

## THE TERRIBLE BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE (contd.)

undamaged until our men swept over it and captured it. The left moved through the Copse, its advance being greatly aided by the enterprise of the Stokes gunners, who succeeded in placing their trench guns in very forward points before the advance began. Our men here were long occupied, however, in a hard fight.

The day was very wet and stormy, and it was almost impossible to maintain connections or keep in touch. Our airmen showed great gallantry in swooping down very low for observation purposes. Shortly before eleven in the morning it seemed as though our attack had failed. The right of the centre had to retire lest it should be cut off. Our right had been driven back and our left was still in the midst of a hard battle.

Then it was that a young officer hurried back to his battalion headquarters with the news that he and

tions enabled them to pour their heavy machine-gun fire on us. In the whole of these operations the machine-gun fire was greater than our men had ever experienced before. At one point on the right the Germans made a stand, and our troops got in among them with the bayonet. At every point it was "dogged" that did it.

One story of the Tuesday's fighting is worth telling. The men of one battalion had pushed forward and captured an advanced German point. There were twenty of them left to hold it. The Germans crept forward, many hundreds in number, to counter-attack. The Canadians let them get close. Then every man jumped to his feet, one and all yelling like furies, and rushed on the advancing enemy. A panic took them. They believed that an enormous force must be behind our men. They turned and fled.



The condition of the ground at Passchendaele is so terrible that it is impossible to make any progress until duck-board paths have been laid.

a fellow lieutenant and forty odd men had secured the top of Bellevue Spur, and that they had been holding it for hours, repulsing every German attempt to advance on their right or front by rifle fire. Bellevue Spur commanded the whole country around. There was dead ground over which fresh troops could come up in safety. A fresh forward movement was begun, and reinforcements were brought into action. That night, after desperate fighting, we had taken a considerable stretch of the German front, had captured many "pill-boxes," and had secured hundreds of prisoners. The Germans counter-attacked repeatedly and in great force, but here the wonderful handling of our artillery—inferior in numbers though it was to the German—played a great part in smashing up every enemy attempt.

The second advance was made on Tuesday, October 30th. On this occasion our men moved up to the very outskirts of the village of Passchendaele and to Goudberg. The weather in the early morning was fine, although rain came on later in the day. Here the same features distinguished our operations. The Germans were greatly aided by the mud. Their concrete posi-

Again came a pause, while fresh troops were brought into line. The German artillery, which was constantly strengthened, kept up ceaseless fire for miles behind our front lines. The German aeroplanes concentrated their attacks upon Ypres and some places behind. Our advance had produced a more and more marked salient, for other troops on either flank had been unable to advance an equal distance.

Our troops were now well on the Ridge itself. Passchendaele village, still before them, was fortified in every possible way. Fresh German troops had been called up. These, judging from the prisoners taken, were among the finest of the enemy infantry.

On the third attack, on Monday, November 5th, we took our entire objective, occupying Passchendaele and the commanding positions around it.

Our victory was due, first, to very careful preparation and Staff work; next, to a complete co-ordination of forces, the whole army acting as one; and last, but not least, to the overwhelming dash and supreme fighting qualities of the infantrymen of all ranks.