**Preface: This transcript was sourced online from the Canadian Letters & Images Project.**

**-Editor**

Dear Mother,

 Received the combination wristlets and mitts O.K. I cannot thank you enough for same. Prior to their receipt, when anyone was talking about what their Mother or sister made and sent them I had to keep still but now I can tell them a thing or two. You know it is not every mother who can make a pair and especially at your age. Do you know some of them even hire it done and then say they did it and claim the credit. Thank goodness I know there is no hypocrisy about mine.

 Am enclosing a clipping from a paper account from hockey game last night. It is my first game in real Hockey for nearly four years. I guess I had nerve to tackle it at all. The weather is very mild here now tho.

 Jan 20/16

Received yours of the 16th inst. O.K. Have much sympathy for the cold weather there. It has been cold enough here too till just lately when it is fine and warm. Hope it freezes up the worms and their friends the Germans in Europe. The war doesn’t seem altogether like a dream to me. It is too real and near to be so filmy and unreal. You say the Canaries are fine singers and suffix “believe me.” Why not say “Believe Ma!” There is never any difficulty in believing Mother you know.

 Have been trying to turn over a new leaf lately but don’t seem to succeed. Things seem to be very much the same as ever if possibly more slack. It makes me vexed but still it is dangerous to trifle with old customs you know.

 Must run in for breakfast now. You see I get up in sufficient time to parade and handle two other parades and still be the first in to breakfast. I wouldn’t get up so early if I didn’t have too but then a new order came out. That is the worst of a Staff job.

 Worlds of love from your son

Eugene

Edmonton, Jan 30/16

Dear Mother,

 Rec’d yours and Nora’s of 24th inst. Was, if possible, more pleased than ever to get it. Was rather expecting a letter at the time. Have played some more hockey and some Basket Ball. Am sending a Journal to you under separate cover. You will notice the account of a B.B. game in it. Some ignominious defeat but then it was sport. Have not played any of these games for a long time except a little B.B. last winter. One gets rather out of practice. When one is slow in clearing it means, in hockey, that he is unable to bat the puck aside from the front of the goal mouth after stopping a hot shot and having the puck bounce out a little way from the net. Just as you stop the shot the puck rebounds and is shot past you before you nab it. Lack of practice accounts for it.

 Trust that father is much better before this. If it is correspondingly as cold in Victoria as it is here I don’t wonder at his being ill. Has been very cold here all January. Had a letter from Uncle Will, after writing him, sending Henry Drader’s address. I note with pleasure that it is a London address and so will most likely be accessible to little Eugene. Uncle Will said that he had asked father down for the winter.

 Will send you all the necessary expenses if you will buy the flannelette and construct me a couple of suits of good warm pyjamas. They must be nice and large for me however. If you make them I’ll stand the expense and remember the best is none too good for the Irish (Kearney). My paper has about run out and so I guess I must soon quit. War times are thrifty, scrimpy times.

 Worlds of love As ever,

Eugene

The Armouries,

51st O. Bn. C.E.F., Edmonton, Alta.

Feb. 6th 1916

 Dear Mother;-

 The papers state that you have had the worst storm and cold out there that you have had in the past fifty or sixty years. I trust that you have been let off by this time and that Father has set out for Los Angeles so that he will enjoy the companionship of a brother and the warm zephers on the Pacific tempered with the moisture laden winds of the Sierras to kiss his fevered brow and cool his neuraliatic nerves.

 We all join in wishing you all the good things that are your due from living in such a fine climate but I would about as soon have old Alberta with its fine cold dry atmosphere than your home town with all its dampness and present snow. Then there is the thing that appeals to us all and you know what a certain human companionship means to you at times. One gets that sometimes here in Edmonton. Trust that you are all adepts there now on snow-shoes as we are here on skates and rifle exercises and also on musketry. I regret to state that last Monday the Adjutant went away and left his job again so that in addition to Musketry and Physical training throughout the Battalion I now have the Adjutant’s duties all on my head again. You know that I am seriously thinking of quitting this job and reverting to something more reasonable and normal until after the war. Of all the most disagreeable jobs in the world the Adjutant’s is the worst when he is only a Lieutenant, especially after a Captain has been in the job as there is a good deal of difference in the respective ranks. It makes me laugh to think of the position I find myself in sometimes. Of course it is no laughing matter no matter if I do laugh. I should worry like a boil and let the matter drop.

 Well, Mother we expect to be getting out of here very shortly now. Just as soon as the transports are available. In that connection I may add that the Parl’t Buildings in Ottawa have not much to do with our movements except to show that the buildings could not have been continuously guarded and that we let the Germans in Canada have altogether too much rope. If I had my way about it I would intern the whole bunch of them and make them crack stones and dig ditches till the war was over. I think that that would get their goat as quickly as any thing else.

 Church Parade is just over as I sat down to write this letter. I will say in this connection that we are now having our church parade right at home in the armouries as it is warm here and cold to march to a church outside. Then there is the satisfaction of knowing that there is a place home large enough to hold all the men to give them service.

 It is very cold here yet and seems no sign of letting up. We practice hockey here again this P.M. and B.B. this A.M. I guess. I don’t feel much like it myself and do not know yet if I shall go out or not. All the folks were well the last I heard of them here. Have not seen Bert for all the time since Xmas it seems.

 Those are the chief news so I guess that I shall close. I am living in hopes that I shall get a letter all round from you people and also a letter from Gladys written at your place.

 Cargoes of love, embraces and kisses,

Eugene

Grunwald Hotel,

Calgary, Alta

Feb 14/16

 Dear Mother;-

 Arrived here O.K. yesterday morning. Was rather surprised to find that were chosen for such noble work as instructors but accepted the job as a matter of course and duty. See lots of work ahead, but none behind in preparing lectures etc. and then giving them. By yesterdays mail I sent you a Valentine. Was in a great hurry but now I wish to send you the best wishes of a loving son and wish you many happy returns of the day and that the anniversary of St. Valentines day and my Valentine’s birthday will not be clouded with war or rumors of war.

 It is fine and mild down here now. I trust it will remain that way for awhile. Did I tell you that I got my head cut the other night? It is a fine color now over and around my right eye on the temple. This hotel where we are stopping is the funniest place. It is like the house of a thousand volts. Every time you touch metal you get a shock. It keeps you wide awake. Don’t expect much news from here or rather be not disappointed if news is scarce as we will be very busy from now on. Hours are from 8.30 a.m. til 5 p.m. All our preparation is outside of that. Have rung up no girls at all as if we did it would take time to go out with them. Some of the mob got away here the other day and smashed up a few places where Germans harbor. We missed it all.

 Love as ever to all at home,

Eugene

 March 5-16

Dear Mother;-

 Your last two letters received O.K. Was indeed pleased to learn of the change in weather conditions out there. Am indeed sorry if I was unduly suspicious of anything which you would do. Poor little Gladys cares about as much for me as she does about most things, except perhaps a good time. I was supposes to be part of her good time at one period.

 Am enclosing a letter, open, to Father, and one to Ferne. Will you please send the one on to Father in you next letter and re address the one to Ferne, and also send me their address. I left it in Edmonton. Was gratified to learn you thought of me at all with regard to abscess. Was out to a big dance last Friday and the Doctor Cap’t Grey found out and gave me fits. I went to bed early last night and slept from 8 pm to 10 am this morning. Read Father’s letter and learn my new temptations. It is sometimes a hard time to turn down promotion.

 Your Caring son sending oceans of love,

Eugene

King Edward School,

Calgary,

Mar 27/16

 Dear Mother:-

 Just a few lines to you. Would have written you yesterday but was in Edmonton this week end and very busy indeed. I feel sorry for your feelings with the news of Bert’s and Earl’s enlistment but coupled with the natural grief there will also be the consequent pride you must feel that your boys are of the stamp who dare to do their duty as they see it. Do not get swollen headed but I’ve seen soldiers and soldiers but never a better than Will. Truly this war is a terrible thing. I never felt it so much as when I saw Will and Earl in Khaki. Bert is not outfitted yet. It rather vexed me when I learned about Earl but realize it is a decision each must make for themselves. It must be said that he is spunky enough anyway.

 It is a caution the way times fly here. Have put our class of 30 through already and started on the second class this morning. In it there is one major and four captains who I am to teach—teach to be my master because I enlisted first etc. Oh well I make soldiers of them and that is all which concerns me. They certainly move when I am around. Have been very busy down here and have learned a great deal too. The class which is graduating this week was the one Balfour and I put through. You see they are giving a farewell party to us as they finish their exams on Wednesday. I rather believe it will be a lively affair. We are hourly expecting notice to report to Edmonton to move. I don’t understand why we are here so long but suppose there must be some good reason. Maybe they don’t need us yet.

 Have not heard from Father or even from home for a long time. I guess it’s my own fault—you are very busy and worried too I know but really you shouldn’t be. Too much worry is too much for one. Grow old too quick. Keeps the girls busy pulling grey hair out of my head. We are all fine here and proud as peacocks of the splendid showing made by the Drader’s. Trust we will make our presence felt.

 Write soon to above address, Your loving son

Eugene

51st Bn

En route

2/4/16

 Dear Mother;-

 It is a hard job to write when the train is running but if you can read it here goes. We got our welcome orders last Wednesday afternoon to report back to Edmonton at once as our Batt’n was leaving on Saturday at 8 a.m. We hastened back and here we are now an hour west of Winnipeg. Everybody is happy and well. We go on a route march through W’pg. It is quite a bit colder hare than around in Alberta but we should worry. We get to Montreal where we will be inspected by the Duke on the 5th. We sail from St. John, N.B. They are calling dinner now 5.45 so will close and go as we must be ready for a march immediately afterwards. Don’t write before you get the address on other side. Watch the papers for news and remember no news are good news.

 Love as ever and don’t worry about us boys.

Eugene

Halifax, N.S.

8/4/16

 Dear Mother;-

 Just a line from here to let you know we have arrived safely so far after a pleasant and very uneventful passage across the continent. Every time I sniff the salty air from off the harbor it makes me think of Victoria and you. We will likely be here for 6 or 7 days out-fitting and equipping our men. Then for the briny billows. This is the toughest town I ever saw. I stay in after dark. The bad men and women here have effectually got my goat. Was out last night with a picquet of 40 men and so was able to go anywhere with impunity.

 Love as ever from your son,

Eugene

Lieut. E. D.

51st Overseas Batt’n. C.E.F.

British Expeditionary Force

Army Post Office,

London, England

18-4-16

 Dear Mother;-

 We are embarking at or before 10 A.M. today. I simply cannot go aboard until I have dropped you at least this small note. Was appointed Transport Officer today. Have visions of supervising the loading, storing and handling of all our impedimenta. I trust that by the time you get this that you will know by the papers, or otherwise, that we are landed in England O.K. Things seem very promising that we shall. Practically no sick men and very little storm. Best love and as a final request send Ferne’s address to me and mine to her—Thanks.

 Again best love and xoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxo to you and all

Eugene

51st Canadians,

Army Post Office, etc,

1/6/16

 My Dear Mother;-

 Regret that I did not send you a line last week end but I know that you will not feel too badly about the matter. One of the reasons was that I went down to Folkestone during the last week end to see Bert and Will. Left London at eleven and our course had just finished at 10.30 so you see that I had to skip to catch a train away down at Charing Cross. Well I got out there O.K. and so it was necessary to get out to their camp that evening to see them. I caught the train back to Westenhanger some dozen miles, and saw them for about two hours. We are planning to get a week end together in London or other place. It was quite dark of course when we were together but they both seemed fit and feeling well. Was very sorry that we could not be together more but they left shortly after I got in. They had to march some 15 miles to the place where they were going for their shooting.

 While down in that part of the country I saw Major Flint and all the officers that I knew who were around there, i.e. not taking courses. Also Harry Brenton and Frank Kennedy, Maude’s brother. Both the latter are in the 9th Battn. Band. Have been there ever since the beginning of the war. Also saw a lot of the other Edmonton boys. I traced the box of candy that Nora sent. They 56th Officers mistrusted what it was and of course you know soldiers, --- after sampling the package it is reported that it dissappeared like magic. A fine complement to Nora’s candy but a bitter pill for little Willie who had to hide his disappointment as best he could. Stayed at Folkestone, by the sea, over Sunday and as Cousin Alice Drader was down with a married cousin of hers we had a fairly good time; for my part absolutely ripping but one can’t speak for them. Got back to work here Monday night and then the Adjutant went away for a few days so that I am at my old job and absolutely now experience on this side of the water at all as we were shipped down to London the week after we left. You can imagine the way one feels. Had a fairly good time in London although they worked us pretty hard. Was out to Hy. Drader’s several times. They are fine and Alice can play and sing to beat the band. Has been taking from the Royal Academy of Music for the last few years. Harry was back on leave from the front and to take a course in armoured motors. I think I told you all this before, but he is another one to be proud of by the name of Drader. They say he is different from his brother Louis.

 There seems very little else to write about as the weather is so fine at the present time and we are not to tell you of the training etc. that is going on at the areas here. However don’t think for a moment that we get more news than you do. We surely do not. We get what is meant for us and that is about all. I could tell you some of the wonders of London but I know that it would bore you. It is all dark there you know on account of the Zepps. I thought I saw one of them one night but it turned out to be one of our own that was flying around. If I had know more about such matters I should have known better. All one’s money here goes for outfit and a good time. The trouble is to keep them in the right proportions. Boots wear out very quickly in this country on the hard roads. The drill at the Barracks at London nearly broke my heart. Quite wore out most of my clothes and I tell you that what we learn as we knock about the country is worth a lot if one is only able to get back to Canada with his hide entire. I wish that you could come over here to see us at our work but I know that is only a dream. By the time that you could get over here we may be gone for all we know. Our Battalion just cleaned up the rest of our Brigade at musketry shooting on the ranges. As a consequence we are to be some brass hats in musketry and considered an authority. Some swank.

 Well, mother dear, I guess that I shall go to dinner. Mrs. Henry Drader wished to be remembered very kindly to you all when I wrote so for the love of Mike send back a nice message for her as she has been awfully good.

 Love to all from,

Eugene

 France 11/6/16

Dear Folks at Home,

 Nothing new or startling to tell you. All quite well and still hale and hearty. This is a most beautiful country and that is about the limit of what we are supposed to say as the enemy has ears everywhere. Have great times speaking “a little French”.—viz all we know. Saw Will & Bert the day I arrived in France. I am led to believe we will all be in the same Batt’n up at the front. They are organizing now and unless there is some change we will all be together. There sure are lots of things happening around but nobody seems to know exactly what to believe. If one can believe all accounts you could turn grey as there are so many stories. Well I’ll try and write occasionally so rest easy. All ok.

 I suppose all the letters we get from now on from you will be read by all us three.

 Love from Eugene

 Have to close in a hurry to catch this mail.

PPS. Use same address

 England

(before Jun 11/16)

 Dear Mother;-

 Our Battalion leaves for France tomorrow so will kick the dust of Merry England off our boots for a period. Was on leave in London yesterday when we were wired back and also news of drowning of Kitchener. Pretty rotten. Gave Mrs. Henry Drader your address and she said she would likely write. They could not have treated me better if I had been a son instead of a cousin, so I know you will bear this in mind when you answer. She wished to be kindly remembered when I wrote. Not much to tell here. Will write when we can so don’t worry at all about us over here.

 You should see the moustache I’m not raising. It is a sort of pinkish tinge—streaked with orange and rather rusty and gray with all.

 The patter of my little feet will soon be heard in France. Poor Kaiser. If he had to wear our heavy boots he wouldn’t feel so gay.

 Met Harold Jobbit up at Drader’s on Sunday. A very nice young fellow indeed. He had been in Calgary for a few months so we know some places of mutual interest. Write often to all your boys over here. I know it’s hard—but we like it. Same old address.

 Worlds of love,

Eugene

Front

26/6/16

 Dear Folks at Home,

 Just a line to go with Berts. All well here and lots to do. Mrs. Henry Drader said she was going to write you so you will likely have it soon. Don’t be surprised. She is a dear. I hope she thinks as much of us. We all appreciate their kindness altho Bert & Will haven’t seen them yet.

 Beside the delightful uncertainty which prevails re—life and limb all is serene—just yet. We still manage to eke out some of the joys of life. Because of vivid imaginations partially.

 Well. Be good writers. Write much and often. Get everybody to write. News are good over here.

 Be gritty. Cecil had better stay where he is.

 Love from

Eugene

 Flanders, 1/7/16

Am writing on this glorious Dominion Day to let you know the Draders are still alive although Bert got shrapneled in the head and also ribs I believe and Will a bullet through the leg below the knee. Neither are serious and will be lucky to remain away as long as possible. So far I am Jake. Did not see either of them after they got theirs but understand everything satisfactory. Bert got his during a bombardment. His helmet saved his life.

 Have had no mail for days on end now. Hope there will soon be some along. Have lots of socks now too. Can’t think of anything we really need altho any momento such as candy or cake would be appreciated. We can buy it of course but that is different.

 If we get out of this place—war I mean—alive I think we’ll hang around about as long as a cat on a hot stove. Am learning the new trench dances—Shrapnel Shuffle, Machine Gun Flop—Jack Johnson jump etc. Am glad I’m not any taller. My head would sure get drilled. Up here we are sure expected to be mirthful of course we are too!!!! Especially amid the “whiz bangs” and High Explosives. Well don’t worry. I think likely you do more worrying than we. Well thanks for what you have done and silence for the rest.

 Ever yours with love,

Eugene

 Flanders 4/7/16

Dear Mother,

 Am enclosing a letter from Bert. You will see he is not serious. It is a good thing in a way that he and Will are out of the running—for a while anyway. I wish they could stay out. Have worried more about them than about myself, and that is no josh either. At present are enjoying(?) a rain. It makes the vegetation spring with remarkable quickness and the result is that we have some mowing to do between the trenches (Fritz and our own). Have had no mail from Canada for ages. Had a letter from the London Draders some time ago but it was the last mail I received. Bert and Will have had none either, so they told me a day or so before they were plugged.

 According to the papers which we get here, the war is going very fine for us. Old Fritz will learn a few things I can tell you. He will learn not to kick the lion and bear and tramp on the lily at the same time. As regards other news I think you get as many as we do where you are. Do not ? ? we are ? ?. What inconveniences we may be called upon to bear are in a just cause. We all believe that and if you saw what we do here, you would wish—oh well—I long for the day when I can put aside paper and pencil and just live and work at peace. It all seems like some dream. This will likely be my last letter for some time, as we will likely be on missions where letter writing or receiving is rather impracticable. Hate to go without getting any letters but one can’t get any if there are none.

 Love to you all,

Eugene

9/7/16

 Dear Mother:-

 Rec’d yours and Nora’s of Jun 2—9th Just of even date. Thank Nora for promise of box and sorry to state that Alice Drader is wearing ring till I get back to England. Will send it home then. Enclosed broach as souvenir. Heard from Will. He is convalescent. Also from Bert through Cora Drader. He is convalescent too. Henry Drader just back from Roumania as King’s Messenger. Some pumpkins.

 Passed that school in Chelsea and led a Bayonet fighting school here last week while out of the trenches resting. Usually the N.C.O.s lead in those schools, but not when there is a Drader as officer. There is a deuce of a fight here tonight. Wonder I can write at all. The trouble with the Canadians is that the officers have to hold their men instead of urge them forward. Hope you can read this writing as we are in a hurry here I can tell you. Time is worth a lot at times.

 There are no news here that I know of. Our life is as precarious as ever—our dug outs as safe as usual. Our trips in and out of trenches as fraught with unconcern etc. All our things are supposed to be in constant readiness for anything within the pale of possibilities.

 Kindest regards to all and LOVE to the family. More love if possible. I’ll be so glad when we get back so it will be made in concrete form.

Eugene

From: Flanders, Dug-on-mud

18-7-16

 My own dear Mother,

 Just a short note to let you know we are all well and in the land of the living. Have had it rather warm in spots. Am not supposed to say anything about the matter but so far the Hun has only ripped my breeches with shrapnel and filled my eyes and mouth with sand by a bullet through the parapet which also knocked off my helmet and scared the supreme nerve out of me and wish for shortness, and deafened me temporarily with high explosive shells. No telling when our last moment will come. Haven’t been out of sound of guns since arriving. One can never get quite settled to the heavy stuff.

 Was out in charge of a party of 50 men last night. It was raining and there were scores of other parties and bound to mix and confusion was rife. Suddenly I began to exercise the freedom of speech for which the Anglo Saxon race is fighting for and when pausing for breath a calm voice inquired “How are you tonight?” One of my old sergeants from the 51st . Wouldn’t that jar you?

 Glad you had it fine and warm there\_\_ in June. No news here. We get lots to eat and drink—except when actually “at it” and usually a change of sox after a drenching so we are lucky. Money is little use here, so speculate with what I have. Have made and lost large sums over here.

 Love to all,

Eugene

27/7/16

 Didn’t send this yesterday so will add the latest news—nothing. Oh yes—of course—the country is fine and very pretty—crops looking good—behind the firing lines. All still well and “quiet on the Western front”—like fun.

 LOVE

Eugene

 Note: This was added to a letter from Bert dated July 23,1916. May contain info. not meant for “Mother”.

July 30-16

My dear Mother,

 Your letters of 27th June and Nora’s of same date to hand. Mails are very uncertain. Get mixed up something fierce. Have had one letter at least from Edmonton dated July 8 which beat out yours of 27th June and card of July 1st also beat out letter from Edmonton June 27 and 30.

 We are well enough looked after here I guess—so that you don’t need to worry. We are not playing a game of checkers here you know. Anything sent from home is much appreciated as it can be—no slight amount either.

 Was called away to do some chores so did away with that pencil. How do you like this one? Had a letter from Alice along with yours saying her mother had received word from both you and Nora. Trust I shall get word from you soon saying you have heard from them; as Alice’s letters came direct yours is likely on its way (circuitous route) (via) London (via) Bramshott (via) Canadian Base etc. When you address them 49th Canadians, France they come direct.

 Must run again as there is some more to do. They sure keep us busy at times and usually all times. You see our hours are from reveille to reveille on active service at the front.

 Here we go again; will try and finish up this time and page too. Must write to Nora and Nellie tonight and possibly----Alice and also Will and Bert. Major Flint may get one. After one has said that all is well here that is about all the news. It’s a lot harder to stop a shell than lift one you know.

 1-8-16

To finish up—sent your letters of July 4 to Will & Bert on to them today as they came to me to instead. Very warm around here now—simply bathe in perspiration. Trying to put up a game scrap.

 Worlds of love,

Eugene

 France

29-8-16

Dear Mother & Sister;

 A line to you both. Enclosed are a couple of souvenirs for you—the beads for you dear sister Nora. If you – either of you would like a real mother of pearl rosary—crucifix and all – let me know.

 Am very tired tonight so will get off to bed for a rest while we have the chance. All sorts of rumors are flying around here. Hope some of them are true. We are having “un bon temps” just now.

 As ever from a loving son and brother,

Eugene

12-9-16

 Dear Folks at Home,

Rec’d Nora’s and Mother’s letters of Aug 15th & 18th respectively. Was very pleased to get them. Will be pleased to get the rest of our mail too as I have a collapsible wash basin “coming up”—tired of washing in every old thing and place.

 Don’t imagine Bert is wild or anything like that. If he didn’t get round some like he did you’d think he was half asleep wouldn’t you? Whatever Will says shouldn’t worry you about me. I’m still fine. Go at it a bit strong at times but mainly the life is very passable out here—while it lasts.

 That card of Nora’s was fine. I’d sooner have letters tho. Yes the Draders here in London have been good to us. They have a son at the same game so realize our position.

 All our troops are very optimistic these days. We have the Huns on the run all over. We all expect to be home soon.

 Much love as always,

Eugene

 (Note: This would appear to be Eugene’s last letter as he was killed Sep. 16, 1916.)

 (Note: With reference to the second paragraph, if you read Bert’s letter to Eugene of Jul 23/16 it refers to some activity perhaps not meant to be relayed to “Mother”. Eugene did forward the letter Jul 27/16)

September 21, 1916

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Drader,

This is without doubt the hardest task I have ever had to do - telling you of the death of your son and my best friend.

Two days before we went into action I had transferred to 'D' Company to be with Eugene, little thinking that our long and intimate friendship was to end so suddenly and so tragically.

Within five minutes of the beginning of the action Eugene was left in command of the company, through Lieut. Macdonald being wounded. Eugene led the company over the shell swept ground in the most gallant way imaginable; shells burst all around him but he led us straight on with the most uncanny sense of direction. We reached our first objective and Eugene incited the admiration of everyone in the way he went ahead, getting his bearings and getting connections - doing everything exactly right.

Then, when we went over the top, made our assault, went on and started to dig in, he proved himself the soldier that I always knew he was. Another of our officers had been hit; then at 9.30 p.m., Sept. 15 a sergeant came to me and told me I was in command - Mr. Drader had been hit. It seemed to me an age before I could get to him; some Germans on our left were causing trouble then, when I traced him up, I was told he had been taken out alright. Accordingly I did not see him again alive.

Next morning I received the sad news that he had not been taken out but had died about 2 a.m. Lieut. Robert Ferris was with him. Eugene was shot through the spine and abdomen and his legs were paralyzed. He was conscious for a long time and always assured inquirers that he would be alright; he did not want to be moved for a while but said he'd get better alright. He never once murmured or complained about his lot. If he suffered he would not admit it.

He was game to the very last; he was a soldier every inch; he died a soldier's death.

He was buried near where he fell-a real soldier's burial, not the parade style of military funeral, but the short hesitating prayer that was said over his grave, with our heads bowed very low on account of the machine gun fire, was the most sincere prayer ever offered up.

He was loved and respected by everyone who knew him-the very type of soldierly bearing, kindness and good judgment.

He was the best friend I ever had. We knew all of each other's affairs, and I can assure you that his reputation for straightforwardness and clean living was well deserved.

On all sides I hear the same remarks-"the pity of it" - his youth, his build, carriage, and appearance impressed those who did not know him intimately. Those of us who were privileged to be his intimates add many noble qualities to this list.

Since his death I am not the same; I cannot be; but everyone is kind and I have received much kind sympathy, for we were known as inseparables.

As deeply as I feel it, it can be nothing in comparison with your feelings.

In his civilian life too, I wish you knew the excellent influence he has had on the lives of the young who knew him as their teacher. They worship him, and what is more, they try to imitate him. Many, many hearts in Edmonton and Gull Lake will be very, very sad.

And your grief; it seemed at first that no one could be more heartbroken than I myself; and I took chances for over a day in the front line that I never would have taken otherwise; I seemed to be obsessed with the one idea, that Eugene and I must not be separated. But I know there's nothing to compare with father's and mother's love, so I send you sympathy and I mean it more than I ever meant those words before. I share your sorrow, words cannot say how deeply.

I shall, if spared, take the first opportunity of seeing you and telling you as much as I can of the hundreds of things you'll want to know.

His personal effects are being sent to you. I have in addition his watch and his identity disc which I shall send you. I will do anything you ask that is possible.

Yours with sincerest sympathy,

Harry E. Balfour, Lieut.

49th Bn. Canadians