

15.40 hrs, Support Coy. (with H.Q. at S.11.b.95.3) reports being in touch with right Coy. with Reserve Coy. close up. I found the best part of my leading Coys. on main road in S.11.a., took them forward and started them through wood.

Report timed 17.00 hrs from Left Coy. that they were well into wood in S.6.d. but meeting with heavy Machine Gun fire on right flank, touch lost with "B" Coy.

At 19.40 hrs left Coy. reported touch with 13th Royal Fusiliers at T.7.b.3.8. but reported not able to get on owing to thickness of undergrowth. The left Coy. encountered 3 enemy machine guns and a sniper at about T.1.c.65.25. and T.1.c.15.50 at about 17.30 hrs.

They opened fire with rifles and Lewis Gun on the enemy who was seen to withdraw carrying one of their number who was apparently wounded, we had two casualties one killed and one slightly wounded. The enemy were followed up but owing to the thickness of the wood and our ignorance of the way they were not found.

A similar experience was met with by "B" Coy. further South, one enemy machine gun with four men being encountered which withdrew on fire being opened on the enemy - the party escaped in the darkness.

Decided to push Support and Reserve Companies through along main rides with strong platoon patrols supported by a second platoon.

Ordered "D" Coy. to send patrols down road and railway South Eastwards from T.7.b.25.80 and T.7.b.40.85 respectively to T.8.d.10.00 and T.8.d.05.85, and "C" Coy. to T.2.c.50.25 and thence to T.8.b.95.00 and T.3.c.02.90. each patrol to establish strong posts at these points if possible and then push on to reconnoitre eastern exits of wood. Moved to forward report centre at T.7.b.25.80 where I found two Company Commanders 13th Royal Fusiliers.

Later established line of posts T.2.c.50.30. - T.8.b.05.85. - T.8.d.05.85. - T.8.d.10.00. with protective listening posts connecting same up.

Three Officer patrols went out one to a point on Railway 50 to 100 yards from eastern exits from wood. Several fires were observed and from 15 to 20 of the enemy were seen passing in front of these fires. A patrol proceeding from T.2.c.60.30 towards T.3.2.80.20. saw 10 of the enemy at this point. Another patrol going from T.2.c.60.30 towards T.9.c.40.70 saw two of the enemy at this point.

Reported situation to Brigade by telephone from T.7.b.30.80.

In this connection I wish to report that the Battn. Signallers laid and maintained lines from S.10.b.50.75 (JOLIMETZ) to T.7.b.30.75.

In the morning learning that 5th Division intended using main drives and railways through wood I ordered Coys. to establish posts at eastern exits so as to deny the observation along drives and railways to enemy.

The leading battalions of the 5th Division on arrival between 03.30 and 04.30 hrs were not aware that we had reached far edge of wood and were intending forming up on western edge of wood in attack formations.

I informed them at once of our position and urged them to shove on down rides to eastern edge of wood. Their Battalions passed through our troops and across eastern edge of wood between 06.30 hrs and 06.40 hrs.