



The ever-ready Engineers repairing the damaged roads following the advance.

Canadian Special Photo.

Mining the Boche.

"What's the date, Major," sang out a voice in the underground dugout, thirty feet below the surface, in the support trenches, near ———, Germany, held by the ——— Battalion, Canadians, pro tem.

"Sixteenth March, Nineteen Hundred and Forty," came the answer from the grey-haired old officer, who glanced at the top of his morning paper, as if to verify it.

"Long war, eh?" remarked the Major. "Wonder where the rest of the boys are?"

"They will be in very soon for a drop of rum. They were up talking to old General South, in the front line, when I came down. Great old boy that, eh? Been out a long time, too. Says he is just back from his seventy-fifth leave to England."

"Give me a drop of 'Runners' and water, and leave one for the old fellow," continued the Major. Just then a pair of highly polished field boots and spurs, a bit splashed with mud, made their appearance at the top of the steps leading down to the dugout, and General South landed in, followed by several "brass hats" and a couple of trench officers.

"I have just come down for a drop of rum, but might be induced to remain to dinner, if you have

anything particularly appealing to-night. It's snowing like the devil outside, or above, I should say, and you know it's a long way back to Headquarters in the dark," said the General, motioning to the junior officers to sit down.

"You are perfectly right about the weather, sir, and we ought to be able to scrape up an extra plate of bully stew. Delighted to have you stay, providing you give us one of your yarns about the early days in the line," returned the Major.

"Contented," said the General, in his best bridge voice. "Now, gentlemen, how about the inner man? I'm hang near starved. Dropped my lunch in a shell hole this morning trying to dodge one of Fritz's big ones. I dodged it all right, but lost my lunch in the scramble. Some people are born unlucky, I think. However, I don't suppose we should grumble. They say rats are selling at a shilling apiece in Berlin now."

Just then the meal was announced, and the party filed into the room off to one side, where the batmen had dinner laid out.

Having done justice to the aforementioned bully stew, and the last plate cleared away, the General took off his spectacles, pulled up his chair to the fireplace, and motioned to the others to sit down and make themselves comfortable.