

done. The German position must be discovered, and under the circumstances there was but one way for it to be done. There was a single high tower about half way between the English and German trenches, and from it was the only chance of discovering the enemy's position. As it stood, it was impossible to reach it without running the gauntlet of the whole German line, which meant certain death if discovered, but valuable information if successful. No officer could command any of his men to undertake such a mission. At last in despair the officer asked for a volunteer, and almost immediately a tall dark-haired boy crept forward, with his head bent below the surface of the earth. "I'm ready, Sir," he said. "Well done, Edwards — but it's no child's job, I warn you." "I know, Sir, but I'm ready for your orders." The orders were short and emphatic, and Edwards saluted and started out on his perilous mission. The rain was holding up and he had to crawl along the ground from one hillock to another for shelter from the bullets over his head. Suddenly they stopped and halted. Now was the time for action. He knew the meaning of those pauses only too well; in a moment the volley would be renewed with redoubled vigor. So he pressed on as rapidly as possible, and without mishap gained the base of the tower.

The Germans, well knowing the value of the view from the tower, had trained their guns on it, in anticipation of some such act on the part of the English, but as yet the shells came seldom and were wide of the mark. Edwards climbed to the top and with the aid of glasses had gained a fairly good idea of the German position, and was about to climb down again, when a huge shell struck the tower fairly in the center and the part in which Edwards stood fell into pieces. He fell among the debris and lay for some time unconscious. The Germans, satisfied that they had destroyed the only means the English had of discovering their position, turned their fire on another portion of the field.

When at last Edwards came to, the rain had stopped, and it was growing dark. He tried to move but fell back with a groan. He was not sure whether he had broken any bones, but he was so sore and stiff that he could not move. He tried again with better success, and after several attempts he managed to crawl a few yards away from the heap of ruins. Here he again had to stop, but when he thought of the rough plans he had of the German position, which he held in his pocket, and of the value they were to his country, he started slowly on again.