

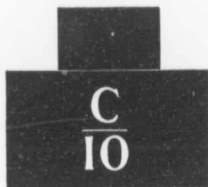
FESTUBERT

A GRAPHIC STORY OF A GREAT FIGHT
WHERE CANADIANS WON HONOR
AT A HEAVY PRICE

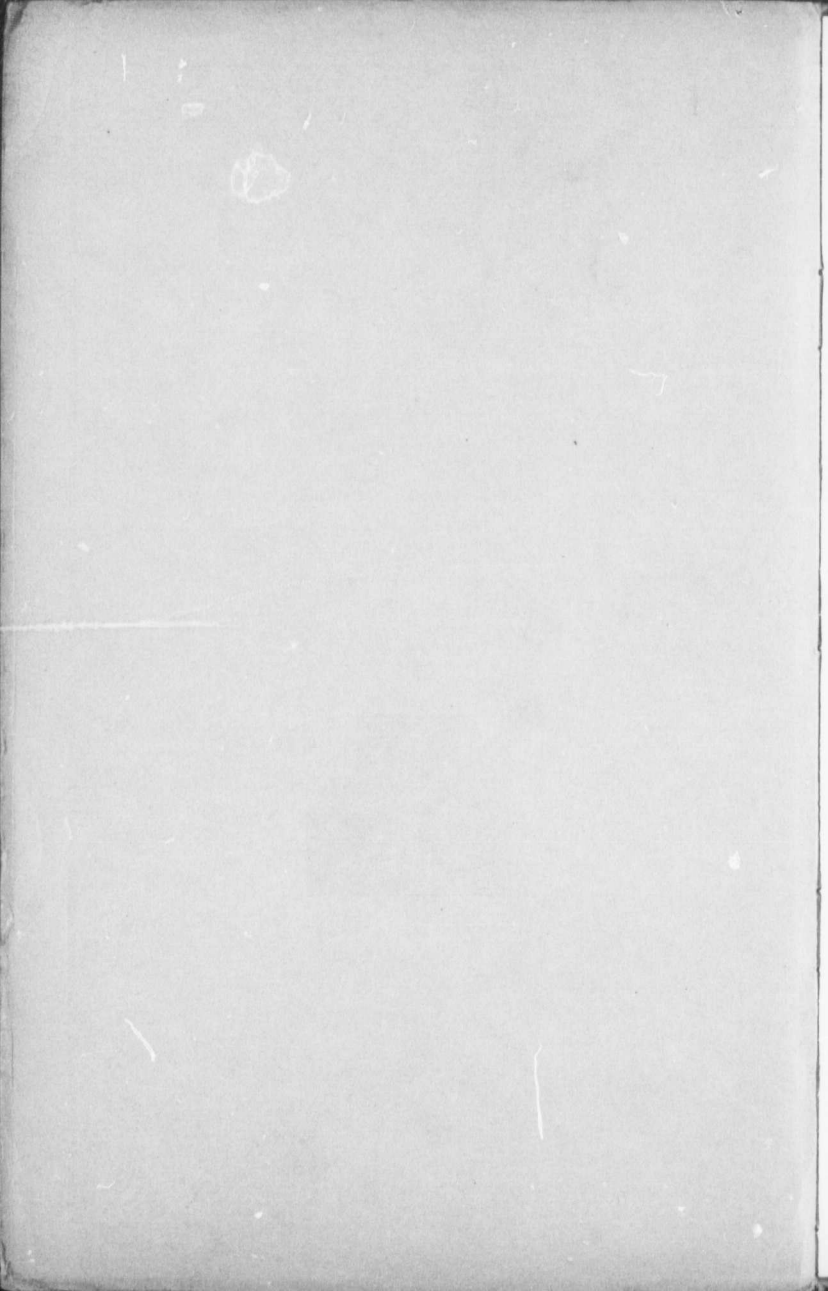
BY

LIEUT.-COL. P. A. GUTHRIE

O.C. 10th Can. Infantry,
April 23rd to May 25th, 1915



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FESTUBERT



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TOP ROW—Lieut. Todhunter, Lieut. Good, Lieut. Romeril, Lieut. Lewis, Lieut. Morgan, Lieut. Dawson, Lieut. Bingham, Lieut. Nichol, Lieut. Thomson, Lieut. Finn, Lieut. Rickard, Lieut. Wheatley.

SECOND ROW—Lieut. Simpson, Lieut. Cockshutt, Lieut. Duncan, Lieut. Knowles, Lieut. Glanfield, Lieut. Reeves, Capt. Stewart.

BOTTOM ROW—Capt. Day, Capt. Snelgrove, Lieut. Small, Capt. Ross, Capt. Costigan, Col. P. A. Guthrie, Major Arthur, Capt. Duck, Major Ashton, Lieut. Critchley.

PICTURE OF 10TH BATTALION OFFICERS TAKEN ON MAY 12TH, 1915, FOLLOWING THE BATTALION RECEIVING GENERAL SIR SMITH-DORIEN'S THANKS FOR THE WORK DONE BY THE BATTALION AT ST. JULIEN.

LIEUT.-COL. P. A. GUTHRIE, Officer Commanding the 10th Canadian Infantry, April 23rd to May 25th, 1915, the author of this story, is a self made man. As a young lad he worked in the lumber camps of New Brunswick and attended night school. At the outbreak of the war he was a K.C. in the city of Fredericton,—had an extensive law practice, was a member of the Legislative Assembly for the County of York, New Brunswick, which includes the city of Fredericton, and a Major and second in command of the Seventy-first York Regiment. All this had been achieved up to the age of thirty-one years, and the outbreak of the war found him at Valcartier camp. He was made second in command of the Twelfth New Brunswick Regiment, his Officer Commanding being Col. H. F. McLeod, the federal member for the County of York, N.B. The Twelfth Battalion was created into a reserve battalion in England after the first division left for France, and Major P. A. Guthrie, as he then was, could have remained second in command of this reserve battalion, and could have been selected for staff appointment. He, however, succeeded in getting to France just previous to the engagements at St. Julien on April 21st and 22nd. He learned that the Tenth Battalion were to be in the thick of the fray so attached himself to it and found himself a senior officer on the morning of the 23rd of April. He was ordered by General Currie, Commander of the Second Brigade, of which the Tenth was a unit, to make the counter attack, which the remnants of the battalion made on the afternoon of April 23rd at Langemarck. He re-organized the battalion and commanded it until wounded on May 25th, 1915. After he was fit to be placed on a hospital ship he returned to Canada. He was embarked on the hospital ship "Hesperian", and although temporarily blinded by gas and with a shattered body, when this hospital ship was torpedoed and sunk by the Germans he was found floating on the sea supported by his crutches. He was invalided to Canada and in December, 1915, Gen. Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., requested him to organize a battalion of McLean Highlanders. He had his recruiting base as the whole of Canada. This battalion he took over to England, the personnel of which was sent to reinforce other Highland units in the field. He is now a corporation counsel in the city of Boston.

A YEAR OF WAR

A year has swiftly rolled away, each day of which has been ushered in and out with the roar of heavy guns; the scream of shells, large and small, as they traced their way through troubled air from cannon mouth to parapet; the never ceasing "talk" and "put" of the machine guns as they scolded and cursed each other across "No Man's Land," which they themselves had christened thus with drops of blood from valiant friend and foe; the crash of bomb—that most terrible now of all our death devices—either from the air or ether or from a few feet away, despatched by steady hand up its errand; the incessant "spit" and "crackle" of the rifle as it tried to maintain its place among its new neighbors in the firmament of war; the earthquake shock of the bursting mine; the hissing, purring, blinding stream of liquid death; the deliberate enrolling cloud of Hell; and each day in many lands and on many seas many peoples of many tongues have met and fought and handed on to history records of bravery, devotion to duty, and military generalship, that shall long survive the corrosive hand of Time and shall be to generations yet unborn the foundation of their racial glories. Great things have happened, mighty men have fallen, nations have been blotted out, Kingdom's have vanished, the complexion of the old world's face has been so changed that other planets look down and ask each other if indeed it is true that a new neighbor has moved into the Heavens to replace their old friend. Battles fierce and battles long have raged 'twixt now and then, and this brings me back to the day, a year ago,—the last day of "The Battle of Festubert."

THE PURPOSE OF THE BATTLE

What was its object? Why was it fought? Was there anything accomplished? Did it result in advantage?

Because of its peculiar course, its beginning and its end, these questions have been often asked, but seldom answered in a way that would bring conviction to one's mind. Our great generals, who were in command of this portion of the line at the time, could easily set our reasonings right if they would speak, but being good generals and busy generals, they talk little and keep on peddling war. It is well that it is so. In the light of what has since come to our knowledge, and being left to our own resources, let us try and work it out for ourselves:

Figures A. B. C. and D. referred to throughout this article appear on two centre pages 16 and 17.

Lille is the second largest city in France, and was the centre of the nation's commercial activity, until the fortunes of war, in the early stages of the conflict, placed it behind the German lines. As soon as the great French Army had recovered from the first shock of battle, and the army of Britain began to assume the proportions of "an army" (in the sense of the word today), it became the ambition of "Grandfather Joffre" to retake the kidnapped daughter from the hostile arms that encircled her resisting form. Lille had plant and machinery, mines and minerals, coal and railways, within her area, which were now being used by the enemy, and she also served as a base for the army of Prince Rupprecht (1). The retaking of Lille, therefore, would place these war elements in the hands of the Allies and would give us the most advantageous base on the whole Western front from which to strike a great offensive against the Huns. This was the object.

LILLE, THE OBJECTIVE

When the Germans were pounding away at Ypres in the latter part of April, and being so stubbornly resisted by first the Canadians and then the British troops, Joffre, for the purpose of creating a diversion and keeping in action at a distant point as many of the enemy as possible, made a great smash in the Artois sector. Being met with success, and finding the defences of Lens not so invulnerable as at first anticipated, large numbers of heavy guns were concentrated in this district, and the constant hammering brought more successes, and gave rise to the hope that the "great drive" indeed was on. The Germans, finding their defences crumbling, and becoming alarmed at the French gains, gave up their offensive at Ypres and hurried troops to meet the threatened break in the line. The British had tried hard in March to take the Aubers Ridge, which really dominates Lille, and Neuve Chapelle was fought without the objective being attained. They still had their eyes on that ridge, and now seemed the opportune time to make another drive, while the Germans were hesitating between Ypres and Lens. They also desired to occupy as many of the enemy as possible, and thereby prevent them from opposing the French at Artois. For these two reasons, then, Festubert was staged and fought.

It must also be remembered that Lille could have been reduced by the big guns placed within range of the city by the British, but nothing would be gained by the destruction of a French town, and everything urged its capture in as good condition as possible. You can see, therefor, by looking at Figure "A,"

that if the German line was broken by the British at Aubers and the French at Lens, these armies marching like two sides of a triangle could meet at a point past Lille, throwing the enemy back far enough to the right and left to prevent its reduction by German artillery fire. Though neither Joffre nor French have ever stated this was the plan. We can easily see that this must have been the way the two great minds of the Western Front had intended things to be.

WHAT WAS GAINED

In answering the question as to what was accomplished, either in trench area or points of strategical importance, I think we must unfortunately come to the conclusion that we did not make gains sufficient to offset the losses in good fighting men which we sustained. We did, however, at several places, penetrate the German line even to the third trench, and by holding these captured positions we had in our possession territory which would not have to be captured again in a future offensive, and forming as it were stepping stones across the morass to the hill slopes leading to the plain from which rose the Aubers Ridge.

Did it result in advantage? I believe it did, and "the battle of Festubert," though small in comparison with the greater engagements of the war, had a greater bearing on the whole conduct of the campaign and the attitude of the British people, than any and all other battles since the war began. This, I realize, is, on the face of it, a tall statement; but let me explain.

Previous to this, the British soldiery knew from their experience in Neuve Chapelle and other encounters, just what an enormous army and what an immense supply of guns and shells would be required to blast a way through the ever-increasing trench lines along the Western Front. The British public, however, was still ignorant as a babe as to the task of the men who were "doing the fighting," and their needs. Politicians jockeyed for place in the race for power, while real men suffered and died. Many of our statesmen knew what should be done, but their hands were tied by party bonds, and the opinion of a public that scoffed at Roberts, laughed at Beresford, slept on while the blood of heroes leaked through their roof at Neuve Chapelle, awake at least when it dripped in their faces from Festubert, and finally made up its mind after Loos.

"GERMANS WERE PREPARED."

(2). The Germans must have expected that an attack would be made in this sector, for they had completed a scheme of forts

which perhaps were no where excelled along the entire front. These forts were built of concrete and sandbags and connected by trenches which would not be fully manned. Dummy forts were here and there erected in which men would appear long enough to attract our fire and then disappear while our small stock of ammunition was used up in "reducing the position." The real forts had moats dug out in front, in and around which wire entanglements were profusely woven, and many machine guns carefully hidden behind steel and concrete embrasures could sweep across the open country between the lines. The only way to "get" one of these forts was with high explosives and this is where we fell down.

The Germans had long ago learned that in trench warfare the machine guns and the heavy high explosive shells were the proper dope; we learned this truth at Festubert. Their policy of not fully manning their front line, but keeping their men in second line trenches and protected pits within easy distance, relying upon machine guns to hold back an attack until they could come up, is, I think, worthy of copy. In the fighting we took several pieces of trench, and, as the enemy retired into these forts with their steel and concrete walls and numerous machine guns, we found it almost impossible to make progress. If these forts had been reduced by artillery fire, our progress from trench to trench would have been rapid. As it was, we were constantly held up and could not proceed until, with great loss, we would charge one of these forts with bombs and bayonets and effect its capture. Our artillery was "of the first water", but we did not have enough. Everything seemed ripe for a great move ahead and I believe if we had been properly supplied with the guns and shells, the Canadians would not have stopped until they took a peep at Lille from the crest of the "Ridge."

MORE MUNITIONS NEEDED

Our lack of success and our heap of dead convinced "our people" that this was not the proper way to win the war, and that we must have the guns and the shells with which to properly do our work. The British newspapers took up our fight (3) and out of the bubbling cauldron of "party interest" came the "Coalition Government," the "Munitions Board," "shells and shells and shells,"—an understanding of our real position in the war, a grim determination that we must win, and finally "Conscription." (4). All of which goes to show that "our blood" was not shed in vain.

Festubert, therefore, shall stand out prominently from the

pages that tell the story of this war, for Festubert was the great gateway through which there passed out the old order of things and through which into our Empire life there entered a new conception of our needs, our duties and our strength.

A DOUBLE BATTLE.

The battle of Festubert was really divided into two periods. During the first half the English were the aggressors, but the Canadians and the Scottish wound up the proceedings. The battle began on the 9th day of May and the fighting between that day and the 16th was done by the 2nd and 7th Divisions. They becoming exhausted ceased in their impossible task and there was a lull until the 19th when the 1st Canadian Division and the 51st Territorial (Highland) Division marched in and began "nibbling" at the line where their English comrades had left it.

I cannot recount to you the story of the fighting during the first period, when our English comrades with their inborn stubborn and dogged determination pushed on in face of every conceivable plan of resistance known to the foe and made gaps here and there in the line; nor can I relate how our Scottish partners with Hieland heart and Hieland yell charged over moat and wire during the latter part of the contest and with rifle butts and bony fists on many occasions wrenched from the Bavarians a few coveted and important posts. The tale of the doings of these men must be told by someone who was there to witness from day to day the feats of these war giants as they grappled with each other in the Amphitheatre of Death, while a world looked on and smiled and criticized and planned how each move "should have been done." History must tell us these things and those of us who are alive when this war is over will scan with pulsing heart each glowing page.

WHAT THE CANADIANS DID.

I can only tell you something of what the Canadians did during the few days we were engaged, and as our attacks were divided into an advance on the "Orchard," which was carried on by the 3rd Canadian Infantry Brigade, and upon "K-5" by the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade, you will see that my story of the work of the 3rd Brigade must be limited and my tale confined to the doings of the 2nd Brigade and more particularly of the 10th Battalion (White Gurkhas), which unit I had the honor to command. The 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade acted as Reserve Brigade to the other two until the latter part of the fight,

when they moved up and did excellent work as will later appear.

In order that the positions of our Canadian troops may be clear, I will ask you to glance at Figure "B," which shows the location of the "Orchard" and "K-5," and then at Figures "C" and "D," which more minutely deal with these portions of the line separately.

In my story of the battle of Ypres I left the First Canadian Division on the 8th of May at Bailleul. Here it was joined by the Cavalry Brigade (Royal Canadian Dragoons, Strathcona Horse and King Edward Horse), under Gen. Seeley, and here during the few days following it pulled itself together and became once more the highly efficient, well organized, and dashing Division that had astonished a whole world and raised hell with "military principles" at St. Julien. From Bailleul one night it marched to Robecq, pausing there for breathing space and then moving on through the Hinges and Long Cornet to pause again for a day and night at such places as "le Hamel" and the other little villages that dot the map near Bethune.

While in this vicinity we were joined by the Indian troops and our men had an opportunity of rubbing shoulders with their dusky comrades from the Empire more ancient than the Empire of which it now forms a part. I could tell many stories of the work of these lithe, little warriors from the Himalayan sides, and those long, lean, lanky rides of Bengal Plain, but these things I reserve for another chapter. Does it not strike one, however, as a strong argument in favor of British rule, when we stop to consider that only a few years ago our armies marched into India among this fierce and warlike people, who with each other strove and know not peace, and soon they cease their ancient feuds and settle down to develop their wonderful country along the lines of British civilization? They accepted our commercial and educational systems, though not our religion, prospered, and then with us gave homage to the same Queen Mother, and now side by side with their white brothers from all parts of the world they give their lives in the defence of "One King, One Flag and One Empire."

CANADIAN AND INDIAN TROOPS

Our boys seemed delighted to make the acquaintance of these warriors, and it was a common sight to find them conversing in the streets and lanes. All soldiers upon landing in France began to learn French, and so the Canadian and the Gurkha, each ignorant of the language of the other, would "carry on" in a "French" that would not get a man by a "gendarme" in a "boulevard of

gay Paris. I heard a "White" Gurkha talking to a Black Gurkha about their respective countries and the Black Gurkha was questioning the "White" Gurkha as to why he would not let the "Indian land in British Columbia." "Are we not all one people under one King and each the equal of the others?" queried the Black Gurkha. This was a poser for the "White" Gurkha, so he tried to evade the issue by the following remark: "Oh, we had better keep all you fellows together in case a rebellion might start, for we have not forgotten Lucknow." "And we have not forgotten the Reil Rebellion—you chaps have a little time of your own now and then, so don't blow," retorted the Black Gurkha, and the two laughed and began smoking from the same box of "fags."

Here during the pouring rain, along the roadways we spent the day and night of the 18th, getting as much shelter as we could from the eaves of the buildings and nearby sheds, and waiting each moment for the word to move on, while the squares, the fields, and the lanes became packed with troops of many tongues and many colors and all branches of "the service" mingled in one great cosmopolitan mass. It was not pleasant but interesting. The troops up in the front line were anxious to be relieved, as they had fought long and hard. We were anxious to get another crack at the Hun and avenge our friends who had fallen at Ypres. The generals were anxious to move up the new troops, so as to continue the struggle—the wheels of the war machine were grinding on and soon the little belt on our pulley would begin to revolve and we would glide out in a steady stream of men to our new position.

THE ORCHARD FIGHT.

First I will deal briefly with the Orchard fight, as I knew of it at first hand while it was going on, but for a complete description and detailed narration I would refer to that valuable and complete story by Sir Max Aitken (8) entitled "Canada in Flanders," in which he so ably follows the course of the Canadian Army from its inception through its training and on many fields.

The "Orchard" lay on the farther side of "La Quinque Rue" near the second German line and was bordered by a country road leading up over a slightly rising piece of ground. A few buildings were thereabouts and these were heavily manned by machine guns and seemed to have escaped demolition by our artillery fire. In addition trenches were dug in and near the Orchard and wire entanglements thrown out everywhere, so as to make an advance of a most perilous nature. There was no time to reconnoitre the

position in a proper way before the attack was ordered. The 16th Canadian Scottish under Lt.-Col. Leckie (9) and the 14th Royal Montreal Regiment, under Lt.-Col. Meighen (10) were selected to make the dash forward on the roadway mentioned above as La Quinque Rue. A frontal attack was to be made by two companies of each unit, while a third company from the 16th was to move up on the left of the attacking line to guard their flank, and if possible to gain a footing in the Orchard.

'Twas the 19th of May and our artillery had been peppering away at the German advanced line for some hours, so as to make way for the attack by the fresh troops, of whom too much seems to have been expected. Over this open ground in the face of withering fire swept the heroes of these two veteran Battalions, but though they tried desperately to continue on into the enemy front line, they found this impossible and halted in a little fold of the ground running across the road and facing the Orchard. They were now in advance of their supports in the "Old German Line" about five hundred yards and within about two hundred and fifty yards of the new German position. Here must they await for the darkness of night to engulf them in its inky screen during which time with entrenching tools they slowly "dug in," so as to get as much protection as possible from the scorching machine gun fire that was turned on from the houses near the Orchard. They were between the Wiltshires on the right and the Coldstreams on the left, and during the night they connected up their trench with these units. Just before dawn the men of the 14th were removed and the 16th left alone on this advanced piece of Hell.

THE MORNING OF THE 20TH.

Here we find them on the morning of the 20th when orders came for an attack on the Orchard that night. No attack was delivered on this date, however, but Major Leckie (11) made as complete a reconnoissance as could be carried out under the circumstances and with a few men occupied an old house near the German line which, strange to say, was left untouched during the terrific bombardment of the following day.

On the evening of the 21st at 7.45 the attack was renewed and Major Rae, who had been one of the first in the wood at Ypres when the guns were retaken, now led the way in command of two companies of the 16th under Captain Morison and Major Peck respectively.

The 15th Battalion (48th Highlanders) carried out an attack on the main German line, about eight hundred yards to the right

and nearer to Festubert. For a few moments they moved forward under the protection of a couple of machine guns, which had been placed in the deserted dwelling, but as it was daylight only a few moments elapsed until down upon them came pouring every kind of shell, machine-guns and rifle fire.

A GREAT CHARGE.

On they pressed undaunted, now rushing across open ground, now crawling over a rise, now wallowing up to their hips in a muddy ditch, now wriggling through a hedge strengthened by wire entanglements, and now at last with a mighty yell, such as Scots only can utter in times like these, they gain the Orchard and with bayonets despatch the few remaining Huns, the others having fled before that glorious stampede of war-mad, frenzied men. The attack had followed so closely upon the heels of the bombardment that the enemy had not time to bring up supports to the garrison in the Orchard, and so it came that the men from the Cascade and Rocky slopes, from the first prairie that Britain owned, and, from her centre of advanced loyalty, (12) had gained a position against which on more than one occasion the best old British troops had been hurled in vain.

On the following night (May 22nd) an attack was launched by the 13th Battalion (Royal Highlanders) under Lt.-Col. Loomis, slightly to the right of the position now held by the 16th. In this attack the 15th Battalion (48h Highlanders) also took part and the 16th made a dash forward and occupied a house to the front from which machine-guns had been operating. Ground was gained at several points and the territory taken consolidated and linked up by communication trenches at both ends, so that our advanced position on the morning of May 23rd was as indicated in Figure "C." This practically wound up the fight in the "Orchard," which has become a well known spot, by reason of the valor there displayed by the good old 3rd Brigade, which in this struggle as well as at Ypres, were personally conducted by Brigadier-General Turner and his capable and ready Brigade Major, Lt.-Col. Garnet Hughes (13).

WITH THE SECOND BRIGADE.

Now let us follow the fortunes of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade in its operations against "K-5" and in doing so I know of no better plan than to quote from the diary written to my wife from the La Touquet Hospital, some time after I had come back from the realms of ether and the sting of wounds:

MAY 19TH.—“During the morning I spent the time in getting the routine business of the Battalion cleaned up; orders issued dealing with promotions, etc., and orderly room. For an office, dining-room and bed-room, I had an empty turnip bin in one end of a large shed. In the afternoon orders came to go out and inspect the trenches we were to take over, so 3 o'clock found me taking my last ride on Black Bess over a road that more resembled a mortar bed. I was accompanied by Major Ashton, Captain Day, Lt. Good and Capt. Snelgrove, representing each company. It took us the entire afternoon dodging shells from one position to another, so as to get accustomed to our territory and be able to lead our men in after dark.

We met the battalion marching in under Capt. Arthur, second in command, at Dead Man's Corner, about 7 o'clock, and there split up in platoons and proceeded to Willow Road, through the Town of Festubert, and thence over open ground to the British line, being the sandbag trench line held since October last; thence along a partly finished communication trench to our position in the forward trench, which was part of the German line and which had fallen into our hands about a month before. Silently we followed the courses of the trench we were to take over, each man placing himself beside the man he was to relieve and then, gladly enough no doubt, the relieved troops as silently filed out. Nos. 1, 2 and 3 companies were in the trenches while we had No. 4 in reserve in dugouts in the village. After getting everything settled down and ammunition up, I made a tour of the trenches to see that all was in order.

A NIGHT PATROL.

Then, as we knew there was trouble coming, two other officers and myself crept out over the parapet for a little reconnaissance. We explored the territory chiefly in front of "K-5," which by the way, was a fort in the German line constructed of concrete and sandbags and in which numerous machine guns were mounted so as to sweep the ground in every direction. Our main object was to find out where the wire entanglements and ditches were. Personally I got so close as to hear the Germans talking in a conversational tone and to see the heads of the sentries along the parapet as they stood with ready rifle peering into the darkness. For some time I lay in a shell hole while a flare went up a little distance away. By this I took a cautious peep around and as it flickered out crept back. My heart stood still when I heard a little scuffle and a gurgling sound not far away. Something told me that

death was near by at some little job of his own, and I know that my hair bristled and I held the rifle a bit tighter. I learned afterwards that the two officers who had gone out with me had got between a German sentry, and the enemy's line, and knowing that they would likely get plugged on the way back, crept up behind the sentry. What happened I need not relate, but let me advise that a jack-knife is a very useful article for one to have in his kit when scouting. The night passed without event. We were shelled quite a lot, but our losses were trivial. The morning broke clear.

READY FOR ATTACK.

MAY 20TH.—I went over the trench line again so as to check up my observations of the night before by looking through the periscope, and after drawing a plan of the situation, I went down to the village and thence to the dugout of General Currie, about a mile away, to discuss the situation and get advice as to my scheme for the capture of "K-5," and trench on both sides of same. As an attack over open ground lying between the two main lines of trenches, some days before, had proved a failure owing to the existence of a wide deep ditch, I felt that to sacrifice more men in this way would be useless and that the proper way to get at them would be from the communication trench, which would first have to be captured for almost its entire length. Accordingly that night we arranged for a move ahead. Two platoons were in the communication trench and in advance of these we placed bombers. Our artillery bombarded the enemy until 8.30 p.m. and then we broke over the sandbag cross parapet which was the dividing line between ourselves and our neighbors, and gave them a run of a hundred yards. Breaking through the side of the trench into the open, we were met with a terrific machine-gun fire and had to stop. We held the captured piece, and decided to make another move forward as soon as things were favorable. As the enemy seemed to be active we spent a sleepless night during the whole length of which we were "standing to" under a continuous shell fire. The mists of morning rolled away and peeping down upon us through the clouds of smoke, the red faced sun ushered in the next day.

A DAY OF HEAVY FIRE.

MAY 21ST.—As usual sentries were posted at short distances from each other along the trenches, while those not on duty huddled down where best they could catch a few hours' sleep with mother earth for a bed, a sandbag for a pillow, and the screaming

shells as a lullaby. I dodged and ducked my way down to the village, where in an old house we had our office, with orderly room clerk and telephone orderlies. It was a kind of half-way place between my headquarters in the front line and Brigade headquarters. The Adjutant stopped here and we kept our extra ammunition, etc., in a shed near by. It was a convenient place because if our wire got blown up between this point and the front line we could send orderlies with messages down from the front, and telephone from here to the Headquarters' Brigade. As Major Maynell, Brigade Major, was waiting for a report, I did not have to go to Headquarters, and when this was done I dropped upon an enticing pile of straw and got two good hours of sleep. I was awakened by a staff officer from Divisional Headquarters, who desired to know all about the situation, after which I went back to the trenches, and with Major Ashton and Capt. Day planned another advance that night. During the day I made two trips to Brigade Headquarters, and how I escaped the steady stream of shells that sprinkled that territory is a miracle.

We were assured that the heavy battery would late in the afternoon properly do up "K-5," so that our advance that night would be easy. Previous to eight o'clock a heavy bombardment opened and as it ceased we made another rush along the communication trench. The bombers, under Capt. Stewart and Sergt. Stevenson, did good work, as was evidenced by the torn and mutilated Germans here and there. Major Ashton was hit, but kept on. Lieuts. Knowles and Wheatley were always in the right place, and the men were impatient to get at the Boches.

Capt. Costigan, the Adjutant, was about the first seriously wounded. His Irish nature always seemed to demand that he should be first in a scrap, and he led the way over the cross parapet. Soon he got a bullet along the top of the head, just deep enough to rip up the fur and splash some of us with as good red blood as any Britisher ever carried in his veins. We did him up and sent him back to the dressing station, much against his protests, though he was getting weaker every minute. So I lost as good an adjutant as any I had known. That night I made Lieut. Duncan adjutant, of whom I shall speak later.

BATTLING IN THE TRENCHES.

We drove the huns some two hundred and twenty-five yards down the trench, and again we attempted to break over to the left on open ground towards K-5. Again the machine guns,

which did not seem to have been disturbed by the artillery, withered us up, and we consolidated the trench taken and waited for another day with the hope that the next bombardment would prove effective. As we had moved up the trench, the space made vacant was filled by the remainder of "A" Company. So we settled down for another night of vigilance, "standing to," flare lights and screaming shells. As each day passed we wondered why we were not almost wiped out, as the Germans had the range to a foot on the whole line we occupied.

During the night, accompanied by Lieut. Nichol, I made another reconnaissance, as there was some dispute between ourselves and the artillery officer as to the location of certain points, and we prepared a map with compass bearings, which was afterwards declared correct. Nichol, by the way, took the place of Lieut. Todhunter, who for some time had acted as signalling officer, and who unfortunately was killed by a shell the day before. Although but a boy, he was wonderfully proficient in this work, and his loss was deeply felt by us all. He was from Winnipeg and had a little wife and two kiddies which he left behind him when he answered the call.

Capt. Stewart, Lieut. Nichol and I attempted to make another trip close to the Boche lines, but being fired on by an outpost, had to crawl back.

"PREPARING FOR ASSAULT."

MAY 22ND.—The morning came, and with it an order to make a frontal attack on the enemy's position that night, so the day was full of business and incident. I made three trips down the road to Brigade H.Q. during the day, but to give you a list of narrow squeaks I had, would take too much time. Lieut. Nichol accompanied me most of the time, as my eyes were getting in bad shape and I needed him to read maps, etc., where the writing was fine. My eyes had not got better after being affected by the shell-burst and gas at Ypres. General Currie placed at my disposal the Brigade Bombing Company, and on my last trip I guided them up to our position. The boys had many close ones, but did not seem to mind, which gave me confidence in them for what was ahead. In the afternoon we had a meeting of the officers who were to take part in the assault and completed our plans.

The bombardment was to last from 6 to 8.30 p.m. and K-5 with its machine guns was to be obliterated by that time. Our plan was to attack the Boche lines on both sides of the communi-

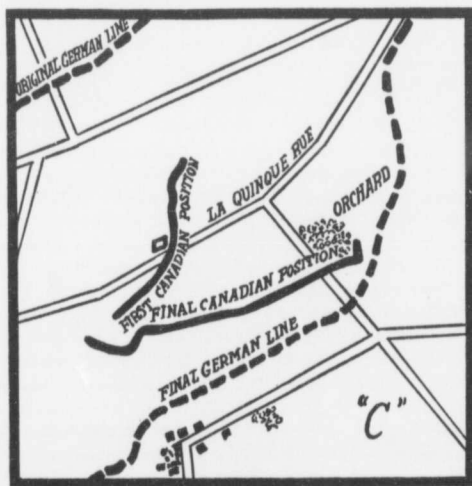
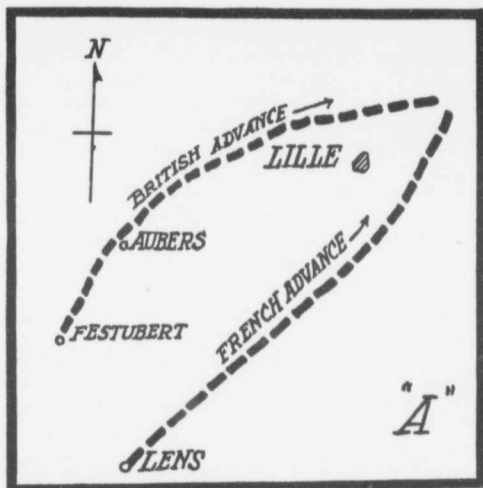
cation trench simultaneously. To this end we had places in the trench dug out so that an opening could be made quickly at the proper time, and our men break through. The bombers were divided into two groups, each one to lead an attacking party. Two platoons were in the communication trench, each of which were to break out in opposite directions. The machine guns were to follow up behind these two platoons. The remainder of "A" Company and "B" Company were to move up on the outside of the communication trench and open out in extended order at the same time that the other platoon broke through. One platoon of "A" Company was left behind to bring up shovels, sandbags, etc., as soon as the attack was made. "D" Company was to move up and occupy the trench vacated by "B" Company, as that company moved forward. "C" Company was to hold the same position and open fire on the line in front to keep the enemy engaged and believing that they were to be attacked from that quarter. "A" Company of the 5th Battalion, which was in reserve, moved up to position, so as to be ready if needed. Stretcher bearers and first aid men were told off, and ammunition parties were ready to move up when required.

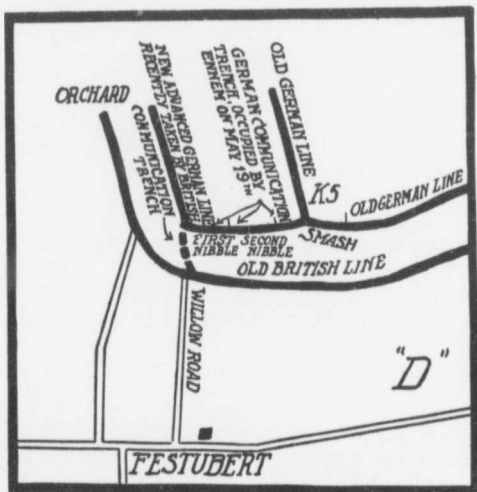
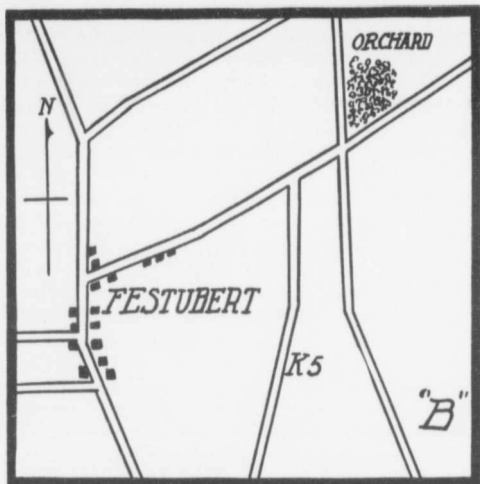
It took some trouble to arrange all these matters, but everything was ready in good time and each man knew just what he had to do. I felt sure the plan I thought of was the best one and the officers taking part thought so too. It only remained that K-5 would be reduced and success was almost assured. If K-5 were not reduced, we all knew what would happen to the party that went up against it.

AWAITING THE SIGNAL.

So we waited for 8.30 p.m. At the time appointed the men had all moved up to their positions, and then minutes later they were stretched out in extended order inside the German barbed wire and ditches, as we had planned. I was between the two attacking parties, and when all was ready passed the word each way. To give you an idea of how silently our men moved, which throws great credit upon themselves and their previous training, I may say that the enemy did not seem to realize an attack was about to be made, for they did not open upon us until we began to charge. Their artillery had kept up a steady stream of fire on the parent trench and communication trenches behind all day, and especially as it grew dark, and we lost quite a few men in that way. Capt. Arthur was in command there, and I cannot speak too highly of how he handled things.

Then came the proudest moment of my life. Those brave





fellows, with cheers that I shall never forget, dashed forward as one man. From the trenches in front came cries of defiance and bursts of flame. The rifles of the enemy barked out their death messages and their machine guns simply rained lead upon us. On the right our boys gained the trench in some places, and the bayonet work began. On the left, after the first yell and rush there came a strange silence. The machine guns from K-5 were keeping up their infernal stream. I felt our men must be creeping forward silently, but groans from the darkness in every direction filled me with fear.

THE DEADLY MACHINE GUNS.

I climbed over the communication trench and heard Major Ashton calling my name. I ran by him to where I saw the men lying by a flare light. I shouted to them to advance and follow me, and we rushed forward, to be met by a more terrific fire. I fell into a shell hole and just then German flares made everything light as day for a moment, and looking back I saw our brave boys strewn about the field.

I shouted again to advance, but no response came to me except groans and shrieks of dying men. God bless them, each and every one; they had not flinched, even though they knew that it meant certain death to go ahead when they heard those machine guns talking—those machine guns, which were to have been silenced by the artillery, but which had not been touched. I crawled back to the communication trench, where I found the faithful Bloxham (Charles, Pte., D.C.M.), waiting for me. I had left him with orders to go back and tell Capt. Arthur to take command if I did not come in, and he was just about starting.

Just then Capt. Day, with a party that had gone far out on our left so as to head off any flank attack, and, having realized the attack on K-5 had failed, came up and he was just in time to repel an attack which the Germans made down the communication trench towards us. I left Day to argue the point there, sent Pte. Sam Maxwell with a message to Capt. Snelgrove to bring up No. 4 company, and then I ran along to the right where the fight was still going on.

CAME AGAINST BAYONET.

Climbing over the trench where there seemed to be something interesting going on, I found myself on top of a Boche bayonet. I dashed the point aside with my stick and only got a slight touch on the nose which brought the crimson and riled

my temper, so I fetched Mr. Hun a whack on the cheek with my stick. What a joke! I have often laughed over it since. To think I was so angry at that Boche that I forgot to shoot him with the revolver, but whopped him with the stick instead. A 10th man just then stuck a bayonet into him and joshed his O.C. for being too mad to shoot.

We pushed along the trench and a moment later I found myself in the grip of a German officer who was vainly trying to get his men to stand up to us. Although smaller, I knew he was stronger than I, but a lucky push from behind upset us and we fell backwards and he tripped on something so that we rolled into a dugout and I happened to be on top. I got a lucky hold in the right spot and the argument was soon over.

Our boys had pushed on, and as we had then captured as much trench as we had men coming up to man, I called a halt and the work of consolidation began. Capt. Snelgrove with Lieuts. Morgan and Lewis, came along just in time to be in at the finish. With what men we had left of the attacking force and No. 4 Company we could only cover the captured trench line, so I had the company from the 5th Battalion moved up into the communication trench.

READY FOR COUNTER ATTACK.

We were ready now for any counter attack the enemy might make. Then the dull part of the work began. We must, of course, reverse the trench captured so as to have a good front against the German shells in the morning; a new piece had to be built out of sandbags connecting the communication trench with that captured; wire had to be put up; ammunition distributed; rations and water arranged for; front shelters for our reserve bomb supply built, and last but not least, the care of the wounded and the burial of the dead. Parties were told off for each of the above purposes, so that all the work would be going on at the same time.

Personally I gave a hand with the wounded, and as it would take too long to tell the many sad things that we witnessed, I will let them go to be related at another time. We assembled all the wounded in a sheltered place from the enemy's fire and there we sorted them out as best we could. Those who could walk with the aid of one or two helpers we sent at once to the dressing station, and those who had to be carried we bandaged up as best we could so as to stop flow of blood and forwarded them as fast as the stretchers returned. Daylight and bullets came along to-

gether before we had finished with the wounded, which made the work extremely difficult, but our men as usual showed that pluck and coolness which always seemed to surmount any difficulties. Our dead were still as they had fallen over the open on every side, and every attitude and expression imaginable could be found on those forms of heroes from the smile of peace to the grin of hate. And as the sun kissed their upturned faces and the morning breezes played with their hair we began another day.

BOMBARDMENT RESUMED.

MAY 23RD.—I had sent in a telephone report of the result of our work, but as a written report was required, I went down to our old house in the village, where I met Major Maynell, and prepared the report there. As soon as he left a bombardment started up the line. Lt. Duncan, adjutant, begged me to lie down for a nap, but I felt I was needed up the line, so I left poor Duncan hard at work answering memo. from H.Q. in that old house with Capt. Stewart, who had led the bombers the night before and who was to get bombs ready for the coming night, together with our staff of orderlies and signallers, many of whom were stretched out on the floor asleep. As I rounded the corner a couple of shells came over and burst behind. I said to myself that our chaps had a close call, but little did I think that those two shells went through the roof and snuffed out the lives of all but two in the place, and those two were seriously wounded. Had I lingered three minutes more I would have shared their fate—my time was not yet, but soon.

I got back in time to repel an attack the Boches were making, which was the first of three they made that day, all of which were repulsed. With Lt. Nichol and a couple of artillery officers I had another tour of the territory covered by us and spent the rest of the day dodging shells and making trips to H.Q.

PLAN ANOTHER ATTACK.

Being now in need of another Adjutant, I sent for Lieut. Graham, transport officer, to take the place of the gallant Duncan. We made our plans for another attack that night on K-5, by bombing the Boche out foot by foot along the trench, but at dark orders came to hand over to the Strathconas and London Rifles, who were to march in about ten, and our boys, although fagged out by four days and night of almost steady vigilance, hated to go and leave that job undone. Capt. Arthur led the battalion out to the reserve trenches, while I stayed behind to go over the situation with the officers who were taking it over, and

to discuss the building of a new communication trench with a couple of engineer officers from an English unit.

While engaged in this latter occupation, an incident occurred that will long live in my memory. A storm which had been coming on for some time suddenly broke upon us, just as we were crossing some ditches across which the trench would run. In a flash of lightning I saw a line of black forms creeping up, and we hustled back to the trench, where I passed the work to the London boys, who had taken over this section. There, in the pouring rain and lead, surrounded by darkness one minute, and flare light or lightning next, with roar of cannon, crash of thunder and howl of bursting shell, those pink-cheeked boys—I don't think there was one of them over twenty-three—stood up to the German charge. Quite a few were hit, but they never wavered, and it was their first real scrap. I got hold of a Lee-Enfield from a chap who did not need it again, and took a hand. The "dark objects" in front got to within about ten yards of us, when they crumpled up and ran. I shall always regard it as an honor to have fought with those fearless English boys. As the Strathconas and Londoners did not bring machine guns with them we left ours, and Sergts. Ryman and Higgins, with our gunners, stayed behind. You can realize what staying out in the rain meant to these men, who had been without rest for five days. But Ryman and Higgins and their men were as impervious to fatigue as they were regardless of danger. My good friend, Pte. Sam Maxwell, and the ever handy Bloxham were waiting for me, and we made our way through the village to the place occupied by our battalion. We found refuge in a deserted house from the pelting rain, and there, on an old mattress, with Pioneer Sergt. Clarke, whom we had picked up on the way, we lay down as close as we could crowd, for a few hours sleep.

REST UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

MAY 24TH.—Being shelled out of buildings in which we spent the night, our boys "retired for rest" behind a reserve trench line near by. Straw was carried in from stacks in the field and in the sunshine which now was a blessing we stretched out to spend the day in comfort. The officers in the afternoon took roll calls of their companies, made promotions caused by casualties, sent to hospital the slightly wounded who "stuck it" during the action, and generally got their companies in shape. Captain Arthur held orderly room, and with Lieut. Graham sent in the necessary reports. That night we detailed a working party to assist the

engineers in the front trenches. About noon I got an order to report at headquarters, and there met a lot of staff officers who discussed K-5, and why it had not been demolished, etc. They wanted me to go up over the ground with an officer from the Heavy Battery, and though Gen. Currie counselled sleep, I felt it was up to me, and so I spent the day and part of the night in the observation station and in the trenches with Capt. Smith, a very fine and interesting officer.

MAY 25TH.—In the afternoon I got an order to attend at headquarters, whither I went with Lieut. Nichol and accompanied by our old friend Bloxham as an orderly. Gen. Currie (16) had moved back with the 7th and 8th Battalions, and the 5th and 10th were left under General Seeley, O. C. Cavalry Brigade. I got orders re that night's operations, and sent them by Bloxham to Capt. Arthur, so that the arrangements would be going on, as I had to stay for some further discussion with the General. When Nichol and I started back all the roads and fields near were being searched by German shells, which made it necessary to take a longer than the usual route back. We struck a peaceful looking road leading to our lines and were proceeding along this when we got hit. Nichol was a little behind me, and on the left of the road.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE WOUNDED.

Suddenly a shell from nowhere lit at my feet and tossed me in the air. I paused for a moment over the little cloud of smoke and then fell in the hole the shell made. I heard Nichol's cry from behind, and saw him pick himself up and start running back shouting for a stretcher. I then got over the stunned feeling and felt the pain and looking down saw that my clothing was torn away and blood gushing from several places. I noticed that I was torn and battered up considerably and crawling out of the hole I started hobbling back along the road. I could not understand my left leg and left arm not doing their work. I got some distance when someone directed me by a shout to go down a little by-road towards a dressing station.

I got a little way along when I felt weak and tottering and had to stop. I looked back at a stream of red that marked my course from the shell hole in the road. I reeled and fell in the grass by the roadside, I tried to rise but could not. I felt the end was drawing near. The place seemed to stop and I felt numb instead. My mind seemed to become clearer than ever before in my whole lifetime, and things that were beyond understanding

were now without their mystery, as my memory carried me back over the years that had sped so swiftly by since first I came to grapple with the world, and before my gaze there seemed to pass in panoramic array the varied incidents of my life, the not too happy boyhood, the youthful struggle for a little learning, unaided and alone, the worries of business and political controversies, the joys and sorrows of a happy home, and then when the good and evil of my years had vanished I saw as plainly as though they were indeed beside me my loved and treasured ones—Margaret, my wife, and my dear kiddies, Ronald, Margaret and Douglas. I felt the end was near, repeated the Lord's Prayer and asked him to accept and cleanse a sinful soul. Darkness seemed lowering down. I tried to reach out and embrace my loved ones, but they were just beyond my reach. I asked God to protect and guard them for the husband and daddy that would not return—as though in answer to my prayer, angels seemed to hover 'round the little family group; I was happy in the thought that God had heard—I slept.

IN HOSPITAL.

How long I lay there I do not know. I came round on a stretcher. A shell burst nearby and a piece took the leg off one of the men above the shin. A comrade stayed with him. The other two ran with me to a house used as a dressing station. Here my wounds were plugged and I was sent by ambulance to Bethune. I woke up to find myself on the tile floor of a large room on which there were many stretchers with wounded.

A doctor was kneeling over me, and was about to begin at my wounds. I refused an anaesthetic, as I felt I had to watch things. It was marvellous how that man went over me. With pinchers and probes he removed pieces of shell. They came out easily, as they had gone in hot, and had burned little pockets for themselves. He stitched me up, pulled my dislocated left hip and shoulder into place and passed on to poor old Nichol, who chanced to be right beside me.

Nichol, as I found out afterwards, had three holes in him. One piece of shell went in at his right breast and came out back of his left hip. He had rolled into a ditch and was picked up by some French soldiers. I shall never forget how that little English M.D. patched me up. He was a marvel.

I then dictated a letter to Capt. Arthur as to further verbal orders received from Gen. Seeley, and it was so rational that when he received it, and showed it to the others, they all thought I had

not been badly damaged. As soon as my responsibilities were over, however, I began to feel the pain more, and then I got the notion that I was among Germans, and challenged the lot to mortal combat, etc., in good lusty Canadian language. The result was that they charged upon me and stabbed me in the arm with a sword (hypodermic needle), after which I wilted. I woke up to find myself floating along a country road in an ambulance, and wondered where I was bound for.

Then I remembered lying in the corner of another hospital in another town, and a nurse with a lantern was looking at me. She looked all right, too, for a German, and I told her so. I seemed to realize all about my wounds and talked with the doctor as he re-plugged a wound that had started bleeding. They said they were shifting me along by easy stages, as I was not strong enough to go straight through, and I thought they were very kind for Germans.

I got more dope, and next woke up on my way to still another hospital in another town. It was daylight. Here my wounds were dressed again, and my next trip was by train to Boulogne, where I was placed in No. 7 (English) and where I was kept till June 2, when I was shifted here. You have had letters since from Costigan and others as to how I got along, so I need not go into my sojourn here. My eleven wounds are practically all healed, with the exception of my ankle, which will unfortunately keep me out of the game for some time to come.

"TRIBUTES TO THE BRAVE."

I cannot close this diary of my humble share in this great war and my observations here and there without mentioning for my own future reading a few of those with whom I have come in contact. I have related from time to time stories of the cool behavior of Capt. Arthur, the weird escapes of Lieut. Critchley, and the escapades of that irrepressible Capt. Costigan.

Shall I ever forget the gallantry of Major Ashton, when he shook my hand and said good-bye and then went out to lead the left, where he fell with five bullets in him, and lying there urged on his men, regardless of his pain.

And what about Capt. Day, who climbed up on the parapet, and ran along in a shower of lead, shooting at Boche heads with his revolver and drowning the other noises of battle with his strange and varied expressions.

The grand Lieut. Reeve has told the last amusing story: like the brave men he was, he led the extreme left of the line, and fell

surrounded by his brave men who loved him and followed him to death.

Lieut. Thompson, in his quiet, unassuming way, led his platoon out to return no more. No better little soldier graced the 10th.

Lieut. Wheatley got shot through the head, and though he could not speak aloud, pointed forward to his men while his face turned from white to red with his blood.

Lieut. Finn got nearer to K-5 than the rest on the left. He was shot in four places, and lay on the field the next day in the hot sun and had his side ripped open by shrapnel. He was discovered that night and carried in.

Lieut. Lewis and Lieut. Morgan stood up to the Boche in two counter-attacks, and each fell with a bullet through the head. Canada could not boast of two men more brave than these.

Capt. Fairbrother was twice buried under sandbags, and had to be dug out, but stuck to his post, and was finally hurt so bad by a shell that he had to be carried out.

Capt. Snelgrove saw his men killed on each side and faced the music alone until he was blown out of the trench by an explosive shell and damaged seriously. He was quite a time in hospital before he came around.

Lieut. Bingham was with Day, when the first German attack down the communication trench was repulsed, and handled himself well. As all the officers of No. 1 Company had been wiped out, I gave him command of it, and he proved his ability to handle a company of men under very trying circumstances.

Lieut. Rickard held the most dangerous part of the line after the charge, while we were there, and he and his stability was a great source of satisfaction to me as I knew things were safe with Rickard.

Lieut. Critchley, with "C" Company, the Guards, and Lieuts. Good, Simpson and Romeril held the most dangerous portion of the old trench from the 19th to 23rd inclusive, and saw their men killed around them by as hot a shell fire as I have seen since Ypres.

And of Geggie (17), who had taken the place of Glidden (18), I cannot say too much, for never was a commanding officer so fortunate in having on hand such an efficient medical staff as that over which he and Sergt. Shultz (19) presided. The poor broken comrades were gathered from the field whither they were strewn by the blasts of war and always tenderly patched up and swiftly sent along.

With such gallant officers as those I have mentioned, is it any

wonder that the dear old 10th Canadians won for itself a name that shall go down in history? True, there are few of the old lot, who were the first to stem the tide of the advancing Prussians at Ypres, left. Those that are gone passed out in the glory of gallant deeds never to be forgotten. Those who follow I know shall try to emulate that past, the heroism of which may be equalled but never excelled. My sadness is that I may never again be a member of that corps which I had the honor to command during such strenuous periods as Ypres and Festubert. I am sorry that time will not permit me now to recount the many brave exploits of the N.C.O.'s and men who composed the "Western Canada Regiment." I shall from time to time jot down in my diary, however, tales of their doings that in after years I may read and remember and have pass through my veins that thrill of pride which fills me now at having been a comrade of each such man.

A SHATTERED BATTALION.

The 10th Battalion, after being relieved on the night of the 23rd, were not again in action except as a working party during the fight, and indeed there were not enough of them left to be of value as a unit. We went into the scrap on the 19th, with 870 men and our losses were heavy each day and on the night of the smash we lost fourteen officers and 365 men in less than a half hour. The relieving troops took up the task where we had left it and accomplished that which we had left undone by reason of our five days' incessant fighting and our depleted ranks. We had captured first 160 yards, then 225 yards, and finally 425 yards, and thereby made it possible to reach the coveted position, "K-5." We rejoice in the success of our comrades and the glory which is theirs.

During the fighting above described the 8th Battalion (Little Black Devils), under Lt.-Col. Lipsett (20), occupied the trench-line to our left and though they were not in attack or called upon to resist one, their losses were heavy by reason of the furious bombardment which on many occasions levelled their trenches. They would crawl out from under the debris, care for their wounded, and at night rebuild the line. How they stuck it is one of the miracles of the war. They were relieved by the King Edward Horse.

ANOTHER ATTACK.

On the night of May 23rd, Lt.-Col. Tuxford (21), O. C. 5th Battalion (Western Cavalry), received orders to move up on

K-5, but, profiting by our experience (11), did not move out over the open from the communication trench. Instead, he adopted the plan which the writer and his officers had considered and recommended earlier in the battle. At 2.45 a.m. (May 24), the attack was made. Lieut. Tozer with his bombers proceeded up along the communication trench toward the parent German line and succeeded in almost reaching the fort, but was held up by an impossible machine-gun fire. Lieut. Murdie, with about fifty men and with bridge-ladders, supplied by Capt. Harboard, stole out in the darkness to the left of the fort and placed these hurriedly constructed contraptions across a deep moat which had been dug, not very far away from the enemy trenches. Over these bridges Major Edgar (22), lead about 500 men to the attack and though the guns from the fort literally sprinkled the intervening space with lead, these gallant men, lead by the mighty Edgar, dashed right through the wire entanglements and engaging the Huns with their bayonets, rifle butts and fists, captured about 200 yards of trench. What Germans were left retired into "K-5," now surrounded by Canadian troops, and connected by a well-constructed communication trench, with their third line in the rear, some two hundred yards away. In this attack one company of the 7th Battalion (1st British Columbia) took part under Major Edgar's command.

The day of the 24th (Victoria Day) was spent by the attacking force in holding on and digging in." Major Edgar having received no less than eighteen wounds, and Lt.-Col. Tuxford being ill, Major Odlum, O.C. of the 7th Battalion (1st British Columbia) took command of both units.

It was after a conference at our Brigade Headquarters on the morning of this day with British Artillery Officers (III) that accompanied by Capt. Smith (Observing Officer of the 9.2 Battery), I made my way back again to the forward line, after having spent some time at the Observation Station, looking through the powerful glasses and range-finders, that would show distinctly blades of grass waving in the breeze a mile or so away. We proceeded to the point about 125 yards from K-5, where we had installed our telephone the day before, and Capt. Smith did not hesitate to declare that we were right and that K-5 had not been reduced. He connected up and his battery by a few well placed shells put the kybosh on the fort and paved the way for the night attack.

THE THIRD BATTALION IN IT.

Night came on and the 3rd Battalion under Lt.-Col. Rennie (23) now celebrated the 24th by a brilliant attack on a position

known as "The Well." The stream of machine-gun fire and the flow of bombs prevented these gallant warriors from being able to retain the piece of trench they gained in the first dash and their casualties were very heavy. The valour displayed deserved a better end. In this vicinity the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions also did good work and I am sorry that owing to my not being near the 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade, I am unable to write fully of the deeds of these brave men. Other writers, who are seized of the facts, I am sure will do them justice in due time.

THE 5TH BATTALION'S ATTACK.

On the night of the 24th the 5th Battalion troops were reinforced by a company of the 7th Battalion (1st British Columbia) and a squadron of the Strathcona's Horse and early in the morning of the 25th a brilliant attack was driven home on the redoubtable K-5, which this time proved successful. The bombers first went into the assault, lead by Capt. J. A. Critchley (24) of the Strathcona's and the men of the three regiments vied with each other in trying to win for their respective units distinction which would o'ertop all previous records for gallantry. The resistless tide rolled in on the battered fortress and found there the remnants of many dead and the broken pieces of a dozen or so machine-guns. K-5, which had proven such a stubborn opponent to the British advance, was now no more and the second line of German trench between Givenchy and the "Orchard" was in our hands. Why we did not take advantage of this break and sweep on to the Aubers Ridge remains a mystery, unless my deductions in the beginning of this Chapter, as to the lack of shells, may supply the reason.

The 26th and 27th days of May were spent in consolidation of the territory gained; the enemy ceased in his artillery activity, the Canadians gradually withdrew from the scene of their herculean achievements and deeds of valour, while their places were taken by fresh troops. One more bar was added to the Canadian medal, and "Festubert" became another memory in the thoughts of men.

Once more the 1st Canadian Division needed more men to take the place of those who had fallen in the path of duty. Once more they turn their eyes across the sea for the reinforcements necessary to fill the gaps—and not in vain. For over in Canada there was working still the man of the square jaw and the determined brow—Canada's foremost soldier who long before the clouds of war gathered in Europe had scented the danger, warned

his country, and in some small way prepared to meet the avalanche when it came. The son to whom Canada in her unpreparedness had turned in her hour of need and who had not failed her. The Sam Hughes who had fought in South Africa as a plain Canadian without rank because he loved to fight for his Empire. The Colonel Sam Hughes who had tried to show Canada her duty in those old opposition days. The Honorable Sam Hughes who, when the party he worked for so faithfully came into power, was chosen over all comers as Minister of Militia. The General Sam Hughes who built the City of Valcartier and sent over the ocean in the largest fleet of the largest ships that ever crossed the sea, a complete Division of trained men to begin the fight for Canada in the war of the world, in so short a time that the greatest men of Europe paused to wonder and to praise. The Sir Sam Hughes who in shirt sleeves still worked on, heedless of the "stay-at-home" critics that buzz about like stink flies from the dungpile of political sedition around the patient horse with its heavy load. He was there to supply the men—and the best men—and to make good the promise of his renowned Chieftain, Sir Robert Borden, given to the Canadian soldier and the Empire—that Canada would send a half million of the best fighting stuff in the world to do battle for the God we love, the King we honor, the Flag of our Fathers, and the mightiest Empire ever known to man.

NOTES

(1) Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria was in charge of this part of the line and in command of the Bavarian troops—the most dreaded of the Hun soldiers by the women of Belgium and France, because of the atrocities by them committed at the beginning of the war.

(2) "Neuve Chapelle" taught us that we must have greater co-operation among the higher commands; Festubert told us that infantry must have proper artillery support to be successful; and Loos convinced the Empire that if we would win we must have the men—hence Conscription.

(3) The soldier cannot "speak out" as it is contrary to regulations. The London Times and other British papers did. They fought our fight at home.

(4) The only sensible and fair way to raise men from a free and democratic country. Let each man do his own fighting.

(5) Taken from footnote on page 108, Sir Max Aitken's "Canada in Flanders":

"The detailed plan of the engagement was as follows: Sir Herbert Plumer with the 2nd Army was to protect Ypres, while the 3rd Corps held Armentieres. The 1st Army under Sir Douglas Haig, was to carry the entrenchments and redoubts on the right of the Crown Prince Rupprecht's Army. Sir John French had arranged for the 4th Corps to attack the German position at Rouges-Bancs, to the northwest of Fromelles. The 1st Corps and the Indian Corps were first to occupy the plain between Neuve Chapelle and Givenchy, and afterwards take the Aubers Ridge."

(6) Gen. J. E. B. Seeley, O. C. Canadian Cavalry Brigade. I first met Seeley in the trenches in the dark and mud and rain. I had not held a very high opinion of him because of the Ulster affair. He came in to look over the trench line before leading in his men. We had a dispute over the location of certain points. He wanted to see "every foot" of the territory we had taken, so I guided him up to within sixty yards of the main German line, where there was a mixed heap of mangled dead, the result of the charge of the night before and a counter-attack that night and with bombs on the following day. The Huns ran down along this trench and hurled bombs now and then, so we only left one or two men there as sentries. I thought when the flares went up and he saw this ghastly mess he would wilt. The flares did go up, he looked around and saw that he was standing among pieces of men, and said, "my word," and then went on arguing with me. I liked him after that. He may not be much of a politician, but he is a soldier, every inch, and as free of fear as a lion. The last order I received in France was from Seeley, just a few minutes before I was blown up.

(7) Victoria the Good.

(8) Sir Max Aitken, K.C.B., M.P. (England). One of the most noted of present day Canadians. Born in Newcastle, New Brunswick, he forged ahead in the field of finance until his name has become Empire wide. As we would say on the Miramichi, he is a "good head." He is now Eye-Witness to the Canadian forces.

(9) Now Brig-Gen. Leckie. Recently lost his leg in battle, but is recovering.

(10) Now Brig-Gen. Meighen.

(11) Now Lieut.-Col. Leckie, O.C. 16th Canadian Scottish brother of Gen. Leckie.

(12) The 16th (Canadian Scottish) was composed of Seaforth from Vancouver, Gordons from Victoria, Camerons from Winnipeg, and Argyll and Sutherlands from Hamilton.

(13) Gen. Vic. Turner, V.C., D.S.O., C.B., now major-general in command of 2nd Canadian Division. Lieut. Col. Garnet Hughes is now Brigadier-General in command of a brigade of the 2nd Division. He is a son of Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., M.P., Canada's War Minister.

(14) The two officers who accompanied me were Capt. Stewart and Lieut. Knowles.

(15) While at Valcartier in camp I woke up at 12 o'clock midnight on three successive nights, and believing I was hit in the crown of the head, put my hand up and upon withdrawing it thought it was covered with blood, which ran through my fingers and also down my sleeve. I was superstitious and always expected I would be killed by being shot in the head. On the day in question, I had left my Adjutant and friend Costigan at the end of the communication trench, to send up men as needed. He would not stay there and just as I was about to spring over the parapet to lead the attack, he brushed past me, catching me by the shoulder and pulling me back saying, 'I'll go, Major, you have a wife and kids. He leaped upon the parapet in my place and got a bullet in the crown of the head, falling back into my arms. I put my hand to his head and the blood ran through my fingers and down my sleeve.

(I) To be filled in after the war.

(16) Now Major General Currie, O. C. 1st Canadian Division.

(17) Capt. Conrad G. Geggie, of Quebec, P.Q.

(18) Capt. Glidden, M. O. of the 10th, who died at Bailleul from wounds received at Ypres.

(19) Sergt. Shultz, D.C.M., mentioned in my Ypres chapter.

(20) Now Brigadier-General Lipsett.

(21) Now Brigadier-General Tuxford.

(II) To be filled in after the war.

(22) Now Lt.-Col. Edgar, O. C. Saskatchewan Division.

(III) To be filled in after the war.

(23) Now Brigadier-General Rennie.

(24) Capt. Critchley of Calgary. His father was Machine Gun Officer of the Strathcona's, though 66 years of age; a brother served in the Strathcona's as a Lieutenant and Capt. Critchley of the 10th was another brother.

THE BATTLE OF FESTUBERT

*If we the Aubers Ridge could wrench
From the Hun and there entrench
We'd have Lille, or I'm a wench;
Thought French.*

*If we were advanced but half a league,
We'd make the sons of beggars beg;
A salient would their vitals plague;
Quoth Haig.*

*We'll start at night and stop at dawn,
We'll fight them fair and fight them "con,"
We'll give them a run while the season's on;
Said Alderson.*

*All those shacks, if I'm a learner,
Hide the guns that make the inferno
We should take the lot and burn 'er;
Counselled Turner.*

*O'er the flat the "Tenth" could hurry,
While the "Eighth" would start a flurry,
If it works—then I should worry—
Reasoned Currie.*

*Scots from Canada wha hae
Reasons ripe to fight today
To the Orchard go with Rae
Ordered Leckie.*

*Gurkhas come along with me,
Give them Hell and we shall see
If the Hun will fight or flee,
Shouted Guthrie.*

