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System of Fire Control.

In handling artillery in the field the first consideration is that its fire must do the utmost possible to assist our Infantry to get forward. Exact intelligence and a careful study of the enemies dispositions enables the Artillery Commander to from his plan with this end in view. He must forsee just which factors of the enemie's defense organization are dangerous and when. Hostile artillery, machine guns, trenches, wire, mortars, enemy reserves, &c., all must be given attention at the proper time. Wherever intelligence is indefinite, inaccuracy must be made up by volume of fire. In practice the various conditions are met about as follows : -

Initally and during the advance, the whole of the Field Artillery and a part of the Heavy are on barrage work carrying out a plan issued by the G.O.C., R.A., of the Corps and co-ordinated with flanking Corps by the Army.

The inner fringe of the barrage is laid in front of the infantry and throughout the attack goes forward according to the pre-arranged plan. It usually consists of 13-pdr. shrapnel fired directly over the heads of our troops and in some of our operations has reached a density of one 18-pdr. per 9 yards of front, firing four rounds per minute. You will appreciate the accuracy demanded from our Field Batteries when you realize that they are called on to burst their shell so that the mean point of impact of their shrapnel bullets shall be 200 yards in front of our advancing infantry. The range being anything from 1,500 - 4,500 or more yards.

W. L. Mackenzie King Papers

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