

A transcription of the

**War Diaries of 20 Heavy Battery R.G.A.**

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made by  
Anne Vincent  
and

Dedicated to the memory of

**Michael John Rock**

1879 to 1931

Gunner, 20 H.B. 7<sup>th</sup> May 1915 – 17<sup>th</sup> September 1918

Part 4 – July 1917 to September 1917

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## 20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

Place: Salonika Field Force Maps POBREG and SMOL 1/20000

| Date    | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.7.17  |      | Battery obtained 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize for pair of H.D. horses at 26 <sup>th</sup> Div <sup>al</sup> Horse Show.                                                             |
| 4.7.17  |      | A shoot to destruction carried out on hostile battery 131(a) in conjunction with 192 H.B. 200 rounds per battery allotted. 2 direct hits reported.                           |
| 7.7.17  |      | Fired at night on roads BOGORODICA – PETIT MAMELON & BOGORODICA – MULBERRY HILL & co-ordinates 1134/1788 to enemies front line trenches.                                     |
| 8.7.17  |      | Fired on roads as on previous night.                                                                                                                                         |
| 11.7.17 |      | Gun Position and Camp inspected by the Corps Commander.                                                                                                                      |
| 15.7.17 |      | Extensive grass fire started at 1500 hours in proximity to Battery O.P. All available men turned out to extinguish the fire which was eventually completed about 1800 hours. |

Place: Salonika Field Force Map KUKUS 1/50000

|                       |  |                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17.7.17               |  | On the night 17 <sup>th</sup> /18 <sup>th</sup> the L <sup>x</sup> & Battery H.Q. moved to Rest Camp near KIREC. |
| 18.7.17               |  | R <sup>x</sup> of Battery moved to Rest Camp on night 18 <sup>th</sup> /19 <sup>th</sup> .                       |
| 19.7.17               |  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> L <sup>t</sup> SHAPLAND arrived at Rest Camp with O.P party from Battery Position.               |
| 18.7.17 to<br>20.7.17 |  | Personnel of Battery occupied in laying out Camp cleaning up wagons, & sorting stores, cleaning harness etc.     |
| 21.7.17               |  | Riding & Driving Drill commenced also food drill & rifle drill etc.                                              |
| 24.7.17               |  | Major W. NORTH-COATES left for 14 days leave to England.                                                         |
| 21.7.17 to<br>31.7.17 |  | Riding & Driving drill carried out daily as well as reconnaissance schemes with the B.C. staff.                  |

20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

G.B. Orr Capt. R.G.A.

31/7/17 Comdg: 20<sup>th</sup> Heavy Battery, R.G.A.

## 20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

Place: KIREC to 17<sup>th</sup> then Asagi Mahala

| Date    | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-8-17  |      | Battery in Training. Driving & Riding Drill and reconnaissance schemes carried out.<br>SIR H. WILSON Commdg. 12 <sup>th</sup> Corps inspected Lines etc.                                                                                                                    |
| 12-8-17 |      | 2/LT. J.D. SHAPLAND left for leave to ENGLAND.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 17-8-17 |      | Full echelon proceeded to Position G (near ASAGI MAHALA).                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 18-8-17 |      | Left Section proceeded to position on night of 18 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> .                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 19-8-17 |      | Right Section moved to position G. on night of 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> .                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 25-8-17 |      | CAPT. A.E. HEWITT from 192 H.B. arrived and took over Command of Battery vice CAPT. G.B. ORR to No. 7 Mountain Battery.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 26-8-17 |      | Registered two Block Points and roads for forthcoming bombardment and offensive operations. Harass roads during the night with shrapnel.<br>Operation orders issued personally by Lt. COL. P.L.HOLBROOKE at group hqrs. the battery now being under 37 <sup>th</sup> H.A.G. |
| 27-8-17 |      | First day of bombardment battery continued registration of important points and neutralized enemy batteries when reported active.<br>Harassed roads during night with 50 rounds shrapnel.                                                                                   |
| 28-8-17 |      | 2/LT. JONES from Wagon Lines to help at Battery Position and O.P. battery still having its O.C. and one other, 2/LT SHAPLAND, on leave.                                                                                                                                     |

# 20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

Place: KIREC to 17<sup>th</sup> then Asagi Mahala

| Date    | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-8-17  |      | <p>Battery in Training. Driving &amp; Riding Drill and reconnaissance schemes carried out.</p> <p>Destructive shoot which should have been carried out on target No 859 was prevented by hostile aeroplanes patrolling during the time when our own observers plane was in the air. Bombardment of enemy trenches continued by 4", 5" &amp; 6" Howitzer Batteries.</p> <p>Engaged in neutralizing enemy batteries and harassing roads during night with 50 Rds. Shrapnel. Arrange with R.F.C. observer at 192 H.B. Mess about conjoint shoot on target 811.</p>                                                                                        |
| 29-8-17 |      | <p>Fire for destruction on target 811 (Ref. 1/20000 DOIRAN). Not a great success as the target was well protected by the crest of GRAND COURONNE so that any "shorts" were not able to clear (200 Rds fired) 192 H.B. unable to obtain a hit at all and did not continue any rounds that missed the crest going well over target. Destruction arranged for by group with 6" Howitzers. Engaged during the rest of day in neutralizing enemy batteries and during night harassing his roads with shrapnel (50 Rounds).</p>                                                                                                                              |
| 30-8-17 |      | <p>Fired 100 Rounds H.E. on trenches "S" of TONGUE (1/20000 Doiran) a great amount of damage appeared to have been done all the "overs" getting communication trenches. A great deal of trouble experienced with the guns which are not our own, one &amp; sometimes two being continually out of action thro' out the day.</p> <p>Infantry raid O2 O6 &amp; P4 ¼ (1/20000 DOIRAN) capturing a few prisoners.</p> <p>Battery engaged in neutralizing enemy targets and harassing roads.</p> <p>Enemy after heavy bombardment raid our trenches on HORSESHOE (1/20000 DOIRAN).</p> <p>A great amount of activity on both sides thro' out the night.</p> |
| 31-8-17 |      | <p>Enemy battery ?817 fires a few (8) rounds of 4-2' H.E. at our position no damage done however. Battery engaged in neutralization of enemy targets No 816, 811, 762 , &amp; 815 &amp; harassing roads with shrapnel.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

Place: KIREC to 17<sup>th</sup> then Asagi Mahala

| Date           | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                             |
|----------------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-8-17         |      | Battery in Training. Driving & Riding Drill and reconnaissance schemes carried out.                                                           |
| <u>GENERAL</u> |      | 42 N.C.O.'s & Men admitted to hospital during month and struck off effective strength. Mostly recurrent cases of Malaria. 13 O.R. from G.B.D. |

(Sgd) A.E. Hewitt a/Capt. R.F.A.  
Commanding 20 Heavy Bty. R.G.A.

# 20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

Place: Salonika Field Force Maps POBREG and SMOL 1/20000

| Date                              | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sept.                             |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1                                 |      | Destruction shoots and counter battery work continued throughout the day. The enemy fired about 60 rounds during the afternoon on the infantry camp in front of position. several "overs" falling in the ravine in the centre of battery and in front of the left section. Harassed his roads and "block" points again during the night with 90 rds shrapnel. The enemy retaliating with gas shell in PEARSE RAVINE (1/20000 DOIRAN) the wind blew the gas into battery ravine and box helmets were worn by all ranks for about half an hour. |
| 2                                 |      | Calibrated all the guns on GRAND COURONNE O.P. (Doiran 1/20000).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> |      | Very Quiet.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>                   |      | Destruction shoots and counter battery work commenced again. Harassed enemy roads and block points during the night with 90 Rounds shrapnel.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup>                   |      | Fire for Obstruction on Target 853 (8" How) at a range of 12400 (12283/18895 1/20000 KARA OGULAR) with Aeroplane observation thro' out. Fired 160 Rounds H.E. 196 H. Battery fired at same time 120 Rounds. 3 M.O.K.s, 2 A6's & 1 A7[?] given after airman gave "go". Quite a satisfactory Shoot considering that 100% Length zone at this range is about 440 <sup>x</sup> and Breadth zone 25'. Harassed roads & block points during the night with 90 Rounds shrapnel.                                                                      |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>                   |      | Very Quiet along the whole front. In XII CORPS routine order (Artillery) No 21 the G.O.C. 22 <sup>nd</sup> DIV expressed his satisfaction at the action of the ARTILLERY during operations 27 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup> August 1917.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> |      | QUIET. On 9 <sup>th</sup> reconnoitred a position 1357/1651 for retired line (KUKUS 1/50000).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 10 <sup>th</sup>                  |      | Lecture by Lt Col P.L.HOLBROKE D.S.O. at CUGUNCI CHURCH on Recent Operations in France.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 12 <sup>th</sup>                  |      | Reconnoitred Wagon Lines etc for retired line position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

# 20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

Place: Salonika Field Force Maps POBREG and SMOL 1/20000

| Date                                | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sept.                               |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 14 <sup>th</sup>                    |      | Reconnoitred wagon Lines for Winter quarters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 16 <sup>th</sup>                    |      | Group Headquarters taken over by 82 <sup>nd</sup> H.A.G. Lieut. Col. H.B. Mayne in command.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> |      | Very quiet all along front the battery only firing 40 rounds during the week.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> |      | Quiet. Infantry reliefs being carried out on both nights.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 21 <sup>st</sup>                    |      | Neutralized 751 & 762.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup>                    |      | Very Quiet.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| night of 22 - 23 <sup>rd</sup>      |      | Harassed roads with 60 Rounds shrapnel enemy did not retaliate.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup>                    |      | Commenced registration of Target 751 (12020/18570) POBREG 1/20000 given up by Observer (An aeroplane registration) owing to bad light. Result however was good two plus and two minus observations being sent down at same gun range. To be fired on for destruction later. |
| 24 <sup>th</sup>                    |      | Registered several road points G26 & Target 817 from HORSESHOE.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> |      | Enemy Artillery very quiet.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 27 <sup>th</sup>                    |      | Harassed roads leading in & out of DOIRAN TOWN with 30 rounds of shrapnel. MAJOR W. NORTH COATES returned to battery from leave and takes over command.                                                                                                                     |
| 29 <sup>th</sup>                    |      | Harassed roads leading to enemy front line from VOLOVEC with 150 rds shrapnel.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>General</u>                      |      | During the month the battery sent two parties of men to change of air camp at KARABURNUN. The health of men very much improved for the change. 48 N.C.O.s & Men struck off strength of battery due to malaria and 29 reinforcements received from base.                     |

## 20 H.B. War Diary Jul 1917 to Sep 1917

Place: Salonika Field Force Maps POBREG and SMOL 1/20000

| Date  | Hour | Summary of Events and Information |
|-------|------|-----------------------------------|
| Sept. |      |                                   |

W. North-Coates

Major R.G.A.

Commanding 20th Heavy Battery, R.G.A.