

LANCE CORPORAL FRITZ NICHOLAS - 22 May 1880 to 21 March 1918 - Killed in Action

Service Number: 56213; Northumberland Fusiliers 22nd (Tyneside Scottish) Bn.

Commemorated at ARRAS MEMORIAL Bay 2 and 3.



Operation Michael - < https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Michael >

Part of the German Spring Offensive in World War I

Date 21 March – 5 April 1918

Location Northern France

Territorial changes Germans penetrate British lines up to 40 mi while seizing 1200 mi² of territory

Operation Michael was a major German military offensive during the First World War that began the German Spring Offensive on 21 March 1918. It was launched from the Hindenburg Line, in the vicinity of Saint-Quentin, France. Its goal was to break through the Allied (Entente) lines and advance in a north-westerly direction to seize the Channel Ports, which supplied the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and to drive the BEF into the sea. Two days later General Erich Ludendorff, the chief of the German General Staff, adjusted his plan and pushed for an offensive due west, along the whole of the British front north of the River Somme. This was designed to first separate the French and British Armies before continuing with the original concept of pushing the BEF into the sea. The offensive ended at Villers-Bretonneux, to the east of the Allied communications centre at Amiens, where the Allies managed to halt the German advance; the German Army had suffered many casualties and was unable to maintain supplies to the advancing troops.

Much of the ground fought over was the wilderness left by the Battle of the Somme in 1916. The action was therefore officially named by the British Battles Nomenclature Committee as The First Battles of the Somme, 1918, whilst the French call it the Second Battle of Picardy (2ème Bataille de Picardie). The failure of the offensive marked the beginning of the end of the First World War for Germany. The arrival in France of large reinforcements from the United States replaced Entente casualties but the German Army was unable to recover from its losses before these reinforcements took the field. Operation Michael failed to achieve its objectives and the German advance was reversed during the Second Battle of the Somme, 1918 (21 August – 3 September) in the Allied Hundred Days Offensive.

34th Division.

102nd Infantry Brigade.

WAR
DIARY

22nd BATTALION

1ST TENDERSLAND REGIMENT

MARCH 1918.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Sheet 2.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BELFAST CAMP	March 11 th		Second and third Battle Systems and covered routes to them. A complete kit inspection was held and men's kits were completed. Men were bathed. As much training as possible was carried on in the mornings.	
	12 th		The Battalion moved forward to its assembly position in the Corps Line and bivouaced. Headquarters were in the road 200 yards S. of St. LEGER.	Lt Lewis H. G. To England - 14 th duty 15 th
	to		The Battalion was employed in building shelters.	
	18 th		The Battalion was employed in building shelters. Lewis Gun classes and Rifle grenade instruction were carried out by day. The Battalion found working parties by night in the forward area. Continued daily reconnaissances of alternative positions in case of enemy attack - were carried out by all officers.	
	19 th		The Battalion went into the front line again taking over the night Subsector of the Right Brigade in the Divisional front. The disposition	
	20 th		of companies was as follows. Right forward Company "D" Coy., Left Forward Company "C" Coy., Support Company "B" Company, Reserve Company "A" Coy.	Capt. Grant 16 th Joined 17 th 1918
	21 st		Enemy attacked. His barrage opened at about 5 am. and was very intense - particularly on the Support, reserve, Lewis and BUNHILL ROW. It consisted of H.E and GAS. The initial casualties on account of	

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Sheet 3

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
U25b 55.25	March 21	11am	<p>His were heavy. The Right forward company formed a defensive flank as the Battalion on our right had been forced back.</p> <p>Two platoons of the Reserve Company were sent to extend the flank westward.</p>	<p>Casualties</p> <p>Lt. Col. H. Skelton Killed</p>
		11.30	<p>Two rifle grenade sections of the Reserve company were sent forward to assist the forward Company.</p>	<p>Missing</p> <p>Capt. Brown G.L. Lt. Davidson R. Beales G. R. Barter G. E. Grant J. Percy R. B. Robinson J. Henry H. Olivier F. G. Lt. Fouldes J. Bogg A. J.</p>
		1pm	<p>162nd L.T.M.B. section reported that the enemy were in ECOUST. One Company 25th N.F. were ordered to extend the defensive flank westward along the ECOUST SWITCH.</p> <p>Battalion H.Q. moved to Left Bn. H.Q. at U25a 6060</p>	
U25a 6060		1.30	<p>The enemy gained a footing in the front line of the Right forward Company as far North as GOG and endeavoured to work northwards but was held up.</p>	<p>Wounded</p> <p>Capt. Bibby R.L. Lt. Anderson S. Moore W.B. Leach A. G. Gallan R. B. Capt. Boyan G. S.</p>
		3pm	<p>The enemy was reported to be on the HOGS BACK. Two Companies 25th N.F. were immediately ordered by Brigade to Counter-attack.</p>	
		4pm	<p>The enemy was seen advancing on the HOGS BACK towards CROISILLES</p>	<p>Other Backs</p> <p>Missing 246 Killed 30 Wounded 69</p>
		5p	<p>The enemy was seen gathering on the W side of the Railway bank at between U2500.90 and U24d 55.60.</p>	<p>345</p>

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Sheet 11

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	21	5pm	The Left Company practically intact and the remainder of the three other Companies made a fighting retirement Northwards on to a line from FACTORY AVENUE to CROISILLES SWITCH NORTH. When the enemy were on three sides, Three Lewis Guns and the H.Q. personnel of 22NF, 23NF and 25NF made a temporary redoubt of Batt ^y H.Q. whilst all documents were burnt - and then a fighting retirement was effected Northwards.	
	22		The remains of the Batt ^y together with parties of 23NF and 25NF, J. Coy R.Es., and 102 Pioneer Company held the CROISILLES SWITCH NORTH. The enemy attempted to enter this track N. of St. Leeger. In the afternoon the enemy entered St. Leeger and flank fighting ensued. The Battalion was relieved at night and returned to billets at MOYENVILLE	
MOYENVILLE	23		The Battalion moved by march route to ABLAINZEVELLE where it occupies huts for the night.	
ABLAINZEVELLE	24		The Battalion moved by march route to BAILLEULMONT where it was billeted for one night.	
BAILLEULMONT				