

6TH. (S). BN. DORSETSHIRE REGIMENT.

REPORT ON ACTION CARRIED OUT DURING THE NIGHT 11/12th MAY 1917
BY TWO COMPANIES OF 6TH. DORSETSHIRE REGIMENT IN CONJUNCTION-
WITH 11th INFANTRY BRIGADE, 4th DIVISION.

ZERO was at 7.30.p.m. MAY 11th.1917, at which time Intensive Bombardment commenced. At 7.38.p.m. message received that the Lines had gone forward close to Barrage, and that no enemy Machine Guns had opened fire on our troops for five minutes after they had commenced to go forward.

The objectives of the 6TH. DORSET REGT (2 COYS) were about 100 yards along CROOK and CROW Trenches, at which points they were to establish double Bombing Stops. "D" COY were to take the portion of CROW TRENCH on Right and "C" COY. CROOK TRENCH on Left. The movement was to be made in conjunction with the 1st BATTN. RIFLE BRIGADE, who were the LEFT Battalion of the 4th. Division attacking line, and the two companies of 6TH. DORSET REGT. on extreme LEFT of the LINE. At 8.10.p.m. messages were received from my two Companies that objectives had been reached by them, that they were in touch with RIFLE BRIGADE on RIGHT and were digging in. At same time message was received from my LEFT COMPANY that a Post consisting of One Lewis Gun and Team, two Bombers and two Riflemen had been established in shell holes to the LEFT of his objective, about I.7.d.2.O.

Between 8.p.m. and 8.30.p.m. several small parties of prisoners were brought down to Battalion H.Q. at H.18.a.4.4. amounting to about 20 in all including a Sergeant Major ("Officer-Aspirant"). All were of the 362nd Regiment, 4th Division. The Sergeant Major stated that the Front Line was very lightly held, that his Regiment had suffered heavy casualties from the barrage of the previous evening, they had had no Rations or Water that day, their Reserves were close but could not get forward and that no defence could be obtained from their Artillery.

At 8.40.p.m. I emphasized the necessity of digging in, and preparation for any counter-attacks.

About 9.p.m. an Officer of the R.Es. reported to me for final instructions as to connecting CAM with German Line captured. Instructions were given him and he proceeded to do this work, which he reported as completed at 2.3.a.m. the trenches dug being about 4 feet deep.

At 10.55.p.m. I received a message from my LEFT Coy Commander that the Lewis Gun Post at I.7.d.2.O. had had to withdraw owing to enemy bombing. I at once ordered him to re-establish without delay, and in response to his call for S.A.A. for Lewis Guns sent up 36 Drums.

At 12.15.a.m. my RIGHT Coy reported that situation was fairly active.

At 2.50.a.m. my LEFT Coy reported that situation was normal, and that the Lewis Gun Post at I.7.d.2.O. had been re-established.

I had already at 1.20.a.m. ordered my RIGHT Coy to withdraw less a Defensive Garrison of two Lewis Guns & Teams, two pairs of Bombers and two pairs of Riflemen, ~~and provided~~ as covering parties, and also a section of Riflemen, and provided O.C. with guides to take COY to PUDDING TRENCH (Reserve).

Upon establishment of L.G. Post at I.7.d.2.O. by my LEFT Coy I ordered him at 2.55.a.m. to withdraw his Coy, less a Defensive Garrison of two Lewis Guns & teams, with covering parties for each Gun of 2 Bombers and 2 Riflemen.

Before withdrawing, the line was very strongly established, the trenches deepened and improved generally.

Withdrawal of the Battalion, less the Defensive Garrison under an Officer, with H.Q. at Junction of CROOK & CROW was completed at 4.30.a.m. May 12th. 1917.

Total Casualties for the whole action were :-

OFFICERS

Nil.

OTHER RANKS. Killed 4. Wounded 13. Missing 2.

Wounded were all walking cases. Throughout the action the Bayonet was used freely, my RIGHT Coy Commander counted 38 killed by his Coy in this manner. This Coy also captured a German Machine Gun & Mounting. My Left Coy were able to open rapid rifle fire on retreating enemy with good results/

Major

Cmdg. 6th Bn. Dorset Regt.