

SECRET

II

Operation Order No. 53.

Copy No 1

-by-
 Brig. General. C. T. Shipley, C.B.
 Commanding 139th Inf Brigade

Reference: TRENCH MAP 1/5,000.April 16th, 1916.

1. The following mines will be exploded tonight the 16th/17th instant at 12 midnight:-

(a) P. 75. "P" at point of BIRKIN.

(b) P. 75. "O" at point of GRANGE.

2. These Operations will be under the Command of the following Officers.

(a) BIRKIN MINE. Lieut-Colonel GOODMAN, 6th Battalion Sherwood Foresters, Commanding the RIGHT SECTOR.

(b) GRANGE MINE. Lieut-Colonel BLACKWALL, 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters, Commanding the LEFT SECTOR.

3. These Officers will be responsible that:-

(a) An area of 100 yards from each mine is cleared by 11:45 pm. That is, in the Outpost Line, from a point 100 yards south of its junction with BIRKIN up to its junction with DUFFIELD, and in the Retrenchment Line from a point 40 yards south of the new. C.T. TIDSA to DUFFIELD.

(b) That in each case, parties are told off ready, to seize the near lip, consolidate the position & protect the flanks, in accordance with the orders already approved for mine explosions.

(c) That the required R.E. material is ready in the adjacent Emergency Dumps.

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4. On the mines being exploded:-

(a) The Field Artillery will form a barrage of fire on each flank and into the German Support Trenches in rear.

The 4.5" Howitzers & the Heavy Artillery will also bombard the enemy's Support Trenches & C.T.s. The exact details of these barrages will be issued when received from the C.R.A.

(b) The Trench Mortars (one 2" & one Stokes at each mine) will support the Infantry as follows:-

(i) At the BIRKIN MINE.

The 2" will fire into the enemy's trenches, ^{100 yards} South ~~immediately in rear~~ of the Crater, and the Stokes on to the enemy's front line Trenches 100 yards South of COMMON, but will be ready to take on any Machine Gun firing on our attacking Infantry.

(ii) At the GRANGE MINE.

The 2" will fire on the German Crater LABRIGOT. N, and the Stokes on the enemy front line Trenches opposite DUFFIELD, but will be prepared to fire on any Machine Gun firing on our attacking party.

(c) One Nest Bomb Thrower in rear of BIRKIN CRATER will act against the enemy first line trenches N. of BIRKIN CRATER, & the other in DUFFIELD will act against the German front line Trenches opposite that C.T.

(d) ³ ~~The~~ grenades rifle-stands in rear of each Crater will come into action under orders of Officers Commanding at these Craters.

The Brigade Bomb Officer will assist in the operations under (c) & (d)

(e) OC Machine Gun Company will arrange to bring fire on enemy's rear & communication trenches.

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5. With the idea of taking advantage of the Commotion which will ensue in the enemy's trenches when the Mines are sprung, the Officers Commanding at each Crater, will evolve a small enterprize with the object of reaching the enemy's trenches, getting in with the Bayonet & bringing back a prisoner.
- (i) At the BIRKIN CRATER, the Southern side would appear to offer the best chance of success.
 - (ii) At the GRANCE CRATER, the Northern side & new trench which the enemy is now digging would appear to give a good opportunity.
- Parties in these schemes should be kept small, a definite limit must be given & men should be instructed to use their Bayonets.
- The outer flanks of both these enterprizes should be protected by Lewis Gun fire from our Outpost Line Trench.
6. Matches will be synchronised from Advanced Brigade Headquarters at 9 pm tonight
7. Acknowledge by wire.

Issued at 7-30 pm to:— Barrabasoi, 139th Bde. ^{Moasi}

Copy No 1	O.C. 6 th Batta S.F.
" " 2	O.C. 8 th Batta S.F.
" " 3	"246" T.M. Btty 139/1 T.M. Battery + BU & M Coy.

8. The Company of the 5th Batta S.F. from the CHEMIN DES PYLONES is placed at the disposal of the RIGHT Commander as a Support, & the Working Coy. of the 7th Batta S.F. in the Trenches this evening is placed at the disposal of the Left Commander for a similar purpose.