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there and try and beat the Germans back. He said they were killing men, women, and children through there, so that excited us quite a bit, you know. That's the reason I enlisted, I know. We went over on the Aspy that afternoon to Sydney; we didn't have to go back to work any more. We got paid off. I enlisted the 1st of October, 1914, with the old Fighting 25th Battalion. I didn't get overseas with them because, after I was in there three months, I was promoted to corporal, and they sent me to the Royal School of Infantry in Halifax to take up military training. And I took up physical training and bayonet fighting, and I was promoted to sergeant, I was too valuable here in Canada, they wouldn't let me go over with them. My job was making soldiers out of civilians, I'd say. I was training. (So you never really used your bayonet in a real way?) No, just in practice, that was all. (Do you think you were prepared for the reality?) Yeah, I think so. Because while taking that course in physical training and bayonet fighting, we had rifles with a bayonet. It was just a bolt about that long on it, and a ball of rubber on the end of it. It was 2 1/2 feet. When you made a point into the other fellow, it wouldn't hurt too much because there was a spring in the rifle, and that bayonet, that bolt, would go right back down, you see. So you couldn't hurt a guy very much. And we wore a leather apron so you couldn't get hurt down here. We practiced on a dummy first, probably for a week, and then we practiced on each other. Had to learn all the different parries and points and everything, and butt strokes. It was really good training. It would teach them not only how to do it but how to protect themselves. There's a lot to bayonet fighting, you know. You take a good boxer--we had a boxer with us taking that course there--no body could beat him in bayonet fighting. There's quite a bit to it when you learn the whole thing about bayonet fighting. And these men would get very good at it. They put us through it pretty tough at the school there, so we had to give it to the men the way we got it. Bill Daye, Sydney: The boat I went over on, before she took over carrying troops, she was a cattle boat. She had about three iron decks. I suppose the cattle were stored on this deck and that deck. Lots of room in that boat for carrying troops. We bunkered her in Halifax with baskets. There's two rows of men. And the baskets were hollow like a bowl, and a handle on each side. At the pile of coal, they dump it in the basket. You throw that and two fellows catch it, and they throw it to the next two, and they catch it. Then there's a line coming back. When it gets down to the end, they throw it to this fellow, pours it in the hatch. It's a conveyor belt, but it's human. I think we took 6 days to bunker that, with this bloody stuff that was no good. The coal that we put on was junk. It was soft, powdered-up coal and it wouldn't bum at all. We used to take turns going down and taking the fire watch, firing the furnaces, keeping the coal up so she would go. (Your convoys went from Halifax?) Yeah. I don't know how long it was before we got out quite a piece. I don't know whether there were a hell of a lot of ships in HIGHLAND FLING Shop of Interest Finest Handcrafts from Artwork to Indian Moccasins Souvenirs & Film -- Authorized Kodak Dealer since 1968 we have been known for, selection & quality. PLEASANT BAY on the CABOT TRAIL Vogue



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