

"THE LOST BATTALION."

(Continued from Page 5)

will, believing that he is doing wrong to his country, to carry forward this present letter to the officer in charge of the battalion of the 77th Division, with the purpose to recommend this commander to surrender with his forces, as it would be quite useless to resist any more, in view of the present conditions.

"The suffering of your wounded men can be heard over here in the German lines, and we are appealing to your humane sentiments to stop. A white flag shown by one of your men will tell us that you agree with these conditions. Please treat Private---- as an honorable man. He is quite a soldier. We envy you.

THE GERMAN COMMANDING OFFICER."

Major Whittlessey read the note and passed it over to Captain McMurtry. He read it and handed it to Captain Holderman. The three officers looked at one another and a grim smile wrinkled their features. "We are appealing to your humane sentiments to stop." This, after six days of the most inhuman warfare conceivable hurled at them by the Boche in attempts to annihilate, that had failed. It was almost funny.

The fact of the receipt of the note soon spread over the hill. Men too weak to stand on their feet raised themselves up on their elbows and cried: "You Dutch ----, come over and get us." That was the only response.

Another answer was on its way to the Boche. That very evening the crackle of musketry and the rat-tat-tat of Chauchats and Hotchkiss guns fell on the ears of the beleaguered men,

coming from the rear and right flank. Beyond the fraction of a doubt, it was the long-hoped for, despaired of relief. It was brother Americans of the 77th Division furiously fighting their way through. Sheer exhaustion forced the tears from the eyes of men to whom the hope of life was returning. The Boche, however, was not quite through. In one last desperate effort to impress his "humane sentiments" on the survivors in "The Pocket," he descended with all his forces on the right flank. For this attack, he had reserved his liquid fire, and scorching flames shot into our ranks.

But our men were revived. They sprang into the fight to the tune of every choice oath in the English language. Our one remaining machine gun at last was firing at a target point blank. In word and deed, the Huns got hell, and back they crumbled never to come on again.

As the Germans dwindled away through the trees into the night, the men of the 307th came up on the right, with food and ammunition in abundance. A half hour later, patrols of the 306th were reported coming in from the south. The relief was complete. The fight of the "Lost Battalion"—the battalion that was never "lost"—was over. On the morning of the 8th, the 252 survivors of the 679 that had entered "The Pocket", with their sick and wounded, marched south through the deep ravine to rest.

Their hill side is now quiet. The dead lie sleeping in a little enclosure near the western border of the valley. The crash of minenwerfers and the whine of the bullets is stilled. But if the trees on the torn slope of France could ever break the silence, they would say "By these splintered wounds you see upon us, we will live to mark the valor of the Americans."

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