

succeeded, and in the course of this critical struggle German troops in considerable though not in overwhelming numbers swung past the unsupported left of the brigade, and, slipping in between the wood and St. Julien, added to the torturing anxieties of the long-drawn struggle by the appearance, and indeed for the moment the reality, of isolation from the brigade base.

In the exertions made by the Third Brigade during this supreme crisis it is almost impossible to single out one battalion without injustice to others, but though the efforts of the Royal Highlanders of Montreal, Thirteenth Battalion, were only equal to those of the other battalions who did such heroic service, it so happened by chance that the fate of some of its officers attracted special attention.

Major Norsworth, already almost disabled by a bullet wound, was bayoneted and killed while he was rallying his men with easy cheerfulness. The case of Captain McCuaig, of the same battalion, was not less glorious, although his death can claim no witness. This most gallant officer was seriously wounded, in a hurriedly constructed trench, at a moment when it would have been possible to remove him to safety. He absolutely refused to move and continued in the discharge of his duty.

But the situation grew constantly worse, and peremptory orders were received for an immediate withdrawal. Those who were compelled to obey them were most insistent to carry with them, at whatever risk to their own mobility and safety, an officer to whom they were devotedly attached. But he, knowing, it may be, better than they, the exertions which still lay in front of them, and unwilling to inflict upon them the disabilities of a maimed man, very resolutely refused, and asked of them one thing only, that there should be given to him, as he lay alone in the trench, two loaded Colt revolvers to add to his own, which lay in his right hand as he made his last request. And so, with three revolvers ready to his hand for use, a very brave officer waited to sell his life, wounded and racked with pain, in an abandoned trench.

On Friday afternoon the left of the Canadian line was strengthened by important reinforcements of British troops amounting to seven battalions. From this time forward the Canadians also continued to receive further assistance on the left from a series of French counter-attacks pushed in a north-easterly direction from the canal bank.

But the artillery fire of the enemy continually grew in intensity, and it became more and more evident that the Canadian salient could no longer be maintained against the overwhelming superiority of numbers by which it was assailed. Slowly, stubbornly, and contesting every yard, the defenders gave ground until the salient gradually receded from the apex, near the point where it had originally aligned with the French, and fell back upon St. Julien.

Soon it became evident that even St. Julien, exposed to fire from right and left, was no longer tenable in the face of overwhelming numerical superiority. The Third Brigade was therefore ordered to retreat further south, selling every yard of ground as dearly as it had done since 5 o'clock on Thursday. But it was found impossible, without hazarding far larger forces, to disentangle the detachment of the Royal Highlanders of Montreal, Thirteenth Battalion, and of the Royal Montreal Regiment, Fourteenth Battalion. The brigade was ordered, and not a moment too soon, to move back. It left these units with hearts as heavy as those with which his comrades had said farewell to Captain McCuaig. The German tide rolled, indeed, over the deserted village, but for several hours after the enemy had become master of the village the sullen and persistent rifle fire which survived showed that they were not yet master of the Canadian rearguard. If they died, they died worthily of Canada.

The enforced retirement of the Third Brigade (and to have stayed longer would have been madness) reproduced for the Second Brigade, commanded