

MS-1377

2nd Infantry Brigade (New Zealand)

Draft of first tank action battle order, Somme
Offensive, 1916

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Enter as below. — Tra

80/11.

~~MR. J. J. DAVIES,~~
~~C/O AUCKLAND MUSEUM,~~
~~PRIVATE BAG,~~
~~AUCKLAND, N.Z.~~

~~War. 1824~~

Draft of the first Tenth Action Battle order

1st Cant. Reg. Somme 15 Sept 1916

N. 2. Army. 1 H.Z.E.F. 1 Canterbury
Regiment.

Draft of the First
Tank action Battle Order,
~~let~~. Somme, 15. Sept
1916.

Source. Translated from
Armed Services Dept.,
1980

98 leaves
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MS 1377

Copy No —

2/nd New Zealand Brigade

Order No 20

Ref to ops LONGUEVAL }
GUEUDECOURT } 1/10.000
British lost from
High Wood & Gueudecourt }

Received

14 September 1916

1. Information

- (a) The French on (our right), and the Reserve Army are attacking the enemy simultaneously tomorrow the 15th Sept 1916.
- (b) The 4th Army is to attack the enemy defences with the object of seizing HERVAL-LESBOEUF - GUEUDECOURT and FLERS and breaking through the enemy's system of defences.
- (c) Tanks will be used for the first time.
Four have been allotted to this Division.

2. Intentions

The attack will be pushed home until the utmost point all along the line until the most distant objectives have been reached.

For the last 2½ months we have been gradually wearing down the enemy.

His moral is shaken, he has few, if any, fresh reserves available and there is every probability that a combined determined effort will result in a decisive victory.

3. Losses

The loss of zero will be met if left.

4. Objectives and Boundaries

The objectives & boundaries of the Division are shown in the attached appendices 8

5. Task

(a) The task allotted to this Brigade is as follows
The HULLAND of OTHCO batteries will attack

5-
task
(containing)

and capture the first objective only.
The 2 of CANTERBURY & 2 of WELLINGTON Battalions will be held in reserve

(A) The first objective is the SWITCH LINE from junction with COFFEE LANE S. 6. C. 3.7 (inclusive) to S. 5. a. 7. 3 (inclusive) a distance of 900 yds approximately

(B) After the first objective has been captured by the 2 Bns of this Brigade the 3/103 (Rifle) Brigade after ~~1 hour~~ an interval of 1 hour will pass through and capture the remaining objectives

6.
PLACES OF ASSEMBLY.

~~The Whites~~ will be assembled in positions to attack as follows:

- (a) 2 of AUCKLAND Battalions (with Hdqrs at junction of FRENCH LANE & TEA trench) S. 11 a. 3. 3) in the RIGHT half of OTAGO trench, in RIGHT half of FERN trench, AUCKLAND trench & TEA trench
- (b) 2 of OTAGO Bn (same Hdqrs as AUCKLAND Bn) in LEFT half of OTAGO trench, in LEFT half of FERN trench, WOOD LANE, and WORCESTER trench
- (c) 2 of CANTERBURY Bn (with Hdqrs as at present in SAVOY trench).
- (d) 2 of WELLINGTON Bn (with Hdqrs as at present in CARLTON trench)
- (e) Nos MACHINE GUN Coy less 6 guns & transport will assemble & move with the WELLINGTON Bn through whose Hdqrs messages will be sent to No 2 machine gun Coy.
- (f) Nos L-T m batty will also remain with the WELLINGTON Bn in CARLTON trench.
- (g) All transport will remain in its present position & the 1st line transport is to be READY to move at daylight tomorrow the 15th inst.
- (h) Brigade Hdqrs will remain in present position at S. 16. c. 6. 9.

The above notes with a number of details are to be carried out tonight after dark & the completion of the assembly to be reported to the Hdqrs.

Assembly of 3/103 Rifle Bde

(i) The 3/103 Rifle Bde will be assembled between the rear of the Auckland & Otago Bns and the road S. 17 a. S. 16. b. S. 16. a.

(3)

(j) ~~the~~ ~~how~~ ~~by~~ ~~which~~ ~~troops~~ ~~are~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~in~~ ~~ready~~ ~~for~~ ~~action~~ ~~and~~ ~~be~~ ~~notified~~ ~~later~~

7.
Final
concentration.

(a) This Brigade will be concentrated in the area SWITCH TRENCH - SAVOY Trench (inclusive) by the time the 3/15 (Rifle) Bde are clear of the SWITCH TRENCH

(b) The 1/15 Inf Bde will remain in its bivouacs as Divisional reserve at MAMMETZ WOOD + FRUCOURT WOOD ready to move at 15 minutes notice.

8.
Time of attack

At ZERO the 1/15 (AVON) + 5/10 TAGO Bns will leave our own front lines for the attack of the first objective (GREEN LINE).

At 1.00 hours after ZERO the 3/15 (Rifle) Bde will leave the GREEN LINE for the attack of the second objective (BROWN LINE).

At 2.00 hours after ZERO the Rifle Bde will leave the BROWN LINE for the attack of the 3rd objective (BLUE LINE)

At 4.00 hours 30 minutes after ZERO the 3/15 (Rifle) Bde will leave the BLUE LINE for the attack of the 4th objective (RED LINE)

9.
Artillery
Bombardment

A bombardment of the hostile defensive system commenced on the 12 Sept.

The preliminary bombardment tomorrow will be similar to that on previous days, there being no further increase of fire previous to ZERO.

The attack of the Division is being supported by the 14th Divisional Artillery & the 1st + 2nd 15.7.47. Bdes

10.
Artillery

(a) At ZERO an intense barrage of field artillery will be opened all along the line.

10
Continued

- (b) The infantry will at once leave their trucks and advance straight on their objective following the Artillery barrage (which will creep in front of them at the rate of 50 yards a minute.
- (c) No pause will be made on the line COFFEE TRENCH - CREST TRENCH which will be dealt with by "kipping up" parties specially detailed by the officer commanding 7 OVERLORD BN) + 7 OTAGO Bns.

11.
TANKS

One tank will arrive on the 1st objective 5 minutes before the infantry arrive there (see appendix D)

Lanes of at least 100 yards will be left in the barrage for the tanks.

One of the group of 3 tanks will stop on the CREST Trench & will assist in dealing with any opposition met there.

It will then rejoin its group on the SWITCH TRENCH. At 1.00 hours after zero the barrage will start creeping forward to the 2nd objective at the rate of 100 yds in 3 minutes

The Infantry will advance all things being the barrage.

12.
Battalions of Assaulting Bns.

The 7 Auckland Bn will attack the enemy in the SWITCH LINE from junction with COFFEE LAKE S. 6. C. 3. 7 (inclusive) to a point 450 yards to the WEST at S. 5. d. 4. 9 (inclusive)

The 7 OTAGO Bn will attack from S. 5. d. 4. 9 (exclusive) to S. 5. a. 7. 3 (inclusive)

13.
STRONG POINTS

The above line after capture will be immediately consolidated & strong points established at the following places:

TRENCH JUNCTION S. 6. C. 3. 7

TRENCH JUNCTION S. 5. b. 2. 0

and at S. 5. a. 7. 3

Hoop-pap
PARTIES

Rifles + machine guns will be pushed forward during consolidation + all small works immediately in front + a short distance away from the SWITCH LINE are to be dealt with

75 X 61
All ~~...~~
Concentration

This Brigade will be concentrated in the area SWITCH TRENCH - SAVOY (inclusive) by the time the 3rd Rifle Bde are clear of the SWITCH TRENCH.

This will be done by the 1st of CANTERBURY Bn moving forward into the assembly trenches vacated by the 3rd Rifle Bde and by the 2nd Bn closing up to SAVOY TRENCH inclusive.

On taking over the assembly trenches vacated by the 3rd Rifle Bde the 1st of CANTERBURY Bn will move his Headquarters to S. 10. b. 4. 2 + the 2nd of WELINGTON Bn will remain ~~at present~~ at present.

H.T. 1/8
Formation for
assault

The 1st of AUCKLAND + 1st of OTAGO Bns will advance to the assault under the creeping ^{artillery} barrage in line of Battalions in Company columns, with no interval between Battalions or Companies + with 50 paces distance between platoons i.e. 8 companies in line distributed = on a depth of 4 waves.

The RIGHT of the 1st of AUCKLAND Bn will direct, + each Bn will advance in 4 waves, each wave consisting of 8 platoons in single ranks at about 2 1/2 paces interval between men.

The 1st and 2nd waves will converge under the artillery barrage before actually entering the enemy trenches; all ranks will hug the barrage closely.

Bayonets will be fixed on the assembly trenches, rifles carried at the slope. The advance will be in quick time, the waves breaking into a jog trot for the last 30 yards as they reach the objective.

There is to be no cheering.

17.19

Capture of objectives

The capture of the SWITCH trench is to be immediately signalled back by the burning of flares of which 6 will be carried by each platoon for this purpose. The SWITCH LINE when captured is to be held at all costs there is to be no firing way as it is the most important line for observation

18.20

TOOLS

50% of each Co. i.e. every man in the 3rd + 4th waves will carry either a pick or a shovel fastened down the centre of the back.

19.21
Greatcoats

Greatcoats will be collected at Central Regimental Dumps left in charge of a small guard. The 1st Co. of each Bn will carry their greatcoats rolled in a wickerbush sheet, & the 2nd & 3rd Bns will carry a waterproof sheet.

20.22
Ammunition + Bombs

Each man will carry 270 S.A.A., 2 Mills bombs, & a proportion of 'P' bombs distributed over each Battalion

23
RATIONS

a filled water bottle, 1 iron ration etc. unexpended portion of the current days issue will be carried.

24.24
RUNNERS

Cps will arrange for a supply of runners at least 4 per company to carry message in advance of their Bn Headquarters.

25.25
Advanced Dumps

Forward advanced dumps for S.A.A., bombs, water etc will be established at:

- TEA TRENCH S. 11. B. 0. 5 (base barbed wire)
- JUNCTION of THISTLE ALLEY & WOOD LANE S. 11. A. 0. 9 (Capt Garland)

The above officers will arrange for carriers to carry stores from these two advanced dumps to the captured position in the following

23
Contingent

order of importance:

- S.A.A
- Bombs
- WATER
- TOOLS

The above are to be carried forward at all risks

24
Bachuefun
In strong points

As soon as the 3/4 of Rifle Bde have vacated their assembly beside the Op HQ on M.G. Coy will send forward 2 rickshaws to each of the 3 strong points in the SWITCH LINE to form part of the garrison viz 2 to the Op AUCKLAND Co + 4 to the Op STAGO Co

25
Sandbags

All men will carry 2 empty sandbags with the exception of Lewis Bachuefunnes & better gunners who will carry 4 apiece.

26
Protection of
plank

Commanding officers are held responsible for the protection of their own planks, & although they may be held & protected by other units, still this fact will not absolve them from taking every precaution to render their own secure.

27
Movement
units would
Baroque

In the event of communication trenches being under a combat barrage troops will be led over the open in lines of sections in single file.

28
30

Traffic
control.

TURK LANE will be used for 'up' & 'FRENCH LANE for Down' traffic.

THISTLE ALLEY will be used for both up & down traffic. The Op of CANTERBURY Co will arrange to control the traffic on these 3 important communication trenches by means of traffic control police.

24-3
Synchronisation
of watches

watches will be synchronised before 11 am today + after
4 pm tonight + again at 11 pm tonight.

30-32
Private correspondence

No letters, diaries or papers which ~~may~~ ^{might} convey any
information of military value to the enemy will be
carried.

31-33
Administrative
instructions

Instructions with regard to Dumps, medical arrangements.
Shuttle parts - provided etc have already been issued by
the Staff Captain.

32-34
Liaison officer

The ops of Auckland + OTAGO Bns will send a
Liaison officer to the Head Qrs of the Bns on the
right + left respectively.

Major S. S. ALLEN of Auckland Bn is appointed Bde
Liaison officer with the Bde on the RIGHT.

Major W. H. Hetch of Wellington Bn in a similar
capacity with the Bde on the LEFT.

33-35
Appendices
A, B, C + D.

- ~~a table of objectives tab A, a table of boundaries B~~
- ~~a table of attack in attached map appendix C~~
- ~~The following appendices are attached:~~
- appendix "A" table of objectives
- " B" table of boundaries
- " C" table of attack
- " D" employment of tanks

34-36
Contact
Aeroplane

Two contact aeroplanes will be continuously in the air
from zero tomorrow until dark + 1 aeroplane will
be up from 6:30 am to 8:30 am on the 16th Sept.

Planes will be hit

- (a) on reaching each objective
- (b) at 2 pm + 5 pm on 15th Sept.
- (c) at 7 am on 16th Sept
- (d) when called for
- (e) on the initiative of the troops when the contact aeroplane
is out; no planes will be used.

put No 1 ^{up} side center is at 5 16 c. b. 9.

(sd) ~~W. W. W. W. W.~~
Capt
Barn

Send at 300 as usual

- copy No 1 filed
- No 2 + 3 ~~W. W. W. W. W.~~
- 4 Brigadier
- 5 Staff Capt
- 6 Signals
- 7 ~~Artillery~~ Liaison ~~officer~~
- 8 ~~of~~ ~~and~~ ~~land~~ ~~to~~
- 9 ~~of~~ ~~cont~~
- 10 ~~of~~ ~~maps~~
- 11 ~~of~~ ~~maps~~
- 12 ~~of~~ ~~maps~~
- 13 ~~of~~ ~~maps~~
- 14 ~~of~~ ~~maps~~
- 15 153 / ~~side~~
- 16 140 / ~~side~~
- 17 3 / ~~with~~ ~~pl~~ ~~of~~ ~~side~~
- 18 1 / ~~of~~ ~~side~~
- 19 ~~of~~ ~~side~~
- 20 ~~of~~ ~~side~~
- 21 ~~of~~ ~~side~~
- 22 ~~of~~ ~~side~~
- 23 ~~of~~ ~~side~~