

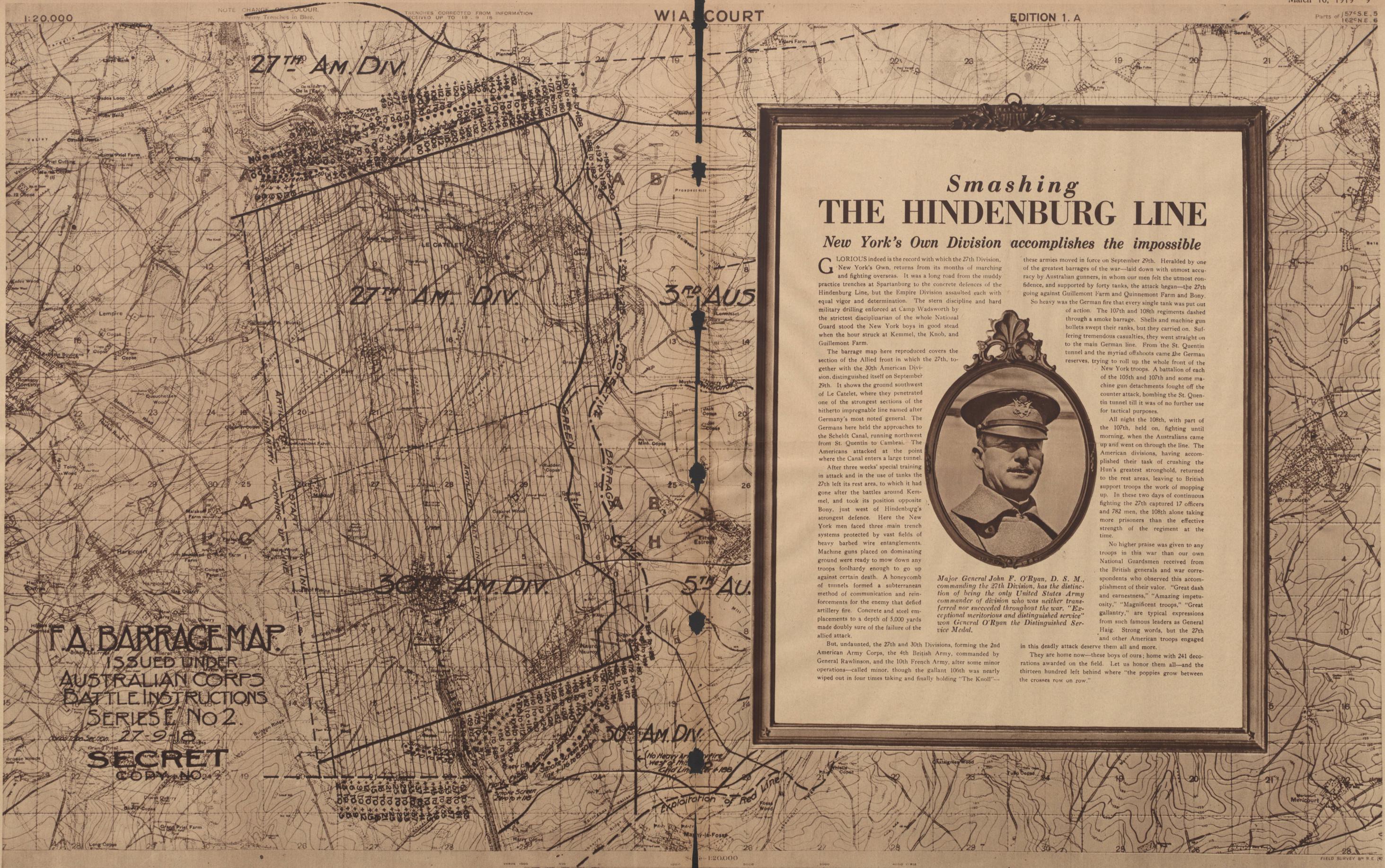
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TRENCHES CORRECTED FROM INFORMATION
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Smashing THE HINDENBURG LINE

New York's Own Division accomplishes the impossible

GLORIOUS indeed is the record with which the 27th Division, New York's Own, returns from its months of marching and fighting overseas. It was a long road from the muddy practice trenches at Spartanburg to the concrete defences of the Hindenburg Line, but the Empire Division assaulted each with equal vigor and determination. The stern discipline and hard military drilling enforced at Camp Wadsworth by the strictest disciplinarian of the whole National Guard stood the New York boys in good stead when the hour struck at Kemmel, the Knob, and Guillemont Farm.

The barrage map here reproduced covers the section of the Allied front in which the 27th, together with the 30th American Division, distinguished itself on September 29th. It shows the ground southwest of Le Catelet, where they penetrated one of the strongest sections of the hitherto impregnable line named after Germany's most noted general. The Germans here held the approaches to the Scheldt Canal, running northwest from St. Quentin to Cambrai. The Americans attacked at the point where the Canal enters a large tunnel.

After three weeks' special training in attack and in the use of tanks the 27th left its rest area, to which it had gone after the battles around Kemmel, and took its position opposite Bony, just west of Hindenburg's strongest defence. Here the New York men faced three main trench systems protected by vast fields of heavy barbed wire entanglements. Machine guns placed on dominating ground were ready to mow down any troops foolhardy enough to go up against certain death. A honeycomb of tunnels formed a subterranean method of communication and reinforcements for the enemy that defied artillery fire. Concrete and steel emplacements to a depth of 5,000 yards made doubly sure of the failure of the allied attack.

But, undaunted, the 27th and 30th Divisions, forming the 2nd American Army Corps, the 4th British Army, commanded by General Rawlinson, and the 10th French Army, after some minor operations—called minor, though the gallant 106th was nearly wiped out in four times taking and finally holding "The Knoll"—

these armies moved in force on September 29th. Heralded by one of the greatest barrages of the war—laid down with utmost accuracy by Australian gunners, in whom our men felt the utmost confidence, and supported by forty tanks, the attack began—the 27th going against Guillemont Farm and Quinmoult Farm and Bony.

So heavy was the German fire that every single tank was put out of action. The 107th and 108th regiments dashed through a smoke barrage. Shells and machine gun bullets swept their ranks, but they carried on. Suffering tremendous casualties, they went straight on to the main German line. From the St. Quentin tunnel and the myriad offshoots came the German reserves, trying to roll up the whole front of the New York troops. A battalion of each of the 105th and 107th and some machine gun detachments fought off the counter attack, bombing the St. Quentin tunnel till it was of no further use for tactical purposes.

All night the 108th, with part of the 107th, held on, fighting until morning, when the Australians came up and went on through the line. The American divisions, having accomplished their task of crushing the Hun's greatest stronghold, returned to the rest areas, leaving to British support troops the work of mopping up. In these two days of continuous fighting the 27th captured 17 officers and 782 men, the 108th alone taking more prisoners than the effective strength of the regiment at the time.

No higher praise was given to any troops in this war than our own National Guardsmen received from the British generals and war correspondents who observed this accomplishment of their valor. "Great dash and earnestness," "Amazing impetuosity," "Magnificent troops," "Great gallantry," are typical expressions from such famous leaders as General Haig. Strong words, but the 27th and other American troops engaged

in this deadly attack deserve them all and more. They are home now—these boys of ours; home with 241 decorations awarded on the field. Let us honor them all—and the thirteen hundred left behind where "the poppies grow between the crosses row on row."



Major General John F. O'Ryan, D. S. M., commanding the 27th Division, has the distinction of being the only United States Army commander of division who was neither transferred nor succeeded throughout the war. "Exceptional meritorious and distinguished service" won General O'Ryan the Distinguished Service Medal.

A BARRAGE MAP
ISSUED UNDER
AUSTRALIAN CORPS
BATTLE INSTRUCTIONS
SERIES E. NO 2.
27-9-18
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