

Captain John Harold Charter MC (1897 -1987) Royal Field Artillery

The original boxed MC and set of miniature medals were presented to the Oxted Branch RBL by his son James D Charter.



Military Cross, 1914-15 Star, WW1 War Medal, Victory Medal.

John Enlisted 27th Aug 1915, Serving with the Royal Field Artillery, 2nd Northumbrian Ammunition Column of the 2nd Northumbrian Brigade.

London Gazette Issue 30204 Page 7625, dated 24th July 1917 citation reads:

The King has been graciously pleased to confer the Military Cross on 2nd Lt J.H. Charter in recognition of his conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty.

An ammunition dump at the battery was set on fire. He got together a few men, and with their assistance got the burning ammunition separated from the other. His prompt action saved many lives.

Description by John Cratchley of the Sheffield City Battalion:

May 4th 1917

Very quiet on this front all day. About seven at night flames shot up in Arras, and in a few minutes we found that an ammunition dump a quarter of a mile long was on fire. The explosions was terrific, all kinds of shells and ammunition exploding. It was a sight, we was about a quarter of a mile from it but did not feel safe, as a big lot of gas shells were near the dump. It went on all night.

May 5th 1917

When we got up the fire was near out, five men were killed through the fire.

The **Battle of Arras** (also known as the **Second Battle of Arras**) was a British offensive on the Western Front during the First World War. From 9 April to 16 May 1917. The British went on the offensive at Arras between 9 April and 16 May. After a huge artillery bombardment, elements of the First, Third and Fifth armies advanced up to eight kilometres (five miles) before the assault was halted. Casualties surpassed 150,000 for the British and Canadians and 100,000 for the Germans. Once again there had been no breakthrough, even though the Canadian Corps gained some success in taking Vimy Ridge, a key feature that dominated the surrounding area. Several days later a new French offensive from Soissons to Reims also ground to a halt after massive casualties.