

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, AUGUST 26, 1915

Thrilling Tale of Hill 60 Is Told In Masterly Style By Chaplin Watkins

Nothing in History to Equal Fight For Little Mound Near Ypres—A Story of Heroism Never Excelled—Human Endurance and Valor Put to The Furthest Test

The Christian Guardian of Aug. 19 publishes the following thrilling story of the famous fight for Hill 60, written by Rev. Owen S. Watkins, Wesleyan chaplain:

For days it had been common knowledge that we were on the eve of great events. The Germans were concentrating for attack, and all were anticipating one of the greatest battles that the world had ever seen. Southeast of Ypres, close to our line, and completely overlooking the whole of the salient, was a little mound known to us as Hill 60, from the fact that its height was sixty metres, and it was marked on the map by a sixty.

An insignificant mound, but for all that, one of the most important strategic points in the German line, for it was their principal "observing station" for artillery fire, and also commanded the roads whereby they brought up their supplies and ammunition. It was evident that in the event of an attack this position would be invaluable to them, and equally evident that if we could secure it their operations would be greatly hampered, and probably defeated. For weeks the Royal Engineers had been mining the hill; their work was now complete, and on the evening of Saturday, April 17, it became known to some of us that at 7 p. m. the mines would be fired. Stationing ourselves on top of the asylum, held glasses to our eyes, we watched the hill.

An Indescribable Struggle. At the stroke of seven it was as though a volcanic eruption had taken place. The whole hill went sky-high, spot after spot, six great explosions—trees, wagons, horses and men in the air; and then faintly the sound of a dull roar. Almost at the same moment every gun we had in the salient concentrated its fire upon what was left of the hill, and nothing could be seen save rolling smoke, which was constantly rent with the flash of shell explosions. It was simply terrible; there are no words to describe it.

What the German loss in lives was nobody knows; we only found three or four wounded, mangled men, and they said they were all that was left of at least 500 who had been holding the trenches.

A half-hour's almost unopposed bombardment, and then the Royal West Kent Regiment charged into the inferno of smoke and flame with the bayonet, capturing the next line of trenches with a loss of only three killed and half a dozen wounded. So utterly broken and terrified were the Germans that in their panic they bayoneted each other in their haste to get away, fighting their way to safety over the bodies of their own comrades. But the enemy, drawing up on what sometimes seems to us their inexhaustible reserves of men, threw fresh troops into a fierce counter attack, and were on our men before they could dig trenches to the new conditions.

Now our losses really began, and I don't believe there is a man living who could describe that fight. We were instructed to hold it at all costs; the Germans were ordered to retake the position, however great the sacrifice. Humanly speaking, the hill had become un-

tenable for either side, for it was simply swept with shell from both German and British guns.

Nothing Like It Ever Seen.

For concentrated fighting I do not believe anything like it has ever been seen in the history of war. In an area of 800 yards' front and about 100 yards in depth there occurred something like 8,000 casualties. The officers and men of the Royal West Kent, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, the Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment, the 4th Liverpool and the East Surrey Regiment performed unparalleled deeds of valor, and again and again accomplished the impossible.

Driven back from the trenches they had captured, they occupied the crater made by the explosions when the hill was blown up, and here was witnessed some of the sternest fighting of those days and nights of horror and blood—funnel-shaped holes some twenty feet deep, our men lining the rim of the crater; shrapnel bursting over them, a ceaseless stream of machine gun and rifle fire pouring into them, and as they were hit they rolled into the bottom of the funnel, which soon became a twilight of crawling mass of wounded and dead. To enter a crater was almost certain death.

Volunteers were called for from amongst the doctors serving with the regiments in reserve, and the volunteers were not wanting, but most were stopped before they got there. Lieut. Eccles, R. A. M. C. (attached to the East Surrey) alone reached the crater, and there for three hours he worked in that inferno of suffering till his task was done and he was needed elsewhere.

A subaltern of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (he was himself wounded later in the fight) was sent up with reinforcements. There was only one communication trench available, and that very narrow. Half-way up he was met by wounded who were just capable of crawling out of the awful crater above, and the way was blocked. But he must go on or the position would be lost. So he ordered the wounded to lie down and he himself went on. Telling him of it later, he said, "I hated to do it, padre; it made me positively sick. But there was nothing else to do, and the wounded were fine—they let us pass over them without a murmur." And so I might go on, multiplying horrors, adding gruesome detail to gruesome detail, but enough has been said of it all; it was as though they had been rescued from the bottomless pit.

Heroes of the Ambulance Corps. By common consent of those in the highest command, one of the outstanding features of the Hill 60 fight was the perfect arrangements which had been made by the R. A. M. C. for collecting and evacuating the wounded. This work was in the hands of the 14th Field Ambulance, and when all was over the ambulances had the highest distinction of receiving a message of thanks and appreciation from the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, Sir John French.

Before dawn on Saturday morning Col. Crawford had sent out a party under command of Major Hannafin to make all arrangements. Major Hannafin had

under his command two medical officers—Capt. T. Lindsay and Lieut. Morris—and fifty bearers, and these he so placed that when the fight began, they would be in close touch with the regiments engaged.

Whilst still dark he got them into position—to do so in daylight would have been impossible—and then all day they waited until the fight began and their services would be needed. These officers and men continued at their work practically without sleep or rest of any sort, until Tuesday evening—three days and nights, and by that time the bearers were dropping exhausted in their tracks, and the doctors were almost falling asleep as they attended to the wounded.

To relieve them was impossible, for the relief sent were instantly used and more were wanted; nobody could spare to rest. The 18th and 19th Field Ambulances sent their bearers and additional medical officers, and there was more than enough for all of them to do. In the first thirty hours over 1,000 wounded passed through our hands, including twelve of our own bearers, and in the hours that followed there was no appreciable lessening of the number that streamed in upon us.

Major Watkins' Experiences. Probably the best method of conveying to you the sort of work that was done, and the conditions under which it was performed, would be to describe my own experiences during those days, but I am not sure that my experiences were child's play beside those of Major Hannafin and his gallant band.

Just after dark on the Saturday night I went with Lieut. Lee, R. A. M. C., taking a number of motor ambulances with us, our instructions being to try to get in touch with Major Hannafin. Having reached the farm which was to be used as a loading point, we left the motors and proceeded on foot. What a walk! The noise of the fighting rolling above us; the slip, slip of bullets overhead from the fight—falling all around us. Where the track was very exposed we crouched low and ran our hardest. Twice shells hit the path a few yards in front of us, but in the providence of God, did not explode. If they had, as one put it later, "We should now be searching for small souvenirs of a person and a doctor."

At last we reached Beau Port Farm, where the Norfolk Regiment had a dressing station. Here Lieut. Brownson, the medical officer, was already crowded out with wounded who were pouring in in a continual stream, though the regiment was only on the edge of the fight. He wanted bearers, so I did myself busy with the dying and dead who were lying all about. The house rocked with the concussion of bursting shells, did not beat on the face of the earth. The two medical officers were fine, both had only recently joined us, and were receiving their baptism of fire, but neither gave any sign that conditions were unusual or the danger great. Calmly, with hands that were perfectly steady they tied up arteries, bandaged shattered limbs, and with the dim light of a candle or, in more critical cases, by the light of my electric torch, performed such operations as were needed for the

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Cadbury's Pure Nut Milk Chocolate, 1/2 lb. cakes, 30c.

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saving of life or the stopping of hemorrhage.

At last the bearers came, but there were too many cases for them to be carried in one journey, and they left with instructions to return again immediately. They were, however, so long in returning that again we had recourse to the field telephone, only to learn that the need for them had been greater elsewhere and they had been sent up through the railway cutting to join Major Hannafin. He, we were informed, had his doubts as to whether he could hold the position more could be got in, and all who remained outside were hit and hit again by the bursting shrapnel.

A Run for Life.

We therefore decided to start back and try to get more bearers. As we left the shelter of the farm we met it—rifle fire which took our breath away. Bending double we reared for the shelter of a barn, and crouching close pressed against the wall listened to the bullets beating on the ground two yards away. It was a "close call," at the moment we seemed to be listening to the bullets beating on the ground two yards away. It was a "close call," at the moment we seemed to be listening to the bullets beating on the ground two yards away.

Still ill-luck pursued us. Whilst we had been in Beau Port Farm, a high explosive shell had burst right on the path, tearing a great hole in which we could have buried a horse. Lieut. Lee, running his hand, failed to see it in time, and he was hit in the leg, and was in, and as we travelled over the rough track at our top speed—bullet holes in the mud, and the sound of the crowd, the kind of cigarettes for the colonel discovered on the Pacific Coast, and sell fifteen for a nickel.

C. P. R. men from all departments were present and several responded to toasts. These included A. Price, Robert Miller, superintendent of the Windsor Station, who as a humorist ranks close to Mr. Ham, J. M. Gibbons, publicity department; R. G. Chamberlain, formerly chief of police of Vancouver.

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DINED GEORGE HAM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

C. P. R. Veteran Now 68 Years Old—Composed Menu But Did Not Know He Was to be Guest of Honor

(Montreal Mail)

Sixty-eight guests paid homage to Colonel George Ham, as the menu described him, at the Place Viger Hotel last evening. The occasion was his 68th birthday, although with the assistance of C. P. R. men, General Passenger Agent of the C. P. R., the colonel's age reached one hundred and eight.

The dinner was an informal one, and was a surprise to Colonel Ham. It was unique in detail—even more unique than the things with which Colonel Ham had to do. Liver and bacon comprised the entrée and "fish Turkey and cabbage" the main course. And incidentally the "Murphy's" were served "with the sweetest on." After some of George Ham's "dear apple pie" and "poor pumpkin pie" had been served, the colonel supplied the "Home Run Cigarettes" for the crowd, the kind of cigarettes for the colonel discovered on the Pacific Coast, and sell fifteen for a nickel.

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ver, and now connected with the Canadian Pacific, and Capt. Walsh, head of the marine department. Mr. Ham, of the Central News Service of New York, who was a guest, also spoke.

The toast to Colonel Ham was proposed by Mr. Miller, who has been associated with Mr. Ham for many years. Mr. Ham's response was along a sober vein, reviewing his years of connection with the C. P. R., but later in the evening he had his usual burst into the realms of humor.

"The hotel rang with the singing of 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow,' as Colonel Ham took his seat. 'Auld Lang Syne,' closed the evening. It least out during the evening that the menu was one of the selections of Colonel Ham himself, although he did not know that he was to be the guest at it. Much was said about the liver and bacon, and the colonel declared he had attended as many banquets as any man in Canada and that this was the first where he had left the table with his hunger satisfied."

Printed on the menu was a poem: "How Laughter Came to Canada," written for Colonel Ham and dedicated to him by Neil Munro, Aug. 23, 1903. During twelve years since it was written it has been kept stored away by Mr. Ham, until it was taken from its pigeon hole and brought to light last night. The poem is a tribute to optimism and good humor of last evening's guest.

PEOPLE AGAIN BUYING JEWELRY FREELY IN THE STATES; A GOOD SIGN

New York, Aug. 25.—The fact that people are again buying jewelry was cited by T. J. Coombs, of Omaha, Neb., president of the American National Retail Jewelers' Association, at its convention here, as evidence that good times are returning.

"The jewelry business is a good barometer," said Mr. Coombs. "People are now buying jewelry and there seems to be no tendency to hoard money. In the jewelry business the panic war times are no more."

Samuel Hershenshtein, Assistant United States District Attorney, announced to the jewellers that an effort will be made in Congress to amend the penal



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code so that the time during which a bankrupt's absence from the jurisdiction of the state will not be included in granting exemption under the statute of limitations.

Wasson's one cent sale for August on Friday, Saturday and Monday. See adv. on page 3.

The annual break at the store—Albert W. Stratford of North Oxford took place the other night and the usual box of tobacco was taken. For six years the store has been entered in about the same way and nothing has ever been disturbed but the tobacco.

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3 Baked Beans in Tomato Sauce without Pork	30 Pickled Walnuts
4 Baked Red Kidney Beans	31 Queen Olives
5 Cream of Tomato Soup	32 Manzanilla Olives
6 Cream of Pea Soup	33 Stuffed Olives
7 Cream of Celery Soup	34 Pure Olive Oil
8 Mince Meat	35 Tomato Ketchup
9 Plum Pudding	36 Tomato Chutney
10 Cooked Sauer Kraut with Pork	37 Chili Sauce
11 Peanut Butter	38 Tomato Relish
12 Spaghetti (a L'Italiane)	39 Mushroom Ketchup
13 Fruit Preserves	40 Walnut Ketchup
14 Fruit Jellies	41 Mustard Ketchup
15 Apple Butter	42 Mustard Dressing
16 Peanut Butter	43 Pepper Sauce
17 Plum Butter	44 Mandarins Sauce
18 Grapefruit Marmalade	45 Worcestershire Sauce
19 Escaloped Figs	46 Prepared Mustard
20 Cranberry Sauce	47 Powdered Mustard
21 Preserved Sweet Gherkins	48 India Relish
22 Preserved Sweet Mixed Pickles	49 East Indian Chutney
23 Sour Gherkin Pickles	50 Evaporated Horseradish
24 Sour Mixed Pickles	51 Sweet Red Peppers
25 Chow Chow Pickle	52 Pure Malt Vinegar
26 Dill Pickles	53 Pure Cider Vinegar
27 Escaloped Pickle	54 White Pickling and Table Vinegar
	55 Spiced Salad Vinegar
	56 Dill Vinegar
	57 Tarragon Vinegar

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