



HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS THE TRENCH SET RADIO MARK 3



Radio, or as it was called prior to the 1950's Wireless, had started early in WW1 for communicating to observers in aircraft, who could provide targets and intelligence for the artillery supporting fire. The introduction of wireless into trench warfare was much more piecemeal especially with the use of voice instead of Morse Code. The WT Set Field Telephone had separate transmitter and receiver boxes. It was made in Teddington at the War Department factory there and provided both voice and CW. The Trench Set Radio Mark 3 developed from these earlier sets. It was designed in 1917 and operated in the frequency range from 150 KHz to 1.3 MHz and was used to the end of WW1, but was obsolete by early 1920's. All the problems that were faced by communicators during WW2 and subsequently, such as antennas, battery size and set reliability were present in this wireless, which included a compass for the operator to use to orientate the antenna correctly. One of these compasses is held in the Royal Signals Museum. It was donated originally by the operator of this set during operations fighting the Germans on the Somme front. He had to destroy the set so it did not fall into enemy hands, but then used the compass to guide him back to Corps HQ. The other problem with the set was the power output, which frequently necessitated using a power amplifier, which was yet another bulky item. This weight was now unacceptable, as by 1918, fighting had become much more mobile. This was to prove to be the trend leading to WW2 and beyond. Radio sets and the associated ancillaries had to become much more portable.

