



War Diary of the 15th Lancers (Cureton's Multanis) – 8th August 1914 to 30th December 1915.¹

When World War I commenced, the 15th Lancers formed the divisional cavalry of the 3rd (Lahore) Division of the Indian Army. They were mobilized on 8th August, 1914, when the regiment was at *Jullundur*.²

By 19th August, mobilization had been completed and the regiment was entrained for *Karachi*, which they reached two days later. Having been in camp for three days, the regiment then, on 24th August, embarked on the B.I.S.N.³ ships *SS Upada* and *SS Itola*.

The ships left *Karachi* in convoy, with escorts in attendance. They arrived at *Suez* on 10th September and *Port Said* the following day.

On 12th September, 1914, the Regiment arrived and disembarked at *Alexandria* and then marched to *Sidi Bisir*, 12 miles beyond *Ramlah*.

¹ Transcription of War Office Document (WO-95-3918-1) "Confidential War Diary of the 15th Lancers (Cureton's Multanis)."

² The 15th Lancers (Cureton's Multanis) were stationed at Jullundur (Jalandhar, Punjab) having arrived from Risalpur on 5 November 1912.

³ British India Steam Navigation Company Ltd.



Figure 1: Officer's Parade Uniform, 15th Lancers (Cureton's Multanis).

On 18th September, the Regiment re-embarked at *Alexandria* and set sail the following day, arriving at *Marseille* on 28th September. That day they marched to a camp at *La Barasse*, some 10 miles east from *Marseilles*.

After two days respite, the regiment left *Marseilles* by Troop Train and arrived at *Orleans* on 4th October when it en-camped at *Cercotte*, about 5 miles out to the north.

On 17th October, the Regiment left *Orleans* on 3 trains destined for *Wizerne(s)*, via *Calais* and *St Omer*. They arrived at *Wizerne(s)* on the night of 18th October and, on the following morning, they marched to *Esquerdes*, some 3 miles to the west.

On the 21st and 22nd October the Regiment completed a march with the 3rd Lahore Division via *Argues* to *Sercus*, *Hazebrouk* and finally *Bailieul*, close to the Belgian border, a march of some 43 miles. Regiment's 'flank' and A.G. patrols entered Belgium at *Dranoutre* and *Locre*.

On 23rd October, the Regiment moved to *Estaires* via *Vieux Berquin*.

On the 24th October, the left wing escorted a section of the 18th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, to *Vieille Chapelle* – one squadron being detached with the artillery in the afternoon to the vicinity of *Laventie*, where the artillery came under fire. The remainder of the Regiment moved to *Lacoute*, but changed camp after dark, by order of General Smith Dorrien, it being too close to the firing line at *Neuve Chapelle*. Camped at *Essares*.

The following morning the Regiment moved via the north edge of *Bethune* to *Les Choquaux*, from whence, **on 26th October**, they marched to *Estaires*.



Figure 2: Lance Daffadar and Officer of 15th Lancers (Cureton's Multanis), 27th October 1914. © National Army Museum, London.

On the 27th October, 1914, at 10p.m., the Regiment departed for *Fauquissart* to support 8th Indian Brigade in the trenches. (One squadron still escorting the artillery.)

On the 28th October, at 1.00a.m., the Regiment arrived at the trenches. They were shelled by heavy artillery on approaching the trenches. The trenches were heavily attacked. Later, at 5.00p.m. on 28th October, they left for *Estaires* and then moved to *Fauquissart Trenches*. One squadron in the rear of 47th Sikhs.

On 29th October, at 5.45a.m. the Regiment departed for *Estaires*. Later, on the same day, at 5.00p.m., they left for *Fauquissart Trenches* – again heavily fired on by Heavy Artillery on approaching the trenches – our movements apparently reported by hostile spies. Very heavy firing all night. On our right and left there were three separate attacks – finishing at 5.00a.m. on 30th October. Later that day, at 5.45a.m., the Regiment marched through the night to *Estaires*. At 3.00p.m., they marched to *Sailly sur Lys* and then, at 6.00p.m. they moved 3 miles S.E. to Trenches, in rear of 59th N.I.⁴

On 1st November, the Regiment marched back to *Sailly*.

The Regiment remained at *Sailly-sur-la-Lys* from 1st to the 14th November, 1914.⁵ All available rifles went out every night into the Reserve Trenches in reserve to the [8th \(Jullundur\) Infantry Brigade](#). The method employed was that the Regiment filled the trenches during the night and returned to billets during the day to look after their horses, etc.. On the 5th November, Major J.H. Hallowes, Squadron Commander, 2nd Lieut. H.N. Sillem, attached as French Interpreter and a Trumpeter were wounded by a high explosive shell in the neighbourhood of *Laventie*. Major Hallowes had to be sent home with a wounded hand, and the Trumpeter was seriously wounded in the left leg and was sent to the Field Hospital. The three horses were seriously wounded and had to be subsequently destroyed.

On the 14th & 15th November, 1914, the Regiment was at *Estaires*, with the exception of one squadron, having marched to billets there.

On the 16th November, the Regiment, the detached squadron having re-joined it, marched to billets at *Hingette* where it remained until the 22nd November whilst the 3rd (Lahore) Division was given a rest. One squadron was detached to *Hinges* close by, as escort to G.O.C. Indian Army Corps.

On 22nd November, the Regiment marched to *Locon*, a short distance N.E., on which date it again formed the reserve to the Jullundur Brigade in the reserve trenches on the line running roughly N. & S. from the junction of the *Rue du Bois* and the main road between *Estaires* and *La Bassée* to *La Quinze Rue*. The method employed was that each squadron found from 50 to 60 rifles permanently in the trenches, each squadron being in reserve separately to the 4th Infantry Regiment of the Jullundur Brigade. The machine guns in the firing line trenches as a separate unit.

On the 27th November, Major J.C. Corbett, Jemadar Samund Khan and an N.C.O. and 3 men were hit by a bursting shrapnel shell while digging a communications trench. Major Corbett was wounded in the foot, but Jemadar Samund Khan died shortly after

⁴ 59th N.I. = 59th Native Infantry (Scinde Rifles).

⁵ At *Sailly-sur-la-Lys* there is a Commonwealth war Graves cemetery containing some 320 WWI graves.

on the same day.⁶ The N.C.O. was dangerously wounded, the remainder being seriously or slightly so.

On 2nd & 3rd December, the Lahore Division, having been relieved by the Meerut Division, the Regiment was relieved from duty in the reserve trenches and returned to its billets at *Locon* and re-joined its horses there.

On 4th December, the Regiment marched to new billets at *La Croix Marmuse*. One squadron formed the escort to the Indian Army Corps Commander at *Hinges* as it did on a former occasion.

On 12th December, 1914, the Regiment changed its billets to *Bethune*. On the same day, the machine gun section of the Regiment went into the firing line trenches of the Jullundur Brigade remaining there till relieved on the 17th December. One Sowar⁷ was killed during this duty.



Figure 3: Officer's Cap - 15th Lancers, Indian Army.

On 17th December, the Regiment again formed a reserve in the rear of the village of Givenchy. This time, only some 150 rifles were available, and they were all kept

⁶ He is buried in [Gorre British and Indian Cemetery](#), Beuvry, Pas de Calais, France. Plot D.5.. He was the husband of Musammat Jindwaddi, of Jamali, Khushat, Shahpur, Punjab. Commonwealth War Graves records give his death as having occurred on the same day that he was injured. He, like all the Regiment, was a Muslim.

⁷ A 'Sowar' was the lowest rank in the Indian cavalry forces: equivalent to a Sepoy in the infantry.



CWG Records show that this was [Sowar Abdullah Khan \(Service No. 2169\)](#) and that he died on 14th December, 1914. He was the son of Khan Muhammad Khan, of Kohawar Kalan, Bhakkar, Mianwali, Punjab. He is commemorated on Panel 6., at Neuve-Chapelle Memorial.

together as one unit under the command of the 2nd in-Command of the regiment, Major A.Y Cheyne. The remainder of the Regiment either remained with the horses at Bethune or continued to form the escort to the G.O.C. Indian Army Corps.

On 19th December, Major A.Y. Cheyne, in command of the detachment in reserve at *Givenchy* was wounded in the right foot and was succeeded in command by Captain O.W.E. Bannerman.

The following day, **20th December, 1914**, the detachment of the Regiment forming the above reserve was ordered to advance to the support of the 129th Baluchies who were strongly pressed by the enemy. Before arriving in support the 129th Baluchies were themselves compelled to retreat. The detachment retired with them and took up a position on the left of the 15th Sikhs on the road just in front of their billets. There they dug reserve trenches and remained there till relieved on the 22nd December. During the advance in support of the 129th Baluchies, Captain O.W.S. Bannerman was seriously wounded in the left thigh by a piece of shrapnel shell and fell into the hands of the enemy for about 5 hours until rescued by the counter attack of the Manchester Regiment. He was eventually sent back to the clearing Hospital at *Lillers*.

On 22nd December, the Regiment was 'on relief in reserve' when the detachment under the command of Captain R.H. Howell (who had succeeded to the command since Captain Bannerman was wounded) returned to their permanent billets at *Bethune* and on the following day, the 23rd December, the whole regiment, less the squadron still forming the escort to the G.O.C. Indian Army Corps, marched into new billets at *Marles*, about 6 miles S.W. of Bethune for a period of rest of the whole of the Indian Army Corps.

On 26th December, 1914, Major J.B. Keogh, 32nd Lancers, arrived with 27 rank and file of the regiment as a reinforcement from India. They arrived on horses received from the Base at *Rouen*.

On 27th December, Major J.H. Crawford, 32nd Lancers, joined the regiment for duty.

On 1st January, 1915, Captain S.M. Bruce, 37th Lancers (Baluch Horse) joined the regiment for duty.

On 5th January, Lieut. H.M. Hankin,⁸ Corps of Guides Cavalry joined the regiment for duty.

On 15th January, the machine gun section, under the command of Lt. C.T.O. Berrington, was attached to the Sirhind Brigade⁹ for duty in the trenches in the vicinity of *Richebourg St. Vaast*.

On 19th January, 1915, the Sirhind Brigade was relieved in the trenches by the Jullundur Brigade, the machine gun section remaining in the same place for duty. The remainder of the Regiment remained in its billets at *Marles*.

⁸ Lt. Hugh Mordant Hankin, of Queen Victoria's Own Corps of Guides.

⁹ 10th (Sirhind) Infantry Brigade.

On the 21st January Captain R.H. Howell and Lt. B.L. Clark (23rd Cavalry) proceeded to join the Royal Flying Corps at *St Omer* for duty and be trained as observers.

On 22nd January, Captain C.P. Browne, Guides Cavalry, joined the Regiment for duty, and brought with him a small reinforcement of 2 Indian Officers and 9 Rank & File from Marseilles.

On 24th January, the machine gun section was relieved in the trenches and returned to the billets at *Marles*.

From 25th to 27th January, the Regiment was held in constant readiness to move with the Lahore Division to support the 1st Army Corps in the vicinity of *Givenchy* and *Cuinchy* as it was frequently threatened and attacked by the enemy on those dates. The Division however did not move.

On 1st February, the Regiment changed its billets to *Hamet Billet* about 10 miles north of *Marles*. The whole of the Lahore Division of the Indian Army Corps, moving at the same time to the same vicinity forming a reserve to the 1st Army. On the same day, orders were received that one squadron of the Regiment was to be held in a state of readiness to move at 2 hours notice in conjunction with one of the Infantry and Artillery Brigades of the Division.

On 12th February, 1915, the Lahore Division relieved the Meerut Division in the front line, and the Regiment returned to its old billets in reserve at *Hamet Billet*.

On 10th March, 1915, the Regiment changed billets to *L'EpINETTE* near *Lestrem* about 9 miles further East.

On 12th March, the Regiment was suddenly ordered to proceed mounted to reinforce the Lahore Division in the neighbourhood of *Neuve Chapelle* and *Richebourg l'Avoué*. It proceeded in two parties. There were also 3 British Officers Patrols out, one with each of the 3 Brigade of the Division. The Regiment was out the whole day and the following night, being used in reserve in conjunction with the 4th Cavalry (the Divisional Cavalry of the Meerut Division) ready to advance should opportunity occur during the attack of the 1st Army on *Neuve Chapelle* and neighbouring important tactical points. No opportunity ~~~ occurred to advance and early of the 13th the regiment returned to its billets at *l'EpINETTE* with the exception of the Machine Gun Section which remained in the trench line attached to the Black Watch Highlanders.

On the evening of the 13th March, the Lahore Division having relieved the Meerut Division in the front line, the regiment marched to new billets S.W. of *Vielle Chapelle* relieving the 4th Cavalry. The machine gun section remained in the trenches and was successively attached to the Sirhind and Ferozepore Brigades.

On 20th March, 1915, a reinforcement of 1 Indian Officer and 25 Rank and File of the 37th Lancers joined the Regiment from the Military Base Depot at Marseilles. The Indian Officer was returned to Marseille on the 24th March.

On the 23rd March the Lahore Division, having been relieved by the Meerut Division [in the front line?], the Regiment marched to new billets at *Carvin*, in the neighbourhood of *Robecq*.

On the 31st March, the Lahore Division relieved the Meerut Division in the front line, and the Regiment marched to new billets at *Lestrem*, relieving the 4th Cavalry (the Divisional Cavalry Regiment of the Meerut Division).

On the 10th April, 1915, the Meerut Division relieved the Lahore Division in the front line, and the Regiment returned to its billets at *Carvin* relieving the 4th Cavalry (the Divisional Cavalry of the Meerut Division) there. The two detachments of the machine gun section were sent up during the previous night to positions in support of the Rifle Brigade of the Division.

On 11th April, one detachment of the Machine Gun Section was withdrawn in the evening. During the withdrawal, Capt. C.P. Browne (Guides Cavalry) attached, was shot through the head by a rifle bullet and died shortly afterwards.

On 12th April, the second detachment of the Machine Gun Section was withdrawn in the evening from its position in support.

On 23rd April, the Lahore Division commenced to relieve the Meerut Division in the front line, in consequence the Regiment again marched to *Lestrem* exchanging billets with the 4th Cavalry.

On 24th April, the Lahore Division was suddenly ordered to reinforce the 2nd Army in the vicinity of *Ypres* to resist a strong attack by the enemy. The Division marched to *Boeschepe* about 16 miles north.

The next day, 25th April, the Division reinforced the 2nd Army to the N.E. of *Ypres* and almost immediately went into action. The Regiment was ordered to proceed to a plan of readiness a short distance S.W. of *Ypres*, but the order was cancelled as it was ~~~ the Regiment would have been too much exposed to shell fire for no purpose. So the regiment remained in the vicinity of *Oudredom* about 5 miles S.W. of *Ypres* in a state of readiness and beyond, finding 3 patrols which accompanied the infantry brigade of the Division, which took part in the battle. The patrols suffered some losses in horses and wounded men.



Figure 4: Sowar and Lance-Daffadar of the 15th Lancers.

On 30th April, the Regiment was ordered to move to the vicinity of *Reininghelst* (Belgium) where it remained on the night of 30th April awaiting further orders.

On the 1st May, the Regiment left its bivouac near *Reininghelst* and marched to *Le Coq de Paille* some 5 or 6 miles south-west crossing into France at the same time.

On 2nd May, the Regiment was ordered back to its billets at *Carvin* some 16 miles to the south, the Division sent back from the vicinity of *Ypres* to rejoin the Indian Corps.

On the 5th May, the Machine Gun Section went into the reserve line of trenches close behind *Neuve Chapelle*.

On the 6th May, the Lahore Division relieved the Meerut Division in the front line and the Regiment returned to its old billets at *Lestrem*. The machine guns remaining out.

On 9th May, the Lahore Division took a part in the general attack on the enemy in the vicinity of *Neuve Chapelle* and the *Bois du Biez*. The Regiment, less one squadron, assembled at *Rue Delannoy* about 2 miles south of *Lestrem* in readiness. One squadron was then detached for duty with prisoners.

On the 10th May, the attack having ceased, the Regiment was ordered to return to its billets at *Lestrem*, one squadron still remaining out for duty with prisoners. During the above operations the Regimental Machine Gun Section, under Captain A.C.K.S. Clarke, was posted in an important position in front of the Jullundur Brigade's advanced trenches, which Brigade was holding the front of the Indian Army Corps, to enable the attack of the Meerut Division to be carried out. The Machine Gun Section being only some 100 yards from the German trenches was subjected for about 10 hours to continual shell fire both from our own guns and those of the enemy. At this period, one gun and part of the detachment was partially buried by a high explosive shell and had to be replaced elsewhere under heavy fire, whilst the other gun was hit three times. The detachment underwent the ordeal with great fortitude and coolness in spite of the fact of Captain Clarke himself and 3 of the men being wounded and shaken.

On 16th May, 1915, the Division took a share in a further attack on the enemy's trenches to the south of *Neuve Chapelle* in conjunction with the 2nd and 7th Divisions further to the right. The Regiment again remained in a state of constant readiness to move but this time it did not move from its billets at *Lestrem*. It also again found a squadron for duty with prisoners and 3 dismounted patrols for duty with each Infantry Brigade.

On the night 18th - 19th May, the Ferozepore Brigade relieved the Jullundur Brigade in the front line trenches and the second detachments of the 15th Lancers Machine Gun Section relieved the first detachments, Captain R.H. Howell relieving Captain Traill on the following night.

On the night of the 26th May, 1915, the Machine Gun Section of the Regiment, having been relieved by a section of the Motor Machine Gun Battery in the front trenches, re-joined the regiment at *Lestrem*.

On 31st May, at 8.00 p.m. two dismounted squadrons of the Regiment were sent to reinforce the Ferozepore Brigade in the front line of the Division. They entered into

Croix Barbée and formed this Brigade's reserve. They were under the command of Major A.Y. Cheyne.

On 9th June, a reinforcement joined the Regiment from the Base at *Marseilles*. It comprised Captain T.S. Christie, Swaziland Police, 1 Indian officer and 30 Rank and File, 3 Officer Chargers and 8 Troop horses. [Script starts to become indecipherable.]

On 11th June, the 2 dismounted squadrons ~~~ to the front line returned to Regimental Headquarters their services being no longer required. On this date the Machine Gun Section of the Regiment was attached to the Jullundur Brigade in front line trenches.

On the night of the 28th/29th June, the Sirhind Brigade relieved a portion of the Ferozepore Brigade front. 120 rifles of the Regiment, under Major J.B. Keogh, were placed at the disposal of the Sirhind Brigade and went into reserve at *Croix Barbée*.

On 30th June, on their right, the above dismounted detachment of the Regiment were moved up from reserve to garrison 3 defensive posts in the Sirhind Brigade front. [Major A.Y. Cheyne, commanding 15th Lancers, signed the diary on 1st July, 1915.]

On 6th July, 1915, the Machine Gun Section of the Regiment was relieved and re-joined Regimental Headquarters at *Lestrem*.

On 7th July, the 120 rifles of the Regiment, under Major J.B. Keogh, forming the garrison of the 3 defensive posts first in rear of the front line, were relieved by a similar detachment from the 'A' & 'B' Squadrons of the Regiment under the command of Major J.W. Hallows.



Figure 5: Two Sowars of the 15th Lancers (Cureton's Multanis) in France, 1915. © National Army Museum, London.

On 14th July, the Machine Gun Section of the Regiment was again sent out to its old entrenched positions first in rear of the front line trenches of the Division (?).

On 17th July, 120 rifles of the Regiment under Major J.B. Keogh, again relieved the similar detachment forming the garrison of the 3 defensive posts close to the front line trenches under Major J.H. Hallowes.

On 21st July, the Machine Gun Section of the Regiment in the entrenched positions in rear of the front line trenches was relieved by a Section of No. 5 Motor Machine Gun Battery, and re-joined Regimental Headquarters at *Lestrem*.

On 22nd July, a reinforcement consisting of Captain G.E. Llewellyn, Indian Army Reserve, and 13 N.C.Os and men of the 37th Lancers, 1 man 27th Light Cavalry, 3 Private Followers, 2 chargers and 6 remounts joined the Regiment from the Base [at *Marseilles*].

On 27th July, the 120 rifles of the Regiment under Major J.B. Keogh forming the garrison of the 3 defensive posts first in rear of the front line trenches were relieved by a similar detachment from 'A' & 'B' Squadrons of the Regiment under the command of Major J.W. Hallowes.

On the evening of 31st July, 1915, the Machine Gun Section of the Regiment was again sent out to its old entrenched positions first in rear of the front line trenches of the Division.

On the evening of the 2nd August, the 120 rifles of 'A' & 'B' Squadrons and its Machine Gun Section, having been relieved on the 3rd Aug. from entrenched posts a short distance in rear of the front line trenches by other units of the Ferozepore Brigade, returned to Regimental Headquarters at *Lestrem*.

On 12th August, about 100 rifles of 'C' & 'D' Squadrons, under the command of Major J.B. Keogh, relieved a detachment of the 47th Sikhs in some posts in reserve in the village of *Richebourg St Vaast*.

On 14th August, a reinforcement of 1 Pava(?) and 2 Farriers of the 75th Lancers, 212 N.C.O's and men of the Corps of Guides and 1 Follower, joined the Regiment from the Base Depot at *Marseilles*.

On 19th August, about 110 rifles of 'A' & 'B' Squadrons under the command of Major J.H. Hallowes relieved 'C' & 'D' squadrons under Major J.B. Keogh in the posts in reserve in *Richebourg St. Vaast*.

On 21st August, the above detachment was relieved by the Ferozepore Brigade and returned to Regimental Head Quarters at *Lestrem*.

On the evening of 29th August, 100 rifles of 'A' & 'B' Squadrons (50 rifles each) under the command of Major J.H. Hallowes and Captain G.E. Llewellyn respectively, relieved the detachments consisting of Infantry of the Jullundur Brigade in the entrenched posts of neighbourhood of *St Vaast* north of *Richebourg St Vaast* about 1500 yards in rear of the front line of the Division. At the same time, the Machine Gun

Section of the regiment under the command of Captain R.G.A. Traill [Guides Cavalry], relieved the section of the Motor Machine Gun Company attached to the Ferozepore Brigade in the front line trenches of the Division.

On 1st September, the detachment of 50 rifles of 'A' Squadron under the command of Major J.H. Hallows was relieved in the entrenched post in the vicinity of *St Vaast* by a similar detachment of infantry of the Sirhind Brigade, and returned to Regimental Head Quarters at *Lestrem*. At the same time the detachment of 50 rifles of 'B' Squadron under the command of Captain G.E. Llewellyn was relieved at the other post [at the rear of *St Vaast* and, as relief, moved about 2000 yards North East into a similar post at *Rouge Croix, W.* on the main *Estaires* [to] *La Bassée* road. Some seven dismounted guards from the regiment, consisting of 1 N.C.O. and 3 to 6 men each, were also distributed throughout the different small entrenchment posts of the second and third lines of the Division. These guards were not intended for actual defence, but merely to look after these posts while unoccupied to prevent them being interfered with as 'foiled', etc.

On this date also the regiment was again called upon, after an interval of over 5 months, to furnish the Escort to the G.O.C. the Indian Army Corps, in relief of the 4th Cavalry, the Divisional Cavalry Regiment of the Meerut Division. The escort was taken from 'D' Squadron and consisted of 2 Indian Officers and 50 rank and file under the command of Risaldar Nihal-Khan.¹⁰

On 4th September, a detachment of 50 rifles of 'C' Squadron under the command of Lieutenant R.C. Geard relieved the detachment of 'B' Squadron under Captain G.S. Llewellyn in the *Rouge Croix W.* Post. The latter, on relief, re-joined Regimental Headquarters at *Lestrem*.

On 5th September, the detachment of 'C' Squadron in the *Rouge Croix W.* Post was reduced from 50 to 40 rifles, the 10 surplus returning to Regimental Head Quarters at *Lestrem*.

On 6th September, the Machine Gun Section under Captain Trail was relieved in the front line trenches of the Ferozepore Brigade by a section of the 89th Punjabis, and was placed in a position in Edward's Post almost 1000 yards in rear of the centre of the Lahore Division front. At the same time the whole detachment was relieved by a fresh detachment from the Regiment under the command of Lieut. W.L. Henderson.

On 13th September, 1915, a detachment of 40 rifles of 'A' Squadron under the command of 2nd Lieut. A.D. Fraser, relieved the detachment of 'C' Squadron under Lieut. R.C. Geard, in the *Rouge Croix W.* Post. The latter on relief re-joined Regimental Head Quarters at *Lestrem*.

On 17th September, a reinforcement consisting of 1 Dafadar and 1 Assistant Salutri [Vet] of the Regiment and 4 Sowars of the Guides Cavalry and 2 followers joined the Regiment from the Indian Base Depot at *Marseilles*.

¹⁰ This is the first instance of an Indian officer being named in these diaries of the 15th Lancers. (see <https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2000-10-24--1> for possible drawing of Risaldar Nihal-Khan.)

On the 18th September, the Machine Gun Section under the command of Lieut. W.L. Henderson was relieved in Edward's Post by another Section of the Regiment under the command of Capt. R.G.A. Trail.

On 20th September, the Machine Gun Section was withdrawn from Edward's Post and re-joined the Regimental Headquarters at *Lestrem*. On this date also, a detachment of 40 rifles of 'B' Squadron under the command of Captain G.E. Llewellyn relieved the detachment of 'A' Squadron under 2nd Lieut. A.D. Fraser in the *Rouge Croix W. Post*. The latter on relief re-joined the Regimental Headquarters at *Lestrem*.

On 23rd September, the 40 rifles of 'B' Squadron, under the command of Captain G.E. Llewellyn, in *Rouge Croix W. Post*, were withdrawn and returned to the Regimental Headquarters at *Lestrem*.

On the 24th September, 1915, the small guards on the seven small posts of the second and third lines which had been mounted and relieved daily since the 1st September, were finally withdrawn.

On 25th September, Captain A.C.K.S. Clarke, who had been wounded with the Regimental Machine Gun Section on the 9th May, re-joined the Regiment.

On 26th September, a reinforcement of 3 Sowars of the Regiment and 2 Sowars of the 37th Lancers, with 5 horses, joined the Regiment from the Base Depot at *Marseilles*.

On 29th September, Major A.Y. Cheyne, 2nd in Command, who had been sick in England since the beginning of July, re-joined the Regiment.

On 30th September, the Diary reports that, On the 25th September a strong offensive of the 1st Army, of which the Indian Corps of the left forms a part, began.¹¹ The Corps on the right attacked the enemy from the north of *La Bassée* in conjunction with the French in the neighbourhood of *Souchez*. Considerable progress was made on the south of *La Bassée* between the 25th & 30th September, a marked advance being made causing the enemy considerable losses in prisoners and guns. The part played by the India Corps was to hold the enemy to his position from just north of *Neuve Chapelle* as far south as the *La Bassée Canal* thereby preventing him from sending reinforcements from this front to the south. This object was obtained by an artillery bombardment of 4 days, followed on the 25th by an attack of the Meerut Division and the Jullundur Brigade of the Lahore Division on the enemy in the neighbourhood of *Moulin du Pietre* just north of *Neuve Chapelle*.¹² The remainder of the Lahore Division holding the enemy to his ground to the south of *Neuve Chapelle* prolonged to the south as far as the *La Basée Canal* by the 19th Division (also belonging to the Indian Corps). The attack was proceeded by the use of smoke and gas. This was the first time that smoke and gas were used by the British forces during the War. The part played by the Indian Corps was a small one, but this attack was a complete surprise to the enemy and was very successfully carried out as it not only held the enemy to his ground but induced him to send no less that 6 train loads of troops from the south of the *La Basée Canal* to reinforce his front in front of the Indian Corps. This in a great measure aided the advance and successful fighting of the

¹¹ This was the start of the Battle of Loos.

¹² The Battle of Loos. At the time, it was the largest British offensive of the First World War.

right of the 1st Army south of *La Basée*. The part the Regiment played was unfortunately very small. All it had to do was to rendezvous at *Vieille Chapelle* about 4 miles south of its billets at *Lestrem* in a state of readiness to advance in the direction of *Lorgies* and *Beau Puits* should the attack be so successful as to pierce the enemy's line and enable the Regiment to carry out its proper cavalry duties by covering the advance of the Division and seizing important points in advance. Unfortunately, the opportunity never arose so the Regiment returned to its old billets at *Lestrem* on the evening of the 25th, moving out again the following morning.

On the 26th September, about mid-day, the offensive of the Indian Corps ceased and it resumed its former trench duties on its front and the Regiment returned to its billets at *Lestrem*. In the meantime, severe fighting is still in progress south of the *La Basée Canal* by the right of the 1st Army in conjunction with the French. During these few days there was also severe fighting in the north by the 2nd Army in the vicinity of *Hooge* near *Ypres*.

On 22nd October, Lieut. Colonel H.C. Ricketts, commandant, having attained 50 years of age, would, according to the regulations and under normal peace conditions, have ~~~ [relinquished] command of the Regiment. But, the Regiment, being in field service, the tenure of his command was extended until further orders by the Government of India.

On 31st October, it was recorded that "the Regiment was not employed tactically in any way during the whole of October. It remained quietly in its billets at *Lestrem*."

On 7th November, the detachment of 2 Indian Officers and 50 Rank and File, which had been escort to the G.O.C. Indian Army Corps since the 1st September was relieved by a similar detachment from the 59th Rifles and re-joined the Regiment at *Lestrem*.

On 8th November it was reported that, information was received in the beginning of November that the Indian Corps was to be taken out of the front and subsequently proceed to *Marseilles* with the aim of being withdrawn from France for service elsewhere. The destination is not yet known. In accordance with the above the Regiment, with the remainder of the Lahore Division, was taken out of the front line on the 8th November and marched to *Lambres* about 15 miles to the west of *Lestrem*.

On 18th November, in order to make place for another Division, the Regiment left *Lambres* and marched to *Serny*, a distance of about 4 miles to the west, and went into new billets at that place.

On 25th November, the Prince of Wales, on behalf of the King Emperor, inspected detachments of the remaining troops of the Indian Army Corps at Corps Head Quarters and delivered a farewell speech. The regiment was represented by a detachment of 25 of all ranks dismounted.

On 9th December, ~~~ of the Regiment, as part of the Lahore Division, leaving France, the 12 remaining British Cavalry N.C.O.s and men who were attached to the Regiment as Map Readers and Patrol Leaders since its arrival at the front in October 1914, were withdrawn from the Regiment.

On 22nd December, the Regiment marched to *Lillers* station, distance 9 miles by ~~~ independently and entrained in 2 trains, arriving at *Marseilles* on the 25th December (Christmas Morning). On arrival 100 Indian Officers and men of 'A' Squadron with 172 horses of 'A' and 'B' Squadrons under the command of Major J.H. Hallowes, accompanied by Captain G.E. Llewellyn, marched to Camp Borely about 4 miles distant to embark in the British India Transport *SS Torilla* at a later date. The remainder of the Regiment embarked the same day in the British India Transport *SS Gracchus* and left *Marseilles* on the morning of the 26th December. The same afternoon, the *Gracchus* arrived at *Toulon* and after staying a few hours, resumed its voyage the same evening escorted by a French Torpedo Destroyer.

At about midday of 30th December, 1915, the *Gracchus* passed by the south of Malta having come from Toulon via the east coasts of Corsica and Sardinia. Just short of Malta the French Destroyer escort left and the ship proceeded on its route without further escort.

This final entry in the War Diary was signed by Lt. Colonel Ricketts, commanding officer.