

# WW1: AMMUNITION PRODUCTION & DEVELOPMENT

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#### Outline

- Factors August 1914
  - Lessons & Legacy
  - Industrial Base
- Nature of Targets
- Ammunition Improvement
  - Metallurgy
  - Exterior Ballistics
  - Wire Cutting
  - Fuzes
  - Propellant
  - Explosive Fill
- Australian Manufacturing
- Epilogue
- Conclusions

#### The Basics

- The Weapon of Artillery is the Projectile
- Effect at Target depends on
  - Rate of fire
  - Total number of rounds
  - Type of round
  - Timing of detonation



## As of August 1914

- Field Artillery lessons not embraced:
  - Boer War
  - Russo-Japanese War
  - Franco-Prussian War
  - American Civil War
- Reasons
  - Policeman
  - Envisaged enemies e.g. tribesman

#### **Industrial Base**

- Good research capability Royal Arsenal Woolwich
- Limited ammunition manufacturing base
  - Not prepared for expansion
- Ammunition Holdings
  - 13-pr & 18-pr 1000rpg
  - 4.5-in How 800rpg
  - 60-pr 500rpg
- Shell Scandal

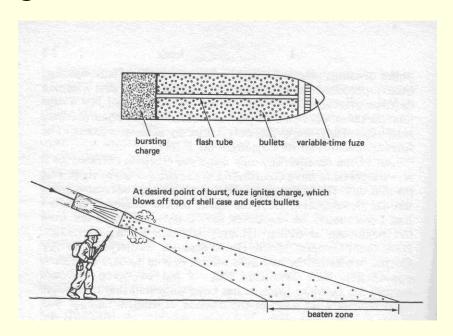
#### **Industrial Base**

- By War's end there were 12 National Filling Factories, 4 Projectile Factories, and 2 Explosives Factories
- A huge increase considering there were only three Royal Ordnance Factories in 1914



## The Nature of Targets & Lessons

- Insufficient ammunition
- Shrapnel limitations
- Shortage of HE

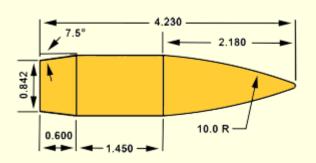


## **Ammunition Improvements**

- Range Tables
- Carrier Shells
- Projectile Metallurgy

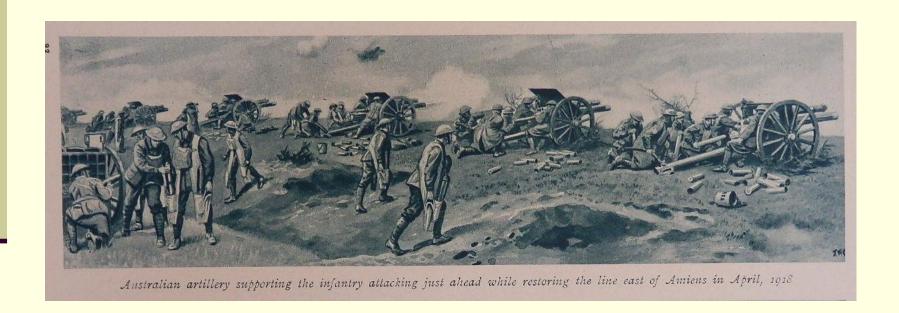


- Projectile Shape & Exterior Ballistics
- Wire Cutting
- Fuzes
- Propellant
- Explosives



## Australian Manufacturing

Only 15,000 Shrapnel Shell bodies produced



## Epilogue – Rounds Fired

- 18-pr gun 99,397,670 70%
- 4.5-in how 25,326,276 18%
- 60-pr gun 10,125,32 7%
- 8-in how 4,189,165 3%
- 9.2-in how 3,119,158 2%
- Total 142,157,590

#### Conclusion – Ammunition Production

- Production capacity was a major limitation
- Fundamental ammunition design improvements did not generally occur
- Main effort in meeting artillery ammunition requirements was in quantity over quality

