

coast about three miles north-east of Cape Tekke, was ordered to direct, its right moving on the south-east edge of Krithia, while the Corps Expeditionnaire with the 2nd Naval Brigade had assigned to them for their first point of attack the commanding ridge running from north to south above the Kereves Dere. A foothold upon this ridge was essential, as its capture would ensure a safe pivot on which the 29th Division could swing in making any further advance. Communication between these two sections of the attack was to be maintained by the Plymouth and Drake battalions.

During the three days (6th-8th May) our troops were destined to be very severely tried. They were about to attack a series of positions scientifically selected in advance which, although not yet joined up into one line of entrenchment, were already strengthened by works on their more important tactical features.

The 29th Division led off at 11 a.m., the French Corps followed suit at 11.30 a.m.; every yard was stubbornly contested; some Brigades were able to advance, others could do no more than maintain themselves. Positions were carried and held, other positions were carried and lost; but, broadly, our gunners kept lengthening the fuzes of their shrapnel, and by 1.30 p.m. the line had been pushed forward two to three hundred yards. Here and there this advance included a Turkish trench, but generally speaking the main enemy position still lay some distance ahead of our leading companies.

By 4.30 p.m. it became clear that we should make no more progress that day. The French Corps were held up by a strong field work. They had made good a point upon the crest line of the lower slope of the Kereves Dere ridge, but there they had come under a fire so galling that they were unable, as it turned out, to entrench until nightfall. The 88th Brigade could not carry a clump of fir trees to their front: company after company made the perilous essay, but the wood swept by hidden machine-guns proved a veritable deathtrap. The Lancashire Fusiliers Brigade also were only just barely holding on and were suffering heavy losses from these same concealed machine-guns. The troops were ordered to entrench themselves in line and link up their flanks on either side.

At night, save for rifle fire, there was quiet along the whole British line. On the right a determined bayonet charge was made upon the French, who gave ground for the moment, but recovered it again at dawn.

Next morning (the 7th May) we opened with shrapnel upon the enemy's trenches opposite our extreme left, and at 10 a.m. the Lancashire Fusiliers Brigade began the attack. But our artillery had not been able to locate the cleverly sited German machine-gun batteries, whose fire rendered it physically impossible to cross that smooth glacia. Next to the right the 88th Brigade swept forward, and the 1/5th Royal Scots, well supported by artillery fire, carried the fir trees with a rush. This time it was discovered that not only the enfilading machine-guns had made the wood so difficult to hold. Amongst the branches of the trees Turkish snipers were perched, sometimes upon small wooden platforms. When these were brought down the surroundings became much healthier. The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, of the 87th Brigade, were pushed up to support

the left of the 88th, and all seemed well, when, at 1.20 p.m., a strong Turkish counter-attack drove us back out of the fir clump. As an offset to this check the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers captured three Turkish trenches and a second battalion of the 87th Brigade, The King's Own Scottish Borderers, was sent forward on the left to make these good.

At 3 p.m. the Lancashire Fusiliers Brigade again reported they were definitely held up by the accurate cross-fire of batteries of machine-guns concealed in the scrub on the ridge between the ravine and the sea, batteries which also enfiladed the left flank of the 88th Brigade as it endeavoured to advance in the centre. Unless we were to acquiesce in a stalemate the moment for our effort had arrived, and a general attack was ordered for 4.45 p.m., the whole of the 87th Brigade to reinforce the 88th Brigade, and the New Zealand Brigade to support it.

Despite their exhaustion and their losses the men responded with a will. The whole force, French and British, rose simultaneously and made a rush forward. All along the front we made good a certain amount of ground, excepting only on our extreme left. For the third time British bayonets carried the fir clump in our centre, and when darkness fell the whole line (excepting always the left) had gained from 200 to 300 yards, and had occupied or passed over the first line of Turkish trenches.

The troops were now worn out; the new lines needed consolidating, and it was certain that fresh reinforcements were reaching the Turks. Balancing the actual state of my own troops against the probable condition of the Turks, I decided to call upon the men to make one more push before the new enemy forces could get into touch with their surroundings.

Orders were therefore issued to dig in at sundown on the line gained; to maintain that line against counter-attack, and to prepare to advance again next morning. The Lancashire Fusiliers Brigade was withdrawn into reserve, and its place on the left was taken by the Brigade of New Zealanders.

General Headquarters were shifted to an entrenchment on a hill in rear of the left of our line. Under my plan for the fresh attack the New Zealand Brigade was to advance through the line held during the night by the 88th Brigade and press on towards Krithia. Simultaneously, the 87th Brigade was to threaten the works on the west of the ravine, whilst endeavouring, by means of parties of scouts and volunteers, to steal patches of ground from the areas dominated by the German machine-guns.

At 10.15 a.m. heavy fire from ships and batteries was opened on the whole front, and at 10.30 a.m. the New Zealand Brigade began to move, meeting with strenuous opposition from the enemy, who had received his reinforcements. Supported by the fire of the batteries and the machine-guns of the 88th Brigade, they pushed forward on the right and advanced their centre beyond the fir trees, but could make little further progress. By 1.30 p.m. about 200 yards had been gained beyond the previously most advanced trenches of the 88th Brigade.

At this hour the French Corps reported they could not advance up the crest of the spur west of Kereves Dere till further progress was made by the British.

At 4 p.m. I gave orders that the whole line, reinforced by the 2nd Australian Brigade,