

**NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT
WAR DIARY**

**BATTLE OF THE SOMME
GUEUDECOURT**

OCTOBER 1916

(EXCERPT)

PLACE
&
DATE

SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND INFORMATION

YPRES

1/10/16 0100 Put clocks back one hour.
One of our aeroplanes brought down enemy observation balloon opposite Railway Wood.
2/10/16 No.996 Pte. O'Driscoll sentenced to 90 days F.P.1. by F.G.C.M. for sleeping while on duty.
4/10/16 2245 5th Kings Liverpool Regiment relieved us in Ypres (165th. Bde.)

POPERINGHE

5/10/16 0330 Entrained at the Asylum for Poperinghe. Strength 27 Officers 4930.R.
0430 Took over billets in Poperinghe.
6/10/16 1000 Inspected by Lieut. General Sir A. Hunter Weston who addressed the battalion and bid it farewell on leaving his corps and returning to the Somme. Military Medals were presented to L/C Fox and Pte. Phillips for gallantry on night of June 28th and to Pte. McGrath for gallantry on July 2.3. & 4.

CORBIE

8/10/16 0100 Entrained at Houputre Siding, Poperinghe for Longeav. Strength 29 officers 566 O.R. Arrived Longeav 1400 and marched to billets in Corbie where we arrived at 1900. Dinners were cooked and eaten en route. Marched about 10 miles. Draft of 12 O.R. joined unit.
9/10/16 1640 Received orders to leave Corbie for the firing line where we were to be on night of 10th.
10/10/16 0415 Left Corbie in 21 motor busses and at 1000 bivouaced in field S23 a.2.6. (Ref.57 c.S.W. 1/20000) South of Longeauval.
1630 Moved into trenches North of Geudecourt. Relief complete 21.30. Rifle strength in line 356. Officers 27.
11/10/16 Front line very heavily shelled. 2 Officers and 430.R. casualties. Received orders to advance on line on 12th.
12/10/16 1200 Casualties in front line report 104.
1405 Attacked enemy line and captured and held same until relieved by a company of 2nd Hants about midnight. Casualties for 11th and 12th. Oct. 10 Officers, 229 Other Ranks. Draft of 266 O.R. arrived at Transport Lines.

S. E. FLERS

13/10/16 0200 Took over position in Bull Trench.
1900 Moved back to Switch Trench. (T7.a.Ref. 57C.S.W. 1/20000) S.E. of Flers.
15/10/16 Draft that arrived on Oct. 12th. moved to Switch Trench and posted to Companies C & D. Companies moved to Gap Trench.
300 yards in front of Switch Trench.
Lieut. H. Rendell rejoined Unit from 88th T.M. Battery.

(Continued)

PLACE
&
DATE

SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND INFORMATION

S.E. FLERS. (CONT'D)

16/10/16 Enemy shelled Switch Trench with H.E.
Very Cold day.
17/10/16 Enemy shelled us with tear shells. Our
bombardment of the enemy was very heavy
and continuous.
18/10/16 2nd. Hants and 4th Worcesters made a
successful attack from N. of Geudecourt.
This unit supplies 250 men as stretcher
bearers.
19/10/16 Very Heavy rain. Trench falling in.
Lieut. W.C.E. Bower, RAMC., Att. Nfld. R
killed by a direct hit on his dugout.

BERNAFAY WOOD

20/10/16 1200 Relieved in Switch Trench by 2nd. Border
Regt. and took over Bernafay Wood Camp
South of S.23.C. (Ref. 57C.S.W.). Strength
20 Officers, 607 O.R. Relief complete 1700.
21/10/16 0530 Battalion out repairing Longeauval -
Flers Road.
22/10/16 Capt. R.H. Tait and 226 O.R. joined Unit.
23/10/16 Brigd. Gen. D. G. Cayley, C.M.G., Commdg.
88th Bde, inspected the two new drafts.
25/10/16 The Governor of Newfoundland approved
promotion of Officers recommended by
Commanding Officer.
26/10/16 370 O.R. working on Longeauval-Flers Road.
Lieut. Toucker RAMC joined Battalion.
27/10/16 Relieved 1st. KOSB in Bull Trench and
Pioneer Trench with A, C and D Coy.
(each 120 strong) and 8 Lewis Guns.
28/10/16 Relieved 1st Inniskilling Fusiliers in
the line N. of Geudecourt. A Co. & 4 Lewis
Guns in Grease Trench, $\frac{1}{2}$ Co. in Hilt Trench,
D. Co. in support in Sonken Road Trench.
Batt. H.Q. & $\frac{1}{2}$ C. Co. (in reverse) in Gird
Trench.
29/10/16 Enemy shelled area very heavily at 0600-
0630 and 1600-1700. Suffered no casualties.
Received orders to hand over our trenches
to 6th. Bn., Australian Infantry. The
night was very dark and wet and relief was
carried out under most unfavourable
conditions.
30/10/16 Relief started at 1700 on 29th. completed
at 0730. The last two Companies (A & D)
coming back across the open. No casualties.

BERNAFAY WOOD

30/10/16 Battalion moved to Camp at Pommier Redoubt.
31/10/16 Brigade moved to billets in Ville, distance
of march $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles, strength 20 officers,
786 O.R.
2nd. Lts. C. C. Duley, S. Smith, C. James,
J. Thompson, S. Manuel joined Batt.

(Sgd) J. Forbes-Robertson, Major.

Comdg. 1st Newfoundland Regiment.

A P P E N D I X A.

10/10/16

At night the Regiment moved into first line trenches in front of Geudecourt. Strength Officers Other Ranks. The battalion was heavily shelled while in the trenches before the attack and suffered casualties including Major W. F. Rendell (wounded) and 2/Lieut. S. C. Norris (killed).

12/10/16

In conjunction with 18th. Bde., 6th. Divn, on right and 35th Bde., 12th. Divn, on our left, the 88th. Bde. attacked the enemy trenches - Newfoundland Regt. on the right, 1st Essex Regt. on the left. For this operation the 88th Bde. were attached to the 12th Division.

The attack took place at 14.05 when the Regiment advanced as follows:

B. Coy (Capt. Butler) on the right, A. Co. (Capt. O'Brien) on the left, both companies in two waves and advancing on a front of two platoons. These were followed in similar formation by C. Coy (Capt. Donnelly) on right and D. Coy (Capt. March) on left. The Regiment followed very close behind our "barrage" and seized the enemy's trenches, which on the right hand were found to be some two hundred yards to our front. Capt. Donnelly was killed on reaching the trench and Capt. O'Brien was hit on the way over. The operations then depended on Captains March and Butler.

Our second objective was to establish ourselves on a line in front of the captured trench. Lieut. Clift (B.Co.) lead a party forward with this object but they were wiped out. Our first objective was held and consolidated, touch being obtained with (i) Bde on our right (ii) between Coys of the Regt. (iii) with 1st. Essex of left. Dugouts in the trench were bombed and cleared out and prisoners taken.

About 1600 it was found that the 1st Essex on our left had retired to their original trenches. Capt. March at once set a patrol up the unoccupied trench on our left and thinned out his line and occupied it. At this time the enemy were seen advancing over the open to counter attack. This attack was defeated and driven back and the trench held.

About 2100 a company of 2nd Hants were sent up to reinforce the Newfoundland Regt. which was now very few in numbers and by about 0300 on 13th another company of the Hants was sent up and the Nfld. Regt. withdrawn to support trenches known as Bull Trench and Pioneer Trench.

During the battle three machine guns were captured also taken prisoners 2 Officer, 1 W. O. and some 56 men.

Our total casualties for the whole time from going into the trenches were Officers 10, O.R. 229. Estimated casualties of enemy 250 killed.

A F F E N D I X B.

WAR DIARY, 1st. NEWFOUNDLAND REGT., OCTOBER /16.

Summary of Casualties.

OFFICERS.

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Captain A. O'Brien | Died of wounds, Oct. 18th. |
| Captain J. J. Donnelly | Killed, Oct. 12th. |
| Lieut. S. C. Norris | Killed, Oct. 11th. |
| Lieut. C. B. Clift | Missing believed killed, Oct. 12th. |
| 2/" S. J. Ebsary | Died of wounds, Oct. 15th. |
| Major W. F. Rendell | Wounded, Oct. 11th. |
| Lieut. R. W. Bartlett | Wounded, Oct. 12th. |
| Lieut. J. Clift | Wounded, Oct. 12th. |
| 2/" G. Emerson | Wounded, Oct. 12th. |
| 2/" C. S. Frost | Wounded, Oct. 12th. |

OFFICERS.

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|
| Killed | 2 | |
| Missing, believed killed | 1 | |
| Died of wounds | 2 | |
| Wounded | 5 | - 10 |

OTHER RANKS.

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| Killed | 23 | |
| * Wounded | 122 | |
| Wounded and Missing | 25 | |
| Missing | 50 | |
| Missing, believed killed | 9 | - 229 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | TOTAL | 239 |
| | | <hr/> |

* Since died of wounds 8.

A P P E N D I X C.

WAR DIARY, 1st. NEWFOUNDLAND REGT., OCTOBER 1916.

List of Officers in the trenches,
Oct. 11th, 12th, 13th, 1916.

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|---|---------------|
| Lt. -Col. | A. L. Hadow, C.M.G. |) | |
| Major | J. Forbes Robertson |) | |
| Capt. & Adjt. | A. Raley |) | At Batt. H.Q. |
| Lieut. | G. S. Gordon, R.A.M.C. |) | |
| 2/Lieut. | K. Keegan |) | |

A. COMPANY.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Captain A. O'Brien | Died of wounds Oct. 17th. |
| 2/Lieut G. Emerson | Wounded |
| 2/Lieut S. Ebsary | Died of wounds Oct. 15th. |
| 2/Lieut S. Stephenson) | (Left trenches on night of Oct. |
| 2/Lieut W. Clare) | (11 and joined 10% at transport (lines. |

B. COMPANY.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Major W. F. Rendell | Wounded Oct. 11th. |
| Captain B. Butler | Took part in attack. |
| Lieut C. B. Clift | Missing, believed killed. |
| 2/Lieut A. M. Clouston | Took part in attack. |
| 2/Lieut J. Irvine | With 10% in transport lines Oct. 11th. |

C. COMPANY.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Captain J. J. Donnelly | Killed. |
| Lieut. J. M. Clift | Wounded. |
| 2/Lieut S. Foran | Took part in attack. |
| 2/Lieut S. C. Norris | Killed Oct. 11th. |
| Lieut. R. G. Paterson | With 10% in transport lines Oct. 11th. |

D. COMPANY.

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Captain J. W. March | Took part in attack. |
| Lieut R. Bartlett | Wounded. |
| 2/Lieut C. S. Frost (L.G.) | Wounded. |
| 2/Lieut J. F. Edens | Took part in attack. |
| 2/Lieut S. Gane (Liaison Off.) | Took part in attack. |
| 2/Lieut L. Murphy | 10% at transport lines Oct. 11th. |
| Lieut M. Johnson | 10% at transport lines Oct. 11th. |

All casualties occurred during the attack, unless dated otherwise.