

of which ran the Hendecourt-Dury road, and roughly paralleling our front line. Then came a gentle valley, and in this depression was the village of Cagnicourt on the right and Villers les Cagnicourt on the left, each being about 6,000 yards from our front line. Immediately east of Cagnicourt were two small woods—the Bois de Bouche and the Bois de Loison. Then another ridge, and a sharp valley running in a north-easterly direction, with the villages of Buissey and Baralle straggling through it practically across our entire front. And finally the wooded valley of the Canal du Nord.

While the natural features presented no great difficulties, the enemy had strongly fortified this ground, and it was these heavily-wired and strongly-held trench systems that formed the great obstacle.

Immediately in front of our position was the Fresnes-Rouvroy line, sited on the slope leading up to the Hendecourt-Dury road. Two to three thousand yards east of this line was the famous Drocourt-Queant line, a switch off the Hindenburg line, which at this point ran in a general south-easterly direction some 1,500 yards south of our frontage. Running in a south-easterly direction from Vis-en-Artois, and connecting the Fresnes-Rouvroy and the Drocourt-Queant lines, was the trench system known as the Vis-en-Artois Switch. And, beginning at the point where the Drocourt-Queant line crossed the Arras-Cambrai road, and also running east, was a fourth line, known as the Buissey Switch. This system of trenches ran immediately south-west of the villages of Villers and Buissey, joining the Hindenburg line in the vicinity of Inchy-en-Artois, a village situated near the canal and just south of our boundary.

It will be seen, therefore, that the trenches to be taken by the 1st Canadian Division ran, in zig-zag fashion, practically to the canal.

PRELIMINARY OPERATIONS.

It will be remembered that the Canadian Corps plan for an attack on the Drocourt-Queant line depended on the divisions in line securing a jumping-off position within reasonable distance of