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Produced and edited by Graham Bradshaw with reference to AWM and DVA articles.

It happened in October

The Battle of Maryang San (Maliangshan)

KOREA 3 - 8 OCTOBER 1951

Although the Battle of Kapyong is probably more well known, mainly because the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment received the U.S. Unit Presidential Citation for its part in that battle, the Battle of Maryang San (aka the Battle of Maliangshan) it is described as the most significant action and greatest single feat by the Army during the course of the Korean War.

On the 3rd of October, the 28th Commonwealth Brigade, which included 3RAR took part in an advance called Operation Commando. On the 5th 3RAR fought through difficult hilly terrain under a heavy mist and successfully drew the Chinese forces away from the main ridge line.

3RAR attacked along the ridgeline and occupied the summit. Then on the 7th they captured “The Hinge” from Chinese forces. What followed was the heaviest artillery bombardment the Australians had been subjected too in the war so far. This bombardment made the evacuation of casualties and resupply of ammunition difficult and extremely dangerous.

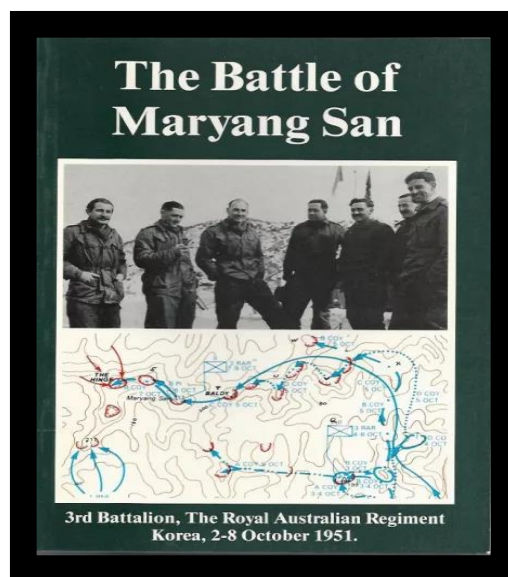
The fierce Chinese counter attacks were unsuccessful and on the 8th of October they withdrew from Maryang San to a position in the next line of hills.

3RAR casualties were 20 dead and 104 wounded. During the battle they fired 900,000 small arms rounds, threw 5000



Australian machine gunners in support of C Company 3RAR during the attack on hill 317
Ref: AWM-HOBJ2432

grenades and fired 7000 mortar rounds. Sadly, after 3RAR retired to the rear area to recuperate the Chinese later recaptured Maryang San from the British and held it until the end of the war. See book below.



The Battle of Broodseinde, 4 October 1917

The Battle of Broodseinde was fought near Ypres in Belgium and was the most successful attack of the third battle of Ypres. The attack began before dawn on 4 October 1917. The Australian troops involved (the I & II ANZAC Corps) were shelled heavily on their start line and a seventh of their number became casualties even before the attack began. When it did, the attacking troops were confronted by a line of troops advancing towards them; the Germans had chosen the same morning to launch an attack of their own. The Australians forged on through the German assault waves and gained all their objectives along the ridge. It was not without cost, however. German pillboxes were characteristically difficult to subdue, and the Australian divisions suffered 6,500 casualties. It was the first time that the Anzac divisions, namely the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and the N.Z. division had fought together.



Broodseinde ridge battlefield



Dead and wounded Australians and Germans in the railway cutting. Ref: AWM E03864

The Battle of Poelcappelle, 9th October 1917

The Battle of Poelcappelle, following on from the Broodseinde battle was the fourth in the series of battles during the Third Battle of Ypres. Heavy rain fell in the two days preceding this battle and the quagmire of mud made the movement of guns and ammunition extremely difficult. Many shells disappeared in the mud and either failed to explode or were absorbed by the mud. Because the artillery became bogged down and ineffective the Battle of Poelcappelle was a failure. The Australian 2nd division lost 1250 men.

What now follows is the costly, disastrous, boldly Battle of Passchendaele.

The Battle of Passchendaele 12th October 1917

The 3rd and 4th Australian divisions and the N.Z. division took part in this the fifth battle in the series. The ANZAC divisions were repulsed by the Germans and were back at their original position by late afternoon on the 12th. The push towards Passchendaele saw minor advances but attempts to capture the town were thwarted again by the incessant MUD and MORE MUD. The Anzacs divisions were eventually replaced by the Canadian Corps who brought the fiasco to an end on the 10th of November. Passchendaele is remembered for its terrible, tragic and futile waste of life. The ANZAC divisions suffered over 43,000 casualties. The 12th of October remains the greatest disaster suffered by New Zealand forces in one single day when 840 men were lost and another 1900 wounded.

Tyne Cot is the largest Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery and contains the largest single number of Australian graves. This cemetery sits atop Broodseinde Ridge.



Passchendaele 12th October 1917

Ref: AWM EO1200



Tyne Cot Cemetery (see ridge on page 2)

Ref: CWGC

THE BATTLE OF MONTBREHAIN – 5th OCTOBER 1918

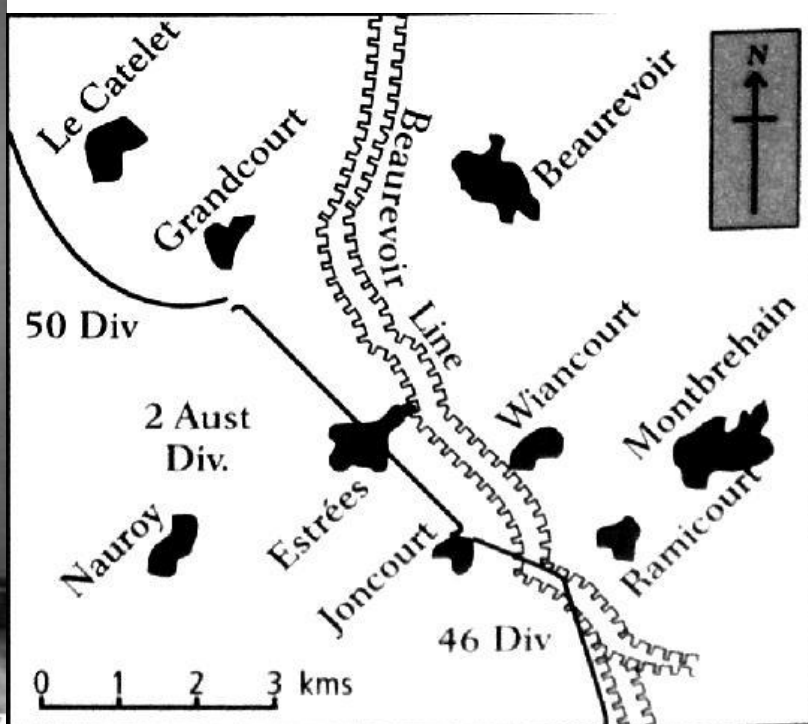
The Battle of Montbrehain was the last Infantry action fought on the Western Front by the Australian Imperial Force which comprised battalions of the 6th Brigade. The Hindenburg Line had been broken and the attack on Montbrehain was an attempt to breach the system of German defences on the Beaurevoir Line. The Australian advance early on the morning of the 5th and took the town along with 400 German prisoners for the loss of 430 casualties. The 64th and last VC won by an Australian in World war I was awarded to Lieutenant George Ingham. His citation read-

‘For most conspicuous bravery and initiative during the attack on Montbrehain, East of Peronne, on 5th October 1918. When early in the advance his platoon was held up by a strong point, Lieutenant Ingram, without hesitation, dashed out and rushed the post at the head of his men, capturing nine machine guns and killing 42 enemy after stubborn resistance. Later when the company had suffered severe casualties from enemy posts, and many leaders had fallen, he at once took control of the situation, rallied his men under intense fire, and led them forward. He himself rushed the first post, shot six of the enemy and captured a machine gun. On two subsequent occasions he again displayed great dash and resource in the capture of enemy posts, inflicting many casualties and taking 62 prisoners. Throughout the whole day he showed the most inspiring example of courage and leadership, and freely exposed himself regardless of danger.’



Lieutenant George Ingram VC

Ref: AWM JO3067



Map of Beaurevoir Line & Montbrehain

Ref: Coulthard-Clark

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