

14 THE STORY OF THE 13TH BATTALION.

On October 8th the offensive against Regina Trench was resumed on a large scale, the 13th Battalion on that night taking over trenches north-east of Courcellette preparatory to making their attack. On this occasion the Canadian Corps attacked on a two Division frontage in conjunction with the 23rd and 25th British Divisions, the 1st Canadian Division being on the right and the 3rd Division on the left. Each Division had two brigades in the line. The battalions engaged, from right to left, were the 4th and 3rd of the 1st Brigade, the 16th and 13th of the 3rd Brigade, the 58th and 43rd of the 9th Brigade, and the Royal Canadian Rifles and the 49th of the 7th Brigade.

The attack had been rehearsed previously and began at 4.50 a.m. while it was still dark. The barrage opened with great intensity, and the enemy replied a minute later. The assaulting waves moved forward in good order, suffering only a few casualties on the way, but when they arrived at Regina Trench they found that the enemy wire was not cut by the artillery except on the extreme right of the attack.

While the men endeavoured to find gaps they were shot down rapidly by concentrated enemy machine guns from behind the trench and from Courcellette trench on the left. Only a few of the 13th men managed to get into the enemy position with some men of the 16th Battalion, and at length they were compelled to retire. Their casualties were heavy, for they had been in full view of enemy machine guns and snipers.

Out of seventeen officers who went forward, only two returned unwounded, and two others, who lay out in the German wire, came back after dark. The failure of this attack was attributed entirely to the fact that the wire had not been cut by the bombardment. On the following day the battalion returned to billets in Albert, and others, after terrible fighting, finally wrested the notorious trench from the enemy after nearly a month's struggle.

For some months afterwards the battalion endured the hard, ordinary work of the trenches without the