05-28-1918

Dear Journal

I just enlisted for the National Army today. I hope I can help bring this war into an end. I only hope that I will survive this fight. It’s been four years, four years of violence, four years of nonsense, and four years of hate. It’s been too long scene we all saw peace. I need to try to put forth the effort to stop all of this madness. My nation needs me as well as my family needs me. I hope that I can come home safe and happy. I have so many hopes but so many fears at the same time. I fear that I would be shot down, blown into bits, chocked by my own blood, slowly decaying in the trenches, run over by a tank, or just being killed period. I don’t want to die but I don’t want to run away from the fight. I am scared out of my mind right now. I only hope for the best and I wish the same for my comrades. I hope we can all finish the war strong and proud. I am ready for the worst and I am also reedy for the battle field. May the lord protect me and my family, brings me strength, bring me hope, and bring me home.

Signed

Durward B.Vice

***A Solder’s trench.***

Day one: I step out into the battle field looking at the debris and all remains of the used to be solders. Before I could even step toward the bodies to grab the tag I was rushed by comrades, pushing me into the ground ducking from enemy fire. “GET INTO THE TRENCH!” I hear roaring in my ear. I quickly got up and run toward the trench. As we get closer to the trench the man in front of me reaches out for me, I raise my hand trying to grab his and before I knew it I watched his head explode. His brains and blood splatter all over me. I tackled his body into the trench and slowly looked up. There was nothing but a headless body under me. The first day of war for me the first day I saw someone die.

Day Fifteen: As I carry bodies to place them along the wall I see the man helping me crying. I stared at him and said “hey don’t cry over them just yet, we still got a lot of bodies to carry.” Then I looked at his tag “John Fredrick.” It read I looked down at the body and read its tag “David Fredrick.” I looked up and realized his brother died on the battle field. I try to say “I’m sorry” but the words couldn’t come out. Later that day I split a loaf of bread with John as he sat next to me. “No thanks I’m not hungry.” He said. “Listen man you have to eat, you need your energy.” I responded. He slowly got up and went to look over the wall. As he climbs he lunged all the way up the wall and started running toward the enemies. Before I could even let out a scream I hear gun fire. I waited to see John drag himself back but as I waited I realized John is gone.

Day thirty: I’m waiting for orders for commander. From the last twenty five day I’ve been sitting here holding position form the enemy. My feet are starting to hurt really badly. I can’t stand the pain so I threw my gun down and started ripping at my feet. A comrade grabbed my hands and stopped me from continuing to rip anymore skin off of my feet. “It will be over soon, just wait till we get treatment” He said with a calm voice. I looked at his face and he smiled at me making me forget about the pain. “GAS IS APPROCHING IN TEN SECONDS!” Both of us jump to the unexpected call “Gas?” I questioned. The man in front of me quickly searches for a mask and puts one on, but he stops and looks at me “Where is your mask?” I quickly shake my head. “NINE SECONDS!” As he hears the man counts down he takes off his mask and struggles to put it on me. “EIGHT SECONDS!” I try to pull away but he straps the back. “SEVEN SECONDS” He smiles again and pats my head. “SIX!” I try to take the mask off and he restrains my arms “FIVE!” I looked at him and I saw him calm as if he was ready to die. “FOUR!” I started crying and asking questions “Why are you doing this?” “THREE!” “You don’t even know who I am!” “TWO!” “DO NOT DIE FOR MY SAKE!” “HOLD YOUR BREATH!” I looked at the man holding my arms. At first he started coughing, and then he started to spit up blood. I try to pull away to give him the mask but he held me in place still smiling. I watched him chocked on his own blood. He coughed blood everywhere, he wheezed, he spit, he gasps for air, and watching all I could have done. After an hour his gripped slipped and final he fell.

Final day: It’s over; it’s finally time to go home. I see the rest of the men packed up their things and walked off. I watched the people around me died, I watched people sacrificed their lives for my sake, I watched them suffer for the sake of the war, and I watched. I am done here, I am leaving this behind, and I am finally going home.

02/16/1919

Dear Durward B. Vice

It’s been awhile scene we have talked. I heard you finally got out of the National army. I heard about the stories and I wanted to make sure you’re alright. I don’t know how you fell, but I know it’s hard watching a lot of people die in front of you. I was wondering if you would like us to visit soon. It would be nice seeing my son once a while. We all miss you dearly.

Your brothers are worried about you. You haven’t written back in a long time so please, please write us back. Your mother misses you and I hope I can get this letter so we can see each other. By the way we are planning a party when you return home. We have your favorite foods and all your friends and family members will be there to see you. Your brothers are trying to convince me to allow alcohol in this party so please tell them to change their minds.

We all miss you so much; home hasn’t been the same with you gone. Anyway we’ll be home waiting for you. I’m so happy you are coming home and going to see us again. I’ll see you soon Durward, we’re all excited to see you again. Oh and I almost forgot Thank you for fighting for us. We are proud to have you in our family.

Love

Your Mother