

the line of the Dialah our Column in this vicinity—having served the double purpose of harassing the retreat of the Turks and joining hands with the Russians—was withdrawn. This enabled us to resume our operations along both banks of the Tigris, which had been temporarily suspended.

4. On the 6th our Cavalry moved forward to the vicinity of Deli Abbas with instructions to cover our right flank, and by delaying action to draw on gradually any movement initiated by the 13th Turkish Corps towards the Tigris. On the left bank of the Tigris it seemed wiser not to commit our troops to definite action until such time as the intentions of this Turkish Corps became clearer. On the right bank of the Tigris the enemy's force was estimated at 4,000 rifles with 200 sabres and 16 guns, and these were holding Harbe with advanced troops about Beled Station. On the 8th our troops moved forward to attack the enemy's position covering Beled Station, and good progress was made until they came under close machine gun and rifle fire from some rising ground in that vicinity. The 51st Sikhs were ordered to secure this point, and making good use of the broken ground and well supported by artillery, they established themselves there without difficulty and pressed forward beyond. The enemy holding the station now found his position untenable, and soon his whole line was in retreat. Our losses were slight, but the enemy, in addition to his battle casualties, lost 200 prisoners, including nine officers as well as three machine guns and some rolling stock. On the 9th Harbe was occupied, and here a pause was ordered in order to allow for further operations on the left bank of the Tigris.

5. Our troops on the left bank had driven several parties of the enemy across the Shatt El Adhaim on the 7th, and on the following day a close reconnaissance of this river was carried out with a view to bridging it. It now became evident, however, that the 13th Turkish Corps from Jebel Hamrin and the 52nd Division of the 18th Turkish Corps on the line of the Shatt El Adhaim were contemplating a converging movement against our troops on the left bank of the Tigris. The 2nd and 14th Turkish Divisions, some 6,000 rifles strong, with 250 sabres and 32 guns, moving down the right bank of the Nahr Khalis Canal towards Deltawa, had by the evening of the 9th reached a point some 10 miles south-west of Deli Abbas. On the following day our Cavalry, falling back under instructions, continued to draw them on whilst our Horse Artillery inflicted substantial casualties on their marching Columns, and by the evening they had reached Arab Bu Abin, but the 52nd Division remained stationary on the line of the Shatt El Adhaim. On the 10th the enemy was reported to be entrenching, but on the 11th he continued his advance, moving in dense columns with his left on the Nahr Khalis. To meet this movement and to support our Cavalry we had detached troops from Deltawa up the right bank of the Nahr Khalis Canal towards Deli Abbas, whilst another Column, leaving sufficient troops to contain the enemy on the Shatt El Adhaim, fell upon his right flank after a night march from Dogameh. This attack, resolutely pressed by two Welsh battalions and the Wiltshires, was a complete surprise, and before the enemy could recover himself heavy casualties were inflicted on his Columns by our well-handled artillery and by rifle fire. Low visibility owing to mirage, heat and the absence of water hindered

our operations, but the enemy was soon in retreat, and by 7 p.m. he had regained Arab Bu Abin.

During the early hours of the 12th the enemy continued his retreat, followed by our infantry patrols, and in the darkness touch with him was lost. At 7 a.m. the Cavalry was ordered in pursuit, and at midday located him 6 miles west-south-west of Deli Abbas, covered by an entrenched rearguard. The Turks were now fighting a stubborn rearguard action, and this continued throughout the 13th and 14th, our progress being continuous but slow. Our Cavalry essayed a wide enveloping movement round the enemy's right flank so as to gain the Kifri Road ahead of him, but his right flank refused to the foot of the Jebel Hamrin, and lack of water prevented them from reaching their objective. During the night of the 14th/15th the enemy continued his retreat on Kifri, and by midday on the 15th our patrols had entered Deli Abbas, where the pursuit was stopped, as it was not intended to follow the enemy into the Jebel Hamrin, since the advantage of position would there have rested entirely with the defence. Over 300 of the enemy's dead were buried, and 1 gun and 80 prisoners were captured by us.

Having disposed of the 13th Turkish Corps temporarily, it was now decided to force the passage of the Shatt El Adhaim and deal with the detachment of the 18th Turkish Corps still holding it. These operations commenced early on the 18th, and by 6.30 a.m. our troops were sufficiently established on the right bank to allow of a bridge being thrown across the river. The channel was narrow, but full of quicksands, and these caused delay, but at 11.40 a.m. the bridge was completed, and by 2 p.m. our infantry had cleared the loop of the river and were moving towards the Barura peninsula. The Turkish opposition had collapsed, prisoners were coming in and a composite Cavalry Brigade moved forward in pursuit. This Brigade, skilfully handled, pushed on resolutely and, in spite of heat and want of water, succeeded in turning the enemy's retreat into a rout. His casualties in killed and wounded were heavy, and 1,300 prisoners—of which 26 were officers—and 6 machine guns were captured. Indeed, only a small fraction of the troops opposed to us that day effected their escape. In this action an Indian Cavalry Regiment, the Horse and Field Artillery Batteries, and four Lancashire Battalions specially distinguished themselves.

6. On the 19th the Tigris was bridged at Sinijah and riverhead was moved up to that place. The enemy's opposition on the left bank having been completely destroyed, a further advance was now ordered on the right bank. The Turks were holding a position about Istabulat, facing south-east, with their left resting on the river and extending over a frontage of about 2½ miles across the Dujail Canal to the Baghdad-Samarrah railway. After crossing that railway their line bent back sharply, and continued more or less parallel with the railway track to a point west of Istabulat Ruins, a distance of over 3 miles. The Dujail Canal, diagonally situated to our advance, was a considerable obstacle, with banks 40 feet high in some places, and containing water 6 feet deep and 20 to 25 feet broad, and its banks had been prepared in places so as to bring enfilade fire to bear upon the ground south of it. Two redoubts north of the Canal were prominent features in this