

856 KINGSMILL Horace Frederick



Major H. Kingsmill, D.S.O.

Son of John Johnson Kingsmill Esq CPS Muswellbrook born December 31 1889
Entered 1904 Left 1905 Great War 1914-18 (Major DSO)

Nom Roll Major 1 Div Arty KIA 8/8/17 cwgc Major DSO 1 FAB

Service Record 5y AFA Joined Lt 1FAB 14/8/14 First Exped Force Embarked Capt
18/10/14 MEF Gallipoli Maj DAC 12/3/16 France DSO 19/8/16 mid 12/11/16 Lt
Col 1FAB 26/1/17-14/4/17 KIA 8/8/17

R. BEAN described the activities of the 1st Australian Division Artillery during the early stages of the Third Battle of Ypres, "whereas at the Somme the German artillery fire lay...more heavily on the forward area, at Ypres it thrashed the roads, bivouacs, and battery positions for miles back. It was no longer blinded by the complete suppression of its airmen....even casualty clearing stations...were shelled, and the battery nests at Zillebeke were one of the most important targets....The impact of those bombardments on the 1st Australian Division's batteries was described by a British artillery officer at the time: 'We were next to the Anzacs, splendid fellows. I remember looking back - we knew where they were, of course, south of Zillebeke Lake...and seeing the Boche fairly pounding it in there; and all the time the Anzac guns kept on firing away, and we wondered how they could do it - how on earth they weren't blown to blazes. Right in the thick of it you would see them firing every time....' But this activity was only maintained at the cost of casualties such as Australian artillery had never before suffered...On the...[second day in this position, 21/7/17] when the 3rd Battery...was being registered upon its targets by its commander, Major Kingsmill...the German artillery opened with shrapnel and high-explosive upon the firing guns." One officer and six others were killed, one officer and eight others wounded. [IV 704-5]

Later in Third Ypres, on the first day [31/7/18] of the phase known as the Battle of Pilckem Ridge, R BEAN described the advance: "The brigades of the 1st Division...advanced at the hour laid down, 6am....and Major Byrne...having left Dickebusch with the teams shortly after midnight, now led the column, 4th, 5th, 6th, 3rd, 1st, 2nd, 102nd Batteries, in that order, across the battlefield. Pack-horses, seven pairs for each gun, followed the battery limbers, so that each piece would have 108 rounds on going into action. At the forward position...1000 yards south of Hooge - Lieutenant-Colonel Stevenson (2nd Brigade) and Major Kingsmill (3rd Battery) were anxiously looking at their watches...when over the gentle slope behind them came the 4th Battery quietly leading the march to the point of divergence. The whole battlefield was sprinkled with bodies of infantry moving up for later stages of the attack, prisoners trailing back, mules going forward with signboards, and tanks sliding along the tracks, while above, under a low ceiling of dull cloud, aeroplanes wheeled so thickly that the pilots had constantly to avoid collision." [IV 708]

"[I]t was the August fighting," wrote R BEAN [IV 728] "that gave to the Third Battle of Ypres its baneful reputation. The fighting at Passchendaele two months later merely added to this. From the August fighting the Australian infantry was so fortunate as to be spared [The 3 and 4 Divisions were holding the flooded trenches east of Messines.], but the detached artillery bore its full share....Artillery casualties were...high [including Major Kingsmill and another 1 Div Battery commander] and the provision of officers with sufficient experience for battery command became a recognised problem." [IV 728-730]

DSO :“ On the occasion of the capture of POZIERES.

From the afternoon of 24 July until relieved at 1100 28 July, the Officer carried out the duties of liaison officer Right Battalion. Throughout this period there was heavy fighting, much of which was of a confused nature...in MUNSTER AVENUE...without the clear and quick information constantly supplied by Major KINGSMILL, it would not have been possible to give the support which was given by this Brigade. .daily reports will show the extent of Major KINGSMILL's work, not only in assisting in the direction of fire but also in passing valuable information to Infantry Brigade and Divisional Artillery Headquarters....Major KINGSMILL's work during this period while constantly under heavy fire was of the greatest value.”