

impassable. As the men were lining up in the Support Trench the enemy delivered a bombing attack on the left flank of the 87th Bn. Word was passed down that the Hun was attacking and that the 102nd was to come up on the double. This was done in absolute silence and as the men passed Headquarters, jumping over trenches and shell-holes, they looked like phantoms in the dark, illumined by the light of German flares and leaping to the crash of bursting shells. Here and there a man was seen to fall, the shelling being very heavy, but the bombers were driven off and the rest of the night spent in preparation for the morrow's work. Rain continued and throughout the night there was constant shelling.

Day broke with rain pouring down in torrents, making the ground absolutely impassable and the Higher Command decided to postpone operations until the 21st inst. "B," "C," and "D" Coys. therefore returned to camp at Tara Hill, leaving "A" Co. to hold the line. Never did the men of the 102nd better deserve their reputation for physique and tenacity of purpose than in their fight against the mud after their exhausting night in the trenches. The mud was hip-high between the trenches and the Bapaume Road and the men had to be literally dug out by their comrades as they sank exhausted in the liquid, glue-like substance. The weather cleared, the ground becoming somewhat more dry and on the evening of the 20th the three companies were again brought into the front line, relieving "A" Co. which went into Support. During the night of Oct. 20-21 the three companies worked hard at digging assembly trenches in which to mass and at forming battalion dumps; the men worked magnificently and at dawn all was ready.

Zero hour was fixed for 12-06 p.m. and at that hour the barrage opened and the men of the 102nd went "over the top"; following the barrage like a wall, lying down until it again lifted and advancing as it moved, all in perfect uniformity. The first two waves consisted of "C" Co. under Maj. J. S. Matthews, on the left and "B" Co. under Maj. H. E. H. Dixon on the right. The remaining two waves were furnished by "D" Co. under Major G. Rothnie. The moment that the barrage lifted over Regina Trench the men were over the parapet; the assault was carried out with such dash, vigour and impetuosity that the Germans were completely demoralized and immediately threw up their hands in surrender. The first wave passed 150 yards beyond the trench, forming a screen; the second rounded up the prisoners and consolidated the positions secured, in which they were assisted by men of the third wave, whilst the fourth wave was occupied in carrying up supplies from the old dumps to the new. For his magnificent services in this work of consolidation under heavy fire Lieut. R. P. Matheson received the Military Cross. The casualties sustained in the assault itself were very light, amounting to about five killed and ten wounded, as the enemy barrage did not come down until about six minutes after ours had started; the Germans, however, had suffered heavily and their trench was piled with dead and wounded.