

pace, and beneath their planes our shells were in flight from heavy howitzers and long-muzzled guns whose fire swept one with blasts of air and smashed against one's ears. Out of the wild wide waste of these battlefields with their dead tree-stumps and their old upheaved trenches, and litter of battle, and endless craters out of which the muddy water slopped, there rose a queer big beast, monstrous and ungainly as a mammoth in the beginning of the world's slime. It was one of our "sausage" balloons getting up for the morning's work. Its big air-pockets flapped like ears, and as it rose its body heaved and swelled.

It was beyond the line of German "pill-boxes" captured in the fighting on the way to the Steenbeek, and now all flooded and stinking in its concrete rooms, that I saw Passchendaele this morning. The long ridge to which the village gives its name curved round black and grim below the clouds, right round to Polygon Wood and the heights of Broodseinde, a long formidable barrier, a great rampart against which during these four months of fighting our men flung themselves, until by massed courage, in which individual deeds are swallowed up so that the world will never know what each man did, they gained those rolling slopes and the hummocks on them and the valleys in between, and all their hidden forts. Below the ridge all our field-guns were firing, and the light of their flashes ran up and down like Jack o' Lanterns with flaming torches. Far behind me were our heavy guns, and their shells travelled overhead with a great beating of the wind. In the sky around was the savage whine of German shells, and all below the Passchendaele Ridge monstrous shells were flinging up masses of earth and water, and now and then fires were lighted and blazed and then went out in wet smoke.

The Canadians had been fighting in and beyond Passchendaele. They had been fighting around the village of Mosselmarkt, on the Goudberg spur. It was reported they had carried all their objectives and were consolidating their defences for the counter-attacks which were sure to come. The enemy had put a new division into the line before our attack, a division up from the Champagne, and, judging from the prisoners taken to-day, a smart, strong, and well-disciplined crowd of men. But they did not fight much as soon as the Canadians were close up on them. The Canadian fighting was chiefly through shell-fire which came down heavily a minute or so after our drum-fire began, and against machine-gun fire which came out of the