

**HUNTING
THE HUN**

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Hunting the Hun by James Belton & E. G. Odell

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JAMES BELTON & E. G. ODELL

**HUNTING
THE HUN**

70 1914
Album 10



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

**ROADSIDE SCENE ON THE BRITISH SECTION OF THE
WESTERN FRONT**

HUNTING THE HUN

BY

CAPTAIN JAMES BELTON

LATE OF THE BRITISH AND CANADIAN FORCES

AND

LIEUTENANT E. G. ODELL

LATE OF THE 24TH CANADIAN BATTALION, B. C. F.



ILLUSTRATED

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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NEW YORK LONDON

1918

FOREWORD

Captain Belton and Lieutenant Odell's book of the war will be read with deep and sustained interest by everyone who wants to understand "the real thing." For myself I confess to being thrilled by the simple, direct, conversational style of the chapters describing the preparations for the attack on and ultimate capture of Vimy Ridge. The complete absence of any attempt at word-painting, the little touches of actuality, such as the pattern of white tapes on the practice ground which showed the conformation of the German trenches, and the method of signalling to the contact aeroplane during an advance—these features are at once novel and arresting. The story is told with the terseness of a despatch. You see the battalion gathering for its deadly work after the training is done; you plod with it in Indian file along the Aux Reitz communication trench; you sprawl with the officers and men in the "jumping-off" trench; you wonder whether the missing jar of rum will turn up in time, and, finally, you go "over the top" with what amounts to a sigh of relief that the ghastly period of waiting has ended and that the "Zero Hour" will mark either the end or the beginning of a strangely

FOREWORD

heroic experience. It is quite remarkable that a plain soldier should be able to give such life to his story. The achievement is a tribute to realism. Here is the truth, and nothing but the truth, so you accept every word for what it is worth, and are even glad to be spared the fine touches of the skilled literary hand.

I am sure Captain Belton and Lieutenant Odell's book will be appreciated by a wide circle of readers in this country. A Canadian battalion and an American battalion must be close akin whether on the parade ground or in the battlefield. As these boys from Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg have done in France so will the boys do who hail from New York, Chicago, and the Far West. For that reason, and for many others quite as obvious, the appearance of this personal record of scenes and events in the Great War is peculiarly timely just now. I read the proofs at a sitting, and that, I know, is a certain test of the value of any book, be it grim fact or enticing fiction.

LOUIS TRACY.

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