

## Letter From Michael McFarlane

"Bryn-Dins"

WOODLANDS, Conway, Wales,  
Aug. 27th, 1940

Dear Editor,

Many thanks for the copy of The Herald of July 15th. I was surprised to find my letter to my sister in and felt not a little abashed. I thank you for your encouraging remarks but do not think I deserve them. If my letter has served a good purpose then it has been useful in the cause, we all have so much in our hearts.

Here is another New-Letter which I trust will prove more acceptable and I trust more enlightening to your readers should you be kind enough to publish it.

Alterations may be of course necessary and so long as the text of it is not changed, you have my full approval and thanks.

Apart from local items of interest in your issue of the —th, I was amazed at the number of very well-written articles covering a wide range of subjects.

It might interest you to know that physically, the "Herald" is somewhat larger in size than the London Dailies. I need not explain the reason for this.

In conclusion—I would be very glad to contact any Marmora boys who are now in camp on this side.

Yours very sincerely,  
Michael McFarlane.

### ENGLAND

I feel sure that the ordinary and sensible people of our village would like to know first hand, how the folks in this land are taking the war and how they are reacting to it. It is usually conceded that the one who is on the spot is more likely to sense the prevailing atmosphere in a situation such as now exists. I sincerely trust that I shall make myself clear to our Readers in order that they shall at least get a glimpse of what is going on in the minds of the populace in general with whom I have daily contact and who range from Professionals to those who win their bread by the sweat of their brow.

They do not all speak the same language nor have they the same mode of expression but they do one and all, express the same thought which binds all those together who have to face a common danger, which common danger is, the losing of all that is near and dear to them as well as to the world.

Are these people of England afraid? Definitely not. Do they face calmly the daily bombings? Most certainly and without complaint. Are they confident of final victory? Never more in all their long history. They speak no more of strategic retreats nor muddling through, but each is set resolutely to his grim task, performing it with a zeal and cheerfulness that must really be very disheartening to Hitler and his criminal Associates.

The English no longer speak despairingly of the collapse of France for England is still the friend and Ally of that country, and shall whenever and wherever she can, assist that republic is this, her hour of extreme need. England does not cast away those who have once been her friends; they feel and believe that France will rise again, and if I am any judge, she is already rising. Observers here, say "let us work for France, pray for France, and she shall be restored to the world and to us, her old Ally". Let us too, think kindly of her and realize what a fearful shock that country had, and may I ask, would any other country under similar circumstances have stood the shock any better? Is it not up to us as Christians to aid that Freedom-Loving people instead of censuring them? I think it is and the only positive way. It is demanded of us according to the dictates of real charity and justice.

We are all standing as one in a great fortress, not only those from the empire but all those who love and cherish liberty including our Allies. We are proud to be in the common struggle and to share with each other the good things as well as the bad.

We are not beleaguered and one day perhaps not far-distant, we shall sally forth and deal the enemy the blow that he deserves and shall get.

Every day takes its toll of lives but this in no way affects the morale of the Great English Public. Matchless is the determination with which they face the ordeal and their faith shall sustain them. "All are sure of a great victory and a Great Peace."

MICHAEL MCFARLANE

MARMORA HERALD

30 OCT 1940

PG 1

## Letters from Soldiers

Following is a letter sent to Pte. M. McFarlin by Marmora Patriotic Society and his reply. Pte. McFarlin wrote his own letter on the typewriter and it was surprisingly well done when one considers that the writer was blind.

The other letter is from Pte. Percy Gray, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Gray, to friends in Marmora.

May 5th, 1916.

Private Michael McFarlane,  
St. Dunstan's Hospital for the Blind,  
Regent Park, London, England.

Dear Mr. McFarlane.—

At a recent meeting of the Marmora Patriotic Society, a resolution was unanimously passed that the sum of £4 be forwarded to you from the funds of the Society for your personal use. I was instructed to write you on behalf of our Patriotic Society to say that your fellow-citizens in Marmora Village are more than proud of the splendid fighting record of yourself and all our boys in the trenches on the western Front.

We hope you will accept this as a very slight token of our regard, and we wish at the same time to express our regret that you have had the misfortune to lose your eye-sight in this awful fight for freedom. You are much nearer the battle fields than we are, and no doubt frequently get news from the other boys who are still doing their bit for the old flag. You will be glad to know that there are now between sixty and seventy in the Marmora Platoon. They expect to go into camp at Barriefield about May 12th. We are assured that St. Dunstan's will do everything possible to make you comfortable. If you can find time and opportunity to write, our Society would be glad to hear from you at any time.

With all good wishes, we are—

Yours sincerely,  
Marmora Patriotic Society,  
per Secretary.

Belgium, May 22/16

Dear Friends,—

I received your parcel to-day and and wish to tell you how much I appreciate it. It came just in the right time. The cigarettes are what I needed worse for I was just out, but after receiving your parcel we had an issue from the Montreal Gazette Fund. The sugar was fine. I gave Joe McFarlane, also Wright, West and Webb, a piece of it. \*

MARMORA HERALD

22 JUN 1916

PG-1

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**INTERESTING LETTERS**  
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London, Eng., Dec. 27, 1915  
Miss F. Clairmont,  
Marmora, Ont.

Dear Auntie:—

As you see by above, here I am in London, after having spent a week at "Salisbury Plains" and will be back to my base on Tuesday night, as my pass expires at midnight. Auntie, thank the Ladies of Marmora and "The Cheerful Workers" also the Ladies of Madoc, for me, who so kindly sent me boxes containing so many good and useful things, all of which reached me in the best of condition. I certainly was more than pleased to get them. I fairly devoured the papers you sent, for there was lots of news in them that I certainly enjoyed reading. Your box sent me on sixteenth of November, reached me on Twenty-fourth of December, in the best of condition, and Michael McFarlin's address in it, noticed. I was not aware of his whereabouts until then. You cannot imagine how I felt when I got it, as I was preparing for four day's leave to this place and was departing that afternoon on the 5.31 train. Well Auntie, I entered the hospital at two o'clock on Christmas afternoon, the hour of admission, and was walking down the hall way, when near the ward, I asked a patient if M. McFarlin was in ward six, he replied "There he is now," I turned to my right and looked; and said "no, that is not Michael." He said it was, and I said "no" again. The poor fellow was to my side in instant. "My old pal Charles, it is I." and right there we embraced. It sure was a pleasant meeting; he knew me by my voice. He is O K in spirits and health, but minus the sight of both eyes, poor fellow. He was wounded on the nineteenth of October, and relates to me some very close shaves he had previous to that, especially one where he said two shells dropped near him at the same time, one six feet away and the other about eight feet away; and exploded, but never left a mark on him. He also told me that he took a fifteen mile walk to see his brother, Joe, but did not see him, owing to Joe having been moved elsewhere. I gave him some Canadian tobacco and

cigarettes, and he certainly enjoyed the pleasure of a Canadian smoke, which all we Canadians do. I told him all the news from home, much of which he had previously heard. Nevertheless he was delighted to talk it over. I also gave him some of the chocolates you sent. Michael is treated first class by the English sisters, (nurses) and they are always teasing or joking with him, and they write his letters. He also has many visitors. Yesterday (Sunday) there were a dozen or more to see him. He received quite a number of presents for Christmas, including ties, handkerchiefs, chocolates, cigarettes, nuts and a very nice satchel for holding necessary things, with his name printed on it. He also tells me he is going to attend St. Dunstan's school, and learn a trade as soon as possible. He said "I wish I had lost only one eye, as I have not yet done my bit, but as it is, I will have to stay away; but I hope that the boys of Marmora and vicinity will come and help give poor Belgium its freedom." The above are his own words, and he asked me to have them repeated for him to the hold backs in Marmora, who have no reason for not coming, and of which, he says, there are many yet. He also wishes all his friends a prosperous New Year.

Bye bye auntie.

Your loving nephew,

Gr. C. D. CLAIRMONT.

MARMORA HERALD  
20 JAN 1916  
RG-1

## PRESENTATION TO PTE. MCFARLIN

Pte. Jos. McFarlin, who enlisted in Marmora about twenty-seven months ago and was wounded last summer, returned home on Monday. A large number of citizens went to the C. P. R. Jct. to meet him and welcome him home. On his arrival in the village the children of the public and separate schools marched in a body to the Royal Hotel corner where they greeted him with cheers and the waving of flags.

On Wednesday evening a public meeting was held in the town hall in honor of Pte. McFarlin. Mr. George MacQueen, President of Marmora Patriotic Society, presided and delivered a fine address. Other speakers were Rev. C. M. Harris, Rev. W. P. Woodger and Mr. F. S. Pearce.

Mrs. F. S. Pearce sang a couple of songs in her usual pleasing style the children present joining in the choruses. Marmora orchestra also gave a number of fine selections.

Mr. F. S. Pearce read the following address to Pte. McFarlin and Mr. MacQueen presented him with a handsome pair of military brushes and a twenty dollar gold piece on behalf of the citizens of Marmora and the Patriotic Society.

Private Joseph McFarlane, No.  
59715, Machine Gun Section,  
21st Battalion, Canadian  
Expeditionary Forces.

Your fellow citizens of Marmora wish to take this opportunity to welcome you home from the war. They have followed with much interest the movements of yourself and the other Marmora boys of the Overseas Forces, from the date of enlistment down to the present time. It seems scarcely possible that twenty-seven months have passed since you joined the Colors. They have been fateful months to us all. The gallant conduct of our boys on the battlefields of France and Flanders will be an inspiration to succeeding generations of Canadians. Ypres, Festubert, Givenchy, St. Eloi and the Somme are famous events in Canadian history. Your experiences in some of these and other battles in the great fight for human liberty and freedom will be treasured memories throughout the passing years. That you may have an early and complete recovery from the honorable wounds you have suffered is our earnest hope and prayer.

Your fellow citizens are proud to know that you have done your duty with honor to yourself and credit to your native place.

Will you please accept these military brushes and this gold piece as a very slight token of our esteem and regard.

Signed on behalf of the Citizens of Marmora.

R. T. GRAY,                      GEO. MACQUEEN,  
Reeve Marmora                  President Mar-  
Village.                          mora Patriotic  
Society.

Marmora, Ontario, January 24th, 1917.

Pte. McFarlin expressed his appreciation of the gifts and the reception tendered him by the people of Marmora in a very capable manner. His address pleased and surprised the audience and increased the esteem in which the speaker is held.

MARMORA HERALD  
25 Jan, 1917

## Letter From M. McFarlane

Following are parts of a letter written by Michael McFarlane, a former Marmora boy, to his sister, Mrs. C. Kennedy. The writer lost his sight in the first World War, but he keeps closely in touch with current events and his mental vision is so keen that he can picture various happenings more vividly than many with both physical and mental vision.

43 Upperton Gardens,  
Eastbourne, Sussex,  
June 2nd., 1940.

DEAR AGNES,

This is Sunday and a lovely example of June weather with, as it is, the countryside looking superbly grand and the hedgerows intoxicatingly fragrant with hawthorne and other blossoms common to this peaceful land. Yet amid such tranquility of scene, we await the deadly bombers of the foe; but not in despair for we know that men of courage man the planes to protect us from the air. Our soldiers too are fighting as did their uncles and fathers 22 years ago to defend what is right and just. When we get the same equipment as Jerry we can beat him to it, but so far he is getting the better of things. In 1915 Jerry sprang two great surprises on us -- the gas attack in which I was, and the (Big Bertha) throwing a shell weighing a ton. These diabolical weapons were very demoralizing but they caused no panic in our ranks and in the end, Britain got her war-machine on the move and we beat them when we got on equal terms. This surely proved something. Morale is worth more than all the armaments in the world. Any machine however deadly can be defeated and so man's courage prevails and conquers. When I pray, it is for courage for our men for that was what was needed by me on more than one occasion whilst at the front. Especially was this true in our fierce engagement at Givenchy in June 16th, 1915, when our trenches, where they resembled such, were little more than a shamble strewn with dead, dying and living all set together in one fearful scene of desolation. I remember I took no food for three days as our food was turned rotten by the presence of so many green flies. This war is no worse but it is more up to date.

Those who have to face it are young and have moved with the times and they will adjust themselves to it and still survive to look on it in the same as I looked on the last war, but perhaps with more enlightenment. The Germans would like to exterminate poor Old England but the calm, cool and collected Englishman is in no mood to give his empire to the sons of cattle and so Jerry will get all that is coming to him. We must all sacrifice more and more for our cause or it will go hard with us -- I have for one been putting on fat for years so can afford to lose a pound here and there. If the worst comes to the worst, well I can fall asleep and suck my paw even as does Mr. Bruin. You know that chap, don't you? He is fond of raspberries and apples and a pawful of honey.

Many poor bloodstained and tired soldiers have arrived here, some covered in bandages. Some with broken limbs. Many have marched and fought for days without sleep but they are not beaten, for as I say, it is the morale that counts and it is excellent in these fellows. Many had little or no clothing and asked for some clean things to wear for they had to throw off their clothing when the ships in which they were sunk and they had to swim many hours ere they were picked up again. One man had been in the water three times. What guts these fellows have and how proud we feel of them. Surely such deeds of bravery ought to comfort the fainthearted.

Thanks for all the news of the lads, especially Percy Gray, so he is in Quebec. We do not get any news of our lads, I mean the Canadian lads. You will get more news from the U. S. It was they who told us that Denmark and Norway were invaded. Our people seemed to know nothing about it, or else pretended not to know.

There is a touching and humorous account of an English Grenadier Guardsman who rescued two infants from a burning house which had been struck by bombs and whose parents had been killed. He got them out of the ruins while bombs were still falling around and slinging his rifle over his shoulder he took a child in each arm and walked calmly down the shattered main street until he reached his comrades. For a moment the bombing ceased and he realized that the babies were crying and he said 'Stop your blinking row you little blighters, I can't hear where the

from Jerry". This was in the Official Communique last night. The two infants were brought to England by the soldiers after he had carried them for miles to the coast.

When I go out for a walk down a certain narrow lane, an old sow lies inside a field apparently happy, judging from the friendly grunts issuing from the opposite side of the hedge. I say to myself, "Good morning Mrs. Hitler, how is Adolph" and then I realize that no sow however ill-bred and mean could possibly have given birth to such a deformity of mind and spirit as the World's greatest miscreant. He is the personification of all evil and his end will surely be terrible.

We had orders last night that no one was to raise any more fowls or pigs. You know what that means -- a shortage of food for them. I wonder how much shall be left in this world for any of us when this is over? Not much I'm thinking as a good part of this highly civilized Europe is now in ruins with more to follow for Italy is preparing to strike at the heart of the Empire. Imagine us being trodden down by Italians and squareheads. If deceit mixed with lies can win a war then Italy is already victorious but if men are required to sacrifice lives then she is doomed to fail.

I am your loving brother,  
MICHAEL McFARLANE.

MARMORA HERALD

18 JUL 1940

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Copies



The Cloth Hall still remains to be built, but it too is on the way to erection. The tower is already up, and holds the lovely carillon dedicated to Notre Dame De Tuane. It is lovely to hear, but it too like everything else in Ypres, is a reminder of those bitter days and suffering not yet forgotten by millions. I lay awake most nights that I spent in Ypres listening to their sweet but sad pealings. To me they were calling our sleeping guardians on the Mennin Ride and Messines and Wyschaete and from the tall bluffs that crown Kemmel Hill. Imperishable memories these, and I for one, have no desire to forget them, more especially our soldiers whose valour I still believe will live as an inspiration in the hearts and minds of those who are yet to be born. Mistaken though the cause may have been, supreme sacrifice has first place in the annals of bravery. So we shall let them rest also in Christ who no doubt helped them out of the mud on to a dry sunny soil where he is leading them on to victory Eternal in the mount of God the Father in Heaven. They lost their lives on earth and now they have found them again in Christ and Heaven. We shall be the same some day. But I must first lose myself in the service of Him who gave me life, then, shall I find it again.

I might tell you that I arrived back in England a different man after my trip to Flanders Fields and the scenes of yesterday. There was for me and many of us, a new battle to be fought, and that battle was within ourselves, and no longer with any external enemy. Yet tradition made us march to war as we did, but true progress will have us break these old ranks and form up anew for quite a different objective. An objective where violence is not necessary in the taking, but where if victory is to be complete it must be avoided. This is our new battle and our new leader is Immortal. The world has learned a bitter lesson by the last war, and I feel certain that there is really no danger of another war in Europe. For owing to the new machines which all have now, it would prove a great farce and a stupid fiasco. The men most anxious to promote war are simply smiling at its possibilities.

The armament firms in Great Britain are going through a pretty gruelling test just now as there is a growing suspicion that such firms are international and perhaps control newspapers, which is true in some cases. I am now convinced by evidence since the war has passed that actually there was co operation between enemy and Allied munition firms and that we were the market thereof. (I mean of course the soldiers.) Wars are propagated, fed and fostered by munition firms. The Hitlerites got their money to buy arms from French munition firms. This has been proved of late. Then the French grumble about the sad state of their security after having sold it to the Germans. Such is Europe and the world but we cannot alter it, so we must ourselves change."

# American Civil War remembered at dedication ceremony

by Judy Backus

**Marmora and Lake** - Nearly 150 members of the McFarlane Clan, one resplendent in full regalia and several sporting splashes of the family tartan, gathered in Marmora last weekend to renew acquaintances, catch up on news and witness history in the making. On June 3 at the Sacred Heart cemetery, markers were dedicated to two of the family's valiant ancestors, Matthew who served and was wounded during the American Battle of Gettysburg on July 2, 1863, in the American Civil War and his son, Joseph, wounded in World War I during the Battle of Sanctuary Wood and Hodge near Ypres.

Under threatening storm clouds which vanished mid-ceremony, the family was joined by members of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 237, local dignitaries, Canadian members of the American Civil War Historical Reenactment Society and a representative of the Sons of the Union Veterans of the American Civil War in a post-mass procession to the gravesite. A colour party and the haunting sound of a solitary piper added to the solemnity of the occasion.

Sandy Schell-Kennedy, a descendent of Matthew McFarlane, outlined the details leading up to the day's events, mentioning with gratitude the involvement of Gerald Belanger whose delving into war records resulted in markers being made available for Matthew from Sons of Union Veterans of the American Civil War and for Joseph from The Last Post Society Fund, Ontario Branch.

Matthew, a survivor of the Irish potato famine, made his way to New York at the age of 17 in 1855, enlisting with the 140th Infantry, Company G in 1862. The only mystery and unknown detail of his rich history is how or why he made his way to Marmora where he settled in 1870, eventually marrying Elizabeth Revoy and raising a large family. Schell-Kennedy stated, "Matthew, the Irish lad, the American, the veteran soldier, the Canadian, the father. Both of our great nations are proud of him."

*Continued on page 3.*

Like his father, Joseph Henry McFarlane was there when his country needed him, enlisting in his regiment in 1914 where he served as a gunner with the 39th Reserve of the 21st Battalion until he was seriously wounded in 1916. Schell-Kennedy commented, "Had it not been for his cousin, Corporal Percy Gray [Sr.] who picked him up and carried him to a dressing station, Joe would have died in the mud at Flanders. The Irish charm and wit flowed freely through and around Joseph ... On the day Joseph returned home to Marmora from the war, both the Catholic and public schools were closed and the students gathered on the main street to greet and welcome him home." Joseph's only son, Leo, who died last year had apparently tried repeatedly to get his father to talk of how he was wounded, but, according to Schell-Kennedy, "All he would say was, 'I got shot in the bum.'"

Tod Shillington, of the New York Department of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, who had travelled most of the night to attend the service, apologized for fact that the U.S. government had been so tardy in delivering the permanent marker that a temporary one (very authentic looking and cleverly constructed by Gerald Belanger) had been used for the ceremony. He said of Matthew's service, "Whatever his motives were [for enlisting] they are not important, but his actions and his sacrifices are." He explained the feeling of some historians was that the military action in which Matthew was wounded was pivotal in the outcome of the war.

With robins calling for rain in the background, the mournful sounds of Last Post hovered above the crowd, which then observed a minute's silence in memory of all who made the supreme sacrifice, as Shillington said, "... giving away all their tomorrows on earth so that we might live in a better world." A volley, fired over the gravesites was followed by Matthew's great-great-grandson, Matthew Kennedy, reading the well-known In Flanders Fields, after which Pat Pild, Matthew's great-granddaughter concluded the ceremony, thanking those who had worked to bring the day's events to fruition.

Later, during a luncheon at the Legion, family and invited guests joined their voices to sing both national anthems and read a world prayer which said in part, "Let us pray that strength and courage in abundance be given to all who work for a world of reason and understanding. That the good that lies in every person's heart may, day by day, be magnified. That we will come to see more clearly not that which divides us, but that which unites us."

COMMUNITY PRESS  
EASTERN EDITION

8 JUL 2001

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LETTERS FROM SOLDIERS  
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Following is a copy of a letter received by Mr. Matt. Farlin from his son Joseph who is with the Canadian troops in France.

Flanders, 22/ 2/ 16

Dear Dad:

Just a few lines in answer to your loving letter which I received about two weeks ago. I should have answered your letter before this but I was going on furlough so thought I would wait till I returned from England. Well Dad, I was in England for eight days and I spent all my time with brother Michael. Poor chap he was awfully glad to see me—at least to know that I was with him. Poor boy, he will never see again as he has no eyes. They are both out. After the bullet pierced his eyes they were useless to him so he had to have them taken out before he reached England. I was astonished at his cheerfulness when I met him at the big school which he is in. This school is a fine big mansion that was turned into a school for the blind. There are about 120 soldiers in this school, all blind. Under the circumstances, I think they are the happiest bunch of soldiers I ever came across. When I entered the school one blind fellow was playing the piano and another was playing the mouth organ. They certainly struck me as a happy bunch of boys, and they get every possible care. The nurses take them around and out for walks and Dad, those nurses are angels on earth. They just work themselves to death, always on the go attending to the soldier's wants. I think if ever anybody deserved a place in heaven those Red Cross Nurses surely do. The head nurse allowed me to stay with brother all the time. I slept in the same ward with him while I was in London. I took him out into the City for long walks, down to Piccadilly and Leicester Square.

I wish he could have seen the place as it is the most beautiful part of London. A lady took brother and I out for a car ride. We had a 44 mile drive so you can see for yourself how Michael is used by the people in England. The boys also have a dance every Tuesday and Friday evenings. They dance with the nurses and ladies come and dance with them. Some of the boys are such good dancers you would not know they were blind at all. Michael was telling me he had Charlie Clairmont up to see him.

I saw some of the boys at their work each one learning their own trade. They are learning to do carpenter work, poultry farming, diving, typewriting and massage. Michael is learning typewriting and massage.

I want to tell you how the boys get about. I had Michael down in the city one day about a mile and a half from the school when we met two of the blind boys, arm in arm, coming home. They just follow along with their canes on the edge of the pavement. It is truly wonderful how they get along.

Well father, I guess I will close as I am getting sleepy and I want to write to one of Michael's friends. They are all so kind to him that I do not want to neglect writing to them. I will close for now, with love.

Your loving son,  
Pte. Joseph McFarlin,  
Machine Gun Section,  
21st Canadians.

MARSDA HERAD

23 MAR 1916

PG-1



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**LETTERS FROM SOLDIERS**  
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Your loving son,

Pte. Joseph McFarlin,  
Machine Gun Section,  
21st Canadians.

MARSDEN HERALD

23 MAR 1916

PG-1

## Letters from Soldiers

Following is a copy of a letter received by Mr. and Mrs. Matt. McFarlane, telling how their son Joe was wounded.

Belgium, June 18, 1916.

Mr. and Mrs. Matthew McFarlane,  
Marmora, Ontario.

Dear Friends:—

I am writing you to-night at Joe's request. I am very sorry to say he was wounded last Monday night. He was with me at the time on the M. G. S. We were doing a lot of firing all night and Joe was reloading magazines for me. We had just run out of reserve ammunition and I told Joe to get another box. He had only come out of the dugout when a rifle grenade fell just behind him. He was hit in the left leg and arm. The stretcher bearers fixed him, and he left his watch for me to send to you. I shall send it along in a day or two. He did not seem to mind the wounds so much and was very cheerful before getting away from the trenches and more so at the dressing station. I expect he shall get to England and I do not expect he shall ever have to return out here again.

Joe and myself have been very closely related out here all the time, and I am glad he has got out of it for a while.

No doubt you know the Canadians had a hard time of it again. They were making the counter attack on our left and of course we got our share of the bombardment. It was the fiercest I have witnessed since coming out here.

We are now in reserve trenches not far behind and are getting sleep, which we lost during our six days in the line. The first and third Divisions got the brunt of the fight, but the Canadian forces were mixed up in general.

We are very much pleased with the reports of the great doings of the Russians and the French at the present time. The Germans have come back on our lines different times during the last few days, but have been repulsed all along the line with great losses. We have lost a number of men also, but most are wounded. The M. G. S. of this Battalion had two men killed and four wounded.

I shall miss Joe now for he was always so cheerful and seemed to like to catch me with a joke. The rest of the Marmora boys are all fine and I hope they have good luck all through.

PERCY GRAY.

P. S.—Do not worry about Joe for he will be all right in a short time, and the wounds will not be fatal for they are in the thigh and hip. He did not get any around the head or face. PERCY.

MARMORA HERALD

6 Jul 1916

PG-1

## Communication

Bustard Camp,  
Salisbury Plain,  
Feb. 4, 1915.

To the Editor of HERALD:—

I am about to write your paper a few things which may or may not be of interest to the public, but I hope you can find space somewhere in your valuable little paper for my letter. I was not sure whether my previous letter had created a favorable impression or not as you did not acknowledge it, but I have since been informed on good authority that it went all right, and I haven't been hung yet for what I said, so that's temptation to write more. I believe I won't be hung for what I intend to say now.

There is a great deal of talk in Canada about the Canadian soldiers on Salisbury Plain doing as they like and all that kind of thing. Such talk comes from people who have little else to do except to gossip, but I am going to tell you that not every man in our great Dominion of Canada could have stood what the first Canadian contingent have gone through on this plain of mud and rain. I saw a letter from a fellow in the 21st Battalion and he had the nerve to say that his company officer told them one day that we were far from being disciplined. Well again all depends on what they call discipline. His loose talk might apply to some Battalions, but I can assure the flabbergasted gentleman that it won't fit the second, commanded by Col. Watson. Our Battalion is as good a body of men as there is in England, bar none, and as far as shooting discipline or drilling goes we don't have to take a back seat from anybody.

And another thing the first brigade is the only under canvas. People, who live around here, tell me that never before have troops stayed on Salisbury Plain in winter time under canvas, so we are making a record for ourselves.

We had our great review to-day, his Majesty the King being present with Lord Kitchener and some other notables. They walked through the lines of troops making a very close inspection of everyone. King George is a smaller man than you would take him to be in his picture, but Lord Kitchener is a great big man with a very broad chest. In my opinion he can look right through a man. He has a very stern face and doesn't seem to have any smile at all. However this review, I believe, is the last on this side of the channel, and also not many days will pass before we go to Franco somewhere, but I could not tell you the somewhere.

I feel sure it will not be long before we shall be sharing the losses or fortunes of our brother soldiers in the trenches, for many lives must yet be sacrificed before the Kaiser's savage legions are crushed. But some day I hope, like all the rest, to be marching on Berlin. Time and perseverance will tell the tale. In the spring the fighting will begin in real earnest, and I want to be right on the job with all the others. I am quite convinced I will be too.

Yours truly,  
PRIVATE M. MCFARLANE,  
E. Company, 2nd Battalion,  
1st Can. Overseas Force.

MARMOORA HERALD  
25 FEB, 1915  
PG 1

# The First and Finest Selection

OF

War Views ever shown in Marmora

—will be presented at the—

**METHODIST CHURCH, Marmora**

ON

**Friday Evening, Dec. 4th, 1914**

These views were personally selected and include many of

**Canadian Troops at Valcartier and  
Enroute to England**

Scenes in Belgium and in Northern France with the  
armies at the front. **ROUSING CHORUSES**

This entertainment will be under the auspices of the  
Gleaners A. B. C.

Proceeds will be devoted to Y. M. C. A. camp, now with  
our troops on Salisbury Plains and other Patriotic Funds.

**ADMISSION: Adults 25c; Children 15c.**

**EVERYBODY CORDIALLY INVITED**

**GOD SAVE THE KING**

MARMORA HERALD

26 Nov 1914

PG 5

# Communication

The following is a letter received by  
Mr. Pearce from one of Marmora's  
volunteers to the second contingent.

Kingston, Nov. 15, 1914.

Mr. F. S. Pearce,

Marmora.

Dear Sir:—We arrived  
in Belleville Thursday noon. Colonel  
Ketcheson came down and we went to  
the 49th Regt. headquarters and signed  
up. We were then told to be ready to  
take the train at 5:40 for Kingston.  
They gave us supper at 4:30; then  
paraded us to the 15th Regt. armouries  
where the Colonel gave us a short ad-  
dress and thanked us for our response  
to the call to duty. It was then near  
train time, so we paraded to the G. T.  
R. station headed by a bugle band from  
Belleville and Colonel Ketcheson and  
Captain Broecker. The station plat-  
form was over crowded and we boarded  
the train amid cheers and shouting.  
We had a grand send-off from Belle-  
ville. We left two of our boys at the  
hospital in Belleville to undergo slight  
operations. At 8:30 we arrived in  
Kingston, and the Colonel had put me  
in charge at Belleville, so I paraded  
the men to the armouries where we  
have our headquarters. They were  
not aware of our coming at such an  
early date, so we had a delay in getting  
placed. They sent us to the left half  
Battalion to stay over night and we had  
to report at the armouries at nine o'-  
clock next morning which we did.  
Well we did not do anything until 4 o'-  
clock when we were examined and then  
taken before Col. Hemming and sworn  
in. Patrick Nayin was rejected on ac-  
count of being partly intoxicated.  
David Emmorey was not sworn in at  
the same time so he is not attached to  
our Company. But he is stopping in  
the same barracks. We were issued  
our uniforms yesterday morning. They  
gave us 1 overcoat, 2 pair socks, 1 pair  
boots, 2 outside shirts, 2 suits heavy  
woollen underwear, 1 fatigue suit, 1  
sweater coat, 1 cap, 1 service suit, 1  
pair putties, and when you get them on  
you have some lead. We are attached  
to B. Company and have over 125 men  
now. They say there are over 1500  
soldiers in Kingston. We are not drill-  
ing with rifles as yet, we get marching  
and lectures. The only ones I see with  
rifles are home guards at the wireless  
station. It has been raining all day  
since early morning. All the boys are  
well except for slight colds. We expect  
to be inoculated some time this week.  
It is very painful some of the boys are  
laid up with their arms for a couple of  
days.

PERCY GRAY,  
B. Co. 21 Battalion,  
Can. Expedition Force,  
Kingston.

To the Editor of the Herald:—

DEAR SIR:—

I thought the people of  
Marmora might like to know something  
of the experiences of the Canadian  
troops on the voyage to England as well  
as in camp at Valcartier, P. Q. We  
landed in Valcartier on Aug. 23rd, and  
never had a pass out. We were 11  
miles from nowhere. Besides there  
was no beer allowed in camp. We  
were very glad when our time came for  
transportation across the ocean. Every  
one was expecting things or rather  
conditions would improve, but to our  
great surprise, we were going from  
better to worse. The only thing that  
was delightful about the voyage was  
the weather. The Atlantic was very  
smooth until we came within one hun-  
dred miles of Land's End. The food we  
got, I cannot understand, but I think  
it must have been stored in the ship  
about four years ago and the stowards  
forgot to use it until the Canadian  
troops came aboard. The meat, which  
was mostly beef, was so tough you  
could have made soles for your shoes  
with it. When it wasn't tough you  
couldn't get near it for the disagreeable  
odor which arose from it. Many a time  
we went to bed hungry and almost  
gaunt. At last we could stand it no  
longer and began to complain. A stew-  
ard said anything was good enough for  
a soldier, but he didn't say it a second  
time you may bet. However the last  
four days of the voyage and before dis-  
embarking conditions improved con-  
siderably. Our ship lay in Plymouth  
Harbor four days before disembarkation  
and you may bet we were all glad to  
get ashore. The men staggered about  
as though they were drunk, but of course  
this was due to being so long on the  
ship. We were 23 days on the water.  
We had a very hearty reception at  
Plymouth. Everyone was in the best  
of spirits. We are fairly comfortable  
here on Salisbury Plain, and we expect  
to move into Barracks soon, but we  
cannot tell when. All the boys are in  
splendid condition and can step off like  
regulars. Am sorry to say only a rem-  
nant of the old 49th is left. Some of  
them have gone to join the territorials,  
some are with the scouts, and others  
again are in the machine gun section.  
All are eager to get to the front to help  
the rest of our brave soldiers, who are  
fighting so gallantly for a noble cause.

Yours truly,

Private M. McFarlane.

MARMORA HERALD

19 Nov, 1914

PG 1

## LETTER FROM MARMORA BOY.

Mr. Michael McFarlane, who went to England with the first Canadian contingent has written the following letter to his father, Mr. Matt. McFarlane, which will be of interest to our readers:—

Dustard Camp,  
Salisbury Plain.

Dear Father:—

Received your letter and was pleased indeed to hear from home. I am well, and feel just about right. I must say I never felt better for a long time although the weather has been most disagreeable. It has rained nearly ever since we landed here. The weather is cool but no snow has fallen so far.

Well father there is a possibility we Canadians may not go to the front at all, as we are not needed there. There are hundreds of thousands of troops waiting to be transported to France, but we are in hopes yet that we may have a hand in helping the Belgians, those poor terror stricken people who have been ruthlessly murdered, and their property destroyed by the 17.4 guns of the enemy. It takes twelve traction engines to move one of these monster guns.

There are thousands of German prisoners in England, and they heap curses on the old Kaiser, for they tell their people the German army is victorious wherever it goes, which proves to be a lie in every case. The British troops are whacking the devil right out of them and they run like fury when they see Bayonets coming at them. They call the Germans "the black devils of British."

The German losses have been so far 1,750,000 men, which is one quarter of their fighting strength. They cannot successfully invade England, because they would only be walking into a death trap. An attempt would only mean murder to them, because we fight altogether different to them. They fight in close formation, that is why they have such enormous losses. The British and French machine guns just mow them down. The Bengal lancers killed 20,000 Germans in a battle along the Yser.

Turkey has sealed her fate by casting her lot with Germany. The old Emperor had a narrow escape a few days ago. He had just left his apartments in Brussels a few minutes when two bombs were dropped from a British aeroplane blowing up the building in which he slept and killing two of his officers who were left behind. Their great Zeppelin airships are a failure. I do not think the war can last very long. The more stubborn resistance they put up the more severely they will be punished by the Allies. The Russians are now on German soil. They pierced the German lines in two places.

We are still under canvas. It rained so hard a few nights ago that the water ran through and onto our beds, wetting us to the hide and my blankets are not dry yet. Last Wednesday I saw King George, Queen Mary, Queen Alexandra, and Lord Kitchener. The King was much impressed with the youth of the ranks in our 1st Division and he asked sit back in a his easy chair and smoke and make merry, while Germany tramples under her feet the gallant little nation called Belgium.

Last Saturday I was in Salisbury city and saw a soldier, who has a brother in France who was buried alive three times by the explosion of German howitzer shells. His comrades dug him out again and he is still living, but in the hospital. The great German shells tear holes in the ground as big as a house, for you must remember they weigh 1500 lbs. They do not kill very many for they sink in the ground too far, but the noise of the explosion deafens the soldiers, and some are found dead from concussion of the brain after the explosion of a "Jack Johnson" as they are called.

Well I must close for this time. Give my love to all.

Your  
"Mike"

MARMORA HERALD  
3 DEC, 1914



## FORMER RESIDENT VISITS BATTLEFIELDS

Following is part of a letter written to Mr. F. S. Pearce by Michael McFarlane, a former Marmora boy who served overseas with the Canadian forces during the war and lost his eyesight as a result of wounds. It will be of general interest to our readers and of especial interest to veterans of the war. It will cause increased interest in the pilgrimage to Vimy and the battlefields which is to be held next year. The first part of the letter, which is of a personal nature, reveals that the handicap which he suffered has had its compensations and has given to Mr. McFarlane a new spiritual vision.

"It may interest you to know that I was out over the old Battlefields last September, and had an interesting and a rather sad time of it, though I would not have missed it for anything in the world. It was one of those experiences that makes a man's conception of life tumble down to ruins; and that makes him feel very small against the great things that happen and have happened and that over which we have had no control.

We went down all along the old line from Ypres to Tynecourt almost on the banks of the Somme river which was the extreme right of the British line in France. En route, we followed as nearly as possible, the old front line of 1915-1916, but of course it was not always possible to do this to good advantage, owing to the many salients encountered. Ypres is now completely rebuilt, and so is Arras in which I stopped only a few hours, but in time to spend a few tranquil moments in its lovely Cathedral when I thought of you all, and of the Marmora boys who lay sleeping in the environs of that town, and especially at Vimy where at least three are at rest. I could not get to their graves and was sorry to leave them without a visit. I found the graves of two brave comrades at Bailleul and I put a wreath on one—that was my company Captain's, G. Richardson, of Kingston, Ont. The thoughts that passed through my mind whilst at this graveside would, I think, fill a large volume. I was taught, once and for all, how inscrutable were God's ways. You will understand why I felt thus, especially with your recent experience.

Of course the Mennin Gate Memorial will ever remain the great attraction. It is magnificent in its solemn grandeur and contains in its panels 56,000 names of men who have no known graves, my brother Alex being among them. I found his name in panel 26 on the right of the great monument and about on a level with the green lawns of the ancient ramparts of that city. It was, I might tell you, a strange thing for me to find my mother's maiden name written in the book of words in the Mennin Gate Memorial along with her place of birth as well as Alex's. How strange the world is, and how far I seemed to be away from home when I had that read to me, you can imagine, I am sure, how it must have felt.

The great pile in question stands astride the road of the same name and the village to the east. It is, I should say, about 70 feet high and crowned by two lions, one at rest and looking to the west and the other rampant and facing eastward. On the top of these is a light which shows up brilliantly at night and can be seen for a good distance across Belgium. Of course, as you know, Belgium is a tiny country and one could drive across it in about two or three hours in a car. The inside is very vaulted and the traffic passing through it is echoed and re-echoed for a good distance from it. Every night a trumpet blows the last post beneath its dome and silence falls upon the streets during this touching little ceremony. This daily or rather nightly tribute to our heroes sleeping there is blown by Belgian soldiers of a local regiment, but is paid for in perpetuity by the British Legion. I think it is a great reminder of other days as well as a warning for the future. I attended a solemn service at the monument for our dead and it was the most impressive thing I have ever witnessed in my life. All was truly quiet on the Western Front. I could have wished for a shell to burst nearby to break the dreadful silence that seemed interminable, yet was only three minutes. The beautiful words of Lawrence Bingham were recited by a Colonel "They shall not grow old as we grow old". I found out that another 190,000 British soldiers were buried within a radius of say—15 miles of that once ill fated city, besides the number given on the gate. Here lies a history never to be unearthed. But it is plain that the Germans were all out to take the channel ports if possible, for that town is adjacent to them, being but a half hour's ride in a motorcar from Ostend or perhaps even Dunkirk.

Marmora  
Neville  
July  
Aug 5th  
1935  
1935  
Research  
BY  
GERALD  
BALANER  
2 PAGES

## Letter From M. McFarlane

Following are parts of a letter written by Michael McFarlane, a former Marmora boy, to his sister, Mrs. C. Kennedy. The writer lost his sight in the first World War, but he keeps closely in touch with current events and his mental vision is so keen that he can picture various happenings more vividly than many with both physical and mental vision.

43 Upperton Gardens,  
Eastbourne, Sussex,  
June 2nd., 1940.

DEAR AGNES,

This is Sunday and a lovely example of June weather with, as it is, the countryside looking superbly grand and the hedgerows intoxicatingly fragrant with hawthorne and other blossoms common to this peaceful land. Yet amid such tranquility of scene, we await the deadly bombers of the foe; but not in despair for we know that men of courage man the planes to protect us from the air. Our soldiers too are fighting as did their uncles and fathers 22 years ago to defend what is right and just. When we get the same equipment as Jerry we can beat him to it, but so far he is getting the better of things. In 1915 Jerry sprang two great surprises on us -- the gas attack in which I was, and the (Big Bertha) throwing a shell weighing a ton. These diabolical weapons were very demoralizing but they caused no panic in our ranks and in the end, Britain got her war-machine on the move and we beat them when we got on equal terms. This surely proved something. Morale is worth more than all the armaments in the world. Any machine however deadly can be defeated and so man's courage prevails and conquers. When I pray, it is for courage for our men for that was what was needed by me on more than one occasion whilst at the front. Especially was this true in our fierce engagement at Givenchy in June 16th, 1915, when our trenches, where they resembled such, were little more than a shamble strewn with dead, dying and living all set together in one fearful scene of desolation. I remember I took no food for three days as our food was turned rotten by the presence of so many green flies. This war is no worse but it is more up-to-date.

Those who have to face it are young and have moved with the times and they will adjust themselves to it and still survive to look on it in the same as I looked on the last war, but perhaps with more enlightenment. The Germans would like to exterminate poor Old England but the calm, cool and collected Englishman is in no mood to give his empire to the sons of cattle and so Jerry will get all that is coming to him. We must all sacrifice more and more for our cause or it will go hard with us -- I have for one been putting on fat for years so can afford to lose a pound here and there. If the worst comes to the worst, well I can fall asleep and suck my paw even as does Mr. Bruin. You know that chap, don't you? He is fond of raspberries and apples and a pawful of honey.

Many poor bloodstained and tired soldiers have arrived here, some covered in bandages. Some with broken limbs. Many have marched and fought for days without sleep but they are not beaten, for as I say, it is the morale that counts and it is excellent in these fellows. Many had little or no clothing and asked for some clean things to wear for they had to throw off their clothing when the ships in which they were sunk and they had to swim many hours ere they were picked up again. One man had been in the water three times. What guts these fellows have and how proud we feel of them. Surely such deeds of bravery ought to comfort the fainthearted.

Thanks for all the news of the lads, especially Percy Gray, so he is in Quebec. We do not get any news of our lads, I mean the Canadian lads. You will get more news from the U. S. It was they who told us that Denmark and Norway were invaded. Our people seemed to know nothing about it, or else pretended not to know.

There is a touching and humorous account of an English Grenadier Guardsman who rescued two infants from a burning house which had been struck by bombs and whose parents had been killed. He got them out of the ruins while bombs were still falling around and slinging his rifle over his shoulder he took a child in each arm and walked calmly down the shattered main street until he reached his comrades. For a moment the bombing ceased and he realized that the babies were crying and he said 'Stop your blinking row you little blighters, I can't 'ear where the bombs are dropping and besides you are ungrateful arter I've saved ye

from Jerry". This was in the Official Communique last night. The two infants were brought to England by the soldiers after he had carried them for miles to the coast.

When I go out for a walk down a certain narrow lane, an old sow lies inside a field apparently happy, judging from the friendly grunts issuing from the opposite side of the hedge. I say to myself, "Good morning Mrs. Hitler, how is Adolph" and then I realize that no sow however ill-bred and mean could possibly have given birth to such a deformity of mind and spirit as the World's greatest miscreant. He is the personification of all evil and his end will surely be terrible.

We had orders last night that no one was to raise any more fowls or pigs. You know what that means-- a shortage of food for them. I wonder how much shall be left in this world for any of us when this is over? Not much I'm thinking as a good part of this highly civilized Europe is now in ruins with more to follow for Italy is preparing to strike at the heart of the Empire. Imagine us being trodden down by Italians and squareheads. If deceit mixed with lies can win a war then Italy is already victorious but if men are required to sacrifice lives then she is doomed to fail.

I am your loving brother,  
MICHAEL MCFARLANE.

MARMORA HERALD  
18 JUL 1940  
X64