

The Indian Army - On Mountain Batteries, 1890-1940

Introduction

"... One day, as I stood by the road with some people, I heard far off a quick, rhythmic rustling sound. It came nearer and nearer. A cloud of dust rose behind the hills. Two officers and two Sikh gunners on horseback galloped past. The officer in the lead shouted, "Out of the way—Cannons!"

The battery came roaring through the bend, filled the whole road, and the huge beasts moved at a speed of five kilometers an hour with breech-pieces, cannon barrels, recoil mechanisms, wheels and cannon shields on their backs. Turbans, eyes and white teeth bounced up and down among all the shiny steel, no one looked right or left or up or down, only straight ahead. If a man had fallen right in front of the battery, it had ridden right over him without noticing it. A hundred meters further on, they turned right across the ditch and up a low rise without slowing down in the slightest.



Light Section, 105th (Bombay) Mountain Battery, Qualander Camp, India, 1937. From Britain at War.

All the cannon teams, consisting of eight mules each, formed a small circle with the wing mule facing inwards, the others facing outwards. Even before they stopped, the tree constables were in the process of unloading. Bang - four sets of wheels and axles rattled down. Boom - recoil brake ... made and coated ... rear stock ... stock and front stock ... aiming mechanism, gear and gun shield ... a stream of command shouts - Ammunition, Setting, Firing Range.

About 50 seconds after the guns had moved into position, they were ready to fire. I giggled and wrote it behind my ear..." [1](#)

The above observations were made by John Masters when he served as a young officer on the North West Frontier in the late 1930s.

Additional illustrations are perhaps hardly necessary with this pictorial description, but one of the cannon divisions referred to came out as shown here.

History



Indian Artillery

Regimental Badge, 1935.

From Source 1.

Historical summary

1935: The Indian Artillery

1940: The Regiment of Indian Artillery

1945: The Royal Regiment of Indian Artillery

1947: Upon India's independence, the regiment is split into the Royal Indian Artillery and the Royal Pakistan Artillery

As such, however, the history of Indian artillery (in English service) begins as early as 1827 with the creation of the Bombay Foot Artillery, just as Indian soldiers and civilians in various capacities were part of English artillery units.

The Indian Rebellion (1857-1858) - and in this connection especially the rebellion of the Indian artillery units - meant, however, that in the subsequent reorganization of the Indian army it was decided that Indian troops (with a few exceptions) should not be equipped with actual artillery or receive actual artillery training. On the English side, one would not put such funds in the hands of potential rebels once more.

Until 1935 ²⁾, when the first modern Indian field artillery division was created, the mountain artillery (*Indian Mountain Artillery*, from 1922 *Royal*), whose batteries were created from 1876, was one of the exceptions to this rule ³⁾.

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Until 1924, the Mountain Artillery was part of the Indian Army, but in 1924 the batteries were transferred to the Royal Artillery and thus became part of the British Army. This affiliation lasted until 1939 when the mountain batteries were transferred to the Indian Artillery. In these 15 years, the Royal Artillery thus included both the English mountain batteries, some of which served in India, as well as the Indian mountain batteries.



Royal Artillery, 1914.

From *The British Army of 1914*

by R. Money Barnes,

Seeley Service & Co. Ltd.,

London 1968.



Regiment of Artillery, 1954.
From Badges of Military Units
from India.

The regimental badge, which was introduced in 1935, is in principle the same as that of the British artillery, but with the following changes:

The crown was replaced by a star and UBIQUE (*Everywhere*) was replaced by INDIA to more easily distinguish Indian units from English ones.

The artillery motto QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT (*Wherever right and honor lead us*) was retained, but written in Persian - IZZAT-O-IQBAL.

In the new Indian Republic, where in 1954 the artillery received the designation *Regiment of Artillery*, the latter was retained for reasons of tradition, despite a government decision on general changes to insignia worn before independence, under which texts were now to be in Hindi or Sanskrit. INDIA was in this process replaced by SARVATRA which means *Everywhere* in Sanskrit [4](#)).



Indian mountain artillery in Mesopotamia, c. 1916 [5](#)).

My sources curiously do not state which marking the mountain artillery carried until 1924.

The English officers who came from the Royal Artillery naturally wore the marks of this regiment, but how the Indian officers and men were marked, the sources do not report anything.

The mountain artillery

The oldest batteries had a past as mounted or mobile artillery. In 1876, the batteries were equipped as mountain batteries (*Mountain batteries*). In the latter part of the period, the designation was changed to *pack*, and

was for a period *light*.

Source 6 describes this development as far as the five oldest batteries are concerned. It should only be mentioned here that in 1903 the numbers of these batteries were increased by 20 to avoid confusion with the corresponding English mountain batteries. However, many references refer to the oldest batteries with their original numbers.

In the following overview, whose basic stock is from Source 2, the year of establishment of the batteries/stock units is listed in parentheses.

Batteries according to the 1903 scheme and later

Batteries according to the 1922 scheme

21st Kohat Mountain Battery (Frontier Force) (1851) 101st Royal (Kohat) Pack Battery (Frontier force)

22nd Derajat Mountain Battery (Frontier Force) (1849) 102nd (Derajat) Pack Battery (Frontier Force)

23rd Peshawar Mountain Battery (Frontier Force) (1853)

103rd (Peshawar) Pack Battery (Frontier Force)

24th Hazara Mountain Battery (Frontier Force) (1851) 104th (Hazara) Pack Battery (Frontier Force)

25th Mountain Battery (1827)

105th (Bombay) Pack Battery

26th Jacob's Mountain Battery (1843)

106th (Jacob's) Pack Battery

27th Mountain Battery (1886)

107th (Bengal) Pack Battery

28th Mountain Battery (1886)

108th (Lahore) Pack Battery

29th Mountain Battery (1898-1899)

109th (Murree) Pack Battery

30th Mountain Battery (1900-1901)

110th (Abbottabad) Pack Battery

31st Mountain Battery (1907)

111th (Dehra Dun) Pack Battery

32nd Mountain Battery (1907)

112th (Poonch) Pack Battery

33rd (Reserve) Mountain Battery

113th ((Dardoni) Pack Battery

34th (Reserve) Mountain Battery (1917)

114th (Rajputana) Pack Battery

35th (Reserve) Mountain Battery (1917)

115th (Jhelum) Pack Battery

36th (Reserve) Mountain Battery (1918)

116th (Zhob) Pack Battery

37th (Reserve) Mountain Battery

117th (Rawalpindi) Pack Battery

38th (Reserve) Mountain Battery

118th (Sohan) Pack Battery

36th (Reserve) Mountain Battery (1918)

119th (Maymyo) Pack Battery

40th (Reserve) Mountain Battery

*Created in
the period
1914-1918* --

41st (Reserve) Mountain Battery

--

42nd (Reserve) Mountain Battery

120th (Ambala) Pack Battery

43rd (Reserve) Mountain Battery

121st (Nowshera) Pack Battery

44th (Reserve) Mountain Battery

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45th (Reserve) Mountain Battery

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46th (Reserve) Mountain Battery

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50th (Reserve) Mountain Battery

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Shot fired! Indian mountain cannon during the Chitral Campaign, 1895.
From Source 7.

From 1913, the batteries were grouped into divisions (*brigade* according to English terminology), under the command of a lieutenant colonel.

In 1922, the 21st Kohat Mountain Battery (*Frontier Force*) was awarded the honorary title of *Royal* by the King of England, who was also the Emperor of India. The recognition was given on behalf of the entire Indian Mountain Artillery for its outstanding and gallant performance during the First World War.

Such an honor has not, before or since, been surpassed by any battery of artillery - English or of the Empire.



5th (Bombay) Mountain Battery, 1895 6). [___](#)

The pamphlet on the left is of the *RML (Rifled Muzzle Loader) 2.5-inch Mountain Gun* type.

In service from: 1878

Caliber: 63 mm

Range: 3.6 km

Further information about the pamphlet can be found on the website of the New Zealand artillery soldiers association Mountain Artillery - The Screw Gun.



Indian Army - Mountain Artillery, approx. 1917.

From a contemporary postcard signed CE Butler.

The effort during the First World War

The mountain batteries participated in all the campaigns of the Indian Army during the First World War. The other batteries established during the war were primarily as personnel replacement units.

The postcard, which appears to be postmarked 21 April 1917, is in the same series as The Ceylon Planters Corps card.

Batteries that did active duty	Campaign
21st Kohat Mountain Battery (Frontier Force)	Egypt (1914), Gallipoli (1915), Egypt (1915-1916), Mesopotamia (1916-1918), Persia (1918)
22nd Derajat Mountain Battery (Frontier Force)	East Africa (1916-1918)
23rd Peshawar Mountain Battery (Frontier Force)	Mesopotamia (1914-1916), North-West Frontier (1917-1918)
24th Hazara Mountain Battery (Frontier Force)	East Africa (1918)
25th Mountain Battery	Northwest Frontier (1915), Mesopotamia (1918)

26th Jacob's Mountain Battery Egypt (1914), Gallipoli (1915), Egypt (1915-1916), Mesopotamia (1916-1918), Persia (1918)

27th Mountain Battery East Africa (1914-1918)

28th Mountain Battery East Africa (1914-1917)

29th Mountain Battery North West Frontier (1914-1917), Palestine (1918)

30th Mountain Battery Mesopotamia (1914-1916), North-West Frontier (1917-1918)

31st Mountain Battery Persia (1918)

32nd Mountain Battery Palestine (1918)

34th (Reserve) Mountain Battery Mesopotamia (1918)

35th (Reserve) Mountain Battery Mesopotamia (1918)

36th (Reserve) Mountain Battery Persia (1918)

39th (Reserve) Mountain Battery Palestine (1918)

My sources differ as to whether Indian mountain batteries participated in the fighting on the Western Front. Source 12 mentions that an unspecified detachment arrived in England in October 1914, then was sent to France at the end of 1914. At some point in 1915, the detachment should have been sent on to Egypt. *The 3rd Mountain Artillery Brigade* accompanied the Indian Expeditionary Force to Europe in September 1914, but was disembarked at Alexandria with *the Sirhind Infantry Brigade* to take part in guarding the Suez Canal; the infantry brigade then came to France - 30 November 1914, but it is not resolved what happened to the artillery division. The Corps History 7), from which this information is derived, does not mention that an Indian artillery unit was deployed in France, just as the information is not supported by other authoritative works on English artillery during the First World War.

Examples of the departmental organization from 1913

1st Mountain Artillery Brigade
(Mesopotamia, 1914) 8) __

(Lieutenant Colonel HD Grier)

7th Indian Mountain Artillery Brigade
(Gallipoli, 1915) 9) __

(Lieutenant Colonel JL Parker)

- 23rd (Peshawar) Mountain Battery
(Major EE Edlmann)
- 30th Mountain Battery
(Major HJ Cotter)
- 21st Kohat Mountain Battery (Frontier Force)
(Major KC Fergusson)
- 26th Jacob's Mountain Battery
(Major JEL Bruce)



Loading of mules at Alexandria, April 1915 [10](#).

Whether they are mules from *the 7th Indian Mountain Artillery Brigade* or *the Indian Mule Cart Transport Corps* [11](#)) is not known.

On 25 April 1915, 09:00, parts of the 7th Indian Mountain Artillery Brigade were landed at Gallipoli, Z Beach, 2nd support of 1st and Australian Infantry Brigade. in

Transport capacity was limited, and at the landing the department could only bring 56 mules. (Source 4)

Other mountain batteries

Two other batteries must also be mentioned, although as such they do not belong to the Indian Army, but consisted of Indian soldiers:

Hong Kong and Singapore Mountain Battery

Egypt (1915-1916), Palestine (1917-1918)

¹st Kashmir Mountain Battery (Kashmir State Forces) East Africa (1916-1918)

The Hong Kong and Singapore Mountain Battery belonged to the Royal Garrison Artillery. The battery is discussed in more detail in *The Imperial Camel Corps Brigade*. It should only be mentioned here that the camels used [12](#)) for transporting cannons and ammunition etc.



Kashmir Mountain Battery (Imperial Service), German East Africa, October 1917.
st 1 From The We where There Exhibition.

^{1st} The Kashmir Mountain Battery was provided by the Maharaja of Kashmir, who - under Imperial Service Scheme - also provided i.a. 2nd Kashmir Rifles and 3rd Kashmir Rifles, who put in a good effort at e.g. the otherwise unsuccessful landing in German East Africa in November 1914, see my article The Battle of Tanga 1914.

The battery was equipped with 6 pcs. *BL 2.75-inch Mountain Gun* and performed well under the very difficult geographical and climatic conditions of East Africa.

The battery commander was Major Dharam Singh Bahadur, who had Major AF Cole, Royal Artillery, attached - presumably as both second-in-command and adviser.

West African Frontier Force



Nigeria Regiment.

Card No. 4 in the

Colonial & Indian Army Badges

series, John Player & Sons, 1917.

In East Africa the Indian batteries worked together with other of the Empire's mountain batteries - from the West African Frontier Force.

After an effective effort in the German colonies in West Africa, these batteries, together with battalions from the tribal regiments, were sent to East Africa.

The text on the back of the card reads as follows:

The badge of the West African Frontier Force. There are included in the WAFF not only the regiment which was raised on the Niger in 1897-98, but also the local forces formerly known as the Gold Coast and Lagos Constabularies (Hausa Forces), the royal Niger Constabulary, the Sierra Leone Frontier Police, and the Niger Coast Protectorate Force.

The following West African mountain batteries served in East Africa:

Gold Coast Battery (The Gold Coast Regiment) 13) 1st ___

Nigerian Battery (The Nigeria Regiment) 14) 2nd ___

Nigerian Battery (The Nigeria Regiment) 4th

Nigerian Battery (The Nigeria Regiment)

The African soldiers proved much better able to withstand the climatic conditions in East Africa, and were not as susceptible to disease as Indian and European soldiers.



Gold Coast Battery, approx. 1917.
From Source 4.

The cannon pictured to the right is a 2.95-inch mountain cannon, purchased for use in the colonies.

In service from: 1901

Caliber: 75 mm

Range: 4.3 km

The "tubes" on the side of the barrel are recoil brakes.

The man's straw hat is a traditional headgear in West Africa.



*Nigerian carrier, with
wheels for mountain cannon [15](#).*

Where the Indian batteries primarily used mules to transport guns, ammunition and others

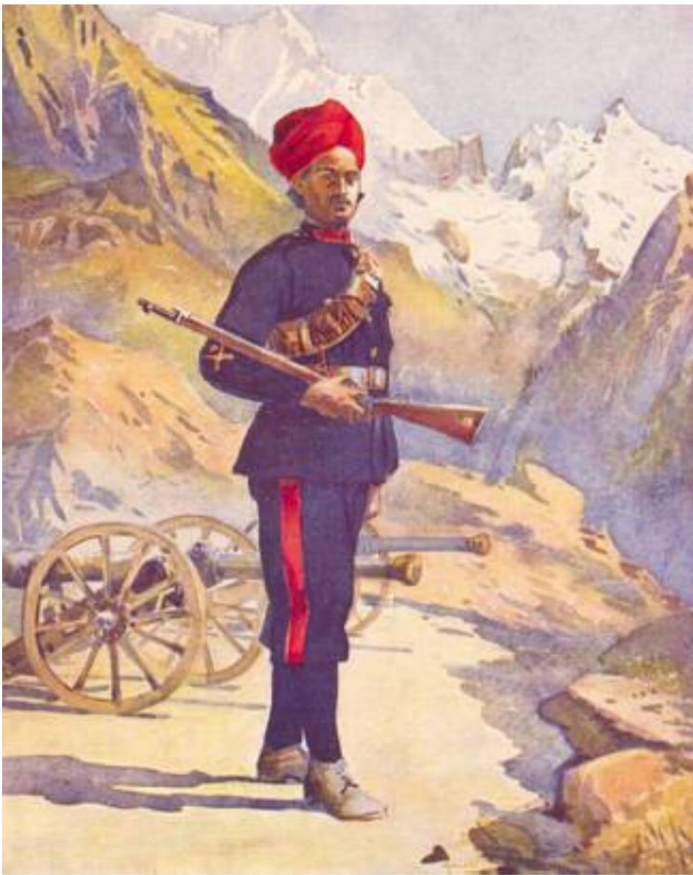
supplies, then the African batteries were based on personnel transport in the form of carriers.

The mortality among the Indian mules, i.a. due to tsetse flies, was large, and at the same time it was difficult to obtain the necessary number of repairs. The Indian batteries therefore also had to resort to either full or partial personnel transport on various occasions. As soon as it was possible, however, they went back to mule transport.

In Source 8 it is mentioned that on 25 February 1917 *the 22nd Derajat Mountain Battery* used 250 porters due to a lack of mules and already the next day another 75 porters had to be provided as several mules were sick/dead. On another occasion, 24 April 1917, 445 porters - from *the Kavirondo tribe* - were used to transport the battery.

The battery lost a total of 984 mules to disease, but only 11 in combat.

The soldiers



*Artillery Constable (Punjabi Musalman),
31st Mountain Battery.*

Drawn by AC Lowett, 1910.

Postcard from the National Army Museum, London.



Artillery Constable (Sikh),

4th (Hazara) Mountain Battery, 1890.

Drawn by PH Smitherman 16). ___

The batteries recruited their personnel from the population groups of the Punjab, with a roughly even distribution between Muslims and Hindus, the latter of whom were primarily Sikhs. (Source 1)



Indian Mountain Artillery.
Card No. 25

in Player's cigarette card
series Military Uniforms
of the British Empire Overseas, 1938.

The following appears from the back of the card:

The Indian Mountain Artillery batteries, which number twenty-one, are units of the Royal Artillery, and their number is on the increase, as new batteries are formed to take the place of the Light Batteries which are disappearing from the British Army.

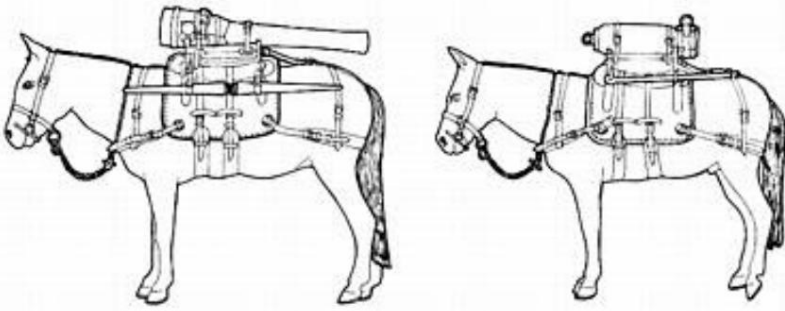
In the rough country of the Indian frontiers, where hills are steep and roads are few, there is still room for artillery carried on mules, which can cover ground impassable to mechanized or horse-drawn guns.

There is in addition an Indian Regiment of Artillery which came into existence in 1935 and which consists of the presence of one field brigade. This will ultimately be officered entirely by Indians.

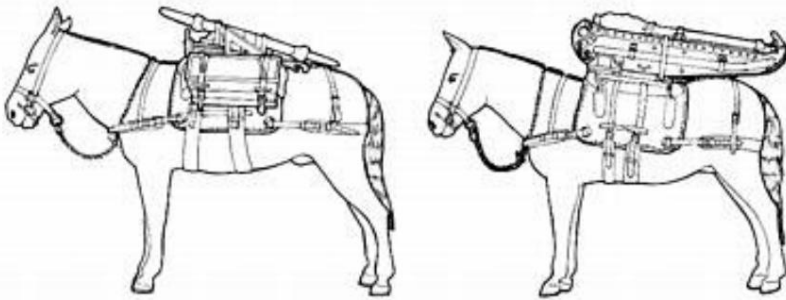
Our illustration shows a Subadar-Major (= oldest native officer; sign of rank = major).

For field use, khaki uniforms were used, while the dark blue uniforms shown here are examples of parade uniforms of the period.

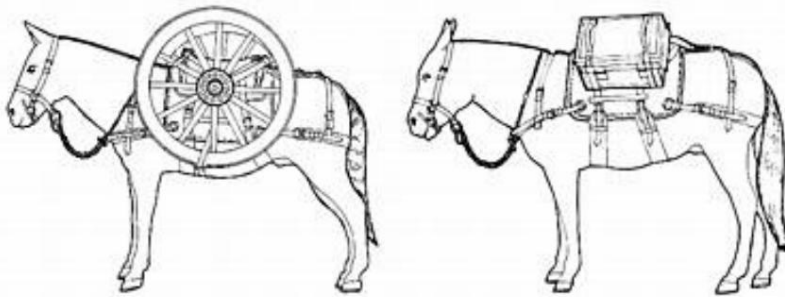
The mules



Barrel and lock.



Axle and made.



Wheels and ammunition.

The mules used in the mountain artillery came primarily from the United States or Argentina, but from time to time other "species" were experimented with, e.g. so-called Chinese mules, which were somewhat smaller than the American ones. The smaller mules were used to transport cannon wheels and ammunition. However, the stronger American mules were preferred [17](#)).

The strongest mules could carry a weight of up to 140 kg and were often in service for a long time.

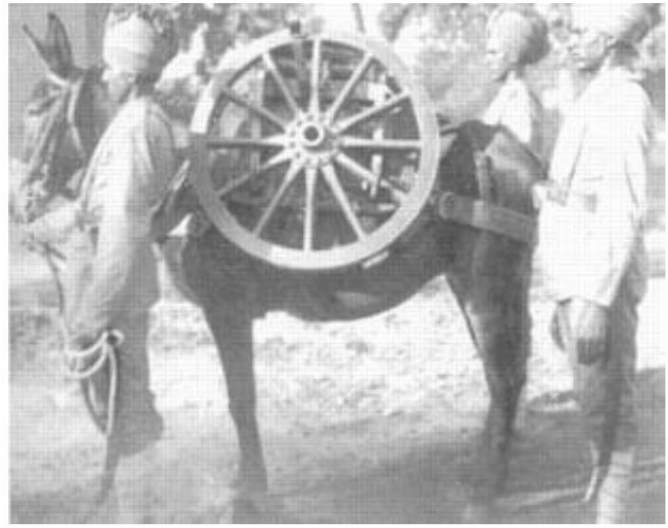
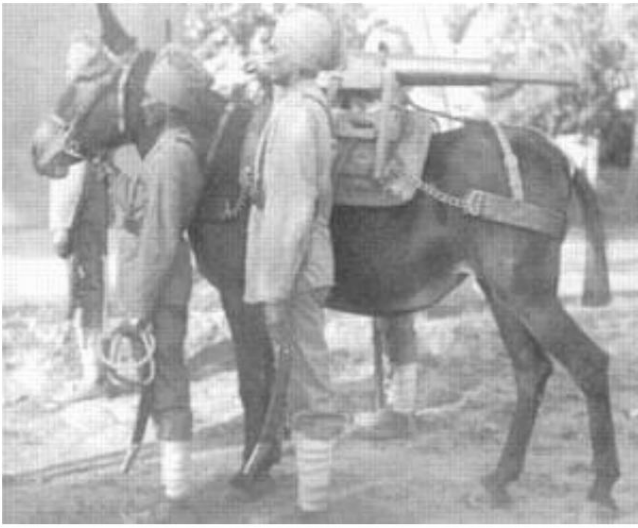
Source 9 thus mentions an example of a mule which was adopted at the age of 3 years and gave distinguished service for the next 33 years - it participated in the Second Afghan War (1878-80), the Tirah Campaign (1897) and at least six others campaigns.

The barrel and the lock were screwed together, which gave the cannon the name *screw-gun*.

The term was immortalized in Rudyard Kipling's tribute poem to the mountain artillery - *Screw-guns* - from 1892 (part of the poem collection *Barrack-Room Ballads*).

On the left, a schematic diagram showing the main parts of an Armstrong 7-pdr Mountain Gun, approx. 1882 loaded on mules.

From Source 10.



Two of the mules in a cannon division.
From Source 11.

The battery's long implements were also transported on mules, here however illustrated with a mule from the engineer troops.



Queen's Own Madras Sappers and Miners, 1897.
From Source 13.

The mountain artillerymen were not the only ones who could boast mules with long and faithful service.

[Queen Victoria's Own Sappers and Miners 18](#)) had a mule that served from 1891 to 1922, then spent the next 11 years as the mascot of the regiment's barracks in Bangalore.

Read the story of The Gray Mule for yourself.

Organization

During the period the strength figures of the batteries for personnel and mules varied somewhat, depending on the type of pamphlet they were equipped with and the number available.

The basic organization was 6 pamphlets, organized into 3 platoons of 2 pamphlets, each under the command of an English lieutenant. The divisions were named right (*Right*), center (*Centre*) and left (*Left*) division (*Section*); the guns are named A to F.

Strength figures for an Indian mountain battery with 6 pamphlets (circa 1890)

Personnel	Number of Mules	Number
Captain (English)	1 Barrel and lock	24
Lieutenants (English)	3 Done	14*
Lieutenants (Indian)	3 Axle	14*
Staff Sergeant (<i>Havildar Major</i>)	1 Wheel	14*
Intendant (<i>pay havildar</i>)	1 Ammunition	42
Trumpeters (Indians)	2 Long tools	3
sergeants (<i>havildar</i>)	6 Tools for i.a. blacksmith	3
Corporals (<i>naik</i>)	<i>Cannon line</i> 6 Reserve	24
Cannon Constables (Indians)	92 Baggage	36
sergeants (<i>havildar</i>)	3 in total	174
Corporals (<i>naik</i>)	6 *) Divided into 6 pamphlets, there will be 2 mules "left over", probably carrying spare equipment of the type in question.	
Train Constables (Indians)	<i>train</i> 150 (<i>Source 7</i>)	
Hardware (inside)	1	
Helpers (Indians)	16	
Total	291	

In addition, 5 horses are included for the native officers and the trumpeters. The English officers were also mounted, but probably on privately owned horses, which is why they are not included in the official strength figure.

Certain batteries, however, only need 4 leaflets, e.g. 22nd Derajat Mountain Battery, which arrived in East Africa in December 1916. During the days 21st to 26th December 1916 it is organized as a 4-piece battery, the *Center Section* becoming the ammunition column. Only in June 1918, when the battery is on its way back to India, is the division re-established as a gun division.

When the 22nd Derajat Mountain Battery set sail from India on 1 December 1916 it mustered:

Personnel	Number of Animals	Number
Major (English)	1 Horses	9
Lieutenants (English)	3 Mules	164
Lieutenants (Indian)	3 in total	173
Doctor (Indian) (Indian Medical Service)	1 The battery is equipped with <i>the 2.75-inch Mountain Gun</i> until February-March 1918, when they are exchanged for the <i>3.7-inch Pack Howitzer</i> .	
Indian NCOs and Privates	295 (Source 8)	
Helpers (on the official payroll) 18		
Helpers (privately paid)	6	
Total		327

The pamphlets



10-pdr BL Mountain Gun, circa 1914.
From Source 12.

10-pdr BL Mountain Gun

In service from: 1901

Caliber: 70 mm

Range: 5.4 km

Due to a high muzzle velocity and lack of recoil brake, the magazine was unstable during shooting.

However, many of the Indian mountain batteries were equipped with this pamphlet, as the more modern *BL 2.75-inch Mountain Gun* was not fully phased in until 1920.



BL 2.75-inch Mountain Gun, approx. 1918.
From Source 6.

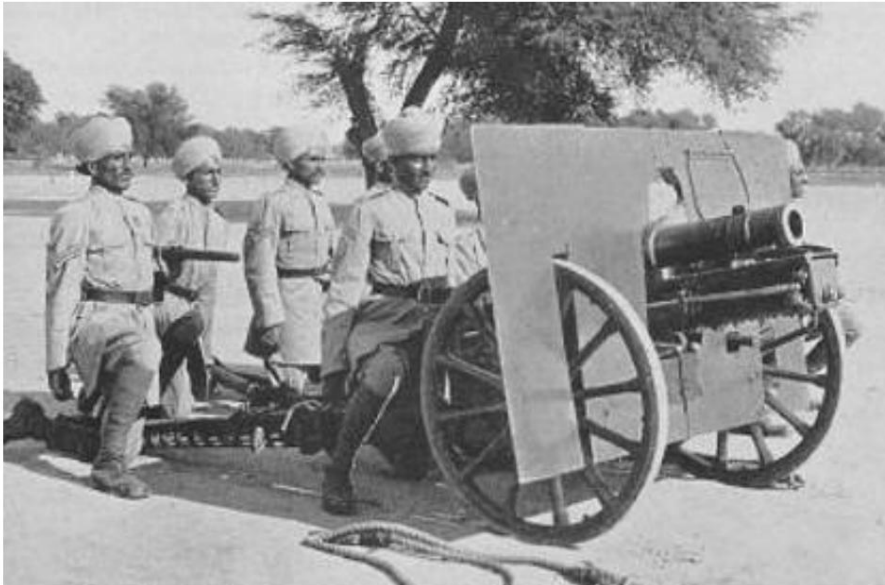
BL 2.75-inch Mountain Gun

In service from: 1912

Caliber: 70 mm

Firing range: 5 km

Source 12 mentions that the first Indian mountain batteries were equipped with this pamphlet in late 1914.



QF 3.7-inch Pack Howitzer, approx. 1918.
From Source 6.

QF 3.7-inch Pack Howitzer

In service from: 1917

Caliber: 94 mm

Firing range: 5.3 km

The pamphlet was transported on 8 mules.

See also 3.7 inch Mountain Howitzer.



15 (Jhelum) Mountain Battery, Kohat, 1945-46. From the article *Mules in the British Army*, found on The British Mule Society's website.

More information

In addition to several pictures of the battery, there is also almost everything worth knowing about mules. Should one seek further information, the article *Mules* (Wikipedia) is also an option.

Mules still play a role, and are part of today's Pakistani army, where they were most recently deployed in connection with the earthquake disaster at the end of 2005. See e.g. BBC telegram *Beasts ease burden of quake victims from October 2005*.

Field Artillery Regiments of the Indian Artillery in World War 2 contains an overview of Indian artillery divisions established 1935-1945, incl. belongs after 1947.

Closing

"... Seen from the train, the procession looked strange. It did not have the usual rhythm of marching troops or harnessed horses, and at first glance seemed arrhythmic, until it was found to be moving in a peculiar compound beat. The animals' heads, going up and down irregularly, as always when animals walk in a line, caught the eye and seemed confusing, until it was seen that they were mules, and that they walked one by one behind each other at odd intervals instead of in pairs or in the usual cannon van on six well-coached horses.

Between the mules the crew walked calmly and calmly, not in step and without hurrying. Small stocky constables and tall artillerymen, sauntering off with anything but military bearing, each in the gait that suited him best. There was something almost insolent about their manner. The men of the light artillery, or pack batteries, as they were called in India and the East, the men of the little short-nosed howitzers, which were taken apart and carried on mules, did not march, they walked. But the knowledge that they were sitting with the army's marching record, and that each artilleryman was specially selected by the doctors for height and physique, and the romantic associations connected with this knowledge, gave them self-assurance.

Like a long snake of brown, sweat-stained mules and horses, painted and polished cannon parts, clanking chains and polished leather, the battery wound its way up the road towards the hilltop ..."

From the novel *Ingen Våben, Ingen Rustning* by Robert Henriques, Samlerens Forlag, Copenhagen 1943, where English mountain batteries help form the setting for the action.

Sources

1. *Armies of India* by Major AC Lovett (illustrations) and Major GF MacMunn (text.), Adam and Charles Black, London 1911
2. *India's Army* by Donovan Jackson, Purnell and Sons, London 1940.
3. *The Army of India and Its Evolution - An Official Report* published in Calcutta 1924 and reprinted by Picton Publishing, Chippenham/Wiltshire 1992, ISBN 0-948251-69-9.
4. *History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery - Forgotten Fronts and Home Base, 1914-18* by Sir Martin Farndale, Royal Artillery Institution, London 1988, ISBN 1-870114-05-1.
5. *History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery - Between the Wars, 1919-39* by BP Hughes, Brassey's, London 1992, ISBN 0-08-04098-9.
6. *Indian Army Mountain Artillery* by Christopher Trevelyan.
7. *Mountain Artillery Uniforms of the Second Afghan War c. 1879-1880* by DSV Fosten, and *2.5-inch Screw Gun* by Roy Dilley, Modelworld, September 1973, and the reader's letter *Mountain Artillery* by Robert C. Gibson, Modelworld, February 1974.
8. *Historical Record of 22nd Derajat Pack Battery, Frontier Force*, Naval & Military Press, London 2004, ISBN 1-84574-158-7. Originally published in 1921.
9. *The Mountain Gun* by Michael Barthorp, *Military Illustrated*, November 1994. [The Garrison Library]
10. *Weapons & Equipment of the Victorian Soldier* by Donald Featherstone, Blandford Press,

Poole/Dorset 1978, ISBN 0-7137-0847-6.

11. *The British-Indian Army 1860-1914* by Peter Duckers, Shire Books, Princes Risborough / Buckinghamshire 2003, ISBN 0-7478-0550-4.
12. *British Artillery Weapons & Ammunition 1914-1918* by Ian V. Hogg and LF Thurston, Ian Allan Ltd., Surrey 1972, SBN 7110-0381-5.
13. *The Indian Army* by Boris Mollo, Blanford Press, Poole/Dorset 1981, ISBN 0-7137-1074-8.
14. *Armies in East-Africa 1914.18* by Peter Abbot, Men-at-Arms Nr. 379, Osprey Publishing, London 2002, ISBN 1-84176-489-2.



AN INDIAN MOUNTAIN BATTERY NEAR THE FRONT.

An Indian Mountain Battery near the Front, ca. 1914.

Reproduced from a contemporary postcard.

Whether the picture on the left actually represents parts of an Indian mountain battery, or whether it is an English mountain battery serving in India, remains uncertain.

One thing is certain, however, that the photograph is hardly taken as close to the front as one might get the impression of. Comparing the rendering with the corresponding one in the image archive at FirstWorldWar.com, it turns out that the image was taken in a training camp, and some tents in the background have been retouched away to give the impression of being taken "near the front" ...

This was common in a time when current images were a scarce factor.

Per Finsted

Notes:

1) From *Indian Fanfare* by John Masters, translated by Cai Clausen, Skrifola Lommeroman R.265, Copenhagen, u.å. (circa 1965).

2) On 15 January 1935, "A" Field Brigade, Indian Artillery, was established with 2 gun batteries (18-pdr Mk II) and 2 howitzer batteries (4.5-inch Mk I), all horse-drawn. (Source 2)

3) Another exception was 4 batteries, which until 1903 were part of *The Hyderabad Contingent*, which had been loyal to the British government during the rebellion. See e.g. *The Hyderabad Contingent (Indian Army 1902)*, No. 4 (Hyderabad) Field Battery (*The British Empire*), Hyderabad (*Online Encyclopedia*) and Hyderabad (*Indian Princely States*).

- 4) See Indian Army - Regiment of Artillery. As far as is known, the Pakistani artillery also retained the motto IZZAT-O-IQBAL.
- 5) From *History of the First World War, Volume 3, No. 9*, Purnell, BPC Publishing Ltd., London 1970.
- 6) From Indian Raj Photography 1845-1947. The photographer is Fred Bremner, who worked in India from 1883 to 1923..
- 7) *The Indian Corps in France* by Lieutenant Colonel Merewether and Sir Frederick Smith; originally published in December 1917, and reprinted by Naval & Military Press, London in 2001, ISBN 1-84342-038-4 .
- 8) The department was included in 6th (Poona) Infantry Division - See *The Road to Basra, 1914*.
- 9) See 29th Indian Infantry Brigade & Indian Mountain Artillery at Gallipoli, from Digger History. Also read about 667 Driver Narain Singh who served with 21st Kohat Mountain Battery (Frontier Force) (Source 6).
- 10) Reproduced from *Military Operations: Gallipoli, Volume I: Inception of the Campaign to May 1915* by Brigadier-General CF Aspinall-Oglander, Heinemann, London 1929, which has been seen for sale on the Internet.
- 11) See Indian Mule Cart Transport Corps at Gallipoli, from Digger History.
- 12) For comparison with the information on the number of mules in a mountain battery (see later), an overview in Source 7 states that a camel battery of 6 pamphlets needs 84 camels, i.e. almost half as many animals as a mule battery.
- 13) See also my article On King's African Rifles for a uniform planche with The Gold Coast Regiment, c. 1912.
- 14) See also my article The British Army in World War I (3) - The Eastern Fronts, which contains a mention of The Nigeria Regiment.
- 15) From *The Forgotten Front - The East African Campaign 1914-1918* by Ross Anderson, Tempus Publishing Ltd., Stroud, Gloucestershire, ISBN 0-7524-2344-4.
- 16) From *Uniforms of the Royal Artillery 1716-1966* by PH Smitherman, Hugh Evelyn, London 1966.
- 17) 22nd Derajat Mountain Battery received 4 May 1919 188 Chinese mules with which the battery participated in the Third Afghan War, but they proved unsuitable for use in the mountain artillery, and were replaced on 15 January 1920 by 208 American mules.
- 18) In 1903, the regiment's name was changed ^{n.d} Queen Victoria's Own Sappers and Miners and by 1922- to 2, the order to 2^{n.d} Queen Victoria's Own Madras Sappers and Miners.