

In Memoriam

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WILLIAM GEORGE McINTYRE

BORN CLEARWATER, MAN., 19th JUNE, 1888

DIED VIMY RIDGE, 9th APRIL, 1917

*Jessie Gordon*

FROM W. L. GRANT

AND

A. J. MCINTYRE

CHRISTMAS, 1917

*The* EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE  
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA



*Queen's University at Kingston*

I have put together this little outline of the short and splendid life of W. G. McIntyre from my own reminiscences and from those of my wife, together with letters from and conversations with his old friends and comrades in arms, especially Miss Mamie McDougall, George Clark, Phillips Macdonnell and Charles Girdler. His brother, A. J. McIntyre, "Archie," has allowed me to use some of Will's letters, and letters written to his family after his death by his friends. My manuscript has been read over, suggestions made, and facts and dates corrected and verified by A. J. McIntyre and Girdler. For me to tender to them and to the others my thanks would be to lose a sense of proportion. We have worked together, and none of us has done a tithe of what we would fain have done to perpetuate the memory of one whom we loved.

W. L. GRANT.



## W. G. McINTYRE

There has been no such display of heroism in the world's history as that of the Allied Nations in the present war. And in that splendid display of human daring and human devotion the part played by Canada is not small. When the men who held the salient at Ypres, the men who took Courcellette and Regina Trench, the men who swept the Ridge at Vimy, go down shell-torn to join the great ones of an elder day, I think that the men who died for liberty at Marathon and at Thermopylae stand proudly side by side with the crew of the *Revenge* and greet them with uncovered heads. When all are so splendid, it is almost arbitrary to hold any worthy of special record. Yet here and there one takes hold of our hearts and imaginations so strongly that we feel that in speaking of him we are speaking of one who came nearer than the others to realizing the ideal for which all strove. Such an one was W. G. McIntyre, gentle but manly, tender but fearless, simple but shrewd, homespun but radiant, pure without prudery, deeply spiritual but untouched by religiosity, loving life but yielding it gladly.

It is a terrible but a merciful gift of heaven that grief cannot endure at the full, and that in the enforced traffic of the world its edges are worn smooth. So while the pain endures, and the edges of memory are sharp, a group of his friends must try to set down in outline the impression which a Canadian soldier made on them during his short stay on earth.

William George McIntyre was born on his father's homestead, five miles south-west of Clearwater in Manitoba, on the 19th of June, 1888. He grew up a short but sturdy lad, living the ordinary healthy life of a Manitoba farm. The local schools soon turned his mind to study, and he is remembered as perhaps the best behaved boy that ever attended Clearwater School. But now, as through his life, his chief inspiration was his mother, of the quiet beauty of whose character and of whose shrewd and loving counsel he often spoke to those who had his confidence. From the Public and Secondary Schools at Clearwater he passed to the Collegiate Institute at Brandon, under Principal D. McDougall. But meantime, while still in his teens, he had entered on what was to have been his life's work. In the rapid development of the Canadian West the need of teachers was great. Equally great was the keenness to learn of the crowds of emigrants from the United States and from Europe, but too often their ideals of education were inadequate or low, and Will soon resolved to make teaching his life's work, and not, as the majority of his contemporaries did, a stepping stone to Law or Medicine or the Church. He had high ideals of what education might become, and of what a widened and a clarified education might do for the West. As a first step in training for his task, he obtained a Third Class Teacher's Certificate from the Provincial Government, and in March, 1907, began to teach in the primary school at Windygates, Manitoba. Here, and in other similar schools to which he went later, he was an energetic and successful teacher. He had the usual troubles, and faced them with cheerful resolution. While teaching at Carievale, Saskatchewan, he writes thus to his elder brother Archie:



“School is going very well. I have some rather unpleasant friction with some of the bigger boys of Grade VIII, who are filled with the spirit of mischief and try to work against me in a pig-headed, awkward, big-calf-like manner, but as I do not scruple to collar them and shake them they are pretty careful.” In his off hours he discussed books and life with the local clergyman, and took part in the Debating Clubs, Literary Societies and other such means of improvement as were afforded, usually in connection with the local church. In the winter of 1906-7 he had his first taste of city life, coming to Winnipeg as a pupil in the Third Class Teachers Normal School. The Spring season of 1908 saw him again at Winnipeg as a Second Class student. In this course his favourite study was Psychology, then taught by the present Inspector for High Schools of Manitoba, Mr. Sidney E. Lang, whom he greatly admired. To him was probably due Will’s introduction to what came to be almost his favorite book, James’s *Talks to teachers on Psychology, and to students on some of life’s ideals*. He also came much under the influence of the Principal, Mr. W. A. McIntyre, and of the Vice-Principal, Mr. A. McIntyre, and repaid them for their interest in him with a rich devotion. “I do not think there ever was a more enthusiastic Normal School student than he,” writes his brother. “He had great capacity for admiration, and he dearly loved his teachers, fellow-students, and the course of study. Five or six years ago he said to me, ‘The Winnipeg Normal School was my first and early love.’”

During this session in Winnipeg he became a member of the Baptist Church, after a great inner struggle, due apparently not so much to religious doubts as to his own

supposed unworthiness. To the special tenets of the Baptists his brother does not think that he attached much, if any, importance, but his faith in God was very real and vital. Writing to his brother in November, 1910, he says: "I am glad to hear of your joining the Church. It is a step which I think you will not regret. I am an unworthy member myself, but the eternal truths which are kept before my mind, and the society of Christian people help me to fight the good fight in a way I should never be able to do alone."

At the Normal School he took a creditable part in athletics and other school activities, but the chief impression which he made upon his friends was of being "always energetic and zealous for improvement."

In October, 1911, he entered Queen's University. This he had for some years been resolved to do; had indeed made it "the lode-star of my life," but for a time lack of the necessary money kept him back. Archie came to his assistance with a loan. This he was for a time doubtful about accepting, as his brother was little better off than himself, and was also set on coming to Queen's. But the probability of making enough in the first summer vacation to repay him induced him to accept, and he was able to write: "We shall bunk together at Queen's, as you say. Old boy, I feel very large, very spirited, when I think of it. The Mater will be very proud of us. Dear mother! She is always proud of our successes, always solicitous of our welfare, always sympathetic in our failures."

Passing by the Universities of Manitoba and of Toronto he came to Queen's. Her reputation in the West was high, spread by her many graduates in western



schools and mission fields. The Vice--Principal of the Winnipeg Normal School was a graduate, and both he and the Principal and the Professor of Psychology seem to have recommended her. The greater cheapness of living in the smaller town, and the greater hope of work in the longer summer vacation were solid, but lesser advantages. It was a fortunate choice, for the mixture at Queen's of sturdy Scotch morality and Canadian nationalism was well fitted to appeal to him. I first saw him when, a few days after the beginning of the term, the two brothers came to me to find out whether it was possible in any way to take six classes in a year, five being the maximum allowed by the rules of the University. The request is not infrequent, and is as a rule refused rather summarily, being usually put forward by those who wish to attain to a degree by hasty cramming; but there was something in the shy smile, the diffident firmness which struck me, and I was at some pains to point out not only the inadmissibility but the inadvisability of the request. The gratitude and cheerful change of mind with which my explanation was received made me feel that here was a student a little out of the common, one whose wish to get on was based on something deeper than a mere desire to hustle through, one who did not regard taking a degree as a mere money-making speculation.

In my class in Colonial History he was soon one of my stand-bys. But his early work, though always thorough and always handed in sharp on time, was without distinction, even a little dull at times, and I was tending to liken his character to his work, when one afternoon, looking out of my class-room window on to the Campus, I saw something which gave me a new light on him. An

Inter-Year game of Rugby was in progress, and suddenly I saw a short sturdy figure, with broad shoulders and broad hips, rip through the opposing line like a snow-plough through a drift. The Industrious Apprentice was revealed a Berserk. Never did I see a man play with more whole-hearted fury. Afterwards, when I began to study his character, it was curious to see that this fury affected his skill but not his sense of honour. So desperate was his rush that he was slow to alter his tactics, and did not show the quick intuition of the enemy's weak spots so necessary in a game; but with all his heat, amid the rough and tumble of Canadian football he was the soul of chivalry to the most unscrupulous opponent. From this time I took a deeper interest in him. We soon became friends; I lent him books; and even ventured at times on pieces of not too obtrusive advice. Toward the end of the Session he became a little stale. His great powers of quiet and concentrated work were too much even for his strong frame, and I ventured a word of expostulation. It was taken with a shy and grateful smile, and the work went on as before. As a result, his papers were obviously the effort of a tired man, and though he won the Haydon Scholarship in Colonial History, his marks were much below his form. In the following years he went on to take Honours in History and in Political Science. His mind developed slowly but steadily, and its growth was a real development from within, not a mere assimilation of facts and theories. His essays were always solid and full, and his meaning clear. A distinctive style he did not achieve; indeed, did not attempt. He was too intent on his subject matter to be careful about fineness of expression; clearness sufficed him. Of his summers, two were spent in teaching at Trossachs, Sask.,

the other on a Mission Field, at Thackeray, Sask. Many an outlying corner of Canada receives the ordinances of religion only thus, through the summer ministrations of a student, and looks back with gratitude on the young man who brings not only the Gospel, but a brief contact with the wider life of city and university. Will had early resolved to serve his God and his country through education, not through the Ministry, but he gladly accepted the view of a fellow-student that it was his duty to spend at least one summer not in a school but on a mission field. That he did so was in accordance with the traditions of his home, of his Highland ancestors, and of his University.

In what is sometimes, though with doubtful truth, known as "the wider life of the University" he took an adequate and indeed a prominent part. He played on his Year team at Rugby, and in the autumn of 1913 on the University team at Association; from time to time he attended the social gatherings of his Year, and the meetings of the Y.M.C.A. and of the Great Council of the students of all the Faculties, the Alma Mater Society. He had a great love for "Arts '15, that solid, dear old year," and in 1913-14 was elected its President. But his soft voice and his shyness with all save his intimates held him back from taking much part as a speaker; though he served on several committees, he never fell a victim to the committee habit, which leads astray so many Canadian students; his classes and his studies came always first.

When he returned to Queen's in October, 1914, the war had begun. Queen's had for some years kept up in her Faculty of Practical Science an energetic and well-trained Company of Military Engineers; these had gone

in a body to Valcartier, whence most of them had gone overseas in the First Canadian Division. After the sending of the First Contingent there was for a time a slackening of effort in Canada, and most of the students resolved to carry on their academic work till the end of the Session, though enrolling to the number of over two hundred in an enthusiastic and successful Officers' Training Corps. But already the deep seriousness of the struggle was becoming evident, the greatness and the fundamental opposition of the ideals involved, and the extent of German preparedness, military, economic and spiritual. Such men as Will McIntyre felt that they could not delay. The Engineers were enrolling a second Company, into which a certain number of Arts men were allowed to enter, and with his fellow-student and fellow-Westerner, J. L. McQuay, he enlisted in it. It says much for their power of work and of concentration that for a time they carried on adequately their academic studies in History and Political Science, and the preliminary drills in knotting, bridging and other branches of Engineering. In December word came that the Company was soon to be moved to Ottawa, and the two friends petitioned the University to be allowed to antedate their final examination. This was allowed in one branch of the work, but not in the other. In the subject in which he competed, Will McIntyre did well, and as a result was granted by the Senate the degree of B.A. Much as he was pleased at becoming a graduate of his beloved Queen's, his grief was deep that he had been unable to win the M.A. which would have been his had he attained First Class Honours in both branches of his course.

On April 15, 1915, he left Canada with the 6th Field Company of Canadian Engineers, and after about five



months at Dibgate and Otterpool Camps, near Folkestone, proceeded to France on September 17, 1915, where he remained for twelve months, when he was recommended for a Commission, and returned to England. Like a number of his comrades, who were similarly recommended at about the same time, he had some thoughts of the Artillery, but eventually was gazetted to the Infantry, and in December, 1916, went out as a subaltern to the 29th Battalion. With this he remained till 9th April, 1917. On the morning of that day he took part, as Battalion Machine Gun Officer in the great attack on Vimy Ridge. Their objective was successfully reached, and they were consolidating their newly won position when McIntyre was seriously wounded in several places by a burst of shrapnel. He lingered through the day, and was removed to a dressing station, where at about ten o'clock in the evening he died. Next day his body was laid to rest in the little cemetery at Ecourviers, near St. Eloi.

What was there in this short life, devoid of any striking incident, which makes it worthy of record? How did so quiet a personality make so deep and vivid an impression? One must risk a hackneyed and pretentious phrase, and reply that the answer lies in the sincerity and beauty of his character. After his death witness was borne to this in a great flood of letters written from every town and village in which he had ever lived. Thus in Ottawa, in 1915, he was for some time a patient in St. Luke's Hospital, and his nurse asks permission of the superintendent to write to his brother: "I nursed him while on night duty in the winter of 1915 and can truth-

fully say he was one patient I can never forget. He was the star patient of the Hospital." As a backing to such a character his other gifts were adequate. Since his death I have heard him described as "a brilliant student." "Brilliant" intellectually he was not. But his shy and simple moral beauty was backed by a shrewd mother-wit, a solid intellect, and a strong physique, which combined to make him infinitely lovable and infinitely dependable. "Most of the time of wise men," said with much truth an Oxford cynic, "has to be taken up in undoing the harm done by good men." But deeply as Will McIntyre held his ideals, his shrewdness and solid intellectual grip kept him from being a fanatic or a "fool-reformer." Love of truth and righteousness and beauty, spiritual yearning to achieve the Kingdom of God on earth shone out in him with the soft glow that illumines, not with the fire that ravages and consumes. To the historian he recalls the wistful and lovable figure of the young William Penn at Oxford. He moved on a high plane, and by his unquestioning assumption that his fellows were also on it, he raised them to it if only for the moment. Yet never was man less of a prig. There are worse things for a young man than priggishness, but a prig is essentially self-conscious and assertive, and Will McIntyre was essentially unselfconscious and diffident. But the diffidence, though an essential part of him, was far from implying weakness. It was due rather to principles so deeply rooted as to be pushed at times to an almost Tolstoian extreme. Few of us realize how stern was the self-control which he laid upon his nature, amid the petty trials and vexations of camp life. "He was the most unselfish soldier I ever met," writes a comrade. "He always wanted to be sure that he wasn't depriving anybody of their needs. Sensi-



tive, with a natural Celtic quickness of temper, most of his section thought he was too meek for a soldier. He used to come to me after some chap whom he could have broken across his knee had been abusing him in a most aggravating way, and ask me whether he should punish that chap or go on enduring. To one who knows what Army life means—that the strongest receive the consideration and the weakest what is left—this attitude on the part of a man who was built like an ox is the nearest approach to the ideal of the New Testament that is conceivable.” Rarely did this self-control give way, never without more than adequate cause. “There was a day when word came though of Len McQuay’s death, and Billy, who had been rather contemptuously refused by one of our officers permission to go to see him in the Clearing Station, Billy, the softest spoken man in our company, cursed and swore like a trooper. It was the only occasion on which I ever knew him to forget discipline and from it one may gauge the strength of his friendship.”

Another side of this self-control was his chastity. I have never known a man more essentially and deeply pure. One could have swept his soul and found no smallest corner in which any dirt lay concealed. He knew what men were in College and in Camp, and he was no prude. He faced the facts and never squawked. But “he was clean in all things; through and through; as a player, as a fighter, as a man. His personal purity was like a white fire, which did not blench from the vile atmosphere of army life. Often, when I was forced to cry out against the all-pervading sordidness, he rose above me, and voiced the higher truths as if they alone mattered. This was because there was nothing morbid in his faith, and because he lacked both the selfishness and the

evil eye which produce such morbidity. Generously he sought the best motive in the lowest action of any man. His reverence for women diminished neither in England nor in France. How could so ardent a spirit fail itself!"

War did not coarsen him even temporarily, as it has temporarily coarsened many. And though he lavished himself on his work, he did not neglect the things of the intellect. Service, Newbolt and Wordsworth—an oddly-assorted trio—accompanied him to France. His letters home are full of the reading accomplished in his leisure hours. When on leave his idea of a "good time" differed oddly from that of the average private or subaltern. "It was my good fortune," writes one, "to go with him on leave to London, and to see how completely his love of historical knowledge and of old world tradition absorbed him in that city. It was not a romantic interest; I knew many men with far more romance than Billy who under the conditions of camp life become rank materialists; but I never knew anyone with more unchangeable reverence. His week in London was therefore sheer enjoyment. Leaving me to steer him through the streets and to find his way from point to point, he talked history with never a break. He reconstructed a dead London; he skipped through centuries of stirring action. There was no doubt about his having the historical mind and eye; he was history itself in those days. He would step into a "Tube" lift after climbing to the street level, and when he found himself at the bottom again would start his climb with a good laugh at himself and with hardly a break in his story. So whole-souled a man could not live in past and present at the same time."

His section of the Sixth Company consisted mainly of University men, and their talk differed from that of

Soldiers Three. "One raw, wet night in November, 1915," says a friend from another section, "I saw a candle light in a partially built hut. I raised the canvas flap where the door should have been and looked in. Billy and "Spike" Daly were discussing some question of ethics or religion. They were lying on the only piece of semi-dry ground that formed the floor of the hut and seemed wholly unconscious of the inclement weather and the unpleasant surroundings.

Every visitor has been struck by the wonderful carpet of red poppies which in Flanders or on the Somme flames above the shell-torn acres we have redeemed. To McIntyre they recalled the lines of Omar and he sent to a friend some verses of his own, of which he wrote that "the verse is very forced and very bad, and the metre, I fear, not always correct"; but though a little bookish and stilted in parts, as a young man's verses are apt to be, they are redeemed by their essential sincerity.

"I think that nowhere blows the rose so red  
As when it on some buried Caesar fed,  
And every hyacinth the garden wears,  
Dropped in its lap from some once lovelier head."

And thou, O Poppy, waist-high in the wheat,  
Opening red-lipped upon the summer morn,  
Or flaming scarlet on deserted fields,  
That know the shrapnel's clang and bullet's hiss,  
Thou mind'st me thou wert richly nourished  
On heroes' clay, inlaid in Flemish turf,—  
Where, stung by whistling ball or crashing shell  
The strong young life welled forth in scarlet flood,—  
Unstanced, it poured upon the soil and passed;  
The passionate soul that feared not night alarms,  
Nor recked when hurtling bullets plunged too high,  
Quitted reluctantly the fair proud frame,  
And crossed, unconquered still, the verge of death.

And Poppy, when I look upon thy pride,  
Cheering with beauty all the shell-torn land,  
It seems to me some gleams of that brave youth,  
Magnificent manhood's aura, glow through thee,  
Uprising from its mould. And thy bright flower  
Shines with the blood of them who at the call  
Of their great mother England, left their far  
Canadian home to strive against the curse  
Of Hundom rising from the mighty Rhine,  
Like mephid vapours threatening to o'erspread  
Our hearths and fires and blot out human joys.

They fell; but beautiful, hopeful and proud  
Thou standest in memory, rich as th' unfettered life  
On which thou'rt fed. And, seeing thee thus bright,  
Though misty grow my eyes for those at home,  
Mother and maid who weep their dear ones slain,  
My soul fills with the strong hope that all  
Will yet be well. Your splendid lives live on  
In others, stouter made by your great death!  
O noble dead! With hearts renewed, refreshed,  
Onward we move wholly to overthrow  
This menace to the good of all the world.  
And though we fall, O Poppy, thou wilt still  
When other summers dawn, mark where we lie,  
Fit emblem of our trust to all eternity.

His trust and his trustworthiness were so deep as at times to provoke an affectionate smile from the more worldly wise. "When after an absence from London of several days, I came back to our quarters, I found Billy stowed away in the garret with hardly a penny to pay the landlady. Nor was he in any stress of mind. He had counted on my coming for him."

"Billy assigned a good deal of his pay," writes another. As even Canadian Soldiers are not overpaid, he was consequently often quite short. Once in Ottawa he approached me in a diffident way and asked me for the

loan of a quarter, as he hadn't the price of a street car service. He said he'd give it back to me on pay-day. We were paid alphabetically, and the list had hardly got past the "M's" when Billy hove in sight with a quarter and profuse thanks for having helped him out of a hole. I know, for I heard him say so last summer, that when we were in camp at Otterpool, and food was not always too plentiful or too appetising, Billy frequently felt hungry. And I also know some boys who borrowed from the generous hearted Billy who were very slow about paying him back.

When he came back from France this year the Pay Office lost his book, and he couldn't draw a cent of pay for several weeks. At the time I was on restricted pay myself and could not help him very well. I split fifty-fifty with him on a ten-bob note and I don't think I ever saw anyone so grateful for a favour; certainly no one ever repaid me more promptly than Billy when his check came through."

These little incidents are typical of the homeliness and humanity of the man. He loved the little jokes and kindlinesses and misadventures which make up so much of life. He held aloof from nothing human. On his return from France his private's uniform was rough and ragged. This caused him no false shame, but when his officer's uniform came from the tailor he was honestly and pleasantly delighted with the improvement in his appearance, and joined with his pleasure no little quiet amusement at his own human enjoyment of good clothes. At the same time he told us with great shrewdness and kindness how the tailor had done him over the price of several articles. In this amusement at the man's petty knavery was mixed a touch of wistful regret that in



England, so long the land of his dreams, there existed dirty fellows who could play such tricks.

But the cheeriness, the love of life, and even of life's little ironies, was uppermost, as it almost invariably was. It is with a smile on his broad face and in his blue eyes that we recall him. "I remember our journey from Folkestone to the firing line via Southampton, LeHavre, Rouen, Amiens, Boulogne, Calais and St. Omer, where we left the train. I remember the gusto with which he ate blackberries from the hedges and how we would race for the train when it started. Thirty-two of us in one of those little French cattle cars for two nights and a day would try anyone's patience. Looking from our car door we could see the boys of Billy's section taking turns at looking out. Billy's face always had a grin on it although it was generally crowded into a corner by more pushing boys." "The last I saw of him," writes another, "Was on a jolly ride out to Lindenhoeck, where we separated, he going in to Regent St. and I to Turnertown. Everybody was very jolly as we drove along over about two miles of snow with more coming down—Billy perfectly happy—decorated with his pack and rifle—grinning at the fun going on and finally telling me to be careful in the new line I was going to."

"Coming back from France last summer, where saluting was greatly insisted upon, he found it hard to salute all officers, and felt as most of us do as to saluting 'war-baby' officers who have not seen active service. One day he came into the tent laughing. He had walked down from the barracks to the camp with both arms full of kit. His road was one where an officer crops up on an average of one in ten yards. Billy jerked his head and eyes right and left, as the case might be, making it necessary for the war-babies and all to salute him."



"Like the rest," says another, "Billy came in for his share of good-natured ragging. The weak joints in his armour were his slight baldness, his small stature and his mildness. Poor Billy! His proud, sensitive nature adapted itself but slowly to the unconventionality of camp life. Time and again the anger would flash up in him, until gradually his better sense conquered, and he grew to enjoy a joke at his own expense as much as the next man. Another of his little weaknesses was his race pride. I thought he would never forgive me for my first jibe at the Scotch; afterwards he learned to pay me in kind,—quite a feat for him, who was unused to insincerity, even in the most harmless form. But though, as the months went by, his fidelity and friendship made him a genial comrade-in-arms, he never attained the care-free abandonment of the average soldier. For the life of him he could not "ape" the Tommy, as so many considered it their duty to do. He remained the "student in arms."

Student in arms he was; but there was plenty of good red blood in him, and he was far too deeply Highland not to be "a bonny fighter." "His chief source of discontent while in the Engineers was that he was not actually accounting for some Fritzies. This was of course a great source of amusement to his friends—a strange contrast to his other inclinations. He finally joined the Infantry because he felt that they were bearing the brunt and that there most of all he would be playing a positive part in the fight which occupied the whole of his mind." "Risk and danger were as the spice of life to Billy," writes another. "He wanted to be in the front line trenches all the time. Once he was quite annoyed when he was put in charge of the stores at the beginning of the communication trench. It was dangerous enough

for most of us, for it was not infrequently shelled." Writing to me on the death of McQuay, which was made the sadder because of the almost physical nausea with which that gallant fellow went about the business of fighting, Billy frankly admitted that for himself he felt none of that, but rather the full romance of danger and the glorious thrill of combat. He was not long in France before he went in company with a friend, on a forbidden visit to Ypres. Here the two, regardless of the shells which were still falling on the martyred town, crawled in and out everywhere, and even brought back to their friends some wholly unauthorized relics. On another occasion, soon after the heavy fighting in Sanctuary Wood, and while German counter attacks were still imminent, the same two paid a private visit to the battlefield "just to see what it looked like." Fritz chose the moment for putting on a heavy barrage, and they were compelled to lie foodless and waterless in a shell-hole for several hours before retreat was possible. Even on the rest-nights, so coveted by the others, he would find his way up to the line on some voluntary work. On at least one occasion in company with Pte. T. V. Lord, he tended wounded infantry under a heavy fire, and was spoken of for a decoration by a grateful infantry officer.

As was natural in a nature so diffident but so intense, he was a great letter writer, and his letters from France, could they be published in full, would be his truest portrait. They show him interested, sunny, thoughtful and keen. The adventure and the romance of war, its frolic and uncertainty, its humour and its fun, were very real to him, though its strain and its tragedy sank in deeper and deeper as time went on, and friend after friend went down. But to the last 'fun' and 'beauty' are two of his

favourite words. He tells of his love for the Belgian cats and dogs and for the Company goat; of the beauty of Flanders and of the Flemish apple-blossoms, and also of the terrible lack of beauty in the Flemish women. "I can understand how done Henry VIII felt when he was induced to marry a Flemish princess." He is full of interest in those left behind at Queen's, in the football and hockey, and the Year meetings, and the 'rushes' of his far-off Alma Mater. He writes to the editor of the *Journal* to congratulate him upon his success. To those in pain or in bereavement he writes comfortable words of true and heart-felt sympathy

10 Sep., 1915.

". . . We engineers will probably leave for France on Monday of next week. . . I wish they'd give us a half-holiday with freedom to leave camp. I think I'd go and steal some plums from a tree we discovered on a route march. I daresay apples and other fruits are ripe in Canada. Just fancy breaking into an orchard of Northern Spies in Old Ontario.

There is just a tang of 'fall' in the air these days. The nights are very cool. I think there would be frost if we weren't so near the coast. I often think what it is like out west during these fine days and I go dreaming off about the slightly smoky September air over the prairies, the yellow fields of stooks, lit by amber sunlight, the song of the threshing machine. It's home, you know, but I'd better not get so enthusiastic. Thank you for the maple leaves. I can do a little conjuring with them too, and call up visions of old Ontario in the autumn glory of yellowing maples, peaceful fields, orchards hung with ripe apples and pears,

and of course old Queen's; the lower campus with boys in rugby suits hardening for the series, 'Co-eds' passing up and down the walk from the New to the Old Arts Building, etc. etc. . . .

"I have only been at the trenches for five days this month, and then not in them, for I was store-man at the hut we occupy there, and dispensed the sand-bags, barbed-wire, chevaux de frise, stakes, etc., to the parties of infantry who came, awfully tame clerical work, you know. The only fun I had was watching German whizz-bangs burst in a field across the way. They put about a dozen there every day with a net result of making the mud fly and spoiling the poor Belgian field. If the Germans shifted their guns about seventy-five yards we'd be nicely in the line of fire, but they don't know where we are, and we're naturally quite content to leave them in ignorance. One of our boys, Frank Quigley, had a narrow escape the last time in. He was patting sand-bags with a maul when a German sniper fired at him. The bullet went clean through the wooden maul and must have missed him very narrowly. Of course we joke with him about batting bullets with a maul. . . . Your view of war is the only right one, and I feel ashamed of my reply. I am inclined to see too much of the romantic in what is really a very bad and desperate business. It takes a chat with Girdler to set me thinking and make me realize how far from the truth is the glamour with which I am prone to invest the whole thing. But our cause is just and right and we must fight to a finish.

I must draw this rather rambling letter to a close, and go to bed. To-morrow we go out again to the trenches. I am afraid I shall be on that clerical job again, drat it. It is a very necessary one, but I'd rather get



into the front line. I made the mistake, if mistake it was, of doing pretty well with it, and the irony of it is they reward me with the job again. However, it is a shade better than cooking for the shift, and I have dodged that so far. I dispense the stores in the day-time, and bring in more at night. Handling the night loading party is interesting, and there is a little fun about, for stray bullets come over, which serves to relieve the situation a little. . . .

4 May, 1916.

Yes; we did feel a little lonesome at leaving our winter quarters and the trenches we knew so well to go into an entirely new part of the line. However, we proceeded to get acquainted with it too and soon learned where the really dangerous places were, where we were protected from machine gun fire, etc. In a few spots it was always dangerous, but we exercised great care in taking parties over them. I had carrying parties nearly every night for three weeks to one dump, and was fortunate to get off without a casualty, though I had two or three trips a night, and a dozen or fourteen men. I always warned the party to duck when a machine gun came on, and only allowed two men beside myself up at the piles of material at one time. We were often lying flat while Fritz was playing his machine gun on the trees over our heads, but luckily most of the shots went high, and he never directed the first shots on exactly the right place. . . .

This is a wonderful day, and my attention wanders sometimes to the trees in leaf and the birds twittering around me. I am writing lying on the grass on the top of the dug-out. There is a tall plane tree right over me and the wind is singing a drowsy lullaby in the leaves.

Fritz is strafing some place farther back and I hear the shells passing over now and then. A little while ago I saw a big cloud of dust rise a few hundred yards away. Otherwise it is as peaceful as Canada and a little hard to realize we are at war. Fritz put a shell in the yard here yesterday, however, just to let us know.

16 May, 1916.

You speak of my envying my brother his work. Yes; I do. We get plenty of thrills in our work but I can't help feeling that the men who do the real work are the infantry. They are the ones who really come to grips and have the hardest and most dangerous jobs to fill. They have a sort of barbaric satisfaction too in being able at times to "get their own back." In our work, though we are in danger much less than the infantry privates (we never live in the front line) we are very apt to be bowled over without a chance of a blow in return. I think that the infantry boys look at the question of killing in a really more reasonable way than we do. Many of our fellows would avoid killing, if possible. The infantryman sees in killing or disabling Germans the only way to end the war. And isn't he right? When war is once declared each side is out to destroy. This attitude doesn't argue that the infantryman is really more hard-hearted. He is only more logical. The ranks are full of the kindest men. My brother Jack, for instance, is as generous and kindly a fellow as one could find and yet he came with a grim determination to "get" Germans and has carried it out. The killing is the dark side you speak of. Woe to the individual, but our cause must live. The pity of war seems to me to be the taking away from honest wholesome industry of such fine strong men, so well fitted to be the



back-bone of a splendid social fabric (their goodness and rightness are so obvious when one is among them) and sending them up here to kill or to be killed. And yet, and yet, would they be such big and such right men if they chose to stay at home. The allied nations are facing a grim necessity where the individual is nothing, the cause everything. "Who dies if England lives?"

12 June, 1916.

. . . I would not willingly be anywhere else. I only wish I were among those (the infantry, I mean) who have the hardest part of it. I tried to get my brother, who is older than I, to claim me into his battalion (the privilege of an elder brother) but he would not. He says one of us must get back to Canada. However, I think I'll manage to get into the infantry yet. Life may be short but I'll feel that I am doing as hard and dangerous work as anyone.

Sep., 1916.

I am still in the C.E.T.D. Record Office and as things move very slowly in the army I may be there for some time yet before the school opens. It is surprising in what a leisurely fashion they do things here. One would think there were years and years to finish the war in. The whole thing appears to me like a huge juggernaut that takes practically no care for the individual but is all for the system. I shudder to think what life will become if militarism gets abroad in Canada after the war, as a mode of government. One can look forward now to coming back to freedom and democracy, and can endure with patience in that hope, but life would be a bleak prospect indeed if one always had to bow to a system which

is absolute and everything and where everywhere the mode of precedence is rigidly prescribed.

Of course the application of the system depends on the one in authority. If he is considerate, as our men were at the front, it is not a hard system to bear, but if he is one of the small-minded drill-sergeant regimental Prussian type so common here, drunk with a little power, then indeed the system becomes hateful. It is not surprising that the most hateful of these men one comes across have never been at the front at all. They are the men who take shelter in a depot job and bully returned soldiers. If I am not mistaken, there will be a great reckoning with these fellows when we are all civilians again. .

I was very much interested in your view that modern magazines and newspapers kill the literary spirit and prevent any great works of literature, and that to 'produce these one would need to keep himself unspotted from the world mentally, to have a mind free enough from the prejudices of the time and the taint of modern life to write anything which would hold any interest to another generation.' But do you not think that a person must understand his own generation and enter into their lives and thoughts and aspirations in order to impress them or do then any good? Don't you think that a fine aloofness on the heights of high thought is rather an unfortunate attitude to take up? It makes the man or woman lonely, and fails to reach the people. Is it not better for the individual to enter into and appreciate the warmth and light and sympathy of the life and thoughts of the common humanity that we all crave? Life and thought are apt to become warped and narrow and out of contact, otherwise. The great writer I think will be great partly in spite of the magazine literature, of which he will prob-

ably read a good deal, and partly because of it, because it expresses, in a halting and imperfect fashion, but still expresses, a good deal of the ordinary thought of the ordinary man. But there—I'm dissenting rather impolitely from your view but really I'm saying something I feel the truth of. I suffer from not having developed quite normally, got out of touch with my brother and sister humans of the same age, and regret that I didn't learn some of the things out of which they get a good deal of amusement and real pleasure, like dancing and playing cards. I'm getting to feel that I'm a very old fogey, though I'm only twenty-eight."

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Some of us who said "goodbye" to him in December had the chill feeling that it was for the last time. We knew that where all were doing their duty, he would be foremost. As his Colonel wrote to his mother after his death, "he always did a little more than his duty called for." "Per ardua" is the motto of the Clan, and he was very fond of quoting it. Much of the work of the Engineers consists in going out with "working parties" of infantry, and acting as consultant. It is obvious that this is a task which the Engineer can easily make light or strenuous. When I was a Captain in the Infantry, Will wrote me from France that at first he had irked a little at the thought of going as a private, but that he was now quite reconciled to it, as most of his work consisted in ordering Infantry Captains around. As a matter of fact, his energy would not allow him to stand round and see others sweat. It was said in the company that when McIntyre went out with a working party of thirty men, the first thing he did was to divide the task into two equal parts, of which he did one, while the working party did

the other. "Once I had occasion to go into No. 2 section's part of the line," writes a member of No. 1 section. "I rounded a corner in the trench and came on a party building a dug-out. In the midst of five or six infantrymen was Sapper McIntyre, working like a horse, the sweat pouring off his face and nose as he paused to speak to me. He was in his shirt-sleeves and he was mud from head to foot. The dug-out was progressing well, and Billy was happy. The Infantry were quite amused at the novelty of seeing an Engineer really work."

But with all this joy in life and in its simple pleasures, with all the happiness of rugged health and of the power of doing work, he did not cling to life. "When the news that Billy had gone reached us, the first thing that came to my mind was a conversation we had had on the way to Folkestone one afternoon in June, 1915. While speaking of the different attitudes of our comrades, some keeping themselves clean in every way so as to make their sacrifice the finer, and others apparently feeling that, having given their lives into the keeping of their country, they had no further responsibility about their conduct, McIntyre said that he was not only ready to give his life, but would almost prefer to make his offering take that form, because then he would feel that at least he had given his best, keeping nothing back." "Beneath the mildness of his manners," writes another, "and the quietness of his course there lay the spirit of Julian Grenfell's fighting man; and few knew better than I how deliberately and how gladly he set his feet on the path of sacrifice. Newbolt expressed it for him, and no article on him can be complete without some mention of his love for Newbolt, particularly of the Chapel lines. He was never



weary of their strong idealism, for his own ideals were never weary. He would quote them incessantly. They were his panacea and his battle psalm."

This love of combat, this power of work, this resolve to lavish his life for his ideals resulted in no hard efficiency, but in a depth of love equally for his friends and for his ideals. If Toryism has been rightly described as "loyalty to individuals", then he was indeed a Tory; but he belonged equally to whatever creed may lawfully claim to be described as loyalty to ideas. "With Billy his squad was the best, his section was the best, his company, brigade, division, army corps the best. . . . In Ottawa he had a bad abscess in his ear, which was shamefully neglected by the Company Doctor, and Billy was sent on parade. He nearly fainted that night, and we forced him to get it attended to by a competent aurist. He had a long spell in hospital and when he came out I asked him what vengeance he was going to take on the Doctor. But there was no venom in his heart. Yet if he saw a pal get a raw deal he was up in arms at once. If you won Billy Mac. for a friend you knew you had one you could depend on. He always defended his friends and made allowances for the shortcomings of those whom few could like."

Writing in the Queen's University Journal of April 22nd, 1916, over the title of "One of the Sixth," he spoke thus of his friend McQuay: "It seems fitting that one of the last issues of the Journal for this term should contain a few words of appreciation, the simple tribute of our esteem and affection for our dead friend McQuay. There are two great branches of the Order of Nobility, the Noble Living and the Noble Dead. Our comrade has but transferred from the ranks of the one order to the ranks of the other. The words on the humble cross which

marks his grave in the little Flanders Churchyard are a faint memorial compared to the more lasting inscription on the hearts and memories of us who knew him. In the dear old College days we had set store by his energy, his courage, his clear-headedness, so early recognized in all activities of books, of argument, or sports. But it was here in Belgium during the last five months of his life that we came to see and to value fully the kindness, the generosity, the humaneness that were entwined in his character with these earlier known virtues. And knowing him better we loved him the more. We mourn for him, as one promising a splendid career. We lament him as a comrade and friend we shall greatly miss. We sorrow for him as the first of our Queen's group in the Sixth to make the greatest sacrifice. We grieve for and with his stricken family. But we cannot think in these bright spring days when life is reawakening in the singing bird, the springing grass, the bursting bud, that an All-Wise, All-Kind God,

‘Who gave his children pain for friend,  
And Death for surest hope of life’

has not a greater use for his fine talents in another and happier existence. He died for his country in the noon-day of his strength and manhood. Surely he is to be honoured. “It is sweet and fitting,” runs the old Latin proverb, “to die for one's native land.” What record could be more reverent, or more worthy of pride and honour than the inscription in Clifton College,

‘Qui procul hinc, the legend's writ,  
The frontier grave is far away.  
Qui ante diem periit,  
Sed miles, sed pro patria.’



So in the little Catholic Churchyard near two comrades who died in November, knit closer to them now in the glorious kinship of duty and death, we leave him, our comrade and our friend."

It was the prerogative of this man to do nobly and beautifully all the things at which the goody-goody books have almost taught us to scoff. His greatest friend was his mother; next to her came his youngest sister Julia and his brothers; and he loved them not because love for mother and brothers are copy-book virtues, but because he was noble and fine and altogether manly. This is how he writes on the death of his elder brother Jack, a Sergeant in the 5th Battalion; this is how he writes to his mother on the day before his own death.

To his brother Archie:

"A telegram reached me to-day with the sad news that Jack was killed. Poor old Jack! He fought and worked so faithfully and well and finally gave his life. I cannot say how sorry I am, and how much I cared for and admired him. His record as a soldier has been splendid and stainless. Every man I met who knew him talked of him so highly. His section loved him and had such confidence in him. He was so splendidly brave and steady and so considerate. No praise is too high for him during his long months at the front. What a pity he could not have had furlough and the pleasantness and change of a trip to England. He knew how to be strong and cheerful and how to suffer silently during his many months of campaigning. I am very proud of him.

I am writing to Colonel Dyer to find out how it happened and how the end came. I think it was during a

charge. And I want, too, to find out where he is buried, so that when I go back, I can have a really good memorial erected. I want to hear too from any of the boys who may be left who were his chums, if he left a message.

Dear old Jack! I wish I had been with him! I will try to get to the 5th among his chums when I go out again.

I must write home now. Poor mother will be taking Jack's death very hard. I must tell her how noble and splendid he was, and how he won everybody's heart.

I cannot write more just now. I hope the news will not affect your health for the worse. Be proud of poor old Jack's achievement and how he has taught us all to live and die gloriously. He really won distinctions again and again. Can we not try to secure that one shall be granted him?

I cannot think other than that such bravery and patience and devotion as poor old Jack showed through the long fifteen months of labour and hardship and danger should win him a rich reward in the life hereafter. So, great as our loss is, and great our cause of grief, do not be too much cast down. Jack has shown us all how to live and die, how to be noble and true and kind."

To his Mother:

"As you say, it is hard to think that he will never come back, but is there not such a thing as communion with our noble dead, though we are not clearly conscious of it? And if Jack's life was never very successful in a business way, what is success of that kind anyway in comparison with the higher and more splendid spiritual and moral success he made of his last year, and the greatest end a man can have, not a grain of selfishness in it, living so cheerfully and kindly through all the great hard-

ships he underwent—cold, wet, danger, discomfort of every kind, and dying at last for the cause of right and mercy, four-square, facing the foe! That's Christianity, not formulated in churches and creeds, but acted and lived. I wonder how many of those, who worship in churches in a comfortable civilization at home, have any such record to show—pain and sacrifice to such an end. No, away with any minimizing view of dear old Jack's life. I'll have none of it. If his wasn't great—yes, Holy living and Holy dying—I'm a fool and confounded in all I think and say."

To his Mother:

France, April 8th, 1917.

"I am writing this note during a few minutes I have to spare on this a very busy day. I hope not, but this may be a note of farewell, for we attack to-morrow morning. If this must be good-bye I must try to acknowledge the unrepayable debt I owe you for love and tenderness, encouragement and sympathy, and high ideals all through my life—you have always been the best of mothers to us—and to ask forgiveness—I know it has been granted already—for the pain and trouble I have sometimes caused you. God bless you always for your goodness!

If this is farewell give my good-byes and heartfelt good wishes to father, the boys and the girls, for health and other blessings of happiness that God gives to those who obey.

I feel very cheery, and if my feelings are any index I should get through this alive, but one never knows. I trust humbly in God, whichever way the issue goes, and ask success for our arms, forgiveness for our sins and rest after our much toiling.

So now Good-bye, and if I go, I go to join Jack. God bless you."

And into his life there came also that love which at its highest is greater than that for brother or even for mother. He was not one to waste his time or his heart in little passing College flirtations, however harmless and natural. But towards the end of his College days he grew to feel an ever-deepening passion for a good woman, though, following a code of honour which forbade him to speak while facing the chances of a soldier's life, he never openly declared his love. Whether a woman's instinct taught her anything of a white-hot passion checked by a supreme reverence I do not know. Out on the rough battlefield he once or twice revealed himself to friends whom he knew that he could trust. "There is one memory of my life in Flanders that will always thrill me," writes one of them. "It is a night scene on the Dranoutre Locre road, near Locrehof. On our right the rise and fall of the glow of the star-shells; the curses and laughter of drunken men in the huts near us; the vile smell of the estaminets; and Billy McIntyre, with his face up to the wind-torn skies, speaking of the woman he loved."

But he knew well that in the present struggle he that loveth father or mother or sister or brother or wife or maid more than his duty is not worthy of his calling. While in England for the last time he had a chance, if he had cared to follow it up, of a furlough to Canada. He was sorely tempted. There were friends and relatives to see, and so much to tell. And he was tired. When he came back to us, after over a year at the front, this was the first and deepest impression made on us. Though the



strength and the smile were unchanged, though the soft voice, the unobtrusive restful manner were the same, a new look of weariness had come. Almost immediately after his arrival, he went to take his subaltern's course at Crowborough, a change of strain rather than a cessation. At the conclusion of the course, the chance came of putting in a probably successful application for a furlough which would have enabled him to spend Christmas in his Western home. In the enforced quiet of winter, he could have been absent from the line with little loss. But after deep thought, and earnest discussion, he steadfastly set his face to return to France. Once there he gave himself unstintedly to his men. "He used to tell me that when he got a commission he would always see to it that his men got a square deal. Not two months ago I met a private from the 29th who was in Billy's platoon. He said, "We've got the best damned officer now in our battalion we ever had. He used to be an engineer in the 6th Field Company."

Not that he was uniformly successful, still less that he was ever self-satisfied. A long letter to my wife, written on the 22nd February, 1917, is full of pleasant talk about friends and affairs, but begins and ends with words which show him to have had the ups and downs of the average keen young subaltern. "It is very pleasing to hear from friends during the press of work here, especially when one has some mistakes and stupidities to his credit and is rather badly pleased with himself. I mustn't drop into discussing my self-caused troubles, but I wonder if one would ever tire of uniform success. Anyway, one would like the experience for a whole day in drill, with just a little sense of triumph to restore one's sense of well-being. . . . I almost dropped into writing some of



the worries of a platoon commander when I began this letter but I hope you will believe that I've quite got over my testiness during the writing and my troubles have dwindled delightfully. I am just now reflecting that if I haven't much of a head I've a very healthy body, and a perfectly alarming appetite, which possessions help 'some'."

To another friend he expressed himself more fully:

"We came out of the trenches for a rest—so called—and it's been the busiest rest I've ever put in. Our training brings many situations and much work quite new to me. My training—three weeks at C.M.S.—was quite inadequate, and I get bawled out for mistakes in Company drill fairly frequently. I don't like getting bawled out, particularly before my men, but they don't seem to mind. I think they like me. I'm too easy-going to be much of a disciplinarian, and I think they rather like my not jumping down their throats very often. But my wail is that I make 'bones' pretty often, and that doesn't help. . . I'm getting to understand what discipline is. It's splendid and gets results but I have to reconstruct my scheme of thought almost entirely, and naturally, being busy, sigh for more free and easy days. I'd rather be in the trenches, where I can take my own lead more. We Queen's people had too little discipline in our training. I'm beginning to find it out. . . .

Now we've got a route march to do. I envy you the quiet, studious days. There is much, very much, in the good old life, one feels, when he's had a little too much activity, and—and—company drill."

But these worries were superficial, and only prove his interest in his work. He felt that he was of more use as an officer than as a private; above all, he felt that he

was now a fighting man in the fullest sense of the word, and he was happy. When, a few hours before his death, Major Hunter, the officer in command of his company, paid him what he knew to be a farewell visit, he found him in great pain of body, but of good cheer. His last thoughts were with his men, and almost his last words a request to know if they were doing what was required of them, and if they were all right.

So he died in the little Dressing Station, while the noise of battle died off into the night. It was a lonely death, stealing slowly and painfully on through the long afternoon and evening. Yet surely he died more gloriously than if he had lived out his allotted span, and died at last in his bed, with his loved ones weeping at his side. Surely that comrade is right who says: "Somehow I don't regret his death in the same way as that of some other friends. What we lose in Billy Mac. is too great to speak of—but knowing how contented Billy is with things just as they are, I feel that he wants us to "carry on" without stopping to wonder why he was taken. He leaves a stainless record with a great store of moral achievement. What more could anyone leave after a century on earth?"

I have tried to find his prototype in one of the characters in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, but there is none of them whom he quite resembles. He had not *le beau geste* of Mr. Valiant-for-truth, though I am very sure that as he crossed over the dark river "all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side." Perhaps he is likest Faithful, who so steadily cheered his comrades on the way, and who went on unquestioningly to his martyrdom. But he is far more lovable than that highly polemical saint, whose love of controversy is so deeply tinged with acrimony that one understands the rage of the jury against him. The

great Fair of Vanity would have moved Billy Mac. less to hatred and scorn than to pity and wonder and a wistful smile. Like Old Honest he was of homespun warp, but his woof was of a thread far finer and more radiant. Though he lacked the physical grandeur of that doughty warrior, his deepest spiritual kinship is with Great-Heart, who never fought so well as when he fought to protect God's weak ones.

So he has gone, dear lovable simple splendid Billy Mac! From the dead his smile is radiant with faith and cheer.









