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“A HOT TIME OF IT.”

**ARDINGLY SOLDIER
WITH THE 9th ROYAL SUSSEX.**

Private Sidney Munnion, a well-known Ardingly footballer, now serving in France with the 9th Batt. Royal Sussex Regiment, has written to his brother, Mr. E. H. Munnion, of Ardingly, Ardingly, giving a graphic account of his battalion's share in the great advance. We print extracts below:—

First of all I must thank you very much for the “fags” of last Thursday, also for the parcel of to-day. The pipes were very acceptable. I kept one, and the others were gone in less than a minute. The tobacco is good, too; English tobacco is a job to get out here, especially shag. We get some served out once a week, and that is all mixture, and I don't like it a bit. . . . Since the 21st of September we have had a hot time of it. We started from our old billet that night, and did 17 miles, and about the same the next night; rested on Thursday night, and then about 12 miles on Friday night. On Saturday we marched straight to the firing line, about ten miles, to hold a position where we have advanced, and stayed there till Tuesday night. All the food I had during that time was four hard biscuits and a bottleful of water, so you can bet we were done up. Talk about an experience! Not one of us expected to come out alive. We were in one of the biggest fights known in this war. During the whole time we were under heavy fire. You can't realise what it was like. It nearly drove me mad. There are 85 killed and wounded in our Company alone, so you can guess it was hot. Captain Clarke is dead, and so is poor old Stan Quaife. I was with him when he was hit. He died only a few minutes after. The only one of our Ardingly boys to get hit was “Fatty,” but I believe it is only a slight wound. I hope Fred and the other boys never come out to get it like we did. Shells were dropping all the time, and machine guns, snipers, rifle fire, bombs and gas were going—it was awful! I never expected to come out again. Seeing the dead and wounded about is the worst part of it, especially the latter. I could write a lot more, but don't feel able. My nerves seem gone, but we are a long way down country again, resting, so shall soon feel better. . . . When we went up we had 27 officers, and we only came back with eight.