

1918

September MANANCOURTAppendix.

18th Battalion moved to assembly position in W 17 a. Move completed about 6 a.m. Remained on this ground for the day. Operations in progress. Prisoners passing through during day from 21st Divn Front. Bn O.165

19th Battalion moved forward to low ground in W 26 a. across country in Artillery Formations - move completed 7.35 a.m. Warning Order Battn to relieve 6th Bn Leicester 110th I.B. tonight Moved, leading Platoon 7.30 pm Relief completed at Midnight. Quiet night no casualties. Bn C 167
Major G.K.Olliver M.C. joined for Minimum Reserve.

FRONT LINE X 19 c 3.2

20th Warning Order received Bde would attack on 21st - Quiet day - Slight Shelling - Ground in Front was reconnoitred - Quiet night Rain fell. Capt & Qr Mrs G.H.WALLIS, D.C.M. when i/c Rations Limbers conveying supplies to Battalion was wounded by Shell. Died of wounds 21st.

21st - See Report on Operations - Bn O.
22nd Casualties Officers Killed - Captain E.W. 168. 169
ERTHELL. Lieut H.L.C.WHITTAKER,
2/Lieut M.B.BLAGDEN 21st R.F.HIGGS
22nd. Wounded. Captain K.A.BROWN
21st Died of Wounds 22nd. 2/Lieut
W.J.PRATT M.M. 2/Lieut L.J.BROOKER,
D.C.M M.M. 2/Lieut J.G.HARKER.
Sx. Yeo. attached.

Wounded remained at duty - 2/Lieut
P.J.JAKES M.M. Other ranks.
Killed 39. Wounded. 134 Missing 89.
22nd 4 pm Orders received Lieut Col.P.C.ESDAILE
was to proceed to B Echelon .
Major G.K.OLLIVER M.C. to assume
temporary command of Battalion
Orders for relief by 2nd Batta
Worcestershire Regt tonight received
about 7 pm. Relief commenced about
8.45 pm. completed 1.30 a.m.

V 17 a.

23rd On relief Coys marched independently to bivouacs in V 17 a - move completed at 4.15 a.m. A hot meal was in waiting for the troops. Troops rested till noon - when cleaning up and refitting was proceeded with. Bn O 170

24th Training and general routine - refitting proceeded with - Lieut S.G.W.HUNT proceeded to England with orders to report to W.O.

6. All empty tins will be carried out and with Lewis Guns be dumped at Bn H.Q. at X 19 c 3.2 - an N C O will be detailed to take charge who will see them loaded on Limbers.

7. Completion of relief will be notified to Bn. H.Q. by runner.

R.H. NEVINS
Capt & Adjt.

Issued 7.40 pm.

1st Battn. "THE QUEEN'S" REG T.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS ON SEPTEMBER 21st. & 22nd 1918.

Reference Map; Sheet 57c. S.E.

The following Officers were present with the Battalion:

In Command - - - - - Lt.Col. P.C. ESDAILE.
2nd in Command - - - - Major G.K. OLLIVER, M.C.,
Adjutant - - - - - Capt. R. NEVINS, M.C.
Scout Officer - - - - Lieut. J.S. MILNER.
Signalling Officer - - Lieut. H. MALLETT.

" A " C O M P A N Y.

In Command - - - - - Capt. K.A. BROWN.
2/Lieut. J.G. HARKER.
" L.J. BROOKER, D.C.M.,
M.M.
" H. BASSETT.

" B " C O M P A N Y.

In Command - - - - - Capt. E.W. BETHELL.
2/Lieut. P.J. JAKES, M.M.
" M.B. BLAGDEN.
" W.J. PRATT, M.M.

" C " C O M P A N Y.

In Command - - - - - Lieut. A.J.R. HAGGARD.
" H.L.C. WHITTAKER.
2/Lieut. E.A. FIELD.
" J.A. BROOKS.

" D " C O M P A N Y.

In Command - - - - - Capt. E.S. BINGHAM, M.C.
2/Lieut. R.F. HIGGS.
" W.J.C. MORGAN.
" A.E. SAUNDERS.

1. The dispositions of the Battalion for the attack, were as follows:-

"A" and "B" Coys. in the front line, each on a two Platoon frontage. "C" Coy. in support. "D" Coy., local reserve.

2. FRONTAGES & OBJECTIVES. "A" Coys. left was to follow the line running East and West through X 20 B 5 4 - X 21 B 0 4 X 22 A 3 4. Boundary line between "A" and "B" Coys. ran east and west through X 20 D 3 7., X 21 c 2 8, trench junction at X 21 D 5 7 to a point just beyond sunken

road at X 22 A 5 2. "B" Coys. right was to follow the line X 20 D 0 0., along the grid line to KILDARE AVENUE, thence along KILDARE AVENUE (exclusive) to X 22 D 5 7. "A" and "B" Coys. were to establish contact at trench junction at X 24 D 5 7 and on sunken road X 22 C 4 9.

3. Forming up line for "A" and "B" Coys. was the sunken road running through X 20 B and D. "C" Coy. formed up on a line parallel to and 100 yards west of sunken road. This Company was in position by Zero minus 30 minutes. Owing to the enemy shelling this Company was moved up to the sunken road. "D" Company at Zero minus 45 minutes moved forward from PLANE TRENCH to occupy sunken road when vacated by "A" and "B" Coys. Advanced Battalion H.Q. moved forward and was established at X 20 D 3 9 at Zero minus 1 hour. Aid Post was established at X 20 D 3 7 in sunken road. Zero was at 5.40 a.m.

4. No information was received until 7.5 a.m. when O.C. Support Coy. came in and reported that the right Company had sheared off to the right and that they were held up in front by machine gun fire. He also reported that the ridge 300 yards east of the sunken road running through X 20 B and D was coming under cross machine gun fire from the direction of MEATH POST and LIMERICK POST. At 7.35 a.m. a message was received from the Cameromians stating that they were held up at X 15 D 5 5. At 7.15 a.m. O.C. Reserve Company was ordered to move up two Platoons to the ridge at X 20 D 7 6 and to find out the situation in PIGEON RAVINE. Information was gained by O.C. Reserve Company that at about 7.57 a.m. enemy was retiring from trench between X 21 D 25 00 and X 21 G 15 10 and that British Troops were in action in trench between X 21 D 50 75 and X 21 D 15 90. British troops were also seen in LIMERICK LANE and along the sunken road in 21 C and D. The troops in sunken road in 21 C and D were prevented from advancing by M.G. fire. At 8 a.m. as no news had been received from either of the leading companies the Scout Officer was sent out with his scouts to obtain information. Information was obtained that "B" Coy. had moved too far to the right and had suffered heavy casualties from M.G. fire from LIMERICK POST.

5. Machine Gun fire held up the attack on the whole front causing advanced troops to dig in. The enemy snipers were very active and their shooting in some cases exceedingly good. After dark the Battalion was re-organised and small parties of men were collected. The men of "B" Coy. and some of "C" Coy. who had lost direction and who had found themselves in KILDARE AVENUE were withdrawn. The Battalion was disposed as follows: "C" and "D" Coys. were dug in on a line parallel to and about 400 yards east of the sunken road in X 20 B and D. The remaining two Companies "A" and "B", which were reduced in numbers, were withdrawn to the sunken road.

The absence of information from the leading Companies during the early part of the attack was probably due to both Company Commanders becoming early casualties.

6. From information obtained after Companies returned and re-organised there is no doubt Capt. K.A.Brown was wounded at about 6 a.m., shortly after attack had commenced; Capt. E.W.Bethell killed immediately on reaching the line on which his Company had been held up, whilst he was actually organising his men and giving orders for digging in; Lieut. H.L.C.Whittaker killed whilst leading his Platoon at about 8 a.m.; 2/Lieut. M.B.Blagden,

who had been wounded in the arm and was with his Platoon, which was digging in, killed by an enemy sniper whilst directing his men; 2/Lieuts. J.G. Harker, W.J. Pratt, M.M. and L.J. Brooker, D.C.M.; M.M., were severely wounded early during the advance and were brought later in the day.

The Cameronians, on left, having been held up a short distance from their jumping off position, the 5th Scottish Rifles were brought in and an operation carried out by them at night succeeded in capturing MEATH POST and LIMERICK TRENCH SOUTH to a distance of about 200 yards. The result of this was to reduce somewhat enemy sniping. It was arranged that "C" & "D" Coys. should exploit any success gained by the 5th Scottish Rifles. Capt. E.S. Bingham, M.C. was instructed to carry this out and reconnoitred the ground in company with Lt. Col. P.C. Esdaile. Plans were made by Capt. Bingham but owing to the situation on the right becoming obscure the operation did not materialise. Apart from heavy shelling the night was normal.

7. On 22nd hostile artillery very active on our forward positions. "C" Company shelled out of its trench about 2 p.m. Orders issued to "D" Coy. and a portion of "B" and "C" Coys., under Capt. E.S. Bingham to capture LIMERICK POST, 5th Scottish Rifles to bomb southwards. "D" Coy. under cover made good its way to KILDARE AVENUE along which it advanced. A Block reached about 150 yards from LIMERICK POST was scaled by a Platoon gallantly led by 2/Lieut. R.F. Higgs, towards LIMERICK POST, which was engaged by Grenadiers with Rifle Grenades. Though met by hot M.G. and rifle fire 2/Lieut. Higgs closed to within 50 yards of the Post. 2/Lieut. Higgs was killed in this operation. Portions of "B" and "C" Coys., under Lieut. A.J.R. Haggard co-operating with "D" Coy., were held up in PIGEON RAVINE. Seeing opposition was too strong Capt. Bingham established a post at the Block and ordered remaining troops to withdraw and take up a line N and S.E. of POPLAR TRENCH. Having arranged with 2/10 London's on right to take over the Block in KILDARE AVENUE, Capt. Bingham reported situation to Commanding Officer, who ordered Companies back into their original position.

During the afternoon the position was reconnoitred by the Commanding Officer and Officer Commanding Companies 2nd Worcestershire Regt., which Battalion had orders they were to relieve 1st. Batta. "The Queen's" Regt this evening and continue the attack in conjunction with Brigade on right.