

CHAPTER VI.
TRAINING IN FIELD OPERATIONS.
(See also "Training and Manoeuvre Regulations.")

112. *System of instruction.*

1. Instruction in field operations will usually be given in the form of problems, which may be set by the commander himself or by an officer acting as director.

It will be progressive and will usually be carried out in two stages. The troops under instruction will first work against an enemy, imaginary or represented, whose movements are restricted and, later, against an enemy who within the limits of the scheme is free to make any dispositions he chooses.

2. The problems may be set verbally or in writing. Each should consist of two portions:

i. A clearly defined tactical situation,

ii. A definite task to be performed by the commander, and should be arranged to illustrate a principle laid down in the instructions for the employment of mounted riflemen in war. (See Part II of this manual.)

3. It is important to teach leaders to come to rapid decisions. When, therefore, the problem is set by a director the space of time allowed to elapse between the receipt by the commander of the definite task and the issue of his executive orders should be shortened as the training progresses.

4. Before the troops move every man should know what the problem is and the method in which the commander proposes to solve it, so far as it may be possible to decide on the latter at that stage.

At the conclusion of a scheme the director will call up the subordinate commanders and explain briefly the exercise and the way it has been carried out. After listening to the reasons which prompted the action taken he will point out mistakes and emphasise the lessons to be learnt. If he has acted as commander as well as director he should also give his reasons for his plan of action. He should call on subordinates for their views and reasons if he thinks fit.

To stimulate the interest of the men as well as to increase their knowledge the commander should make certain that every man knows how the scheme was carried out, and hears any criticism which may be useful to him.

113. *Special instruction of leaders without troops.*

1. Special instruction of leaders down to the section leader will be carried out by means of exercises in which regimental officers work out on the ground, under the guidance of a director, minor tactical and administrative problems, such as they may be called upon to solve in war.

2. The party under one director should rarely consist of more than eight officers or non-commissioned officers divided into pairs; or of fours, if not divided into pairs.

3. The director will select a piece of country within easy reach of the place where the unit is quartered or encamped.

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He will go over the selected ground carefully before the exercise begins and plan a series of situations involving tactical problems concerning the handling of small bodies of troops.

4. The following exercise for the instruction of junior officers and N.C.Os. indicates the nature of the problems which may be set for solution:

Force: One squadron acting as advanced guard of a brigade.

The squadron advances.

Problem I. The point of the vanguard is suddenly fired on, describe the action of the commander of the point.

Problem II. The action of the vanguard when news of the presence of the enemy is received.

Problem III. the action of the advanced guard commander when he hears that the vanguard cannot advance.

Problem IV. the action of the troop leader of the main guard who has been sent with his troop to outflank the enemy.

5. On arrival on the ground the first situation is issued and each pair is directed to describe shortly in a note book what action would have been taken; the object in having the solutions written is to ensure that, before the discussion on each problem takes place, each pair has arrived at definite solution. The director will indicate the time and place where the solutions have to be handed in. The length of time given for each problem will vary according to the nature of the problem and to the aptitude of those under instruction. It is, however, important that leaders should receive progressive training in making quick decisions and that sufficient time should be allowed for appreciation of the influence of the ground.

The director should make certain that the decisions are arrived at after the ground has been seen and not merely by reference to a map.

When all the solutions have been handed in the director will assemble the party and ask one of each pair to state the views of the pair. He will then discuss the various solutions and give his decisions explaining the influence exercised by the features of the ground.

6. From three to four hours is sufficient time for an exercise to last. A conference may be held subsequently to emphasise points of importance raised during the day.

114. *Instruction in fire tactics.*

1. For instruction in fire tactics it is by no means necessary to parade with horses, for much of the preliminary work can be carried out without them.

2. It must be impressed on the men that an ability to hit the target on the range, to judge distance accurately, and to make intelligent use of cover, are by themselves insufficient to render troops successful in action.

In addition the tactical principles laid down in Chapter XI must be understood, and men must be trained to work rapidly under the direction of their leader, and to support each other.

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3. It is important that stress should be laid on the necessity for *offensive* tactics.

Commanders must endeavour to foster in their men an aggressive spirit, and they must teach them that a determined enemy will not be beaten or driven off his ground merely by long range fire.

4. As far as possible the supply of ammunition should be practised.

5. When opposing sides are working against each other no firing is to take place within fifty yards and bayonets will not be fixed.

115. *Instruction of machine gun sections.*

Omitted

116. *Instruction in reconnaissance.*

1. As a rule scouts should be practised in working against troops, and not in exercises against other scouts or against flags. When troops are working against a skeleton enemy scouts may be attached with advantage to the latter. The ordinary course of squadron, regimental, and brigade training should provide ample opportunity for teaching the ground work of scouting, but continuous operations extended over several days are also valuable.

2. Schemes for reconnaissance should illustrate the difficulties which must be overcome when transmitting information in war. To this end it may be advisable occasionally to arrange for the interception of the despatch riders.

3. In all reconnaissance exercises practice should be given in reporting on the enemy and on the country, both in writing and verbally.

4. Officers and non-commissioned officers should be taught by covering long distances at various paces on horseback, to estimate distances of several miles.

117. *Instruction of scouts and despatch riders.*

1. Every mounted rifleman should receive some training in reconnaissance and those who show special ability a further training as scouts or despatch riders.

2. In every regiment the following should be the minimum number of trained scouts:

1 officer, scout leader.

1 serjeant scout.

8 regimental or 1st class scouts.

16 squadron or 2nd class scouts.

Scouts will be classified annually as 1st and 2nd class.

Every second lieutenant should be instructed in the details of the work of a scout, and should qualify as a 1st class scout before he can be considered fit for promotion.

3. In addition to the above there will be at least four trained despatch riders in each squadron. These will not only be trained to find their way across country with verbal or written messages, but also in such details as are necessary for carrying out the duties of orderlies. For instance, they should know by name and be able to recognise the

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commanders of other units in the brigade and the commander and staff officers of the force with which their regiment or brigade is working.

4. Scouting is learnt by reading and hearing of the experiences of other scouts, and by intelligent and constant practice. A scout must be impressed with the feeling that during training as well as on service, he is implicitly trusted by his commander to carry out his work honestly; that to attain success, he must combine pluck with common sense and cunning; that he must be prepared to sacrifice himself if necessary; and that great personal credit and honour are attainable as a result of successful work whatever may be his rank.

5. The following are the subjects in which the scouts should receive special instruction. As far as time permits these subjects should also be included in the training of all mounted riflemen.

i. Ability to find the way. The scout must be taught to find the way in a strange country by an ordinary map or rough diagram; by memory of the map; by the stars, sun, and compass; by land marks; by questioning natives of the country.

ii. Use of eye and ear. He should be practised in observing the same distant object both with and without glasses; in noting small signs or details, both far away and underfoot; in interpreting various sounds; and in the use of all his senses at night.

iii. Concealment. The importance of taking cover and of selecting a background to suit the colour of his clothing, &c., should be emphasised; of remaining perfectly still; of concealing his horse by making him lie down or keeping his head towards the enemy; of avoiding the sky line; of the use of trees; of selecting look-out points when on the move, and getting from one to another quickly, and unseen.

iv. Getting across country. Instruction should be given in practical cross-country riding, in the crossing of such obstacles as railway embankments, dykes, wire fences, rivers and canals, and in riding from point to point.

v. Reporting. As the result of a scout's work depends on his ability to furnish a useful report, he should receive special instruction in this subject.

vi. Sketching. When the man has learnt to read a map, elementary instruction should be given in enlarging maps. Judging distances both long and short by eye and by time, and by night as well by day.

vii. Horsemanship. A scout should know how to save his horse on a long reconnaissance; how to water, feed and rest his horse; how to detect and treat lameness; how to prevent and treat galls. He should have practice in knee haltering, linking, rounding up horses, &c.

6. After receiving elementary instruction in the foregoing, the men should be practised in scouting as individuals or in company with others.

Special instruction should be given in the selection of look-out points and in moving quickly from one point to another without being seen; detecting and reporting ambushes and posts of the enemy.

Instructors must exercise their ingenuity in devising interesting schemes and competitions.

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7. Every scout should be occasionally sent out on patrol for distances of fifty miles or more in order to develop his powers of finding his way, to teach him to save and look after his horse, and to develop generally his intelligence and self-reliance.

Trained scouts should as a rule work in pairs, but young soldiers should be sent out alone, to carry out definite missions, with a view to improving their self-reliance.

118. *Instruction in the transmission of information.*

1. This will usually be practised in connection with reconnaissance schemes and scouting exercises.

2. Despatch riders will be practised in forming connecting posts between reconnoitring detachments and the main body both on the move and at the halt, passing messages, verbal as well as written, from one to the other, and registering the despatches as they go through.

3. In addition to using despatch riders, troops will be practised as far as is possible, in making use of other means of sending back information, *i.e.*, by telegraph, by signal, by wireless, &c.

4. Troops should be practised in transmitting messages verbally. Opportunities for practice of this kind may be found at all stages of training.

119. *Elementary instruction in night operations. (See also Sec. 167.)*

1. The success of night operations in war depends to a large extent on practise and training in peace. Much of the instruction can be carried out during winter afternoons and evenings. It will often be unnecessary to use horses during the training.

2. The elementary training should consist in explanations followed by practical work. The following may be taken as a general guide as to the methods to be adopted in carrying out the elementary instruction:

i. Visual training. One man of a section should march away and be stopped by voice or pre-arranged signal as soon as he is out of sight. He should call out the number of paces he has taken. The same man should then advance towards the section from some distance further off, and be stopped as soon as he becomes visible, later counting his paces to the section.

It should be explained that:

i. Ability to see in the dark increases with practice.

ii. Objects are more visible when the moon is behind the observer than when it is in front of him.

iii. An observer may stand up when he has a definite background and should lie down when he has not.

When the men have been practised in observing a man approaching at a walk they should be similarly practised in observing a man who is endeavouring to approach unseen.

ii. Training in hearing. Instruction will be carried out on similar lines to visual training. At first the advance of a single man should be listened for, gradually the

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number should be increased so that facility may be acquired in judging the strength of a party approaching. It is easier to hear sounds on soft ground standing and on hard ground lying.

3. The following are some of the chief points to bear in mind when giving instruction in night operations:

i. Men must be accustomed to find their way by night and to note by day landmarks which they will be able to recognise again by dark.

ii. In war troops are always liable to be called upon to saddle up and march in the dark. Every man should be taught when in camp or bivouac to arrange his saddlery and kit every evening in such a manner that he can saddle up in the night without confusion or delay.

iii. Inter-communication and the passing of orders by night should be practised.

iv. Men should be taught to capture small hostile posts silently, to lay traps to catch despatch riders, and other tasks of this nature which are likely to fall to their lot in war.