

Mounted Firing Exercise - Snider-Enfield Carbine

(Instructions for the Cavalry Sword, Carbine, Pistol & Lance Exercise & Field Gun Drill, 1871)

General Instructions

1. When the recruit has attained a sufficient degree of efficiency on foot, the Mounted Firing Exercise should often form a part of each riding lesson.
2. The following instructions are given in detail as they are to be taught to recruits in small squads; but, as soon as the recruits are perfect, they may proceed with the execution of the several commands without loss of time; and afterwards may fire blank cartridge.
3. In the first lessons, great care must be taken, that, in presenting to the front or left, the recruit does not strike or touch the horse's head with the carbine.
4. In all motions connected with firing, great care must be taken to avoid altering the accustomed feeling of the bridle in the horse's mouth, or the usual seat and balance of the man, and position of his legs; for a horse once rendered timid by an accident in firing from his back, will make the practice both difficult and dangerous.
5. When the recruit is familiar with the firings at the halt, he is to practice them while his horse is in motion.
6. Although it is desirable that a horseman should be habituated to the use of his carbine at speed, few occasions can arise for his using it against an enemy at any pace beyond a walk; and not withstanding he is enjoined, while skirmishing, to keep his horse in motion, in order to avoid becoming a fixed object for the enemy's marksmen, he cannot reasonably calculate his shot being effective, unless he halts for the moment of firing.
7. The mounted target practice in the Cavalry is to be conducted as follows, vis:-

The men are to fire to both the left and to the front.

A menage is to be marked out at the proper distance from the target, and the men are to file around to the right, keeping a horse's length distance from head to croup. Each horse is to be halted for a moment, when opposite the target-the man firing and walking on a horse length, when he is to pause until the next man fires-the object being to prevent the horse hurrying on after in front.

For every third round the order is to be given "down the centre," in which the men will lead straight towards the target, and fire to the "front" turning their horse's heads to the right according to order.

1. By Numbers.

The squad is formed in rank entire (single rank), at double open file interval.

By Numbers Draw-Arms

Take off the right hand glove, and place it in the waist-belt (fingers down), and seize the carbine by the small.

Two

Draw the carbine from the bucket and bring it to the "The Advance:" viz., place the barrel between the forefinger and thumb of the left hand, then move the right hand from the small to the front of the hammer, little finger near the trigger guard, thumb and fingers round the carbine, muzzle pointing to the left front just clear of the horse's near ear, and quit the carbine with the left hand.

[In this position the carbine is carried by detachments and advanced parties when near the enemy, and by vedettes on service.]

At ___ Yards, Ready.

Place the barrel of the carbine in the palm of the left hand, the little finger touching the projection in front of the lock-plate, thumb between the stock and the barrel, butt resting on the right thigh, and half-cock; the right hand to hold the small lightly, the thumb resting on the comb of the hammer, elbow to the rear as when dismounted.

Two.

Open the breech, &c. as detailed in the 3rd motion of the "Ready" dismounted.

Three.

Adjust the sight, &c. as detailed in the 4th motion of the "Ready" dismounted.

Front - Present.

As detailed when dismounted

Two.

As detailed when dismounted.

Three.

Bring the carbine to the "Ready" position; then shut down the flap of the back sight, &c., as detailed in 3rd motion of the "Present" dismounted and return to the "Ready position."

At ___ yards, ready. Two. Three.

As above detailed.

Left-Present.

Raise the carbine to the "Present" to the left with the right hand, the right elbow to be raised nearly square with, and well in front of, the right shoulder and press the centre of the butt firmly to the shoulder; the left arm and elbow to be raised to support and steady the carbine, but without moving the bit in the horses mouth; if necessary, the reins may be lengthened in this and the "Front Present" by allowing them to slip through the bridle hand, &c.

Two. Three.

As detailed above

Before giving the command *Front Present*, the horses' heads must be turned off to the right by the command *Half Right Turn*; and before giving the command *Left Present*, they must be turned to the right by the command *Right Turn*.

The recruit should be taught on no account to fire between the ears, or near the eyes, of the horse.

2. In Quick Time

When the squad is proficient in the firing exercise by Numbers it will perform it in Quick Time, by the following commands:-

Draw-Arms.

In two motions.

At Yards, Ready.

In three motions.

Half Right -Turn.

Front-Present

In three motions

Right —Turn.

Left-Present.

In three motions

Ease Springs

Return Arms

Place the carbine in the long bucket with the right hand. With the short bucket, place the muzzle of the carbine into the bucket, pass the carbine stay-strap once round the small of the carbine and buckle it. In either case, when the carbine has been returned, put on the right hand glove and drop the hand down behind the thigh.

With Carbines, Prepare to Dismount.

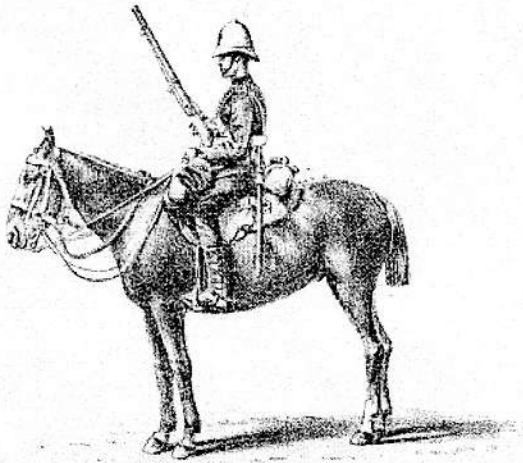
From "The Advance."- Raise the carbine perpendicularly in front of the face, hand as high as the chin, then lower the butt under the bridle hand in front of the near wallet, and hold the barrel with the left hand about three inches from the muzzle; take a lock of the mane with the right hand and twist it round the thumb of the left; then dismount as usual; when dismounted, lower the left hand, bring the carbine to the position of "The Trail," and hold the bridle with the right hand. If required for dismounted service, as soon as the horse is given up, pass the carbine from the left to the right.

With Carbines, Prepare to Mount.

Take hold of the barrel of the carbine with the left hand about three inches below the muzzle, butt downwards, and prepare to mount, in the usual manner; when mounted, raise the carbine with the left hand, seize it with the right hand in front of the hammer (as at "The Advance"), pass the butt over the wallets to the off side, and "Return Arms."

With the long bucket, it may be often be advisable to dismount without drawing arms, the carbine being removed from the bucket after dismounting, by the soldier either reaching over the saddle from the near side, or passing round to the off side. In the same way, the carbine may be placed in the bucket before mounting.

MOUNTED INFANTRY, SERVICE MARCHING ORDER .



Trooper with carbine at the "Advance," as carried when near the enemy and by vedettes on service.

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