

Learning Resources for Teachers

Learning Resource: **Harold Linfield**

On Sunday morning at 4.30 our first gun spoke and fired til 5 am, then all our big guns started. The earth seemed to shake and tremble, shells flew over our heads and you couldn't hear what the next man said to you if you tried. It was like a continual roll of thunder. We all thought there could not be one possible man left alive in front of us. Smoke and dust and all manner of things were flying about over the German lines. Then, after half an hour of this, we had the order to charge.

We all streamed out over our parapets and lined out beautifully. We advanced till we got just over a hundred yards away from the Germans, and then their machine guns started on us. They absolutely mowed us chaps down, and we flopped down and remained as still as mice. We daren't even lift a finger

Well we laid there for a little while, and then we started to make a hole to dig ourselves in. Our entrenching tool was our real pal. We remained here all day, with shells and bullets flying over us. Our company, which went out with 260 men or more and 5 officers, had as many as 200 casualties.

You should have seen our poor chaps try to crawl back. I started to at about 5.30, and it was one of the most risky things I've ever attempted.

When we got in I and another chap went back to find the regiment, or what was left of it, and we found it behind the firing line. . ."

Clue 14: Extract from a letter from Private George Short, 2nd Sussex Battalion to his mother in Southwick describing events of 9.5.15