Royal Sussex Regiment: Newspaper Articles and Sources

12th (Southdowns) Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment (original held at West Sussex Record Office RSR MS 7/23)

War Diary covering the Battle of Boar's Head (30th June 1916)

The whole war diary for the 12th Battalion is available on this website on the 'Battalion War Diaries' page.
12th BATTALION, ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT.

1916.

June.
1st

ANNAMOURTH.

Bn. relieved 14th Hants in front line GUIANCY.

GUIANCY.

5th

Bn. moved back to village line. Relieved by 14th Hants.

8th

Bn. moved into front line GUIANCY & relieved 14th Hants.

10th

Bn. relieved by 1st Middlesex & moved back to billets at LES SARCEY QUEIGNAY.

LE QUEIGNAY.

11th

Bn. moved back to Divn., Reserve billets at LES CHOQUAUX.

LES CHOQUAUX.

16th

Bn. relieved 15th Cheshire Regt. (Bantams) in front line at FERME DU BOIS.

FERME DU BOIS.

21st

Bn. moved back to CROIX BARBEE.

CROIX BARBEE.

22nd

Bn. moved forward to LES LOBES in Divn., Reserve.

LES LOBES.

28th

Bn. moved to RICHEBOURG.

8 pm. Two companies marched to front line trenches right sector FERME DU BOIS.

One company marched to RICHEBOURG.

One company marched to VIELLE CHAPELLE.

FERME DU BOIS.

29th 9 pm. Two companies marched from RICHEBOURG & VIELLE CHAPELLE & joined rest of battalion in front line FERME DU BOIS.

Artillery bombarded enemy trenches BOARS HEAD from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

30th 3.5 p.m. Battalion attacked enemy front & support lines, & succeeded in entering same. The support line
1916.

June.

30th
(Cst.)

was occupied for about ½ hour & the front line for 4 hours. The withdrawal was necessitated by the supply of bombs & ammunition giving out & the heavy enemy barrage on our front line & communication trenches, preventing reinforcements being sent forward.

Operation orders are attached to Diary. The Battalion was relieved by the 14th Hants at 10 a.m. & marched to LES LOBES after resting at RICHBOURG.

CASUALTIES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Casualty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.6.16</td>
<td>2 O.R. wounded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.16</td>
<td>3 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.16</td>
<td>3 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.16</td>
<td>1 Off. Lt. Boyd killed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Wounded. 1 O.R. wounded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6.16</td>
<td>2 O.R. wounded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.6.16</td>
<td>5 O.R. wounded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6.16</td>
<td>2 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6.16</td>
<td>2 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.6.16</td>
<td>4 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.6.16</td>
<td>3 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.6.16</td>
<td>4 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.6.16</td>
<td>2 O.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.6.16</td>
<td>O.R. Killed........................ 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missed reported killed.............. 35
Wounded.................................. 236
Missing.................................. 120

Total..... 412

List of Officers casualties attached.

Officers’ Casualties during engagement of 30th June, 1916.

Lt. Col. Impey, G.H.
Captain Cotton, A.N.
Lieut. Boys, S.C.
" Sparks, C.
" Robinson, H.C.T.
2/Lieut. Fenchalle, G.J.
" Ambler, G.
" Arkell, E.T.
" Hanby, F.J.
" Moody, J.L.
" Mercer, J.
" Dorman, C.C.B.
" Moyle, F.W.
" Ardill, J.
" Swallow, S.H.
" Mason, F.A.
" Salberg, J.B.

Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
Killed in Action.
Wounded.
26th June, 1916.

OPERATION ORDER NO. 20.

SECRET.

1. Intention.

To capture the enemy’s trenches between the BOARS HEAD and the salient about S.10.c.9.5. viz:-

Enemy front line from BOARS HEAD to S.10.c.9.5.

Enemy support line from S.16.a.04.6 to S.10.d.1.3.

2. Frontage.

The frontage allotted to the 12th Bn. is from Ditch from our front line S.10.c.5.3 to S.10.c.3.0, i.e., the frontage between the junction of HAZAR & VINE STREET with our present front line.

The 13th Bn. are allotted the right section of the assault.

3. Composition of Assaulting Columns.

The Battalion will assault in 4 lines of Platoons, "A" Coy. with its right on the ditch about 30 yards N. of VINE STREET, "B", "C" & "D" Coy, with its left in HAZARA STREET; each Coy. to have approximately 20 yards of frontage.

The columns will be dispersed as follows:-

1st Wave

4 Assaulting Platoons.

"D" Coy.

1 Assaulting Platoon.

2 special bombing & blocking parties for blocks 7 & 6 and support trenches leading up to them.

1 Coy. Bombing Squad to bomb up communication trench between D & C points.

"C" Coy.

1 Assaulting Platoon.

1 Coy. Bombing Squad for 7 communication trench and trenches of support line to left to join up with "D" Coy.

"B" Coy.

1 Assaulting Platoon.

1 special bombing & blocking party to bomb up Z communication trench to block S.

1 Coy. bombing squad to bomb along support line & join up with "C" Coy.

"A" Coy.

1 Assaulting Platoon.

2 special bombing & blocking squads to deal with communication trench to blocks 4 & 3.

2 Coy. bombing squads to bomb along the two support trenches towards Z trench.
2nd Wave
4 Assaulting Platoons. A reserve Coy. bombing squad will be told off from each Platoon.

3rd Wave
4 Assaulting Platoons. 
"D" Coy. 1 special bombing & blocking party to deal with front line to block S. Each platoon will detail 1 bombing squad to clear the enemy's front line as follows: Each squad to work from its right to left flank until it joins up with the Coy. on its left.

4th Wave
4 Assaulting Platoons. Each platoon to detail one reserve bombing squad.

Lewis Guns
The 4 Lewis Guns will accompany the last wave and will join their Companies as occasion requires.

Snipers
(1) Six pairs will be selected by each of the Assaulting Battalions in conjunction with the Brigade Sniping Officer.
(2) These snipers will advance with the third wave of their respective Battalions, and on their outer flanks.
(3) On arrival in the new trenches they will take up suitable posts for sniping and observation.
(4) When all the Battalion Snipers have taken up their posts, the Battalion Sniping N.C.O. will send a report to his Bn. Hqrs., from which it will be sent on to the Brigade Sniping Officer at Vine Street H.Q.

4. Assembly of Column.
Nos. 1 & 2 Waves, plus the specialist parties, will assemble in the front line trench between Hazara Street and Vine Street.
Nos. 3 & 4 Waves will similarly assemble in the support line between these 2 points.
The definite allotment of frontage of each platoon will be decided upon on the ground.
5. The Assault. At 7 a.m. on the 1st day the Artillery will lift and the Assault will be carried by waves as detailed in para. 3. The lst Wave will immediately go over the parapet & will be followed by the second, 3rd & 4th Waves as soon as possible. The platoons will be formed in lines, and with their specialists parties immediately in rear of them and on the flank nearest to their allotted task. The objectives of the lst & 2nd Waves is the enemy's support trenches, and the platoons concerned will take no account stop at the enemy's front line. The objective of the 3rd & 4th Waves will be the enemy's front line. O.C. Coys. will assure that certain men of the Coy. bombing squads are told off to deal with dug-outs.

6. Consolidation. The work of consolidating the new trenches will be undertaken at once. Special typed instructions have been issued to each Company Commander on the subject. The R.E. are constructing strong points at A, B, C, D & E as per attached sketch. The 116th Bde. Q.M. Coy. will supply Vickers Guns for these strong points.

7. Stores.

Ammunition. Two extra bandoliers will be issued to each man, which, with the 120 rounds already carried, will make 240 rounds per rifle. There will be a close reserve of 100 rounds per rifle at the following points:—

- A Coy. VINE STREET (Northern Side) 15 boxes.
- B Coy. COPSE STREET (Northern Side) 15 boxes.
- C Coy. COPSE STREET (Northern Side) 15 boxes.
- D Coy. HAZARA STREET (Northern Side) 15 boxes.

A Brigade Reserve of 50 rounds per rifle will be stored at the junction of GUARDS and VINE STREET.

Bomb Stores will be established under Brigade arrangements as follows:—

- First Reserve Store
  - A Coy. at forward end of VINE ST. (Southern side) 500.
  - B & C Coys. forward end of COPSE ST. (Southern side) 1,600.
  - D Coy. forward end of HAZARA ST. (Southern side) 800.
- Second Reserve Store
  - Junction HAZARA STREET and GUARDS - 6,000.
- Third Reserve Store (Brigade Reserve)
  - At junction of VINE STREET with GUARDS trench - 6,000.

8. R.E. STORES. Dumps for R.E. Stores will be at the head of COPSE STREET and HAZARA STREET.
9. Rations & Water. Each man will carry 1 day’s rations & a full waterbottle. Water will be stored in petrol cans etc. at convenient points against the front line parapet. Stores for rations and water will be established as follows:
A. Coy at forward end of VINE STREET.
B. Coy at forward end of COPSE STREET.
C. Coy at forward end of COPSE STREET.
D. Coy at forward end of HAZARA STREET.

10. Stores. Within our New Lines. Within our new lines, Ammunition, Stores, Bomb Stores, Dumps for R.E. Stores and Tools, and Stores for Rations and Water will at once be constructed and filled up as detailed above.

11. Equipment. Marching Order No. 2 i.e. without packs. Each man to carry his waterproof sheet on back of his belt.
Arrangements regarding the dumping of packs & great coats will be notified later.
All ranks will carry 2 bombs. These will on no account be used except by order of an Officer. They will be collected, if possible, under instructions of Platoon Commanders, to form a reserve.
Tools and Sandbags will be carried as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Packs &amp; Shovels</th>
<th>Sandbags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Wave</td>
<td>1 per man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Wave</td>
<td>Each man 1 tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Wave</td>
<td>Each man 1 tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Wave</td>
<td>Each man 1 tool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Carrying Parties. A carrying party of 20 men has been detailed from the H.Q. Staff, Pioneers, etc.
O.C. Coys. will detail a further 6 men.
Lieut. C.O. Bolton will be in charge of the R.E. Stores, Rations & Water.
2/Lieut. H.T.K. Robinson will be in charge of the bomb & S.A.A. Stores and will be responsible for the supply of same to front line.
These officers will arrange together the distribution of the carrying parties.
O.C. Coys. will detail one reliable R.C.O. to assist these officers.


14. Special Warning. The order "RETIRE" will not be given and should this particular word be heard it must be understood that it emanates from no one in authority.

15. Runners. O.C. Coys. will ensure that all Runners make themselves well acquainted with the various H.Q. & Signal Stations.

16. Medical Arrangements. All wounded will be evacuated via HAZARA STREET and tramway.
17. *Battalion H.Qs.* will be at a point in COPSE STREET halfway between that trench and GUARDS.

(Sgd.) G.H. IMPEY,
Lieut. Colonel,
Commanding L.B.R.