

1917

July

Appendix.

23rd Battn moved to Camp at N 1 a Central (Sheet 28).

24th) Parties were detailed to go up to the
25th) Trenches to reconnoitre the line from which the Battalion will attack at an early date. Training was carried on. 2/Lt. J.E. Day failed to return from reconnoitring the line.

26th) Battalion at Micmac Camp N 1 A Central. Bde O.O 137
27th) Bn O.O.163. V.
28th) VI.
Bde O.O 165
BN O.O 164

29th The Battalion moved to the Trenches and occupied the right sector of the Brigade front the right resting on Klein Zillebeke and the left adjoining the 1st. Bn. North Staffordshire Regiment at a point about 350 yards North of Klein Zillebeke

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR X Y AND Z DAYS.
VII.
Bde.O O 166

TRENCHES

The Battalion was on the extreme right of the Division and joined the 20th Durham Light Infantry of the 41st Division. "C" Company took over the front line from the 8th Bn. Royal West Kent Regiment. A B & D were accommodated in the old British front line & the old German front line. 2/Lt. E.J. Young was wounded on the way up to Trenches and 28 other casualties were sustained.

30th The day was spent in resting the men and getting necessary stores up to the front line. At about 9 p.m. Companies commenced to move forward to the assembly positions on a taped line East of the front line which had been laid out by Major H.J.C. Peirs D.S.O. This was completed by 3.45 a.m. D Company (Captain Yandell) was on the right "A" Company (Captain F.W.Rider) on the left. C Company (2/Lt L.G. Stedman) in Support and B Company (Captain E.A. Fellowes) in Reserve. Battalion H.Q. moved forward to I 36 B 45.80. and a rear H.Q. was established at I 36 C 5.0. The Battalion was commanded by Major H.J.C. Peirs D.S.O. and he with the Adjutant (Lt. G.S.G. Hamilton) established themselves at forward Battalion H.Q. from 10 p m.

31st The enemy had kept our front line Image
1 A.M. Crescent and the immediate vicinity under
to constant shell fire which lessened
3.45 slackened-off thickened as dawn approached.
A.M. and some casualties were incurred on the
tape line. At 3.50 a.m. (Zero hour) the
barrage commenced and within one minute
a hostile barrage of 77 mm & 4.2 in.
Howitzer's fell on our front line. At
3.54 the leading Companies advanced under
the barrage meeting with slight opposition

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31st (contd.) at J 31 A 05.50 and from the Klein Zillebeke road on their right. After "piling up" on Jehovah Trench the barrage lifted at Zero plus 56 minutes (4.46 a.m.) and the leading Companies charged and took the first objective Jehovah Trench without opposition. The "Meppers up" of "C" Company collected 16 prisoners of the 71st Regiment. The barrage now moved forward two hundred yards and the Companies reorganised under it before advancing to Jordan Trench the final objective. This trench was taken without further trouble except from Machine Guns firing from Bulgar and Cubist Woods. During the advance the enemy's barrage was very accurate and the Battalion sustained many casualties Captains W. Yandell & F.S. Rider being wounded soon after the Advance commenced. Having reached their objective the Companies started to consolidate but the 20th Durham Light Infantry had failed to reach their objective on the right. This necessitated two Platoons of "C" Company forming a defensive right flank from Jordan Trench to Jehovah Trench by linking up shell holes. The 1st North Staffordshire Regiment on our having to retire to a position West of Jordan Trench owing to the 73rd Brigade on their left being held up "D" Company had to conform to them and establish posts in Shell-holes on the West side of Jordan Trench utilizing the uncut wire for their own defence. Our final dispositions were as follows:-

Post 1. 1 N.C.O & 6 men at J 31 C 80.95
 Post 2. Lewis Gun & Team at J 31 C 75.95.
 Post 3. Lewis Gun & Team & Company H.Q. in Jordan Trench at I 31 A 9.0.
 Post 4. 1 N.C.O. & 6 men in Alarm Weg at J 31 B 0.2.
 Post 5. In Jordan Trench at J 31 A 98.10 (1 N.C.O & 4 men)
 Post 6. Lewis Gun & Team at J 31 A 98.15 (This post practically adjoined No.5 Post)
 Post 7. 1 N.C.O & 4 men at J 31 A 75.20
 Post 8. In Alarm Weg trench from J 31 A 7.2 to Jordan Trench 3 Lewis Guns & Teams and 20 O.R. D Company established their H.Q. at J 31 A 75.18.
 Post 9. In new Trench running from J 31 a 62.12 through J 31 A 6.0 to J 31 c 45.95. This post was held by 2 Officers & 40 O.R with two Lewis Guns

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Appendix.31st
(contd.)

- Post 10. 1 N.C.O. & 5 men in Jehovah Trench at J 31 A 45 12
- Post 11. 2 N.C.O's and 8 men in Trench from J 31 A 5.3 to J 31 A 55.20. This post was given up as the garrison was required for carrying purposes.
- Post 12 In Jehovah Trench at J 31 A 45.40 "C" Company H.Q.

A reserve consisting of 18 men & 4 Lewis Guns of "B" Company was kept in Image Crescent.

The remainder of the day was spent in consolidating and collecting wounded. Shell fire was consistent and accurate. Towards evening heavy rain commenced to fall making work and movement difficult owing to the slippery and muddy state of the ground which became steadily worse. In addition to Captain Yandell & Rider 2/Lts Millard, Lake, Steadman L.G., and C/S/M Waller were wounded and 2/Lts Green & Sergeant Nowbray were killed and many others.

August

1st

2/Lt Frost and a party of 20 O.R. whilst proceeding to draw rations from Battalion rear H.Q. were met by a man from the 20th Durham Light Infantry on our right who told them that the Enemy had taken one of the posts of the Company adjoining our right. 2/Lt Frost immediately marched his party to the point and after a sharp hand to hand fight recaptured it.

During the day the rain continued and conditions became steadily worse. The Enemy Artillery was quiet until about 1.30 p.m. when it re-opened and was very active for the remainder of the day our front and support lines being very heavily shelled. During the day many more casualties were incurred Lt. & Adjutant G.S.G. Hamilton and 2/Lt L.D. Crooker being killed and 2/Lts L.N. Jonas, H.A. Stedman and E.R. Scrivener being wounded.

At night the Battalion was relieved by the 9th Bn East Surrey Regiment the relief being completed by 11.45 p.m.

On relief the Battalion moved into camp at N.1.A Central (near Reninghelst)

The losses of the Battalion on the 30th 31st July & 1st August were

Officers:- 3 killed 9 wounded.

O.R. 32 killed 156 wounded 105 missing

Strength of Battalion 24 officers & 653 O.R.

VIII.

Bde. O. O. O.

Bn. O. O.