

SECRET

OPERATION ORDERS

by

Lieutenant- Colonel T. Eardley-Wilmot, D.S.O.

Commanding 12th. Bn. Suffolk Regiment.

21st September, 1917.

Ref. Special Sheet Ed. 1,
GOUZEAUCOURT 1/20,000.

1. Raid will be carried out on night 25th/26th September on enemy's trenches in R.28.d.
2. Objects.
 - (i). Obtain prisoners, identifications and material.
 - (ii). Destroy dug-outs, material and defences.
3. ZERO hour will be notified later.
Parties will be in position about 50 yds N.E. of NEWTON ROAD and facing the enemy trenches 5 Minutes before Zero.
4. Raid will be carried out under a creeping barrage. During the day a bombardment of the enemy trenches by Artillery and Trench Mortars will take place. A gap in enemy's wire will be cut about R.28.c.10.95.
Detail and action of Raiding Parties on separate sheets.
5. At Zero a 3 minutes barrage will fall on the front line and will creep at 25 yards per minute to R.28.d.00.50. – R.28.d.85.50. It will remain on that for 5 minutes. At end of 5 minutes it will creep forward at the same rate ~~to R.28.d.10.75. – R.28.d.65.75., and will remain on that line for 3 minutes. At the end of 3 minutes it will creep forward~~ over enemy's trenches and establish box barrage. Box barrage remains until Zero + 70 minutes, by which time all parties will be clear of enemy trenches.
6. Signal for withdrawal will be a series of short whistle blasts.
All ranks to be warned that the word "RETIRE" will not be used. If orders are necessary, the word "WITHDRAW" will be used.
O.C. Parties will be responsible for the withdrawal of their men.
7. No identifications, letters or maps will be carried.
All ranks will be issued with a number, to be worn on left wrist.
8. All wounded and prisoners to be evacuated at once. Prisoners to Advanced Battalion Headquarters, together with ant identifications.
Advanced Battalion Headquarters will be in CHESHIRE QUARRY.
Advance Dressing Station will be in CHESHIRE QUARRY.
Medical officer will make necessary arrangements for evacuation of wounded.

9. Signalling Officer will arrange the following:--

- (a). Advanced Runner and Telephone Post at head of BICESTER AVENUE R.34.b.00.45. to connect with Battalion Headquarters.
- (b). A telephone to go with raiding party.

10. Battle Police will be established at:--

TURNER'S QUARRY.
Top of BROADHURST AVENUE.
Top of BICESTER AVENUE.
Top of WILLIS AVENUE.
Top of HUSH ALLEY.

11. Identifications :--

Runners	- RED band.)	
Moppers up	- WHITE band.)	bands to be worn round
Signallers	- BLUE band.)	the left forearm.
Salvage	- KHAKI band.)	

12. Watchers to be synchronised.

All Officers to have compasses and know bearings to their objectives and way back.

All ranks should be warned to note the direction of the wind, if any, or moon, so that they do not lose their way.

13. As casualties occur, understudies for all Commands will be told off.

Each man will, know exactly what he is to do and where he is to go.

14. Raiders will return by any route, wherever the enemy's barrage can best be avoided.

Officers and N.C.O's i/c. Parties will report to Advanced Battalion Headquarters on their return.

Other ranks will proceed straight to billets where they will hand in their discs.

T. Eardley-Wilmot

Lieutenant-Colonel,
Commanding 12th Battalion Suffolk Regiment.

Copy No 1 to 121st Inf Bde

2 " "

3 OC C Coy

4 OC B Coy

5 Group 178 Bde

6 BHQ

7 War diary

8 DCV 121 MQC

9 War Diary

No. 1 Party.

Composition.

2 Officers, 58 Other ranks, 1 Lewis Gun. - divided as follows: --

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| (a). <u>Main Party</u> | 1 Officer, 22 Other ranks. |
| (b). <u>Blocking Party</u> | 1 N.C.O., 7 Other ranks, 1 Lewis Gun. |
| (c). <u>Moppers up</u> | 1 Officer, 14 Other ranks, 6 R.E's,
4 Salvage men, 4 Stretcher Bearers. |

Equipment.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| (a). <u>Main Party.</u> | Rifle and bayonet, 20 rounds per man, 4 bombs (Mills No. 5).
<u>Among Party.</u>
2 electric torches, 4 doz. bombs (Mills No. 5),
2 doz. Grenades (Mills No 23), 4 bomb cups,
12 hand wire cutter with lanyard. |
| (b). <u>Blocking Party.</u> | Rifle and bayonet, 20 rounds per man
(Nos. 1 & 2 L.G. revolver and 20 rounds), 4 bombs per man.
<u>Among Party.</u>
1 L.G. with radius sights, 4 magazines, 6 barbed wire gooseberries,
1 electric torch, 2 doz. bombs (Mills No5). |
| (c). <u>Moppers up.</u> | Rifle and bayonet, except Salvage men and Stretcher Beraers, 20 rounds, 4 bombs per man, 2 electric torches, 2 doz. Mills No. 5, 1 doz. 'P' bombs, mobile charges, 2 stretchers. |

A C T I O N.

- (a). Main Party.

Follow close up behind barrage, strike enemy trench at R.28.d.65.30. and proceed along Right Boyeau on each side of trench to BLEAK SUPPORT, thence along latter to R.28.d.35.95.

- (b). Blocking Party.

Follow close behind Main Party to BLEAK SUPPORT, then turn Eastwards and block BLEAK SUPPORT 50 yds from junction. Lewis Gun to be in position on parados facing N.E. with proper field of fire.

- (c). Moppers up.

Follow close behind Main Party, jump into trench at R.28.d.65.30. and move along Right Boyeau and then along BLEAK SUPPORT keeping level with Main Party, and dropping men from rear at each dug-out, one man and one R.E. at each entrance to dug-outs.
Salvage men collect all moveable material and take back to local support.
Stretcher Bearers take back any wounded men to supports.
O.C. Moppers up will detail men to escort back any prisoners to supports.

No. 2 PARTY

Composition.

1 Officer, 29 Other ranks - divided as follows : --

- (a). Main Party. 1 Officer, 15 Other ranks.
- (b). Moppers up. 1 N.C.O., 9 Other ranks, 2 R.E's,
2 Stretcher Bearers.

Equipment.

- (a). Main Party. Rifle and bayonet, 20 rounds, 4 bombs per man.
Among Party.
1 electric torch, 2 doz. Mills No. 5,
1 doz, Mills No. 23, 2 bomb cups, 10 wire cutters.
- (b). Moppers up. Rifle and bayonet, 20 rounds, 4 bombs per man.
Among Party.
1 doz. 'P' bombs, 2 electric torches,
1 mobile charge, 1 Stretcher.

A C T I O N.

- (a). Main Party.

Advance close behind barrage in extended order, cross SAP Trench to BEER Trench at R.28.d.40.45. Thence a small party moves forward keeping in touch with flanks and clearing up all shell holes.

- (b). Moppers up.

Follow close behind Main Party, drop 4 Other ranks in SAP Trench to work along same to Right Boyeau.
Remainder with R.E's and Stretcher Bearers enter BEER Trench and work along same to Right Boyeau.

No. 3 PARTY.

SUPPORTS.

Composition.

1 Officer, 24 Other ranks, 1 Lewis Gun.

Equipment. Rifle and bayonet, 30 rounds, 4 bombs per man.

Among Party.

1 Lewis Gun, 6 magazines, 2 electric torches, 4 doz. Mills No. 5,
2 doz. Mills No. 23, 6 'P' bombs, 2 stretchers, 4 bomb cups,
6 hand wire cutters, 6 barbed wire gooseberries.

A C T I O N.

Advance just to rear and right flank of No. 1 Party, and establish H.Q. in SAP Trench about R.28.d.70.30.

Detail party to block SAP Trench to the East.

Be prepared to reinforce Blocking Party of No. 1 Party if any attack develops there.

Lewis Gun to be in position to cover right flank and whole party to be ready to meet any attack from the right.

No. 4 PARTY.

Composition.

1 Officer, 29 Other ranks --- Divided as follows :--

- (a). Main Party. 1 Officer, 15 Other ranks.
- (b). Moppers up. 1 N.C.O., 9 Other ranks, 2 R.E's,
2 Stretcher Bearers.

Equipment.

Same as No. 2 Party.

A C T I O N.

- (a). Main Party.

Advance close behind barrage in extended order, cross SAP Trench to BEER Trench at R.28.d.20.40. Thence a small party moves forward clearing up ground to R.28.d.35.90. and keeping touch with parties on their flanks.

- (b). Moppers up.

Follow behind Main Party, drop 4 in SAP Trench to work to left, remainder in Centre Boyeau to work up to BEER TRENCH and then along to loft (Westwards) to No. 5 Party.

No. 5 PARTY.

Composition.

2 Officers, 40 Other ranks --- Divided as follows :--

- (a). Main Party. 1 Officer, 20 Other ranks.
- (b). Moppers up. 1 Officer, 15 Other ranks, 6 R.E's,
2 Stretcher Bearers, 4 Salvage men..

Equipment.

- (a). Main Party. Rifle and bayonet, 20 rounds, 4 bombs per man.
Among Party.
2 electric torches, 12 hand wire cutters,
4 doz. bombs Mills No. 5, 2 doz. Grenades Mills No. 23,
4 bomb cups.
- (b). Moppers up. Rifle and bayonet, 20 rounds, 4 bombs per man.
3 electric torches, 2 doz. bombs Mills No. 5,
1 doz. 'P' bombs, mobile charges, 1 Stretcher.

A C T I O N.

- (a). Main Party.

Advance behind barrage with left flank on CHESHIRE STREET to
SEA Trench, thence along road to BLEAK SUPPORT.

- (b). Moppers up.

Drop men at all dug-outs on road between BEER Trench and
SEA Trench, clear up trench and any other dug-outs,
Escorts for prisoners to be provided and prisoners sent back to supports.
Salvage men collect and bring back material.

No. 6 PARTY.

SUPPORTS.

Composition.

1 Officer, 24 Other ranks, 3 Signallers.

Equipment.

Same as No. 3 Party, including Lewis Gun.

A C T I O N.

Advance on left rear flank of No. 5 Party and establish H.Q. near CHESHIRE STREET in BEER Trench.

Detail party to block BEER Trench West of Road.

Lewis Gun to take up position to cover left forward flank.

Signallers to get into telephonic communication with Battalion Headquarters.

APPENDIX A

On night of 25th September we raided the enemy trenches in R.28.d after heavy artillery bombardment. The enemy saw our party forming up in Nomans land & his barrage came down 7 minutes before ours, causing considerable casualties. Our raiding party advanced & was followed across by enemy barrage. They however reached their objectives & besides killing many in the trenches bombed several dug outs blocking up the entrances of those from which the enemy refused to come out. Out of a total of 8 Officers & 236 OR our casualties were 1 Officer Capt M.E.H. SCHIFF wounded & missing, 4 Officers 2/Lts R.T. ROBINS, G.HALLSMITH, J.T.SUTTLE, J.FRYETT + 92 OR.

APPENDIX B

Following wires received with reference to raid carried out 25-6 Sept.

From G.O.C. Division:

'Please convey to 12th Suffolks my appreciation of their very Gallant efforts last night. The enemy offered a very stubborn resistance but in spite of the very heavy fire which the Batt came under they gained their objectives, inflicted severe losses on the enemy & brought back prisoners. I much regret to hear that the Batt suffered severe casualties in carrying out the attack'

From Division:

'Please convey to 12th Suffolks the congratulations of the Corps Commander on their success & the fine spirit shown by all ranks during the raid'.

From General BYNG Army Commander:

'Convey my hearty congratulations to 12th Suffolks on their successful raid'.