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Die Nacht zum 16. August zog herauf, durchglüht von Millionen Flammenspritzern von östlich Steenstraate bis an die Lys, eine schwüle Gewitternacht, die das Atmen erschwerte.

Von Mitternacht an gossen an zweitausend englische Batterien, das sind achtausend Rohre, an zwölfhundert deutsche Batterien, das sind viertausendachthundert Rohre, ihren Granatenhagel über diesen dreißig Kilometer breiten Landstreifen, der voller Menschen war.

Von 5 Uhr morgens an rollte das Trommelfeuer in nie dagewesener Stärke.

