

gallantry under the fire of the German guns. Greatly assisted by their efforts our advance continued. Obstinate resistance was met with at Graincourt, and it was not until late in the day that the village was finally surrounded and captured by the 63rd Division. The 57th Division (Major-General R. W. R. Barnes) meanwhile had passed through and carried the line forward east of Anneux to Fontaine-Notre-Dame. Bourlon had been carried by the 4th Canadian Division, and the 3rd Canadian Division (Major-General F. O. W. Loomis) had passed through at Bourlon Wood, which was wholly in our possession.

On the left the 1st Canadian Division, having seized Sains-lez-Marquion early in the attack, advanced with the 11th Division (Major-General H. R. Davies) and took Haynecourt, while the latter division captured Epinoy and Oisy-le-Verger. On the extreme left the 56th Division of the XXII. Corps crossed the Canal and having cleared Sauchy Lestree and Sauchy Cauchy, moved northwards towards Palluel.

At the end of the day our troops had reached the general line Beaucamp-Ribecourt-Fontaine-Notre-Dame-east of Haynecourt-Epinoy-Oisy-le-Verger, and had taken over 10,000 prisoners and 200 guns.

Next day the advance on this front was continued, and Gouzeaucourt, Marcoing, Noyelles-sur-l'Escaut, Fontaine-Notre-Dame, Saily and Palluel were taken. At Marcoing our troops established themselves on the east bank of the Scheldt Canal and on the northern flank entered Aubencheul-au-Bac.

(36) *The Hindenburg Line Broken.*

The heavy and continuous bombardment opened on the morning of the 27th September, had been maintained by the Fourth Army along its whole front without intermission for two days. The intensity of our fire drove the enemy's garrisons to take refuge in their deep dugouts and tunnels, and made it impossible for his carrying parties to bring up food and ammunition.

At 5.50 a.m. on the 29th September, under an intense artillery barrage, General Rawlinson's Fourth Army attacked on a front of 12 miles, between Holnon and Vendhuille, with the IX., II. American (General G. W. Read commanding) and III. Corps, a strong force of tanks, manned by British and American crews, accompanying the infantry. On the right of the Fourth Army the French First Army continued the line of attack in the St. Quentin sector. On the left the V. and IV. Corps of the Third Army had attacked at an earlier hour between Vendhuille and Marcoing, and had heavy fighting about Villers Guislain, Gonnellieu and Welsh Ridge.

On the Fourth Army front, the 46th Division (Major-General G. F. Boyd) greatly distinguished itself in the capture of Bellenglise. The village is situated in the angle of the Scheldt Canal, which, after running in a southerly direction from Bellicourt, here bends sharply to the east towards the Le Tronquoy Tunnel. Equipped with lifebelts, and carrying mats and rafts, the 46th Division stormed the western arm of the canal at Bellenglise and to the north of it, some crossing the canal on footbridges which the enemy was given no time to destroy, others dropping down the sheer side of the canal wall, and, having swum or waded

to the far side, climbing up the farther wall to the German trench lines on the eastern bank. Having captured these trenches, the attacking troops swung to the right and took from flank and rear the German defences along the eastern arm of the canal and on the high ground south of the canal, capturing many prisoners and German batteries in action before the enemy had had time to realise the new direction of the attack. So thorough and complete was the organisation for this attack, and so gallantly, rapidly and well was it executed by the troops, that this one division took on this day over 4,000 prisoners and 70 guns.

On the remainder of the front, also, our attack met with remarkable success. South of Bellenglise, the 1st Division (Major-General E. P. Strickland), with the 6th Division covering their flank, crossed the ridge north-west of Thorigny and reached the west end of the Le Tronquoy Tunnel. Here they gained touch with the 32nd Division, who had passed through the 46th Division and taken Lehaucourt and Magny la Fosse. North of Bellenglise, the 30th American Division (Major-General E. M. Lewis) having broken through the deep defences of the Hindenburg Line, stormed Bellicourt and seized Nauroy. On their left the 27th American Division (Major-General J. F. O'Ryan) met with very heavy enfilade machine-gun fire, but pressed on with great gallantry as far as Bony, where a bitter struggle took place for the possession of the village.

Fighting on the whole front of the II. American Corps was severe, and in Bellicourt, Nauroy, Gillemont Farm, and at a number of other points amid the intricate defences of the Hindenburg line, strong bodies of the enemy held out with great obstinacy for many hours. These points of resistance were gradually overcome, either by the support troops of the American divisions or by the 5th and 3rd Australian Divisions (Major-Generals Sir J. J. T. Hobbs and J. Gellibrand), which, moving up close behind the American troops, were soon heavily engaged. On the left of the attack the 12th and 18th Divisions cleared the slopes above Vendhuille.

Meanwhile, the Third Army captured Masnieres and secured the crossings of the Scheldt Canal between that village and the outskirts of Cambrai, while the Canadian Corps made progress north-west of that town, taking St. Olle and Sancourt.

For the next two days our attacks continued on all fronts. On the 30th September the gap in the Hindenburg Line was enlarged by the capture of Thorigny and Le Tronquoy by the 1st and 32nd Divisions, thus securing possession of the Le Tronquoy Tunnel. On this day the enemy abandoned Villers Guislain and Gonnellieu, being threatened with envelopment, and withdrew behind the Scheldt Canal.

Next day, the IX. and Australian Corps attacked in conjunction with the French First Army, who occupied St. Quentin. Levergies was taken by the 32nd Division and Australian troops captured Joncourt, Estrees and Bony, establishing our line well to the north and east of the latter village.

In the Cambrai sector, the New Zealand and 3rd Divisions took Crevecœur and Rumilly, while north of Cambrai the Canadian Corps cleared the high ground west of Ramillies and entered Belcourt. The fighting on the Canadian front at this period was particularly