

WAR DIARY OF E SQUADRON NORTH IRISH HORSE¹
11 JANUARY TO 30 APRIL 1916

Divisional Mounted Troops to 34th Division

January 1916

11	Longbridge Deverill. 11am. Left camp to entrain at Codford for France. Horses and waggons loaded in 18 minutes. Arrived Southampton Docks 6pm. On Board S.S Rosseti of Lamport and Hobb Line by 7.20. Sailed 8pm.
12	Havre. Arrived off the harbour early in morning. Entered docks midday. Disembarked by 1.30pm. Squadron then watered and fed and Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant drew mobilisation stores which could not be issued before leaving England. Entrained at 5pm at No.4 P(?). Entraining assignments compared most unfavourably with those at Codford. Various fatigue parties were demanded by the Railway Transport Officer which was impracticable. Method for entraining in France suggested as follows: (1) Each Troop to load at same time. (2) Allot each Troop five trucks, four of which for horses and the remaining one for the men. This method exactly disposes of the 32 horses per Troop and permits each Troop to load at the same time. (3) All saddlery to be in with the horses and two men as guard. Horses were fed again at 7pm and watered and fed at 6.30am at Abbeyville. Blednecques. 3pm. Arrived. Detrained most satisfactorily considering the more or less confusion that the method of entrainment had put the Squadron in at Havre. Received orders to proceed to Ebblinghem (6½ miles distant) and billet in the vicinity. 2 nd Lieutenant J.H Grigg ² and the interpreter were sent on in advance. Arrived in billets at Ebblinghem at 6.30pm.
13-19	–
20	Ebblinghem. General Officer Commanding 34 th Division inspected the Squadron in billets.
21	–
22	Ebblinghem. 10pm. Received instructions to proceed to Estaires (21 miles distant).
23	Ebblinghem. 7.55am. Marched. Halted for 15 minutes about 12.30pm to water and give horses a small feed, besides halting occasionally for 10 minutes or so. Walked with horses in hand about 4½ miles. Arrived Estaires 3.15 and quickly got into billets.
24	Estaires. General clean up of horse lines and billets just vacated by Cumberland Yeomanry.
25-31	Nothing of particular interest.

February 1916

1	Estaires. On January 29 th twelve NCOs and men and on the 10 th February twenty NCOs and men went for a course of Road Control under Assistant
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¹ Official War Diaries (Ref. WO 95/2445) signed by **Ian Archibald Finlay**, Captain (later Major) Commanding E Squadron North Irish Horse.

² **John Hutton Grigg**, Lieutenant North Irish Horse, Devonshire Yeomanry Inns of Court Regiment.

	Provost Marshall 34 th Division at Blaringhem. The first party rejoined at Estaires on February 3 rd . The second party rejoined at Steenwerck on February 18 th .
2-9	–
10	Estaires. 2 nd Lieutenant Darling ³ and twelve NCOs and men left for course of ‘sniping’.
11-16	–
17	Estaires. One Sergeant and ten men sent to guard bridge at Bac St Maur. They were relieved on 20 th .
18	Estaires. The Squadron left Estaires 8.15am, arrived Steenwerck 9.45am. Good turn out and nothing left behind, either in billets or stables.
19	Steenwerck. 8.[0]7pm. Received orders to ‘turn out’ from 23 rd Division. Squadron including 1 st line transport was on road ready to move anywhere at 8.37pm. At 9.30pm received orders to ‘Dismiss’. All 2 nd line transport was ready to hook in if required. One Sergeant and four men were detailed as guard until further orders were received and to load baggage waggon and supply waggons if required.
20	Steenwerck. Supplied two Sergeants and 22 men for duty under Assistant Provost Marshall 34 th Division. One Sergeant and eleven men took over guard at Bac St Maur Bridge. Sent one Officer and twenty men to take over ‘salvage’ of 23 rd Division at Erquinghem permanently. ⁴
21	Steenwerck. Supplied 45 men for fatigue at brickworks Sailly. This left the Squadron with two available men to water and feed 143 horses at midday.
22	Steenwerck. Supplied 25 men for fatigue at Sailly.
23	Steenwerck. Supplied 25 men for fatigue at Sailly. The Squadron from a military point of view as an ‘effective unit’ now practically ceases to exist. Twenty-three NCOs and men and three Officers could be put into the firing line! in a sudden emergency.
24	Steenwerck. Fatigue 25 men.
25	Steenwerck. Fatigue 25 men.
26	Steenwerck. Fatigue 25 men.
27	No fatigue!
28	One Corporal and six men detailed for guard over (R?)E Dump at Armentieres.
29	Have nineteen men I could put into action only in all, including horseholders.
March 1916	
	Practically no ‘training’ carried out during the month owing to shortage of men earlier in the month and ‘no’ of horses in hand.
1-2	–

³ **N Darling**, originally Private (No.960) North Irish Horse, later Lieutenant 1st Regiment North Irish Horse.

⁴ This sentence follows the entry for 21 February, but is listed as 20 February.

3	Steenwerck. One Officer and 28 men detailed for permanent duty under Assistant Provost Marshall.
4-8	–
9	Steenwerck. Two NCOs and six men detailed for road control at L’Epinette
10	Steenwerck. 2 nd Lieutenant G.H Grigg [sic] and two Other Ranks left for III Corps school of sniping.
11-16	–
17	Croix Du Bac. Changed billets.
18	Croix Du Bac. One Corporal and one man left for school of instruction in Hotchkiss Gun.
19	–
20	Croix Du Bac. The following letter was received on this date. “GOC ⁵ directs me to express his satisfaction on the state and efficiency of your sqdn” – (signed) Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General 34 th Division.
21	–
22	Advance guard to a Division was practised with all available men. Managed with difficulty to have 65 men on parade.
23	Croix Du Bac. Two men left for III Corps sniping school.
24-26	–
27	2 nd Lieutenant G.H Grigg went to the trenches with eight Other Ranks for ‘sniping’.
28	Two men and three horses sent to 7 th Squadron Royal Flying Corps for use of Officers.
29-30	–
31	2 nd Lieutenant N. ff. Darling left to join 2 nd Lieutenant G.H Grigg ‘sniping’. 2 nd Lieutenant R.B Kellock ⁶ and one man left for La Boudrelle school of instruction. State of Squadron as at 31 st – Bridge guards, 18 Other Ranks (dismounted) Assistant Provost Marshall and salvage, 1 Officer and 28 Other Ranks School of instruction, 1 Officer 3 Other Ranks ‘Divisional snipers’, 2 Officers 10 Other Ranks 1 man hospital 1 on special leave

⁵ General Officer Commanding.

⁶ Probably **Harold Plumer Kellock**, Corporal (No.1198) Royal Naval Division Hussars, Lieutenant North Irish Horse attached Royal Field Artillery, died of wounds 6 October 1918 aged 22, son of William Plumer Kellock and Mrs M.C Kellock of Allerton, Totnes, Devon. Kellock is buried in Terlincthun British Cemetery, Wimille. Alternatively, **Edwin David Kellock**, Private (No.1996), North Irish Horse, 2nd Lieutenant Prisoner of War Unit and Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.

	2 men and 3 horse Royal Flying Corps Total with Squadron 2 Officers 75 Other Ranks 106 horses.
April 1916	
1-6	Croix Du Bac. Detailed for duty under Assistant Provost Marshall, one Officer, 28 Other Ranks. Detailed for duty 'sniping', two Officers, eight Other Ranks. Detailed for duty bridge guards, sixteen Other Ranks. Squadron drill, minor schemes, etc.
7	Croix Du Bac. 'Snipers' withdrawn from trenches.
8-9	–
10	Croix Du Bac. Bridge guards withdrawn.
11	Assistant Provost Marshall troop withdrawn and Squadron paraded 2pm and proceeded to Sec Bois, arriving 5pm.
12	Sec Bois. 8am. Proceeded to billets at Scaderbourg (St Martin) arriving 4pm.
13-14	–
15-18	Scaderbourg. Provisional training program of 34 th Division commenced, which included sword and rifle drill, musketry and range practice. Physical and bayonet exercises. Saluting and setting up drill. Riding drill. Despatch relay system. Study of ground and map reading. Scouting and protection at halt.
19	Paraded 8am and proceeded to Journy to be attached to 2 nd Cavalry Division. Arrived in billets 12 noon.
20-29	Journy. Training in duties of IInd Mounted Troops under Captain Nicolson ⁷ 15 th Hussars in conjunction with 34 th Divisional Cyclist Company.
30	–

⁷ Possibly **F.A Nicolson**, Captain Hussars.