

21. At 4.45 a.m. on 5th July the 30th Infantry Brigade, commanded by Major-General Melliss, advanced to attack the enemy; on the left bank, the 76th Punjabis and the 24th Punjabis, the latter moving in bellums through the inundation accompanied by the 30th Mountain Battery. The 2/7th Gurkhas supported by the 1/4th Hants moved up the right bank. Considerable opposition was encountered, especially on the left bank, and it was not until 1.20 p.m. that our troops forced the enemy on the right bank of the Euphrates to hoist the white flag.

The 24th Punjabis had to carry their bellums across some 60 yards of dry land before they could cross the Euphrates to take possession of the enemy's position and battery. After the right bank had been cleared our Naval craft were able to sweep for mines, an operation rendered easier for us as a captured Turkish Officer assisted to indicate their position.

By 9 p.m. the Channel was clear. The ships came up and the troops embarked.

22. The detachment of the enemy which had opposed our advance consisted of 1,000 regular Turkish troops, 2,000 Arabs, four guns and two Thorneycroft launches armed with pom poms. Four guns and 130 prisoners fell into our hands at a cost to us of 26 killed and 85 wounded.

The second phase of these operations was commenced on the morning of 6th July by the occupation of Suk-Esh-Sheyukh by Captain Nunn, with two gunboats, and afterwards the whole flotilla moved up the Euphrates.

23. The Turks had taken up a series of positions astride the river about five miles below Nasiriyah, with both flanks resting on marshes. In front of their trenches were broad deep channels difficult to turn or assault.

The ground on the right bank was devoid of cover; that on the left bank fringed by a narrow belt of palms.

24. General Goringe established his force some two miles below the enemy's advanced positions and occupied entrenchments on both banks. Up to the 13th July continual reconnaissances were made and our entrenchments gradually extended nearer to the enemy.

25. On the night of 13th/14th an attack was made by our troops on both banks. On the right bank we secured an entrenched position within 400 yards of the Turkish trenches. A gallant attempt by the 24th Punjabis under Lieutenant-Colonel Climo, supported by four guns of the 30th Mountain Battery under Captain E. J. Nixon, to capture some sand-hills behind the enemy's right flank met with unexpectedly strong opposition, and they were attacked in rear by Arab tribesmen and had to withdraw.

The Mountain guns covering the withdrawal rendered invaluable support.

26. Until the 23rd, General Goringe was perfecting arrangements for his decisive attack. Gun positions were moved forward, infantry trenches extended and communications improved. The working parties were subjected to a continual fire, but our snipers established ascendancy over those of the enemy. The heat night and day throughout was intense.

27. At 5 a.m. on 24th July the attack was launched. By 7.30 a.m. the 12th Infantry

Brigade operating on the left bank of the river had occupied the enemy's advanced trenches at Miyadiyah. The 30th Infantry Brigade then pushed its attack up the right bank, covered by well-directed artillery fire, and by 9.30 a.m. had captured the advanced trenches after forcing the passage of the Mejinneh Channel. During this operation the gunboat "Sumana," carrying bridging material, fought her way up to the entrance of the creek under a very heavy fire, and, supported by the fire from the gunboats, the 17th Company Sappers and Miners threw a bridge across.

28. The attack was continued by both banks. The main position was captured by noon, in spite of a stubborn resistance. The enemy clung to their trenches where some 500 were killed. After reorganising, the troops pushed forward to the Sadanawiyah position—the enemy's final line of defence, which was also captured. During the attack at Sadanawiyah Captain Nunn, in the "Shushan," a small sternwheeler, laid his ship alongside hostile trenches on the river bank and engaged them at close range.

29. By 6.30 p.m. the enemy was in full retreat across the marshes, and our troops bivouacked on the position they had won.

Severe losses had been inflicted on the enemy, while our casualties were not heavy considering the nature of the fighting, the total number of our killed and wounded being under 600.

Our captures included over 1,000 prisoners, 17 guns, five machine-guns, 1,586 rifles, and quantities of ammunition and stores.

Nasiriyah was occupied on the 25th without further opposition.

30. General Goringe conducted the task assigned to him with skill and determination, and his troops responded to the strenuous calls that were made upon them in a gallant and devoted manner.

Seldom, if ever, have our troops been called upon to campaign in more trying heat than they have experienced this summer in the marshy plains of Mesopotamia.

But the spirit of the troops never flagged, and in the assault of the entrenchments which the Turks thought impregnable, British and Indian soldiers displayed a gallantry and devotion to duty worthy of the highest traditions of the Service.

31. I have to place on record the excellence of the work performed by the officers and men of the Royal Flying Corps, whose valuable reconnaissances materially assisted in clearing up the situation before the battle of the 24th July.

32. And I have to express my deep appreciation of the valuable and whole-hearted co-operation of the officers and men of the Royal Navy under the command of Captain Nunn, D.S.O., Senior Naval Officer. It was in a great measure due to the excellent work performed by the Royal Navy that these amphibious operations, like those at Qurnah, at the end of May, were brought to so successful a conclusion.

33. The capture of Nasiriyah had established British control on the western side of the Basrah Vilayet, but the district lying north of the line Amara-Nasiriyah still remained outside our control, and strong Turkish forces under Nur-Ed-Din Bey were reported to be