

Page 27 - Cape Bretoners in World War One

ISSUE: Issue 33

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1983/6/1

caped. I went to the station, and one cor? poral, a Czechoslovak, squealed on me. And the policeman came to me. He said, "You pig," he said, "you want to go to Yugoslav? ia," he said, "fighting Italians again." Slap {--across the mouth. He took me back. I was thinking, I'm finished now. But I wasn't penalized. Then in December, the Austrians were let go home. I was asked, "Do you want to go home now?" "Yeah." They took my paper over there, put my name on. I went home. In 1915, I was 42 days in Serbia, didn't take my shoes off. Walking. Any time we fell asleep, we learned to sleep with our clothes on. Get something alongside the road. Walk and eat. Nobody knows how much men can stand. You don't know yourself. In Carpath Mountains on the Russian front-- Carpath Mountains are the biggest moun? tains in Eastern Europe--I was laying down on the top of the snow. Not only me, but thousands besides me. And I fell asleep. Snow melted underneath me. I sank down. I was covered up with snow. And a little tube was in my mouth. When I woke up, I shook my hand, my arm, until I came through the snow. I'm living yet. H. L. Livingstone: My brother was reported missing about 12 o'clock at night. The ser? geant major came and told me he was mis? sing. And I paraded before the colonel, asked for permission to go out and look for him. And the colonel refused permis? sion. I never forgave him for that. Be? cause I think that my brother Dan lived for perhaps two days. (What happened to him?) He was hit--he was out on patrol--he was scout officer, in charge of a battal? ion of scouts. He was out on patrol with another officer, Fraser. I don't know why the two of them went out, because it's usu? ally the scouts that did any patrolling in No Man's Land. The next day, a sergeant in A Company saw movement in No Man's Land-- somebody raising his hand. And he rushed out and brought Fraser in under fire. But Fraser was killed on his back on the way in, so we never found out exactly what hap? pened. And my brother was found about a week later by the 24th Battalion scouts. He had crawled almost to our lines. He had taken off his Sam Browne belt and put a tourniquet on his leg--he was shot through the thigh. But he was shot again through the neck. But whether that was that partic? ular day or two or three days later, we don't know. I suspect it was later. So, my platoon commander came to me about 3 o'clock in the morning and said, "Report at once to Whaley Orchard Cemetery--light marching order"--that's a rifle and gas mask only. I knew then that Dan had been found. "Report to cemetery"--I knew it was for him. I started out. We could see Whaley in the distance, from the front line. Instead of taking the long way around the communica? tion trenches out there, I went overland. I'd been about halfway to Whaley when day? light overtook me, and they started snip? ing at me with everything they had. They even threw gas shells at me. Gas shells-- German artillery. I put on my gas mask and plodded on. At that stage, I didn't care two hoots whether they hit me or not. Dan and I'd been very close. We had found to? gether the first Mayflower and Blue Violet in the spring, and we knew the location for every bird's nest on the farm at Big Bras d'Or. But he was an officer and I was a private at the time. So, I couldn't even talk to him when I met him in the trenches. I



couldn't speak to him. I found the cemetery quite easily. When I got there, there was just the body wrapped up in burlap by the empty grave. In half an hour or so, the chaplain came, with two or three of his fellow officers. They bur? ied him, and that was it. Morrisoris Pioneer Restaurant Antique Display * Motel Adjacent to Restaurant Cape North Cape Breton Isle, Nova Scotia This is Part 1 of a much longer article. We want to thank all who have helped us so far. Among them are Hugh L. McLeod, John L. Ramsay, Joe Beaton, Sydney; Dan Currie, Leslie Reid, New Waterford; Joe L. Mac? Donald, Jim Moran, Inverness; Christine Livingstone, Frank W. & Elva Jackson, North Sydney; Johnny Mur? doch MacKinnon, Kenloch; Calixte Doucet, Cheticamp; John R. Fraser, Baddeck. There are other WWI veter? ans we hope to visit. Thanks for photos to: Cora MacDonald, Port Hawkesbury (Passchendaele & trench); Mrs. Roger T. Clapp, Providence, R.I. (Bridenbaugh photo & text); staff of the Beaton Institute, UCCB, for photo of Iona militia and for continuing support.