

**Extracts from Report of the Action by Lt Col N C Martin MC  
commanding 2/7<sup>th</sup> Sherwood Foresters.**

After the battle Lt Col M Martin submitted a two page report.

The National Archives' reference WO 95/3025/7

To Headquarters  
178th Infantry Brigade  
REFERENCE YOUR 688/9

On the night of the 23/24th I received Operation Orders from G.O.C. 178th Infantry Brigade, giving details for the attack on the 26th

On the evening of the 24th the Battalion moved up and took over the line from the 6th North Staffs., the line running roughly SCHULER FARM SCHULER GALLERIES LOOS

On the morning of the 25th the enemy put down a heavy barrage on the front line and on the line CAPRICORN KEEP CORN HILL PORT HILL. This barrage lasted about 2 1/2 hours. A practice barrage was put down by our own guns at 6 pm and was replied to by the enemy by a barrage lasting about 2 hours, on the same lines as above. From observations made this practice barrage seemed very effective.

By 3.30 am on the morning of the 26th the Battalion formed up in 3 waves on 3 Company frontages on lines which had been previously taped under cover of darkness; in the front wave "D" Company on the left and "A" Company on the right, and the rear wave "C" Company on the left and "B" Company on the right.

During the night orders were received that ZERO hour would be 5.50. At about 4 am a bombardment by our guns was put down on the enemy lines, which apparently proved effective. At this time an enemy barrage was put down on our rear waves, but caused few casualties. The Battalion advanced and the barrage was lifted according to time table

The first wave suffered a fairly number of casualties through Machine Guns at KANSASHOUSE and the strong points round CROSS COTS.

The first objective was then consolidated by the first wave, the 2nd wave leapfrogging over, and here direction was slightly lost. A position about D.14. a.5.2. was captured by a Section of the right Company. It was then handed over to the Battalion on the right. From here little opposition was met by the 2nd wave on to their 2nd objective, most of the casualties being through enemy shells. The 2nd objective was then captured and consolidated

I received a message at 7.15 am that the first objective was in our hands at 6.20 am. At about 7.30 am I received another message to say that we had captured and were consolidating the 2nd objective at 7.15 am

During the morning and early afternoon enemy shelling was not heavy on the front line, but was on the 2nd line and the rear area about SCHULER GALLERIES and CAPRICORN KEEP

About 2 pm the enemy launched a local counter attack which was broken up by our Artillery Fire. This barrage was apparently brought down by one of our Aeroplanes who spotted the enemy concentration.

About 5.30 the enemy put down a creeping barrage apparently on the whole of the front line, and he then launched a heavy counter attack. The troops on the extreme right and left flanks, for some reason unknown, then began to retire. I am not clear as to whether there were any troops in my immediate front or not. None were seen.

An S O S Barrage was put down by our own Artillery, and also a heavy barrage by our barrage Machine Guns, both of which seemed to prove effective. In any case, the counter attack stopped before reaching our front line. The nearest enemy did not get to a point nearer than 450 yards. The enemy then shelled the region of our front line and KANSAS HOUSE. By this time stragglers had been collected and the front line reinforced, and the unit holding the 3rd objective were collected and sent up into their original position to reinforce a small body who had apparently still remained in their position.

From about 9.30 pm there was practically no shelling whatever.

The usual barrage was put down by the enemy about 4 am on the morning of the 27th. During the day intermittent shelling of front line as far back as CAPRICORN KEEP.

At 6 pm the enemy put down an intensive barrage on the areas FOKYER FARM, NILE, KANSAS CROSS, CROSS COTS, SCHULER GALLERIES, POND GALLERIES, CAPRICORN KEEP, which lasted until 8 pm. It is not clear on what portion of the line the enemy counter attack was launched. Considering the intensity of the barrage few casualties were suffered and the men showed extra ordinary good morale in face of the heavy shelling. After the barrage had ceased the night was quiet.

The usual shelling took place between 6 and 7 am on the 28th which was continued intermittently throughout the day.

About 6 pm S O S Signals went up on our flanks, which brought down very heavy shelling from the enemy guns. At 7 pm the shelling on both sides died down, and the Battalion was relieved by the 2/6th S. Staffs the relief being completed about one hour after it commenced. The Battalion was then withdrawn and split up into three parties, one to SCHULER GALLERIES, one to POND GALLERIES and one to PORTHULL.

On the 28th the usual intermittent shelling took place, and arrangements were made with the 2nd Batta Canterbury Regiment Anzac for relief at night. The Batta was relieved by one Company of the 2nd Canterbury Regt, half an hour after the relief commenced.

The Batta then marched back to VLAERTINGHE No 2 Area, via XPRES

IN THE FIELD  
2 10 17

*W. H. Hartley*  
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Commanding 27th Sherwood Foresters