

position. They were, however, successful in securing and consolidating the ground won during the first part of the attack, on a front of a thousand yards, including the advanced portion of the enemy's salient north of the Ypres-Menin Road.

During this action the fire of the artillery was most effective, the prisoners testifying to its destructiveness and accuracy. It also prevented the delivery of counter attacks, which were paralysed at the outset.

Over two hundred prisoners were taken, besides some machine-guns, trench material and gas apparatus.

Holding attacks by the neighbouring 2nd and 6th Corps were successful in helping the main attack, whilst the 36th French Corps co-operated very usefully with artillery fire on Pilkem.

Near Hill 60 the 15th Infantry Brigade made four bombing attacks, gaining and occupying about fifty yards of trench.

On 6th July a small attack was made by the 11th Infantry Brigade on a German salient between Boesinghe and Ypres, which resulted in the capture of a frontage of about 500 yards of trench and a number of prisoners.

In the course of this operation it was necessary to move a gun of the 135th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, into the front line to destroy an enemy sap-head. To reach its position the gun had to be taken over a high canal embankment, rafted over the canal under fire, pulled up a bank with a slope of nearly 45 degrees, and then dragged over three trenches and a sky line to its position seventy yards from the German lines. This was carried out without loss.

This incident is of minor importance in itself, but I quote it as an example of the daily difficulties which officers and men in the trenches are constantly called upon to overcome, and of the spirit of initiative and resource which is so marked a feature amongst them.

From the 10th to the 12th July the enemy made attempts, after heavy shelling, to recapture the lost portion of their line; but our artillery, assisted by that of the French on our left, prevented any serious assault from being delivered. Minor attacks were constant, but were easily repulsed by the garrison of our trenches.

On 19th July an enemy's redoubt at the western end of the Hooze defences was successfully mined and destroyed, and a small portion of the enemy's trenches was captured.

5. Since my last despatch a new device has been adopted by the enemy for driving burning liquid into our trenches with a strong jet.

Thus supported, an attack was made on the trenches of the Second Army at Hooze, on the Menin Road, early on 30th July. Most of the infantry occupying these trenches were driven back, but their retirement was due far more to the surprise and temporary confusion caused by the burning liquid than to the actual damage inflicted.

Gallant endeavours were made by repeated counter attacks to recapture the lost section of trenches. These, however, proving unsuccessful and costly, a new line of trenches was consolidated a short distance further back.

Attacks made by the enemy at the same time west of Bellewaarde Lake were repulsed.

On 9th August these losses were brilliantly regained, owing to a successful attack carried

out by the 6th Division. This attack was very well executed and resulted in the recapture, with small casualties, not only of the whole of the lost trenches, but, in addition, of four hundred yards of German trench north of the Menin Road.

At the end of this engagement it was estimated that between four and five hundred German dead were lying on the battlefield.

Valuable help was rendered by two batteries of French artillery lent by General Hely d'Oissel, commanding 36th French Corps.

6. From the conclusion of the above-mentioned operations until the last week in September there was relative quiet along the whole of the British line, except at those points where the normal conditions of existence comprised occasional shelling or constant mine and bomb warfare. In these trying forms of encounter all ranks have constantly shown the greatest enterprise and courage, and have consistently maintained the upper hand.

The close accord and co-operation which has always existed between the Commander-in-Chief of our Allies and myself has been maintained, and I have had constant meetings with General Joffre, who has kept me informed of his views and intentions, and explained the successive methods by which he hopes to attain his ultimate object.

After full discussion of the military situation a decision was arrived at for joint action, in which I acquiesced.

It was arranged that we should make a combined attack from certain points of the Allied line during the last week in September.

The reinforcements I have received enabled me to comply with several requests which General Joffre has made that I should take over additional portions of the French line.

7. In fulfilment of the rôle assigned to it in these operations the Army under my command attacked the enemy on the morning of the 25th September.

The main attack was delivered by the 1st and 4th Corps between the La Bassée Canal on the north and a point of the enemy's line opposite the village of Grenay on the south.

At the same time a secondary attack, designed with the object of distracting the enemy's attention and holding his troops to their ground, was made by the 5th Corps on Bellewaarde Farm, situated to the east of Ypres. Subsidiary attacks with similar objects were delivered by the 3rd and Indian Corps north of the La Bassée Canal and along the whole front of the Second Army.

The object of the secondary attack by the 5th Corps was most effectively achieved, for not only was the enemy contained on that front, but we have reason to believe that reserves were hurried toward that point of the line.

The attack was made at daybreak by the 3rd and 14th Divisions, and at first the greater part of the enemy's front line was taken; but, owing to the powerful artillery fire concentrated against them, the troops were unable to retain the ground, and had to return to their original trenches toward nightfall. The 5th Corps succeeded, however, in capturing two officers and 138 other prisoners.

Similar demonstrations with equally good results were made along the whole front of the Second Army.

With the same object in view, those units of the First Army occupying the line north of the