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N.34.D.o.o. N.34.D.6.6. thence along Les Boenffs -
Le Transloy Road.

N. Boundary. 12th Bde and 6th Division. N.34.A.1.9. -
N.28.B.8.1.

Div. Front. N.28.B.9.0. - N.35.a.8.7. - T.6 .A.6-8.

The 2nd Lan. Fus and 2 guns M.G.Co. will be on the left
of the Bde.

Attack in 8 waves. 200 yards between 4th & 5th. 4
guns 12 M.G.Co. and 4 guns T.M.B. will be on special
mission.

A & C Cos. have been digging saps out from the
front line for assembly trenches which will be finished
to-night 11/12th Oct. and with Spectrum trench will
form Bn. assembly position.

A.Co. to assemble on right.

B.Co.

C.Co.

D.Co. " " on left.

to be assembled by 5:15 a.m. Oct. 12th 1916.

Having had these orders I got back to the Co. in
Cow trench as quickly as possible landing up there
about 4 p.m.

I had my platoon Officers - Johnny Greaves-Fortescue
- and Addison and my N.C.O's up and gave them orders.

At 5 p.m. I got a chit from Brain telling me to
fetch the stores from D.Dump at 10:45 p.m. this evening
These stores consisted of yellow flares for signalling
to aeroplanes and wire cutters for the attack.

I had also to arrange to fetch rations to my C.H.Q.
and issue them out to the other Cos. each of whom sent
a party back for them.

Rations and stores were fixed up and the Co. ready
to move by 12 midnight 11/12th.

Robin whi was at present in the support line, which
was really the only communication trench arranged to be
clear of this by 2:30 a.m. so as to enable me to get
straight up to the line.

Accordingly I had given orders to the platoon Comdrs. to be ready to move off at 2:30 a.m. The men would wear fighting order Packs and Greatcoats being left in charge of Co. Q.M.S. Clifton in Cow trench.

Therefore everything being settled I turned in and slept till 1:30 a.m. Oct. 12th. 1916.

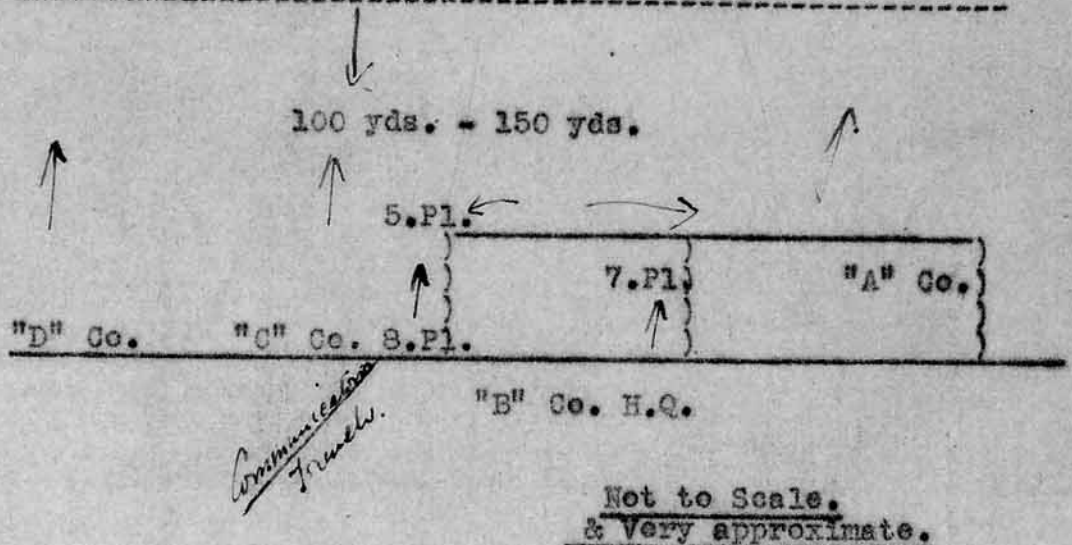
October 12th. 1916.

At 2:30 a.m. I started off to the assembly position with my Co. H.Q. which consisted of C.S.M. Laverick D.C.M. my runner Ginger Hodgkinson my servant Hargreaves and the Co. Signallers and Orderlies.

The platoon were to start off at 3:15 a.m. in the following order :- 5.6.7.8 .

I reached Robins H.Q. at 3 a.m. to find "A" Co. had not moved and were still sleeping the sleep of the just. This seemed to prophesy a bit of a muddle at dawn unless somebody hustled. So I chivied Robin up and his 3rd platoon were just getting away as Johnny rolled up with No.5. They sat down and rested until "A" Co. were well clear and then went on up the line. Addison Commanding 7 platoon and Sgt. Bolton Commanding 8 platoon rolled up O.K. and were sent on up to the line but of Fortesque and No.6. platoon there was'nt a sign. By 4:30 a.m. as Fortesque and 6 were still absent I left Ginger and another orderly to show them the way up and with Cottee went on up to see how the 3 platoons were getting on and after a little effort got them assembled with a certain amount of room and comfort and a space left for Fortesque. At 5:30 a.m. just as it was getting daylight. Fortesque with No.6. turned up. His guide had lost him compleely and utterly and it had taken Fortesque some time to find his wat back. After a short time 6 platoon got settled in. By 6 a.m. we were assembled thus :-

Hun Line. Hidden by Crest.



At about 6 a.m. the preliminary bombardment began and lasted all day until Zero Hour. It was very slow and very regular. A few shots fell short into "D" Co. but nothing very exciting happened at first. (The rest of this diary is written by Hour and minutes as the events of the day became somewhat crowded).

8 a.m. One C.O.'s, 6th Div. came along our trench he thought Zero hour was 2 p.m.

12 noon. Watkins came along from C.Co. for a last conflagration. Salt the Co. Comdr. is being sent back to Brigade with Blencowe as 10% reinforcements.

12:15 p.m. Several Huns running and crawling about in No Man's Land, carrying a Machine Gun. Had a few shots at them.

12:30 p.m. 12 Huns came into our line and surrendered. Some excitement. Things assume a rosy aspect and point to a fairly easy show.

1:0 p.m. Watches sent to Bn. H.Q. for synchronizing.

1:30 p.m. Watch sent back and following additional orders received from Brain. Zero hour 2.5.p.m. The Duke to attack the length of trench occupied by the Hun between A Co. and then At. 2.25 p.m. the rest of the Division to attack. Accordingly we sat down and waited for Zero hour.

2.P.m. Bombardment increased. Bay onets fixed.

2:3 p.m. Hunplan flew straight down own line about 300

feet up, must have seen trenches crowded with men. None of our planes in sight.

2:5 p.m. Fiendish Row. Zero hour. Heavy enemy barrage on 10th Brigade Machine Gun Barrage. Dukes attacking on our right but can't see much.

2:10 p.m. Shrapnel shell on top of us. Laverick hit on steel helmet and stunned several other casualties.

2:15 p.m. Awful noise impossible to make oneself heard. Several men got excited and went over the top on their own. Keen as hell to go.

2:20 p.m. Shell landed on Co. H.Q. all Co. signallers and runners knocked out except Ginger Hargreaves badly knocked.

2:25 p.m. Johnny Greaves and 5 platoon off followed by the rest of the Co. Johnny shot through the lung 5 yards in front of our parapet. Enemy machine gun barrage pretty unhealthy our own barrage which should have waited for us has gone on with the Dukes and 25 mins. in front of us.

Ginger and I follow the Co. over. Run like hares and find ourselves well away in front of the Co.

2:50 p.m. 50% Co. already down. Whole Bde appears to be held up. L/Cpl. Fenton one of my Lewis Gunners has got his gun going in a shell hole on my left. Awful din can hardly hear it yelled at Sgt. Manin to take the 1st wave on. He's lying just behind me. Ginger says he's dead. Sgt. Mann on my right of 7 platoon also dead. Most of the men appear to be dead. Shout at the rest and get up to take them on. Find myself sitting on the ground facing our own line with a bally great hole in my thigh, doesn't hurt much but bleeding like hell. Ginger also hit in the wrist. Awful din still. Most of the Co. now out. Ginger ties my leg up I put my tie round my leg as a tourniquet Fortesque about 5 yds on my right still alive. He had had a bullet through his steel hat and another had broken the skin on his nose. Funny how one noticed these things.

Yell at him to come over to me. Show him my leg and tell him to carry on. He gets into a shell hole to listen while I tell what to do. Shot through the heart while I'm talking to him, Addison also wounded and crawling back to our lines. That all the Officers and most of the N.C.O's. cant see anything of Bolton and 8 Pl. Start crawling on back, back to our own lines. Bump. "Whats that Ginger" Dead man Sir, Dam;; Turns over and drag along on my stomach. Ginger helps me along. About 75 yds. to go. Leg still bleeding fast, and my trousers have been cut off me. Feel rather naked. Beastly uncomfortable also rather faint. Bloody row still. Make another effort and roll over our parapet on to Laverick who has recovered and is just coming up. Ginger dives off for stretcher bearers. Awful shindy still. Feeling rotten. Stretcher bearer arrives. Take my Field Dressing off. Hole in my thigh. I can put my fist into it. Full of mud to. They tie me up and cart me off to a small hole somewhere near in original assembly trench. Laverick goes off to collect the Co. Only about 12 men left out of a hundred.

2:40 p.m. Johny Greaves carried along and put in another small hole. Badly hit in lung. Can't get away till dark.

3. p.m. Got an awful pain. Laverick has collected the remnants of the Co. in the front line. Himself Sgt. Bolton and a dozen men. Attack an absolute failure.

5 p.m. Feeling rotten. Keeping loosing consciousness. Beard a Subaltern in the Dukes passes. Asks him how they did. He says he is the only Officer left. 9 Officers killed, 6 wounded. Ask him if he is going to Bn.H.Q. He is. Will he tell Brain how things are, and that Johny and I are here. He will. Must have fainted again.

6 p.m. Still in this beastly hole. Johny very quiet. 10% reserves come up.

11. p.m. Stretcher Bearers come up and Johny carried off