

The work to be done tomorrow will perhaps make heavy demands upon the endurance and staying powers of many of you; but I am confident that, in spite of excitement, fatigue, and physical strain, every man will carry on to the utmost of his powers until his goal is won, for the sake of Australia the Empire and our cause.

I earnestly wish every soldier of the Corps the best of good fortune and a glorious and decisive victory, the story of which will re-echo throughout the world, and will live forever in the history of our home land.

John Monash

Lieut-General,
Commanding Australian Corps. "

The barrage opened at 4.20.a.m. on 8th. August, ushering in the biggest attack the Australians had ever been concentrated upon. The attack of the 4th. Army was from the River Ancre to the Aure on the south, and aided by a heavy mist, our infantry and tanks penetrated the enemy's line along the whole front, and shortly after noon all objectives had been gained. The barrage itself, was concluded at 8.20.a.m. when the brigade moved forward. By that hour, 9,000 18-pdr. rounds and 2,200 4.5 How. rounds had been expended. The enemy's retaliation was very weak and confined to a very narrow limit.

The first shelling of the brigade was in the vicinity of the cross roads at Hamel where there were several casualties, the 25th. battery having one member killed. The position destined to be taken up by the brigade was South West of Morecourt, for the rest of the day, little shooting was indulged in. Through the inability of the Divisions comprising the 3rd. Corp. on the left of the "Aussies" to make good in the advance, the left flank of the Australian Corp was somewhat exposed to enemy enfilading fire which somewhat held up the progress. It was not until the Australian Infantry had cleared Chipilly Ridge which allowed the front line on the north of the Somme to conform with the Australian front line on the south. On the 9th. the brigade was relieved and took up a position near Vaire-Sous-Corbise in reserve for twenty four hours, at the end of that time was ordered to take up a position in advance of the former position at Morecourt.

Here, the same as the previous position, the battery gunners had a good variety in the way of gun laying, as there were numerous Fritz batteries of whizzbangs 4.2, 5.9 and 8" Hows. all in good order in the immediate vicinity. The number of shells sent back to Fritz with the Seventh's compliments was considerable.

Being moonlight, Fritz's Cothas unloaded their "eggs" in the forward areas, fortunately the brigade did not suffer to any great extent.

In Ludendorff's (The German Chief of staff) Memoirs (just published). He wrote :- This (8th AUG) is Germany's BLACKEST DAY.

On the 12th. we were again in reserve, but not for long, as the next day, we were packed off at the "toot" in the direction of Rosieres. Gun positions were prepared at Meharicourt for "stunt" beyond Lihons, although ammunition was carted, the positions were never occupied. A considerable number of the brigade were wounded here.

Letters of appreciation from General Rawlinson and the G.O.C., R.A., 4th. Army.

Fourth Army No. G.S. 2/8.

Australian Corps.

I desire to express officially to all ranks of the Australian Corps, my sincere appreciation of their splendid victory over the enemy on the 8th. August and the succeeding days.

The task that was allotted to them depended largely for its success on the element of surprise. The care that was taken prior to the 8th. August to camouflage the arrival of the Canadian Corps interfered to some extent with the Australian Corps' dispositions. In spite of this and other difficulties the assembly of the Corps, the distribution of the Tanks, and the disposition of a large force of heavy and field artillery, were accomplished by night without attracting attention.

From zero onwards everything went according to programme and without a hitch. It was no ordinary feat to win all the objectives allotted, to effect a penetration of 10 miles into the hostile position, and to reach the most distant objective half an hour before scheduled time.

The three points which I desire specially to eulogise are (1) the splendid gallantry and drive of the infantry, (2) the thoroughness and precision of the staff work of the Corps, Divisions and Brigades and (3) the skill and rapidity with which the mobile artillery were brought forward in close support of the infantry for the attack of the more distant objectives.