III--Tragic Battles on the British Front

BY PHILIP GIBBS

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our generals and their staffs had to guns. The men wore their 'hairies."

One of Our Worst Battles. ward to the south and east of the city big battle. The 47th Division was A SPRING TONIC GREATLY

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ly fighting, but buoyed up by the be- fore; the assault our men were told the London boys, not to be outdone front. lief that they would smash a way that they had only weak forces by this music, went over the top playthrough and inflict a bloody defeat. against them, so that they would have ing mouth-organs to the music-hall victory. Without that supreme con- be delivered by our First Army, com- through the German lines and into ing close behind the moving wall of led to no great issue. viction in success they could never manded at that time by Sir Douglas the enemy's village of Loos, where high explosives flung by our guns in professional army in the world, and surging tide of men and horses and learn by many bitter lessons, and our or goat skin coats, to which the snow men had to suffer while they were clung, and they had white snow

British troops were called upon to at- around Lens were torn and mangled the enemy. Some parties of the found that if a battle were fought I saw it that morning with roofs still the Scarpe, and day after day I saw of prisoners. But after that we tempt the impossible and to make a into fragments of twisted steel. The Scots with Lendoners among them against some isolated village, or on its houses and unbroken walls and our walking wounded coming back had the worst of luck with the weasacrifice of life on account of over- town of Bethune on our side of the went on to the mining village of St. wood, or section of trenches, the en- a white chateau only a little scarred over those fields, streams of those ther. As soon as the battles bewhelming hazards. Criticism, how- lines was the assembly place of our Auguste on the outskirts of Loos, but emy would quickly signal to all his by shell fire. A few hours later it tired, brave men whother their pain gan beyond Ypres the rains began, ever, is easy now. We were an army men, and through its old Grand Place none of that gallant band ever came hatteries for miles around, and from was wiped off the map, and that was with most stoic endurance, so that and hardly ceased until the end of wreaths upon their steel hats. They left and on the right. On the left learned the British armies suffered rush of splendid bodies of men rid- talk, outside in the sunlight, waiting filled with water so that our men belonged to the infantry, artillery the 1st Division had prepared to as- devastating losses. They attacked ing at the gallop in a snow storm their turn to enter. Some of the were stuck and drowned in bogs and our worst was that of Loos, which assault next day at dawn. They lies and then was swirled back to and again they captured Delville the valleys below the hill was a mass and slept there. Others came hob- houses . ¿Our losses were appalling began on September 25th, 1915. It were Scots of the Black Watch among their own lines so that numbers of Wood and High Wood and had to re- of cavalry men standing by their bling with each arm around the neck in men and guns and tanks. But in was fought in conjunction with the English troops of the 1st Divi- men were gassed and fell choking and treat from the ground they had won horses, and stamping to keep them- of the stretcher-bearers or stumbled spite of these losses our men fought French on our right who had decided sion and the 15th Division was com- gasping for breath. German pris- because they were slashed and man- selves warm. While I was there a forward, gropingly. It was the on with grim, desperate valor, capturto assault the Vimy Ridge above Ar- posed entirely of Scottish Territorials, oners told us that day that our gas gled under concentrated gun fire, German aeroplane flew low above whimper of those blind boys and the ing ridge after ridge and destroying

like most of the customs of our grandparents, is based upon be ours. sound common sense and good medical practice. No matter on the British battle front. The aspanies, but a handful of nien, had lost how mild the winter it is a trying time, even in the most fav- saulting divisions, now on Hill 70, all their officers, and were led back ored climates, for those who are not in rugged physical health. came under heavy German counter by sergeants or corporals. I stood Many men, women and children go through the winter on re- attacks by fresh divisions of the en- beside their Brigadier - General serve strength they have stored up during the sunny, summer in numbers after their hard fighting. "Bravo, Munsters! Bravo, Conmonths, and grow increasingly pale as the spring days ap- They looked back in vain for the sup- naughts! You did darn well, Dubproach. A tonic for the blood and nerves at this time will do porting troops, but no battalions lins!" and he had tears in his eyes as much for such people, by putting color in the cheeks and ban- came to their relief. Two Divisions these poor, tired, boys of his pulled ishing that tired feeling that worries thousands at this season 24th, but owing to a faulty time table with an effort at a jaunty air. In they had started late and far back capturing and holding the Posieres You can not be energetic if your blood is thin and weak, or from the fighting line. They became Ridge, the Australians alone lost 20,if your nerves are frayed or shattered. You cannot compete with others if you do not get refreshing sleep at night, or if you long marching and by hunger long weight. You need a tonic at this time to all the roads, and were exhausted by long marching and by hunger long were 450,000 in the battles of the are losing weight. You need a tonic at this time to add to your before they reached their place on Somme. That was a fearful price efficiency now, as well as to save you from suffering later on, the battlefield. They they took their to pay for victory. But it was vic-And in all the realm of medicine there is no safer or betier own transport and cookers too far tory, and the German's had also lost tonic that Dr. Williams Pink Pills for Pale People. These pills forward into a murderous place call-make new right red blood, which circulates the current state of the pills and all their wagons were strewn with their dead. Many make new rich, red blood, which circulates through every por- were smashed to pieces by shell fire. tion of the body, strengthening jaded nerves and run-down These two divisions had never fought organs, and bringing a feeling of new strength and energy to before; the officers were inexperienced and had no knowledge of the ground, and when that evening the men were brought up to the support of the forward troops under heavy

Fault of Leadership at Loos. STRONG AND WELL AGAIN. of Loos was for them a black tragedy. been digging for a year, Mrs. H. H. McKelvey, Orono, Ont., It continued for several days and the says: "My experience with Dr. Wil- Guards were thrown in to re-capture British began in April of 1917 as liams' Pink Pills has been of the Hill 70 and a black slag heap called part of a great strategical plan in most favorable kind. At the time I fosse 8, but they were cut to pieces connection with the French under B., says: "I have never felt so well as run down that I could hardly go parade, with perfect and glorious dis- British armies. The French had I do since taking Dr. Williams' Pink about. My stomach was also out of cipline, but their losses were dread-prepared a big offensive in the Cham-Pills. When I began their use I was very much run down. I had no color, order and the food I took did . not its objective. I saw Sir John French las Haig and the British armies to no appetite, could not go up stairs seem to do me a bit of good. Then riding behind the lines on a white attack at Arras and draw in as many without stopping to rest on the way. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills came to my horse speaking to the walking wound- German divisions as possible so that I had frequent headaches and a feel- rescue, and under their use my stom- ed who came back and thanking the French could attack a divided ing of despondency. I took Pink ach grew better, my general health them for their gallantry. That was German defence. Then his blow Pills regularly for about eight and grew better, my general health on a day when I walked up to Locs would, if successful, smash through and saw the dead strewn in the the enemy lines, put a heavy strain them almost from the first, at the and vigorous a man as I had ever trenches and did not expect myself upon the German reserves, and Sir end of that time I was in better been. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, with to get back alive. It was the last Douglas Haig would at that moment health than I had ever enjoyed be- the use of Pinklets as a laxative big battle commanded by Sir John attack the ridges around Ypres and fore. I freely give you permission to when needed, is now our family med- linquished his position as Comman- coast. It was a bold scheme, but may be the means of pointing the icine, and we would not be without der-in-Chief to Sir Douglas Haig unfortunately the French were not ache, dizziness and a feeling of de- mia, rheumatism, neuralgia, pains in their biggest lessons in the two bat- pression, it left the British "in the pression and tiredness. A short treat- the back or side and the after effects ties of the Somme. That is to say cart." Sir Douglas Haig had launchment with the pills fully restored my of influence or fevers. If you are our Divisional Corps, army and general staffs, learned their lessons, for plete success on the first days of bal-

heights. By that failure all failed, mont. They, too, were but a little ly Johnson, and I saw his deadshody England," were among those who

"The Blood-Bath of the Somme." Under Loupart Wood, on a small fire and against a fierce German coun- plot of ground, I saw 800 German "The Blood-bath of the Somme." and led forward small bodies of men They were demoralized and stricken who fought and died, but the mass with terror because of the fury of our gunfire and the unceasing sequence of our infantry assaults, and at the beginning of 1917 they made It was the fault of leadership and their first retreat on a wide front benot of courage, because afterwards fore the Britsih, going back twenty these two divisions did heroic things miles to the shelter of their great in many great battles, but this battle | Hindenburg line, which they had

Another series of attacks by the by the German fire, and had to fall General Neville, then for a short time back. They did so as though on Generalissimo of the French and upon whom that responsibility had successful. They came up against fallen. The Battle of Loos in its what they call a "bec de gaz," a gaslarger aspect was a dismal failure, bracket, which is a slang expression but it proved one thing, and that was for saying that they took a hard the superb courage of the private sol- knock. It was so hard and cost the saulting divisions; and the splendor lowing to Hindenburg's new system of the Guards. The men were creat of "elastic" defence, that General soldiers, and needed only great fead. Nivelle, very wisely, abandoned the suffering from anaemia, and through weak, watery blood, or shaky nerves, the men had nothing to learn in hu-tle. Following a hurricane of fire the use of six boxes of Dr. Williams' a fair use of these pills will restore man courage, and what they were which I saw sweeping the enemy's Pink Pills gained wonderfully in you to full health and strength. Dr. told in their method of attack, and lines as though a thousand volcanoes weight, strength and general health. Williams' Pink Pills are sold by all were marvellously obedient to their were in cruption, the Canadians with Pink Pills that we are never with- mall, post paid, at 50c a box or six edly many mistakes were made in the on their right captured the whole out them in the house, and I con- boxes for \$2.50 by The Dr. Williams' way of command. It would be fan- length of the great Vimy Fidge, so tastic to suppose that an army like that a few hours after the battle had

a wide area of artillery twenty miles when the cavalry were in. They there was hardly a groan to be heard the year. In a previous article I Tragic things had happened on the troops. Before those lessons were Ridge on the way to Monchy; the in mud, and too weary and spent to cratered land with every shell hole sault behind a wave of poison gas, and captured the ruins of Containai- which covered them with white man- men lay down on the bank in queen swamps when they went forward and the heavy vapor rolled into gul- son and fell in great numbers. Again the steel hats. In distorted attitudes very like death, against the German concrete blockthem and then whisked back to the agony on their faces, which was most great numbers of the enemy. said with insolent laughter, that they I watched our men go into those enemy's lines. I guessed what pitiful; those and the men smashed "rather liked the scent of it," add- places and my heart bled for them, would happen, and I guessed right about the face and head so that only ing that the English always had to and my spirit cried out in agony, be- A few minutes later German guns their eyes stared through the white . It seems to me now, as it did then, copy German methods, and copied cause of the intolerable sight of that were ranged upon the ground in masks of bandages. A tragic pic- that our men were called upon for then Jadly. The 7th and 9th Divi- tumuit of fire upon the places they which all these men and horses were ture, which lives in my memory. sions, attacking the Hohenzollern re- had entered. And I saw them come assembled and shells burst among On May 3rd there was an attack battles ought never to have been doubt and the quarries near Holluch, out again as when the 9th (Scottish) them, and the ground was strewn in the dark, before dawn, and that fought. Some of the battles were had severe and costly fighting gaining Division with the South African with dead boys and mangled beasts. was a fatal mistake for which our just massacres of young flesh and their first objectives, but being check- Brigade came out of Delville Wood But the assaulting squadrons of cav- poor men paid a high price. When blood—our flesh and blood—in those ed and partly thrown back at the end a poor thin remnant of this glorious alry rode on until they topped the dawn came many of them found that infernal swamps. One of the worst of the day. On the right the French body of troops who had gone into ridge and swept round the village of they had passed through the enemy's days of all came on Oct. 12th, when had attacked with magnificent cour- battle, led out by some pipers who Monchy, while immediately intense line, and that they were cut off. Their in storms of rain English, Australian age and had swept through Souchez played the "Flowers o' the Forest" as shrapnel fire burst over them so that only hope was to smash their way and New Zealand troops made anoth-

Looking back on those years of war, of Lens. Our plan was to capture composed of London Territorials, vol- ours, made up for the most part of begun the entire German population on a stretcher carried back through tried. "It's up to the Buffs!" shout-I remember many mornings of hope the village of Loos and to encircle unteer soldiers from the great old amateur soldiers, could conduct war of the Ridge, except those who were the ruined village of Tilloy by a ed a little lieutenant, who was one of which ended in evenings of gloom Lens on the north and west by sweep- city who were inspired that day on this scale without many blunders, dead, were down on our side of the small party of troopers. But the the few officers left in command, and and tragedy; the wornings of battle ing over Hill 79 and getting into the of battle with the old spirit of death and much ignorance of modern condiwhen large numbers of British troops suburbs of Loos, through the mining or giory. When the assault began tions. The higher command had right, out from Arras, the 15th Divi-side of the village and the enemy fled lines of trenches filled with Germans, assembled secretly for some great as- villages of St. Pierre and St. Auguste. at dawn the Scots went forward to had no real experience of Staff work sion of Scots, and the 56th London- from them. It is an astonishing and that little band backed their way sault upon the enemy's lines, know- Our information as to the enemy's the music of their pipes, screaming dealing with large bodies of troops, smash- thing that two withered old French through with the bayonet, and some, ing there would be hard and cost- strength was very inaccurate, and be- the charge under heavy shell fire, and and conducting battles over a wide ed their way through a maze of women stayed in the village all but not many, came back to our lines. trenches, through many ruined vil- through the fighting. When our The attack in the dark was a tragic lages, like Neuville Vitasse and He- troopers rode in these women came affair. Nearly always in those first three an easy break-through. They were song of "Hulloh, Hulloh, H years of war our generals were over- also told to go ahead as fast and as ferent Girl Again"; one company ac- two fatal mistakes were made, as all Scarpe, thousands of prisoners fall- fear of the enemy. When our men the failure of the French offensive in confident and our men uplifted by an far as they could, with the promise tually dribbling a football all the way our generals now acknowledge. Our ing into their hands. So far, in surrounded them, they were full of the Champagne Sir Douglas Haig optimism due to a faith in their own that all the ground they took would to Loos to show their contempt of men were not taught to follow close spite of our heavy losses, we might joy, and held until the British armies were confrontcourage. This faith among the men be held by supporting troops follow- death. The battle began with suc- enough behind our barrage fire, and claim success. But after that there | faces to be kissed by the troopers, ed with a hard task when they set was the quality by which after many ing close upon their heels. Sir cess as far as concerned the Scots of actions were fought on too narrow a were many dreadful little battles, who leaned over their saddles to give out, too late in the year, to capture frightful battles and fearful losses John French was then Commander- the 15th Division and the Londoners front. We learned in the first place fought as "team work" for the their greeting. Afterwards Mon- the ridges of Flanders, around Ypres.

to the lower slopes of the Vimy a lament for the dear dead they had they were slashed by bullets and through and back. This they tried or desperate attempt to gain the Ridge, but after heavy lesses of left behind; and again, when the many men and horses fell. Among to do. The East Kents, or "Buffs," heights of Passchendaele. They fail-French youth failed to carry the Irish Division came back from Guille- them was the Cavalry General, Bulke- young soldiers from the "Garden of ed, and were cut down in swathes by

they did at last smash their way to in-Chief, and the main thrust was to of the 47th. The Gordons were first that unless men took the risk of keep- French, which cost us very dear and chy was filled with a fury of sell fire Because every time we smashed one so that hardly a horse remained German division a fresh one was have attempted the things they did Haig. We had massed a large num- they made many prisoners, and they front of them with inevitable casual— A Gallant but a Rash Adventure. losses, and had to come back on foot. We had one great and successful batnor recovered from the disasters that ber of guns behind our lines, and were followed by the Black Watch, lies from shells that burst too close, On April 11th the village of Mon- leaving the village on the hill to be the at Wyshtschaete and Messines on befell them. In my humble opinion three days before the battle began I Seaforths. Camerons, and Highland they would suffer far greater casual- chy, on the hill beyond Arras, was at- attacked again and captured again June 7th, beginning with 19 mine exsome of our generals should have saw them open a terrific and de- Light Infantry. Then they assault ties because the German troops would tacked and captured by our cavalry. by our infantry of the 15th and 37th plosions under the German lines, the tempered their own optimism due to structive bombardment upon the en- ed and captured Hill 70 beyond. The have time to get out of their dug- Divisions, who were also moved most amazing and frightful spectacle the same racial qualities as that of emy's defensive systems, and that Londoners on the right were also suc- outs and tunnels after the barrage ture, and looking back upon it I am down by fire. In the country around ever seen in war, and ending with a their men-by more caution and a fire never ceased day or night so that cessful, and kept pace with the Scots. fire had passed over them and sweep certain that it was no job for cavalry there were many other battles in march through of our troops to their closer knowledge of the enemy's the village of Loos was flung into a fighting gallantly under frightful fire our men to death with machine gun to do. The village of Monchy, on which our men, were slashed with ultimate objectives, with light losses strength, because in many cases the heap of ruins and the mining works and against the desperate defence of fire. In the second place it was the hill top, was still standing when machine gun fire from both sides of and the capture of many thousands or so on each side of our point of at- were men of the 10th Hussars, the anywhere. They formed up in a long have already described the foul contack there would be directed an an- Essex Yeomanry and the Blues, and queue outside the dressing station ditions through which our men had Gassed-Our Men Fell Gasping. nihilating fire upon our advancing I saw them going over Observation beneath the citadel of Arras, covered to fight-that twenty-mile belt of



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CAD ERHAPS that is what you might be all in. There was so little nerve force in my system that I went all to pieces with I a little exertion.

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weak, easily tired, despondent men, women and children. CURED BLADUS HEADACHES. Mr. D. C. McClure, Heffley Creek, Mrs. M. D. MacLeod, Caledonia,

appeared, I had a better appetite, in your pills as a blood builder. and was in every way stronger and better than before I began the use of this medicine. Almost everyone needs a tonic in the spring, and for this purpose I can strongly advise Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

NEVER FELT SO WELL. Pills regularly for about eight way to new health to some other them.

weak and run down girl." GAINED WONDERFULLY. Hainesville, N.B., says: "I have the do this one thing and they do it well. very highest regard for Dr. Williams' They are, for this reason, an invalu-We think so much of Dr. Williams' medicine dealers or will be sent by discipline and training. Undoubt- the Highlanders of the 51st Division

HAS A BETTER APPETITE.

B.C., says: "As a spring tonic I know P.E.I., says: "I have used Dr. Wil- ter attack, they became confused and Williams' Pink Pills. Last spring I liams' Pink Pills as a spring medi-demoralized. Many of their officers German soldiers called these battles felt weak and run down, and sufferca cine with satisfactory results. Be behaved with the greatest gallantry, a great deal from bilious headaches, fore I began their use I was subject I got a half dozen boxes of Dr. Wil- to weak spells, but these have now of them fell back in disorder. liams' Pink Pills, and after taking disappeared." I find that my appetite situde from which I suffered had dis- is better, and I have every confidence

Miss Beatrice Bishop, Fendale, N. began their use I was so weak and

BUILD UP YOUR BLOOD. Herbert Hanson, Lower Pills is to build up the blood. They

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