

TURNING BACK THE HUNS

HOW THE BRITISH STORM TRENCHES

The British method of storming trenches, which has won the admiration of French officers, is to combine the smashing of concrete shelters under heavy shell fire with a system of night raiding by scouting parties. The raiders locate hidden machine-guns and finish the destruction of barbed-wire entanglements, thus opening the way for the usual charges of infantry.

The fire of the French and British guns, which were used for the tremendous preliminary bombardment, was increased in fury on June 29th, the date first fixed for the assault. But no order was given to the troops, either because the bombardment was not thought to be sufficient, or more probably because the rumor as to the date of the movement had been deliberately allowed to reach the enemy and induce him to pack his reserve trenches. During the last two days of the bombardment these reserve trenches were subjected to an especially terrific fire, and several zones of shrapnel were maintained over all the enemy's routes of supply and reinforcement. According to a German statement, every place within ten miles of the firing-line was smitten with heavy shell and incendiary projectiles. Then in the morning of Saturday, July 1, 1916, the British and French infantry forces climbed out of their trenches and advanced into the German lines.

General Fayolle's army connected with the British Army north of the Somme at the village of Maricourt. Here, General Balfourier, the army-corps commander of the Twentieth Corps, had his troops of the Twenty-ninth Division—the incomparable Iron Division—stretched