

in tone. They were never intended to be so - I merely mentioned as a matter of course the main incidents of what was happening each week, and if that gave you the impression that we were having a rough time, well that was true enough, but it did not indicate that I was by any means downhearted. Indeed, when I look back at it, I wonder at the matter-of-fact way in which I took everything as it came. I had the reputation of being the luckiest man in the company, and I had such confidence in my luck that I never felt afraid. Only on Sept. 16th, when we went through a terrible barrage, I was bowled over twice and

lost my nerve completely for a while. As for hardships, I really almost enjoyed them, thanks to a foolish romantic strain in my imagination. A "bivvy" half the size of a dog-kennel, or a cattle shed with sixty men crowded into it, quite satisfied me for a home, and I could get a meal for half a franc at a humble cottage, which the average Englishman would turn up his nose at, simply because it was different from his usual food, but which I particularly enjoyed for that very reason.

You ask me to tell you something about the friends I had in Armentières, so I am sending you the photo of the

girl I loved best. It ~~does~~ not do her justice by any means, for her usual mischievous expression is banished by the importance of the occasion, and besides French work-girls, though they little think it, don't look nearly so well in their Sunday best. This is the girl whose mother gave me a home at all times, but especially during my week at the bomb school. Her name is Zoé Duriez, and she worked at our engineers' carpenter shop, making duck-walks for the trenches.

I have still very little idea what is going to happen to me. My foot is doing remarkably well, getting back to normal shape and healing over nicely,

but it is quite likely to need another operation yet. Meanwhile I can get about quite well on crutches, and the dressing is a very simple matter. I could very well go and stay with my aunts, but red tape will not allow of it. I would like at least to go to a convalescent hospital, where they get more liberty, but the doctor won't hear of it, so I must be patient. I have nearly exhausted the possibilities of this place. I have been down the road to the tiny village, and up the road through a bit of the Forest, and I am waiting for new worlds to conquer. I have several promises of motor-rides, but nothing

doing so far. Bournemouth etc.
have been put out of bounds
except for parties conducted
by a sister, and the sisters are
so hard-worked that they are
seldom disposed to spend
their precious half-holidays
that way. I have read some
good books by John Buchan,
Tan Hay and H. S. Merriman -
all authors who are new to me.

It is possible that this mail
will be in time for Dmas, but
not if you are at Haritane.
Still I will wish you a very
happy holiday. Only please
find time to think of me, dear.

With lots of love
from
Cecil.