

**NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT
WAR DIARY**

**BATTLE OF THE SOMME
BEAUMONT-HAMEL**

JULY 1916

(EXCERPT)

PLACE
&
DATE

SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND INFORMATION

1/6 - 6/6/16 Remained in billets at Mailly-Maillet in Bde Reserve whole Bn. employed on various working parties in trenches.

7/6/16 Afternoon Battalion marched to billets at Louvencourt in Divisional Reserve.

8/6 - 14/6/16 All 88 Bde at Louvencourt - Special training for part the Brigade is taking in attack - Weather very wet.

13/6/16 Major T.M. Drew (the Leicestershire Regt.) 2nd in Command left for England unfit for active service.

14/6/16 Clock advanced 1 hour at night.

15/6/16 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. Bde final tactical exercise.

Afternoon marched to trenches, same sector as hitherto, and relieved the Border Regt.

Capt. J. Forbes-Robertson, the Border Regt., joined as 2nd in Command.

Situation normal in trenches but more shelling - total casualties 11 wounded.

23/6/16 The S.W.B. relieved us in the trenches in the evening Marched to billets at Louvencourt - Heavy rain.

24/6/16 Bombardment commenced Field Artillery wire cutting.

26/6/16 In morning Major General de Lisle, Comd. 29 Division, addressed the Regt. on parade - at night a raid made on German trenches - Party of 50 selected men who had undergone a special training under Capt. Butler with Lieut. Strong and 2nd Lieut. Green - Raid failed owing to failure to cut through the wire and fire being opened on party.

27/6/16 Raid repeated at night. Party reached enemy's trench, but being met with heavy fire and bombs unable to make further progress. Party retired after all Officers had been wounded, 6 men killed and 13 wounded. All the wounded were brought in.

28/6/16 Regt. was to have moved up to trenches preparatory to attack to-morrow, but orders received in afternoon postponing movement 48 hours, weather very unsettled.

30/6/16 A draft of 66 men arrived from Base. Regt. marched off 9.15 p.m. for forming up place in trenches, i.e. rear line of trenches in our usual sector. Strength Officers Other Ranks Following were left behind as Reserve and for special duties: Officers Other Ranks. March to trenches about 8 miles. In position about 2 a.m.

In addition to above, 22 men with the 88th Bde. M.G. Coy and 1 Officer and 11 Other Ranks with Trench Mortar Battery took part in the battle of July 1st.

(Sgd) A. L. Hadow, Lt. - Colonel,
Comdg. 1st. Newfoundland Regiment.

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SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND INFORMATION

TRENCHES

1/7/16

ST. JOHNS ROAD

CLONMEL AV 06.00

07.30

General attack all along the line.

Intense bombardment.

86th and 87th Brigades attacked 1st system of enemy trenches. 88th Bde. under pre arranged orders were to move forward at 08.40 to attack 3rd line system of trenches. About 08.20 received orders not to move until further orders. Presumably the first attack not having been successful.

08.45

Received orders on telephone to move forward in conjunction with 1 Essex Regt. and occupy enemy's first trench, our objective being point 89 to just north of point 60 and work forward to Station Road, clearing the enemy trenches, and move as soon as possible. Asked Brigade if enemy's first trench had been taken and received reply to the effect that the situation was not cleared up. Asked Brigade if we were to move off to attack independently of Essex Regt. and received reply in affirmative.

09.15

Reported to Brigade that Newfoundland Regt. was moving off. It was subsequently found that the Essex Regt. did not attack until 09.55 i.e. after our attack had failed. The Regiment moved off in previously arranged formation i.e. A. & B Companies (A on left) in 1st line in lines of platoons in file or single file at 40 paces interval and 25 paces between sections - followed by C & D Coys (C on left) in similar formation at 100 yards distance. C Coy had been specially detailed as consolidating Company and therefore carried additional equipment. The advance was made direct over the open from the rear trenches known as St. John's Road and Clonmel Avenue. As soon as the signal for advance was given the Regiment left the trenches and moved steadily forward. Machine gun fire from our right front was at once opened on us and then Artillery fire also. The distance from our objective varied from 650 to 900 yards. The enemy's fire was effective from the outset but the heaviest casualties occurred on passing through the gaps in our front wire where the men were mown down in heaps. Many more gaps in the wire were required than had been cut. In spite of losses the survivors steadily advanced until close to the enemies wire by which time very few remained. A few men are believed to have actually succeeded in throwing bombs into the enemy's trench.

A report by Capt. G.E. Malcolm, Commanding D.Co., 1st. K.O.S. Bs., which formed part of the first attack carried out by the 87th. bde is attached.

09.45

The C.O. reported personally at Bde Battle H.Q. 100 yards behind our firing line that the attack had failed. Shortly afterwards the enemy opened an intense bombardment of our trenches with heavy artillery which was kept up for sometime. During the night and evening unwounded survivors managed to crawl back to our own lines and by next morning some 68 had answered their names in addition to stretcher bearers and H.Q. runners.

PLACE
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SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND INFORMATION

TRENCHES

1/7/16 09.45 During the afternoon the 10% reinforcements under Capt. Forbes-Robertson arrived in the trenches and orders were received to occupy the support trench in the right sub-sector known as St. James Street, where we remained on July 2nd.

3/7/16

Moved to support trench in left sub-sector known as Fethard Street. At night brought in some dead and equipment. Orders received to be prepared for counter attack and gas.

4/7/16

Much rain.

ENGLEBELMER

6/7/16

Regiment moved out of trenches to billets in Englebelmer, strength. During the afternoon the village was shelled.

7/7/16

Commenced reorganizing. Lt.-Gen. Sir A. Hunter Weston visited the Regiment and made an address expressing his great appreciation of their conduct. Village again shelled in the afternoon and Lieut. O.W. Steele wounded. He died next morning.

MAILLET-MAILLY

8/7/16

After breakfast moved into tents in Mailly Wood.

10/7/16

Battalion moved a short distance into huts.

11/7/16

Received a draft of 127 Other Ranks.

TRENCHES

14/7/16

Took over about 450 yards of trenches on both sides of 1st Avenue relieving the 4th Worcesters. Strength 11 Officers, 260 Rifles.

During this tour in the trenches we were shelled heavily by enemy's 5.9 howitzers and a good deal of damage was done to the trenches.

ACHEUX

17/7/16

Relieved in trenches by 2nd. S.W.B. and marched to billets in Acheux.

18/7/16

2/Lieut. G. Emerson, A. L. Summers, S. Gane joined the Battalion from the Depot.

20/7/16

Messrs. Clift & Bishop from Newfoundland visited the Regiment and inspected it on parade and afterwards addressed the men.

BEAUVAL ⁵⁰

21/7/16

A draft of 126 Other Ranks arrived.

23/7/16

The Brigade marched to billets at Beauval, distance 10 miles, arriving at 14.30.

24/7/16

Sir Edward Morris, Prime Minister of Newfoundland, and Capt. Timewell, in charge of Pay & Record Office, visited the Regiment and inspected it on parade and afterwards the Prime Minister addressed the men. A draft of 60 Other Ranks arrived.

25/7/16

Brigade route march of about 12 miles.

27/7/16

Brigade entrained at Candass. Advance party of Regt. moved off at 17.00, followed at 19.00 by the remainder of Battalion. Strength, 554.

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PLACE & DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND INFORMATION	
POPERINGHE		
28/7/16	06.30	Battalion detrained at Hopoutre and to billets in Poperinghe.
29/7/16		Draft of 12 Other Ranks arrived from Base.
30/7/16	21.00	Battalion proceeded to Ypres by train. C. Co. took over cellars in School 19C.D.Co. took over buildings 1 8 D 66. <i>18 d. 66.</i>
YPRES		
30/7/16	21.00	A. and B. Co's., South and North of Menin Gate respectively. (Reference map <u>1</u> Sheet 28 N.W.). Strength <u>473</u> <u>20000</u> rifles. Battalion in Brigade Reserve.

(Sgd) A. L. Hadow, Lt. -Colonel,

Comdg. 1st. Newfoundland Regiment.

SUMMARY OF CASULTIES ON JULY 1st. 1916

OFFICERS:	Killed	11
	Wounded	12
	Died of Wounds	2
	Missing	
	(Believed killed)	1
OTHER RANKS:	Killed	66
	Wounded	362
	Died of Wounds	21
	Missing	
	(Believed killed)	209.