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9th BATTERY. AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY.

Brief account - Gallipoli.

by Brig.Gen. Burgess.

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PART 1



Col. Genl Burgers

Mena

9th Bty

The training at Mena was good. Attention was particularly paid to the engineering side of artillery work. The overcoming of natural and artificial obstacles was practised and the training was progressive. When Mena was left the artillery were in a well-trained flexible condition and ready for war.

Burgers went ashore on the night of Sunday/Monday and made a reconnaissance of the front - the personnel of two subsections went up to relieve the 7th Bty gunners. Burgers hit on 3rd and absent till 15th. There was then one 7th Bty gun in action near the bottom of Schapnel Gully & Captain Goffe was in charge of a gun on the top of Mackay's Ridge which was not yet in action. The first of these was known as the Brighton battery. The other two guns were parked near Victoria Gully - Burgers then placed two guns in front of Mackay's ridge and two on top of the ridge. The two first had an arc of 60° from Gaba Tepe and were laid indirect. They were to cover their sector at medium ranges. The other two guns had a field of fire of 110° covering much the same country as the first two. They were laid direct. They were right on top of the Scarp



and proved impossible for the Turks to range on. A great many ^{of the same} targets were registered by each section, and when these had to be engaged one section would be put on and if it drew heavy fire from the Turks it would cease fire and the other section would take up the task.

When lines of fire had to be laid out the Director and aiming posts were employed and a distant aiming point given to the guns - the RB was measured with No 3 Director (in Burgers' opinion the ~~best~~ most useful one ever issued). The Plotter was occasionally used and is of service where OP is distant from guns. It should be on issue.

Targets

In the first week or so there consisted largely of enemy personnel in the open - sometimes in formed bodies. A low air burst was used and proved very effective. Later on such targets became very rare and enemy guns & trenches were principally engaged.

HE

The first issue of HE to field guns was 7 rds per platoon. This was fired at enemy trenches at about 1500 yds. range & proved quite effective.



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Bold use of Artillery

Gallipoli is a basin and it was necessary if field guns were to be used at all - to use them boldly. This was found possible because of the flexibility obtained through their men's training. With certain targets which had to be engaged the guns were necessarily - run up on to the skyline.

Range

Guns were employed from practically point blank to 7500 yds a range ^{of which} quite effective shooting was obtained with HE.

Anti - aircraft gun

An 18 pdr was employed for this purpose - A circular pit was dug - the trail let in and the muzzle elevated to an almost perpendicular angle - The custom was to keep the range constant at 2000 yds and on the approach of an aircraft to range with fuse only - Direct laying was employed. No direct hit was ever obtained but some shots were very near and it certainly helped to keep planes at a respectful distance.

The Navy

On several occasions the 9th Bty had a combined shoot with the navy, amongst other targets being the Winglears battery - The ships generally taking part were the Bacchante, Triumph

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Daris and Canopus - ~~On one~~
occasion the 4.2 guns of the above
Grove left section were in the habit
of firing at the monitors while they
were shooting and the 9th Bty
usually engaged the Turk guns
with its indirect section.

Cover

The 9th Bty guns had no
overhead cover - cover was obtained
for the detachments by tunneling
into the hill which ensured their
perfect safety when not actually
servicing the gun.

Night firing was common at
Gallipoli and when guns were
not in action were laid on various
targets - generally on Turkish guns.

OP

The OP was in the front line
trench the battery was controlled
from there so that liaison with
the infantry presented no difficulty.
From the OP there was direct
telephonic communication with each
section of the battery - and with
Bde Hq^r. SA could be got through
Bde. Very little difficulty was found
in keeping a line.

Map shootings

The maps were not satisfactory
Contours especially being questionable.
Quite often however the indirect switch

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was obtained from the map. No map shoot however was ever carried out without observation. The general method was to range on to the nearest spot recognizable both on the map and terrain and then make necessary difference in range and angle as learnt from the map.

Aeroplane shoots.

The battery did three aeroplane shoots the target being enemy guns at the Olive Grove. There was no direct communication between the plane and battery during the shoot but when the guns had ceased fire the plane sent in its observations these were found a useful guide.

Howitzers

The country was never really suited to field guns and the want of howitzers and trench mortars was severely felt.



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