

1915AppendixOctober

8th too till 1 p.m. when they were ordered to stand down. The remainder of the night passed quietly. We had Lt. Gibson and 2 men killed Capt. Wyatt & 20 men wounded.

THE QUARRIES HULLUCK.

9th A fairly quiet day we started to relieve the West Kents in the front trenches at about 1 p.m. the relief completed successfully by 9 p.m. Capt. Dresser & Lieut. Devenish were both wounded in the thigh by a sniper while relieving, Capt. Penderel went sick. The night passed quietly for this part of the world.

10th More or less heavy bombardment of our front trenches and the HULLUCK Road all day, our left trench had the parapet blown down as usual with aerial torpedoes and heavy shell. Casualties during the last 24 hours. 2 officers wounded 2 men killed 3 men wounded.

11th Quiet all morning rather a heavy bombardment by the Germans in the evening. Casualties 3 killed 5 wounded.

12th An unusually quiet day the parapet in the left front trench was for the first time for several days blown down.

13th The Division was order to attack in conjunction with a general attack more or less all along the line. Copy of orders attached.

12 noon The Artillery bombardment began, and continued until 2 o.c. smoke and gas began at 1 and was continued to 2 o.c.

The attack was made by the 46th 12th and 1st Division its main object was to straighten our line and if possible to take from the enemy one or two very nasty positions he had which enfiladed our line. The 46th Division were to take Hohenzollern Redoubt and Fosse No.8. The 12th Division the Quarries, and trench from Quarries to gun trench and gun trench, the 1st Division to take line of LENS, LE BARRON ROAD.

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Result. The 46th Division took part of Hohenzollern Redoubt but could go no further, the 13th Division, took the N.W. corner of the Quarries, failed to take trench from Quarries to GUN TRENCH, the East Surreys took & held gun trench. The 1st Division took the line of the road ~~was~~ but were subsequently shelled out of the northern portion in front of MULLUCH. The 46 Division and 35th Brigade advanced under gas and smoke the remainder under smoke only. At 2 p.m. exactly B company 2 platoons led by Lt. Hewat assaulted the whole of gun trench by a frontal attack at the same time bombing parties from A and B attacked both flanks. The frontal attack got in at once the Germans running as soon as we got close. A coy under Capt. Tomkins with two platoons followed up at 50% interval but kept too much to the north and were badly cut up by machine gun fire in the open, and did not get in from the front, the flank bombing attacks both made ground. A coys attack having failed frontally followed up from the flank the northern bombing attack led most gallantly by Sergt. Martin. Behind A Coy came Lieut. Findlay and C Coys bombers, whose duty was to clear and block for 100% the German communicating trench running back to Cite St. Elie which they did, as soon as this had been done C Coy advanced from their position in 2nd Support to the front line and gradually re-inforced the captured trench mostly on the right. Reinforcements were soon called for again, so B Coy was sent up from 3rd Support trench and 1 Coy under Capt. Dawson of the West Kents were sent for, these went straight up into the new trench, later a coy. of the Queens under Major Roberts went up $\frac{1}{2}$ to our old 1st Support line and $\frac{1}{2}$ to our 3rd Support line the 2 platoons in the 1st Support line were subsequently withdrawn to the 3rd Support line in reserve. There was a great deal of bombing on both sides,

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and our men suffered rather heavily from enfilade fire from the Quarries on our left & the dump also the trenches were shelled somewhat heavily with H.E. However the result was exactly what we had set out to do we won the trench, held it blocked the communicating trench for 100%. The Buffs on our left were unable to take their trench owing to very heavy machine gun fire so we had to block the end of the trench. Later at about 10.30 p.m. Two coys of the 8th Fusiliers came up and occupied the old German trenches in reserve in case they might be needed. The night passed fairly quietly except for bombing. At about 4.30 a.m. we started to organize our front line which had become somewhat muddled with different Regts. and companies. At 6 a.m. the line was organized. The enemy made a counter attack on our left at 5.30 a.m. which we easily repulsed with rifle fire. During the rest of the day things were more or less quiet and the time was spent in consolidating the position won. The men fought splendidly all through and attacked with great dash this was especially creditable as they had been in the trenches for 4 months without a rest and the last 5 days had undergone a continual and heavy bombardment. The casualties were heavy. Capt. Tomkins Lieut. Bearsnell were killed Lieuts. Knight & Marshall wounded. 56 other ranks were killed 156 wounded & 33 missing of which many it is hope will subsequently be brought in wounded. We took about 16 prisoners 1 machine gun & 3 trench mortars with a lot of ammunition. In the evening we were relieved by the 11th Middlesex and went into billets at Moyelles des Vermelles.

OPERATION ORDER NO.2. BY LT. COLONEL
BALDWIN COMMDG. 7TH EAST SURREY
REGT.

- (1) 37th Inf. Bde. 69 Field Coy. R.E. 1 Coy Northants are allotted the task of securing the line G.12.d. central to the East corner of the QUARRIES G.12.a.6.9. joining up with 35th Inf. Bde.
- (2) The attack will take place on the 13th inst.
- (3) The following will be the procedure:
12 noon Artillery bombardment.
1 p.m. Gas and smoke will commence. The former will last till 1.50 p.m. and the smoke according to attached instructions.
2 p.m. The assault will be launched on the German gun trench G.12.d.5.7. - G.12.b.2.2. by the East Surrey Regt.
- (4) At 1.30 p.m. our blocks at either end of the German trench will be opened under cover of the smoke curtain simultaneously with the assault, bombing parties will push in from both flanks a further bombing party with at least 20 carriers will move forward in rear of the assault and be responsible for bombing up the German communicating trench G.12.d.3.9. and forming a double block 100^x up the trench, the trench between the blocks must be straightened and a machine gun placed behind the rear block.
- (5) 1 sec. 69th Field Coy R.E. 1 platoon Northants will be allotted to O.C. East Surrey for consolidating the position.
- (6) 7th East Surrey will vacate all the support trenches North of the new communication trench CENTRAL ALLEY.
- (7) STONE STREET (HULLUCH ROAD) will be available for East Surrey Central ALLEY for the Buffs.

E.H.J. NICOLLS, Capt. & Adjt.

Dictated to O.C. Coy.
 3.30 p.m.

Report on Attack by 7th (S) Bn.
 East Surrey Regt. on German Trench at G.d.3.9.
 (Ref. Trench Map Sheet 36.c.N.W.3. and part of 1.
 also sketch map attached).

1. Distribution of Battalion prior to attack vide Sketch Map.

The various Companies occupied the following positions :-

"A" Coy.	2 Platoons from A to B. 2 Platoons from E to F.
"B" Coy.	2 Platoons from C to D. 2 Platoons from F to G.
"C" Coy.	In 2nd Support Line.
"D" Coy.	In 3rd Support Line.

Orders issued for attack at 2 p.m.

2. (1) The Bombers of the front Platoon of "A" & "B" were to attack the flanks of the enemy's position, the front platoons less their Bombers were to remain in their positions and not advance.

(2) The 2 platoons of "B" Coy opposite the German Trench were to attack the whole of the enemy's front, moving forward in one line.

(3) The 2 platoons of "A" Coy in the S.F.T. were to follow the 2 platoons of "B" Coy at 50 yards distance in the same formation.

(4) Three bombing parties of "C" Coy. were to follow close in rear of the assaulting column, their duty being to pass over the German Trench and clear the communication trenches X and Y for 100 yards.

(5) A Machine Gun was detailed to follow in rear of the bombing parties.

(6) As soon as the assaulting columns had left their position "C" Coy from the 2nd Support line were to advance over the open and occupy the trench evacuated by the assaulting column.

(7) "D" Coy. occupying the 3rd Support Trench were to hold themselves in Reserve until required.

Major Wilson was detailed to remain in their trench in order to control operations.

(8) A party of Pioneers with a Section of R.E. were detailed to remain in the 3rd Support Trench until the enemy's position was occupied, when they were to advance, assist in blocking the enemy's Communication Trenches and in consolidating the position.

(9) Battalion Headquarters was situated in the old German Fire Trench at G.11.d.5.4.

(10) Telephone Communication was established from all Companies to Headquarters, and was maintained practically the whole time from our right Fire Trench to the 3rd Support Trench and from thence to Battalion Headquarters and from Battalion Headquarters to Brigade Headquarters.

3. The Assault.

At 2 p.m. the orders for the attack were carried out with the following results :-

(1) Left Flank Attack.

The Bombers of "A" Coy. on our left flank bombed its way down the German Trench to 2.B. where it erected a barricade as it found they were unable to advance further owing to heavy bombing and rifle fire from Communication Trench 2. they also cleared the two small subsidiary trenches running N.W. & S.E. of 2 B.

This bombing party suffered heavily in its advance, but also caused considerable casualties to the enemy.

(2) Centre Attack.

(a) The 2 platoons of B Coy under Lieut. Hewat charged the German position in line and occupied it roughly between the 2 German Communication Trenches X & Y.

Many of the enemy retreated rapidly down the above mentioned Communication Trenches while others ran over the open, under a heavy fire from our men.

(b) The 2 platoons of A Coy under Capt. Tomkins advanced immediately after B Coy. but instead of inclining to the right inclined to the left, they were subjected to a severe fire from a Machine Gun especially on their right and lost their Officers and all their N.C.Os. they however reached the German Trench, which by then had been cleared by the Bombers of the Left Flank Attack. A Gap was then caused between the two Companies.

(c) The 3 parties of Bombers under Lieut. Findlay followed close in rear of the 2 platoons of B Coy and passing through the Company divided one going down Trench Y and clearing it for 200 yards, one going down Trench X and clearing it for 100 yards, a third party bombed down towards the Left Flank Attack, and coming under a heavy fire from bombs and rifles erected barricade e.3.B.

(3) Right Flank Attack.

This party under Sergt. Hanscombe bombed their way down the German Trench, and subsequently joining with the Bombing parties under Lieut. Findlay co-operated with and assisted them.

(4) The Supports.

Immediately the assaulting parties left their trench C Coy under Major James advanced across the open and occupied the evacuated trench. The enemy evidently did not see this movement until C Coy. had reached their trench, when maxim gun fire was opened on them.

(5) The Supports were sent up to reinforce the firing line at 2.30 p.m. & D Coy from the 3rd Support Line occupied the S.F.T. and shortly after reinforced A Coy.

(6) Subsequently a Coy of the West Kents also reinforced the firing line and a Company of the Queens was moved up in Reserve.

(7) As soon as the position was occupied a party of Pioneers & R.E. advanced and did excellent work in blocking the Communication Trench X & Y.

4. Desultory fighting continued during the night. At about 5 a.m. a line of the enemy estimated at about a Company advanced from the direction of Site St. Ellie, these suffered heavy casualties, but a certain number managed to dig themselves in about 300 yards from our position between the Communication Trenches X & Y.

5. When I visited the occupied trench about 5.15 a.m. the position was as follows:-

(a) The Battalion held the line from 1B to 2B and from 3B to 5B.

(b) There appeared to be a portion of the trench between 2B & 3B which might be called "No Man's Land" as the enemy coming into it could be bombed from 2B or 3B, while our force was unable to enter it owing to bombing by the enemy proceeding from Communication Trench Z and Flanking rifle fire from the direction of Communication Trench X.

(c) Communication Trench Y was blocked 100 yards up and had a Machine Gun inside to repel any advance of the enemy.

Communication Trench X had been blocked 100 yards up and had been filled in for about 40 yards.

(d) The line from 3B to 4B required considerable consolidation and this I ordered to be carried out.

(e) On my leaving the fire trench about 10.30 a.m. the position was normal, a certain amount of bombing and firing was going on, but there was no signs of an enemy's counter attack being probable. This condition prevailed until the Bn. was relieved during the night of the 14th, the relief being carried out successfully without further casualties to the Battalion.

6. The difficulties experienced in the occupation of the enemy's trench was to a great extent due to the fact that the trenches had been so battered about by Artillery fire that they afforded no cover, also to several small trenches with dead ends whose existence were unknown, and that through Communication Trench between our Left & Right was not obtainable owing to the heavy fire brought to bear on that portion of the trench I have named "No Man's Land".

Our casualties were:-

1 Officer killed.

1 Officer missing believed killed.

2 Officers wounded.

Rank & File.

54 Killed. 158 Wounded.

33 Missing believed killed or wounded.

Total 4 Officers. 245 Rank & File.

R.H. BALDWIN, Lieut.Colonel,
Commanding 7th (Service) Bn.
East Surrey Regt.