

CHAPTER XII.
NIGHT OPERATIONS AND CONVOYS.

167. *Night Operations* (See also "Field Service Regulations, Part I, Chapter IX)

1. Though it is unlikely that mounted rifles will be required to carry out assaults in strength by night, they will frequently have to move secretly at night either mounted or dismounted in order to operate at distant points suddenly the next morning; and in carrying out such movements they may find it necessary to overcome and capture by assault small posts of the enemy in the dark.

Opportunities for minor night operations to harass the enemy by disturbing his repose may often be found by enterprising mounted troops and such operations when well conducted may have a great effect on the enemy's moral, especially when he is resting after a long march or severe fighting. On such occasions the enemy may be entirely deceived by means of rapid fire as to the strength of the force engaging him.

Reconnaissance by night, as well as movement by night in order to reach a locality whence reconnaissance can be carried out by day, will also undertaken frequently by mounted rifles.

2. Night marches must be designed on very simple lines; every complication increases the risk of failure. Combined movements of two or more forces acting in co-operation are liable to miscarry.

3. Secrecy is one of the chief factors leading to success in night operations. As a rule the orders for a night march should. Seldom be issued before hand, although it will usually be advisable to explain the leader's general plans and intentions secretly to subordinate commanders in sufficient time to enable them to understand what will be required of them. Any necessary instructions to the remainder of the force can usually be given after the troops have been ordered to turn out.

The presence of wheeled transport or guns or even in certain cases of any horses at all in a column may endanger the success of a night march.

4. The march should generally be protected by small advanced and rear guards. In close country, the flanks are best protected by piquets posted by the advanced guard and withdrawn by the rear guard; in open country, either by piquets or by flanking patrols, but the later, unless accustomed to night work, are liable to lose their direction.

5. The regulation distances between units should be reduced or omitted, and the column must be kept closed up. An officer should usually march in rear of each unit. Connection must be maintained throughout the column, the head of the main body being responsible, as in daytime, for the pace at which the column marches.

The distance of the advanced flank, and rear guards from the column must be small, close connection being maintained by means of connecting files.

6. To prevent the troops in rear from going astray, the advanced guard, under instructions from the commander of the column, should block all branch roads that are not to be used, by posting men at them, or by placing branches of trees or lines of stones across them. Men so posted will be withdrawn by the rear guard.

7. When leaving the bivouac or billet, or after crossing an obstacle or defile where opening out is likely to occur, the column should advance about its own length and then be halted until the rear is reported to be closed up.

8. Rifles should not be loaded, but magazines should be charged. No firing should take place without orders. Absolute silence must be maintained, and no smoking or lights are to be allowed, except with the permission of the commander of the force.

9. The pace should be uniform, and great care should be taken that the head of the column does not march too fast, especially at the beginning of the march.

168. *Convoys. (Omitted for this purpose.)*

CHAPTER XIII.

WARFARE AGAINST UNCIVILISED ENEMIES

169. *General Principles.*

1. In campaigns against savages the armament, tactics, and characteristics of the enemy, and the nature of the theatre of operations demand that the methods of regular warfare be somewhat modified; the modifications in this chapter are such as experiences has shown to be necessary.

2. Self-reliance, vigilance, and judgement are the chief requisites for overcoming the difficulties inherent in savage warfare. Discipline and organization are powerful aids; but unless both officers and men are well trained, capable of adapting their action to unexpected conditions, and of beating the enemy at his own tactics the campaign will be needlessly long and costly.

3. The nature of the objective will differ considerably according to circumstances. In the case of peoples with some settled form of government, an advance against their capital will probably be opposed; its fall will follow the defeat at the enemy, and will often bring all organized resistance to an end. Similarly, in dealing with independent fanatical tribes, an advance against a sacred town or shrine may have the same effect. If no such objective is available, the enemy may be brought to oppose the advance by a movement against his wells or sources of supply. Should the enemy refuse to make any organized resistance, the occupation of his country, the seizure of his flocks and supplies and the destruction of his villages and crops may be necessary to obtain his submission.

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4. The susceptibility of this class of enemy to moral influence is a most important factor in the campaign. Hesitation, delay, or any retrograde movement will at once be interpreted as signs of weakness, and while the braver of the enemy will be encouraged, the waverers, always to be found amongst undisciplined forces, will be tempted to throw in their lot with what appears to be the winning side. A vigorous offensive, strategical as well as tactical, is always the safest method of conducting operations.

The most complete preparations, which should include a careful study of the topography of the country and of the mode of fighting, habits, and characteristics of the enemy should be made, to ensure the campaign being carried through to its conclusion without a check. Success is to be achieved by discipline and vigour rather than by force of numbers.

5. The local resources being small, all supplies will, as a rule, have to be carried; owing to the absence of good roads it will often be impossible to use wheeled transport. Pack animals or porters will therefore be employed, and these will often be unable to move on a wide front. Supply and baggage columns will therefore be both long and vulnerable; and as there is a limit to the number of men and animals which it is possible to move over one road during the hours of daylight, a force may have to be broken up into small and compact columns, moving in several lines, or on the same road at a day's interval. Against a badly organized enemy this is not so dangerous as it would be in other circumstances.

6. The freedom of an uncivilized enemy from the complicated organization of regular armies, his individual independence, and his ability to disperse at will, necessitates a crushing blow being delivered against him, if the result of an action is to be decisive. Care should therefore be taken not to induce him to abandon a position by too great a display of force, or to manoeuvre him out of it, unless it be too strong to be taken without undue loss. When once beaten he should be followed up and given no respite until all resistance is at an end. Natural obstacles will often render pursuit a difficult undertaking, but to facilitate it, a portion of the force, at least, should be thoroughly mobile and independent; the question of supply and transport being carefully worked out before hand.

7. As such people are usually adepts in laying ambushes and effecting surprises, vigilance and precautions should never be relaxed. Reconnaissance, even when everything appears to be absolutely secure, should be pushed out as far as prudence permits, and every endeavour made to preclude all possibility of surprise.

8. In open country a badly armed enemy has but small chance against regular troops, but in bush, or very broken country, his superior activity, recklessness, and knowledge of the ground make him a formidable foe. Such ground should, therefore, be avoided especially as a halting place or bivouac.

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170. *The attack.*

1. The formation adopted for the attack should have sufficient power of resistance to repel vigorous counter-attacks delivered by an enemy determined to come to close quarters.

As the losses during the advance are, as a rule, comparatively small, the first line should be able to deliver the assault without reinforcements from the reserves. For this reason the proportion of troops held in reserve may be smaller than is the case in civilised warfare.

2. When possible the attack should be enveloping, savages being generally very nervous of any movement directed against their line of retreat. Detached parties of mounted men should move round towards the rear of the enemy in order to be in a position to take up the pursuit vigorously as soon as the enemy begins to retire. But he should not be frightened into retiring before he has been thoroughly beaten.

171. *The defence.*

1. Troops usually adopt close formation in defence, firstly because it is the most suitable formation for repelling an enemy using shock action, and secondly because it induces him to reduce his front and thus to offer a good target for guns and rifles. Close formation has not usually the same disadvantages in savage as it has in civilised warfare, for the enemy will have no efficient artillery and the rifle fire of savages is generally much less accurate than that of civilised warfare, for the enemy will have no efficient artillery and the rifle fire of savages is generally much less accurate than that of civilised troops.

2. If the attack is received in line, the menaced flank should be thrown back, and that which is not threatened wheeled up.

3. In open country a square formation offers the best protection to animals and transport, and is easily moved in any direction. Its disadvantage lies in the loss of fire effect, unless the attack is pressed on all sides simultaneously; but as ill-armed savages usually do attack on all sides, it will often be found the safest and most effective formation to adopt.

Two squares may be used instead of one, in which case they should move in echelon. A reserve should be kept inside the square ready to fill up any gap which may occur.

When the square halts to receive an attack, machine guns when available should be placed at the corners which are the most vulnerable points.

Guns should move inside the square, but if there is time to place them in position before the enemy attacks, they should usually be posted in prolongation of one of the faces of the square, the teams being inside. If the enemy presses the attack very closely, the gunners should take refuge inside the square.

172. *Protection on the move.*

1. Savages are usually skilful in laying ambushes; protective reconnaissance must therefore be very carefully carried out. Reconnoitring parties should be pushed out as

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far as discretion will allow, in order to preclude as far as possible the danger of being surprised. They should not off-saddle except in open ground where they can obtain an unrestricted view of the surrounding country.

2. If the enemy is unprovided with artillery the advanced flank and rear guards need not march at such a distance from the main body as they do in civilised warfare. Precautions should be taken to prevent the protective troops from being cut off from the main body. Occasionally it may be necessary for the main body to keep touch with and regulate its pace by the rear guard.

173. *Protection when at rest.*

1. The line of defence is usually on the perimeter of the camp and must be clearly defined the whole way around; in the case of a laager it will usually be a few yards outside the wagons. It should provide the troops with cover from fire and have a good obstacle in front of it.

The troops should be so disposed that they can man the line of defence without confusion immediately the alarm sounds.

2. If the enemy is armed with a long range rifle it may be necessary to deny to him the occupation of positions up to a distance of 2,000 yards from which he could fire into the camp. This can be done by occupying the positions with an outer line of strong piquets, able to hold their own without assistance for several hours.

3. Men should be told off in each unit to stand to all animals, and a general reserve should be detailed; special places should be allotted to the followers in the camping grounds of units.

4. Lights or fires are apt to attract the enemy's rifle fire, and it is therefore dangerous for men to sleep near them.

5. To guard against the danger of having the camp burnt out, it may be advisable to burn a strip of grass all round the position.

174. *Forming square.*

1. When mounted rifles acting independently of other arms form square to meet an attack by uncivilised troops the command will be "TO FORM SQUARE, ACTION - DISMOUNT." On this command all dismount and fix bayonets, if armed with them, the Nos. 3 of the odd numbered sections holding the horses of their own sections and those of the section on their left. When time permits the horses will be coupled.

2. When a squadron is in *squadron column*, the first troop after dismounting forms to the front; the 2nd to the right; and the 3rd to the left; and the 4th to the rear. When there are only three troops, the right half of the centre troop under the command of the troop leader forms to the right, and the left half under the second in command of the troop, to the left.

3. When two squadrons are in *mass* or *line of squadron columns*, the first troop of each squadron forms to the front; the 2nd and 3rd troops of the 1st squadron to the left flank; the 4th troop of each squadron forms to the rear. When time permits the two squadrons in *line of squadron columns* should form *mass* before dismounting.

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4. When three squadrons are in *line of squadron columns or mass*, the first troop of each squadron forms to the front, the 2nd and 3rd troops of the 1st squadron form to the left; the 4th troop of each squadron forms to the rear. The 2nd and 3rd troops of the centre squadron form in front of their respective troops and act as a reserve. When time permits the three squadrons in *line of squadron columns* should form mass before dismounting.

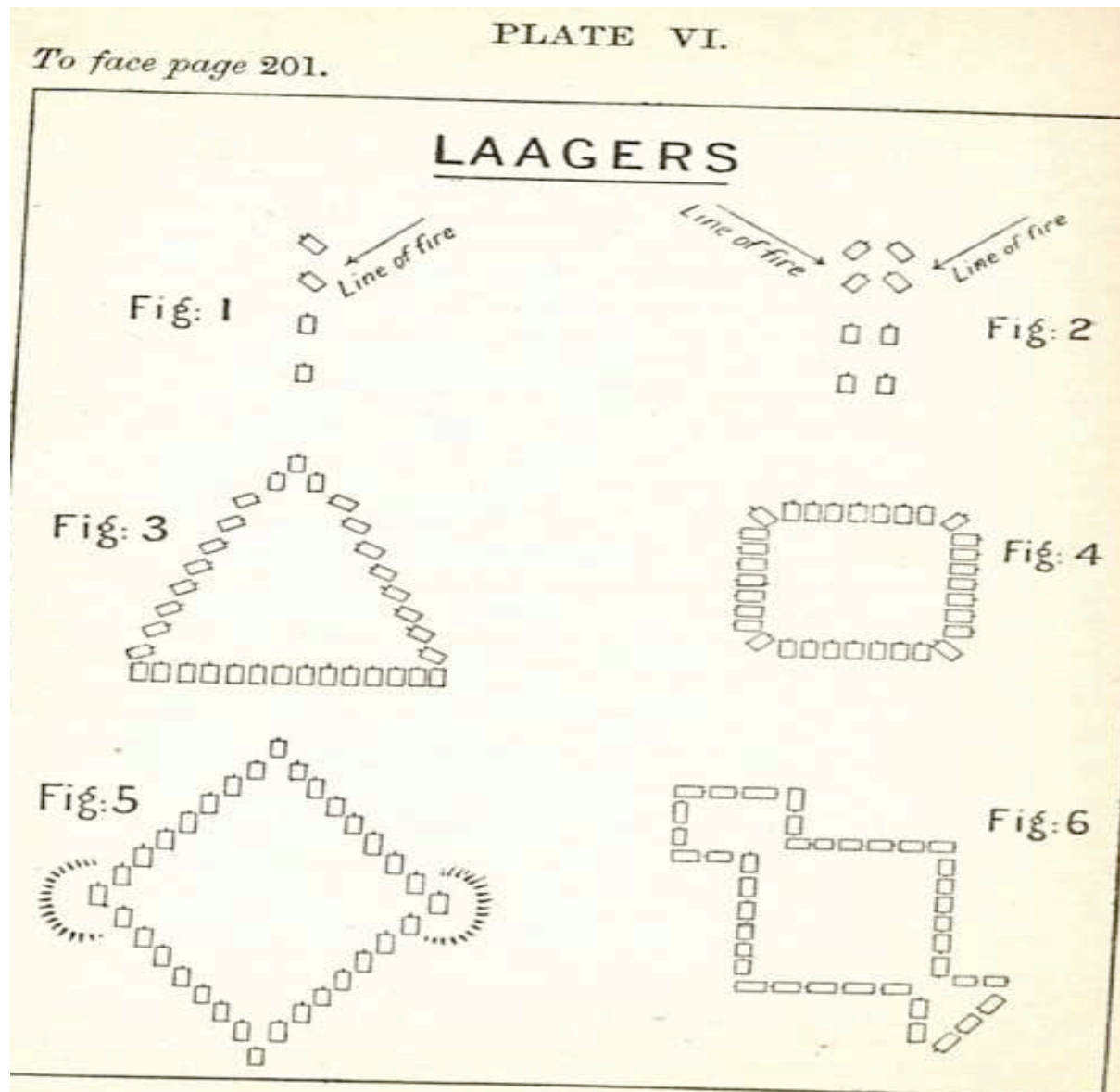
If *mass or line of squadron column* is composed of four squadrons, the two centre squadrons act in the manner described for the centre squadron when there are only three.

175. *Formation of laagers.*

1. Laagers are used for hurried defence on the line of march and for defence when halted at night or when forming a permanent camp.

2. The formation of a column of wagons on the march depends upon whether the country to be traversed is open and easily passed over, or close and impassable for vehicles except on the roads.

In the first case the wagons should march on a broad front so that the escort may move concentrated.



3. When attacked on the march and there is sufficient open ground available to a triangular laager may be formed (see Plate VI, Fig. 3). If the wagons are in single column, the first wagon should form the apex of the triangle, the second and third wagons forming to the right and left respectively; these three wagons should face to the front. The remainder form alternately to the right and left, but should face inwards, so that the teams are protected by the wagons. When half the column has been parked in this manner, the remaining wagons facing to the front form the base of the triangle.

The wheels of the wagons should be lashed together.

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4. When attacked on the march and there is not sufficient space or time to form a triangular laager the wagons should be drawn obliquely across the road and as close together as possible.

If attacked on both flanks a double column of wagons should be formed (see Plate VI, Figs. 1 & 2).

5. When halted at night the hollow square laager (see Plate VI, Fig. 4) is usually the best formation. In order to facilitate the resumption of the march all the wagons except those of the rear side should face outwards. Openings can be made by drawing forward a wagon, which in case of attack can be run back. The wheels of all the wagons except those used for openings should be lashed together. The animals should be picketed as near as possible to their own wagons.

6. A diamond laager (see Plate VI, Fig. 5), which is more difficult to form than a hollow square laager, may be used when the space inside of the latter laager is not sufficient.

If the escort is small, it should entrench and hold the angles on either flank.

With a larger escort all four angles may be held, and with a still stronger escort the faces may be manned.

7. The permanent laager (see Plate VI, Fig. 6) may be held with a comparatively small escort, which should occupy the two small corner laagers, the larger square being used for animals.

The wagons to be placed in position end to end have to be man handled.

The space beneath the wagons should be filled up, loopholes being made where required.

BUSH WARFARE.

176. *Marches.*

1. Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of taking the offensive in bush warfare, but the offensive is difficult if the transport is with the fighting troops at the moment of collision. Whenever possible, therefore, a column should park and form a zareba round its transport before coming into action. Bold scouting and an intelligent use of friendly natives will usually afford the column sufficient warning to enable this to be done.

2. The distances which should divide the parts of a column cannot be fixed. It is important to keep as closed up as possible in dense bush, or the enemy may interpose between the various parts of the column. Turns in a path are sometimes frequent and very erratic, and it is only by keeping well closed up that all parts of a column can maintain their cohesion and act more or less in concert.

3. When it is necessary to march in half sections or single file halts should be frequent. During these the men composing various units or parts of the column should close up at once, and distances between units should then be corrected.

4. The guns should be near the head of the main body. The baggage guard should be sufficient to hold its own in case of any temporary separation from the remainder of the force and should be under a specially appointed officer.

177. *The advanced guard.*

1. Against an enemy unprovided with artillery or modern rifles in any numbers as is usually the case in bush warfare, the main body is able to march so close to the advanced guard as to be able to support it immediately. The advanced guard should be strong enough to brush aside minor opposition and to hold its own till supported. Whether the advanced guard should move out to a distance from the camp before the column leaves depends on the character of the enemy, but in any event the advanced guard must be ready for action while camp is being broken, and the whole circuit of the camp should be patrolled to give warning of any enemy collecting in its immediate neighbourhood.

2. Scouts precede the advanced guard, and even in the densest bush, should be not less than 80 yards on either side of the path; they should carry their rifles ready for immediate use. Close behind these come the point, the remainder of the vanguard follows. The scouts and flankers will work in complete silence, using whistles if necessary as signals. None but well trained men can perform these duties, untrained men will soon be lost in the bush. As soon as they observe anything suspicious they should remain perfectly still and call up their comrades by whistle. If the enemy is discovered and offers a good mark, rifle fire may be used. When a scout has fired he should report at once what he has fired at.

No villages, open spaces, streams, , or knolls should be crossed or approached before being thoroughly examined.

3. The advanced guard should see that all paths leading off the line of advance are carefully closed. This can be done by marking the wrong paths by cut branches, or by grass placed a little beyond the proper path to prevent them from being displaced; trees may be blazed; or where an important turning exists two men may be left on the path. After dark this latter is the only method, and if not adopted great confusion and delay may be caused in a column.

178. *Flankers.*

Every column in addition to its other precautions must have flankers at varying distances along its route to protect it from surprise.

If the column is attacked in flank, the advanced guard should halt and throw out extra flankers or piquets. Mountain guns should be prepared for action. If firing continues for long a portion of the main body may be sent to assist in repelling the attack.

179. *The rear guard.*

1. The rear guard must be strong enough to act independently or to assist the baggage guard at any time. Many savage races make a point of attacking the rear guard, thinking themselves safe from attack in so doing. In such cases ambushes, if successfully planned, will often so disconcert the enemy as to stop all further attempts for the time being.

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2. Just before daylight the rear guard for the day will relieve the outposts. Piquets and sentries round camp should be doubled and not withdrawn till the camp is clear; the commander of the rear guard will then inform the commander of the force that all is ready for the advance.

The covering of the movement out of camp is one of the most important duties of the rear guard.

180. *Protection when at rest.*

1. Savages see far by night, are endowed with cunning, and are generally superior in numbers; they move silently and know the bush. Against them, therefore, vigilance by night is of the greatest importance.

2. Camps should be formed on the perimeter system; well guarded by obstacles, for which barbed wire is useful; in easy soil trenches will be useful. Large trees should not be cut down, as while standing they take up little room, and if felled require much labour and time to remove.

At sunset all paths in the vicinity of camp should be blocked by obstacles, which should be removed next morning. One or two single strands of wire run round the camp through the brushwood and firmly fixed about two feet from the ground, will usually stop a savage rush.

3. The troops should be placed on the perimeter. All shelters should open outwards. Piquets will be told off at special points on the perimeter. Camp followers should be thoroughly drilled in what they have to do in case of attack. A clear space should be left immediately behind the firing lines all round the perimeter, to facilitate communication and control in the event of attack.

4. Patrols should search the surrounding ground by day. Paths should be constructed between all units, and the better and neater they are, the easier will it be to avoid all confusion in case of alarm.

By day, piquets should be posted some way out, watching paths, open clearings and nullahs leading to camp; these should be withdrawn at night. If for any special reason a piquet is left out at night it should be made safe from fire from the camp, and also from surprise. In no case should it fall back on camp during an attack. It can sometimes be arranged for the native scouts to remain out all night in small groups, at a sufficient distance from the camp to give timely warning of an enemy's approach. Such scouts should make a pre-arranged signal when returning to camp with information, and all sentries know the signal agreed upon.