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Passchendaele Ridge Falls to the Terrific Smash of The Canadian Attacks.

Three Weeks of Bitter Fighting End in Glorious Victory For the Canadian Corps Against the Flower of Hindenburg's Troops.

(Written for the Canadian Press by W. A. Willison, Canadian War Correspondent.)

Five years ago on Nov. 6, in Flanders fields, the Canadian Corps was concentrating on the last phase of its battles for Passchendaele. To-day, as we give thanksgiving throughout the Dominion for all the blessings that Canada enjoys, we will do well to remember those captains and subalterns and men of all services who, under the direction of higher commands, challenged Hindenburg, defeated the flower of his storm troops and completed on Nov. 6, 1917, the heroic story of Canada in Flanders. Bellevue Spur, Laanbeek, Wolf Copse, Hillside Farm, Heine House, Augustus Wood had fallen before the 3rd and 4th Divisions on October 26th. On October 30th, these same Divisions had stormed the outer defences of Passchendaele itself. From Houthouset Wood on the north to Gheluvelt on the south our artillery, combining with that of the French and Imperial forces, had roared its challenge on a 10 mile front. Behind one flaming stretch of misting shells, regiments from Nova Scotia, Manitoba, British Columbia, Eastern Ontario, Quebec, and Sask-

atchewan, had attacked Meetcheele and Crest Farm, those key points of the enemy position that guarded the inner Passchendaele defences. The 3rd Division had again held the left flank, with the 7th and 8th Brigades facing Friesland, Duck Lodge, Meetcheele, Vanity House, Vapour Farm, and Source Farm. The 4th Division was on the right, with the 12th Brigade fronting Haalen Copse, Haleen, Crest Farm, Tiber, Tiber Copse, and Vienna Cottage. The First Anzac Corps was on the Canadian right and the 53rd (Imperial) Division on the left as in the former battle. Such had been the vigour of the Canadian attack that within less than an hour of the barrage, the 4th Division had taken Crest Farm. Shortly afterwards it had captured all its objectives. The capture of Crest Farm in such a short time was a brilliant performance. The advance to it was precarious—a big swamp on one side and a wood on the other, leaving only a narrow gap swept by forty-eight guns. With surprisingly slight casualties, the attacking force stormed the gap and reached the Hun front line, which had been pounded to pieces by our barrage. Pushing forward to Crest Farm itself,

the Division was subjected to heavy fire, but the enemy infantry were dashed by our bombardment and no protracted resistance was encountered. On the left, the success had been equally brilliant. On the extreme flank the 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles, heroically wading through swamps, had gone forward to Source and Vapour Farms and had even secured a footing in Vanity House. Such was the terrain on their left flank that the 63rd Imperials had not been able to get up, and the Canadians had fought all through the day with one flank exposed. With flanks about them on every side, they had been literally isolated. They had been subjected to attack and constant bombardment, but at 6 p.m. those that were left were hanging grimly on to Source and Vapour Farms, having withdrawn their outposts only from Vanity House. Relief came with the night.

"PRINCESS PATS" IN ACTION.

The attack on Meetcheele added further stirring pages to the history of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. A thousand yards of rising land, a succession of shell holes and stagnant water, had to be crossed. To their right was marsh. They skirted the marsh and struggled up the heights. They paid for every yard of their advance, for the enemy fought well, defending every fortified shell hole. Raked by machine gun and artillery fire, with comrades falling around them, and no shelter save that afforded by the dip of occasional hollows, they had pressed forward to their objectives. They had captured it—what was left of them, Meetcheele had fallen, despite the raking fire of another enemy stronghold only seventy-five yards distant, and the way had been prepared to Passchendaele Village and complete domination of the heights that overlooked the Rouler's Plain. The Germans had launched counter attack after counter attack to dislodge the Canadians, rushing their most formidable troops into the line, but again and again they had been sent reeling back with heavy losses. On the afternoon of the battle they had counter attacked no less than five times. In the succeeding five days they had attempted again and again to dislodge our forces. Their guns were never silent, but raked our front line with machine gun fire, haled them with shrapnel, and pounded them with one barrage after another. Driven from their positions at Bellevue and on the Passchendaele Spur after the first Canadian attack, smashed out of Meetcheele and Crest Farm on the second, the Germans fought desperately to retrieve their losses, or at least secure their final Passchendaele positions. With their faith broken in

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INFANTRY ATTACK LAUNCHED.

Hindenburg and the higher German command had ordered Passchendaele held at all costs. The 1st and 2nd Divisions were to countermand that order. Even while the ebb and flow of battle surged around the forward positions, the 1st and 2nd Divisions relieved their battered comrades, and on November 3, they in their turn took up the conflict. Again, the Allied advance was on a 10 mile front, but this time there was no prolonged artillery bombardment. Our guns, which had been hammering the enemy steadily for forty-eight hours, spoke

the protective value of the swamps and marshes which guarded their advanced areas and their infantry routed in hand to hand fighting, the enemy, by throwing in new divisions and rushing up additional guns, were constantly strengthening their defence in every possible manner.

the protective value of the swamps and marshes which guarded their advanced areas and their infantry routed in hand to hand fighting, the enemy, by throwing in new divisions and rushing up additional guns, were constantly strengthening their defence in every possible manner.

extreme left of the attack lay Vine Cottage, and there was written one of the lesser epics of the war in the salient. It was cut off by marsh from the rest of the attacking forces; it imperilled the advance, and its capture was of great moment. The night before the general attack, a company and a half of Canadians were sent to seize and hold it. For hours there was no news of the gallant little band. Then came scattered reports of desperate fighting by men isolated from their comrades and without either reinforcements or supplies. The reports proved true. The German garrison fought grimly and only surrendered after their position had been carried with the bayonet. But carried it was, and the whole Canadian Corps rejoiced in the valour of the few that captured it.

NOTHING LEFT UNDONE.

Meanwhile the main attack had gone forward at 6.2 a.m. Against the front that Hindenburg had ordered held at all costs. Every possible preparation had been made for the attack. Railway troops had worked ceaselessly, pushing forward the light lines up past Wulffite. Plank roads had been repaired and extended. Many hundreds of yards of 4x4-boards had been added to the straggling shell-pocked trails that led to the forward line. For four days our heavy and light artillery had been pouring shells into the enemy lines. By night, and by day, through mud and slime, guns of all calibres had been slowly advanced to new positions. Fresh ammunition dumps had been established; and when the barrage thundered its challenge, confident infantry went forward under the protection of a bombardment that literally blasted the enemy out of many of his strong points. For once fair weather prevailed, and at least on the higher levels the men could advance and fight without the formidable handicap of clinging mud to halt their steps and exhaust their strength. Fighting the enemy artillery and machine guns was the most trying ordeal. German artillery had been concentrated on the ridge and the bombardment was terrific. But our men were not to be stopped. They followed our barrage so closely that in many instances they were upon the enemy before they had time to recover from the stunning effects of our artillery fire. It was largely short sharp work. The 6th Brigade stormed the village, and the 28th Battalion, operating on the extreme left of the Brigade flank, with the 31st in the centre and the 27th on the right. The ground which lay between the assembly trenches and the higher levels was swampy. In places the storming parties moved forward thru

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had been... with the... the church and school; at the... opposition was offered. General... Germans had little stomach for... to hand fighting. On the... left, however, where the... Battalions of the 1st Brigade... crating, there was sturdy op... The enemy's strong point... five yards in front of Meetche... with a slight resistance wher... remained stand had been cal... but at Mosselmix there had... sharp fighting, and the Canad... to rush the position with bomb... bayonets before they could... defence down. Here the... fought well, the temper of the... being illustrated in the actio... of the officers, who, wher he... men surrendering and knew the... tion to be hopeless, held a... his hand until the explosion... to bits. As early as 7.30, Van... Farm was in our possession... thoughts were centred on Van... tage, the only place in dock... success of the Canadian... already been told. Althoug... morning had brought victo... where? Most of the signal... achieved was directly due to... tillery. Passchendaele and Pa... dalee Ridge were Canadian... German Higher command was... disposed to accept such a cras... feat. Captured prisoners eve... ed of how the Ridge would be... tured. On November 10, the... fans showed them what the... ing was worth. Again they... forward—this time on a 60... front—against Venture farm... ditive Cross Roads; and in... imately half an hour, despite... boastings of the German com... (Continued on page 11)

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