

Battalion Diary Extract

2ND BATTALION THE SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS

1916

July

THE FIRST DAY OF THE SOMME BATTLE

1st:

The same track as the Battalion from BEAUSSART, arrived in the TENDERIOIN about 10pm. They remained there for an hour or more, awaiting further orders, and then moved back to the SUNKEN ROAD. The men were put in a trench running along the east edge of the road about 300 yards south of the SUCRERIE. Colonel Hopkinson, who had during the later part of the day been wounded in the face and the shoulder, Captain Laurie the Adjutant, and Captain Gordon COB Coy, with what remained of the Battalion arrived at this point on the SUNKEN ROAD about 2am. Very great tribute was paid to the Battalion by all who took part in the day's fighting, and very particularly to Colonel Hopkinson, the Adjutant and Captain Gordon who hung on for several hours, commanding and encouraging men not only the remaining few of their own Battalion, but also men of every unit in the Division who, having lost their own leaders, left themselves in charge of Col Hopkinson and fought most gallantly. In due course the Colonel and the Adjutant were awarded the DSO, Captain Gordon the Military Cross and also CSMS Fenboulost and Aitken of 'B' and 'D' Companies respectively, whereas Sgt K Mcleod of 'A' Company, who was left very early in the day as the senior NCO in his company, when all his officers and senior NCOs had been killed, was awarded a truly well-earned DCM. The casualties were heavy, and the proportion of killed among the officers was particularly severe. The very large majority of the casualties especially those of the officers occurred during the first two hours of the day's fighting. The casualties among officers were:-

KILLED

Capt Baird, CH
2nd Lt Shaw, W
2nd Lt Gourlay, JH
2nd Lt Sillars (3rd A & S Highlanders)
2nd Lt Buchanan, D
2nd Lt Williamson, J
2nd Lt Broom, FO
2nd Lt Harvey
2nd Lt Crum, SA
2nd Lt Connor, PA
2nd Lt Blackwood MH
2nd Lt Lancaster TH (12)

DIED OF WOUNDS 5/7/16

2nd Lt Harrison, B (3rd Gordons)