

On the left of the 47th Division a Scottish Division of the New Armies (15th Division) assaulted Loos, Hill 70 and Fosse 14 bis.

The attack was admirably delivered, and in a little more than an hour parts of the division occupied Loos and its northern outskirts, Puits 14 bis and Hill 70, whilst some units had pushed on as far as Cité St. Auguste, a mile east of Hill 70.

The 15th Division carried out its advance with the greatest vigour, in spite of its left flank being exposed, owing to the 1st Division on its left having been checked.

About 1 p.m. the enemy brought up strong reserves, and the advanced portions of the division at Fosse 14 bis and on the far side of Hill 70 were driven in. We had, however, secured the very substantial gain of Loos and the western portion of Hill 70.

11. At 9.30 a.m. I placed the 21st and 24th Divisions at the disposal of the General Officer commanding First Army, who at once ordered the General Officer commanding the 11th Corps to move them up in support of the attacking troops.

Between 11 a.m. and 12 noon the central brigades of these divisions filed past me at Bethune and Noeux les Mines respectively. At 11.30 a.m. the heads of both divisions were within three miles of our original trench line.

As the success of the 47th Division on the right of the 4th Corps caused me less apprehension of a gap in our line near that point, I ordered the Guards Division up to Noeux les Mines, and the 28th Division to move in a southerly direction from Bailleul.

12. The 1st Division, attacking on the left of the 15th, was unable at first to make any headway with its right brigade.

The brigade on its left (the 1st) was, however, able to get forward and penetrated into the outskirts of the village of Hulluch, capturing some gun positions on the way.

The determined advance of this brigade, with its right flank dangerously exposed, was most praiseworthy, and, combined with the action of divisional reserves, was instrumental in causing the surrender of a German detachment some 500 strong which was holding up the advance of the right brigade in the front system of trenches.

The inability of the right of this division to get forward had, however, caused sufficient delay to enable the enemy to collect local reserves behind the strong second line.

The arrangements, the planning and execution of the attack, and the conduct of the troops of the 4th Corps were most efficient and praiseworthy.

13. In the attack of the 1st Corps the 7th Division was directed on the Quarries. The 9th Division was to capture the Hohenzollern Redoubt and then to push on to Fosse 8.

The assault of the 7th Division succeeded at once, and in a very short time they had reached the western edge of the Quarries, Cité St. Elie and even the village of Haisnes, the tendency of the action having been to draw the troops northward.

On the right of the 9th Division the 26th Brigade secured Fosse 8 after heavy fighting, and the 28th Brigade captured the front line of the German trenches east of Vermelles railway. At the latter point the fighting was extremely severe; and this brigade, suffering

considerable losses, was driven back to its own trenches.

At nightfall, after a heavy day's fighting and numerous German counter attacks, the line was, roughly, as follows:—

From the Double Crassier, south of Loos, by the western part of Hill 70, to the western end of Hulluch; thence by the Quarries and western end of Cité St. Elie, east of Fosse 8, back to our original line.

Throughout the length of the line heavy fighting was in progress, and our hold on Fosse 8, backed as it is by the strong defences and guns of Auchy, was distinctly precarious.

Heavy rain fell throughout the day, which was very detrimental to efficient observation of fire and reconnaissance by aircraft.

In the course of the night 25th/26th September the enemy delivered a series of heavy counter attacks along most of our new front. The majority of these were repulsed with heavy loss; but in parts of the line, notably near the Quarries, our troops were driven back a certain distance.

At 6 p.m. the Guards Division arrived at Noeux les Mines, and on the morning of the 26th I placed them at the disposal of the General Officer commanding First Army.

14. The situation at the Quarries, described above, was re-adjusted by an attack of the 7th Division on the afternoon of September 26th; and on that evening very heavy attacks delivered by the enemy were repulsed with severe loss.

On the 4th Corps front attacks on Hulluch and on the redoubt on the east side of Hill 70 were put in operation, but were anticipated by the enemy organising a very strong offensive from that direction. These attacks drove in the advanced troops of the 21st and 24th Divisions, which were then moving forward to attack.

Reports regarding this portion of the action are very conflicting, and it is not possible to form an entirely just appreciation of what occurred in this part of the field.

At nightfall there was no change up to Hill 70, except for a small gain of ground south of Loos. From Hill 70 the line bent sharply back to the north-west as far as Loos-La Bassée Road, which it followed for a thousand yards, bearing thence north-eastward to near the west end of Hulluch. Thence northward it was the same as it had been on the previous night.

The night of September 26th/27th was as disturbed as the previous night, for many further counter attacks were made and constant pressure was maintained by the enemy.

A dismounted cavalry brigade was thrown into Loos to form a garrison.

On this day I placed the 28th Division at the disposal of the General Officer commanding First Army.

I regret to say that Major-General Sir Thompson Capper, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., commanding 7th Division, was severely wounded on the 26th, and died on the morning of the 27th. He was a most distinguished and capable leader, and his loss will be severely felt.

15. Soon after dawn on the 27th it became apparent that the brigade holding Fosse 8 was unable to maintain its position, and eventually it was slowly forced back until at length our front at this point coincided with the eastern portion of the Hohenzollern Redoubt.