

To,

Headquarters,

139th Infantry Brigade.

In accordance with Brigade Operation Orders my Battalion was in the early morning of 1st instant disposed as follows:- "A" & "B" Companies in 1st Support Line with some Bombers, remainder of bombers and 4 Brigade Machine Guns in a small trench behind. The remaining two Companies "C" and "D" occupied 3rd Support Line in order from right. Owing to the muddy state of the trenches it took considerably longer than had been expected to get this wave into position, and it was not completed before till 3-15 a.m.

At 5-45 a.m. I moved to Left Advanced Headquarters (7th Battalion).

About 7 a.m. Major HIND, his Adjutant and Medical Officer left. He stated he was going to new front trench to watch the waves out and then go himself.

At 8-45 a.m. I and my Adjutant went along GREEN STREET towards REGENT STREET to watch my leading Companies advance and to follow them.

I found GREEN STREET congested and waited a long time trying to get men forward but found it impossible as the front line was blocked. During this time the enemy's bombardment was very heavy with Shrapnel and H.E., the latter being distributed round advanced Headquarters of both Battalions. My Adjutant was wounded beside me.

At 7-45 a.m. Capt. ROBINSON, Commanding my RIGHT("A") COMPANY had a report from his runners that the 5th Battalion Carrying Company was moving. He led his Company forward but was checked by 5th Carrying Company who said they were checked by 4th wave who had not cleared. It was 8-45 a.m. before head of my "A" Company was in the old front line trench and partially ready to move. (All the men could not get into this trench).

Captain ROBINSON reported the block to Major CHECKLAND who pushed on 5th Carrying Company. By this time smoke had almost gone.

The left Platoon of "A" Company (or most of them) then go over the parapet under Lieut. R.D. WHEATCROFT and the right of the Company endeavoured to advance up No. 3 Sap and "C" C.T..

The barrage was very heavy and Lieut. WHEATCROFT was almost at once badly wounded. There were many Casualties and the men withdrew for shelter to the saps and other trenches.

The same thing happened on the left when my "B" Company was kept back by 7th Carrying party. Capt. F.M. DICK Commanding my Company was hit in the leg as soon as he got over the parapet and his Coy. Sergt. Major was killed at his side. The survivors accordingly took cover.

When I found it was impossible to get my men forward owing to the congestion I returned to LEFT HEADQUARTERS about 9-30 a.m. and reported by telephone to Brigade. At my request the Assistant Adjutant 7th Battalion went to the new front trench for information and I received a verbal message from Captain SCOTT, M.O. 7th Battalion, that he was in that trench with a good many men. I understood he remained there all day taking charge in the absence of a combatant Officer and attending to wounded.

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The enemy's fire (chiefly rifle) on that (new front) trench was very heavy and accurate. No. 3 Sap (to which I went) was covered by enemy's rifle fire.

About 12-30 p.m. I received orders to attack with 2 Companies of my Battalion at 1.15 p.m. under cover of smoke. There was no smoke however and I did not attack. Another attack was ordered for 2-30 p.m. also under cover of smoke, which however was not ready, and orders were recieved to the effect that the smoke would be at 3.25 p.m. and I was to advance at 3-30 p.m.

A Stafford Officer came to confer and I settled that my right should advance on ORKNEY, my left on OUSE C.T's. A small carrying party was organised and bombers collected. About 3-30 p.m. a small film of smoke appeared but in no way interfered with the view of the enemy trenches. I accordingly at 3-35 p.m. ordered the men not to go over the parapet.

There was a very heavy and extremely accurate fire barrage and also considerable rifle fire. I was and am quite satisfied that there was no possible chance of reaching the objective and no result could have been achieved. As a matter of fact owing to a mistake a party of 20 did leave the trench most of them were struck down at once.

/sd/ G.D.GOODMAN. Lt-Col.

3/7/16.

Commanding 6th Battalion S.Foresters.