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John Angus MacNeil: We tunneled under Hill 60. In this country, you wouldn't say it was much of a hill, you know. But over there, it's so flat, and it was quite a little hill. But the engineers, they tunneled under Hill 60. The Germans held 60. They went under them. There were the Canadians and Australians and New Zealanders--tunnellers, you know. (Did that tunneling take weeks or months?) Oh yes--years. They started way back--a tunnel about 3 feet wide, about 4 feet high--and they loaded her up with TNT, And you couldn't use a shovel. And you couldn't use a pick. The Germans were listening. When you'd loosen the dirt, you were using the bayonet. You'd push the bayonet in, push it down, and that dropped. And you had a canvas bag underneath it so it wouldn't make any noise. And that's the way you advanced in. (They were mining this for years?) Oh yeah, yeah. I worked there before I got my stripes. And listening, you'd have to-- when there was no mining going on, you'd have to be listening, you had earphones, you could hear the Germans working. The Germans were tunneling, too. And sometimes you could hear them talking, plain. When the Russians gave up, you know, all the German troops that were on that Eastern Front were taken back to the Western Front. And they were changing, relieving the Germans that were on Hill 60, replacing them with the new people that came from the Eastern Front--giving the fellows that were on Hill 60 a rest. That morning that they were doing the changing, the but-ton was pushed. And 60 went up in the air, with all those Germans with it--the fellows that were relieving, and the ones that were there before them. We were in the trenches to the left, towards the ocean. And when the bomb went up, the ground went like that, you know--just like waves. What we used to have as a hill, it was a big shellhole. We could look down it. That finished 60. Dan E. MacQuarrie: The first thing the Germans knew, the front line all blew up. And they were coming out with their hands up, hundreds of them. They knew the jig was up. Just tell them, "Here, there's the road, and you follow it down there." There might be one or two fellows following them with rifles. No trouble at all with them. I suppose a lot of them were glad to get out, and get something to eat. John Angus MacNeil: The Germans had to retreat and build their trenches back further. (Did you move forward into that?) Yeah. In fact, the whole front then moved ahead, moved towards the Germans--new positions, new trenches, and so on. (It wasn't really a battle?) Oh no, it wasn't. It was just a few, maybe 25 or 50 feet or so, like that. It wasn't like a battle would have been, what you gained. It was just that you just moved your front, because they had to move back, they had to straighten their line because of Hill 60 being out. Passchendaele was a hard place to take. You know, the English tried it, the Austrians tried it, and the French tried it. And they failed. But the Canadians tried it--they took it. But the downpour of rain--it wasn't raining--it was pouring down, the rain. And there were more people drowned in the shellholes than were killed by the bullets. On account of the bombardment that the Canadians put on at the time. It was so dark; you couldn't use any light--it was as dark as the hounds of hell. You see, there were duckboards around the shellholes, but you couldn't see



them. You just went off the duckboards and into a shellhole. You'd be drowned. (H. L. Livingstone: Couldn't get up with their heavy marching order--that is, carrying a full pack, about 70 pounds.) John Angus MacNeil: You couldn't get out, the shellhole was so deep. It was the shells, those big army shells, makes the holes. They filled with water, with that rain that night. They claim more lost in the shellholes. In fact, the Germans didn't put up any battle at all, they retreated. And the funny part of it. Before they could gain a Beautiful, Intelligent and Peaceful Idlb
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