

MY EXPERIENCES AT THE FRONT.

by
Private Taylor.

At 3 A.M. on the morning of the 17th. of June, we made an attack to take the Boche's support line. About 3.30 A.M. we advanced and somehow we were taken beyond our objective, unfortunately running into our own barrage, which caused us a lot of casualties. Afterwards we found we came to a sunken road, where we started to consolidate and whilst doing so were surprised by a large force of the enemy going along the bottom of the sunken road. They started to fire on us which caused more casualties, myself being wounded in the thigh. I fell helpless, luckily falling into a shell hole, where I lay all day and night. The following morning I saw a little shelter which somebody had made over a little trench with a couple of rifles and shovels and sand bags. To this I managed to drag myself and shortly afterwards the Boche came along searching for prisoners, and when he came to me he promised to go back and fetch a stretcher with him, but he never returned.

Sometime after this one of our chaps crawled out of a shell hole and stayed with me. For three or four days we suffered terribly from thirst; luckily for us, it started to rain and we immediately laid down our ~~wxxx~~ waterproof sheets into which we managed to get some water. My pal went out that night in search of water bottles, of which he managed to get nine or ten and we filled them with water. My chum used to go out at night looking in dead mens'haversacks for food; this he continued for about five weeks. One night he went out as usual and never came back any more. I presume he must have been taken prisoner for the night after the Boche came along and searched the place where I laid (so I take it for granted he must have told them where I was). They then shone a torch light on me and also shook my leg but I did not move, so I think they believed me to be dead and they walked away. The following night I managed to drag myself out in search of food but all I found was four tins of bully beef and this had to last me a fortnight. It was marvelous how I managed to escape from our own shells as they were dropping all around me night and day.

I was suffering great pain and my food had given out so I had to do something. Then I made three attempts to get back to our own lines, but being in great pain I had to give it up. At last I made another attempt and with a bit of luck I managed to get to the German front line. Just as I reached it there was about twelve Boches passed me and I don't know how they missed seeing me. When they had passed me I managed with great effort to spring over the trench and I kept on going until I reached their barbed wire, which I had a great struggle to get through. At last I succeeded in reaching our own wire and whilst getting through a very bright light was sent up and I caught sight of one of our own men. I shouted, and luckily for me, as they told me afterwards they had a machine gun trained on me, thinking that I was a Jerry; they then gave me a smoke, which I never enjoyed better in all my life. Afterwards they took me down to the First Aid Post and gave me a good feed. After that I was sent to the dressing station and from there to the Base, where I managed to get to the Plage and put under the care of Dr. Cunningham, where I am being very well treated.



Pte. Taylor.