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Wounded No. 5. In Action.

By Sergeant Alexander McClintock D. C. M., 87th Overseas Batt.,

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Sergeant McClintock, an American boy of Lezington Ky., has seen service in France, was decorated for bravery, wounded and invalided home. He is telling his story, a thrilling one, and this is the fifth article of the series. In the preceding ones he described how he reached the front, fighting in Relaium and then the great preparations for the Somme battle. In this installment he tells of conditions and describes first hand the fighting in that greatest of all

OUR high command apparently meant to make a sure thing of the general assault upon the Reging trench, in which we were to participate. Three times the order to "go over the top" was countermanded. The assault was first planned for Oct. 19. Then the date was changed to the 20th. Finally, at 12:10 noon of Oct. 21, we went. It was the first general assault



It Seemed Almost Certain Death to Start Over In Daylight.

a highly nervous state. I'll admit

It seemed almost certain death to start over in broad daylight, yet, as it turned out, the crossing of No Man's Land was accomplished rather more easily than in our night raids. Our battalion was on the extreme right of the line, and that added materially to our difficulties, first by compelling us to advance through mud so deep that some of our men sank to their hips in it and, second, by giving us the hottest

little spot in France to hold later. I was in charge of the second "wave." or assault line. This is called the "mopping up" wave, because the business of the men composing it is thoroughly to bomb out a position crossed by the first wave, to capture or kill all of the enemy remaining and to put the trench in a condition to be defended against a counterattack by reversing the fire steps and throwing nication which might cost serious

Our artillery bad given the Germans such a battering and the curtain fire which our guns dropped just thirty to forty yards ahead of us was so powerful that we lost comparatively few men going over-only those who were knocked down by shells which the Germans landed among us through our barrage. They never caught us with their machine gun sweeping until we neared their trenches. Then a good many of our men began to drop, but we were in their front trench before they could cut us up anywhere near completely. Going over I was struck by shell fragments on the hand and leg, but the wounds were not severe enough to stop me. In fact, I did not know that I limb been wounded until I felt blood running into my shoe but saw that it was unife shallow and that no artery of importance had been damaged So I went on.

I had the familiar feeling of nervous ness and physical shrinking and muses

duces a serious itapression.

After I had been hit I remember feeling relieved that I hadn't been hurt enough to keep me from going on with the men. I'm not trying to make myself out a hero. I'm just trying to tell you how an ordinary man's mind works under the stress of fighting and the danger of sudden death. There are some queer things in the psycholozy of battle. For instance, when we had got into the German trench and were holding it against the most vigorous counterattacks the thought which was persistently uppermost in my mind was that I had lost the address of a girl in Loudon along with some papers which I had thrown away just before we started over and which should certainly never be able to find

Hold Regina Trench at Last.

again.

The Regina trench had been taken and lost three times by the British. We took it that day and held it. We went into action with 1,500 men of all ranks and came out with 600.

I have said that because we were on the extreme right of the line we had the hottest little spot in France to hold for awhile. You see, we had to institute a double defensive, as we had the Germans on our front and on our flank, the whole length of the trench to the right of us being still held by the Germans. There we had to form a "block," massing our bombers behind a barricade which was only fifteen yards from the barricade behind which the Germans were fighting. we had taken part in, and we were in Our flank and the German flank were In contact as fiery as that of two live wire ends. And meanwhile the Fritzes tried to rush us on our front with nine separate counterattacks. Only one of them got up close to us, and we went out and stopped that with the bayonet. Behind our block barricade there was the nearest approach to an actual fighting hell that I had seen.

And yet a man who was in the midst of it from beginning to end came out without a scratch. He was a tall chap named Hunter. For twenty-four hours, without interruption, he threw German "eggshell" bombs from a position at the center of our barricade. He never stopped except to light a cigarette or yell for some one to bring him more bombs from Fritz's captured storehouse. He projected a regular curtain of fire of his own. I've no doubt the Germans reported he was a couple of platoons, working in alternate reliefs. He was awarded the D. C. M. for his services in that fight, and, though, as I said, he was unwounded, half the men around him were killed, and his nerves finished in such condition that he had to be sent back to England.

The Big Blunder and What It Cost. One of the great tragedies of the war resulted from a bit of carelessness when a couple of days later the effort was made to extend our grip beyond the spot which we took in that first fight. Plans had been made for the Forty-fourth battalion of the Tenth Canadian brigade to take by assault the trench section extending to the right from the point where we had established the "block" on our flank. The hour for the attack had been fixed. Then headquarters sent out a countermanding order. Something wasn't

quite ready. The orders were sent by runners, as all confidential orders must be. Telephones are of no avail any more, as both our people and the Germans have an apparatus which needs only to be attached to a metal spike in the ground "pick up" every telephone message within a radius of three miles. When telephones are used for anything important messages are sent in code. But for any vitally important commulosses, if misunderstood, old style runners are used, just as they were in the days when the field telephone was unheard of. It is the rule to dispatch two or three runners by different routes so that one at least will be certain to arrive. In the case of the countermanding of the order for the Fourty-fourth battalion to assault the German position on our flank some officer at head uarters thought that one messenger the lieutenant colonel commanding the Forty-fourth would be sufficient. The messenger was killed by a chance shot, and his message was undelivered. The Forty-fourth, in ignorance of the change of plan, "went over." There was no barrage fire to protect them. and their valiant effort was simply a

We had gone into

ber had a good many casuattles en roste. They found us as comfortable as bugs in a rug except for the infernal and continuous bombing at our flank barricade. The Germans had concluded that it was useless to try to drive us out. About one-fourth of the

600 of us who were still on their feet were holding the sentry posts, and the remainder of the 600 were having banquets in the German dugouts, which were stocked up like delicatessen shops with sausages, fine canned foods, champagne and beer. If we had only had a few ladies with us we could have had a real party.

I got so happily interested in the spread in our particular dugout that I forgot about my wound until some one reminded me that orders required me to hunt up a dressing station and get an anti-tetanus injection. The Tommies like to take a German trench, because if the Fritzes have to move quickly, as they usually do, we always find sausage, beer and champagne, a welcome change from bully beef. could never learn to like their bread.

After this fight I was sent, with other slightly wounded men, for a week's rest at the casualty station at Contay. I rejoined my battalion at the end of the week. From Oct, 21 to Nov. 18 we were in and out of the front trenches several times for duty tours of forty-eight hours each, but were in no important action. At 6:10 the morning of Nov. 18, a bitter cold day, we "went over" to take the Desire and also the Desire support trenches. These were the names given these trenches. We started from the left of our old position, and our advance was between Thiepval and Pozieres, opposite Grandecourt.

There was the usual artiflery preparation and careful organization for the attack. I was again in charge of the "mopping up" wave, numbering 200 men and consisting mostly of bombers. It may seem strange to you that a noncommissioned officer should have so important an assignment, but sometimes in this war privates have been in charge of companies numbering 250 men, and I know of a case where a lance corporal was temporarily in command of an entire battalion. It happened on this day that, while I was in charge of the second wave, I did not go over with them. At the last moment I was given a special duty by Major John Lewis, formerly managing editor of the Montreal Star and one of the bravest soldiers I ever knew, as well as the best beloved man in our battalion.

The Troublesome Machine Gun.

"McClintock," said he, "I don't wish to send you to any special hazard, and, so-far as that goes, we're all going to get more or less of a dusting, but I want to put that machine gun which has been giving us so much trouble out of action."

I knew very well the machine gun he meant. It was in a concrete emplacement, walled and roofed, and the devils in charge of it seemed to be descendants of William Tell and the prophet Isaiah. They always knew what was coming and had their gun accurately trained on it before it came. "If you are willing," said Major Lewis, "I wish you to select twentyfive from the company and go after that gun the minute the order comes to advance. Use your own judgment about the men and the plan for taking the gun position. Will you go?"

"I sure will," I answered. "I'll go and pick out the men right away. think we can make those fellows shut up shop over there. "Good boy!" he said. "You'll try, all

I started away. He called me back. "This is going to be a bit hot, Mc-Clintock," he said, taking my hand, "I wish you luck, old fellow-you and the rest of them." In the trenches they always wish you the best of luck when they hand you a particularly tough job.

I thanked him and wished him the same. I never saw him again. He was killed in action within two hours



after our conversation. Both he and my pal Macfarlane were shot down dead that morning.

When they called for volunteers to go with me in discharge of Major Lewis' order the entire company responded picked out twenty-five men, twelve bayonet men and thirteen bombers. They agreed to my plan, which was to get within twenty-tive yards of the gun emplacement before attacking, to and a half minutes. The battalion was place no dependence on rifle fire, but to bomb them out and take the posiwere court martialed as a result of tion with the bayonet. We followed that plan and took the emplacement the German quicker than we had expected to do, We had gone into the German quicker than we had expected to do, the lates in detail how England cares for the trenches at a little after soon on Sat- but there were only two of us left there is a great deal in luck. They wounded. How the king and queen came urday. On Sunday night at about 10 when we got there-Private Godsall, couldn't have traveled more than fifty to the bed of an American boy and deco'clock we were relieved. The relief No. 177.063, and myself. All the rest | yards from the shell hade when the orated him in a London hospital for galforce had to come in overland, and of the twenty-five were dead or down, shrick of a high explosive Seemed to lantry. Interesting, intimate and amus-The emplacement was beld by cleven

When we saw the gun had been silenced and the crew disabled Godsall and I worked round to the right about ten yards from the shell hole where we had sheltered ourselves while throwing bombs into the emplacement and scaled the German parapet. rushed the gun position. The officer who had been in charge was standing with his back to us, firing with his revolver down the trench at our men who were coming over at another point. I reached him before Godsall and bayoneted him. The other Ger man who had survived our bombing threw up his hands and mouthed the Teutonic slogan of surrender-"Mercy kamerad!" My bayonet had broken off in the encounter with the German officer, so I picked up a German rifle with a bayonet fixed, and Godsall and I worked on down the trench.

The German who had surrendered stood with his hands held high above his head, waiting for us to tell him what to do. He never took his eyes off of us even to look at his officer, lying at his feet. As we moved down



I Tumbled In on Top of the Four.

the trench he followed us, still holding his hands up and repeating, "Mercy, kamerad!" At the next trench angle Make 'em carry you to Pozieres. It's we took five more prisoners, and as only five miles, and you'll make it all Godsall had been slightly wounded in right. I've got this place loaded up the arm I turned the captives over to full, no stretcher bearers, no assistants, him and ordered him to take them to the rear. Just then the men of our second wave came over the parapet like a lot of hurdlers. In five minutes | week just keep right on going now." we had taken the rest of the Germans in the trench section prisoners, had reversed the fire steps and had turned their own machine gun against those. of their retreating companies that we could catch sight of.

As we could do nothing more here, saying. I gave orders to advance and re-enacross a field furrowed with shell holes and spotted with bursting shells. Not a man hesitated. We were winning. That was all we knew or cared to know. We wanted to make it a certainty for our fellows who had gone ahead. As we were proceeding toward the German reserve trench I saw four of our men, apparently unwounded, lying in a shell hole. I stopped to ask them what they were doing there. As spoke I held my German rifle and bayonet at the position of "guard," the tip of the bayonet advanced, about shoulder high. I didn't get their answer, for before they could reply I felt a sensation as if some one had thrown a lump of hard clay and struck me on the hip, and forthwith I tumbled in on top of the four, almost plunging my bayonet into one of them, a private named Williams.

McClintock Badly Wounded.

"Well, now you know what's the matter with us." said Williams. "We didn't fall in, but we crawled in."

They had all been slightly wounded had twenty-two pieces of shrapnel and some shell fragments imbedded in my left leg between the hip and the knee. I followed the usual custom of the soldier who has "got it." The first thing I did was to light a "fag" (cigarette), and the next thing was to investigate and determine if I was in dauger of bleeding to death. There wasn't much doubt about that. terial blood was spurting from two of the wounds, which were revealed when the other men in the hole helped me to cut off my breeches. With their aid I managed to stop the bemorrhage by improvising tourniquets with rags and bayonets. One I placed as high up as possible on the thigh and the other just below the knee. Then we all smoked another "fag" and lay-there i'stening to the big shells going over and the shrapnel bursting near us. It was cuite a concert too. We discussed what we ought to do, and finally I

"Here, you fellows can walk, and I can't. Furthermore, you're not able to carry me because you've got about all any of you can do to navigate alone. It doesn't look as if it's going to be any better here very soon. You all proceed to the rear, and if you can get some one to come after me I'll be obliged to you."

cause it was good advice, and, besides. it was orders. I was their superior officer. And what happened right No. 6 .- Decorated For Bravery; Home after that confirmed me forever in my come right down out of the sky into

my ears, and the detonation which in stantly followed shook the slanting I sides of the shell hole until dirt in little dusty rivulets came trickling down upon me. Wounded as I was, I dragged myself up to the edge of the hole There was no trace anywhere of the four men who had just left me. They have never been heard of since. Their bodies were never found. The big shell must have fallen right among them and simply blown them to bits.

It was about a quarter to 7 in the morning when I was hit. I lay in the shell hole until 2 in the afternoon, suffering more from thirst and cold and hunger than from pain. I only hoped the Germans wouldn't drive our men back over me. At 2 o'clock a batch of sixty prisoners came along under escort. They were being taken to the rear under fire. The artillery bombardment was still practically undiminished. I asked for four of the prisoners and made one of them get out his rubber ground sheet, carried around his waist. They responded willingly and seemed most ready to help me. I had a revolver (empty) and some bombs in my pockets, but I had no need to threaten them. They hall dragged me toward the rear.

Carried to the Rear.

It was a trip which was not without incident. Every now and then we would hear the shrick of an approaching "coal box," and then my prisoner stretcher bearers and I would tumble in one indiscriminate group into the nearest shell hole. If we did that once we did it a half dozen times. After each dive the four would patiently reorganize and arrange the improvised stretcher again, and we would proceed. Following every tumble, however, I would have to tighten my tourniquets, and, despite all I could do, the hemorrhage from my wound continued to flow so profusely that I was beginning to feel very dizzy and weak. On the way in I sighted our regimental dressing station and signed to my four bearers to carry me toward it. I couldn't talk German. The station was in an old German dugout. Major Gilday was at the door. He laughed when he saw me with my own special ambulance "Well, what do you want?" he asked.

"Most of all," I said, "I think I want a drink of rum."

He produced it for me instantly. "Now," said he, "my advice to you is to keep on traveling. You've got a fine special detail there to look after you. no adequate supply of bandages and medicines and a lot of very bad cases, If you want to get out of here in a

As we continued toward the rear we were the targets for a number of humorous remarks from men coming up to go into the fight.

"Give my regards to Blighty, you lucky beggar," was the most frequent "Bli' me," said one cockney Tommy,

force the front line. Our way led "there goes one o' th' Canadians with an escort from the kaiser." Another man stopped and asked

about my wound. "Good work," he said. "I'd like to have a nice clean one like that my-

I noticed one of the prisoners grinning at some remark and asked him if he understood English. He hadn't spoken to me, though he had shown the

greatest readiness to help me. "Certainly I understand English," be replied, speaking the language perfectly. "I used to be a waiter at the Knickerbocker hotel in New York." That sounded like a voice from home, and I wanted to hug him. I didn't. However, I can say for him he must have been a good waiter. He gave me good service.

Of the last stages of my trip to Pozieres I cannot tell anything, for I arrived unconscious from loss of blood The last I remember was that the former waiter, evidently seeing that I was going out, asked me to direct him how to reach the field hospital station at Pozieres and whom to ask for when he got there. I came back to consciousness in a clean hospital cot the next morning.

I realized as I lay on that cot I was out of the modern hell for a time, and my mind drifted back over the days just passed. Wounded men, grim reminders, were all about me, many of them worse off than I was. I had seen all kinds of bravery-British officers climbing calmly over the top with a monocle in their eyes and a cane in their bands into almost certain death, like a man getting into a tub of water where he knew he would get wet. "Come on; let's go!" they would

drawl. My respects to them. And also to the enemy. The German officers fight to the last. Few surrender. My hat off to them. And the dead brave Major Lewis and poor Macfarlane, my close comrades. And only the other day I read Lance Corporal Glass, the man I carried in after our first bombing raid in Belgium, had been killed in action in France. I saw it in a Montreal paper.

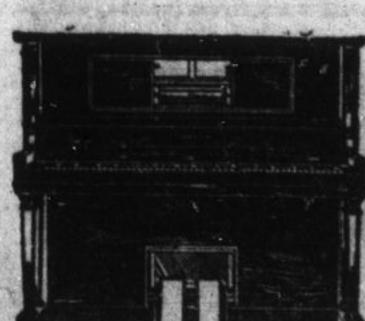
They vaccinated me for everything while with the army-everything except against being shot. If a man could invent an autitoxin for thatwell, he would be a hero.

The sixth article of this remarkable personal narrative will appear soon.

Tommise Trying to fight for Uncle date.

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