

filling the assembly trenches knee-deep in water. But these conditions suggested to the mind of Colonel J. E. Leckie, of the 16th Battalion, or centre attack, a particularly daring scheme. Two of his subalterns, Lieuts. Adams¹ and Scroggie, had been for some days reconnoitring and crawling about the ground in front, with the view of guiding the Battalion during the actual assault.² In the course of these investigations they had come across an old trench marked on no map and about 100 yards in front of the Canadian first line. Such a trench is a common feature on ground which has been much fought over. It was suggested that if the leading lines of the Battalion crept up during the night to this new position they would be 100 yards nearer their objective and would probably escape the German artillery fire, which would break out on our front line the instant our guns lifted and the attack was seen to be imminent. Such a course had great advantages. On the other hand, Colonel Leckie had to consider the fact that an encounter with a patrol or a listening post of the enemy would give away the secret of an attack the prospect of which had, so far, been sedulously guarded from reaching the ears of the enemy. A premature brush on the part of a company with even a small section of the enemy would have meant flares and infantry firing along the whole line and the plan would have stood disclosed. Colonel Leckie decided to take the risk and the responsibility. His regiment

¹ Lieut. Adams was killed in the attack.

² A reconnaissance was also undertaken on the night of the 12th to try to estimate the accuracy of our shooting in the bombardment beginning at 8.30 p.m.