



SUPPLEMENT

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WEDNESDAY, 14 APRIL, 1915.

From The Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, The British Army in the Field.

To The Secretary of State for War, War Office, London, S.W.

*General Headquarters,*

*5th April, 1915.*

My Lord,

I have the honour to report the operations of the Forces under my command since the date of my last despatch, 2nd February, 1915.

1. The event of chief interest and importance which has taken place is the victory achieved over the enemy at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, which was fought on the 10th, 11th and 12th of March. The main attack was delivered by troops of the First Army under the command of General Sir Douglas Haig, supported by a large force of Heavy Artillery, a Division of Cavalry and some Infantry of the general reserve.

Secondary and holding attacks and demonstrations were made along the front of the Second Army under the direction of its Commander, General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien.

Whilst the success attained was due to the magnificent bearing and indomitable courage displayed by the troops of the 4th and Indian Corps, I consider that the able and skilful dispositions which were made by the General Officer Commanding First Army contributed largely to the defeat of the enemy and to the capture of his position. The energy and vigour with which General Sir Douglas Haig handled his command show him to be a leader of great ability and power.

Another action of considerable importance was brought about by a surprise attack of the Germans made on the 14th March against the 27th Division holding the trenches east of St. Eloi. A large force of artillery was concentrated in this area under cover of mist, and a heavy volume of fire was suddenly brought to bear on the trenches at 5 p.m. This artillery attack was accompanied by two mine explosions; and, in the confusion caused by these and the suddenness of the attack, the position of St. Eloi was captured and held for some hours by the enemy.

Well directed and vigorous counter attacks, in which the troops of the 5th Army Corps showed great bravery and determination, restored the situation by the evening of the 15th,