

**CAPTAIN ROBERT WYNYARD POWELL, M.C., C.E.**

(Continued from Page 1)

ning down his points with certain convictions, leaving nothing to be imagined and always humourously reminding the class that there are some things that depend upon the Hun after all, that everything doesn't go just as smoothly as "shown on the blackboard".

The depot had with regret to relinquish the services of Capt. Powell in May 1916 when he was recalled to England. During his stay with us here, however, his promotion to the rank of Captain, so well merited, was consummated and congratulations were as numerous as they were sincere.

On his arrival in England this time he went to the Engineers' Depot at Crowborough, and moved with the depot to Shoreham. After three months in England he returned to Canada to take up instructional duties with the E. T. D., St. Johns, again and later was appointed to his present position of Chief Instructor.

Captain Powell wears the Military Cross with a bar. He gained the ribbon at St. Eloi for devotion

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to duty during a period of several days and nights under intense artillery fire, combined with enemy bombing attacks—during which time, in spite of being wounded, he set a splendid example to his men.

On this occasion he was caught in an advanced trench, having no covering party in front to protect his working party, and thereby hangs a tale worth relating.

Captain (then Lieut.) Powell was instructed to proceed to a certain point under guidance of another officer to connect up two of a series of five craters. It was known that the Germans were in occupation of three of these five craters and it was the intention of the British Command to obtain and secure possession of the other two.

Arriving at the site after dusk two craters were indicated to him, and work was started as arranged. After working for practically a week, at night, during which period the weather did not permit of photography from airplanes, word was received that from a photo taken the location of the work undertaken was wrong.

Two shell holes of large dimensions had been mistaken by the guiding officer for the craters! The photo also revealed the fact that the Germans were in possession of four of the five craters. Work, however, was started at once, to join up to the main trench when an enemy bombing raid was made. Captain Powell had fourteen men of his party wounded and three killed in this scuffle before he realised the situation.

His orders to complete the work that night had come at such short notice that he had only just time to arrange for his working party and had no time to arrange for the usual covering party, and in his anxiety to finish the work according to orders he took the chance. His party soon beat off the raid, however, and the work was completed.

He gained his "bar" to his Military Cross at the Somme for devotion to duty. As mentioned before, he was hit in the eye with shrapnel splinter while leading a party up to the front of the front line.

In spite of his wound he proceeded with his men and laid out the work, stayed with them until the work was well started and was at last forced to go for treatment.

While at the Somme, Capt. Powell had an experience of a unique character. As far as he can tell a shrapnel shell burst immediately in front of him. All he felt was the hot blast, but two men on either side of him were killed by that explosion. We wonder then

that he is no believer in "luck". He considers luck is superstition and figures his chances are cyclic in their operation, rather than at the direction of what we call luck.

Capt. Powell tells in his characteristic manner of a trench the British occupied at Messines. This trench had been in the possession of the Germans and subject to shell fire. In reversing the parapet the booted foot of a Hun was disclosed. He says that the first duty of the troops occupying that trench was to polish that boot, and sure enough!—there it stood out into the trench with a polish that would make even a Greek shoe shine parlour artist green with envy!

This story he tells of course with the usual "chuckle".

Captain Powell has seen quite a deal of hard service and "Knots and Lashings" voices the feeling of the Depot in congratulating him upon his safe return and particularly upon the distinctions he so well earned. We only hope that he will write some articles for us that we may share his knowledge, and that in the spare moments at our disposal may have a chance to absorb his instruction for our own benefit when we go overseas.

R. R. K.

**BASE COY! GET BUSY!**

Next week it's your turn to show the Depot the literary capabilities hidden amongst you. The eyes of everyone are on you! Get all material in by MONDAY NOON, please.

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT ST. JAMES CHURCH.**

We got a bit mixed last week in our announcements of the above services. Major the Rev. A. H. Moore says he will "carry on" as usual next Sunday but that the Christmas Eve Carol Service, designed especially for men in Barracks, will come off as announced.

On Christmas Day there will be a service of Holy Communion at 8 a.m. and a later service at 10.30 a.m. to enable Engineers attending to get back to Barracks in good time for their Christmas dinner. By means of these services we feel sure we shall be helped to get into the real spirit of the Christmas season.

As the collection on these occasions is for the Rector—and are the only collections throughout the year that he receives—we hope there will be a bully good attendance. Major Moore deserves a Christmas treat, what with his perennial good nature, his personal helpfulness, his aids on passport-securing, and his numerous first-aid kindnesses—so loosen up wi' your siller when the plate comes 'round, and give cheerfully!

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