

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
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Place	Date	Hour	<i>Page 477</i> Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and reference to Appendices
	<i>1st</i>		<i>Fine day. Situation on front pretty quiet. Enemy aircraft fairly active over our lines. All companies were employed at work during the night.</i>	
	<i>2nd</i>		<i>Heavy rain all day. Artillery less active owing to bad weather. A enemy aeroplane attempted to cross our lines but was driven off by Lewis Gun Fire. Al companies were very busy working on their own trenches.</i>	
	<i>3rd</i>		<i>Heavy showers with bright intervals. Pretty quiet day. One enemy plane crossed our lines during the evening and dropped 2 bombs. Companies cleaning and draining trenches by day and working parties were found at night.</i>	
	<i>4th</i>		<i>Bright day with a few showers. During the morning some heavy shells fell in the vicinity of the position held by battalion but caused no casualties, remainder of day was pretty quiet. Warning order received that the Division was being relieved, commencing on the 5th inst.</i>	

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	5 th		<i>Heavy showers all day. The Division was relieved in the NIEPPE FOREST Sector by the 61st Division. The Battalion was relieved in the support line at CHAPELLE BOOM by the 2/4th Royal Berkshire Regiment. After relief the Battalion marched back to billets at STEENBECQUE.</i>	
	6 th		<i>Showery with bright intervals. The Battalion left STEENBECQUE at 1 p.m. and marched to HURLINGHAM CAMP, RACQUINGHAM arriving at 3.45 p.m.</i>	
	7 th		<i>Brilliant sunshine with cloudy intervals. Companies under Company Commanders for Training – Inspections and Re-organization. A Rugby Football match was played in the evening between the Officers 1st D.C.L.I. and Officers 1st DEVONS. Result DEVONS 3pts D.C.L.I. nil.</i>	
	8 th		<i>Fine but cloudy at intervals. All companies at disposal of Company Commanders for platoon training under Platoon Commanders.</i>	

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	8 th		<i>Football match in the afternoon. Regimental team (less Officers) versus 1st DEVONS. Result DEVONS 3 D.C.L.I. nil.</i>	
	9 th		<i>Fine bright day. All companies on the range and training under Company Commanders. A cricket match was played in the afternoon between "C" and "D" Companies. "C" Company winning by 6 wickets. A concert was given in the evening by NCO's & men of the Battalion which proved a great success.</i>	
	10 th		<i>Bright sunny day and very hot. All companies at training under Platoon Commanders. A cricket match was played in the afternoon between Officers and Sergeants, Officers winning easily.</i>	
	11 th		<i>Very hot and sunny day. Battalion attended Church Parade in the morning. A cricket match between Officers 12th Gloucester's and Officers 1st Bn. D.C.L.I., Gloucester's winning easily.</i>	
	12 th		<i>Very hot. Bright sunshine all day. Battalion carried out route march with first line transport, ending with practising "Battalion in the attack". Cricket match between "D" Coy and "Headquarters" was played in the afternoon ending in a win for "H.Q." by 40 runs.</i>	

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	12 th		<i>Boxing contest was held in the evening which proved a great success.</i>	
	13 th		<i>Very hot and bright day. Companies were employed under company commanders for platoon and section training until 11 a.m. when orders were received to prepare to move.</i>	
	14 th		<i>Lovely sunny day. The Battalion less "A" Company left RACQUINGHAM at 1.45 a.m. and marched to ST. OMER and entrained. Train departed at 7 a.m. passing through ST. POL and detrained at BOUQUEMAISON (LENS 4.E.13.55) at 1 p.m. and marched to billets at BONNIERS. "A" Company left RACQUINGHAM at 4.45 a.m. for ST. OMER entraining there and leaving at 10.15 a.m. Detrained at BOUQUEMAISON at 4.30 p.m. and rejoined battalion at BONNIERS.</i>	
	15 th		<i>Very hot and sunny day. Companies at training from 10 a.m. to 12 noon under Company Commanders.</i>	
	16 th		<i>Fine day. Companies at disposal of Company Commanders for training from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Inter Company Cricket matches were played in the afternoon.</i>	
	17 th		<i>Fine sunny day. Companies at disposal of Company Commanders from</i>	

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	17 th		<i>10 a.m. to 12 noon. In the afternoon headquarters played Transport at Cricket ending in an easy win for Headquarters. A concert was held in the evening but had to be postponed owing to rain.</i>	
	18 th		<i>Fine day. Battalion attended Church Parade in the morning. Concert was held at 5 p.m. but again was postponed owing to battalion receiving sudden orders to move. Battalion left BONNIERS at 9.30 p.m. arriving in billets at the Citadel, DOULLENS at 3 a.m. the following morning.</i>	
	19 th		<i>Fine day. NCO's & men were allowed to remain in bed until 10 a.m. Battalion left DOULLENS en route for COIGNEUX arriving at 4.50 a.m. 20th inst.</i>	
	20 th		<i>Fine sunny day. Battalion rested all day and moved from COIGNEUX at 9 p.m. and marched to assembly positions at KEANE TRENCH (Sheet 57 D N.E.) Assembly complete at 2 p.m. 21st inst.</i>	
	21 st		<i>The Brigade was ordered to attack and capture the enemy's positions on a line from G.31.d.7/5 to G26.b.8/6. 1st Devons & 1st E. Surreys in front line, 1st D.C.L.I. in Support and 12th Bn. Gloucester Regiment in reserve. At 4.55 a.m. the attack commenced. There was no preliminary bombardment but the guns opened fire with a creeping barrage at ZERO. The 37th Division were to capture the Blue Line running from L.15.c through L.9.c and b - L.10.a to L.4.c and d and the 5th Division would then pass through. The mist</i>	

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	21 st		<p><i>was so thick that nothing could be seen after about 70 yards. Our Companies were due at the Blue Line at ZERO plus 110 and the y moved off, "D" Coy on the right and "C" Coy: on the left in front line with "B" Coy on the right and "A" Coy on the left in Support. Battalion Headquarters followed at about 6.15 a.m.</i></p> <p><i>The Blue line was taken with very little resistance and Battalion Headquarters was established at L.8.b.9/2. Companies pushed on very well and many prisoners passed through our hands. Great difficulty was experienced in keeping direction owing to the mist but companies still pushed on and found themselves up with the front line.</i></p> <p><i>Up to 9 a.m. no definite news came through but from information given by the wounded all was going well. The mist lifted about 8.a.m. but almost immediately it came down thicker than ever.</i></p> <p><i>At last messages came through. A message timed 8.40 a.m. from "B" Coy stated that with "D" Coy they were in the front line at about L.16.c & that units of the 15th Bde were all mixed up</i></p>	

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	21 st		<p><i>with them. After re-organizing they pushed on again and got to the line of the Brown Objective along the road in L.16.d.</i></p> <p><i>Next came a message "C" Coy timed at 9.50 a.m. stating they had arrived at the Brown Objective about L.17.b.7/7 to the rear of the sunken road in L.17.c and that "A" were in rear of them. All units commenced to re-organize in the Brown Objective and whilst do so the mist suddenly lifted. This rather hindered operations so all units commenced to dig in.</i></p> <p><i>About 1.30 p.m. the 12th Gloucester's came up in front of "B" and "C" Coys and the whole line moved forward again & reached roughly the line of the Red Objective from L.24.c running in a N.W. direction along the line of the railway. This line was also consolidated and disposition of Brigade ran as follows:- 1st E, Surreys on left and 12th Gloucester's on right in front line. 1st D.C.L.I. in Support with 1st Devons in reserve. Had the mist not lasted so long the final objective would have undoubtedly been reached.</i></p> <p><i>Casualties in our battalion were extremely light (2 Officers and 50 other ranks). 2/Lt R.B. Seaton & B. D. Johnstone were both</i></p>	

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	21 st		<i>wounded.</i>	
	22 nd		<i>Slight mist in the morning turning out into a fine hot day. There was a fairly heavy shelling of our positions throughout the early morning and at about 4.30 a.m. the enemy opened a heavy barrage on our position. His infantry move forward to attack but were soon rounded up by the 12th Gloucester's and 250 prisoners were taken. The day passed fairly quietly except that the enemy shelled our position very heavily at intervals.</i>	
	23 rd		<i>Bright moonlight during early morning. Very Bright hot day. At 2.30 a.m. orders were received to complete the capture of the Red dotted line at a time to be notified later.</i> <i>The attacks commenced at 11 a.m. The barrage was fine and units advanced in splendid order.</i> <i>At about 11.50 a.m. the 1st E Surreys on the left had reached their objective with our "A" & "C" Coys in support. On the right the 12th Gloucesters and our "B" & "D" Coys met with</i>	

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	23 rd		<i>heavy M.G. fire from the direction of MIRAUMONT which caused rather heavy casualties and they only got as far as the top of the ridge and could not reach the village of IRLES. They remained in this position until 8 p.m. when the 12th Gloucesters together with "B" and "D" Coys of this battalion and half a company of 1st Devons pushed forward through IRLES and consolidated the RED Dotted Line. Many prisoners were taken in the days fighting mostly of the 418th Regiment, 183rd Division.</i>	
	24 th		<i>Fine hot day. The day was spent in re-organizing and resting as much as possible: The 13th Brigade came up and took over parts of the line and our battalion into support, taking up positions in G.19.b & d.</i> <i>The attack was continued on our right by the New Zealand Division who managed to clear MIRAUMONT and pushed on through LOUPART WOOD and GREVILLERS and reached the outskirts of BAPAUME.</i>	
	25 th		<i>Very hot day. At 8.30 a.m. orders were received to move forward to G.16.d Soon after battalion was in position they were heavily shelled and were moved across to the trench line in G.23.b</i>	

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	25 th		<i>at 6.30 p.m. the 37th Division attacked and captured the village of FAVREUIL and the 13th Bde moved up and took over the line. Battalion remained in Support to the 13th Brigade.</i>	
	26 th		<i>Dull & showery and a little cooler. The day passed away pretty quietly. In the evening the 13th Brigade pushed forward and occupied the village of BEUGNÁTRE and consolidated on a line just in front of the road in G.17.b and G.17.c.</i>	
	27 th		<i>Battalion still in trenches at G.23.b resting as much as possible. A large amount of salvage work was done in this area.</i>	
	28 th		<i>Dull and showery with a few bright intervals. Battalion still in trench line. Battalion expected to move forward as soon as Army to the N. of us pushed on.</i>	
	29 th		<i>Fine and bright day. Battalion still in trench line G.23.b. At 2 p.m. orders were received to move into assembly positions and orders for the attack would be issued later. At 2.30 p.m. the battalion moved off to positions at about H.14.a. Battalion rested here until 8 p.m. where guides were to meet us. Guides did not arrive so Battalion moved off and after some difficulty got into positions just in front of the village of</i>	

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	29 th		<p><i>BEUGNÁTRE at about H.17.c.4.8 to H.17.b.9.9. Some casualties were caused by shell fire whilst moving into positions. A Draft of 5 Officers and 100 Other Ranks joined battalion.</i></p>	
	30 th		<p><i>Fine and bright but got colder after mid-day. The attack commenced at 5 a.m. supported by tanks, moving under a creeping barrage. The enemy put up a fairly strong resistance but the battalion pushed on and a number of prisoners were taken. The 1st DEVONS on our left and our "C" Coy reached the first objective at the trench line in I.14.b and c. and pushed patrols forward.</i></p> <p><i>On the right strong resistance was met with. The New Zealand Division on our right worked around the village of FREMICOURT but the village itself was not cleared of the enemy and our "A" & "B" Coys were held up by heavy enemy enfilade M.G. fire so they dug in positions at I.19.b and I.20.c After the village was cleared they again attempted to push on but they were held up again by heavy M.G.fire from the high ground in I.26.b and I.27.a. At 2 p.m. they again attacked and "B" Coy moved forward and occupied positions along the sunken road in I.20.b. "A" Coy were in positions at I.20.a & c.</i></p>	

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	30 th		<p><i>In spite of repeated attempts to advance the position of the Battalion at the end of the day remained the same. Casualties in other ranks were estimated at 170. Casualties in Officers were Capt. C. F. Sandoe and 2/Lieutt H. G. Frayling "Killed in Action" Capt. G. W. Strevens and 2/Lieutt. R. T. Dryer "Wounded"</i></p> <p><i>Enemy aircraft was very active throughout the day. At 6 p.m. 12 planes came over flying low and fired on our line and also dropped a few light bombs but no damage was done.</i></p>	
	31 st		<p><i>Dull morning with light showers. About 5 a.m. the S.O.S. was sent up by the New Zealand Division on our right. The enemy made a strong attack and the New Zealand Division withdrew leaving our right flank exposed. The situation was restored by a counter attack by the N.Z. Division assisted by our "A" & "B" Coys. The enemy was completely repulsed and our Companies took about 50 prisoners. The enemy retired over the high ground and was followed up by our patrols who reported a great number of enemy dead caught in our counter barrage. Since this attack the M.G's.</i></p>	

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	31 st		<p><i>Of the enemy on the high ground in I.26.c and I.27.a appear to have withdrawn.</i></p> <p><i>J Westurt Lt Colonel</i> <i>Commanding 1st Bn. Duke of Cornwall'a L. I.</i></p> <p><u><i>Attached to Diary</i></u> <i>A.F. B213 for month (5)</i> <i>Operation Orders No. 508 to 511/1</i> <i>Receipts for 15 P. of War</i> <i>2 Situation Maps of REIMS and the Marne & Aisne</i> <i>Objective maps for Battle of BAPAUME (2)</i></p>	