

(1)

Machine Gun Company 139th Brigade5th July 1916.

To
139th Brigade

Part played by Machine Guns during the action of the 1st July 1916.

The 12 Guns moving forward with attack were placed in RETRENCHMENT, and ordered to advance in rear of the 4th wave of the attacking battalions.

No.3 Section with 2 Guns under 2nd Lieut E.J.Peash to advance with left on junction of OHIO and FORK TRENCHES.

No.1 Section with 4 Guns under Lieut.G.F.Gardner to advance with right on junction of OHIO and FORK TRENCHES.

No.2 Section with 4 Guns under 2nd Lieut Clayton to advance with centre on junction of OUSE and FOOD TRENCHES

No.4 Section with 2 Guns under 2nd Lieut. Kemshall to advance with right on re-entrant of LITTLE " Z "

Action taken by No.3 Section

These Guns reached within 20yds of the German front line trenches and came into action from shell holes and fired at Germans observed in front of GOMMECOURT WOOD.

The smoke was very thin..These Guns fired until most of the men were put out of action. The Guns were entirely unsupported and a message was sent back for bombers who never came up.

Only 3 men and 1 Gun returned from the 2 that went forward.

Action taken by No.1 Section

3 Guns were known to have passed the German barbed wire. The N.C.O. in charge of the 4th Gun is reported to have been lying with his Gun in the German barbed wire.

1 of these Guns got into action in front of the German wire and fired, later this Gun had to be abandoned but was first put out of action by the man in charge.

The other 2 Guns were both put out of action before they were mounted.

All men in this Section report practically no smoke after they had passed our advance line.

Action taken by No.2 Section

Only 3 of these Guns left our old front line trench, the 4th Gun being stuck in the mud in the C.T. and got out of touch. Of the 3 Guns one passed our advanced trench, here there was practically no smoke. No Infantry were visible so the man in charge brought the Gun back into the advanced trench. Only 2 men were left at this time.

The 2nd Gun returned to our front line.

Action taken by No.4 Section

These 2 Guns moved up to our old front line. Here the 3rd and 4th Wave of the attacking Battalions apparently did not move off. The Officer went forward to the advanced front. Here he states there was no smoke and the German front line was clearly visible.

None of our Infantry were to be seen, in consequence of this he returned and not allow his Gun to leave the front line

(2)

Support Guns.

The 4 Guns in support were moved up to the old front line trench and took up positions in this trench.

H. E. Wallaston Lr

O.C. Machine Gun Company
139th Brigade