

An extra cart has been granted for the mason - The Sgts have also provided a large number of hand bombs but the trench mortar is still wanted.

Casualties No 477 Sy Dusan Singh killed bullet in the forehead

December 15th 1914. - Night passed very quietly - During the morning a message came to the effect that the P.O.C would see officers at the field post of the 1st Manchester Regt. at 12.30.

Information was then given that an attack on the part of the French was to be pushed home on the South of the Canal and on the right of the Manchesters. Orders for TULLOCH HUR Bde were to assist this with a heavy frontal fire - The FERROZEPOR/BDE under General EGERTON with the 129th Baluchis - Connaught Rangers and a French territorial Regiment would come to and assume a position of assembly at GIVENCHY while the 129th Baluchis would make an attack on the two German saps distant about 25 yards from our parapet on our left and right center, and would endeavour to gain the German main line of trench.

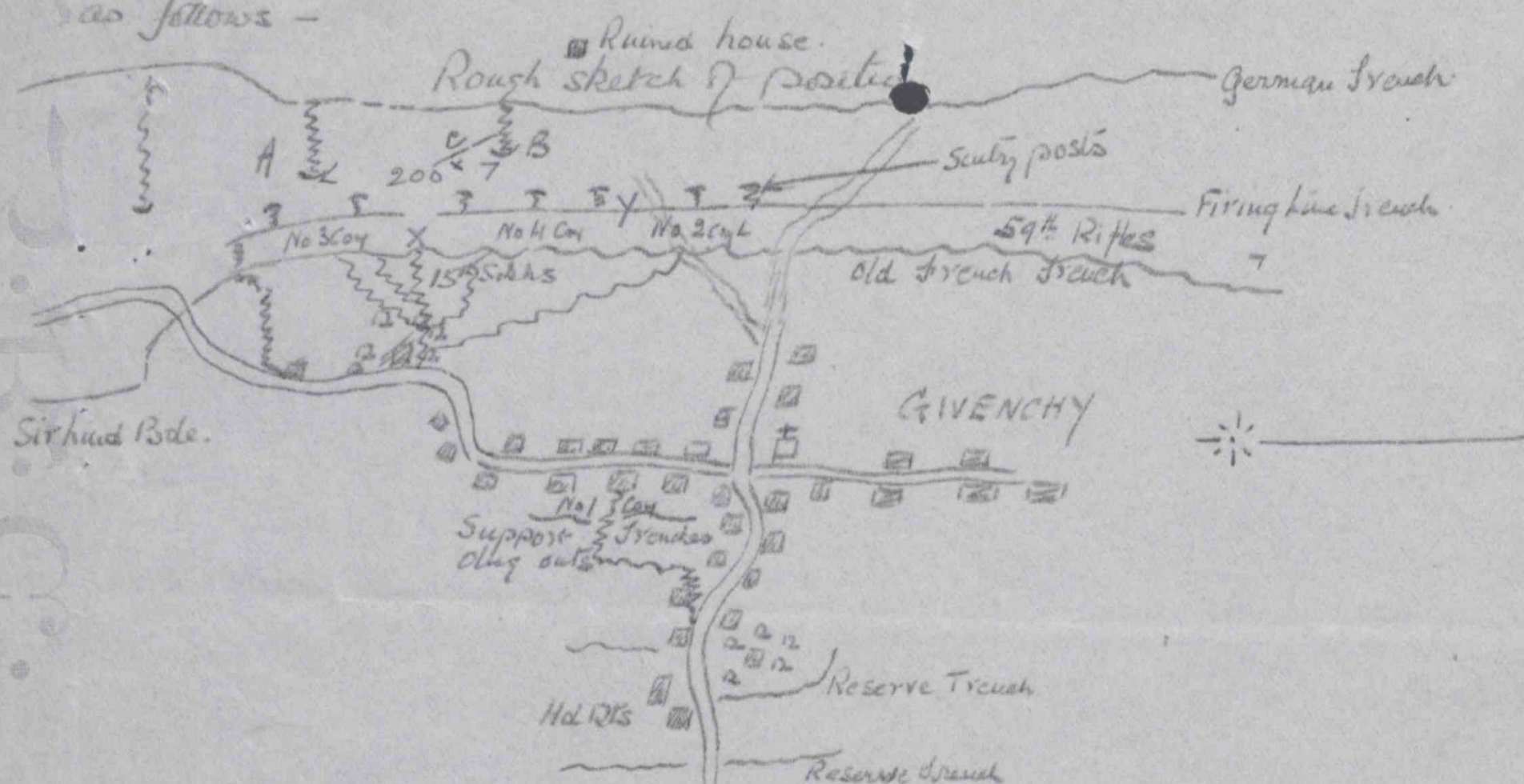
The 15th Sikhs were to help this attack by a heavy direct fire and bomb throwing parties and diggers were to be ready to help the 129th -

Casualties today 3 killed making a total of 6 killed and 10 wounded since we came into these trenches four days ago. All thanks to the French for leaving a parapet wholly unbullet proof

December 16th 1914 - Night passed quietly -

The attack by the 129th on the two saps which was fixed for 8 am was altered to take place at 6.30 am. The 129th therefore passed headquarters at 5 am on their way to the trenches - The attack was unsupported by artillery - The method of attack was

as follows -



A = left German sap 25 yards from fire trench.

B = Right German sap 50 yards from fire trench.

C = a trench running obliquely to sap unprovided with head cover or loopholes.

Part of the firing line trench was cleared of our men in order to make way for the 129th - This Regt crowded into the trenches and communication trenches the Rt half Bu opposite the Right ^{sap} ~~half~~ and the left half opposite the left ~~half~~ sap - 2 platoons being opposite each sap in the fire trench - With these were a digging party of the 15th Sigs accompanied by bomb throwers composed of 6 men on the left ^{sap} ~~half~~ and 10 men on the right sap - At 6.30 the platoons were helped up over the parapet and rushed each sap that on the left being led by Captain ^{Major} POTTER while Major BOIST of the GOIDES superintended the right half -

The first platoons were over and into the German saps without hardly a shot being fired the Germans fleeing before them - these were followed by our digging parties who commenced to dig as hard as they were able to connect up the sap head with our own trenches - On the left Major POTTER arrived within 10 yards of the German main trench on the left right it was not quite clear how far they progressed when the saps had been secured the intention was to charge the

main German trench between the saps, but owing to the difficulties of the narrow communicating trenches 2 companies of the 129th with the 57th Rifles again behind them never left our front parapet, a very hot maxim and rifle fire being immediately opened. - The second and succeeding platoons lost heavily - The real objective of the attack therefore failed for want of support at the right moment. - Meanwhile digging was continued unceasingly - it being anticipated that by nightfall a bullet proof communication trench would be dug to the left sap. - On the right sap however things did not go so well, the Germans commenced to bomb heavily and the men were driven back bit by bit to its head - Several attempted to get out over the open to our own trenches but were immediately killed - Eventually they were driven back right into the sap head and the party of the 15th Sikhs were no longer able to dig. Towards two o'clock the Germans made a counter attack on the right sap; a heavy frontal fire was opened on our main fire trench and the Germans crowded into the trench marked C on sketch and commenced firing over the parapet into the sap head - Attracted by the unusual fire Lt Barstow with jemadar Bin Singh who had been sent up by Colonel Hill with a message to the firing line looked through a loophole at X and saw the most unusual sight of the Germans showing themselves in trench C head and ~~trenches~~ shoulders snap shooting over the parapet into the sap head - 2nd Lt Smyth also perceived the same from Y (marked on sketch) and while Lt Barstow and jemadar Bin Singh accounted for a minimum of 10 - 2nd Lt Smyth accounted for a minimum of 4 - this effectually stopped any firing from this point into the sap head and the Germans continued to bomb - No 4072 Havildar MASTAN SINGH pluckily attempted to return to report about 1 pm of the state of affairs but was killed in so doing in coming out into the open - It was found that the right sap

could not be held and orders were shouted over when dark to return - On the left saps Major POTTER hung on and about 6 pm communication was established and the saps taken over by our men - on the right the men as soon as it was dark crawled out and 21 returned to our trenches in every single case wounded by bombs - No 891 Sepoy Khagan Singh H Coy was also killed ^{close to} by the saps - Total casualties of the regiment during the day were 6 killed, and 14 wounded those of the 129th were 14 casualties -

During these operations Bde Head Quarters were at L E QUESNOY about 2½ miles in rear, and during the same Colonel Hill was placed in command -

December 17th - During the night which passed quietly the Sappers and Miners with one man completed the communication trench to the German trench (sap head), blocked the German communication trench leading to it and made a small loop ^{for trench} ~~trench~~ sufficient to hold about 8 men in the sap head on the left.

During the day the enemy's Sniping was very much more active while their artillery also fired a great deal more than usual - Information received yesterday that the Regiment would be relieved by the 129th Baluchis at 4 am tomorrow with in addition ½ Bn of the 9th Bhopal Infantry -

At 2 pm the OC 129th accompanied by his Coy commanders came to head quarters to arrange about the reliefs -

December 18th The Regiment was relieved by 6.45 am this morning the 129th owing to the condition of the men's feet were unable to march quick enough and the reliefs were delayed for ¾ of an hour - On relief the Regiment marched into billets in COSSRE Orders were received at 4.30 P. M that we should be called out in Reserve by the SIRHIND Bde the next day.

Casualties during the period 11th to 18th Dec, were 32 wounded & 9 killed
Dec 19th -

At 3.30 a.m. the regiment marched to FESTUBERT to be in support to an attack by the H.L.B. and the 4th Grenadiers. The attack was preceded by a short artillery bombardment, and an attacking party consisting of about 400 men of the H.L.B. and 4th Grenadiers then charged and captured 200 yards of the German trench with some prisoners. The regiment remained in FESTUBERT during the whole day and on being relieved by the 125th Rifles returned to billets in CORE. We left FESTUBERT with the situation rather critical as the attacking party were cut off in the German trench. The mud in the trenches was awful and in many cases the Grenadiers were wading up to their arm pits. On an average 100 rifles a day became unserviceable there.

Dec 20th -

At 9.30 a.m. the guns near our billets started a rapid fire and we were informed that the Germans had broken the line in two places. The regiment was soon ordered out; the rth $\frac{1}{2}$ Bn under the C.O. going to the right Section Reserve and the left $\frac{1}{2}$ under Major Vivian to the left Section Reserve of the SIRHIND Bde. Major Carden who had twisted his knee was unable to accompany the regiment. On ^{the rth} $\frac{1}{2}$ Bn approaching FESTUBERT we received orders to march straight to GIVENCHY. As we were approaching that place we met about 300 men of different regiments half of them without rifles, who were retreating in disorder from the trenches; they said all their officers had been killed and that the enemy had taken their trenches. The C.O. chose a line about 700 yards behind GIVENCHY for us to hold, but afterwards found a better position further back behind PONT FIVE where we started to entrench, but soon got to water and had to retire on to higher ground. Some French troops and the MANCHESTER Regt then passed us going up in the direction of GIVENCHY to make a counter attack. At 4.30 P.M. the rth $\frac{1}{2}$ Bn were ordered to take up an immediate line of trenches along the FESTUBERT - PONT FIVE road. 120 rifles of the 15th Lancers were attached to us and the men were allowed to go into the houses behind the trenches for the night. By 6 P.M. the MANCHESTER regiment had driven the enemy out of

53

2

the buildings of GIVENCHY and 2/Lt Smyth was sent to guide a French Battalion in a counter attack to regain the trenches on their left, but the attack was not successful. Of the left $\frac{1}{2}$ Bn 2 platoons of No 3 Coy relieved some of the H.L.S. in the trenches and were then placed with the remainder of the coy in Reserve. No 4 Coy on the right relieved the 125th Rifles in the trenches at mid-night 20/21 December and remained in them till 10 p.m. 21st Dec. The trenches were full of mud and water.

Dec 21st

The 21st $\frac{1}{2}$ Bn occupied the intermediate line of trenches before daylight with the 15th Bn on our left and the 59th Rifles on our right. The Manchester Regt and the French troops who had attacked the night before were holding GIVENCHY but had not regained the lost trenches. We were kept busy improving our trenches and making loopholes all the morning. At mid-day the enemy began a violent artillery bombardment of GIVENCHY with their heavy guns and burst-shrapnel on the far side to prevent re-inforcements coming up. About 12.45 P.M. we saw the French and Manchesters retiring and GIVENCHY was once more taken by the Germans. We heard that the 1st British Division were going to attack and re-capture the trenches & Lt Bantow was sent to lead the Camerons up to GIVENCHY. The attack was preceded by a very heavy artillery fire from our guns which inflicted all the FESTUBERT trenches and must have cut a great deal of the enemy's artillery wires. The Coldstreamers then attacked the position in open order from the front and the Camerons advanced from the right on to GIVENCHY. The advance was carried out magnificently and they got up close to the enemy's trenches before dark. Lt Bantow led the Camerons right into GIVENCHY and then unluckily put his foot into a "Jack Johnson" hole and put his shoulder out and had to be sent off to hospital. 2/Lt Smyth was brought from the trenches to officiate as Adj. The men were again allowed to go into the houses for the night.

Dec 22nd

At 7 a.m. the 1st Division having been re-inforced made a further effort to regain the trenches and Captains Hughes & Hamill were

54

3

sent to show them the ground. However the enemy are holding the position very strongly and no further advance could be made. The 1st Bn had gone back to billets in GORE the previous evening and Lt Thomson went sick from an attack of ague. Things were fairly quiet during the day and we could see the Camerons holding our old support dug-outs in GIVENCHY. About 4 P.M. the 4th Bn Royal Welsh Fusiliers came up to relieve us and at 6 P.M. we received orders to march back to billets in BETHUNE.

Dec 23rd

The Tullundun Bde marched at 9.50 A.M. to ALLOUAGNE six miles from BETHUNE. It was snowing hard and most of the men were very footsore. We got good billets in ALLOUAGNE.

Dec 24th

In billets ALLOUAGNE - Nothing to record - Men glad of a rest.

Dec 25th

In billets ALLOUAGNE - Nothing to record.

General Carnegie inspected first re-inforcements.

Dec 26th

In billets ALLOUAGNE

General Watkins inspected first reinforcements.

Dec 27th

In billets ALLOUAGNE - Nothing to record

Dec 28th

In billets ALLOUAGNE

Very damp and rainy and nothing to be done except stay in billets. An extra machine gun section was made up under 1 Canadian Trencher consisting of 12 Lewis & 5 V.C.O.s. They started instruction under Captain Daniell. In the afternoon the regiment was inspected by Sir James Willcocks.

Dec 29th

In billets ALLOUAGNE - Nothing to record.

There are still a large number of men whose feet are bad.

Dec 30th

The C.O., Colonel Gordon and 6 N.O.s went in motor lorries to meet