

A Gunner's War: An Artilleryman's Experience in the First World War

Ian Ronayne

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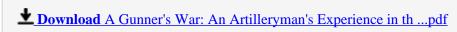
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If the First World War had not happened when it did, Channel Islander Clarence Ahier would almost certainly have led a mostly unremarkable life. But it did, and in October 1915, aged just 23-years-old, Clarence left his home and volunteered to join the British Army. He would spend the next two and half years serving as an artillery man on the Western Front.

Now this in itself is not remarkable - millions of other young men did the same thing. But Clarence Ahier did do something remarkable, and it was something to set him out from almost all his contemporaries. From the very beginning of his time at the front, he wrote a graphic and moving account of his experiences of war.

Clarence's ultimate plans for his meticulously written journal are unknown. But having lain unnoticed for years, it was recently discovered in a collection of dusty ephemera handed to a local history society.

The complete journal consists of around 25,000 words, with a focus on Clarence's experience during the Battle of the Somme, in the fighting around Ypres, and, after he was wounded for the second time, the journey to India and his time there as a member of the garrison. This will be supported by additional explanatory text.



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