

forward positions on the left bank. The Light Armoured Motor Brigade, under command of Lieut.-Colonel Sir T. R. L. Thompson, Bart., M.C., having been especially equipped to make it self-contained for some days, proceeded to El Hadr (60 miles W. of Shergat) in order to establish a base at that place for operations against the Turkish communications with Mosul.

The roads through the Fatha Gorge (on both banks) were found to be impracticable for vehicles, the Turks having blown the road into the river in several places, and a new road therefore had to be made by cutting into and blasting out the rocky hillsides. A pontoon bridge was also thrown across the Tigris at Fatha to facilitate transference of troops and supplies.

12. On the 25th, the 7th Cavalry Brigade and the leading (53rd) Infantry Brigade of the 18th Division forced a crossing over the Lesser Zab, near its confluence with the Tigris, in face of considerable opposition and heavy shell fire. Meanwhile the 11th Cavalry Brigade, which was now engaged in ferrying its transport across the river near Uthmaniya, sent a force down the right bank of the Zab. These two movements caused the Turkish force on the left bank of the Tigris to retreat across their bridge at El Humr.

Lewin's column had during the day driven back superior Turkish forces and occupied Kirkuk.

13. The 17th Division, on the right bank, was keeping in close touch with the Turks, but was meeting with great difficulties, and its advance was necessarily slow. The few tracks existing over the deep ravines and precipitous slopes of the Jebel Makhul and Jebel Khanuka were mere goat paths, and all transport had to be converted from wheeled to pack; one brigade having to be immobilised to provide sufficient pack transport for the troops operating. The difficulties of getting forward, the field and heavy artillery in time to support the infantry were immense, while the heat and lack of water entailed great exertions from the troops.

The Division, however, worked steadily forward, assisted by artillery fire from the left bank, and in the late evening the leading troops (1st Battalion, Highland Light Infantry) made a gallant attack on the advanced trenches of the Turkish position covering Humr. The wire protecting these trenches was uncut, but the H.L.I. were not to be denied, and, rushing the wire, captured the trenches, which they held throughout the night and following morning, despite considerable losses.

14. On the 26th the Division continued the attack on the Turkish position, which was, in addition to being well entrenched, one of great natural strength.

On the same day the 11th Cavalry Brigade (consisting of 7th Hussars, Guides Cavalry, 23rd Cavalry, and "W" Battery R.H.A.) was despatched at an early hour from Uthmaniya (moving wide of the Tigris) to a reported ford opposite Hadraniya, some 14 miles upstream of Shergat. The ford, which was discovered at 3.30 p.m., proved just feasible, but it entailed crossing three channels of the river, one of which was nearly 5 feet deep, with a strong current. The leading regiment having completed the crossing galloped to seize the Huwaish gorge, about 5 miles downstream. This important point was occupied without opposition, and by the morning of the 27th the

bulk of the Brigade had taken up a strong position, blocking the road to Mosul.

During the day the 7th Cavalry Brigade by moving up the left bank of the Tigris towards Shergat attracted the attention of the Turks, and thus masked the movement of the 11th Cavalry Brigade to Hadraniya. Whilst the cavalry was engaged in this operation the light armoured motor cars moving from their base at El Hadr round the right rear of the enemy, cut the telegraph line to Mosul, thus isolating the Tigris force from the 6th Turkish Army Headquarters.

15. During the night of October 26th/27th the 7th Cavalry Brigade, having run out of supplies, was brought back to the bridgehead at Fatha to fill up from the supply columns, and also to be available for use on either bank as the situation might demand.

On the 27th the 11th Cavalry Brigade, with its right flank protected by light armoured motor cars, moved southward from Huwaish and launched an attack against the Turkish reserves with the double object of assisting the 17th Division and concealing its own weakness. Meanwhile the 53rd Infantry Brigade, under Brig.-General G. A. F. Sanders, with some artillery, marched from the Lesser Zab to join the 11th Cavalry Brigade. After a march of 33 miles the leading battalion reached Huwaish early in the afternoon of the 28th, and at once moved into position.

Throughout the day the 17th Division continued to advance over extremely difficult country, maintaining a continuous pressure on the Turks in order to prevent them from putting all their weight against the 11th Cavalry Brigade.

16. At 3 a.m. on October 28th the 17th Division continued its march over a broken, arid, and waterless country. Some eight hours later it closed with the Turkish rearguard which was holding a position three miles south of Shergat, and by 2 p.m. had driven it from its trenches. In this attack the assault by the 2nd Royal West Kent Regiment was skilfully arranged and gallantly carried through to the enemy's rearmost line of trenches, over 200 prisoners and 11 machine guns being captured.

Owing to the complete exhaustion of men and animals due to the heat, lack of water, and their previous exertions, the Division was in no state to pursue. It was, indeed, necessary to get men and animals to the river for water. The Turks were thus able to concentrate during the night in a position amongst a maze of hills and deep ravines about 6 miles S. of Huwaish. Here, however, they were discovered by our aeroplanes and heavily bombed as well as being shelled by our artillery from the left bank.

During the day Turkish reserves some 2,500 strong with several batteries of artillery made repeated attempts from the south to break through the 11th Cavalry Brigade, who barred the road to Mosul, but their attacks were unsuccessful, though the approach of enemy reinforcements from Mosul compelled the Brigade to draw back its right flank to cover its rear.

During the afternoon infantry reinforcements from the 53rd Infantry Brigade began to arrive, and at 6.30 p.m. the 7th Cavalry Brigade (13th Hussars, 13th and 14th Lancers, and "V" Battery, R.H.A.), after a march of 17 hours from Fatha, in which they covered 43 miles, and crossed the difficult Hadraniya ford, where several men and horses were