

through the greater part of the day, however, for soon after noon the enemy launched a determined counter-attack under cover of an organised barrage, and penetrated some portions of Upton Wood and Cemetery Trench. A portion of the 2nd Battalion in the Fresnes-Rouvroy line at once started another counter-attack, and so brought the enemy to a standstill, but did not drive him out completely. An attempt on the part of the 3rd Battalion patrols to take the remainder of the Fresnes-Rouvroy line that lay between the Vis-en-Artois Switch and the Arras-Cambrai road was not successful, owing to the strength with which the enemy was holding it. Towards evening a portion of the 4th Battalion was thrown into the fight to re-establish our new line. By nightfall this was accomplished, and the enemy driven out of those positions he had secured as a result of his attack at mid-day.

The next day, August 31st, the 2nd Brigade, using the 8th Battalion, completed the capture of the Fresnes-Rouvroy line as far north as the Arras-Cambrai road, and then in daylight and in the face of heavy machine-gun fire patrols were pushed out well forward of the captured line.

Owing to the strength of the wire in front of the Drocourt-Queant line, the date for the major attack was postponed for one day, in order to give the heavy artillery further time to carry out wire-cutting operations. In order, also, to thicken the infantry attack, the frontage of the 1st Division was reduced by some 1,500 yards on the night of August 31st, the 2nd Brigade side-slipping south. The 1st Brigade was relieved during the night, the 3rd Brigade taking over the right sector with the 15th and 14th Battalions, and the 2nd Brigade the left sector with the 5th Battalion. On the same night the 4th Division came into line between the 1st Division and the 4th British Division.

Once again, at dawn the next day, the whole infantry line on the corps front moved forward. This time the advance on the 1st Division front was only for a distance of a thousand yards, the new line being established within the same distance from the Drocourt-Queant line—a suitable striking distance for the great attack set