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WAR NEWS AGENCY.

SURVIVOR MAD SEAFORTH CHARGE TELLS OF FOILING THE GERMANS

Enemy Had Machine Guns Planted on a Commanding Hill And Was Bringing Up Heavy Artillery But Seaforths Got There First—How a "Forlorn Hope" of Scotch Bravely Went to Sure Death, Only Four Escaping

HEARTENING EFFECT OF THE SCOTCH PIBROCH

Seaforth Highlander writing home of his experiences, tells the following story:—

My wound feels quite well again now, and they tell me that in a fortnight I'll be fit to go back to the fighting line. So as I mayn't be so lucky as to get only a wound next time, but maybe I'll get knocked out altogether, I thought I'd try and write a bit about what my regiment, the Seaforths, has done at the front when I was with them.

Every Scotsman is proud of the Seaforths. And if a Seaforth may say it without seeming boasting, no regiment has upheld old Scotland's honor more bravely during these awful months than the Seaforth lads have done.

After I wake from sleep with a start, thinking I hear our war slogan singing again in my ears as we rush towards the German trenches, often I see in a dream the form of gallant Capt. Methven outlined against the sky, within point blank range of the German rifles, as he waved us on to the charge.

And there is another scene that often comes to match it and a man on my other side had an arm broken by a bullet that bounded off something before it hit him, so altogether things weren't very healthy.

Raked by Machine Guns.
When morning broke the firing got a great deal hotter. The Germans had occupied a hill that commanded the British lines beautifully, and they'd got a whole lot of machine guns up there. As a general rule the Germans can't use rifles for nuts, but in they work machine guns like a fireman with a hosepipe.

We lay there in the trenches doing our little bit as best we could, and presently the word went round, that the Germans had got a lot of big guns, at a place there or four miles off, and they were bringing them to that hill as hard as ever they could go.

Well, it would have been clear to the biggest rumbakill living that once the Germans got a row of big guns on to that hill it would be all up with poor little us. They'd be able to bang us to pieces at their leisure, and they'd be able to hold that hill for a month of Sundays if they wanted to. It commanded the plains for miles on every side, you see. We hadn't been turning this over in our minds for more than a couple of minutes when we got the order to go and take that hill.

"We'll have to look sharp about it," says our captain, "or their artillery will be there before us."

We were up in a moment, and away we went. We had to cross a couple of meadows that had got about as much cover as you'd find on a football field, and the air was simply sizzling with bullets. We went forward in short, sharp dashes, and every time we got up to rush on again we left men kicking and moaning on the ground. At last we got to a bit of a hedge, and then we lay flat and rested for a minute or two.

We'd want all our wind for the rush up the hill three hundred yards ahead.

When the Pibroch Calls!

"Come on, my lads!" shouts the captain suddenly. "Stick into them." We were on our feet in a flash, bayonets fixed. God! how the bullets shrieked at us. It was like a great hurricane of death sweeping down the hill. All at once close beside me I saw a chap with the bagpipes slung across his shoulders. Strange, but I hadn't noticed him till now. It was Piper Maclean, and he was going to pipe us right up that hill of Hell!

"At 'em, boys!" yells Maclean in Gaelic. Then he struck up our war slogan, "Caberfeidh." An icy shiver ran up my spine right into the roots of my hair as the first wild notes rang out, and then I was all on fire. Talk about men possessed with devils. If you'd seen us at that moment you wouldn't have known us for ordinary kilties, I'm certain sure of that!

"Caberfeidh!" was yelled again, and up the hill we tore. I wonder if most men during a bayonet charge feel as I felt them! My feet seemed to have got wings; my hair and beard—I hadn't shaved for two months—seemed bristling with fury; and I heard myself swearing at the top of my voice!

Bullets! I cared for them no more than flies. If a score had gone through me at that moment I don't believe I'd have felt a pinprick of pain. The keen shining bayonet at the end of my rifle struck me as the beautifullest thing I'd ever seen, and I was simply mad to sheath it in human flesh!

At The Top of the Hill.

We had reached the top of the hill now. For a moment the bullets flew so thick that they seemed like a solid wall that we'd got to fight our way through. Of course, one couldn't see anything, but the sound gave you that idea. And then above the banging and coughing, and whirring of rifles and machine guns rose once more the wild, mad music of the pibroch, and like tigers we bounded forward.

Our gallant captain was the first to reach the trenches. It came to me afterwards that he'd kept his head and wasn't half daft like the rest of us. For a moment he stood poised on the breastwork of mud, within point-blank range of a score of rifles. He just gave a fierce, proud smile, and waved his sword. Then as we surged forward with a yell he toppled backwards shot through the heart.

I won't say much about what happened after that. The thing's too terrible to write about in cold blood. Your bayonet goes into a man as easily as sticking your finger into a pot of jam. . . . We were as red-handed as butchers when we'd cleared those trenches. When the Germans came into sight with their artillery they were mightily surprised at the fire we turned on them. They'd got the idea, I believe, that the hill was impregnable, but they'd reckoned without the Seaforths. Still, sometimes I doubt if we'd have taken the position at all if it hadn't been for the pibroch. A Scottish regiment would storm hell itself if it heard the bagpipes playing. All honor then to Piper Maclean for the work he did in that charge!

Going To "Certain Death."

"There's all the difference in the world between charging in a body to the sound of the pipes and charging in meagre numbers with only the song of the bullets to listen to. At least I found it so.

The way I took part in the second kind of charge came about like this. The Germans were occupying a line of trenches right in front of our position. We'd got to get hold of those trenches somehow and the only way to do it, seemed to be by attacking them in front and while the Germans were doing all they could to keep us out, attacking them heavily on the flanks with another force.

Two sections of our regiment—44 men in all volunteered to make the frontal attack, which was to be, you understand, a sort of feint.

Don't imagine for a moment that there were only 44 of the Seaforths willing to face the risk. Why, when the call for volunteers was made, half the regiment wanted to go. But as the commanding officer knew how precious few of those sent would come back, he just despatched the 44 of us. Naturally he didn't want more men to be killed than was necessary.

The facts hadn't been disguised from us at all. We knew our mission

meant almost certain death for every man in the sections. But I'm proud to say our hands didn't tremble when we fixed our bayonets and prepared to make our advance.

The one section was under the command of Serjt Cameron and the other had Acting Serjt Stornach in charge. No finer or braver soldiers have ever lived than those two men.

The Grip of Dread.
Before we'd got a dozen yards the Germans knew we were coming. There wasn't cover enough to shelter a rat, let alone a man, and as we came dashing across the open towards the trenches they poured a withering fire into us. Men went down in all directions, just like ripe apples when you shake the trees.

That grand god-like sort of feeling which I had during the charge I told you of, didn't come to me now, though I prayed all I knew to get it. It was the scream of the pipes I missed and the yelling of a mass of men on each side of me. A fellow just in front of me had his head blown away and just for a moment my belly seemed to be sticking to my backbone, and my knees turned all to a jelly. But I roared out "Caberfeidh" and a chap behind me let out a slogan at the same instant, and then I knew I wasn't charging all alone, as I'd thought for the second I was. A bullet laid my cheek open, and that and the shout behind me drove me on like a spur and I dived forward into the smoke and crash of the trenches.

For a moment I could see nothing and then I made out Serjt Stornach and Private Finnigan, back to back knocking down Germans in all directions. A great heavy fellow fired at me, but I got him through the throat with my bayonet. I noted another chap cut off the path and tried to fight my way to these two brave lads. But I hadn't got more than a couple of yards before something seemed to hit me a tremendous blow between the shoulders. I fell face downwards to a pool of blood and didn't remember any more till they were lifting me to the Red Cross wagon.

I heard afterwards that when the flanking forces reached the trenches, they found Stornach and Finnigan still alive and fighting. How they escaped being shot to pieces is a mystery to me.

I'm glad to say that the trenches were captured at night, but of the 44 men of the Seaforths who had made that frontal dash only four answered the roll-call. The rest of us were all either wounded or dead.

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