

**CHAPTER V.**  
**MOUNTED DRILL AND FURTHER PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTION.**  
**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS.**

*70. The object of drill.*

Drill is the method by which troops are trained to manoeuvre against an enemy with ease, rapidity, and precision.

While on the one hand drill alone can never ensure victory, on the other hand it is impossible without it to acquire that manoeuvring power which is essential to success in action.

The rapid movement of large bodies in good order and with the minimum of fatigue to the horses, depends on the accurate drill of small units.

Drill, therefore, is a means to an end, and, though an essential means, it must never be looked on as the end in itself.

Only the simplest formations are required, but mounted troops must be capable of executing them smoothly, in good order, and at fast paces.

In all exercises commanders must keep clearly in their minds the difference between drill and manoeuvre, but no movements except those which are useful in manoeuvres should be practised.

*71. The tests of drill efficiency.*

The following are tests of the general drill efficiency of a body of mounted troops:

- i. That commands and signals are simultaneously and correctly obeyed.
- ii. That there is a complete absence of noise and confusion.
- iii. That the various units of command can be manoeuvred by their leaders, by signal, in close or extended formation, with rapidity and smoothness.

*When in close formation.*

- iv. That pace and direction are carefully maintained.
- v. That correct distances and intervals from the unit of direction are maintained, that wheels are made accurately, that words of command, when used, are given distinctly, and that steadiness is preserved.

*When in extended order.*

- vi. That the men act, both singly and by sections, with confidence, intelligence, and rapidity.
- vii. That the troop and other leaders are given a proper latitude.

*72. Pace and direction.*

1. An even pace is essential in manoeuvring large bodies of mounted men.

In line, care must be taken not to diminish the pace, and in column, not to increase it.

After the order or signal for a change of pace has been given three horse-lengths will be passed over at the original pace before the new pace is taken up.

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In formations to the front from *column* when at the gallop the leading unit must check the pace slightly to enable the rear to come up. The commanders of the rear units, if they find the pace too great to bring their units up into line in good order should bring them opposite their proper places in *line* and follow in *echelon* until they are able to come up in good order.

The pace should not be faster than that at which the body can maintain good order.

2. The centre or right centre troop leader will be the directing troop leader of a squadron. Similarly with a regiment the centre or right centre squadron will direct. The direction will be indicated either by naming an object on which the directing unit is to lead, by instructing the commander of the directing unit on the route he is to follow, or by the commander detailing an officer called the "directing guide," who will give the direction to the directing unit.

When a change of direction is ordered, leaders on giving the order should at once turn their horses and point in the new direction.

### 73. *Changes of direction and formation.*

1. Each unit will move to its place in the new formation by the shortest available route, and in the simplest manner. As a rule, the formation only is indicated by the commander; the movements and pace of smaller units depend on the ground and their relative positions, and will be left to the initiative of subordinate leaders.

2. Any formation or movement ordered will be performed on the move. (*i.e.*, troops will continue in movement after it is completed), unless the order is preceded by the words "TO THE HALT."

### 74. *Dressing.*

1. At the halt dressing is obtained by every man -
  - i. Taking the correct distance in rear of his troop leader.
  - ii. Taking the same direction as his troop leader and making his horse stand facing in that direction.
  - iii. Maintaining the correct interval towards the centre of his troop.
2. On the move it is maintained by every man -
  - i. Riding smoothly and quietly at the pace ordered, or at that set by his troop leader, and keeping his proper distance of one horse-length from his troop leader.
  - ii. Maintaining the correct interval towards the centre of his troop.
3. Men should give way to pressure from the point of direction, but should resist pressure towards it.

The dressing of the men in the ranks except on ceremonial occasions must always be by that of their troop leaders.

### 75. *Wheeling and shouldering.*

1. When a troop wheels the troop leader moves on an arc equal to three quarters of the troop frontage. Other bodies wheel in a similar manner.

The following are the words of command for the different degrees of wheel:  
"HALF RIGHT" (OR "HALF LEFT"), "RIGHT (OR LEFT) WHEEL," "RIGHT (OR LEFT) ABOUT WHEEL".

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2. *Shouldering*. Is used instead of *wheeling* when a body has a frontage greater than that of a troop. When *shouldering*, the directing troop leader, still maintaining the original pace, moves on an arc of such a size that the outer flank men can always keep in line. Subject to this limitation the arc should be as small as possible. The outer flank will thus increase the pace and the inner flank decrease the pace.

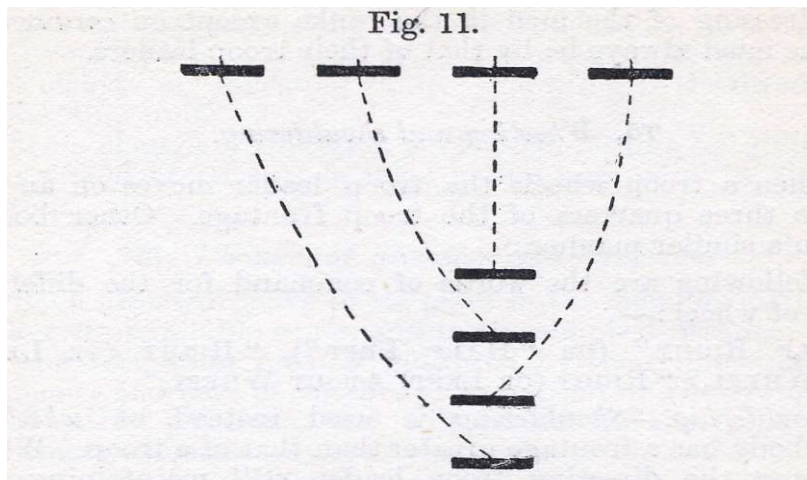
The words of command are: "RIGHT (OR LEFT) SHOULDER" and "FORWARD," when the desired direction is reached.

### 76. *Increasing and diminishing the front.*

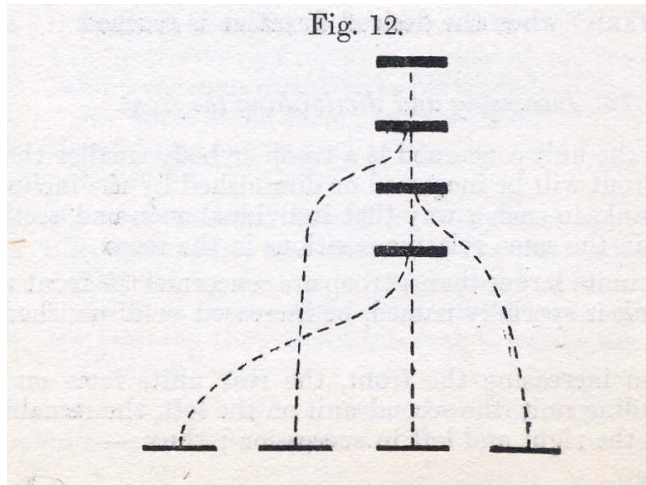
1. When the unit concerned is a troop or body smaller than a troop, the front will be increased or diminished by the incline to or *from* a flank, in such a way that individual men and sections always retain the same relative positions in the troop.

2. When units larger than a troop are concerned the front will, unless a flank is specially named, be increased or diminished as follows:

i. When increasing the front, the rear units form on the leading unit, the second unit on the left, the remainder on the right and left in succession; thus:



ii. When diminishing the front, the centre or right centre unit advances first, followed by the unit on its left; after these; the units on the right and left will follow in succession; thus:



Thus the troops in a squadron, the squadrons in a regiment or the regiments in a brigade may change their relative positions from time to time as the drill progresses.

The rear units, if their frontages are equal to that of a troop, alter their directions by making half-wheels.

3. When the front is increased or diminished *from* or *to the halt*, the whole of the men move at the pace ordered, or continue at the pace at which they are moving; but when the change of formation is to be made on the move the units in the rear must be given the command to take up the next faster or slower pace, as the case may be, to the one at which they are moving, *i.e.*, “REAR TROT”, “GALLOP” OR “WALK”.

#### 77. *Commands.*

1. The leader's intentions cannot be instantly understood without a complete understanding between himself and his subordinate commanders. This understanding can only be acquired by practice under varying conditions.

The following methods of conveying commands may be used either separately or in combination as may seem best adapted to the circumstances of each particular occasion. Leaders of subordinate units must be prepared to pass on commands to those next to them, when necessary.

2. *Following a leader.* The commander of any body of mounted troops may guide it personally by placing himself at its head and ordering it to conform to his movements. It is most important that mounted troops should be thoroughly efficient in this method, both when moving closed up or in extended order.

Often the commander will detail another officer to act as directing guide, giving him general instructions as to pace and direction, while he himself rides to the front. The directing guide is responsible for utilising the ground to the best advantage in guiding the formation to the point indicated. In a brigade the officer the formation to the point indicated. In a brigade the officer so employed is usually the brigade major or the staff captain; in a regiment, the senior major or adjutant. With bodies larger than a regiment it is advisable for the directing guide to carry a small guide flag or other distinguishing mark.

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3. *By signal.* Officers using signals (Sec. 5) should, as far as possible, face the same way as those to whom the signals are made, and should use whichever arm will be most clearly visible. On giving a signal involving change of direction an officer should turn his horse accurately in the new direction.

Before giving a signal, commanders above the rank of troop leader may blow their whistles to attract attention; excessive whistling, however, especially when working in large bodies, is most undesirable. Mounted troops should be moved as silently as possible.

Men should look to their troop leaders for signals.

Troop leaders, on hearing their squadron commander's whistle, will look for his signals and not for those of the regimental commander or brigadier; squadron commanders will look towards the regimental commander.

4. *By field calls.* When the commander cannot be seen or heard his commands may be conveyed by field calls (Sec. 6).

5. *By gallopers.* Gallopers should be made to repeat their messages, before leaving.

6. *By word of command.* Words of command must be distinctly pronounced and loud enough to be heard by all concerned, but no louder.

When in *squadron*, troop leaders, as a rule, give no words of command unless their troops are unable to distinguish their signals.

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