

A Short History of the 6th Division, Edited by Thomas Owen Marden

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by Thomas Owen Marden

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Transcriber's note:

Obvious printer's errors have been corrected.

The original spelling has been retained.

Page 76: Two instances of AAA left by the printer have been replaced by dots.

Explanations of British/Canadian military abbreviations can be found at <http://www.1914-1918.net/abbrev.htm> and <http://www.wakefieldfhs.org.uk/military%20abbreviations.shtml>

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE 6th DIVISION

Aug. 1914-March 1919

Edited by

MAJOR-GEN. T. O. MARDEN C.B., C.M.G.

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PREFACE

This short history has been compiled mainly from the War Diaries.

My reason for undertaking the task is that there was no one else to do it, the units composing the
Division being scattered far and wide, and there being no Divisional habitat with local historians as
in the case of Territorial and New Army Divisions. My object is that all who served with the
Division for any period between 1914-1919 may have a record to show that they belonged to a

Division which played no inconspicuous part in the Great War.

I regret that it has been impossible to tabulate the honours (except V.C.s) won by officers and men of the Division, and it is also inevitable that the names of many individuals to whom the success of the Division in many operations was largely due should go unrecorded. The Infantry naturally bulk large in the picture, but they would be the first to admit that their success could not have been obtained without the splendid co-operation of the Artillery, who are sometimes not even mentioned in the narrative; and this theme might be elaborated considerably.

My particular thanks are due to Lt.-Col. T. T. Grove, C.M.G., D.S.O., R.E., to whom the credit belongs for the form taken by the history and the more personal portions of the history itself. I also wish to thank Lt.-Gen. Sir J. Keir, K.C.B., D.S.O., and Major-Gen. C. Ross, C.B., D.S.O., as well as several Brigadiers and C.O.s, for so kindly reviewing the periods of which they had personal knowledge.

In conclusion, I wish to add that every copy sold helps towards the erection of Battlefield Memorials to be placed in France and Flanders.

T. O. MARDEN, *Major-General. April 1920.*

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE 6th DIVISION

CHAPTER I

MOBILIZATION AND MOVE TO FRANCE 1914

The Division mobilized with its Headquarters at Cork--two brigades in Ireland, namely, the 16th Infantry Brigade at Fermoy, and the 17th Infantry Brigade at Cork, and one Infantry Brigade--the 18th--at Lichfield. Divisional troops mobilized in Ireland. The order for mobilization was received at 10 p.m. on the 4th August 1914.

On the 15th August units mobilized in Ireland commenced embarkation at Cork and Queenstown for England, and the Division was concentrated in camps in the neighbourhood of Cambridge and Newmarket by the 18th August.

The period from the 18th August to the 7th September was one of hard training. Those who were with the Division at that time will also remember, with gratitude, the many kindnesses shown them by the people of Cambridge; the canteens and recreation rooms instituted for the men, and the hospitality shown by colleges and individuals to the officers. They will remember, too, their growing impatience to get out, and their increasing fear that the Division would arrive too late.

On the 7th September, however, entrainment for Southampton commenced, and on the 9th the first troops of the Division disembarked at St. Nazaire.

From St. Nazaire a long train journey, which the novelty of the experience robbed of its tediousness, took the Division a short distance east of Paris, where it concentrated in billets in the area Coulommiers--Mortcerf--Marles--Chaume by the 12th September.

CHAPTER II

BATTLE OF THE AISNE 1914

The period 13th to 19th September was spent in the march to the Aisne, where the Division arrived at a time when a certain amount of anxiety was felt by the Higher Command. The 5th French Army on the right, the British Army in the centre, and the 6th French Army under General Maunoury on the left, had pushed the Germans back across the Marne, and on the 14th September the British troops had crossed the Aisne on the front Soissons-Bourg--the I Corps at Bourg, the II Corps at Vailly and Missy, and the III at Venizel. The French right attack from the direction of Rheims and the British attack by the I Corps had progressed much faster than the left, and had reached the heights on the line Craonne-Troyon, astride the famous Chemin des Dames. These were now the objective of fierce attacks by the Germans, and the 6th Division, which had been allotted originally to the III Corps, was put into General Reserve instead, only the artillery joining the III Corps. The units of the I Corps were very tired and weakened after the big retreat from Mons and the subsequent hard fighting on the Marne and Aisne, so immediately on its arrival the 18th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. W. N. Congreve, V.C.) was ordered to relieve the 2nd Infantry Brigade on the right of the British line. The front taken over ran diagonally from north-east to south-west along the high ground just south of the Chemin des Dames to the north and north-east of Troyon. The East Yorks on the left relieved in daylight on the 19th September the D.L.I., and the West Yorks during the night of the 19/20th September. The West Yorks had two companies in front trenches, one company echeloned in right rear and one company in support. The Sherwood Foresters were in reserve.

At dawn on the 20th September, the enemy delivered a heavy attack on the I Corps and on the French left, driving in the Tirailleurs d'Afrique and turning the flank of the West Yorks. The echeloned company formed front to the flank, and the supporting company followed suit. The Germans annihilated the right front company, and, using the white flag ruse, apparently captured some of the next company. Major Ingles, collecting a proportion of the front companies, withdrew a short

distance and counter-attacked, but was unsuccessful and lost his life in this gallant endeavour. At about 1 p.m. a counter-attack was delivered by the Sherwood Foresters, who were in Brigade Reserve, the support company of the West Yorks, under Lt.-Col. Towsey, and a squadron of the 18th Hussars from Paissy. These, advancing over the perfectly open ground, recaptured the trenches and gallantly held them against further attacks. In this affair the West Yorks suffered casualties amounting approximately to 15 officers and 600 other ranks, the Sherwood Foresters also losing 12 officers and 180 other ranks. The temporary loss of the trenches by the West Yorks exposed the trenches of the D.L.I. to enfilade machine-gun fire, from which they had considerable casualties, including Majors Mander and Robb. This was the only serious fighting in which the Division was engaged, but a certain amount of trouble was caused by the arrival of guns from Antwerp which fired "Black Marias," and the enfilade gun and machine-gun fire to which portions of the main line lent themselves.

On the 21st September the 17th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. W. R. B. Doran) relieved the 6th Infantry Brigade and the 4th Guards Brigade on the front Fort de Metz-La Cour de Soupir, and held the portion without much incident till 2nd October, when they were withdrawn into Corps Reserve.

The 16th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. E. C. Ingouville-Williams) relieved the 7th and 9th Infantry Brigades to the north-east of Vailly on the 21st/22nd September, and remained in trenches until 12th October, some time after the rest of the Division had gone north. They received the thanks of the II Corps for their soldierly conduct. The divisional artillery (Brig.-Gen. W. H. L. Paget) was in support of the 5th Division opposite Missy, but only the 2nd Brigade was engaged. It had already been re-organized since mobilization by the inclusion, in each of 12th, 24th and 38th Brigades, of a battery of 4.5-in. howitzers.

The Battle of the Aisne marked the commencement of trench warfare, and the Royal Engineers (Lt.-Col. G. C. Kemp, C.R.E.) were employed to some extent in wiring at night.

CHAPTER III

MOVE TO THE NORTH AND FIRST BATTLE OF YPRES

1914

The diminishing pressure of the Germans on the Aisne had made it evident that an attempt by them to reach the Channel ports would be made very soon. This would best be frustrated by an outflanking movement of the Allies to the north, with the ultimate aim of joining hands with the Belgian Army at that time holding Antwerp. Sir John French was most anxious to place the British Army in its original position on the left of the French, as it was based on Boulogne, Calais and Dunkirk.

The II British Corps was the first to move from the Aisne and prolonged the French line towards La Bassée; the I and III Corps extending inwards to relieve it. Next followed the III Corps, relieved by the French and destined to take its place north of the II Corps towards Bailleul.

The Cavalry Corps advanced north of the III Corps towards Kemmel, and at a later date the I Corps, handing over to the French, was moved towards Ypres, while the 7th Division, just arrived in France, was directed on Menin.

The III Corps consisted of the 4th and 6th Divisions under Lt.-Gen. Pulteney. The period 6th to 9th October was occupied in the march to the entraining station near Compiègne. The Division detrained at St. Omer on 10th October, and was joined by the 19th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. Hon. F. Gordon), which remained with it until 31st May 1915. The battalions composing this brigade were 2nd R.W.F., 1st Cameronians, 1st Middlesex, 2nd A. and S. Highlanders. The 5th Cameronians were added on 19th November 1914.

On the 12th October the Division marched to Hazebrouck, where it covered the detrainment of the 4th Division and came into touch with the enemy. The latter, consisting of two Cavalry Divisions with some Jäger (Rifle) Battalions, and at least one Division of the XIX Corps, were fighting a rearguard action until such time as they should be reinforced. The character of the advance may be illustrated by an incident on the 14th October, when a platoon of the 1st R.F. (of the Reserve Brigade) was detailed to rescue General Keir's car, which had run into snipers near Merris. Fortunately the G.O.C. was not in it. The reinforcement by the enemy occurred on the 20th October, on which date began the Battle of Ypres-Armentières, generally called the First Battle of Ypres. As far as the Division was concerned this took place on the western portion of the ridge between Armentières and Lille, and resulted in the Division being forced back from the line Préniesques-Radinghem (almost on top of the ridge) to the low ground Rue du Bois-La Boutillerie after very fierce continuous fighting from 20th to 31st October, in which the Division suffered nearly 4,000 casualties. To revert, on 13th October the III Corps advanced with the 4th Division on the left and the 6th Division on the right. An action took place on the line of the Méteren Brook, commencing at 1 p.m. and continuing till dark, when the 17th and 18th Infantry Brigades had captured Méteren and Bailleul with about 400 casualties. Pushing forward, the 17th Infantry Brigade crossed the River Lys at Bac St. Maur, and the 18th Infantry Brigade at Sailly on the night 15/16th October, and approached on the 17th the ridge west of Lille, where the enemy were reported to be entrenched. The 16th Infantry Brigade now rejoined the Division from the Aisne, and on the 18th October a reconnaissance in force was ordered, which was brilliantly carried out. The Buffs and Y. and L. on the right captured Radinghem without much opposition, and advanced across a small plateau, 300 yards in width, towards the woods in which stands the Château de Flandres. They here came under a heavy cross-fire of machine-guns and shrapnel, and were counter-attacked and driven back. The situation, however, was saved by Major Bayley's company of the Y. and L., which had worked round on the left and threatened the flank of the counter-attack, which thereon withdrew. The Y. and L. suffered considerable casualties in this little action--Major Robertson being killed. Meanwhile the 18th Infantry Brigade had captured Ennetières and the south end of Capinghem, while the 17th Infantry Brigade reached Prêmesques, but was unable to take Pérenchies. The 4th Division had not been able to cross the Lys north of Armentières, which necessitated the 17th Infantry Brigade throwing back its flank to l'Epinette. On the 19th October the Division entrenched on the line it had won. To the right were French cavalry and cyclists, covering the gap between the right of the III Corps and the left of the I Corps near Aubers. The advance from Hazebrouck to the ridge had occupied six days, and cost the Division some 750 casualties.

On the morning of the 20th October the Germans attacked very heavily on the whole front. Fighting on a very extended front (five miles) and with very little in hand, the Division was soon in difficulties, particularly on the exposed left flank, where the Leinsters had their three left companies quickly driven in, and the situation at midday was critical. One company with the machine-guns was able to hold on until the afternoon at Mont de Prêmesques, and to withdraw under cover of darkness, having inflicted heavy loss on the enemy. Meanwhile units of other brigades were putting up a gallant fight against great odds, each unit generally with one or both flanks unsupported. At Ennetières, which formed rather a salient, the Sherwood Foresters held out all day, but were attacked at dusk by three battalions and practically annihilated or captured, only the CO., Adjutant, Q.M. and 250 other ranks remaining the next day.

The Buffs, after a splendid fight, were driven out of Radinghem, and by night the Division was practically back on the line which it was to hold for the next few months, and on which the German offensive of 1918 still found the British. Continuous unsuccessful attempts to break through occurred

till 31st October, when trench warfare set in. Notable among these was the attack on the K.S.L.I. and Y. and L. on the 23rd October, when 300 enemy dead were left in front of our trenches; on the 18th Infantry Brigade on the night of the 27/28th October, when the enemy captured the line, but was driven out by a counter-attack, in which the East Yorks specially distinguished themselves; and on the night of the 29/30th October, when the 19th Infantry Brigade lost some trenches, but counter-attacked successfully, and counted 200 German dead. The incident of Cpl. Forward, 1st The Buffs, is typical of the fierce fighting. On 30th October, when the O.C. machine-guns of The Buffs and all the team had been killed or wounded, this gallant N.C.O. continued to fire his gun until eventually wounded in five places, when he crawled back to report the situation. He was rewarded with the D.C.M. During the whole period, 20th to 30th October, the guns were woefully short of ammunition, and consequently a greater strain was thrown on the infantry.

CHAPTER IV

ARMENTIÈRES 1914-15

Active fighting now died away on this front, but its place was taken by constant shelling and the deadly sniping which claimed so many victims at this time. The weather during November and December was truly appalling. All trenches were knee-deep and more in mud and water, and it is on record that the B.G.C., 19th Infantry Brigade, had his boots sucked off by the mud and went round trenches without them. Parapets would not stand and were so flimsy that many men were shot through them. But the weather eventually improved, material for revetment began to appear, and by the commencement of 1915 it was possible to move in the trenches in comparative safety.

The next few months were uneventful ones, the only incidents worthy of remark being a visit from the King on the 2nd December; a minor operation by the North Staffordshire Regiment on the 12th March, resulting in the inclusion in our line of the unsavoury Epinette Salient; the sudden move of the 16th Infantry Brigade to Vlamertinghe at the time of the enemy's attack at St. Eloi in the middle of March, and a little mining and counter-mining on the Frelinghien and Le Touquet fronts in May. The minor operation at l'Epinette was a very well-planned night affair, whereby the 17th Infantry Brigade advanced their line 200-300 yards on a frontage of half a mile. It was carried out by the 1st Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment and 12th Field Company, and Sir H. Smith-Dorrien (Army Commander), in congratulating the regiment, mentioned particularly Lieuts. Pope and Gordon for fine leading. But if there was no heavy fighting, the trench casualties from sniping and enemy shell-fire were quite considerable (see Appendix). We had practically no artillery ammunition with which to worry the enemy, as the following extract from the Divisional War Diary shows:--

24th April 1915.--"In view of the fighting in progress in the north (Second Battle of Ypres) the Corps Commander allots an extra ten rounds of shrapnel per gun for 18-pounders with a view to making a demonstration by fire to hold the enemy in front of us." Amusing reading in 1919!

The Division continued to hold a quiet but very extended front till the end of May, receiving a succession of units from new Divisions to serve their apprenticeship to trench warfare.

Amongst our visitors, during this period, were units of the 9th Division, and some of those who have read Ian Hay's *The First Hundred Thousand* will have recognized in it a description of a part of the trenches of the 19th Infantry Brigade.

During this period the four brigades each received a fifth Territorial Battalion--the Queen's Westminsters joining on the 11th November and being allotted to the 18th Infantry Brigade; the 5th

Scottish Rifles, who went to the 19th Infantry Brigade, joining on the 19th November; the 2nd Battalion London Regiment joining the 17th Infantry Brigade in February, and the 5th Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment the 16th Infantry Brigade on the 15th of that month. The 38th Field Company left the Division on the 9th April, and on the 21st December 1914 the 1st London Field Company, later the 509th, began its long connection with the 6th Division. The Division lost its squadron of the 19th Hussars, receiving in its place "C" squadron of the Northamptonshire Yeomanry.

It was during the sojourn in Armentières that the "Fancies," without mention of whom no history of the Division would be complete, came into being. With the "Follies," the 4th Division troupe, formed a few weeks before them, also in Armentières, they were the forerunners of the Divisional theatrical troupes which subsequently became universal.

At Armentières also took place the first 6th Divisional Horse Show, a highly successful two-day show--the first of its kind held in the B.E.F.

On the 27th May 1915 began the relief of the Division by the 27th Division, and on the following days its move northwards to join the newly formed VI Corps. Major-Gen. Sir John Keir left on the 27th to take up command of the new corps, taking with him--as B.G., R.A.--Brig.-Gen. W. H. L. Paget.

Major-Gen. W. N. Congreve, V.C., from the 18th Infantry Brigade, succeeded Sir John Keir in command of the Division; Brig.-Gen. Humphreys taking the appointment of C.R.A.

CHAPTER V

YPRES SALIENT

1915-16

On the night of the 31st May/1st June the Division took over its new front in the Ypres Salient, commencing its long tour in that unsavoury region, and trench casualties almost doubled immediately. It continued in the Salient up to the end of July 1916, with three periods of rest, each of about a month's duration: the first spent in the neighbourhood of Houtkerque and Poperinghe, in November and December 1915; the second in the Houtkerque-Wormhoudt area, with one brigade at a time back at Calais from mid-March to mid-April 1916; and the third again in the Houtkerque-Wormhoudt area from mid-June to mid-July 1916. The nature of these rests has been humorously but not untruthfully portrayed in the columns of *Punch*; the author of "At the Front" in that paper having been an officer in the K.S.L.I.

The line was just hardening after the Second Battle of Ypres when the Division moved up to the Salient, and no active operations took place on the actual front taken over by the Division, but its artillery was called upon to assist its neighbours on either flank, i.e. on the 16th June when the 3rd Division attacked Bellewarde Farm north-west of Hooze; on the 22nd June when the 42nd Infantry Brigade of the 14th Division attempted a small operation, and on the 6th July when the 4th Division carried out a successful minor operation near Pilkem.

On the 30th July the 14th Division was attacked at Hooze and driven back to Sanctuary and Zouave Woods. Their counter-attacks, gallantly delivered, but under the circumstances giving very little prospect of success, failed, and for a time the situation was critical. The 16th Infantry Brigade was moved up to the area about Goldfish Château (half-mile north-west of Ypres) as a precautionary measure, and was at one time in danger of being thrown in to make a hasty counter-attack. Fortunately this proved unnecessary, and on the 31st July the Corps Commander decided to relieve the whole Division, and to allot to it the task of restoring the line at Hooze in a carefully prepared attack.

The relief was carried out on the 2nd and 3rd August 1915, and on the 6th the Division took over its front of attack, and the preparatory bombardment was commenced. This bombardment was very carefully planned, carried out with great thoroughness and accuracy, and was one of the most effective and severe that had, up to that time, been put down by the British. The artillery co-operation in the attack was on a similar scale and equally effective, except so far as counter-battery work against enemy artillery to the south was concerned, and the attack owed much of its success to the assistance it received from the artillery. To this assistance two French batteries of "75's," lent by the 36th French Corps, ably contributed.

The attack was launched on the 9th August at 3.15 a.m. on a front of about 1,000 yards--the 18th Infantry Brigade (Lt.-Col. F. W. Towsey) attacking on the right with the 2nd D.L.I. in front line and the 2nd Sherwood Foresters in support, the 16th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. C. Nicholson) on the left, with the 1st K.S.L.I. and the 2nd Y. and L. Regiment in front line, and the 1st The Buffs in support.

The attack was completely successful; all objectives were quickly gained. A very large number of German dead were counted in the recaptured position, and a considerable number of prisoners taken. The captured position was subjected to a very heavy bombardment, especially on the right; principally by guns firing from the south-east, not opposite the corps front, which took the new line in flank and often in reverse. The troops of the 18th Infantry Brigade held on to their positions with their usual gallantry and determination, in spite of very heavy casualties. The 2nd D.L.I. particularly distinguished themselves by the tenacity they displayed, and they and the 2nd Sherwood Foresters and 1st East Yorkshire Regiment suffered severely. In face of the heavy shelling it was found impossible on the right to establish a line on the final objective, where all the former trenches had been entirely obliterated. The advanced troops had accordingly to be withdrawn on this flank, but some time after this withdrawal was thought to have been completed a message was received from a Lance-Corporal of the 2nd D.L.I. to the effect that he was established in the stables of the château with a few men, and asking that rations and ammunition might be sent up to them. On the left not only was all the ground lost on the 30th July regained, but an important spur north of the Menin Road, which had hitherto been in German occupation, was included in the final position consolidated. Three officers and 124 other ranks were taken prisoners, and over 500 of the enemy were counted dead on the captured ground. The gallant work of the R.E. in wiring the position was specially mentioned in the accounts from G.H.Q. which appeared in the papers.

The attack at Hooze was particularly interesting, as it was the first attempt made to follow the barrage really closely. The barrage did not, however, "creep" up to the German front line, but was placed directly on it at once at zero and lifted back from there, the 6-in. howitzers lifting slightly before the Field Artillery. The infantry lay out as close to the barrage as possible before zero, and moved in *on time* as soon as the Field Artillery barrage lifted. The attack was looked upon for some time as a model of really close co-operation between infantry and artillery.

For this operation, skilfully planned and most gallantly and successfully carried out, the Division received great praise. The casualties were 70 officers and 1,700 other ranks. (A very full account of this operation can be found in the fourth volume of *The Great World War*, published by the Gresham Publishing Company, Limited.)

Other incidents of the tour in the Salient were the gallant voluntary assistance rendered on the 6th July 1915 by Lieut. Smith, 1st North Staffords (died of wounds), with his grenadier party to a post of the 41st Brigade which was being heavily attacked, and which brought him the thanks of General Allenby, commanding V Corps; the enemy gas attack of 19th December 1915, when no actual attack

was launched against the Division, and the minor operations near Turco Farm and Morteldje Estaminet on 19th-22nd April 1916. Certain trenches, D20 and 21 and Willow Walk, were much overlooked by High Command Redoubt, some 150 yards away. The Germans throughout the 19th April heavily bombarded these trenches, and succeeded in seizing them at night. One company 8th Bedfords and two companies Y. and L. delivered a counter-attack in the early hours of 20th April, but could not retake the position. The Brigadier-General therefore decided to bombard them steadily throughout the 21st, and recapture them on the night 21st/22nd April with three companies of the K.S.L.I., then in Brigade Reserve. This was brilliantly accomplished in spite of the very heavy going, and the line firmly re-established, but with the loss of Lt.-Col. Luard, commanding K.S.L.I., who died of wounds. It was found that the enemy had dug good new trenches in several places, and equipped them with steel loop-hole plates, and these were occupied thankfully by our men. The general state of the trenches, commanded as they were by the enemy's positions, in the water-logged Ypres Salient during the winter of 1915-1916 defies description, and all praise must be given to the regimental officers and men for their hard work and cheerfulness under most depressing conditions.

Mention must be made of the thirty-five-mile march to Croix Dubac to assist in an extensive raid by the Anzac Corps, made by the 24th Brigade, R.F.A., at the shortest notice. The brigade was away ten days.

During this period the principal change which occurred in the Order of Battle of the Division was the arrival of the 71st Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. M. Shewen) instead of the 17th Infantry Brigade, which took the place of the former in the 24th Division. Consequent on this was a redistribution of battalions to brigades--the 1st Leicestershire Regiment, from the 16th Infantry Brigade, and the 2nd Sherwood Foresters, from the 18th Infantry Brigade, being transferred to the 71st Infantry Brigade in exchange for the 8th Bedfordshire Regiment and the 11th Essex Regiment respectively. These exchanges took place--the former on the 18th November 1915, the latter on the 28th October 1915. On 1st April the 11th Leicestershire Regiment (Pioneers) joined from the United Kingdom.

On the 11th June the 5th Loyal North Lancashire Regiment left the Division, and on 11th October the 2nd London Regiment; on the 26th November the 1st East Yorkshire Regiment was transferred to the 1st Division, and on the 28th November the Queen's Westminsters left to join the 56th Division, the 14th D.L.I. arriving the same day to take their place in the 18th Infantry Brigade. On the 13th October the 2/2nd West Riding (later the 459th) Field Company joined. Machine-gun companies took their place--the 18th M.G.C. in January, the 16th M.G.C. in February, and the 71st M.G.C. in March 1916. Medium T.M.s came into being in May 1916, and L.T.M.s in August 1916. The cyclist company and the squadron of Northamptonshire Yeomanry also left during this period on becoming Corps troops.

The changes in the Divisional Artillery were numerous. On 12th May the 12th Brigade, R.F.A., was broken up--the 87th Battery going to the 2nd Brigade, and the 43rd Battery to the 24th Brigade; each battery giving one section to form "D" Battery, 38th Brigade, which latter replaced the 34th Battery transferred on 15th February to a T.F. Division. The 86th Battery had previously been transferred from the 12th Brigade, R.F.A., to another Division. The 38th Brigade later became an Army Brigade, R.F.A.

On the 14th November 1915 Major-Gen. C. Ross, D.S.O., assumed command of the Division, on the appointment of Major-Gen. W. N. Congreve, V.C., to the command of the XIII Corps. Lt.-Col. J. M. Shea (now Major-Gen. Sir J. M. Shea, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.) was succeeded as G.S.O.1 on the 5th July 1915 by Lt.-Col. G. F. Boyd, D.S.O., D.C.M., who finished the war as Major-General commanding the 46th Division. On the 29th February 1916 Major W. E. Ironside, who has since

reached the position of Major-General commanding the Allied Forces at Archangel, was succeeded as G.S.O.2 by Major L. P. Evans of the Black Watch, who subsequently, after winning the V.C. as a Battalion Commander, finished the War in command of an Infantry Brigade.

A history of the Division would hardly be complete without a short reference to "The Admiral." Many of those who knew and liked him well by that name probably never knew him by any other. Lieut. Smith was an owner driver in charge of a convoy of "buses with the Royal Naval Division at Antwerp, whence he escaped to France. In October 1914 he seized the opportunity of an officer requiring to be taken up to join his unit, to make his way with his car to the front. Arrived there he contrived to get himself attached to the 6th Division Headquarters, remaining with them until he was reported missing on the 10th June 1916. Consumed with a good healthy hatred of the enemy, and keen to be of assistance in any way that he could, he devoted the greater part of the time he was with the Division to experimenting with bullet-proof shields on wheels to be propelled by manpower, a sort of embryonic tank. His ambition was himself to take the first of these into action. At last he was offered an opportunity of co-operating with a small 3-man pattern in a minor raid near Forward Cottage. What success he might have achieved it is impossible to say, as in his eagerness he preceded the shield by several yards to show the crew the way and was hit in the neck by a splinter from a bomb. The name of Admiral's Road, given to the road past Crossroads Farm and Forward Cottage, commemorates the incident of which it was the scene. Later "The Admiral" turned his attention to Bangalore torpedoes, in the use of which he trained the unauthorised party which had long existed under the name of the 6th Division Shield Party. With them he took part in many raids and minor enterprises, one of which earned him the D.S.O. On the 10th June he was reported missing from a patrol of the 9th Norfolk Regiment, and nothing has since been heard of him. For nearly two years he contrived to serve voluntarily with the Division, nobody quite knows in what capacity or by what authority, and during that time he endeared himself to all by his unfailing good nature and cheeriness, his whole-hearted enthusiasm and his lack of fear.

It may here be mentioned that during its last "rest" the Division carried out very hard training over dummy trenches for an attack on the Pilkem Ridge, in conjunction with the Guards. This attack was abandoned when the Division moved to the Somme, but it formed the basis of the very successful attack delivered by the Guards and Welsh Divisions in July 1917.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOMME 1916

At the end of July the Division was at last relieved from the Salient, where it had suffered nearly 11,000 casualties during its thirteen months' sojourn, and went south by train to join the Fifth Army.

The greater part of August was spent on the Ancre, on the front opposite Beaumont-Hamel, making preparations for an attack which was eventually abandoned for a time.

After a short period in reserve the Division was moved, between 6th and 8th September, to join the XIV Corps, Fourth Army (Lt.-Gen. Lord Cavan), to which corps it had for some time belonged up north. The XIV Corps was the right corps of the British attack, and had its right on the north bank of the Somme. In a succession of hard-fought battles the Fourth Army (Gen. Sir H. S. Rawlinson) had pushed the Germans back a considerable distance; units were feeling the strain badly, and fresh troops were needed.

On 9th September a successful attack had given us Ginchy and Leuze Wood, but the Germans

were holding very strongly the high ground which lies in the form of a horseshoe between the above-named points, and which dominates the country for some distance to the south. The trenches followed the shape of the spur roughly at the back end of the horseshoe, and covered access was given to them by a sunken road leading back to the deep valley which runs north from Combles.

At the top of the spur, just south of the railway and communicating with the sunken road, was a four-sided trench in the form of a parallelogram of some 300 yards by 150 yards, called by us the Quadrilateral.

It was this strong point and the adjoining trenches which had held up the advance of the Fourth Army on the 9th September, and it was the first task of the 6th Division to obliterate the horseshoe and straighten the line preparatory to a general attack on the 15th September.

On 12th September attacks by the 56th Division on the south and the Guards on the north reduced the neck of the horseshoe, or pocket, to about 500 yards, but could not close it. The situation within the horseshoe was undefined, and the exact positions of the Quadrilateral and other trenches were not known, owing to the bad flying weather. Even our own positions were in doubt, as almost every vestige of roads, railways and even villages had disappeared under the continuous bombardments.

On night 11/12th September the 71st Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. J. F. Edwards) relieved part of the Guards Division and the 16th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. W. L. Osborn), part of the 56th Division, with orders on the 13th September to straighten the line by capturing the Quadrilateral. The 71st Infantry Brigade attacked with the Foresters north of the railway and 9th Suffolk Regiment south of the railway, while the 8th Bedford Regiment, who were close to the Quadrilateral on the north-east of the Leuze Wood, co-operated by bombing up the trench towards it. The artillery co-operation was weak, observation being difficult, and though the troops advanced with the greatest gallantry the northern attack could only make 500 yards, and the southern attack of the 71st Infantry Brigade still less, while casualties from the enemy artillery and machine-gun fire were very large.

A second attack at 6 p.m. the same day succeeded in bringing our line to about 250 yards from the Strong Point, and in getting touch on the right with the 16th Infantry Brigade.

Preparations were now made to include the Quadrilateral in the general attack of the 15th September instead of making it a subsidiary operation--a situation which recurred two years later almost to a day in the attack on Holnon Village, and which had similar results.

The British objective for the 15th September was Gueudecourt-Flers-Lesboeufs-Morval--the XIV Corps (Guards and 6th Division) to capture the two latter. It was the first occasion on which tanks were employed, and as far as the Division was concerned was a failure, for of the three allotted to the 6th Division two broke down before starting, and the third, moving off in accordance with orders long before the infantry, had its periscope shot off, its peep-holes blinded, was riddled by armour-piercing bullets, and had to come back without achieving anything. This again found a parallel in the attack on the Quadrilateral, near St. Quentin, on 18th September 1918, when the tanks were ineffective.

To facilitate the movement of the tanks a gap of about 200 yards had been left in the creeping barrage. This gap unfortunately coincided with the strongest point of the Quadrilateral. The barrage, moreover, had passed over the German trenches by the time the infantry advanced; the latter had, consequently, to attack up the glacis-like slopes without any artillery support except the bombardment. This, owing to the enemy's trenches not having been accurately located, was ineffective.

The 16th Infantry Brigade attacked on a battalion front--one company of the Bedfords bombing up the trench from Leuze Wood, and the remainder over the open to the north against the south-west face.

The Buffs and York and Lancasters supported the attack, but in spite of the greatest gallantry could not take the Strong Point.

The 1st Leicesters and the Norfolks, passing through the entrenched Foresters and Suffolks, attacked the Quadrilateral from the north-west with equal drive, but they too failed. Some ground, however, was made, and by 10 a.m. the 16th Infantry Brigade on the south, and the 71st Infantry Brigade on the north, were digging in close to the enemy's wire and trenches.

During the day constant reports arrived that the Guards had gained their objectives, and that tanks and cheering men were moving through Lesboeufs. It was not until the following morning that this report was proved to be incorrect, and that it was Flers which had been captured. In the meantime it appeared to the Divisional G.O.C. (General Ross) that the prospect of a break-through on a large scale was prejudiced solely by the repulse of the 6th Division. He therefore ordered a night attack on the flanks of the Quadrilateral to be executed by two battalions of the 18th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. R. J. Bridgford). These battalions, the 2nd Durham Light Infantry and the 11th Essex, moved round after dark and attacked; the former from the north, the latter from the south-east to the left of the 16th Infantry Brigade. The 11th Essex lost direction, while the 2nd D.L.I. bombed down a trench only to find that it did not lead into the Strong Point. Except on the 6th Divisional front and at High Wood, which was captured during the night, the whole line had advanced, and it was a bitter blow to the Division to think that their sacrifices had been in vain.

On the night of the 16/17th September the 18th Infantry Brigade relieved the sorely-tried 71st Infantry Brigade, and fresh preparations were made for an attack, on the 18th, of the Quadrilateral, which had been strongly reinforced by the enemy through the sunken road.

The K.S.L.I. dug themselves in with their left on the railway, so as to assault the south-west face of the Strong Point. The weather having cleared, the trenches were now carefully located from the air and heavily bombarded, and on the 18th September, under both a stationary and creeping barrage, and with the York and Lancasters bombing up the trench from Leuze Wood, and the 18th Infantry Brigade (West Yorks and 14th Durham Light Infantry) attacking the north-west face and the trench running north from the Quadrilateral, this redoubtable Strong Point was at last captured with comparatively small loss after what must be conceded as a magnificent defence, and which had cost the Division upwards of 3,500 casualties. Nine machine-guns and 160 unwounded prisoners were taken in the Quadrilateral and many Germans killed.

The Quadrilateral once captured, the advance was carried forward for 1,000 yards to within half a mile of Morval and Lesboeufs. These, which were the original objectives on the 13th September, were now to be attacked on the 25th September. Relieved for rest on the 16th, the Division came in again on 21st September, and dug good assembly trenches. The most forward portion of the line taken over by the Division consisted of 250 yards of one of the main German trenches, which was held by the Germans on both flanks for some distance. Fortunately we were in possession of the communication trench leading up to it, and during the three nights after taking over considerable excitement and amusement were caused by the occasional arrival of German ration parties at our part of the trench, having failed to hit off the part occupied by their own troops. Uttering many guttural oaths these fled for their lives, speeded up by our machine and Lewis guns. A few prisoners were captured in this way, and some valuable information obtained. Spurred on apparently by the loss of their rations, the Germans attacked on the 24th September both flanks of this trench under cover of a mist, but were driven back without reaching it, except on the extreme right. Here they entered a bombing post, but were ejected, leaving one officer and twelve other ranks dead and an unwounded prisoner, while our casualties were practically nil.

The objective allotted to the Division for the 25th September was the ground between the north end of Morval (attacked by 5th Division) and the road which passes through the centre of Lesboeufs. At 12.35 p.m. the attack was launched--the 16th Infantry Brigade on the right gaining the first objective with the Buffs, and the final objective with K.S.L.I. and the Y. and L. On the left the 2nd D.L.I. and the Essex captured the first objective, and the West Yorks and two companies 14th D.L.I. the final objective. This was one of the most successful battles on the Somme--thanks to good weather and observation, a carefully arranged creeping barrage, and a sound preliminary bombardment.

The Division captured over 500 prisoners, 6 machine-guns, and 4 heavy trench-mortars. Tanks were not used. We here turned the tables on the 52nd Division, 26th Reserve Corps, our old opponents at Ypres, where the ground was all in their favour and where they had proved troublesome antagonists.

After consolidating its ground the Division was relieved by the 20th Division on 30th September, and the long struggle began for the possession of the high ground overlooking the Bapaume-Le Transloy Road.

On 7th October the XIV Corps (20th and 56th Divisions) attacked with only partial success, and the 6th Division was brought in again on night 8/9th October for a general attack on the 12th October. The enemy had dug a series of trenches named by us Rainbow--Cloudy--Misty--Zenith, etc., a portion of which had been captured by us, making a somewhat pronounced salient. All three brigades were in the line, with one battalion in front trenches, the 71st Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. E. Feetham) being in the salient, with the 16th Infantry Brigade on the right and the 18th Infantry Brigade on the left. The objective of the attack of the 12th October was the line of trenches running north from Le Transloy.

At 2.5 p.m. the flank brigades attacked, but with only partial success. The failure to make ground, which was general all along the British front, was attributed to want of surprise, as we had bombarded the position for two days, and always attacked in the early afternoon. Further, the ground was very heavy and observation extremely bad. The Germans were fresh troops, and fought well. Perhaps more than anything it was due to the effect of their machine-gun fire. Taught by our creeping barrage that machine-guns in the front line were useless, the enemy had drawn them across the valley towards the road, and caught our advance over the brow of the rise with accurate distant machine-gun fire.

Changing the time of zero, the attack was renewed at 5.35 a.m. on the 15th October, the 18th Infantry Brigade on the left (2nd D.L.I. and 11th Essex) attempting to seize those portions of Cloudy and Mild trenches still held by the enemy, while the Sherwood Foresters on their right attacked some gun pits which lay about 200 yards in front of their line. This latter attack succeeded, but with the great loss of Colonel Hobbs, O.C. The Foresters, who died of his wounds. The left attack made a little ground. A final attempt to push forward the line was made on the 18th October by the 9th Norfolks, but was only partially successful.

On 20th October the Division (less artillery) was relieved and moved to the First Army, going into Corps Reserve of the I Corps, with Divisional Headquarters at Béthune and the units in the town and surrounding area.

The artillery of the Division (Brig.-Gen. E. S. Cleeve, C.R.A.) had first come into action on the Somme on the 3rd September, supporting the attack of the 16th Division on Guillemont. It was grouped and re-grouped in accordance with the requirements of the situation, but never as a whole covered the operations of the Division.

On the 9th November it was withdrawn and marched to First Army area, where for about a month it covered the 56th Division, XI Corps, with 6th D.A.H.Q. at La Gorgue, rejoining the Division in I

Corps in December. Brig.-Gen. E. F. Delaforce replaced Brig.-Gen. Cleeve as C.R.A. on 25th October.

The Division had taken part as a whole in three general attacks on the Somme (15th and 25th September and 12th October), and had also carried out subordinate operations on 13th and 18th September and 18th October.

It had suffered casualties amounting to 277 officers and 6,640 other ranks, and had well earned a rest.

CHAPTER VII

LOOS SALIENT

1916-17

On 25th November the Division took over the La Bassée sector, which included the famous Givenchy Ridge and Cuinchy Brickstacks. After about a month it side-stepped to the Cambrin-Hohenzollern Quarries front of about 5,500 yards, where it remained until the 28th February 1917. All this front had a most evil repute, but so exhausted was the enemy by the Somme fighting that this four months' trench sojourn proved the quietest the Division ever experienced, except before the storm of March 1918, and the casualties would have been far fewer had it not been for several raids carried out by us.

The machine-guns of the Division were strengthened on 15th December by the arrival of the 192nd M.G. Company, and on 2nd January 1917 Lt.-Col. G. F. B. Goldney, D.S.O., succeeded Lt.-Col. H. R. S. Christie as C.R.E., the latter having been nearly a year with the Division.

On the 1st March the Division took over a 11,000 yards' front extending north from the Double Crassier at Loos with sectors Loos--14bis--Hulluch--Hohenzollern, all three brigades being in line and a brigade of the 21st Division also which came under the command of G.O.C., 6th Division.

March and the first portion of April were notable for raids and counter-raids, and for considerable artillery and trench-mortar activity, which gave place to more or less continuous fighting consequent on the withdrawal of the enemy opposite the right of the Division after the successful attack by the Canadians at Vimy.

Notice was received on the morning of the 13th April that a withdrawal was contemplated by the enemy opposite part of the Divisional front. The right section of the front was at that time held by the 16th Infantry Brigade, with the 2nd York and Lancaster Regiment on its right. On the 13th April the withdrawal commenced, the enemy being so closely followed up by the York and Lancaster Regiment that by 6.20 p.m. the brigade was able to report the Railway Triangle in our occupation, and the whole of the battalion in the enemy's trenches. Our troops were into the enemy's dug-outs before the candles left by them had burnt out.

The policy laid down for the Division was that the enemy was to be closely followed up wherever he fell back, but that our troops were not to be committed to a serious engagement. In accordance with these instructions the enemy's trenches were subjected to heavy bombardment, with pauses during which patrols were sent forward and occupied as much ground as they could. This policy was maintained for four days, during which the 16th Infantry Brigade pressed the enemy with such vigour, within the limits allowed to it, that he was evidently rushed rather farther back than had been his intention, and began to become apprehensive as to his hold on Hill 70. The opposition stiffened on the 15th April, and on the 16th a counter-attack drove the 1st The Buffs back slightly, but was unsuccessful against the 8th Bedfordshire Regiment on the right. An advanced post of the latter

battalion put up a very fine defence and maintained its position. A further attack on this battalion on the following day again failed to shake the defence.

On the 16th April a systematic bombardment of the trenches on Hill 70 was commenced, and authority was given for a slightly greater employment of force. Attacks on the 18th and 19th April, by the 1st K.S.L.I. and the 8th Bedfordshire Regiment, gained some ground and gave us between forty and fifty prisoners.

By this time continuous fighting, under very trying weather conditions, had exhausted the 16th Infantry Brigade. In order to maintain the pressure it became necessary to withdraw battalions from the front of the other brigades and to put them straight in on the offensive front, replacing them by the battalions withdrawn from that front.

An attack by the 14th D.L.I. on the 21st April in conjunction with the left of the 46th Division, who by this time had relieved the 24th on the right of the 6th Division, yielded thirty-five prisoners and two machine-guns, and disposed of a strong machine-gun nest on the Double Crassier Railway which had been holding up our right. Two counter-attacks were repelled, and on the 22nd April the 14th D.L.I. and the 11th Essex Regiment delivered a combined attack. The 14th D.L.I. secured the whole of their objective, with forty-six prisoners and three machine-guns, but the 11th Essex Regiment was unable to gain any ground. The 46th Division had been prevented by uncut wire from co-operating in the attack, with the result that the 14th D.L.I., after enduring a very heavy bombardment with exemplary determination, were eventually sniped and machine-gunned out of the captured line from the houses on their right. Eventually the position stabilized itself, with the enemy in possession of Nash Alley.

During ten days the Division had been engaged in continuous fighting on the front of one brigade, whilst holding with the other two a front of approximately 7,000 yards. Four battalions from other brigades, in addition to its own four, had passed through the hands of the 16th Infantry Brigade which was conducting the fighting. Battalions relieved from the fighting front one night were put straight into the line elsewhere on the following night, and battalions which had already done a long continuous tour in the trenches were relieved one night, put into the fighting front on the following night, and twenty-four hours later had to deliver an attack. The enemy, concerned about the fate of Hill 70, concentrated a very formidable artillery on the narrow front involved, and the bombardments and barrages on the front of attack were of exceptional severity. The extent to which the Division was stretched on the rest of its front is exemplified by two incidents. On one occasion an enemy raid penetrated both our front and support lines without being detected or meeting anyone, and came upon our reserve line by chance at the only place on the front of the brigade concerned where there was one company in that line. At another part of the front it was found, when normal conditions were restored, that in an abandoned part of our front line between two posts, the enemy had actually made himself so much at home that he had established a small dump of rations and bombs.

For the manner in which the Division had followed up and pressed the enemy withdrawal it received the thanks of the Commander-in-Chief.

On the 26th June 1917 the 46th Division was engaged on our right in active operations in the outskirts of Lens. The 2nd Sherwood Foresters and the 9th Norfolk Regiment were placed at the disposal of the 46th Division for these operations. The 9th Norfolk Regiment was not actively engaged, but the 2nd Sherwood Foresters, used in the later stages of the attack, fought with great gallantry and suffered fairly heavily.

On the 25th July the Division was relieved after a continuous tour in the Loos front of just under five months--a period of particularly bitter and severe trench warfare. Trench-mortaring was

continuous on both sides on the greater part of the front held, and shelling heavy. The artillery suffered no less severely than the infantry, owing to the very restricted choice of positions and the advantages of the observation enjoyed by the enemy. Raids and counter-raids were numerous. An analysis of the diary shows that during the six months from the end of January to the end of July the Division carried out 30 raids, of which 13 were successful in obtaining their objective and securing prisoners (total for the 13 raids: 54), 11 secured their objective but failed to yield any prisoners, and only 6 definitely failed. During the same period the enemy attempted 21 raids, of which only 4 succeeded in taking prisoners, 5 entered our trenches without securing any prisoners, and 12 were entire failures. Three of the enemy's attempted raids yielded us prisoners, and 4 yielded identifications. The low average of prisoners taken by us in successful raids is attributable to two causes--first the extraordinary precautions taken by the enemy in the latter part of the period to avoid losing prisoners by evacuating his trenches on the slightest alarm or remaining in his dug-outs, and secondly the fierceness engendered in our troops by the severity of the bombardment, and particularly of the trench-mortaring to which they were normally subjected.

A very successful battalion raid by the 1st The Buffs on the 24th June, which yielded 15 prisoners, might have made a better showing if it had not followed closely on the receipt of the mail containing accounts of an enemy bombing raid on Folkestone.

It is invidious to differentiate among so many carefully prepared and gallantly executed enterprises, but a reference to the successful battalion raid of the 11th Essex Regiment on the 24th March, to the raid carried out by the 14th D.L.I. on the 15th June, in the early morning which caught the Germans at breakfast, and particularly to the combined raid by the 2nd D.L.I. and the 11th Essex Regiment on the 28th June, will perhaps be forgiven. The latter was an exceptionally fine performance. It was carried out in connection with the operations of the 46th Division already referred to, by one company from each of the two battalions. Everything possible had been done beforehand to induce the enemy to expect attack on the front of the Division, yet these two companies succeeded in establishing and maintaining themselves for one hour in the enemy's line, though constantly counter-attacked. They inflicted very heavy casualties on the enemy, who counter-attacked both over the open and by bombing along the trenches. It was on this occasion that 2/Lieut. F. B. Wearne, late 11th Essex Regiment, won the V.C. Mention ought also to be made of the very gallant repulse of an enemy raid by the 1st K.S.L.I. and the 1st The Buffs on the 7th July. In one post of the 1st K.S.L.I. one wounded Lewis gunner, the only survivor of his post from the enemy bombardment, kept his gun in action and beat off the raiders.

On the 25th July the Division was relieved by the Canadians, with a view to an attack by the latter on Hill 70, and withdrew into rest in the Monchy Breton area with Divisional Headquarters at Ourton.

A feature of this period of rest was the very successful two-day rifle meeting, held on the Monchy-Breton Range.

During the month's rest out of the line Major-Gen. Ross left the Division, being succeeded in command by Major-Gen. T. O. Marden, C.M.G., on the 19th August, and Brig.-Gen. Feetham, C.B., C.M.G., left the 71st Infantry Brigade to assume command of the 39th Division, in command of which he was killed in March 1918.

From the 31st July to the 5th August the 1st Leicestershire Regiment and 9th Norfolk Regiment were away from the Division, lent to the 57th Division to assist in a relief at the time of the gas shelling of Armentières.

On the 24th to the 27th August the Division was relieving the Canadians on the Hill 70 front. The

month spent in that sector was one of hard work for all ranks consolidating the newly won position, but was without important incident.

On the 24th September the Division side-stepped into the Cité St. Emile sector just north of Lens, and commenced preparations for an attack north of Lens, to be carried out in conjunction with the projected attack by the Canadian Corps on Sallaumines Hill. This project was, however, abandoned, and on the 23rd October the Division was withdrawn into rest in the St. Hilaire area, west of Lillers.

Six days later it commenced its march south to the Riencourt area, to join the Third Army for the Battle of Cambrai.

The 11th Leicesters (Pioneers) had gone north to the II Corps, to work on light railway construction near Dickebusch on 2nd July 1917. Their absence was much felt by the Division, and in view of the approaching operations they were welcomed back on 6th November, when they brought with them a letter from G.O.C., II Corps (Lt.-Gen. Jacob) congratulating them on their excellent work.

Before leaving the subject of the tour of the Division in the Loos-Lens front, some reference ought to be made to the successes won during that period by the Division in horse shows. After practically sweeping the board in all events at the I Corps show for which it was eligible to enter, the Division secured seven first and eight second prizes at the First Army show, as well as the cup for the best R.A. turn-out presented by G.O.C., R.A., First Army, and also that for the best R.E. turn-out, presented by the C.E., First Army.

The Divisional Ammunition Column secured prizes for the two best teams of mules, the best single mule, and the best light draught horse.

CHAPTER VIII

CAMBRAI

1917

The general situation on the British Western Front in November 1917, though fairly universally known to-day, may now be outlined, and the hopes and aims which led to the Cambrai offensive be touched on shortly. The prolonged and hard-fought attacks in Flanders by the British, and in other portions of the front by the French, had caused the enemy to concentrate his forces in the threatened sectors, denuding those portions of the line which appeared reasonably safe and quiet. The Cambrai sector was included among the latter, for not only was the ground very open, forbidding to us the unseen concentration of the large forces and masses of heavy artillery which at that period were deemed essential, but also the Hindenburg Line was immensely strong and the trenches so wide that the tanks in use by us could not cross them.

This enemy sector was, therefore, particularly suitable for surprise by us, as it was deemed by the enemy to be unassailable.

The Hindenburg Line ran north-west for six miles from the St. Quentin Canal at Banteux to Havrincourt on the Canal du Nord, where it bent sharply north for four miles to Moeuvres, thus making a pronounced salient. The Commander-in-Chief's plan was to smash the salient, to occupy the high ground overlooking Cambrai--notably the Bourlon Wood Ridge--push cavalry through the gap in order to disorganise communications and the arrival of reinforcements, and to roll up the enemy's defences to the north-west.

The French held considerable forces in the immediate vicinity to exploit successes. It was reckoned that the enemy could not reinforce his front under forty-eight hours. Everything depended in the first instance on successful surprise, and in the second on securing within forty-eight hours the

important tactical points within the salient. The difficulties of surprise, which were many and serious, were most successfully overcome, but the enterprise failed eventually because the key points were not seized.

The principal factors operating against success were the limited hours of daylight and the long distances to be traversed both by men and by tanks, which, though vastly improved since 1916, were still very slow. There was also, in the case of securing the high ground west of Cambrai, the canal to be crossed by tanks. While smashing in the enemy's salient we ourselves were making a salient, extending our front, as far as the Third Army was concerned, from a straight 7,000 yards to a curving 15,000 yards, thus affording the enemy a chance of a blow at the sides and hinges of the salient, of which he availed himself to good purpose ten days after our initial attack.

To ensure success the troops which were to undertake operations practised with tanks in back areas, and officers and men went through the operation on a carefully made ground model without being aware what ground it represented. Units were brought up just before the 20th of November, the day of the attack, marching by night and hiding in villages and woods by day. In some cases battalions were quartered in flat canvas erections, looking like ammunition or supply dumps. The 6th Division were fortunate in being in woods and destroyed villages. No unusual activity on ground or in the air was allowed, no guns registered as had been usual, even the Home mails were stopped for a short period, and a screen of the troops which had held the line for some time was kept in front trenches to the last. Under General Byng's initiative the difficulty of tanks crossing the wide Hindenburg Line trenches was overcome by each tank carrying on its brow a huge faggot which it deposited in the trench at its selected crossing-place, and which gave its tail a purchase to enable it to climb the opposite side of the trench. The ground was very suitable for tanks, as it was moderately hard grass land, and the first portion of the attack on much of the front was downhill.

The III Corps (Lt.-Gen. Sir W. Pulteney) was on the right, and consisted of the 12th, 20th, and 6th Divisions, which attacked in the order named. The left corps (IV) consisted of the 51st and 62nd Divisions. These covered the six miles with an average frontage of one and a half miles. The 6th Division attacked on the front Villers Plouich-Beaucamps, with the 71st Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. P. W. Brown) on the left next to the 51st Division, the 16th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. H. A. Walker) on the right next to the 20th Division. These two brigades were to advance about 3,000 yards to the first objective (Ribécourt and spur to south-east of it), and another 1,000 yards to the second objective (support system). The 18th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. G. S. G. Craufurd) was ordered to advance through the 71st Infantry Brigade and secure the third objective about a mile farther on (Premy Chapel Ridge), throwing back a defensive flank towards Flesquières for the further operations of the 51st Division on its left and securing the flank of the 29th Division on its right. The latter division passing through the right of the 6th Division and the left of the 20th Division, was charged with securing the crossings of the St. Quentin Canal at Marcoing and Masnières and seizing the high ground at Rumilly, thus facilitating exploitation to the south-east, preventing a concentration against the widely stretched defensive flanks of the III Corps and threatening Cambrai.

The Divisional Artillery was reinforced during the first part of the operations by the 17th Brigade of the 29th Division and the 181st Brigade of the 40th Division, as well as by two R.H.A. Brigades. Batteries moved into position and camouflaged their guns. No registration could, of course, take place, but long practice enabled the gunners to put down a very accurate barrage without this desideratum.

Opposite the Division the Hindenburg Line commenced with an outpost line 750 yards distant on the left and 250 yards on the right. This was out of sight of our front trenches by reason of the curve of

the ground. Half a mile behind this came the main system, consisting of two trenches 200 yards apart, the whole guarded by most formidable belts of wire about 150 yards in depth. The interval between outpost and main systems was sown with well-sighted and concealed machine gun positions. A mile farther on, and on the opposite side of the valley for the most part, ran the support system, similar to the main system. One and a half miles farther back again was the reserve system, of which only machine-gun dug-outs were completed, and a small amount of wire had been erected.

Two battalions of tanks, each of thirty-six tanks, were allotted to the Division. "B" Battalion (Lt.-Col. E. D. Bryce, D.S.O.) operated with the 16th Infantry Brigade, and "H" Battalion (Lt.-Col. Hon. C. Willoughby) with the 71st Infantry Brigade. The 18th Infantry Brigade advanced without tanks. The only points which caused anxiety, provided that the tanks functioned satisfactorily, were Couillet Wood on the right of the 16th Infantry Brigade front, in which tanks could not operate, and Ribécourt Village on the left of the 71st Infantry Brigade front.

The former was successfully cleared by the Buffs, and the latter gallantly captured by the 9th Norfolk Regiment; the 11th Essex clearing and securing it for the advance of the 18th Infantry Brigade, while the 71st Infantry Brigade attacked the second objective.

The 18th Infantry Brigade pushed through the 71st Infantry Brigade and secured Premy Chapel Ridge in good time, and rendered great assistance to the 51st Division on our left, who were held up at Flesquières by guns in the valley picking off the tanks one by one as they breasted the ridge. The West Yorks and the 2nd D.L.I. each charged over the Premy Ridge spur and captured a battery at the point of the bayonet.

At 3.15 p.m. the cavalry, who would have been of the greatest assistance in capturing the enemy guns holding up the 51st Division, reported that they could not advance owing to snipers in Ribécourt. The village had been in our possession since 10 a.m., and the 18th Infantry Brigade had passed through it at 11.30, and were now two miles beyond it. However, the cavalry pushed through patrols before nightfall to Nine Wood.

A company of the 9th Suffolk Regiment successfully carried out its mission of advancing without artillery or tank support, and capturing the bridge at Marcoing. The Division had a most successful day, with very light casualties (about 650), capturing 28 officers and 1,227 other ranks prisoners, 23 guns, and between 40 and 50 machine-guns and many trench-mortars, and receiving the congratulations of the Corps Commander. Everything had gone like clockwork: the artillery had pushed forward to advanced positions to cover the new front before darkness came on; the machine-guns, under Major Muller, D.M.G.O., were likewise established in their new forward positions, thanks to careful arrangements and the use of pack animals; and the 11th Leicesters, under Major Radford, were repairing and clearing the roads before the third objective had been secured. The tanks, which had made surprise possible, were most gallantly handled, and all arrangements most carefully thought out by Col. A. Courage, D.S.O.

The next morning the 51st Division captured Flesquières from the north, and three companies of the 14th D.L.I., moving forward slightly in advance of them and operating with a squadron of the Queen's Bays, entered Cantaing ahead of the 51st Division, handing over subsequently to the 4th Gordons.

The Buffs, with the assistance of the tanks, completed the clearing of Noyelles (a village some 2,500 yards north-east of Premy Chapel), which had been entered the previous day by the 29th Division, and relieved the latter there. On the night of the 26/27th November the 18th Infantry Brigade extended its left up to the south-east edge of Cantaing.

About half a mile of the original front had been handed over to the 29th Division, and the 6th

Division now held a rectangular strip 2,500 yards by 7,000 yards, with the head at Cantaing and Noyelles, and the rear in the Hindenburg Main Line. The 29th Division had a precarious hold of the ground across the canal on the right, and the Guards Division was having hard fighting at Fontaine on the left.

Comparing the position with the back of a man's left hand, the 6th Division occupied the third finger, the 29th Division the main finger, the 20th Division the index finger, the 12th Division the portion below the index finger down to the lower portion of the thumb when fully extended, the 55th Division occupied the thumb. Such was the situation when the enemy delivered a heavy counter-attack, on the morning of the 30th November, on the 29th, 20th and 12th Divisions of the III Corps and the 55th Division of the VII Corps, driving the 20th and 12th Divisions on to the main finger except for a few posts, and occupying the thumb.

The Germans reached Gouzeaucourt at about 9 a.m., but were stoutly opposed by transport details of the 18th Infantry Brigade, who most gallantly led by Lieut. and Quartermaster J. P. L. Shea, 2nd D.L.I., and Capt. and Adjutant W. Paul, 1st West Yorks, checked the enemy in a portion of the village until it was retaken by the Guards about midday. These two brave officers, whose initiative and sound military action probably saved the situation from becoming much worse, were both wounded, and subsequently died of their wounds, a great loss to their battalions and to the Division.

A Staff-Officer arrived from the 29th Division about 9 a.m., and reported their Divisional Headquarters just north-east of Gouzeaucourt to have been captured and the Germans entering the village, which was about two miles to the right rear of 6th Divisional Headquarters. The 16th Infantry Brigade, which was in Divisional Reserve in the Hindenburg Main Line some two miles away, was ordered up to the ridge between Beaucamps and Gouzeaucourt. Brig.-Gen. Walker, commanding 16th Infantry Brigade, who was ordered to report to G.O.C., 29th Division, at Gouzeaucourt, narrowly escaped capture, together with his Brigade-Major, the enemy now being in possession of the village. G.O.C., 29th Division, had in the meantime passed through 6th Divisional Headquarters, and gone forward to his line.

The situation was now very confused, as all wires to corps had been cut, but it was evident that there was a gap between 12th and 20th Divisions, the latter still holding on to La Vacquerie, a strong point on the ridge two miles east of Beaucamps. The 16th Infantry Brigade was ordered to retake Gouzeaucourt, aided by some tanks which were at Beaucamps, and advanced about 3 p.m., but found the Guards already in the village. It therefore took up a position in the road between Gouzeaucourt and Villers Plouich, to the left of the Guards, and prepared to attack Cemetery Ridge between Gonnellieu and La Vacquerie, so as to re-establish the line. Patrols reported no enemy activity, and as there were no guns available (all in this sector having been captured or out of action) the Divisional Commander (Gen. Marden) thought a surprise attack by moonlight might succeed in capturing this important ridge before the enemy could reinforce it. An attack was launched at 1 a.m. hand in hand with 20th Division, but though most gallantly pushed, failed owing to loss of direction and heavy enemy machine gun fire. The ridge was captured by a Guards Brigade the next morning at 6.30 a.m., by the aid of tanks and artillery.

In the meantime the Reserve Battalion of the 18th Infantry Brigade (14th D.L.I.), and a battalion lent by the 57th Division, took up a position on Highland Ridge facing east, thus completely securing the flank.

On 2nd December the 16th Infantry Brigade was withdrawn and ordered to relieve 87th Infantry Brigade (29th Division), which had been having stiff fighting across and astride the canal east of Marcoing. The 14th D.L.I. (18th Infantry Brigade) were lent to 16th Infantry Brigade and on the night

of 2nd/3rd December occupied the south portion of the loop across the canal, the K.S.L.I. taking over the north half. The 88th Infantry Brigade (29th Division) held the ground south of the canal. The whole position was a salient subject to shell, rifle and machine-gun fire from north, south and east. The 14th D.L.I. position had no wire, and only hastily dug trenches. At 10.30 a.m., after a heavy bombardment, the enemy attacked the 14th D.L.I. and the battalion of the 29th Division south of the canal, penetrating the trenches, but was counter-attacked and driven out. At 11.30 a.m. he attacked again with similar results. At 12.15 p.m. he attacked both D.L.I. and K.S.L.I. and penetrated the right of the D.L.I., but was again driven out. With a final attack at 12.45 p.m. the enemy succeeded in forcing both battalions across the canal by sheer weight of numbers.

Two companies of the 8th Bedfords now reinforced the 14th D.L.I., and this force again counter-attacked and recovered the bridge-head at dusk; the 88th Infantry Brigade, assisted by 2nd Y. and L., having also counter-attacked successfully south of the canal. Losses were, however, heavy, and the line was gradually withdrawn under Corps orders during the next two days to the Hindenburg support system, which became our front line. The 14th D.L.I. fought magnificently, losing 15 officers and 262 other ranks, more than half being killed. Capt. Lascelles, who led two of the counter-attacks and was twice wounded, here gained his V.C. The 16th M.G.C., both north and south of the canal, had very heavy losses, but put up a splendid resistance.

The only other incidents of note were the repulse by the 18th Infantry Brigade of a half-hearted enemy attack on Cantaing on the 1st December, and D.H.Q. being three times shelled out of its Headquarters between 30th November and 9th December.

During the whole period--20th November to 6th December--the Divisional Artillery were constantly changing position in order to support the infantry, either in advance or retirement, as closely as possible. It was a welcome change to them after the many weary months of position warfare, and it may be said, without fear of contradiction, that both brigades and batteries were extremely ably handled, and that the D.A.C. never left a battery short of ammunition, in spite of very long distances and rough going.

On 10th December the Division (less artillery) was withdrawn to rest in the Basseux area south-west of Arras, after a strenuous three weeks.

The Divisional Artillery remained in action, covering the 18th Division. A little later the 2nd Brigade, R.F.A., was withdrawn to rest, but the 24th Brigade, R.F.A., continued in the line.

CHAPTER IX

GERMAN OFFENSIVE OF MARCH 1918

1918

After a month's rest in the Basseux area, during the first few days of which the 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades were placed at the disposal of the 3rd Division to relieve two of their brigades on the Bullecourt front, the Division moved up, commencing on the 17th January to relieve the 51st Division in the front line between Hermies and Boursies. A month later it side-stepped northwards, relieving the 25th Division in the Lagnicourt sector. The period up to the 21st March was one of steady work on defences, but without special incident, except a gas-shell attack on the 71st Brigade, which caused a certain amount of casualties.

During this period Infantry Brigades were reduced to three battalions each--the 9th Suffolk Regiment, 8th Bedford Regiment, and 14th Durham Light Infantry being disbanded between 1st and 16th February. Shortly afterwards the three Machine-gun Companies and the Divisional Machine-gun

Company were organized into the 6th Machine-gun Battalion, under the command of Lt.-Col. Rosher, D.S.O., late commanding 14th D.L.I.

Some description of the ground and defensive organization of the Division will not be out of place here. The front held by the Division was generally on a forward slope opposite the villages of Quéant and Pronville.

No Man's Land averaged three-quarters of a mile in width. The whole area was downland, and very suitable for the action of tanks. The position lay astride a succession of well-defined broad spurs and narrow valleys (like the fingers of a partially opened hand), merging into the broad transverse valley which separated the British line from the two villages above-mentioned. All the advantages of ground lay with the defence, and it seemed as if no attack could succeed, unless by the aid of tanks. A large portion of the front line--notably the valleys--was sown with 2-in. trench-mortar bombs with instantaneous fuses, which would detonate under the pressure of a wagon but not of a man's foot. In addition five anti-tank 18-pounder guns were placed in positions of vantage. The wire was very broad and thick. The position would, indeed, have been almost impregnable had there been sufficient time to complete it, and had there been separate troops for counter-attack.

The ground was a portion of that wrested from the enemy in the Cambrai offensive of November-December 1917, but had only improvised trenches. A month's hard frost in January had militated against digging, and though there were a complete front trench and reserve trench, the support trenches hardly existed, and dug outs were noticeable by their absence. The front was 4,500 yards in extent, the three brigades in line--18th on right, 71st in centre, 16th on left--on approximately equal frontages. The depth from front or outpost zone to reserve or battle zone was about 2,000 yards. With only three battalions in a brigade, there was no option but to assign one battalion in each brigade to the defence of the outpost zones, and keep two battalions in depth in the battle zone. With battalions at just over half-strength, and with the undulating nature of the ground, the defence resolved itself everywhere into a succession of posts with a very limited field of fire.

A good corps line called the Vaux-Morchies Line had been dug, the nearest portion a mile behind the reserve line, and this was held by the Pioneers and R.E., owing to scarcity of numbers.

The Right Group, R.F.A. (Lt.-Col. H. Weber), consisting of 2nd Brigade (less 21st Battery), supported the 18th Infantry Brigade; the Left Group (Lt.-Col. J. A. C. Forsyth), consisting of 24th Brigade, 21st Battery, and 93rd (Army) Brigade, supported the 16th and 17th Infantry Brigades.

Reports from deserters that we were to be heavily attacked were persistent, and the Division stood to arms twice before 21st March. On 20th March aeroplane photos disclosed ammunition pits for seventy extra batteries opposite the divisional front, and when at 5 a.m. on 21st March the bombardment commenced, there was no doubt but that a real offensive had begun. Warning had been given overnight for all troops to be in battle positions by 5 a.m., but it came too late to stop working parties, and the reserve battalions of all brigades had marched ten miles before the battle commenced.

Fog favoured the Germans in that it prevented us seeing when the attack was launched, but every credit must be given them for the skill they evinced and the dash with which they pushed forward and brought up successive waves of attackers. By concentrating their efforts on the three main valleys, i.e. Noreuil Valley on our extreme left, Lagnicourt Valley in the centre and Morchies Valley on our extreme right, they avoided much of the fire which they would have encountered on the broad spurs, and thus worked round and isolated the garrisons of the latter. For five hours the bombardment continued with tremendous force, first with gas and H.E. on back areas to cut communications and disorganize reinforcements, later about 7 to 8 a.m. with smoke and H.E. on the forward system. The intensity of it may be gauged by the fact that four out of five concealed anti-tank guns were knocked

out by direct hits.

This bombardment annihilated the garrisons of the forward system, and few survivors came back to the reserve line.

The only authenticated accounts of a successful resistance in the front system were from the 71st Infantry Brigade, where both 9th Norfolks and 2nd Sherwood Foresters repulsed the first attack. By 10.30 a.m. the enemy had nearly reached Noreuil and had driven back the 59th Division on our left, leaving the left flank of the 16th Infantry Brigade in the air, while its right flank went shortly afterwards, as the enemy captured Lagnicourt, driving in the Sherwood Foresters in the valley. The 16th Infantry Brigade was gradually squeezed out towards the corps line, where at 4 p.m. parties from the Divisional Bombing School counter-attacked and drove the enemy out of trenches on the immediate left. The 71st Infantry Brigade, with its right flank secure, threw back a defensive flank south-west of Lagnicourt, and successfully prevented issue from that village to the high ground. The enemy broke into Skipton Reserve Strong Point, but were thrown out again by a counter-attack of Norfolks and Leicesters.

Coming up a subsidiary valley the enemy nearly drove a wedge between 71st and 18th Infantry Brigades, but the 2nd D.L.I. counter-attacked gallantly and kept them out till dusk. On the right of the 18th Infantry Brigade, however, the enemy advanced up the Morchies Valley, capturing the left trenches of the 51st Division on our right at about 10 a.m.

The 2nd West Yorks, reinforced by two companies 11th Essex, gallantly led by Lt.-Col. Boyall, D.S.O., who was subsequently wounded and captured, drove back three attacks issuing from our support line. The 18th Infantry Brigade held on till 7 p.m. when, in trying to withdraw, it suffered heavy casualties. The last company was not overwhelmed till 8.30 p.m. The 18th and 71st Infantry Brigades, therefore, maintained their hold on the ground Lagnicourt and the Morchies Valley all day, though the enemy had penetrated far in rear on both flanks.

When darkness fell the remnants of the Division were back in the corps line, together with three battalions of the 75th Infantry Brigade (25th Division), the remaining troops of the Division not being strong enough to hold the line unaided. The 11th Cheshires were with 18th Infantry Brigade, 2nd South Lancs with 71st Infantry Brigade, and 8th Border Regiment with 16th Infantry Brigade.

The night was quiet, both sides preparing for the next day's struggle.

At 7.30 a.m. on 22nd March the 16th Infantry Brigade repulsed an attack, but the enemy renewed his efforts with great persistence, and with much heavy bombardment and trench-mortaring, at 9.30 a.m. and onwards in the vicinity of Vaux and Méricourt Woods. Though frequent counter-attacks were made, the troops were forced back little by little from the corps line towards some improvised trenches hastily dug under the C.R.E.'s (Col. Goldney) direction some 1,000 yards in rear, and manned partially by men from the Corps Reinforcement Camp under Major Jones of the 2nd D.L.I. As an example of the tenacious fighting, a sunken road which contained the Headquarters of the 16th and 71st Infantry Brigades changed hands three times. Throughout the day Lt.-Col. Latham, D.S.O., commanding 1st Leicesters, and Lt.-Col. Dumbell, D.S.O., commanding 11th Battalion Essex Regiment, distinguished themselves greatly in the defence of their sectors of the line. On the right of the Division the control had passed by dusk to the G.O.C., 75th Infantry Brigade (29th Division)--the 18th Infantry Brigade having only about 100 of all ranks left. On the left there was a large gap between the 16th Infantry Brigade and the 40th Division, which had been pushed up towards Vaux Vraucourt, and this the 6th Division had no troops with which to fill it. The enemy's pressure on the flanks of the 16th Infantry Brigade and in the centre on the 71st Infantry Brigade caused the line to fall back on the new Army line which was being dug and wired. This was done in good order, and at

nightfall the weary remnants of the Division were relieved by the 41st Division and concentrated in the vicinity of Achiet, the artillery remaining behind and fighting in the subsequent withdrawal up to 26th March.

The Division had put up a resistance of which it had every reason to be proud, and which won for it the following letter from the G.O.C., Third Army (General Sir J. Byng):--

"I cannot allow the 6th Division to leave the Third Army without expressing my appreciation of their splendid conduct during the first stages of the great battle now in progress.

"By their devotion and courage they have broken up overwhelming attacks and prevented the enemy gaining his object, namely a decisive victory.

"I wish them every possible good luck."

To this magnificent result all ranks and all arms had contributed, and it is perhaps invidious to single out special instances for mention. The gallant stand of the 18th and 71st Infantry Brigades in the reserve line throughout the whole of the first day has already been referred to. Other outstanding incidents are the counter-attack by part of the 2nd D.L.I. against the enemy advancing from our support line, which relieved the pressure on the reserve line and captured four machine-guns; the holding out of a post of the West Yorks on the east side of the Morchies Valley from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. though completely commanded and surrounded; the counter-attacks by companies of the 1st Leicestershire Regiment and 9th Norfolk Regiment, which restored the situation in the Skipton Strong Point just east of Lagnicourt; that of a company of the 11th Leicestershire Regiment which drove the enemy out of the corps line when he had established a footing in it on the afternoon of the 21st; and that of the two platoons formed from the 16th Infantry Brigade School which regained posts on the extreme left of the corps line in the Divisional area on the evening of the 21st.

Another gallant deed must be mentioned. Sergt. Shales, R.E., and another signaller went from 18th Infantry Brigade Headquarters to a distributor station 400 yards distant during the full force of the bombardment, sorted out and tested wires in the open, and thus established communication between the front trenches and Battalion Headquarters. The burying and connecting up of the cable was to have been completed the day of the attack.

The casualties in the infantry were extremely heavy, amounting in the two days to some 3,900 out of a total for the Division of somewhat over 5,000 engaged, and out of a total trench strength of less than 5,000 infantry. The 18th Infantry Brigade suffered particularly heavily, being only able to muster in its three battalions 8 officers and 110 other ranks of those who had been through the fight, including 32 at Battalion Headquarters.

The Machine-gun Battalion did excellent service and great execution, many guns remaining in action until the enemy were within a few yards of them. Its losses were heavy--14 officers and 280 other ranks.

The field companies suffered heavily, and rendered good service as infantry. Special mention may be made of the action of 12th Field Company under Capt. Langley, who rallied some 300 stragglers of various units and filled a gap between the 18th Infantry Brigade and troops on its left.

The 11th Leicesters, under the gallant leading of Major Radford, fought splendidly, losing 14 officers and over 200 other ranks.

The artillery performed magnificent services, particularly on the 21st March. All guns that were not destroyed by the enemy's bombardment were fought until all the ammunition was expended or the enemy's infantry reached their position. The gunners enjoyed the novel experience of firing over open sights and seeing the effect of their fire, and not only with their guns but with rifles and Lewis guns did they inflict very heavy casualties on the enemy. The 42nd Battery, having kept their three forward

guns in action after our infantry had fallen back behind them, succeeded in bringing the two that were not destroyed away, under the very noses of the enemy and through a heavy barrage and machine-gun fire. The forward section of the 53rd Battery had one gun destroyed. Lieut. Reeves got the other into the open, and, after firing 850 rounds with it over open sights and having exhausted his ammunition, brought back his detachment and the breech-block. The forward section of the 87th Battery continued firing until rushed by the enemy's infantry. Sergt. Pengelly of the 112th Battery, who was in command of a 15-pounder in an anti-tank position, having had his gun destroyed in the preliminary bombardment, fought for two days with the infantry, in command of a platoon, and did great execution himself with a pickaxe. A forward gun of the 110th Battery was fought until all its ammunition was expended, and the breech-block was then removed with the enemy almost on the top of the gun. For over seven hours the main battery fired on the enemy at ranges from 1,200 to 600 yards, expending over 2,400 rounds. The forward gun of the 111th Battery, after expending all its ammunition (500 rounds), largely over open sights, was withdrawn and brought into action again in the main position, a team coming up in full view of the enemy, and under very heavy shelling and a hail of bullets, for the purpose. The 112th Battery had two guns in action in advance of the corps line. These remained in action until all their ammunition was expended, and the detachments then withdrew with all their wounded and the breech-blocks of their guns, the enemy being by this time actually on the wire of the corps line.

The instances quoted are only typical of the conduct of the whole of the artillery of the Division, which fully justified the very high reputation it has always enjoyed, and the confidence which the infantry of the Division has always felt in its own artillery.

The morning of the 23rd March found the remnants of the Division, less artillery, assembled about Achiet-le-Grand and Bihucourt. The survivors of the 18th Infantry Brigade numbered 8 officers and 110 other ranks; those of the 71st Infantry Brigade 11 officers and 279 other ranks. Each of these brigades had had a trench strength on the morning of the 21st of just over 1,800 all ranks. Figures for the 16th Infantry Brigade are not available. The Division was most fortunate in having very few senior officers killed, though many were wounded. The most noticeable casualties among the killed were Major Lyon, 2nd Brigade, R.F.A., Majors Williamson and Wingate, D.S.O., M.C., R.E., and Capt. Harbottle, M.C., 1st Leicesters.

Even after relief the Division was not able to enjoy the rest it had so richly deserved, and of which it stood so much in need. The further progress of the enemy's attack and constant alarms necessitated its preparing and taking up a position of readiness covering Achiet, throughout the 23rd and the 24th.

On the 25th March it entrained for the north, to join the Second Army in its old haunts in the Ypres Salient.

CHAPTER X

YPRES SALIENT AGAIN

1918

On the 30th March, whilst in rest in the neighbourhood of Steenvoorde, the Division had the honour of a visit from His Majesty the King. Representative survivors of all ranks from the recent fighting were drawn up in the square and were inspected by His Majesty, who spoke most graciously to every individual, questioning all as to their experiences during the fighting, and thanking them for and congratulating them on their services.

At the beginning of April the 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades took over the front from Broodseinde southwards to Polygon Wood, coming under the XXII Corps (Lt.-Gen. Sir A. Godley).

The general situation now was that the Flanders front was held by tired and decimated Divisions withdrawn from the big battle in the south. These had been brought up to a respectable strength by drafts from all sources--wounded men belonging to other formations, R.A.S.C., Labour Battalions, etc., many of whom had received no training in infantry weapons or methods of fighting. Officers and men were new to each other, and there was no chance to train as the whole of every Division was in trenches.

Against these forces the Germans now opened a determined offensive from Zandvoorde southwards.

On the 13th April, as a result of the German successes on the Lys, the 71st Infantry Brigade, which was in reserve, had to be rushed off to join the 49th Division on the Neuve Eglise front. It returned to the Division on the 26th April after a pretty rough time, during which it suffered considerable casualties (about 750), but earned great praise. A counter-attack delivered by the 9th Norfolk Regiment was a particularly creditable incident in this period.

Otherwise the first fortnight in the Salient was without special incident. On the 16th April, in consequence of the progress made by the enemy farther to the south, the Salient was reduced in accordance with plan, and the line withdrawn to the battle zone, where an advanced force was left out in a line of detached pill-boxes and works. The enemy followed up cautiously in the afternoon, but the garrisons of the line of posts by lying low were able in several cases to catch parties unawares, and a fair number of casualties were inflicted. One party of twenty-five in particular was annihilated.

On the 25th April the enemy attacked and captured Kemmel Village and Hill from the French. This decided the Higher Command to withdraw the advanced force, and this was successfully carried out on the night of the 26/27th to the line West end of Zillebeke Lake-White Château.

Incessant work on the new defences, and heavy shelling, particularly gas shelling of Ypres, were the only incidents for some time on the actual front of the Division, though heavy attacks on the 29th April on the Division on the right, and the enemy's unsuccessful attack on Ridgewood on the 8th May, kept it on the alert. The Division was on the edge of the battle, and stood to on several occasions for an attack on its own front.

On the 11th to the 14th May the Division side-slipped to the south in relief of the 19th Division, thus coming next door to the 14th French Division, and passing to II Corps (Lt.-Gen. Sir C. Jacob). On the 28th May the enemy attacked our neighbours on the right and succeeded in driving them out of Ridgewood and almost in reaching Dickebusch Lake. In view of the importance to us of the lost position, and of the exhausted state of the 14th (French) Division, an offer was made to co-operate with them in a counter-attack to regain the lost ground. This was gladly accepted, and on the early morning of the 29th May the 11th Essex Regiment attacked in conjunction with two battalions of Chasseurs of the 46th (French) Division, which was in process of relieving the 14th Division, the operation taking place under the orders of the G.O.C., 14th French Division (General Philipot, the conqueror of Fez).

Under a barrage formed by the French and English artillery the 11th Essex Regiment attacked with great determination, and by the end of the day had achieved the whole of its share of the task. The two battalions of the Chasseurs were, unfortunately, not so successful, with the result that the right of the 11th Essex Regiment was exposed, and it was unable to hold on to a small part of the ground recovered on its extreme right. For this action the Division received a letter of thanks for its "spontaneous" co-operation from General de Mitry, commanding the French Détachement de l'Armée

du Nord.

The Division remained in the line as next-door neighbours to the French till the 7th June, when relieved by 33rd Division. Many will retain pleasant memories of our association with our Allies during the three to four weeks that we were alongside them, and of the admirable liaison that existed between us.

During the period of just under three weeks' rest that it enjoyed on this occasion the Division had one brigade always at Dirty Bucket Camp working on rear lines of defence, one training in the St. Jan ter Biezen area, and one at musketry at Cormette, near Tilques. During this period, too, the 71st Trench-mortar Battery and the 18th Trench-mortar Battery were able to be of service to the French, the former being lent to the 46th Division to assist them in an operation on 8th June, the latter co-operating with the 7th (French) Division in a successful raid on the 19th June.

On the 27th June the Division passed to the XIX Corps (Lt.-Gen. Sir H. E. Watts) and relieved the 46th French Division (Chasseurs) in the Dickebusch sector. This was in a very unpleasant front, where the dominating position of the enemy on Kemmel Hill made movement, even in the rear lines, impossible by day, and practically all work, of which there was plenty, had to be done by night.

The chief incidents of the tour of the Division in this sector were the successful attack on Ridgewood, the 1st The Buffs daylight raid on the Brasserie, the sixteen-prisoner night-raid of the 2nd D.L.I. on the Zillebeke front, and the co-operation of the 18th Infantry Brigade with the operations of the 41st Division on our right.

The situation created by the enemy's attack on Ridgewood on the 28th May had never been satisfactorily restored, in spite of repeated attempts on the part of the 46th (French) Division. The 6th Division took over with the determination to put this right on the first opportunity, profiting by the lessons learnt in the successive attacks made by the French Chasseurs, which their Division had placed most unreservedly at our disposal. After careful reconnaissance the 18th Infantry Brigade, assisted by two companies of the 1st Middlesex Regiment of the 33rd Division, attacked the enemy at 6 a.m. on the 14th July. The attack delivered by the 1st West Yorkshire Regiment and the 2nd D.L.I. and the two above-mentioned companies was a complete success. The enemy, taken entirely by surprise, only offered any resistance in one or two isolated cases, and the dash and prompt initiative of the attacking troops soon dealt with these. All objectives were gained, Ridgewood and Elzenwalle retaken, and 7 officers, 341 other ranks, 25 machine-guns, and 3 trench-mortars captured at small cost to the attackers. Large quantities of trench-mortar ammunition, found dumped close up to the front line, demonstrated the correctness of the view that the enemy had in contemplation a resumption of his offensive on this front. For this the Division received congratulations from the Commander-in-Chief, the G.O.C., Second Army (General Sir Herbert Plumer), and G.O.C., XIX Corps.

The raid of the 1st The Buffs was carried out on the 2nd August. The objective was the Brasserie and neighbouring farms. The raid, which was by day and on a fairly extensive scale, was very successful.

On the 8th August the 41st Division carried out a small operation, in co-operation with which the 18th Infantry Brigade undertook two minor operations. That by a company of the 1st West Yorkshire Regiment on the Vierstraat Road was unsuccessful, through no fault of the attacking infantry, who were held up by machine-guns sited so far forward that they had escaped our barrage. On the right a company of the 2nd D.L.I., operating in direct touch with the left of the 41st Division, was completely successful in carrying out its task. In connection with operations on this front the Division sustained a severe loss in Major R. W. Barnett, K.R.R., G.S.O.2, who was killed by a sniper while reconnoitring on 12th August.

During July and August the Divisional Artillery was exceptionally busy. An immense amount of effort was put into the preparation of forward positions for a large number of batteries to be employed in a contemplated later offensive. Vast quantities of gun ammunition were carted nightly, and dumped therein in readiness.

During the month of August the Division had the pleasure of close association with our American Allies, part of the 27th American, a New York Division, doing their attachment and apprenticeship to trench warfare with us. On the 21st to the 24th August the Americans relieved the Division in the line, and it was withdrawn for rest and training to the Wizernes area.

On leaving the XIX Corps the Corps Commander sent the Division his "warmest thanks for and appreciation of the excellent service rendered" while under his command.

CHAPTER XI

THE ALLIED OFFENSIVE IN THE SOUTH

1918

Originally destined to take part in a projected attack for the recapture of Kemmel Hill and Village, the Division suddenly received orders at the end of August, to the delight of all, to move southwards at very short notice. During the 1st, 2nd and 3rd September the move southwards was carried out by rail, the Division, less artillery, detraining at Corbie, Heilly and Méricourt. On the 4th the Divisional Artillery followed, and the whole Division was concentrated in the area Heilly-Ribemont-Franvillers on the River Ancre, in G.H.Q. Reserve. The next few days were devoted to a continuation of the training in open warfare commenced in the Wizernes area.

The Germans, forced back in July and August from the high-water mark of their advance in March and April, had stood on the line of the Somme and the Péronne--Arras road. In the southern sector of the British front the Somme defences had been turned by the brilliant capture of Mont St. Quentin (to the north of and guarding Péronne) by the Australian Corps. The retreating enemy had been pursued across the Somme by the 32nd Division, which had been attached temporarily to the Australians. This Division now became part of the newly-constituted IX Corps (Lt.-Gen. Sir W. Braithwaite), which was to bear such a glorious part in the concluding chapter of the War, and which consisted of 1st, 6th, 32nd and 46th Divisions.

The 32nd Division had followed the enemy without much incident up to the large Holnon Wood, three and a half miles west of St. Quentin, and it was there that the Division relieved it on night 13/14th September, with the 1st Division on the left and the 34th (French) Division on the right.

It was expected that the enemy would stand on the heights which command St. Quentin to the west and south, but it was not known whether their resistance would be strong or not, as they were much disorganized.

The 1st and 6th Divisions, hand in hand with the French, were ordered to capture this tactical line on 18th September, as a starting-point for the attack on the Hindenburg Line, which ran just outside St. Quentin to the canal at Bellenglise.

To the 18th Infantry Brigade was entrusted the task of securing a line well clear of Holnon Wood for the forming-up line on the 18th, and in doing so it first had to clear the wood and establish posts at the edge, then push forward. The selected forming-up line included to us Holnon Village on the right and next to the French.

On the morning of the 16th September the 11th Essex, after an unsuccessful attempt to push forward during the night, attacked under a barrage and advanced from the line of posts taken over a

little way inside the wood to a line of trenches just clear of the wood, capturing in this small operation forty-six prisoners. It was now arranged for the 1st, 6th and 34th (French) Divisions to advance simultaneously to secure the above-mentioned starting line. On the left the 1st Division was successful, and so were the 11th Essex, who, held up at first by heavy shelling and machine-gun fire, persevered throughout the day and were rewarded by finishing up in possession of the whole of their objectives, a very creditable performance.

On the right the West Yorks had to secure Holnon Village, which lay in a hollow commanded by Round and Manchester Hills in the area allotted to the French, and which was itself strongly held. The French failed in their attack, and though the West Yorks obtained part of the village they could not clear it and establish the starting line beyond it. The situation at the end of the 17th was therefore unsatisfactory on the right, but it was impossible to put off the general attack, and arrangements had to be improvised. Another unsatisfactory feature was that Holnon Wood covered practically the whole 2,500 yards frontage of the Division, and was so drenched with gas shells and the tracks so bad, that both 16th and 71st Infantry Brigades had to make a detour north and south of the wood respectively to reach their assembly positions, and this naturally fatigued the troops and hindered communication and supply.

Standing on the east edge of the wood, a bare glaxis-like slope devoid of cover, except for two or three shell-trap copses, stretched away for 3,000 yards to the high ground overlooking St. Quentin. There was no sign of life and very few trenches could be seen, though it was known that they were there as the Fifth Army had held the position in March 1918. It was found afterwards that the Germans had camouflaged their trenches with thistles, which here covered the ground to a height in many places of eighteen inches.

At the highest point about the centre of the Divisional area of attack was a network of trenches known later as the Quadrilateral--a name of bad omen to the 6th Division--and which, like its namesake on the Somme, could be reinforced under cover from the back slopes of the hill. An examination of the battlefield after the 24th September also revealed several narrow sunken roads filled with wire. The position was one of great natural strength, and in addition the whole of the right was dominated by heights in the area to be attacked by the French. Lastly, adequate time could not be given to Brigades for reconnaissance owing to the imperative necessity of pushing on to guard the flank of Corps farther north. Troops had not seen the ground they had to attack over, and rain and smoke obscured the few landmarks existing on 18th September.

On that morning the Division attacked at 5.20 a.m. with the 71st Infantry Brigade on the right, its left directed on the Quadrilateral and its right on Holnon and Selency.

The 16th Infantry Brigade was on the left, with its right just clear of the Quadrilateral and its left on Fresnoy le Petit. Six tanks were allotted to the Division, but met with various mishaps or were knocked out, and were not of much use. The attack met with most determined opposition at once, especially on the right, where the difficulties of the 71st Infantry Brigade were increased by the failure of the French to take Round and Manchester Hills.

The 2nd D.L.I., attached to this brigade to complete the clearing of Holnon Village, accomplished this, but were driven out by shelling and by machine gun fire from Round and Manchester Hills, losing very heavily.

The 16th Infantry Brigade was more successful, and at one time the York and Lancasters had nearly completed the capture of Fresnoy le Petit, but were unable to hold it. The brigade advanced, however, 3,000 yards. Fighting was continuous throughout the day, but without further success. The Sherwood Foresters advancing very gallantly against the Quadrilateral were reported as being just

outside it and entrenched. It was machine gun fire from this stronghold which prevented the right of the 16th Infantry Brigade advancing, and an attack was therefore ordered for dawn of the 19th September, but it was evidently anticipated by the enemy, who put down a very heavy artillery and machine-gun barrage before the attackers left their jumping-off positions. Fighting again continued throughout the day, but without success, and it was evident that the enemy meant standing his ground and that this was not a rearguard action as it had at one time been thought. The enemy's artillery was very strong, and, with the thick Hindenburg wire in front of it, was placed close to their front line, and was enabled thus to do considerable execution on our back areas.

The successes of other Divisions in the south of the British zone had been constant and fairly easy for some time, so that the partial success which the Division had obtained was very disappointing to all ranks. They were much cheered, therefore, to get the following wire from the Army Commander (General Sir H. Rawlinson):--"Please convey to the 6th Division my congratulations and warm thanks for their success of yesterday. Though all objectives were not attained they carried through a difficult operation with great gallantry and determination. I offer to all ranks my warm thanks and congratulations."

All units had heavy fighting, in which some had incurred considerable losses, and all were tired and in want of reorganization. It was therefore decided not to renew the attack for a few days, and to devote the interval to a proper artillery preparation (the heavy artillery put 1,000 shells on the Quadrilateral in one day), the reorganization of battalions, and the construction of a jumping-off position, in the execution of which the R.E. (Lt.-Col. H. A. L. Hall) and the Pioneers rendered invaluable assistance. The fighting up to this date had yielded 6 officers and 264 other ranks prisoners, and 65 machine-guns.

On the morning of the 24th September a fresh attack was launched; the 18th Infantry Brigade, to which was attached the 1st Leicestershire Regiment, attacking on the right; the 16th Infantry Brigade on the left. The French 36th Corps attacked with a fresh division simultaneously to our right; the 1st Division, which had taken over the task of the capture of Fresnoy and Gricourt, on our left. The four tanks detailed to attack the Quadrilateral again had bad luck, one being turned absolutely turtle by a mine field. The three battalions of the 18th Infantry Brigade met at first with little success, the 11th Essex on the left establishing a rather precarious footing in one face of the Quadrilateral, and the 1st West Yorkshire Regiment getting in at one point in Douai Trench, running south from the Strong Point. The D.L.I., attacking south of them through Holnon Village, could make no headway. The French had during the morning captured Round Hill and part of Manchester Hill, and came up in line with us. The 16th Infantry Brigade fared much better, and working down from the north was able in the course of the day to secure the northern face of the Quadrilateral. Their four tanks were of great assistance to them this day. Throughout the day the 18th Infantry Brigade maintained the fight with characteristic determination, but without improving its position very much. At 11 p.m., however, it launched the 1st Leicestershire Regiment by moonlight in a further attack on Douai Trench. The attack, delivered with great gallantry, was successful, and many enemy were killed in the trench which was found to be strongly held. In spite of the very rough handling which it had received on the 24th the 18th Infantry Brigade stuck grimly to its task during the 25th. Douai Trench was cleared from end to end by hand-to-hand fighting, and patrols, admirably handled, gradually made good the whole of the objectives allotted for the previous day's attack. On the morning of 25th September 3 officers and 104 other ranks surrendered near Fayet to patrols of the 2nd Y. and L. Regiment. By midnight on the night of the 25/26th September the 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades in co-operation had completed the capture of the Quadrilateral, a position of such unusual natural strength that captured German officers admitted

that they had fully expected to be able to hold it indefinitely. For this very fine performance, a remarkable instance of grit and determination and of intelligent initiative by regimental officers of all ranks, to whom the successful results were entirely due, the Division received the congratulations of the Army and Corps Commanders and G.O.C., 1st Division. The message telephoned on behalf of the Army Commander contained the following passage:--"He fully realises the difficulties they have had to contend with, and admires the tenacity with which they have stuck to it and completed their task."

The enemy's resistance now broke down, and during the 26th, 27th and 28th September patrols were able gradually to gain further ground, so that by the time the Division was relieved by the 4th French Division on the 29/30th, posts had been established round three sides of the village of Fayet. Manchester Hill was finally captured by the French on 26th September.

The captures during the period were 10 officers, 372 other ranks, 4 guns, 15 trench-mortars, and 53 machine-guns.

During the relief by the French a noteworthy incident occurred. The 2nd Brigade, R.F.A., were asked to fire a barrage to cover an advance of French infantry at a certain hour, and did so. Just after completion a message arrived saying that the attack had been postponed, and would the brigade repeat the operation very shortly at another hour which was fixed. This the brigade did, clearing to absolutely the last shell the ammunition available on the ground and completing the barrage at the same moment.

During the fighting in September the Division had "B" and "C" Companies, 2nd Life Guards Machine-gun Battalion, at its disposal, and these fine troops helped much in the machine-gun barrage, and added confidence that any counter-attack on the right would meet with a hot reception.

While the 6th Division had been fighting on the right of the British Army, the 46th Division, with the Americans on their left and the 1st Division forming a defensive flank on their right, had broken the Hindenburg Line on 29th September by a magnificent attack. Followed across the canal by the 32nd Division, these two divisions had very severe fighting at Ramicourt and Sequehart and were exhausted. The 6th Division, after four days to rest and absorb reinforcements, was ordered to relieve them and attack on the 8th October in the direction of the small town of Bohain. The 30th American Division was on the right and about 2,000 yards ahead, connected to the 6th Division by a series of posts along the railway. This curious position entailed a very complicated creeping barrage, which, however, was successfully put into operation on the day of the attack. On the right was the French 42nd Division slightly in rear, having followed the Germans through St. Quentin and met with strong resistance beyond it. The position to be attacked consisted of high rolling downs with deep traverse valleys, giving good cover for supports and forward guns, and on the right a broad longitudinal valley closed by a ridge on which stood the village of Méricourt. The French had a stiff task in front of them, and did not propose to advance as far as the British--6,000 yards--with the result that even if they were successful our frontage, thrown back from left to right, would be 7,500 yards, and if unsuccessful over 10,000. Added to this their zero hour was nearly an hour after ours, and there would be a very real danger of counter-attack from the right. The Divisional Commander, therefore, decided to leave the valley severely alone to start with, merely smoking by guns and bombs from aeroplanes the Méricourt Ridge and attacking all along the high ground on the north. As our attack and the French attack progressed the valley was to be cleared by three whippet tanks supported by the 1st Battalion West Yorks, lent to the 16th Infantry Brigade, while finally an attack from the high ground against the Méricourt Ridge would be delivered with a view to cutting off posts in the valley between the two attacks. The 139th Infantry Brigade of the 46th Division remained in position at Sequehart, together with two companies Life Guards Machine-gun Battalion, to secure the right flank against

counter-attack. The machine-gun nests on the Sequehart-Méricourt road enfiladed the start line of the 6th Division, and the G.O.C., 139th Infantry Brigade (Brig-Gen. J. Harington), was asked to capture these just before the general attack. The 46th Divisional Pioneer Battalion (1/1st Monmouthshire Regiment) undertook this task, and twice attacked the position but without success, in spite of the greatest gallantry. The Commanding Officer (Col. Jenkins) and his Adjutant were both unfortunately killed. Their bravery, however, was well rewarded, as their action enabled the 6th Divisional troops to work round and cut the position off, and the enemy eventually surrendered.

The weight of artillery for the operations of the 8th October was immense. In addition to the Divisional artillery there were the 5th and 16th Brigades, R.H.A., 161st, 168th, 230th, 231st, 232nd Brigades, R.F.A., and the 14th and 23rd Army Brigades, R.F.A. Only a part of these fired the creeping barrage, the 6th Divisional Artillery, the 5th Brigade, R.H.A., and the 232nd Brigade, R.F.A., moving forward as the infantry attack progressed to new positions, so as to support exploitation and give protection against counter-attack. The attack was launched at 5.30 a.m. The 16th Infantry Brigade on the right next to the valley, and the 71st Infantry Brigade on the left next to the Americans, both made excellent way, the former capturing the very strong Mannikin Hill position, and the latter the formidable Doon Mill and Doon Copse position, and making a good haul of machine-guns.

As had been anticipated the French had been held up by Bellicourt Farm on their left, and the 16th Infantry Brigade suffered a good deal from machine-gun fire from Cerise Wood on the farther side of the valley and from Mannikin Wood in the valley. The three whippet tanks allotted to the 16th Infantry Brigade were all knocked out, but the West Yorks, to whom had been entrusted the clearing of the valley, stuck to their work most gallantly, and in the afternoon, after three attempts, had the satisfaction of securing Mannikin Wood, with 10 officers, 240 other ranks, and 20 machine-guns, by a final attack under an artillery smoke barrage. To this success "B" Company, 6th Machine-gun Battalion, contributed largely by enfilade fire.

By 3 p.m. the French announced that they had captured Bellicourt Farm, and were advancing. The situation on the right was now completely changed, and the 1st West Yorks, advancing up the valley, gained touch with the French east of Fairy Wood, more than half-way to the final objective in that area.

By nightfall Méricourt, which blocked the head of and commanded the whole of the valley, was in our hands.

The Americans gained their final objective and continued the advance without much opposition. In attempting to support their flank the 71st Infantry Brigade came under the fire of field guns firing over open sights near Joncourt Farm, and could not advance. A squadron of the Royal Scots Greys (5th Cavalry Brigade, Brig-Gen. Neil Haig), attached to the Division, worked round and made a gallant attempt to gallop the guns, but were stopped by close range gun fire. Pitch darkness now came on, and left the Division tired but triumphant on their final objectives. The bag of the 6th Division amounted to over 30 officers and 1,100 other ranks.

Congratulatory messages were received from the Army and Corps Commanders as follows:--

From the Army Commander--"Will you please convey to the 6th Division my warm thanks and hearty congratulations on their success to-day. They have done admirable work, and I wish them all good luck for to-morrow."

From the Corps Commander--"Well done 6th Division. So glad casualties so light, considering what Division has accomplished."

Almost before the final objective had been captured an order was received from the Corps for the

Division to take over a portion of the 30th American Division front on the left, hand over some ground to 46th Division on the right, and attack at dawn on the 9th behind a barrage. Though very tired, and though it was a pitch dark night, the 71st and 16th Infantry Brigades somehow managed to carry out these almost impossible orders, and advanced splendidly at zero hour--the artillery putting down an accurate barrage. The attack progressed successfully, the first objectives being gained by both brigades without much difficulty, but the enemy was able to delay our advance from the Railway Line, where after stiff fighting the 1st Leicesters, by a turning movement, captured some prisoners and machine-guns. The 9th Norfolk Regiment on the left worked round by the north, and during the night captured Bohain, where some 4,000 inhabitants were liberated, and vast quantities of war material fell into our hands.

During this phase of the operations the 5th Cavalry Brigade was attached to the Division, but circumstances did not allow of much cavalry activity.

We were now in a different country to that in which the operations since 1914 had been conducted. The country had seen no war, houses were intact, inhabitants looking starved and downtrodden were delighted to see the British troops. To stop our advance all roads in Bohain had been cratered at their exits from the village, and delay-action mines on the railways were constantly going up. As an example, D.H.Q. was in Brancucourt Farm, in a main road which had been cratered just outside the farm. A railway bridge just opposite had been blown down and the line cratered. The Canadian Engineers repairing the line had removed a great many bombs, but about three days after the arrival of D.H.Q. a delay-action mine went off on the railway at 7.30 p.m., and two days later again at 7 a.m. Fortunately on both occasions no men were working on the line, and D.H.Q. suffered no worse harm than some injuries to staff cars from falling debris. The total captures by the Division since the 8th October now amounted to 45 officers, 1,839 other ranks, 15 guns, 20 trench-mortars, and 266 machine-guns.

On 10th October the advance was continued--the 30th American Division on the left, the 6th Division in the centre, and the 46th Division on the right next to the French, who were again some distance in rear.

The 71st Infantry Brigade (1st Leicesters and 2nd Sherwood Foresters), passing through the 9th Norfolks, gained most of its objective, which was the high ground about 2,000 yards east of Bohain, but the 40th Division was held up by machine-gun fire in Riqueval Wood. An attempted advance by the 71st Infantry Brigade, assisted by two tanks, on 11th instant was brought to a standstill by machine-gun fire, after a small advance.

On the night of the 11/12th October the 18th Infantry Brigade, which had been in Divisional Reserve, relieved the 71st Infantry Brigade, and at 4.30 p.m. on the 12th October carried out a minor operation, simultaneously with the left brigade of the 46th Division, in order to push its left flank forward to the line of the Americans, who were reported to be in possession of Vaux Andigny--some one and a half miles ahead. The attack on the right failed, with about 100 casualties, owing to machine-gun fire from Regnicourt, and the 46th Division was also held up. The left made a little ground. This attack and a low aeroplane reconnaissance disclosed the fact that the Germans had dug a series of new trenches on the high ground immediately in front, and that there was a considerable amount of wire. The maps of this area were most indifferent, and many copses existed which were not shown. It was now evident that the enemy intended to stand on the high ground east of Selle River and its continuation to Riqueval Wood. Failing to make any progress by a frontal attack, the G.O.C., IX Corps, undertook a very pretty tactical move, which produced the attack of 17th October. The 6th and 46th Divisions were moved to the north flank, and attacked south-east and east instead of north-east.

By this manoeuvre a great deal of enfilade fire was brought to bear both from guns and machine-guns. The task allotted to the 6th Division was a difficult one. It had to issue fan-wise from the village of Vaux Andigny on a 1,500 yards front, advancing 2,500-3,000 yards to a front of 5,000 yards. The 1st Division was to pass through it and push on towards the Sambre Canal. The attack was to be made under a barrage of eight brigades of Field Artillery and eighty machine-guns. The IX Corps employed on this occasion 172 60-pounders and heavy howitzers.

In the evening of 16th October Brig.-Gen. H. A. Walker, commanding 16th Infantry Brigade, which was to attack on the left the next morning, most unfortunately lost his left arm by a shell, which blew it off so cleanly that his wrist watch was recovered by his orderly and was still going. Brig.-Gen. P. W. Brown, commanding 71st Infantry Brigade, then in reserve, took command until the arrival of Brig.-Gen. W. G. Braithwaite.

During the night 16/17th October the enemy poured gas shells into Vaux Andigny, causing considerable casualties both to the troops forming up just outside and to those who had to pass through a little later. Zero was at 5.20 a.m., and the attack commenced in a dense fog, which in the fan-shaped advance caused a good deal of loss of direction, although the 18th Infantry Brigade on the left had laid out long direction tapes to give the troops the initial direction.

The latter brigade was held up at the start by uncut wire, which caused it to lose its barrage. It also encountered a good deal of opposition on Bellevue Ridge. It was, however, carried forward by the oncoming waves of the 1st Division, which were to pass through to a further objective, and together the troops of the two divisions made good the objective of the 18th Infantry Brigade. The fog was so dense that all direction was lost, although the 11th Essex Regiment took the unusual precaution of sending its men forward arm-in-arm. Notwithstanding every precaution troops of the 11th Essex eventually fetched up at Regnicourt, which was on the right of the objective allotted to the 46th Division, who attacked on our right. Troops of all three divisions also reached Andigny les Fermes, which was in the objective of the 46th Division. The 16th Infantry Brigade was more fortunate, and was assisted in maintaining its direction by the railway, with the result that it gained its whole objective in good time and with very little trouble. The day's captures were 26 officers, 599 other ranks, 5 trench-mortars, and 82 machine-guns.

The 1st Division having passed through, the 6th Division was now withdrawn from the line to the neighbourhood of Bohain for a day or two.

On the night of the 20th/21st October the Division was again put in, relieving the 27th American Division and a part of the 25th Division on the front from Bazuel to a short way north of Mazinghien, with a view to the attack planned for the 23rd October. There now occurred a sudden change in the type of country. Instead of open rolling downs, there was a multiplicity of small fields, divided by high thick-set hedges trained on wire which proved formidable obstacles. The enemy had good positions for his artillery in the Bois l'Evêque, and on the east bank of the Canal de la Sambre, protected from the danger of being rushed by that obstacle, and it was evident that he intended to put up a determined fight on the strong position thus afforded. The hostile artillery fire was more than had been encountered since the fighting about St. Quentin, and throughout the few days preceding the attack the shelling of roads, farms and villages in our rear area and of artillery positions was continuous. On the night of the attack the assembly positions of the assaulting brigades were subjected to heavy counter-preparation, including a great deal of gas-shelling, and the assembly units suffered considerable casualties. The attack was delivered at 1.20 a.m. on 23rd October in a dense fog; the 1st Division being on the right and the 25th Division on the left. Three sections of 301st American Tank Company were allotted to the Division, and did excellent work in smashing fences and destroying

machine-gun nests, though, owing to the fog, the infantry lost touch with them almost at once.

On the right the 18th Infantry Brigade, which attacked with the 2nd D.L.I. on the right and the 1st West Yorkshire Regiment on the left, had a less difficult task than the 71st Infantry Brigade, but were delayed in crossing the gas-shelled valley in their immediate front, and met with opposition from various farms. However, they fought their way steadily forward during the day, and by the late afternoon their right battalion had reached its objective and had pushed its patrols down to the canal, and the left battalion, having reached its first objective, was struggling forward to its second.

The 71st Infantry Brigade on the left attacked with the 9th Norfolk Regiment and the 1st Leicestershire Regiment. Its attack soon became disorganized in the very enclosed country, was unable to keep pace with its barrage, lost touch with its tanks in the fog, and was soon held up on a line not more than about 400 yards beyond that from which it had started. Fighting continued throughout the day, and finally, taking advantage of the progress made by the 25th Division on its left, the 71st Infantry Brigade was able by night to reach a line about half-way through the Bois l'Evêque.

During the night this brigade was relieved by the 16th Infantry Brigade (Brig.-Gen. W. G. Braithwaite), which resumed the attack on the morning of the 24th October. Opposition had by this time decreased, and better progress was made, so that by noon the right battalion, the 2nd York and Lancaster Regiment, held the line of the objective laid down for the previous day's attack, and the left battalion of the 18th Infantry Brigade had also completed the capture of its objective. Some further progress was made during the day by the 16th Infantry Brigade.

During the period 20th to 24th October, Brig.-Gen. E. F. Delaforce, C.R.A., 6th Division, had under his orders the Divisional Artillery of the 3rd, 4th and 5th Australian Divisions, though the 5th Australian Divisional Artillery was withdrawn on the eve of the attack of 24th October. Their fire was most accurate and prompt, and gave the attacking infantry every confidence. The 6th D.A. on this occasion was in Corps Reserve.

During the 26th, 27th and 28th the patrols of the 16th Infantry Brigade continued to work their way slowly forward, and the village of Ors was evacuated of its inhabitants under the protection of patrols of the 18th Infantry Brigade. The latter established a bridge-head across the canal at Ors, and posts on the west side commanding the canal on the whole brigade front.

On the 29th orders were received for the relief of the Division. In order to be able to hand over to the relieving Division a satisfactory position from which to launch the attack on the line of the canal, a further small operation was planned by the 16th Infantry Brigade, and brilliantly carried out by the 1st The Buffs on the 30th October. Two companies attacked and captured an important farm and spur overlooking the canal, were counter-attacked in the afternoon and turned out of the farm, but retook it at once with the bayonet, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy and capturing five more machine-guns.

On the night of the 30th/31st October the relief of the Division (less artillery) was completed, and it withdrew to billets in Fresnoy le Grand, whence it moved some days later to Bohain.

The captures during the fighting from the 19th to the 31st October numbered 9 officers and 431 other ranks, 13 guns (including two 5.9-in. howitzers), 12 trench-mortars, and 61 machine-guns.

The total captures during a period of between six and seven weeks, in which the Division had seen much stiff fighting, and had suffered over 6,000 casualties, amounted to 96 officers, 3,505 other ranks, 32 guns, 52 trench-mortars, and 527 machine-guns counted.

The infantry of the Division saw no more fighting, but its artillery remained in till the end, finishing up in the neighbourhood of Avesnes.

Among the many casualties which the artillery suffered must be mentioned Major W. S. Ironside,

D.S.O., M.C., commanding 112th Battery, R.F.A., who was killed east of Le Cateau on 2nd November. He was among the then much reduced number of those who had landed originally with the Division in France in 1914, being then a sergeant.

Very little mention has been made of the services of the Royal Engineers during this period. Exceptionally heavy work was thrown on the signal sections, owing to the frequent changes of headquarters, but they were untiring in their devotion and met each emergency with resource. To the Field Companies fell the dangerous task of taping out the jumping-off lines for the attacks, but they invariably achieved this difficult task to the complete satisfaction of the brigadier-generals and units concerned in the operations.

It is inevitable in a short History like this that the services of the administrative branches should not receive the same notice as those of the purely fighting portions of the Division, but the History would be incomplete without some reference to them.

The Field Ambulances showed throughout the high devotion to duty which has always characterized the Royal Army Medical Corps. The work of the bearer sections during actions always elicited the admiration of the infantry, while the tent sections were frequently under shell fire, which, however, in no way interfered with their care of the wounded. Both at advanced dressing stations and tent sections many of the chaplains rendered most valuable assistance in carrying and helping wounded men, while during trench warfare they were frequently to be found with their men in the forward trenches.

In the action of 18th September 1918, Lt.-Col. Collins, D.S.O., and Major German, both of the R.A.M.C., and also Father FitzGibbons, were killed by shelling at a tent advanced dressing station.

The work of our Army Service Corps has always been the envy and admiration of our Allies, and that of the 6th Divisional Train was up to the highest standard of the British Army. The acknowledged excellence of the horses and mules of the Division is a tribute to the efficiency of the Veterinary Section and of the horsemasters attached to the artillery, as well as to the mounted branches.

In spite of the amusing comments of "The Fancies," the life of the Military Police was not all beer and skittles. The control of the traffic at some of the cross-roads, favoured by the Boche heavy gunners, was nerve-racking in ordinary times, and tenfold more so during an action, and several awards were given to the Divisional Military Police for gallant conduct under these conditions.

Very few officers or men served throughout with the Division. Perhaps the two most notable were Lt.-Col. J. A. C. Forsyth, D.S.O., commanding 24th Brigade, R.F.A., who came out as a Captain, and Staff-Sergt.-Major Woollard, who was Chief Clerk of the Division for some time before mobilization.

CHAPTER XII

THE MARCH TO THE RHINE AND OCCUPATION OF GERMANY 1918-19

Armistice Day--11th November--found the Division in billets in Bohain area, training for possible future operations. The news of the cessation of hostilities was received with calm satisfaction that we had beaten the Germans, and of relief that now we could sleep peacefully at nights and that lights need not be screened.

Early in November the 1st and 32nd Divisions of the IX Corps had forced the crossings of the Sambre Canal at Catillon and Ors after heavy fighting, and had driven the enemy back towards Avesnes. On 11th November a mixed force, under Major-Gen. Bethell, was pushing the disorganized

Germans over the Belgian frontier near Beaumont.

The IX Corps was now transferred to the Second Army, under Gen. Sir H. Plumer, to whom was assigned the command of the British Army of Occupation in Germany.

On leaving the Fourth Army the following letter, addressed personally to the Divisional Commander, was received from Gen. Sir Henry Rawlinson:--

"Now that the 6th Division is passing to the command of another Army, I desire to place on record my sincere appreciation and warm thanks for the valuable services rendered by you since you joined the Fourth Army in September last.

"The Division has passed through strenuous times and has seen some heavy fighting, especially in September between Holnon Wood and the Canal, and at Bohain and Vaux Andigny in October, where the gallantry and determination of all ranks filled me with admiration.

"I congratulate most heartily you all on the victories you have won, and trust that at some future time I may again find the Division under my command."

The Division spent the period 14th to 19th November in a march, via Catillon and Avesnes, to the area round Solre le Château and Sars Poteries, where it was to assemble for the March to the Rhine. For this it was organized in three Infantry Brigade Groups and a Divisional Troops Group under the C.R.A. The 16th Army R.H.A. Brigade (Chestnut Troop, "Q" and "U" Batteries) was attached to the Division, and formed part of the 18th Infantry Brigade Group. The 2nd Brigade, R.F.A., marched with the Divisional Troops Column, the 24th Brigade, R.F.A., with the 71st Infantry Brigade, and the Divisional Ammunition Column with the 16th Infantry Brigade. Each Infantry Brigade had a Field Company and Field Ambulance.

The march resembled the progression of a snake, the rear group moving forward at each advance to the area occupied the previous day by the leading group. Commencing officially on the 20th November there were long halts up to 2nd December, owing to the difficulty of feeding the leading Divisions (cavalry and infantry), caused by the destruction done by the Germans to the railways, and also owing to the withdrawal of the Germans not being carried out in accordance with programme. Sometimes groups did not move, or only made minor adjustments to obtain more comfortable quarters.

Both branches of the staff had long days of reconnaissance in cars ahead of the Division, made to avoid moving troops farther off the main roads than necessary, while the R.E. and Pioneers were often pushed ahead to see about water supplies and mend roads. Up to the Belgian frontier roads had been cratered and bridges blown down, and these caused defiles and impeded the march. Once across the frontier the roads were splendid, the inhabitants most hospitable and enthusiastic, and the advance only held up until it could be pushed through continuously.

However, it was no hardship to be delayed in such charming surroundings, though the weather was for the most part vile. The march from the neighbourhood of Dinant across the Ardennes, and along the lovely valley of the River Ambleve, will always stand out as a most delightful reminiscence. All ranks worked hard at their equipment, and the transport was so smart as to be thought by the Belgians to be new.

It was a proud and splendid Division which marched, with drums beating and colours flying, across the German frontier into the little town of Malmedy between 13th and 16th December.

Marching generally by only one road, the length of the Division, when billeted, varied from ten to twenty-five miles. It was particularly interesting for Brigades to occupy the German huts at Elsenborn Camp of Exercise, where large numbers of the enemy had assembled in the end of July 1914 for the conquest of Belgium.

The attitude of the population in Germany was servile, and little hate could be felt by one or two battalions which marched into Malmedy in pouring rain and found German women lighting special fires, without being ordered to do so, to dry their clothing. It must, however, be added that the inhabitants of Malmedy speak French and have Belgian sympathies.

Passing through the lovely little village of Montjoie, which reminds one so much of Switzerland, the Division marched to its allotted area south-west of Cologne, Divisional Headquarters arriving at Bruhl, six miles from Cologne, on Christmas Eve; Headquarters 16th Infantry Brigade at Zulpich, Headquarters 18th Infantry Brigade at Lechenich, Headquarters 71st Infantry Brigade at Eichhols (a country house), and Headquarters Divisional Troops at a château near Weilerswist. The route followed--220 miles--is given in the Diary.

It was with a great feeling of gratitude and elation that the Division ate their Christmas dinner on the Rhine in December 1918.

The area allotted to the Division was a strip of country almost rectangular in shape, with a maximum length of twenty miles, and a maximum breadth of twelve miles, and lying to the immediate south-west of Cologne. The north-west border was on the ring of forts encircling the city, which were later included in the divisional area.

The Civil Administration was carried out by the G.O.C. Infantry Brigades and the C.R.A., who were much assisted by a Civil Staff Captain and a Provost representative, and in the town of Bruhl by the G.O.C. Division, who also generally supervised under the Corps and the Army the work of the Group Commanders.

The Germans were very orderly, and little trouble was given, but guard and night patrol was fairly heavy.

On 1st February 1919, General Sir H. Plumer presented a Colour to the 9th Norfolk Regiment, 11th Essex Regiment, and 11th Leicester Regiment respectively, and made a stirring speech to each, congratulating them on their fine appearance and steady drill, and emphasizing their duty to their King and Country.

The Division settled down to improving their billets and to education, and frequent lectures were given by special lecturers sent out from England. Some of the troops were very comfortable, and notably those in towns like Bruhl, where each man had a bed and mattress, and Warrant Officers and N.C.O.s who were billeted in private houses, but others in the smaller villages were not so well off.

As the Germans did not play football there was a general lack of football grounds, which had to be made, but the troops scored considerably by finding electric light in even the tiniest cottages, and at least one concert-room, with a stage properly fitted up, in even the smallest village. The Opera, too, was a great source of pleasure to many. But it was a period of transition--men were being demobilized freely, and it was with a sigh of relief that something definite had been fixed, as well as with many sighs of regret, that orders were eventually received that the 6th Division, as such, would cease to exist in the middle of March 1919. Farewell parades were held, farewell speeches made, farewell dinners given, and on 15th March the Machine-gun Battalion, Pioneers, Field Companies (except 12th Field Company), and Train were transferred to the newly-constituted Midland Division.

The 6th Division, B.E.F., had completed its task.

APPENDIX I

BATTLE CASUALTIES

1914 Aisne (19th Sept.--12th Oct.) 1,482 Battle of the Aisne. 1914 Armentières (13th--31st Oct.) 4,696 First Battle of Ypres. 1914-15 Armentières (1st Nov.--31st May) 3,940 Trenches. 1915-16

Ypres (1st June 1915--31st July 1916) 10,938 Includes 1,780 in attack on Hooze; 660 gas attack, 15th Dec; 400 Morteldje attack. 1916 Somme (5th Aug.--20th Oct.) 7,430 Battle of the Somme. 1916-17 La Bassée (25th Nov. 1916--16th February 1917) 709 Trenches. 1917 Loos (2nd Mar.--25th July) 4,884 Raids and attacks, Hill 70. 1917 Loos-Lens (26th Aug.--23rd Oct.) 1,400 Trenches. 1917 Cambrai (20th Nov.--10th Dec.) 1,790 Battle of Cambrai. 1918 Bapaume (17th Jan.--20th March) 313 Trenches. 1918 Lagnicourt (21st--22nd March) 5,160 German offensive. 1918 Ypres (3rd April--24th Aug.) 4,715 Includes 750 at Neuve Eglise (71st Infantry Brigade) and 250 in attack on Scottish and Ridge Woods. 1918 St. Quentin (14th--28th Sept.) 3,163 Battle of St. Quentin. 1918 Bohain--Ors (4th--29th Oct.) 3,120 Battles of Bohain, Vaux-Andigny, and Ors.

Grand Total 53,740

N.B.--Above are approximate, and have been compiled from D.H.Q. War Diaries (Administrative).

APPENDIX II

V.C.s WON BY THE DIVISION

No. 7504 Private HENRY MAY, 1st Battalion The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), 19th Infantry Brigade, at that time attached to 6th Division.

For most conspicuous bravery near La Boutillerie, on 22nd October 1914, in voluntarily endeavouring to rescue, under very heavy fire, a wounded man, who was killed before he could save him, and subsequently, on the same day, in carrying a wounded officer a distance of 300 yards into safety whilst exposed to very severe fire. (Gazetted 21st April 1915.)

No. 9730 Private JOHN CAFFREY, 2nd Battalion The York and Lancaster Regiment.

For most conspicuous bravery on 16th November 1915, near La Brique.

A man of the West Yorkshire Regiment had been badly wounded, and was lying in the open unable to move, in full view of, and about 300 to 400 yards from, the enemy's trenches. Corporal Stirk, Royal Army Medical Corps, and Private Caffrey, at once started out to rescue him, but at the first attempt they were driven back by shrapnel fire. Soon afterwards they started again, under close sniping and machine-gun fire, and succeeded in reaching and bandaging the wounded man, but just as Corporal Stirk had lifted him on Private Caffrey's back he himself was shot in the head.

Private Caffrey put down the wounded man, bandaged Corporal Stirk, and helped him back into safety. He then returned and brought in the man of the West Yorkshire Regiment. He had made three journeys across the open under close and accurate fire, and had risked his own life to save others with the utmost coolness and bravery. (Gazetted 22nd January 1915.)

No. 3/10133 Sergeant ARTHUR FREDERIC SAUNDERS, 9th (Service) Battalion The Suffolk Regiment.

For most conspicuous bravery. When his officer had been wounded, in the attack he took charge of two machine-guns and a few men, and, although severely wounded in the thigh, closely followed the last four charges of another battalion, and rendered every possible support. Later, when the remains of the battalion which he had been supporting had been forced to retire, he stuck to his guns, continued to give clear orders, and by continuous firing did his best to cover the retirement. (Gazetted 30th March, 1916.)

2/Lieutenant FRANK BERNARD WEARNE, 11th (Service) Battalion Essex Regiment.

For superb courage, leadership and self-sacrifice.

On 28th June 1917, 2/Lieut. Wearne was in command of two sections on the left of a raiding party, whose objective was the German front line, east of Loos. He led his men into the objective

against opposition, and by his magnificent example and daring, they held on to the German trench for one hour according to orders.

Throughout the hour they were repeatedly counter-attacked, from their left down the trench and from their front over the open. Grasping the fact that if the left flank went, our men would have to give way, 2/Lieut. Wearne at a moment when the attack was being heavily pressed, and when matters were most critical, leapt on to the parapet and, followed by his left section, ran along the top of the trench, firing and throwing bombs at the enemy. This unexpected and daring manoeuvre threw the enemy back in disorder. Whilst on the top 2/Lieut. Wearne was severely wounded, but refused to leave his men. He remained in the trench directing operations, organizing the defence and encouraging all. Just before the order to withdraw was given 2/Lieut. Wearne was severely hit for the second time, and when being brought away was hit for the third time and killed.

His tenacity in remaining at his post, though severely wounded, and his magnificent fighting spirit enabled his men to hold on to the left flank; had this gone, the whole operation would have failed. (Gazetted 5th August 1917.)

2/Lieut. (A/Captain) ARTHUR MOORE LASCELLES, 3rd Battalion, attached 14th Battalion The Durham Light Infantry.

At Masnières on 3rd December 1917, showed the greatest courage, initiative, and devotion to duty when in command of his company.

His company was in a very exposed position, and after a very heavy bombardment, during which Captain Lascelles was wounded, the enemy attacked in strong force, but was driven off, largely owing to the fine example set by this officer, who refused to allow himself to be dressed, but continued to encourage his men and organize the defence. Shortly afterwards the enemy again attacked and captured the trench, taking several of his men prisoners. Captain Lascelles at once jumped on to the parapet and, followed by the remainder of his company, twelve men, rushed across under very heavy machine-gun fire and drove over sixty of the enemy back, being wounded again, thereby saving a most critical situation. He then was untiring in re-organizing the position, but shortly afterwards the enemy again attacked and captured the trench and Captain Lascelles. Later he escaped, being wounded again in doing so.

The remarkable determination and gallantry of this officer inspired everyone. (Gazetted 11th January 1919.)

APPENDIX III

DIARY

1914.

Sept. 8. Division embarked Southampton.

9. Commenced disembarking St. Nazaire.

10. Commenced entraining.

12. Into billets Coulommiers--Mortcerf--Marles--Chaume.

13-19. Marching to the Aisne--into General Reserve, D.H.Q. at Bazoches.

19. 18th Infantry Brigade to I Corps to relieve 2nd Infantry Brigade.

20. Attack on I Corps--18th Infantry Brigade heavily engaged.

21. 16th Infantry Brigade to II Corps to relieve 7th and 9th Infantry Brigades, and 17th Infantry Brigade to I Corps to relieve 6th Infantry Brigade and 4th Guards Brigade.

Sept. 20 to Oct. 6. In trenches on the Aisne.

Oct. 2. Division (less 16th and 17th Infantry Brigades) concentrated in area Serches--Jury, under

III Corps--D.H.Q. at Serches.

6. 17th Infantry Brigade rejoined Division, which marched west.

9. Division (less 16th Infantry Brigade) entrained at St. Sauveur near Compiègne.

10-11. Division arrived St. Omer and went into billets--19th Infantry Brigade joined Division (one battalion to Renescure)--one battalion 18th Infantry Brigade to Racquinghem.

12. March to Hazebrouck to cover detrainment of 4th Division. 16th Infantry Brigade relieved by French troops.

13. 16th Infantry Brigade entrained for Cassel. Division marched east--fighting from 1 p.m. on line La Couronne--Merris--Fontaine Houck, which was reached at nightfall--considerable casualties.

14. Line reached R. du Leet--Blanche Maison--east of Bailleul.

Oct. 15-16. 18th Infantry Brigade crossed River Lys at Sailly, and 17th Infantry Brigade at Bac St. Maur during the night--Steenwerck occupied.

16. Line advanced to Rouge du Bout--Rue Dormoire. 16th Infantry Brigade rejoined Division and went into Divisional Reserve.

17. Line Rouge du Bout--Bois Grenier--Chapelle d'Armentières reached without opposition.

18. Reconnaissance in force on enemy's reported positions. Line at night after considerable fighting Radinghem--Ennetières--Prêmesques--Halte to west of Pérenchies--l'Epinette (east of Armentières).

19. Entrenching above line.

20. Massed German attack all along line--Division driven back to Touquet--Bois Blancs--Le Quesne--La Houssoie--Rue du Bois--l'Epinette.

21. 19th Infantry Brigade (sent to fill gap between II and III Corps) driven back from Le Maisnil--Fromelles to La Boutillerie--Touquet.

22. Heavy attack on 19th Infantry Brigade in evening repulsed.

23. 17th Infantry Brigade relieved by 4th Division and became Divisional Reserve--attacks on 16th Infantry Brigade (K.S.L.I. and Y. and L.) repulsed with much loss to enemy-- 300 dead in front of trenches.

24-25. Continuous attacks on Divisional front throughout day, all repulsed, but situation critical.

25-26. Retirement made during night to prepared line about half a mile in rear Touquet--Flamengerie Farm--Rue du Bois, so as to straighten front.

27-28. Attack by night on 18th Infantry Brigade trenches, which were captured but retaken by counter-attack--East Yorks especially distinguished themselves.

28-29. Attack by night on 19th Infantry Brigade repulsed.

29-30. Strong attack by night on 19th Infantry Brigade captured trenches, but was driven out by counter-attack and 200 dead counted.

Nov. and Dec. } 1915. } In trenches Armentières front. Jan. and Feb. }

Mar. 12. l'Epinette attacked and captured by North Staffordshire Regiment.

Mar. 15. 16th Infantry Brigade moved up to Vlamertinghe, but returned next day.

May. A little mining and counter-mining on the Frelinghien and Le Touquet fronts.

27. Major-Gen. Sir John Keir left to command VI Corps, being succeeded by Brig.-Gen. Congreve. Brig.-Gen. Humphreys succeeded Brig.-Gen. Paget in command of Divisional Artillery.

Relief by 27th Division commenced.

31. Front handed over to 27th Division--19th Infantry Brigade left Division.

May 31 to June 1. Took over new front Ypres Salient.

June 2. Relief completed on front from Ypres--Roulers Railway to Wieltje.

5. 17th Infantry Brigade into line, which now extended to just short of Turco Farm.

8. D.H.Q. from Couthove to Vlamertinghe.

15. Gallant bombing attack by Lieut. Smith's Grenadier Platoon to assist 41st Brigade.

16. Artillery co-operation with 3rd Divisional attack on Bellewarde Farm.

20. 16th Infantry Brigade's first experience of gas.

22. Artillery co-operation in 14th Divisional attack.

July 6. Artillery co-operation in 4th Divisional attack near Pilkem.

30. Attack on 14th Division at Hooze. Drove them back to Sanctuary and Zouave Woods.

Counter-attack unsuccessful.

31. 16th Infantry Brigade moved up. Decided to relieve 6th Division and give it task of retaking Hooze.

Aug. 2-3. Relieved.

6. Took over new front and commenced bombardment.

9. Attack on Hooze by 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades--infantry moved close up under barrage, which remained on support trench five minutes longer--attack successful, but right suffered very heavily from shelling from south and fire from east.

Oct. 14. 17th Infantry Brigade left for 24th Division, and 71st arrived.

Nov. 19-20. Division relieved--to Houtkerque and Poperinghe, but had to find working parties for divisions in line.

Dec. 14. Into line again--Roulers Railway to Wieltje.

19. Gas attack by enemy.

1916.

Jan. 24. 11th Essex patrol raid (3 officers and 10 other ranks) on mound on Verlorenhoek Road--killed six Germans.

Feb. 14-15. Two enemy raids near Wieltje and Trenches B9 and 10 repulsed.

Mar. 9-10. 1st The Buffs bombing raid (1 officer and 19 other ranks) on crater at I 12.

15-16. 2nd D.L.I. (3 officers and 44 other ranks) successful raid, capturing a prisoner--Bangalore torpedo laid by Lieut. Smith, R.N.V.R.

15-18. Relieved from line--to Houtkerque, Wormhoudt, Calais.

April 15-18. Back into line 5,500 yards front, with left on canal next to 58th French Division and right next Guards Division.

19-20. Enemy occupied trenches out of which he had shelled a company of the 8th Bedfords in Morteldje Salient--counter-attack unsuccessful.

21. Trenches retaken by two companies K.S.L.I., in spite of very heavy going.

May 14-15. Enemy attacked four bombing posts of 1st The Buffs--beaten off three times, but captured them at fourth attempt--all garrison casualties.

June 3. Five officers and 200 other ranks 1st West Yorks drove enemy out of posts on frontage 450 yards and re-occupied it.

10. "Admiral" reported missing from patrol of 9th Norfolks.

17-18. Relieved--to Bollezele, Houtkerque, Wormhoudt.

July 15-17. Into line north-west of Hooze to north of Wieltje.

July 29 to Aug. 1. Relieved preparatory to entraining.

Aug. 2-3. Entrained Hopoutre, Proven, and Esquelbec, and detrained Candas and Doullens.

3-4. Marched to Acheux--Raincheval area.

5-7. Into line on Ancre--preparing for attack.

21. 9th Suffolk and 2nd Sherwood Foresters' unsuccessful raid.

24. 14th D.L.I. unsuccessful raid.

Aug. 26-27. Relieved and began to move south to Vignacourt-- Flesselles area.

Sept. 6-8. Moved up to XIV Corps area.

11. Into line on front between Leuze Wood and Ginchy.

13. Attack by 71st Infantry Brigade on Quadrilateral unsuccessful--renewed in evening but only partially successful.

15. *General attack* by 16th and 71st Infantry Brigades--6th Divisional objective beyond the Quadrilateral--attack failed--renewed in evening and failed again.

16. 18th Infantry Brigade into line in relief of 71st Infantry Brigade.

18. Fresh attack on Quadrilateral after bombardment by 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades--successful.

19. Relieved.

21. Into line again.

25. *General attack*--6th Division on Lesbœufs, and south to Morval--by 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades, with 71st Infantry Brigade in reserve--successful--over 500 prisoners.

30. Relieved by 20th Division.

Oct. 8-9. Into line relieving 20th Division.

12. *General attack*--6th Division towards Le Transloy--by 18th and 71st Infantry Brigades--16th Infantry Brigade in reserve--unsuccessful.

15. Attack renewed--partially successful.

18. Fresh attack by 71st Infantry Brigade--only partially successful on left.

20. Relieved--to Corbie.

28. Assembled in reserve to I Corps.

Nov. 25. Into line on Canal Sector, La Bassée.

During Dec. Side-slipped slightly to south.

1917.

Jan. 26. 1st West Yorks raid (6 officers and 160 other ranks under Capt. Trimble) in Cambrin Sector--five prisoners.

29. 8th Bedford Regiment raid (C Company--150--under Capt. Brewster) in Hohenzollern Sector--two prisoners.

Feb. 4. Enemy raided 1st West Yorks and captured a Lewis gun and a prisoner.

Feb. 9. 2nd Sherwood Foresters raid (6 officers and 100 other ranks under Major Wylie) in Quarries Sector under smoke barrage by Special Co. R.E.--20 dug-outs blown in--about 60 enemy killed and wounded--8 prisoners.

10. 2nd D.L.I. raid (3 officers and 38 other ranks) on Mad Point--over 30 enemy dead counted--1 prisoner brought in--several dug-outs destroyed.

12. 71st Infantry Brigade scouting party raid partly successful only--one machine-gun entrenchment blown in.

15. Enemy attempted raid in Hohenzollern Sector repulsed by artillery and machine-gun fire--one enemy identification made.

16-17. Relieved by 21st Division--to Béthune--Busnes--Robecq.

Mar. 2-4. Into line Loos Sector--from Double Crassier to Railway Alley.

18. Enemy carried out several simultaneous raids--that on 2nd York and Lancasters dispersed by Lewis-gun fire--that on Buffs repulsed after hand-to-hand fighting--that on 1st West Yorks penetrated

and captured one Lewis gun and six men.

19. Enemy raided 2nd York and Lancasters--unsuccessful--two Germans killed in our trenches.

24. 11th Essex Battalion raid on area round Posen Crater (4 companies of 2 officers and 80 other ranks each)--penetrated to enemy support line and remained one and a half hours--captured 1 officer, 8 other ranks, and 1 machine-gun.

25. Enemy raided 9th Norfolk Regiment and 2nd Sherwood Foresters and captured nine prisoners, penetrating some distance between the battalions, but leaving one officer and three other ranks dead in our trenches.

30. 1st The Buffs raid (4 officers and 100 other ranks under Capt. B. L. Strauss) in Loos Sector--remained in trenches over half-hour--took one prisoner and one machine-gun, and blew in eight dug-outs.

April 5. Enemy raid on 2nd Foresters at Border Redoubt--driven off with very slight casualties.

April 8. 2nd D.L.I. patrol raid (2 officers and 47 other ranks) in Loos Sector--held up by wire.

10. 9th Suffolks raid (D Company under Capt. England, M.C.) in Quarries Sector--successful and obtained identification.

12. 2nd York and Lancasters raid (2 officers and 80 other ranks under Capt. Hardy)--got into trench and killed sixteen Germans.

13. Enemy withdrew from Railway Triangle, closely followed by 2nd York and Lancasters, who entered enemy dug-outs before candles had burnt out.

24th Division on our right also advancing line.

System of bombardment followed by pauses during which patrols went out and occupied what they could.

14. Enemy small raid on 1st West Yorks--driven off by counter-attack and identification obtained.

15. A certain amount of ground gained in the face of increasing opposition--Buffs and York and Lancasters advanced a bit.

16. Systematic bombardment of Hill 70 trenches commenced--enemy counter-attacked and drove Buffs back slightly, but failed against 8th Bedfords' advanced post--D Company, West Yorks (3 officers and 65 other ranks under Capt. Rendall), attempted raid, but driven back by artillery fire.

17. Gas released on enemy--ideal conditions--enemy attacked right flank of 8th Bedfords but driven back.

18. Enemy shelled Loos heavily during night (about 1,000 5.9s) --1st Leicesters (C Company under Capt. Cox) raided and captured one prisoner--1st K.S.L.I. and 8th Bedfords made more ground, latter taking twenty-seven prisoners and one machine-gun.

19. 1st K.S.L.I. got north end of Novel Alley, but three attempts to push forward by 8th Bedfords unsuccessful--K.S.L.I. took eighteen prisoners--14th D.L.I. relieved 8th Bedfords--11th Essex placed under orders of G.O.C., 16th Infantry Brigade.

20. 46th Division relieved 24th Division on our right--11th Essex into line, relieving 1st Buffs and 1st K.S.L.I.

April 20-21. Line partially withdrawn to allow of bombardment.

21. Attack by 14th D.L.I. in conjunction with 46th Division-- successful--two machine-guns and thirty-six prisoners.

21-22. 14th D.L.I. repulsed two enemy counter-attacks.

22. Attack by 14th D.L.I. and 11th Essex in conjunction with 46th Division--latter unable to attack Narwhal trench on account of uncut wire--11th Essex unable to get on--14th D.L.I. took objective, but gradually shelled and sniped out and driven back to original line--forty-six prisoners and three

machine-guns.

22. 1st Leicesters relieved 14th D.L.I.--9th Suffolks lent to 16th Infantry Brigade--position became stationary with enemy in Nash Alley.

23. Small enemy raid dispersed and an identification obtained.

26. G.O.C. 71st Infantry Brigade assumed command Loos Sector vice G.O.C. 16th Infantry Brigade to northern sector of Division.

27. Enemy raided in Quarries Sector--one prisoner taken by us.

28. Raid by 9th Norfolks (No. 8 Platoon) stopped by new wire--same by West Yorks, also unsuccessful.

29. 7,000 gas shells by enemy on Vermelles, Philosophie, and Maroc.

May 2. 46th Division took over portion of Southern Brigade area.

5. Enemy patrol entered our lines, but was shot and identification made.

9. Enemy attempted raid on 2nd D.L.I., but driven off.

13. Heavy enemy bombardment in 14bis Sector--raid broken up as it came out of trenches by artillery fire.

15-16. Enemy raided Boyau 46 and captured four men.

20-21. 1st West Yorks raid (2 officers and 52 other ranks) entered trenches but enemy fled--no result.

22. 1st Leicesters raid (B Company, 4 officers and 132 other ranks, under Capt. Wykes) in Quarries Sector--several dug-outs with enemy in destroyed.

May 28. 2nd Sherwood Foresters (6 officers and 133 other ranks under Major Addison-Smith) raided under cover of a smoke barrage--captured two prisoners and destroyed some dug-outs, machine-gun entrenchments and tunnel entrances.

June 1. 1st K.S.L.I. (3 officers and 130 other ranks under Capt. E. Spink, M.C.) raided enemy near Hendon Alley--sixteen Germans killed and machine-gun entrenchments blown in.

4. Two officers and forty other ranks of 1st K.S.L.I. raided same trenches and got in, but no prisoners taken.

6. Small raid 2nd D.L.I. (2 officers and 50 other ranks) unsuccessful--enemy's barrage too heavy.

8. Enemy small raid on 9th Suffolks at Newport Sap repulsed--four enemy dead left on our wire.

10. 9th Suffolks (3 officers and 94 other ranks) raided as far as enemy support trenches, but found no one.

12-13. 9th Norfolks (1 officer and 35 other ranks) attempted raid on Merthyr Sap, but could not get in.

15. 14th D.L.I. successful daylight raid (3 officers and 80 other ranks) in vicinity of Nash Alley--a good many enemy killed and seven prisoners taken.

23-24. Enemy entered post of 11th Essex and did some damage, but was driven out by counter-attack.

24. Raid by 1st Buffs (two companies under Capt. Jacob) near Halifax Alley--remained in trenches three and a half hours and captured fifteen prisoners and two aerial-dart machines. Lieuts. Harrington and Buss (both killed) greatly distinguished themselves.

27-28. Very gallant raid by 2nd D.L.I. (2 officers and 84 other ranks under Capt. Fawcett) and 11th Essex (3 officers and 67 other ranks under Capt. Silver) in connection with operations of 46th Division--though anticipated the raiders got into the enemy's trenches and remained there one hour, repelling all counter-attacks--one prisoner taken.

July 1-2. Small enemy raid on Novel Alley unsuccessful--left one dead in our trench.

3. Small enemy raid on 1st West Yorks in Novel Alley unsuccessful --two prisoners taken and one enemy left dead in trench.

7-8. Brilliant repulse of strong enemy raid near Boyau 70 by 1st The Buffs and 1st K.S.L.I.--two prisoners taken by us.

9-10. 14th D.L.I. raid (1 officer and 30 other ranks)--trenches entered but enemy fled--enemy small raid on Novel Alley driven off.

12. Patrol raid (3 patrols of 12) by 8th Bedfords in Hulluch Sector--one prisoner.

16. Surprise raid by 9th Norfolks (2 officers and 36 other ranks)--stiff fighting but no identification obtained.

20. Three patrols (3 officers and 55 other ranks) of 2nd York and Lancasters raided enemy's posts but only partly successful.

23. Raid by 1st Leicesters (8 officers and 291 other ranks under Capt. Mosse) in Quarries Sector--enemy bolted into dug-outs --remained one and a half hours in enemy's trenches--one prisoner taken. Division relieved by 46th Division--D.H.Q. to Ourton-- troops to area Ourton-Monchy Breton.

31. 9th Norfolks and 1st Leicesters went by bus to Bac St. Maur to come under orders G.O.C., 57th Division.

Aug. 5. 9th Norfolks and 1st Leicesters returned.

24-27. Into line on Hill 70 front.

Sept. 9. 2nd Sherwood Foresters raided enemy Hill 70 Sector unsuccessfully--enemy had bombarded trenches all day and blown in many, and had anticipated the raid.

13. 8th Bedfords (2 officers and 85 other ranks) raided enemy and bombed his crowded trenches, but failed to get in.

20-21. Enemy's raid on 11th Essex failed.

24. Side-stepped with a view to attack on Cité St. Auguste.

29. Enemy raided York and Lancasters, but was repulsed and left an unwounded prisoner in our hands.

Oct. 4. Preparations for attack. Enemy raid (about half battalion) on 18th Infantry Brigade repulsed.

Oct. 19. Raid with heavy bombardment on 14th D.L.I. unsuccessful.

20-23. Relieved by 11th Division--to St. Hilaire area.

29. Marched south to join Third Army. Training with tanks.

Nov. 15-19. Commenced march to Cambrai front.

20. *Battle of Cambrai.*

16th Infantry Brigade on right, 71st Infantry Brigade on left, 18th passed through--broke both systems of Hindenburg Line, capturing Ribécourt and Premy Chapel Ridge--first company into Marcoing--over 1,100 prisoners and 23 guns.

All objectives gained with few casualties by 12 noon.

Congratulatory message from Corps Commander.

21. Action of 14th D.L.I. supporting cavalry in advance to Cantaing.

26-27. 18th Infantry Brigade extended front to Cantaing. 1st The Buffs cleared and occupied Noyelles.

30. *Enemy counter-attack in force on Third Army.*

16th Infantry Brigade moved from Divisional Reserve to near Beaucamps and ordered to counter-attack on Gouzeaucourt-- found Guards already in possession.

Arranged to attack by night on La Vacquerie-Gonnellieu-- attack unsuccessful.

Gallant action of 18th Infantry Brigade transport under Shea, Q.M., 2nd D.L.I., and Paul, Transport officer, 1st West Yorks --both died of wounds.

Congratulatory message on this action received from G.O.C., 29th Division.

Night Dec. 2/3. 16th Infantry Brigade relieved part of 29th Division north of St. Quentin Canal.

3. Enemy attacked K.S.L.I. and 14th D.L.I. north of canal. Three counter-attacks by D.L.I., but finally driven back.

Bedfords and York and Lancasters put in to restore situation --partially successful.

Front withdrawn to line of canal night of 3rd/4th.

4. General withdrawal of British line to Support System of Hindenburg Line ordered.

Dec. 10. Relieved by 19th Division.

11. 16th Infantry Brigade to VI Corps.

12. 18th Infantry Brigade to VI Corps.

Above brigades placed at disposal of 3rd Division, and went into line to relieve two of their brigades on Bullecourt front for a few days.

Dec. 14 to } In rest--Basseux area. Jan. 17, 1918. }

1918.

Jan. 17. Commenced move up to Frémicourt.

Feb. 4. Enemy's silent raid on three posts of Boursies area and captured one prisoner.

13. Side-stepped into Lagnicourt Sector.

Mar. 3. 1st K.S.L.I. (2 officers and 50 other ranks, B Company) raided Magpie's Nest and captured one machine-gun--enemy fled.

16. 1st Leicesters (2 officers and 50 other ranks) repeated raid-- post empty.

21. *Great German offensive commenced.* Fighting all day--heavy casualties--71st and 18th Infantry Brigades holding out in Reserve line till dark.

22. Fighting all day on Corps line.

Remnants of Division relieved at night--to Achiet and Logeast Wood.

25. By train to Second Army.

30. King's visit to Steenvoorde.

April 3-4. Into line in Ypres Salient on high ground between Menin and Zonnebeke Roads--came under XXII Corps.

13. 71st Infantry Brigade left to join 49th Division on Neuve Eglise front.

16. Line withdrawn to battle zone--enemy followed up in the afternoon and a good many casualties were inflicted on him-- one party of twenty-five annihilated.

18. Enemy raided post unsuccessfully and lost an officer killed--identification obtained by us.

25. Capture of Kemmel by enemy from the French.

26. 71st Infantry Brigade returned to Division.

Night 26-27. Further withdrawal to west end of Zillebeke Lake-White Château.

29. Heavy attacks against Division on our right.

May 8. Unsuccessful enemy attack on Ridgewood.

11-14. Side-slipped to south and came into II Corps.

19. 11th Essex raided Manor Farm successfully but no prisoners taken.

May 22. 2nd D.L.I. (A and C Companies) raided pill-boxes Bedford front and took sixteen prisoners.

28-29. Attack by 11th Essex in conjunction with French 46th Division.

June 5. 2nd York and Lancasters raided (3 officers and 68 other ranks) Lankhoff Farm

unsuccessfully.

7-8. Division relieved--to Dirty Bucket Camp and Jan ter Biezen area.

71st T.M.B. co-operated in 46th French Division operation.

19. 18th T.M.B. lent to 7th French Division for a raid.

27-28. Relieved 46th French Division in Dickebusch front.

July 6. Enemy's raid on Scottish Wood repulsed.

9. Patrol of 2nd Sherwood Foresters rushed a post near Ridgewood by day--captured a machine-gun and killed the garrison.

14. *Attack by 18th Infantry Brigade on Ridgewood.* 1st West Yorks and 2nd D.L.I. assisted by two companies 1st Middlesex of 33rd Division--enemy surprised--most successful-- captures, 7 officers, 341 other ranks, 23 machine-guns, 1 H.T.M., 2 L.T.Ms.

Aug. 2. 1st The Buffs daylight raid on the Brasserie--successful-- three prisoners.

6. H.M. The King saw some of the troops at Winnezele.

8. Minor operation by 18th Infantry Brigade in connection with 41st Division's operation--company West Yorks unsuccessful --company 2nd D.L.I. on right co-operating with 41st Division entirely successful.

In August. Attachment of units of 27th American Division.

21-24. Relieved by 27th American Division--to Wizernes area.

31. Division marched to Arques.

Sept. 1. Entrained for Fourth Army.

2-4. Detrained and billeted in area Heilly-Ribemont-Franvillers.

13-14. Relieved 32nd Division at head of IX Corps by bus.

18th Infantry Brigade took over front in Holnon Wood with 11th Essex.

16th Infantry Brigade in support in Trefcon area.

71st Infantry Brigade in reserve in Monchy-Lagache area.

Sept. 15. 11th Essex attacked and captured trenches just clear of Holnon Wood, taking forty-six prisoners.

15-16. Divisional front re-organized with West Yorks on right and Essex on left.

17. West Yorks attacked Holnon Village and Essex Badger Copse to establish starting line for general attack on 18th September --fighting all day--Essex eventually successful--West Yorks unsuccessful.

18. *General attack* to capture high ground overlooking St. Quentin--71st Infantry Brigade on right, with D.L.I. attached to capture Holnon--16th Infantry Brigade on left --latter advanced 3,000 yards--former held up by Quadrilateral--right made little progress as French failed to capture Round and Manchester Hills on right flank.

19. Attack renewed on Quadrilateral but unsuccessful.

20-23. Digging new assembly trenches and bombarding Quadrilateral with heavy artillery.

24. Attack on whole IX Corps front--18th Infantry Brigade on right, 16th Infantry Brigade on left--fighting all day; half Quadrilateral captured by nightfall.

1st Leicesters, attached to 18th Infantry Brigade, captured Douai Trench east of Holnon at 10.30. p.m. by moonlight.

25. Gradual completion of capture of Quadrilateral. Selency Village captured--Position consolidated.

26-30. On position.

Sept. 30 to Oct. 1. Relief of Division by the French.

Oct. 1-3. Resting in Tertry area.

4. Division relieved 46th Division--D.H.Q. at La Baraque, 71st Infantry Brigade at Magny la Fosse, 16th Infantry Brigade took over line with 139th Infantry Brigade (46th Division) left at Sequehart under 6th Division.

7. 71st relieved part of 16th Infantry Brigade on left next to 30th American Division.

8. *General attack* towards Bohain--71st Infantry Brigade on left, 16th Infantry Brigade on right, 18th Infantry Brigade in Divisional Reserve with West Yorks (attached to 16th Infantry Brigade) attacking up valley, French on right--all objectives gained by night.

Oct. 8-9. Took over part of line by night from 30th American Division and handed over part to 46th Division.

9. Attack under a barrage at dawn towards Bohain and Fresnoy --Bohain captured during night by 9th Norfolks.

10. Advance by 71st Infantry Brigade to high ground 2,000 yards east of Bohain--46th Division on right.

11. Reconnaissance in force by 71st Infantry Brigade brought to a standstill by machine-gun fire.

11-12. 18th Infantry Brigade relieved 71st Infantry Brigade by night.

12. 18th Infantry Brigade reconnaissance in force at 4.30 p.m. made a little ground.

14. 71st Infantry Brigade relieved 18th Infantry Brigade.

16-17. 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades moved to north for general attack on 18th, with 30th American Division on left and 46th Division on right. Brig.-Gen. Walker wounded.

18. *General attack* through Vaux Andigny--16th Infantry Brigade on left, 18th Infantry Brigade on right, 71st Infantry Brigade in reserve--successful--1st Division passed through 6th Division, which came into Corps Reserve.

19-20. Resting.

20-21. Division relieved 30th American Division in St. Souplet area --18th Infantry Brigade on right next to 1st Division, 71st Infantry Brigade on left next to 25th Division--D.H.Q. Becquigny.

23. *General attack* to gain high ground overlooking Sambre Canal--zero 1.30 a.m.--18th Infantry Brigade successful on right--71st Infantry Brigade on left, disorganized by gas shelling in assembly position and losing the barrage by reason of the high fences and the mist, gained most of their objectives by the afternoon.

23-24. 16th Infantry Brigade relieved 71st Infantry Brigade by night and pushed on, completing capture of final objective.

Oct. 28. 71st Infantry Brigade relieved 18th Infantry Brigade.

30. Successful attack on a farm by 1st The Buffs.

30-31. Division relieved by 32nd Division, went to rest at Fresnoy le Grand.

Nov. 6. Division moved to Bohain.

11. Hostilities ceased.

14. Division marched to area Catillon-Mazinghien-Vaux Andigny.

15. To area Prisches-Le Sart-Catillon.

16. To area Avesnes-Favril.

17. Halt.

18. To area Solre le Château-Dompierre.

19. Tail closed to Dimechaux-Sars Poteries.

20. *March to the Rhine commenced.*

To area Barbençon-Thirimont. Tail at Solre le Château.

23. Tail closed to Barbençon-Beaumont.

24. To area Leneffe-Fraire-Walcourt-Boussu.

Nov. 25th to Dec. 1. Halt.

Dec. 2. To area Mettet-Flavion-Morialme. Tail at Leneffe-Fraire.

3. To area Sommières-Onhaye.

4. To area Bouvignes-Anhee. Tail at Mettet-Biesmeree.

5. H.Q. Group and 71st Infantry Brigade crossed Meuse and went to Crupet-Braibant-Purnode.

16th and 18th Infantry Brigades closed to river at Anhee-Bouvignes. Tail at Gerin-Maredret.

6. 16th and 18th Infantry Brigades crossed Meuse Division in area Achet-Hamois-Ciney. Tail at Yvoir.

7. Halt.

8. To area Les Avins-Pailhe. Tail at Ciney.

9. To area Ouffet-Tinlot-Stree. Tail at Havelange.

10. Halt.

11. To area Remouchamps-Aywaille-Comblain la Tour. Tail at Tinlot.

12. To area Francorchamps-Stoumont. Tail at Ouffet-Hody.

13. 71st Infantry Brigade crossed German frontier to Malmedy.

Remainder in area Stavelot-Stoumont. Tail at Oneux-Pressieux.

Dec. 14. H.Q. Group crossed frontier--71st Infantry Brigade to Elsenborn Camp. Tail at Aywaille.

15. 18th Infantry Brigade crossed frontier--71st Infantry Brigade to Montjoie. Tail at Stoumont.

16. 16th Infantry Brigade crossed frontier--71st Infantry Brigade to Simmerath-Rotgen. Tail at Malmedy.

17. Tail to Elsenborn Camp.

18. Halt.

19. To area Heinbach-Gemund-Schleiden. Tail at Elsenborn Camp.

20. To area Mechernich-Kommern-Zulpich. Tail at Montjoie.

21. To area Euskirchen-Zulpich. Tail at Harpersheid-Drieborn.

22. To area Lechenich-Weilerswist. Tail at Vlatten-Satzvey.

23. To area Rondorf-Kendenich. Tail at Zulpich-Froitzhein.

D.H.Q. at Bruhl--all units now in final positions.

APPENDIX IV

ORDER OF BATTLE ON MOBILIZATION.

DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS

G.O.C. Major-Gen. J. L. Keir, C.B., late R.A. A.D.C. Capt. P. F. Fitzgerald, King's Shropshire Light Infantry. G.S.O.1 Col. W. T. Furse, D.S.O., late R.A. G.S.O.2 Lt.-Col. J. T. Burnett-Stuart, D.S.O., Rifle Brigade. G.S.O.3 Capt. A. T. Paley, Rifle Brigade. A.A. and Q.M.G. Col. W. Campbell, D.S.O., Gordon Highlanders. D.A.A. and Q.M.G. Major F. C. Dundas, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. D.A.Q.M.G. Major A. Delavoye, A.S.C. A.D.M.S. Col. H. O. Trevor, R.A.M.C. D.A.D.M.S. Major N. J. C. Rutherford, R.A.M.C. A.D.V.S. Major H. M. Lenox-Conyngham, A.V.C. D.A.D.O.S. Major H. M. Howard, A.O.D. A.P.M. Capt. H. S. Rogers, King's Shropshire Light Infantry.

DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS

C.R.E. Lt.-Col. G. C. Kemp, R.E. Adjutant Major B. W. Y. Danford, R.E. 12th Field Company

Major A. F. Sargeaunt, R.E. 38th Field Company Major F. M. Browne, R.E. 6th Divisional Signal
Capt. A. N. Paxton, R.E. Company.

DIVISIONAL CAVALRY

O.C., Squadron, 19th Major H. O'S. F. Tanner, 19th Hussars. Hussars.

DIVISIONAL CYCLISTS

O.C., Cyclist Company Capt. S. H. Dix, Leinster Regiment.

DIVISIONAL TRAIN

O.C., 6th Divisional Lt.-Col. H. Davies, A.S.C. Train.

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

O.C., 16th Field Lt.-Col. A. C. Fox. Ambulance. O.C., 17th Field Lt.-Col. J. P. Silver.
Ambulance. O.C., 18th Field Lt.-Col. A. A. Watson (S.R.). Ambulance.

DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY

C.R.A. Brig.-Gen. W. L. H. Paget, C.B., M.V.O. Brigade-Major Major J. Farquhar. Staff-Captain
Capt. J. de V. Bowles. Orderly Officer 2/Lieut. K. F. W. Dunn.

2nd Brigade, R.F.A.

O.C. Col. W. A. M. Thompson. Adjutant Capt. H. R. S. Massey. 21st Battery Major L. M.
Phillipotts, D.S.O. 42nd Battery Major H. J. Brock. 53rd Battery Major C. J. Rugge Price. Brigade
Ammunition Capt. C. E. S. Bower. Column.

24th Brigade, R.F.A.

O.C. Lt.-Col. C. E. Lawrie, D.S.O. Adjutant Capt. H. A. Boyd. 110th Battery Major W. M.
Warburton. 111th Battery Major E. C. W. D. Walthall, D.S.O. 112th Battery Major W. B. Browell.
Brigade Ammunition Capt. B. H. Shaw-Stewart. Column.

38th Brigade, R.F.A.

O.C. Lt.-Col. R. F. Fox, D.S.O. Adjutant Capt. C. S. Rich. 24th Battery Major A. G. Arbuthnot.
34th Battery Major A. R. Wainwright. 72nd Battery Major F. A. Tighe. Brigade Ammunition Capt. C.
R. Hill. Column.

12th (Howitzer) Brigade, R.F.A.

O.C. Lt.-Col. G. Humphreys, D.S.O. Adjutant Capt. A. T. McGrath. 43rd Battery Major E. R.
Burne. 86th Battery Major R. S. Hardman. 87th Battery Major H. T. Belcher, D.S.O. Brigade
Ammunition Capt. R. J. C. Meyricke. Column.

24th Heavy Battery, R.G.A. (60-pounders)

O.C. Major H. E. J. Brake, C.B., D.S.O.

Divisional Ammunition Column

O.C. Lt.-Col. G. A. Cardew. Adjutant Capt. J. C. Dundas.

16th INFANTRY BRIGADE

B.G.C. Brig.-Gen. E. C. Ingouville-Williams, C.B., D.S.O., late Worcestershire Regiment.
Brigade-Major Capt. R. H. Mangles, D.S.O., The Queen's Regiment. Staff-Captain Capt. G. Lee, The
Buffs. O.C., 1st Bn., The Lt.-Col. H. C. de la M. Hill. Buffs. O.C., 1st Bn., Leicestershire Lt.-Col. H.
L. Croker. Regiment. O.C., 1st Bn., K.S.L.I. Lt.-Col. C. P. Higginson, D.S.O. O.C., 2nd Bn., York Lt.-
Col. E. C. Cobbold. and Lancaster Regt.

17th INFANTRY BRIGADE

B.G.C. Brig.-Gen. W. R. B. Doran, C.B., D.S.O., late Royal Irish Regiment. Brigade-Major
Major A. D. Green, D.S.O., Worcestershire Regiment. Staff-Captain Capt. H. V. Scott, Rifle Brigade.
O.C., 1st Bn., Royal Lt.-Col. R. Fowler-Butler. Fusiliers. O.C., 1st Bn., North Lt.-Col. V. W. de
Falbe, D.S.O. Staffordshire Regt. O.C., 2nd Bn., Leinster Lt.-Col. W. T. M. Reeve. Regiment. O.C.,

3rd Bn., Rifle Lt.-Col. R. Alexander. Brigade

18th INFANTRY BRIGADE

B.G.C. Brig.-Gen. W. N. Congreve, V.C., C.B., M.V.O., late Rifle Brigade. Brigade-Major Capt. R. F. H. Wallace, Black Watch. Staff-Captain Capt. F. G. Maughan, Durham Light Infantry. O.C., 1st Bn., West Lt.-Col. F. W. Towsey. Yorkshire Regiment. O.C., 1st Bn., East Lt.-Col. R. E. Benson. Yorkshire Regiment. O.C., 2nd Bn., Sherwood Lt.-Col. C. B. Crofton-Atkins. Foresters. O.C., 2nd Bn., D.L.I. Lt.-Col. B. W. L. McMahon.

ORDER OF BATTLE--11TH NOVEMBER 1918

DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS

G.O.C. Major-Gen. T. O. Marden, C.B., C.M.G., late the Welch Regiment. A.D.C. 2/Lieut. E. C. W. Severne, General List. A.D.C. Capt. J. R. Tylden, East Kent Yeomanry. G.S.O.1 Brevet-Lt.-Col. T. T. Grove, D.S.O., R.E. G.S.O.2 Major L. M. Taylor, M.C., York and Lancaster Regiment (T.). G.S.O.3 Capt. J. Horlington, M.C., York and Lancaster Regiment (S.R.). Intelligence Officer Lieut. K. Archbold, M.C., General List. A.A. and Q.M.G. Brevet-Lt.-Col. P. Hudson, C.M.G., D.S.O., The King's (Liverpool) Regt. D.A.A.G. Major C. Macfie, D.S.O., Seaforth Highlanders. D.A.Q.M.G. Lt.-Col. A. J. D. Hay, East Surrey Regiment (S.R.). A.D.M.S. Col. H. C. R. Hime, D.S.O., R.A.M.C. D.A.D.M.S. Major N. Cantlie, M.C., R.A.M.C. D.A.D.V.S. Major R. F. Bett, A.V.C. D.A.D.O.S. Major R. G. P. Hare, A.O.D. D.A.P.M. Capt. W. A. Bignell, South Irish Horse. S.C.F., C. of E. Rev. E. C. Hoskyns, M.C., A.C.D. Divisional Claims Officer. Lieut. C. E. B. M. Smith, Sherwood Foresters. Divisional Gas Officer Capt. D. Powell, M.C., R.E. O.C., 209th Employment Capt. G. L. Scudamore, Labour Corps. Company. 6th M.T. Company Major O. B. Gabriel, A.S.C.

DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS

C.R.E. Lt.-Col. H. A. L. Hall, M.C., R.E. Adjutant Capt. C. A. Langley, M.C., R.E. 12th Field Company Major F. W. Moore, M.C., R.E.(S.). 459th Field Company Major A. S. Lambert, M.C., R.E.(T.). 509th Field Company Major H. G. Bambridge, M.C., R.E.(S.). 6th Divisional Signal Major A. G. Shaw, M.C., East Yorkshire Company Regiment (T.).

PIONEERS

O.C., 11th Bn., Leicestershire Lt.-Col. R. H. Radford, Leicestershire Regiment Regiment (S.R.). 2nd in Command Major W. A. Rodger, Leicestershire Regiment (S.). Adjutant Capt. H. M. Raleigh, Leicestershire Regiment.

MACHINE-GUN BATTALION

O.C., 6th Battalion, M.G.C. Lt.-Col. J. B. Rosher, D.S.O., M.C., Durham Light Infantry (S.). 2nd in Command. Major M. C. Cooper, M.C., Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry (T.). Adjutant Capt. J. M. Briggs, King's Shropshire Light Infantry (S.R.).

DIVISIONAL TRAIN

O.C. Lt.-Col. F. C. S. Norrington, A.S.C. Adjutant Capt. R. Beales, A.S.C. Senior Supply Officer Capt. A. F. Osborne, M.C., A.S.C.

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

16th Field Ambulance Lt.-Col. J. W. C. Stubbs, M.C., R.A.M.C. 17th Field Ambulance Lt.-Col. A. J. Hickey, M.C., R.A.M.C. 18th Field Ambulance Lt.-Col. E. W. Wade, D.S.O., R.A.M.C.

MOBILE VETERINARY SECTION

O.C. Capt. H. J. Hughes, A.V.C.

DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY

C.R.A. Brig.-Gen. E. F. Delaforce, C.M.G., R.A. Brigade-Major Major S. Carwithen, R.A. Staff-Captain Capt. K. Lyon, R.A. Reconnaissance Officer Lieut. L. S. Wooler, R.A. Signal Officer Capt.

F. Goodman, R.E.

2nd Brigade, R.F.A.

O.C. Lt.-Col. W. H. F. Weber, D.S.O., R.F.A. Adjutant Capt. T. C. Rayner, M.C. Orderly Officer 2/Lieut. T. Brough. Signal Officer 2/Lieut. W. F. J. Delyon. Horsemaster Capt. W. P. Jones, Duke of Lancaster's Yeomanry. 21st Battery Major E. F. Housden. 42nd Battery Major T. R. Ubsdell, D.S.O. 63rd Battery Major R. Scott-Aiton, M.C. 87th Battery Major J. W. Godley.

24th Brigade, R.F.A.

O.C. Lt.-Col. J. A. C. Forsyth, D.S.O., R.F.A. Adjutant Capt. E. J. Saltwell. Orderly Officer Lieut. C. G. Campbell. Horsemaster Capt. E. T. C. Murray, 6th Royal Regiment Dragoons (Canada). 110th Battery Major P. J. C. Honner, M.C. 111th Battery Major F. M. A. Wood. 112th Battery Major G. Sandeman. 43rd Battery Major B. Todd, M.C.

6th Divisional Ammunition Column

O.C. Lt.-Col. B. Allan, R.F.A. Adjutant Capt. F. Heap. No. 1 Section Capt. A. McQueen. No. 2 Section Capt. H. W. C. Angell. No. 3 Section Capt. H. Brewin (S.A.A. Section).

Divisional Trench Mortars

D.T.M.O. Capt. R. A. Levinge, R.A. X/6th T.M. Battery Capt. M. R. Anderson, M.C., General List. Y/6th T.M. Battery Capt. V. E. Wait, 11th Essex Regiment.

16th INFANTRY BRIGADE

B.G.C. Brig.-Gen. W. G. Braithwaite, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Royal Welch Fusiliers. Brigade-Major Capt. E. Dryden, M.C., Durham L.I. Staff-Captain Capt. S. H. D. Chamier, M.C., West Yorkshire Regiment. Intelligence Officer Lieut. G. H. Bond, M.C., York and Lancaster Regiment. Signal Officer 2/Lieut. W. D. A. Williams, R.E. O.C., 1st The Buffs Lt.-Col. R. E. Power, D.S.O. 2nd in Command Major Lord Teynham. Adjutant Lieut. E. F. Hall. O.C., 1st K.S.L.I. A/Lt.-Col. L. H. Morris, M.C. 2nd in Command Major C E. Parker. Adjutant Capt. G. S. E. Denyer, M.C. O.C., 2nd York and Lt.-Col. J. R. Robertson, Bedfordshire Lancaster Regt. Regiment. 2nd in Command Major P. H. C. Collins, M.C. Adjutant Capt. E. E. Battle, M.C. 16th T.M. Battery Lieut. H. Carss, Durham Light Infantry.

18th INFANTRY BRIGADE

B.G.C. Brig.-Gen. G. S. G. Craufurd, C.M.G., C.I.E., D.S.O., A.D.C., Gordon Highlanders. Brigade-Major Brevet-Major H. C. E. Hull, The Queen's. Staff-Captain Capt. W. V. Cavill, M.C., West Yorkshire Regiment. Signal Officer Lieut. G. White, Scottish Rifles. O.C., 1st West Yorkshire Lt.-Col. D. L. Weir, D.S.O., M.C., Regiment. Leicestershire Regiment. 2nd in Command Major J. C. Blackburn, M.C. Adjutant Capt. G. A. Robinson, M.C. O.C., 11th Essex Regiment Lt.-Col. C. H. Dumbell, D.S.O., Sherwood Foresters. 2nd in Command Major A. G. Saunders. Adjutant Capt. G. H. Scott. O.C., 2nd D.L.I. Lt.-Col. R. V. Turner. 2nd in Command Major P. C. Parker, M.C. Adjutant Capt. S. R. Streatfield. 18th Trench Mortar Battery Capt. T. E. Peart, M.C., Durham Light Infantry.

71st INFANTRY BRIGADE

B.G.C. Brig.-Gen. P. W. Brown, D.S.O., Gordon Highlanders. Brigade-Major Brevet-Major A. Weyman, M.C., Leicestershire Regiment (A/G.S.O.2, 18th Division). Acting-Brigade-Major Capt. J. F. Tamblyn, M.C., The Queen's Regiment (S.). Staff-Captain Capt. F. W. Musgrave, West Yorkshire Regiment (T.). Intelligence Officer Lieut. H. L. Hayne, Leicestershire Regiment (S.). Signal Officer Lieut. K. D. Allen, R.E. O.C., 9th Norfolk Regiment Lt.-Col. F. R. Day, Norfolk Regiment. 2nd in Command Major E. W. Cannings, M.C. Adjutant Capt. C. P. Bassingthwaite, M.C. O.C., 1st Leicestershire Lt.-Col. J. R. Martin, D.S.O., M.C., Regiment Royal Scots. 2nd in Command Major G. N. Wykes. Adjutant Capt. R. N. Davies, M.C. O.C., 2nd Sherwood Foresters Lt.-Col. C. E. Hudson,

V.C., D.S.O., M.C. 2nd in Command Major F. D. Collen, M.C. Adjutant Capt. A. L. Gill, M.C. 71st Trench Mortar Battery Capt. R. Gjertson, M.C., Essex Regiment (T.).

APPENDIX V

CHANGES IN COMMANDS AND STAFFS

N. B.--Ranks and Honours are given as held on date of appointment.

I. DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS

Major-Gen. J. L. Keir, C.B. Mobn.--26.5.15 Major-Gen. W. N. Congreve, V.C. M.V.O 27.5.15--13.11.15 Col. (T/Maj.-Gen.) C. Ross, D.S.O. 14.11.15--18.8.17 Col. (T/Maj.-Gen.) T. O. Marden, C.M.G. 19.8.17--Armistice.

II. G.S.O.s, 1st GRADE

Col. W. T. Furse Mobn.--28.12.14 Lt.-Col. J. M. Shea, Indian Army 29.12.14--4.7.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. F. Boyd, Royal Irish Regiment 5.7.15--17.6.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) L. F. Renny, D.S.O., Royal Dublin Fus. 18.6.16--22.3.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) T. T. Grove, D.S.O., R.E. 23.3.17--Armistice.

III. G.S.O.s, 2nd GRADE

Major J. T. Burnett-Stuart, Rifle Brigade Mobn.--17.2.15 Major W. E. Ironside, R.A. 18.2.15--29.2.16 Major L. P. Evans, Black Watch 1.3.16--5.3.17 Major M. Beevor, The Buffs 6.3.17--17.11.17 Major W. Harris-St. John, Royal Welch Fusiliers 18.11.17--28.4.18 Major S. S. Hill-Dillon, D.S.O., Royal Irish Regiment 29.4.18--15.6.18 Lieut. (T/Major) R. W. Barnett, M.C., Rifle Brigade 16.6.18--12.8.18 (K.) Major L. M. Taylor, M.C., K.O.Y.L.I. (T.F.) 24.8.18--Armistice.

IV. G.S.O.s, 3rd GRADE

Capt. A. T. Paley, Rifle Brigade Mobn.--31.10.14 Major W. E. Ironside, R.A. 1.11.14--17.2.15 Capt. T. T. Grove, R.E. 18.2.15--9.8.15 Major A. B. Lawson, 11th Hussars 10.8.15--5.12.15 Capt. H. D. Denison-Pender, Scots Greys 6.12.15--24.6.16 Capt. M. K. Wardle, Leicestershire Regiment 25.6.16--25.7.17 Capt. M. C. Bell, D.S.O., M.C., Royal Fusiliers 26.7.17--1.11.17 Major A. S. Wright, Royal Canadian F.A. 2.11.17--21.5.18 Lieut. (T/Capt.) J. F. Horlington, M.C., Y. and L. Regt. (S.R.) 22.5.18--Armistice.

V. A.A.s AND Q.M.G.s

Col. W. Campbell, D.S.O. Mobn.--30.9.14 Col. R. Wanless-O'Gowan 1.10.14--7.2.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R.S. May, Royal Fusiliers 15.2.15--5.2.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) M. R. Walsh, Worcestershire Regiment 6.2.16--29.8.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) M.B. Savage, D.S.O., South Staffs Regt. 30.8.17--15.12.17 Bt.-Lt.-Col. P. Hudson, D.S.O., King's (Liverpool) Regiment 16.12.17--Armistice.

VI. D.A.A.G.s (FORMERLY D.A.A.s AND Q.M.G.s.)

Major F. C. Dundas, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Mobn.--30.10.14 Capt. G. Ogston, Gordon Highlanders 1.11.14--4.1.16 Capt. J. L. Watson, West Riding Regiment 5.1.16--7.3.16 Capt. S. G. L. Bradley, Queen's Westminster Rifles 8.3.16--22.3.17 Major C. Macfie, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 23.3.17--Armistice.

VII. D.A.Q.M.G.'s.

Major A. Delavoye, A.S.C. Mobn.--1.1.15 Major H. L. Nevill, D.S.O., R.A. 15.1.15--26.2.15 Major B. Atkinson, R.A. 27.2.15--28.5.15 Capt. J. C. Dundas, R.A. 29.5.15--13.10.15 Major H. Street, Devon Regt. 14.10.15--16.1.17 Capt. R. B. Tower, Notts and Derby Regiment 17.1.17--21.5.18 Bt.-Col. A. J. Hay, East Surrey Regiment (S.R.) 22.5.18--Armistice.

VIII. C.R.A.s.

Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) W. H. L. Paget, M.V.O. Mobn.--26.5.15 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) G. Humphreys,

C.B., D.S.O. 27.5.15--28.6.16 Bt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) E. S. Cleeve (R. of O.) 29.6.16--23.10.16 Lt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) E. F. Delaforce, C.M.G. 24.10.16--Armistice.

IX. C.R.E.s.

Lt.-Col. G. C. Kemp Mobn.--12.8.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) A. G. Stevenson 13.8.15--19.12.15 Col. T. A. H. Bigge 20.12.15--24.1.16 Lt.-Col. H. R. S. Christie 25.1.16--1.1.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. F. B. Goldney, D.S.O. 2.1.17--22.9.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. A. L. Hall, M.C. 23.9.18--Armistice.

X. O.C.s Train

Major H. Davies Mobn.--6.4.17 Major F. Norrington 7.4.17--Armistice.

XI. A.D.M.S.

Col. H. O. Trevor Mobn.--March, '15 Col. B. H. Scott March, '15--March, '17 Lt.-Col. (T/Col.) H. W. Grattan March, '17--Oct., '18 Lt.-Col. (T/Col.) H. C. R. Hime, D.S.O. Oct., '18--Armistice.

XII. D.A.D.O.S.

Major H. M. Howard Oct., '14--26.1.15 Major F. H. P. O'Connor 27.1.15--18.11.15 Major S. T. Hayley, D.S.O. 19.11.15--26.12.15 Major S. B. Winch 27.12.15--28.4.17 Major R. G. P. Hare 29.4.17--Armistice.

XIII. A.D.V.S. (LATER D.A.D.V.S.)

Major H. M. Lenox-Conyngham 6.9.14--28.8.15 Major R. Tindle 29.8.15--2.2.18 Major R. F. Bett 3.2.18--Armistice.

XIV. SENIOR CHAPLAINS (C. of E.)

Rev. T. P. Moreton July, '15--Oct., '15 Rev. Nevile Talbot, M.C. Oct., '15--May, '16 Rev. Maurice Ponsonby, M.C. May, '16--Nov., '16 Rev. J. D. McCready Nov., '16--31.12.16 Rev. L. G. Reed, M.C. 1.1.17--7.7.18 Rev. E. C. Hoskyns, M.C. 8.7.18--Armistice.

XV. SENIOR CHAPLAINS (R.C.)

Rev. Father FitzGibbons, M.C. Nov., '16--Sept., '18 Rev. Father Kearey Sept., '18--Armistice.

XVI. A.P.M.s.

Capt. H. S. Rogers, K.S.L.I. Mobn.--2.3.15 Major Hon. J. R. Tufton, Royal Sussex Regiment (S.R.). 3.3.15-- ---- Capt. A. J. Simey, R.I.C. ---- --Aug., '18 Capt. W. A. Bignell, South Irish Horse Aug., '18--Armistice.

XVII. INFANTRY BRIGADE COMMANDERS

16th Infantry Brigade

Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) E. C. Ingouville-Williams, C.B., D.S.O. Mobn.--16.6.16 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) C. L. Nicholson 17.6.16--25.7.16 Major (T/Brig.-Gen.) W. L. Osborn, D.S.O., Royal Sussex Regiment 26.7.16--26.10.17 Bt.-Lt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) H. A. Walker, D.S.O., Royal Fus. 27.10.17--16.10.18 Bt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) W. G. Braithwaite, C.B., D.S.O., Royal Welch Fusiliers 17.10.18--Armistice.

17th Infantry Brigade (to 24th Division on 14.10.15)

Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) W. R. B. Doran, C.B., D.S.O. Mobn.--10.2.15 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) G. M. Harper, D.S.O. 11.2.15--23.9.15 Major (T/Brig.-Gen.) J. W. V. Carroll, Norfolk Regiment 24.9.15--14.10.15

18th Infantry Brigade

Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) W. N. Congreve, V.C., M.V.O. Mobn.--29.5.15 Lt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) H. S. Ainslie, C.M.G., Northumberland Fusiliers 30.5.15--14.8.15 Lt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) R. J. Bridgford, C.M.G., D.S.O., King's Shropshire L.I. 15.8.15--19.4.16 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) W. K. Macclintock, C.B. 20.4.16--12.6.16 Lt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) H. S. Tew, East Surrey Regiment 13.6.16--12.8.16 Bt.-Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) R. J. Bridgford, C.M.G., D.S.O., King's Shropshire L.I. 13.8.16--14.9.17 Lt.-Col.

(T/Brig.-Gen.) G. S. G. Craufurd, C.M.G., C.I.E., D.S.O., Gordon Highlanders 15.9.17--Armistice.
19th Infantry Brigade (to 27th Division on 27.5.15)
 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) Hon. F. Gordon 12.10.14--27.5.15
71st Infantry Brigade (joined Division on 14.10.15)
 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) M. T. Shewen 14.10.15--26.5.16 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) J. F. Edwards 27.5.16--4.10.16 Col. (T/Brig.-Gen.) E. Feetham, C.B. 5.10.16--19.8.17 Major (T/Brig.-Gen.) P. W. Brown, D.S.O., Gordon Highlanders 20.8.17--Armistice.

XVIII. O.C. UNITS

[Tablenote a: Signifies date of joining or leaving Division.] [Tablenote b: Signifies date of disbandment of unit.]

Squadron, 19th Hussars
 Capt. H. O'S. F. Tanner Mobn.--April, '15[a]
"B" Squadron, Northants Yeomanry
 Major Sir C. B. Lowther 14.4.15[a]--29.10.15[a]
6th Machine-Gun Battalion
 Lt.-Col. J. B. Rosher, D.S.O., Durham Light Infantry March, '18--Armistice.
2nd Brigade, R.F.A.
 Col. W. A. M. Thompson Mobn.--7.7.15 Lt.-Col. L. C. L. Oldfield 8.7.15--May, '15 Lt.-Col. M. J. MacCarthy, C.M.G. May, '15--20.6.17 Lt.-Col. W. H. F. Weber, D.S.O. 21.6.17--Armistice.
12th Brigade, R.F.A.
 Lt.-Col. C. E. Lawrie, D.S.O. Mobn.--26.5.15 Lt.-Col. W. Evans, D.S.O. 27.5.15--29.2.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) J. A. C. Forsyth 1.3.16--Armistice.
38th Brigade, R.F.A.
 Lt.-Col. R. F. Fox, D.S.O. Mobn.--27.1.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) L. M. Phillpotts 30.1.15--1.11.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. F. Calthrop 2.11.15--19.12.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) W. E. Clark 23.12.15--25.9.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) A. Mellor, D.S.O. 26.9.16--2.12.16[a]
12th Howitzer Brigade, R.F.A.
 Lt.-Col. G. Humphreys, D.S.O. Mobn.--29.6.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. M. Davson 30.6.15--12.5.16 Distributed to other Brigades.
24th Heavy Brigade, R.G.A.
 Major H. E. J. Brake, C.B., D.S.O. Mobn.--Feb., '15 Capt. (T/Major) E. Miles Feb., '15--Dec., '16[a]
6th Divisional Ammunition Column
 Lt.-Col. G. A. Cardew Mobn.--19.9.14 Lt.-Col. Baron H. E. W. de Robeck 20.9.14--Oct., '16 Lt.-Col. B. Allan (T.F.) 21.11.16--Armistice.
1st Battalion The Buffs (16th Infantry Brigade)
 Lt.-Col. H. C. de la M. Hill Mobn.--15.11.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. McDouall 16.11.14-- Bt.-Col. J. Hasler, D.S.O. --26.2.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. McDouall 27.2.15--2.6.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. H. Finch-Hatton 3.6.15--8.1.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. F. Gould 9.1.16--26.5.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. W. Green 27.5.16--1.6.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. H. Finch-Hatton 2.6.16--12.7.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. W. Green 13.7.16--26.11.17 Major B. L. Strauss 27.11.17--1.12.17 (K.) Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. E. Power 12.12.17--Armistice.
1st Battalion Royal Fusiliers (17th Infantry Brigade)
 Lt.-Col. R. Fowler-Butler Mobn.--31.7.15 Bt.-Lt.-Col. B. G. Price, D.S.O. 1.8.15--11.10.15[a]
9th Battalion Norfolk Regiment (71st Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. E. Stracey 11.10.15[a]--30.9.16 Lt.-Col. B. H. L. Prior 1.10.16--10.12.16 Capt. (T/Major) R. S. Dyer-Bennet, Leicester Regiment 16.12.16--14.1.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) J. B. O. Trimble 27.1.17--26.2.17 Capt. (T/Major) R. S. Dyer-Bennet 27.2.17--9.3.17 Lt.-Col. E. Stracey 10.3.17--23.3.17 Lt.-Col. B. H. L. Prior 24.3.17--30.1.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. J. Spurrell, M.C. 31.1.18--13.3.18 Lt.-Col. B. H. L. Prior, D.S.O. 14.3.18--21.3.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. R. Day April, '18--28.7.18 Lt.-Col. B. H. L. Prior, D.S.O. 29.7.18--22.8.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. R. Day 23.8.18--Armistice.

9th Battalion Suffolk Regiment (71st Infantry Brigade)

Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) W. H. A. de la Pryme, D.S.O., West Yorkshire Regiment 11.10.15[a]--14.5.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) A. P. Mack, Suffolk Regiment (S.) 14.5.16--15.9.16 (K.) Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. Latham, D.S.O., Leicester Regiment 18.9.16--1.2.18[b]

1st Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (18th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. F. W. Towsey Mobn.--20.9.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. G. Lang 20.9.14--18.10.14 Lt.-Col. F. W. Towsey 14.10.14--19.10.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) T. P. Barrington 22.10.14--7.12.14 Lt.-Col. F. W. Towsey 8.12.14--15.9.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. G. Lang, D.S.O. 16.9.15--11.11.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. H. Soames 12.11.15--27.1.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. G. Lang, D.S.O. 29.1.16--18.9.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. M. Dillon, D.S.O., Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry 19.9.16--31.10.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) A. M. Boyall 1.11.16--21.3.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) D. L. Weir, D.S.O., M.C., Leicestershire Regiment 28.3.18--20.5.18 Lt.-Col. G. Barry-Drew, D.S.O. 21.5.18--21.7.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. W. Cannings, M.C. 22.7.18--28.7.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) D. L. Weir, D.S.O., M.C. 29.7.18--Armistice.

1st Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment (18th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. R. E. Benson Mobn.--20.9.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) W. H. Young 20.9.14--10.11.14 Lt.-Col. W. H. Armstrong 11.11.14--19.11.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) J. L. S. Clarke 20.11.14--26.11.15[a]

8th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment (71st and 16th Infantry Brigades)

Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) J. S. Liddell 11.10.15[a]--13.1.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. C. Jackson 14.1.16--17.4.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) W. R. H. Dann 17.4.16--19.5.16 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) D. M. Hawkins 19.5.16--1.6.16 Col. Lord Henry Scott 2.6.16--4.4.17 Lt.-Col. Lord Ampthill 5.4.17--19.5.17 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) H. R. MacCullagh, D.L.I. 20.5.17--14.6.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. Le Huquet 15.6.17--16.2.18[b]

1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment (16th and 71st Infantry Brigades)

Lt.-Col. H. L. Croker Mobn.--11.12.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. Stoney-Smith 12.12.14--15.10.15 (K.) Lt.-Col. A. H. Buchannan-Dunlop 25.10.15--1.2.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. H. Gillespie 2.2.16--21.9.16 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) R. S. Dyer-Bennet 22.9.16--12.12.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. H. Gillespie 13.12.16--27.3.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. B. Brown, D.S.O. 28.3.17--2.5.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. H. Gillespie, D.S.O. 3.5.17--5.7.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. B. Brown, D.S.O. 6.7.17--16.1.18 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) D. L. Weir, D.S.O., M.C. 17.1.18--Feb., '18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. Latham, D.S.O. Feb., '18--29.4.18 Capt. (T/Major) G. N. Wykes 30.4.18--11.5.18 Capt. (T/Major) Hartshorne 12.5.18--20.5.18 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) D. L. Weir, D.S.O., M.C. 21.5.18--25.7.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. Latham, D.S.O. 26.7.18--2.11.18

11th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment (Pioneers)

Major (T/Lt.-Col.) C. Turner, Leicestershire Regt. (S.R.) 1.4.16[a]--24.9.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. H. Radford, Leicestershire Regt. (S.R.) 25.9.18--Armistice.

2nd Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers (19th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. H. Delme-Radcliffe 12.10.14[a]--26.10.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) O. de L. Williams

27.10.14--31.5.15[a]

1st Battalion The Cameronians (19th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. P. R. Robertson 12.10.14[a]--31.5.15[a]

11th Battalion Essex Regiment (71st Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. C. J. Hobkirk, D.S.O. 11.10.15[a]--3.6.16. Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. W. Green, D.S.O., The Buffs 3.6.16--28.6.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. G. Spring, Lincolnshire Regiment 29.6.16--3.11.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. V. Manger, Durham Light Infantry 4.11.16--9.12.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. G. Spring, D.S.O. 10.12.16--14.9.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) C. H. Dumbell, D.S.O., Sherwood Foresters 15.9.17--Armistice.

2nd Battalion Sherwood Foresters (18th and 71st Infantry Brigades)

Lt.-Col. C. B. Crofton-Atkins Mobn.--7.10.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) P. Leveson-Gower 8.10.14--5.8.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) C. J. W. Hobbs, D.S.O. 5.9.15--7.6.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. R. Street, D.S.O. 7.6.16--2.8.16 Lt.-Col. C. J. W. Hobbs, D.S.O. 3.8.16--15.10.16 (K.) Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. E. Bradshaw, Rifle Brigade, R. of O. 19.10.16--19.10.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. Tylden-Wright, Derby Yeomanry 19.10.17--22.11.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. M. Milward, D.S.O. 23.11.17--Sept., '18 Bt.-Major (T/Lt.-Col.) C. E. Hudson, V.C., D.S.O., M.C. Sept., '18--Armistice.

1st Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry (16th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. C. P. Higginson, D.S.O. Mobn.--23.10.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. B. Luard 24.10.14--13.11.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) W. J. Rowan Robinson 14.11.14--30.11.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) J. A. Strick 1.12.14--4.8.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. B. Luard 5.8.15--22.4.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) B. E. Murray 22.4.16--17.10.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) C. F. B. Winterscale 18.10.16--14.2.18 Lt.-Col. H. M. Smith, D.S.O. 15.2.18--21.3.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. de R. Morgan, The Buffs 23.3.18--2.4.18 Lt.-Col. C. Meynell, D.S.O. 3.4.18--26.5.18 Capt. (T/Major) E. A. Freeman 27.5.18--8.6.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. D. Leslie 9.6.18--17.7.18 Capt. (T/Major) E. A. Freeman 18.7.18--23.7.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) C. H. Cautley 8.8.18--28.8.18 Lt.-Col. G. H. Meynell 29.8.18--9.10.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) L. H. Morris 10.10.18--Armistice.

1st Battalion Middlesex Regiment (19th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. B. E. Ward 12.10.14[a]--21.10.14 Lt.-Col. F. G. M. Rowley 21.10.14--30.10.14 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) H. P. Osborne 30.10.14--28.11.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) W. C. C. Ash 29.11.14--31.5.15[a]

2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment (16th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. E. C. Cobbold Mobn.--9.12.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) W. F. Clemson 10.12.14--18.9.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) C. Mc.D. Pratt 19.9.15--17.10.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) M. F. Halford 18.10.15--30.4.16 Capt. (T/Major) H. B. Philby, D.S.O. 1.5.16--17.5.16 (K.) Lt.-Col. H. R. Headlam, D.S.O. 17.5.16--5.6.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. L. Thomson 6.6.16--29.6.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) A. St. J. Blunt, D.S.O. 30.6.16--25.9.16 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. P. Wood, M.C. 25.9.16--9.10.16 (K.) Major (T/Lt.-Col.) F. Lewis, D.S.O. 10.10.16--31.3.17 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) A. St. J. Blunt, D.S.O. 1.4.17--21.4.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) J. R. Robertson 22.4.18--Armistice.

2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry (18th Infantry Brigade)

Lt.-Col. B. W. L. McMahon Mobn.--4.1.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) J. A. Crosthwaite 5.1.15--10.6.15 Lt.-Col. M. D. Goring-Jones 11.6.15--Sept., '15 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) A. E. Irvine Sept., '15--15.8.17 Capt. (T/Lt.-Col.) H. R. McCullagh 16.8.17--4.2.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) D. L. Brereton 5.2.18--12.7.18 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) R. V. Turner 13.7.18--Armistice.

14th Battalion Durham Light Infantry (18th Infantry Brigade)

Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. F. Menzies, S. Lancs Regt., R. of O. 28.11.15[a]--12.11.16 Major (T/Lt.-

Col.) J. B. Rosher, Durham Light Infantry (S.) 13.11.16--1.2.18[b]
1st Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment (17th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. V. W. de Falbe, D.S.O. Mobn.--11.10.15[a]
2nd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (19th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. H. P. Moulton-Barrett 12.10.14[a]--2.11.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) H. B. Kirk 3.11.14--
8.1.15 Lt.-Col. R. C. Gore 16.2.15--31.5.15[a]
2nd Battalion Leinster Regiment (17th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. W. T. M. Reeve Mobn.--19.11.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. M. Bullen-Smith 20.11.14--
3.6.15 Lt.-Col. W. T. M. Reeve 3.6.15--20.7.15 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) G. M. Bullen-Smith 21.7.15--
11.10.15[a]
3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade (17th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. R. Alexander Mobn.--13.10.14 Major (T/Lt.-Col.) Lord Henniker 13.10.14--21.11.14
Lt.-Col. R. Alexander 22.11.14--29.12.14 (d. of w.) Major (T/Lt.-Col.) Lord Henniker 30.12.14--
9.6.15 Capt. (T/Major) R. Pigot, M.C. 10.6.15--11.10.15[a]
1/5th Battalion Loyal North Lancs Regiment (16th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. G. Hesketh 16.2.15[a]--11.6.15[a]
1/2nd Battalion London Regiment (17th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. J. Attenborough 19.2.15[a]--11.10.15[a]
Queen's Westminster Rifles (18th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. R. Shoolbred, T.D. 11.11.14[a]--28.11.15[a]
5th Battalion Scottish Rifles (19th Infantry Brigade)
Lt.-Col. R. J. Douglas 19.11.14[a]--31.5.15[a]

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