

On July 20 the Corps Commander was informed of the plan for the Amiens offensive. Then came the admirable piece of work that led the enemy to believe the Corps was going to Flanders. To quote Sir Douglas Haig:—"Preliminary instructions to prepare to attack east of Amiens at an early date had been given to the Fourth Army Commander, General Sir Henry Rawlinson, on July 13, and on July 28 the French First Army, under General Debeney, was placed by Marshal Foch under my orders for this operation. Further to strengthen my attack, I decided to reinforce the British Fourth Army with the Canadian Corps, and also with the two British divisions which were then held in readiness astride the Somme. In order to deceive the enemy and ensure the maximum effect of a surprise attack, elaborate precautions were taken to mislead him as to our intentions and to conceal our real purpose. Instructions of a detailed character were issued to the formations concerned, calculated to make it appear that a British attack in Flanders was imminent. Canadian battalions were put into line on the Kemmel front, where they were identified by the enemy. Corps headquarters were prepared, and casualty clearing stations were erected in conspicuous positions in this area."

So much depended on the secrecy of the movement and in the deception of the enemy that the precautions taken were very elaborate. "On July 21," says Sir Arthur Currie, "I attended a conference at Fourth Army Headquarters, where the operations contemplated were discussed. The Fourth Army Commander dwelt upon the importance of secrecy. . . . The operation as outlined at the conference was of limited scope, and was designed to relieve the pressure on Amiens and free the Amiens-Paris railway line, thus improving the situation at the junction of the French and British Armies. A large number of Tanks were to be made available for this operation. The methods for maintaining secrecy and misleading the enemy were discussed. I pointed out that I had been considering a scheme for the capture of Orange Hill