



## Source 3

Official reports of the experiences of British Army units, 1 July 1916

(Catalogue ref: a. WO 95/2366, b & c. WO 95/1653)



### How to use this source:

Study this source carefully. It contains information that could be useful in your presentation. As you study the source, ask yourself:

- What happened to the Lancashire regiments?
- Did the Gordon Highlanders have a better experience than the Lancashire Regiments?
- How did the experience of the Devonshire Regiment compare with the experiences of the other two?
- Will you use any of these sources in your presentation?



## Source 3a

11<sup>th</sup> EAST. LANCASHIRE REGT.  
July 1916.

1st.

The assembly trenches for the attack on Gave ~~was~~ situated from  
MARK CROSS to MATTHEW CROSS in a line with the 12<sup>th</sup> BATTAL YORK  
LANCASHIRE REGT on the left and the 9<sup>th</sup> BATTAL BRISTOL on the right.  
The 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> BATTAL YORK and LANCASHIRE REGT were in support  
of the 11<sup>th</sup> LANCASHIRE REGT + 12<sup>th</sup> YORK + LANCASHIRE REGT. The  
formation was ordered to go forward in 4 waves accompanied by  
detachments from the 9<sup>th</sup> BATTAL BRISTOL, THE 14<sup>th</sup> BATTAL BRISTOL and the 12<sup>th</sup>  
BATTAL YORK (Pioneers), the hour for attack being 7:30 am.

When the infantry advanced, heavy rifle and machine gun  
fire was opened from in front on a high ridge from the direction  
of the POINT and GONNERSBURG BATT. A heavy artillery barrage  
was also placed on the first line trenches. From  
information brought back by wounded it appears that only  
a few reached the enemy front line and were able to enter  
their trenches owing to the retirement of the Machine Gun



## Source 3b

The 2nd GORDON HIGHLANDERS after crossing "No Mans Land" came under a very heavy machine gun and rifle fire and H.E. shrapnel. The enemy in the front line was preparing to meet the assaulting columns with bombs, but so quickly were the 2nd GORDON HIGHLANDERS upon them that the defence was quite ineffectual - bombs being thrown without drawing the pins.

Casualties were now heavy but the line pushed steadily on, with the exception of the left company which was most unfortunately held up by uncut wire.

This was the only wire on our front which had not been thoroughly cut through; every effort had been made to complete it, but it appeared to present special difficulties to the Artillery. With this exception the cutting of the wire was most thorough.

This uncut wire undoubtedly caused many casualties and greatly delayed the advance.



## Source 3c

The 9th DEVONSHIRE REGIMENT had advanced at 7'27 a.m. in touch with 2nd BORDER REGIMENT, but on reaching our front line in the vicinity of MANSEL COPSE came under a heavy artillery and machine gun barrage, and suffered severely. The first two lines of this battalion advanced in extended order with the 3rd line in small columns.

The battalion moved on steadily at first, but the leading companies losing all their officers soon after entering the hostile trenches, and having to pass over trenches completely wrecked beyond recognition by shell fire, became somewhat disorganized and remained in the vicinity of TIRPITZ Trench and SHRINE ALLEY, collected in small parties, and engaging the enemy in front of and behind them wherever met. They undoubtedly did great service in keeping the enemy engaged, and in clearing the trenches, and sent back many prisoners. They did not however succeed in getting into touch with the battalions on their right and left, and failed to carry out the task of clearing the "dug-outs" in the wooded bank West of the Railway.