole, tending his wounds under fire.

Pte. F. W. N. Watts—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. When in full view of the enemy, he dragged a wounded man to a place of safety, and remained with him for seventeen hours in a shell hole, tending his wounds under fire.

4TH LONDON (ROYAL FUSILIERS)

Capt. William George Clark—D.S.O.

Near Ypres, on May 27, 1915, while under very heavy shell and rifle fire, he collected men of his own and other companies, gallantly led them forward, and held the position he gained until ordered to retire after dark.

Lieut. Moore—M.C.

2nd Lt. (temp. Capt.) Joseph Richard Pyper—M.C.

Co.-Sgt.-Maj. E. H. Risley—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. The captain of his company was wounded and the other officer killed, but Co.-Sgt.-Maj. Risley assumed the command, and, although the men were much shaken, by his courage and fine example soon restored the morale of the company.

Sgt. A. E. Ehren—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on April 26–27, 1915, near Ypres, when he carried successfully several reports under heavy shell and rifle fire. On one occasion he left his trench and rescued a wounded man, being exposed to a heavy fire the whole time.

Cpl. W. J. Knowles—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry; he carried a wounded officer to a place of safety, obtained a stretcher, and finally brought him to the dressing-station, being the whole while under heavy fire.

L.-Cpl. G. L. Colomb—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on April 27, 1915, near Ypres. He rescued, under a very heavy rifle fire and shell fire, a wounded man who was lying about fifty yards away, rendered first aid and carried him back to cover. In doing so he was himself wounded.

Pte. Badham—D.C.M.

THE CAST IRON SIXTH (6TH LONDON)

Maj. (temp. Lt.-Col.) William Frederick Mildren—C.M.G.

Capt. William Hughes—M.C.

Co.-Sgt.-Maj. A. L. Yelf—D.C.M. and Croix de Guerre of France.

For conspicuous gallantry on September 25, 1915, at Loos. After all his company officers had been killed or wounded he led, with great coolness and gallantry, his company to the assault of the German second-line trenches, which he captured and consolidated.

L.-Cpl. (now Sgt.) H. J. O. Allan—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on many occasions, when he carried out reconnaissances at night outside the front trenches under heavy fire.

L.-Cpl. (now Sgt.) F. S. Cuss—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry in leading the bombing party up to the first enemy line trench, clearing all the dug-outs. Having completed this, he again led the attack up to the enemy communication trench.

L.-Cpl. L. Gordon—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, 1915, at Festubert, when, acting as a stretcher-bearer, he attended to the wounded under a heavy shell fire. He was himself wounded by the bursting of a shell, but continued assisting the wounded until completely exhausted.

Pte. D. De Ath—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. He displayed great coolness and bravery in moving across the open with a trench mortar battery in the attack on the enemy lines, and afterwards in the consolidation of the position won.

Pte. (now Sgt.) F. J. Burke—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, 1915, at Festubert in establishing and maintaining telephonic communication between the firing line and the battalion headquarters under a heavy shell fire. He relaid the line on several occasions, procuring wire from a considerable distance to carry out the work.

Pte. (now Cpl.) F. G. Challoner—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty on September 25, 1915, at Loos, when he charged the German first-line trenches, bayoneting and shooting nine of the enemy, and giving a very fine example to all with him.

17TH LONDON (POPLAR AND STEPNEY)

Maj. Thomas Gould Walter Newman—D.S.O.

Capt. (temp. Maj.) Fred Evan Evans—D.S.O.

2nd Lt. (temp. Lt.) Howard Caldwell Wright—M.C.

Sgt. W. Wood—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. With another N.C.O. he searched two and a half hours for a wounded officer near the enemy wire, and after finding him, went back for a stretcher-party and brought him in.

Cpl. D. Wooding—D.C.M.

Pte. E. Michael—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry; he displayed great skill in the maintenance of the communications, and on several occasions carried messages to detached companies under heavy fire.

Pte. B. J. Pugsley—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry in the maintenance of the communications. On several occasions he carried messages to detached companies under heavy fire.

Pte. A. G. Woodley—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry; he displayed great skill in the maintenance of the communications, and on several occasions carried messages to detached companies under heavy fire.

LONDON IRISH (18TH LONDON)

Capt. and Adj. A. P. Hamilton—M.C.

For conspicuous gallantry on September 25, 1915, during the attack on Maroc and Loos. Although severely wounded early in the day, he remained in the German second-line trench, reorganizing and encouraging his men until the consolidation was well advanced. He then had to be ordered back for medical attendance.

Capt. John Robert Trinder—M.C.

2nd Lt. (temp. Capt.) Heathcote Upton Mann—M.C.

2nd Lt. Ronald George Munro—M.C.

For conspicuous gallantry and ability at the Quarries, near Vermelles, on December 16, 1915. He was in command of a party of Grenadiers in a very exposed position in the front line and repulsed a succession of violent bomb attacks made by the enemy.

Sgt. (now 2nd Lt.) A. J. Cunningham—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry; during the attack he assumed command of his company, when the officers became wounded, and led it with conspicuous bravery and skill until wounded himself.

Sgt. F. Jones—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. When the signalling officer was killed he took command of the signallers and established communications by wire at great personal risk. He was constantly in the open repairing the wire under heavy fire.

Sgt. W. G. J. Parker (47th London Divisional Cyclist Co., Army Cyclist Corps, now with 3/18th London R., T.F.)—D.C.M.

Sgt. W. O. Stephens—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. Although wounded during the attack, he continued to lead his men until he was obliged to give in from exhaustion, having been again wounded in the enemy's second-line trench.

Pte. N. H. Sagar—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on the night of May 25–26, 1915, at Givenchy. The telephone line having been cut near the Keep, he went out and repaired the wire, although at the time

exposed to a very heavy shell fire. He also repeatedly took messages across the courtyard of the Keep, while shells were bursting in and around it.

Pte. J. TILLEY—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry at the Quarries near Vermelles on December 16, 1915, during two attacks by the enemy at 9 a.m. and 11.45 p.m. During the former when the barrier had been blown down and all the bombs burned, he sent back his remaining comrades to get more bombs and held up the enemy single-handed until reinforcements arrived.

Pte. G. E. VINCENT—D.C.M.

Pte. P. J. WOOD—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25, 1915, at Givenchy. When the communication between the Keep and Battalion Headquarters had been severed he went out, during a lull in the bombardment, and proceeded to carry out repairs. The bombardment recommenced at once, but he remained out about half an hour and completed the work.

19TH LONDON (ST. PANCRAS)

Capt. (temp. Maj.) LEONARD JOHN DANBY—M.C.

Lt. (temp. Capt.) SAMUEL CHARLES HASKINS—M.C.

Co.-Sgt.-Maj. J. DILLINGHAM—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry; although suffering from a badly sprained ankle, he, with great bravery, regulated the supply of small arms, ammunition, and bombs, and refused to rest or go to the rear.

Sgt.-Maj. W. J. KING—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry; he showed great bravery and skill under heavy fire, and managed, regardless of danger, to get supplies to the battalion throughout the operations.

Act.-Qmr.-Sgt. H. J. WILLS—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and consistently good work. He invariably displayed great skill, bravery, and devotion to duty in the performance of his duties.

Sgt. A. A. SOUTHAM—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. Although wounded and most of his platoon out of action, he collected a party of men, whose officers had been killed, and led them forward with great bravery.

L.-Cpl. P. R. Dowling—D.C.M.

For great bravery and devotion to duty on the night of May 26–27, 1915, at Givenchy. He went out in front of a captured German trench and rescued a wounded officer, after four men had previously been killed in attempting the same act.

L.-Cpl. H. W. Mitchell—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and coolness. Noticing an enemy aerial torpedo approaching, he cleared his detachment out of the danger area. He returned after the explosion to investigate, and, though already wounded, rescued singlehanded a man of the bombing platoon who had been buried. He then returned to his platoon and took command, as the sergeant had been wounded.

Pte. A. Gray—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and initiative on September 25, 1915, near Loos. He carried his machine gun forward to the captured position when only two men of the gun team were left, and selected the gun position in the most able way. His coolness and gallantry under heavy and continuous fire afforded a fine example to all ranks, and greatly contributed to the safety of the companies of his battalion.

Pte. T. Hiscock—D.C.M.

For great bravery and devotion to duty on the night of May 26–27, 1915, at Givenchy. He went out in front of a German captured trench and rescued a wounded officer, after four men had previously been killed in attempting the same act.

20TH LONDON (BLACKHEATH AND WOOLWICH)

Lt. William Frederick Dyer—M.C.

Sgt.-Maj. W. A. Muir—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry in superintending the supply of ammunition under heavy fire. His devotion to duty was most marked.

Sgt. G. A. C. Lomas—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25–26, 1915, at Givenchy. When all the men of his platoon, with the exception of seven, had been killed, he held a trench on the right of another battalion and successfully repelled three counter-attacks of the enemy.

L.-Cpl. P. C. Litten—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. L.-Cpl. Litten showed great courage and resource in organizing the supply of bombs and assisting his officer when the enemy made a counter-attack.

Pte. R. A. F. Carey—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25–26, 1915, at Givenchy. Private Carey sapped his way along the side of the Givenchy Bluff, and made three journeys for bomb ammunition, which he carried up to the point he had reached. He afterwards assisted to hold the captured position.

Pte. F. Hill—D.C.M. and Croix de Guerre of France.

For conspicuous bravery on September 25, 1915, at Loos, in bombing forward during the attack on the Chalk Pit. Although wounded several times, he refused to retire, but continued bombing until the attack was completed. He exhibited great gallantry and devotion to duty.

Pte. S. G. W. Smith—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 26, 1915, at Givenchy, when he assisted an officer to carry in many wounded men across the open under a very heavy fire. He displayed great bravery and devotion to duty.

Pte. C. H. I. Stewart—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry from September 25 to 26, 1915, at Maroc and Loos. Although wounded on the first day when carrying in a wounded man, he refused to retire, and continued his duties during the four following days in spite of his wound, exhibiting a gallantry and devotion to duty beyond praise.

Pte. D. L. Waghorn—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. Private Waghorn showed great courage and resource in organizing the supply of bombs and assisting his officer when the enemy made a counter-attack.

FIRST SURREY RIFLES (21ST LONDON)

Capt. Arthur Hutchence—M.C.

2nd Lt. (temp. Capt.) Sidney Frederick Corby—M.C.

2nd Lt. Roberts—M.C.

2nd Lt. Gilkes—M.C.

Co.-Sgt.-Maj. W. E. Burrow—D.C.M.

Sgt. Wicks—D.C.M.

Cpl. R. H. Masters—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on the night of September 29, 1915, at Loos, when he laid a telephone wire to headquarters of the brigade from headquarters of his battalion during very heavy shell and shrapnel fire. He was obliged to make a second journey in order to obtain more wire and repair the portion first laid, which had been damaged by shell fire. He was continually at work during the night of September 29–30, in keeping the wires in working order under heavy continuous fire.

Cpl. H. K. Wigzell—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. He took a telephone instrument and laid a line up to the captured trench. When this line was broken, he laid a second line, and kept up communication with the supporting trenches during the night.

L.-Cpl. F. W. Eastlake—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry, when he remained in an exposed position on the parapet of a captured empty trench and threw bombs for upwards of six hours, thus assisting to prevent a counter-attack.

Pte. A. H. Cole—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When a mine exploded he, as stretcher-bearer, tended the wounded under very heavy fire, and carried several men from the crater into safety at great personal risk.

Pte. W. Ellis—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. When a mine exploded he seized with his bombers the enemy's edge of the crater within thirty yards of the enemy's line, and held on there for three and a half hours under heavy machine-gun and trench-mortar fire till the near edge was consolidated.

Pte. R. S. Shellard—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, 1915, at Givenchy. Private Shellard remained outside the lines for three hours, endeavouring to shield an officer who was badly wounded, and remained with him until he died. He afterwards assisted in carrying in many wounded under a heavy fire.

THE QUEEN'S (22ND LONDON)

Capt. Ernest John Woolley—M.C.

2nd Lt. (temp. Lt.) Albert Baswitz—M.C.

Co.-Sgt.-Maj. J. W. Fisher—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry in patrolling in front of the trench under heavy fire. He has invariably displayed great bravery, and set a fine example to all ranks with him.

Sgt. W. S. Porter—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry, when he continued to carry sandbags and provisions between the lines after daylight, and under heavy fire.

Pte. A. B. Berry—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 22, 1915, at Givenchy. While engaged in holding a line with three other men, they were isolated by the blowing in of three traverses. Private Berry behaved with great coolness and bravery in extricating those buried in the debris and afterwards organized a fresh defence, showing the greatest devotion to duty.

Pte. C. R. Corrall—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry. The enemy exploded five mines under some trenches, in one part of which Private Corrall was almost the only survivor, but with fine pluck he held up the enemy, flung their own bombs back at them, blocked the sap and held it.

Pte. A. McIntosh—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, at Givenchy, when he held a section of a trench under heavy fire, alone, all the other men in the section having been killed or wounded. He gave a fine example of bravery and devotion to duty.

Pte. T. J. Voisey—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on October 1, 1915, at Loos, when he went out on two occasions under heavy shell fire and mended a telephone wire over Loos Crassier, and also laid a new wire through the streets. By this gallant action communication was kept open.

THE QUEEN'S (24TH LONDON)

Lt.-Col. William George Simpson—C.M.G.

Capt. Donald Whitely Figg—D.S.O. and Croix de Chevalier of France.

For conspicuous and continuous gallantry on the night of May 25–26, 1915, and following day at Givenchy, when, after taking part in an assault on a trench, he led repeated rushes with bombs into a German work, and when most of the bombers were killed continued the attack single-handed. His extraordinary bravery and disregard of danger enabled the dangerous flank he commanded to hold its own against constant assaults by the German bombers and riflemen. On May 26, when his line was enfiladed by rifle and very heavy shell fire, his determination held his men to their ground until relieved four hours later. For seventeen hours his conduct was a brilliant example to the hard-pressed men around him, and more than any in the battalion he contributed to the successful retention of the position won.

Capt. Ralph James Holliday—M.C.

Capt. George Ernest Millner—M.C.

Lieut. C. G. Davies—M.C.

For excellent work on May 25–26, in leading bombers and himself throwing up a trench, thereby keeping the enemy's bombers at bay at a critical moment, and subsequently taking part in capturing twenty Germans in a trench.

2nd Lt. (temp. Lt.) Hugh Imbert Perlam Hallett—M.C.

Co. Sgt.-Maj. H. W. Norris—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, 1915, at Givenchy. He repeatedly crossed a fire-swept zone from a captured trench with messages, each time giving valuable personal estimates of the situation. Subsequently he took control of two platoons which were without an officer. Throughout the operations his extraordinary coolness under fire and his devotion to duty afforded a splendid example, and gave great encouragement to all the men with him.

L.-Cpl. Leonard James Keyworth—V.C. and Russian Medal of St. George, 2nd Class. (Since killed.)

For most conspicuous bravery at Givenchy on the night of May 25–26, 1915. After the successful assault on the German

position by the 24th Battalion, London Regiment, efforts were made by that unit to follow up their success by a bomb attack, during the progress of which fifty-eight men out of a total of seventy-five became casualties. During this very fierce encounter Lance-Corporal Keyworth stood fully exposed for two hours on the top of the enemy's parapet, and threw about 150 bombs amongst the Germans, who were only a few yards away.

Pte. H. J. W. Allen—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, 1915, at Givenchy. After taking part in a successful assault he went back repeatedly under heavy fire to give first aid and water to men who had been wounded in the charge. On each occasion he returned to the trench bringing a considerable amount of ammunition, which he had collected from the dead and wounded.

Pte. E. Carr—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, 1915, at Givenchy. During an attack on a German work at the flank of a captured trench, Private Carr hurled bombs for three hours at close range, until his supply was exhausted, when he used his rifle until further supplies arrived. He showed the greatest gallantry and coolness in continuously attacking the enemy and encouraging the men around him, until finally he was wounded.

Pte. P. A. Guest—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry; throughout the attack on an enemy trench he led, with great skill and bravery, a party of men against a machine gun.

Pte. A. B. Thompson—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry and resource; he repaired telephone lines under heavy fire, with great bravery and skill, and under extremely difficult conditions.

Pte. N. H. Walters—D.C.M.

For conspicuous gallantry on May 25 and 26, at 1915, Givenchy. Private Walters went out to establish communication with a captured trench, when the fire was so heavy that it necessitated his making four separate attempts, the last with a lamp which he had managed to obtain. Later he volunteered to make a fresh attempt, but, it being considered impossible, he was ordered to desist.

ARTISTS (28TH LONDON)

Lt.-Col. MAY—C.M.G.

Lt. (temp. Capt.) HENRY KNIGHT EATON OSTLE—M.C.

Col.-Sgt. P. EMSLIE (3rd Batt. Scots Guards, attached to 28th London)—D.C.M. and Médaille Militaire of France.

For conspicuously good and devoted work since the commencement of the campaign as an Instructor of Cadet Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers. He has invariably displayed great ability and energy in the performance of his duties, and has always been ready to undertake any work, however difficult or hazardous.

[As officers in other regiments of the Army members of the Artists have of course won many distinctions.]

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The following have been recommended for gallant and distinguished service in the Field:

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Faux, Lt.-Col. and Hon. Col. E.; Casson, Capt. W. (killed); Green, Capt. C. J. S.; Laurie, Capt. A. D.; Roberts, 2nd Lt. H. O. D. (died of wounds); Harvey, Lt.-Col. J.; D.S.O.; Thomas 2nd Lt. (temp, Lt.) A. S.; Lawrence, 2nd Lt. O. J. (killed);

Moon, 2nd Lt. B. O. (died of wounds); Peel, 2nd Lt. (temp. Lt.) H.; Heather, No. 1473 Sgt. W. A. G.; Tapsfield, No. 212 Sgt. C. R. (killed); Clark, No. 1298 Pte. W. G. H.

Dickens, Maj. (temp. Lt.-Col.) V. W. F.; Andrews, Lt. (temp. Capt.) J. C.; Lindsey-Renton, Capt. R. H.; Murray, 2nd Lt. R. B.; Dunlop, Lt. (temp. Capt.) J. K.; Lewis, Lt.-Col. (temp. Brig.-Gen.) F. G., C.M.G.; Kimber, Capt. E. G., D.S.O.; Holland, 2nd Lt. (temp. Lt.) H.; Malby, 2nd Lt. R. G. (killed); Lock, No. 9405 Reg. Sgt.-Maj. A.; Davis, No. 51 Co. Sgt.-Maj. J. R.

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APPENDIX

LONDON TERRITORIALS IN THE BATTLE OF LOOS

OFFICIAL STORY

The Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence published on May 20, 1916, the following account of the London Territorial regiments' share of the fighting round Loos in September 1915. It has been prepared from such official records as are at present available :—

The Fourth Corps

" While the First Corps had been hotly engaged on the left of the main attack the Fourth on its right had attacked with no less dash and had gained equally striking successes. Of its three divisions one was from the old original Expeditionary Force of 1914, one consisted of Territorials, one of the ' New Army.' On the right, south-west of Loos, the 47th (London) Division connected with the French ; in the centre, west-north-west of Loos, was the 15th Division, the Scottish regiments of the ' Second Hundred Thousand ' ; north again came the 1st Division, whose left rested on the Vermelles—Hulluch road, the boundary between the 1st and 4th Corps. Each Division had two of its brigades told off for the assault, and kept the third in reserve ; the attacking brigades had two or three battalions in front, with the rest in close support. The German trenches, which it was their first task to assault and carry, ran along a ridge which rises in a south-westerly direction from the Vermelles—Hulluch road. East of this ridge the ground slopes down gradually into a shallow valley, through which runs the road from Loos to Hulluch, beyond which it rises gradually to an almost parallel ridge ending in Hill 70, south-east of Loos.

Preparing for Attack

"The 47th Division's instructions were, after carrying the German positions in front of them, to wheel to the right and form a defensive flank, facing south, so as to cover the advance of the 15th Division, who were to push through Loos against Hill 70 and over it to Cité St. Augusté, while the 1st Division had as its objective the line from Puits 14bis, more than half a mile north of the highest part of Hill 70, to the southern end of Hulluch.

"Here also, as farther north, gas and smoke were let loose from 5.50 onwards, and very soon the German front line was completely blotted out from the view of the British, though in places the distance between the two lines was only 300 yards. Our artillery at the same time increased the intensity of the bombardment, to which the German guns replied vigorously, though their rifle and machine-gun fire was wild and high, and gradually diminished in volume. On the whole, the gas worked well, but the wind was light and fitful, and in one or two places the cloud drifted back on our lines, causing some casualties and a little confusion. It was then that at a point where the gas was hanging thickest Piper Laidlaw, of the 7th K.O.S.B.'s, jumped out of his trench and moved up and down, playing the regimental march, and his example at once steadied the men.

"Punctually at 6.30 the leading lines of our infantry went over our parapet and dashed forward against the German lines. A storm of shrapnel met them, and from rifles and machine guns a tremendous fire was poured into them; many officers and men went down, but the advance was never checked; line after line of supports followed, and in a very few minutes the Scots and Londoners of the 15th and 47th Divisions were in and over the German front line. On the extreme right of the 47th two battalions of the 142nd Brigade remained in our trenches, covering the flank of our advance.

Regiment by Regiment

"The battalion on the right of our attack, the 7th City of London, had before it the northern end of the Double Crassier, a long, double slag-heap lying south-west of Loos. This the 7th carried after stubborn fighting, and then proceeded to consolidate the position.

"On their left the 6th London pushed forward in face of a heavy machine-gun fire, carried the front trenches, taking over

200 unwounded prisoners, and then swept on to the second line, which was in turn carried and made good. Less than an hour and a half from the moment of advance these two battalions were in the positions they had been detailed to seize, and here, with some aid from the 8th London (Post Office Rifles), they maintained themselves successfully.

"North of the 6th and 7th the London Irish (18th London) had been equally successful. Their objective was the second line from the Bethune—Lens road to the Loos cemetery, and this they reached, captured, and consolidated in face of heavy fire and stubborn opposition. Behind them followed two more battalions.

"On the right the 20th (Blackheath and Woolwich), pushing through the 18th, secured in succession an enclosure south of Loos, known as the Garden City, and then a chalk pit near the southern end of the Loos slag-head, in which they captured a couple of field guns.

"On the left the 19th Battalion (St. Pancras) made their way through the southern outskirts of Loos, capturing another field gun, and established themselves on the south-eastern edge of the town, their left flung back to connect with the 15th Division, their right in touch with the Blackheath Battalion at the chalk pit.

"Later in the day the 17th Battalion (Poplar and Stepney) were brought up to assist in holding the position, which was subjected to heavy shelling and several counter-attacks.

"Despite these the positions were securely held, and through all the fluctuations of the subsequent fighting the 47th Division maintained their ground unflinchingly: the defensive flank they had been detailed to secure was never a source of anxiety; indeed on September 27 they were able to improve their position.

"The 23rd London aided by bombers from the 17th, 19th, and 20th, made a dashing attack and cleared the Germans out of a copse from which their snipers had been giving trouble. Finally, between September 29 and October 1, the division was relieved by the French, and withdrawn for a well-earned rest."

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