

Appendix III
C O P Y

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ACTION OF SEPT. 28th 1916

7th (S) Batta "The Queen's" Regt.

The Battalion started to leave BLIGHTY VALLEY at 10.15 am Sept. 28th 1916.

On debouching from N.E. corner of AUTHUILLE WOOD it was seen that all movements between here and TRIEVAL were in full view of enemy observation balloons.

Shortly after 12 noon, the Battalion and "D" Coy, 8th NORFOLK REGT. (moppers up) were formed up in the open in their attacking lines. "E" Coy (Capt H. L. Martin) right and "G" Coy (Capt H. R. Longbourne) left, were the assaulting Coys. "D" Coy (Capt T. S. Walter) was in support and "A" Coy (Capt D. B. Henton) D.S.O. reserve.

From about 11.30 am till after the hour of attack, enemy maintains fairly heavy shrapnel barrage and long range rifle and machine gun fire on the forming up places of the battalion which luckily caused few casualties.

At 1 pm our artillery barrage opened and the battalion moved forward to the attack.

BULGAR TRENCH was found to be weakly held and the occupants were disposed of without much difficulty.

After crossing this trench it was seen that direction, which was extremely difficult to maintain owing to the lack of landmarks and ignorance of the ground of almost the whole of the battalion, was likely to be lost, as the battalion was inclining slightly to its left and there was an inclination to bunch in the centre. Some opposition was encountered in MARTINS LAKE and by this time heavy rifle and machine gun fire was coming from south face of SCHWABEN REDOUBT, which caused casualties and checked the leading waves, and waves to become mixed.

The assaulting Coys got over MARETT TRENCH with some difficulty and were shortly afterwards checked by a strong point at 65, the battn being held up by this point for over an hour.

The left of the battn now rested from about point R 19 d 2035 and a gap which had been caused on the right by this slipping to the left was filled by Capt J. S. Walter leading up part of his Coy. He found that the advance was definitely checked on the right by a strong point strongly held at R 20 e 27.

The Germans were seemingly inclined to retire from 65, in this direction he himself led a bombing party of 5 men from 15 to 65 and cleared the trench and dug-outs in it, capturing over 50 prisoners. On reaching 65 he found that the left of the battalion had got this point. This had been accomplished by Capt H. R. Longbourne stalking two machine guns in succession, moving from shell hole to shell hole with a bag of bombs. He knocked out the whole of one gun team and captured the gun. The second gun he bombed and put out of action but the gunners got away. While he was doing this Sgt PUNTER led a bombing party on the west face of the Redoubt as far as Pt. 39 but was driven back from here through running out of bombs finally established a bombing post at about R 19 d 37.

On the reduction of the Strong Point at 65 the battalion secured the line R 19 d 37, 45, 98, to R 20 e 15 where it was in touch with the 8th Suffolk Regt. A number of men of the battn who had got in the trench R 19 d 45 to 22 in the objective of the 7th Bedford Regt. were withdrawn on to the battn. points. On the battn right enemy strong point still held out at Pt. 27.

A projected attack on it by men of the battn and 8th Suffolk Regt under cover of Stokes gun fire was not persisted in as Stokes Gun fired very short and was ineffectual. The Straight trench between 37 and 15 and high command of Pt. 27 makes latter point very difficult to tackle. No further attempts were made to take it that night.

The Battn. was now fairly firmly established on line R 20 e 15 to R 19 d 37 with supports R 19 d 65 to 92.

It was now beginning to get dark and with Pt. 27 still holding out further advance that night was clearly impracticable. The battn therefore consolidated ground gained.

During the night there was continuous bomb fighting on Western face of the Redoubt and finally battalions left was driven back to Pt. 45 where touch was gained with 7th R.W. KENT Regt. after some difficulty on their relieving the bedfords.

Except for the reserve Coy which was held back in ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ BULGAR TRENCH till about 5 pm the battalion suffered little from enemy shell fire from zero till about 7 pm. After this hour a fairly heavy though not very accurate shell fire was maintained on the ground captured throughout the night.

At about 7 pm a section R E under officer was sent forward to consolidate Strong Point at R 19 d 92. The Section did not arrive there, nor did the officer report this failure to do so. The Strong Point was therefore consolidated by men of the battalion.

The Messers up who were allotted to each of the first four waves did not reach SCHWABEN REDOUBT except two men.

The going was very slippery and great difficulty was experienced in keeping up to the barrage. This gave the enemy time to get machine guns into action. From the number and ~~positions~~ positions in which some of the enemy dead lay in their trenches it seems probable that many named the parapet and risked the barrage.

The enemy, though a number of them were of peer physique, fought well when encountered hand to hand.

The men of the battalion, a considerable majority of whom had little or no experience, on the whole showed good fighting qualities but little initiative and required much leading.

The following incidents which occurred during the fight may be of interest:-

In BUEGAR TRENCH there were few Germans but those who surrendered were very quick to again pick up arms and shoot our leading waves in the back unless quickly dealt with.

In a dug-out near Pt 85 two Germans were found on the morning of Sept 25th. in a screened off compartment. One of them was a telephone.

The other gave away the position of both by sniping out of the dug-out entrance at our men in the trench. They were suitably disposed of.

nobody ~~was~~ was present who could talk German sufficiently well to make any use of the telephone in this situation.

(Signed) M. Kent-Walsh. Lt. Col.

Commanding 7th. Batta, 'QUEENS'