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INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE

OFFENSIVE COMBAT

OF

SMALL UNITS

(Prepared at the General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, France, from an official French document of January 2, 1918.)



(This publication cancels previous publications of the same title, War Department Documents Nos. 583 and 711.)

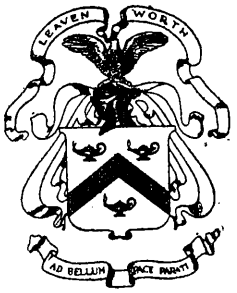
WAR PLANS DIVISION

MAY, 1918

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WAR DEPARTMENT,

WASHINGTON, May 6, 1918.

The following pamphlet entitled "Instructions for the Offensive Combat of Small Units," is published for the information of all concerned.

(062.1 A.G.O.)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

PEYTON C. MARCH,
Major General, Acting Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:
H. P. McCAIN,
The Adjutant General.

PREFACE

These instructions conform to the organization of the American company and are based on French experiences in their most recent operations. They are published for the information and guidance of the American Expeditionary Forces.

A supplement showing formations and deployments is published on page 49.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL PERSHING:

JAMES G. HARBORD,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

BENJ. ALVORD,
Adjutant General.

General Headquarters American Expeditionary Forces, France, March, 1918.

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INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE

OFFENSIVE COMBAT OF SMALL UNITS

(As modified for the organization of such units in the United States forces.)

INTRODUCTION

I. The German defensive doctrine is at present characterized by organization in depth; and by the dispersion of strong points which are protected, as far as possible, from the hostile reconnaissance and destructive fire of artillery.

In Flanders, the principle of organization in depth has not always been followed. In such exceptions the attack has been met by infantry completely occupying the first position, which, in turn, has delivered an immediate and strong counter-attack.

In both cases, this active defense aims to break up the attack by the intensive use of machine guns placed in shell holes (which are located in checker-board fashion and protected by small garrisons), by small offensive detachments covering the flanks of each unit and by the automatic and immediate action of counter-attacks.

These tactics can be defeated by infantry, formed in depth, capable of rapid and flexible action, advancing close behind the barrage and acting by surprise. In such operations the tanks may also be of powerful assistance.

II. The company is usually *formed in two echelons;* an echelon of assault and an echelon in support. The first usually moves in skirmish line, while the supporting echelon of first line companies and the battalion reserve advance, as a rule, in small columns, ready to outflank the enemy's points of resistance and to repel his counter-attacks.

The machine guns, disposed in depth and employed with the other infantry weapons, flank and support the action of the first line companies.

Certain tactical units, or parts thereof, will be given the mission of completely cleaning up the captured positions.

As a rule, the second line battalions advance over open ground in small columns. They cover the flanks of the first line battalions and stand ready to support them or are prepared to execute a "passage of lines."

All unit commanders must establish proper liaison of every kind, in order to keep their commanders informed of events and to insure close co-operation between artillery and infantry.

III. The formation for assault must be adjusted *to the hostile dis positions* and to the openings made by our artillery in the enemy's acces sory defenses.

Regimental and battalion commanders must prevent their subordinates from developing the habit of a rigid scheme of combat, which may dull their initiative and mental activity. The commander studies the enemy's dispositions in all its details and considers his possible action. From these considerations he forms his own plan of action.

IV. Most of the enemy's vulnerable points, especially the machine gun emplacements, will have been determined prior to the attack, through constant observation of his position and information furnished by aerial photographs. These objectives will be definitely assigned to attacking fractions and to cleaning-up units. Such of these locations as have escaped observation can be discovered only during the course of the combat. It is the duty of the company commanders, of the leaders of *platoon* and leaders of the *half-platoon* to take full advantage of surprise and to reduce the enemy's points of resistance by surrounding them and bringing all infantry weapons into action.

V. Finally, an analysis of the present German methods of defense therefore demands no essential modifications in our offensive tactics. It does make clear, however, the extreme importance of certain fundamentals, which may be summarized as follows:

Formation in depth of all offensive means.

The closest possible contact of assaulting units with the creeping barrage; this principle also applies to the contact with tanks.

Concentration of individual effort within the group; mutual co-operation of neighboring units, aided by supports properly disposed, which make it possible to break local resistance and to repel counter-attacks.

The combination of fire and movement; that is, advance by rushes of a fraction covered by the fire of the remainder; engaging the enemy by fire in front while groups work around his flanks; direct advance by a portion under cover of artillery, machine guns or other troops.

Continued maintenance of liaison in every form and especially with *artillery*.

Rapidity, *order* and continuity in infantry action.

Careful organization and accurate execution of the "cleaning up."

The fearful effect of artillery, the action of tanks and the German methods of combat restore to the infantry, *once within the hostile positions*, the necessary conditions for open warfare.

Therefore, the flexibility and mobility of infantry must be developed to the highest degree.

VI. These *Instructions* are divided into three parts: General rules, methods of combat, and methods of instruction.

PART I

GENERAL RULES

CHAPTER I

The Commander

The character of the commander has a decisive influence on the valor of the troops. He must be educated, he must set an example, and he must know how to command.

Knowledge.—The lack of knowledge is fatal to a man who seeks to inspire confidence, for it creates timidity. The commander who knows his business exacts only useful effort from his men; he does not wear them out prematurely, nor does he risk their lives imprudently.

Example.—Troops are the reflection of their commander. They are his severest judge; they retain his slightest words, and they watch his attitude. They ask nothing better than to be able to admire him and to follow him blindly. Fine behavior of troops under fire is a commander's best reward.

Command.—To command is to give orders and to see that they are carried out; to foresee events and to provide for them; to strive to know at every moment the feelings of the men, to reward them, to provide for their needs of every sort, to exercise authority with justice; to maintain strict discipline, which embraces conditions on the march and in billets, neatness of dress and general bearing, exterior marks of respect, upkeep of arms and equipment, and correctness of maneuver (since the better troops are disciplined the better they fight); to be proud of the organization, to bring up its morale at rest as well as in battle; to keep, under all circumstances, a courageous heart, a firm will, a wide-awake mind, a clear eye and a cool reason.

CHAPTER II

Characteristics of Infantry

In order to handle infantry well it is indispensable to know it thoroughly. One must know its capabilities and its limitations.

1. When a line is stopped by organized defenses, which are intact and occupied by the enemy, the reinforcement of such line has little chance of producing success—it will simply increase the losses. The assault on such positions must be prepared and supported by artillery directed by its own observers and agents of liaison, and by the infantry's own weapons. *The close co-operation of infantry and artillery is of prime importance.*

On favorable ground the artillery preparation may be completed, or even replaced, by the assault of a line of tanks.

2. *Infantry has a very great power of holding terrain.*

Tools permit it to shelter itself against blows. The power of its armament gives it the almost complete certainty of stopping an attack that has not been prepared by artillery and makes it possible even to repel the most minutely prepared assaults.

3. *Infantry is quickly consumed in combat.*

Reinforcements, counter-attacks, interchange of lines and reliefs must be assured by *disposing in depth* all means of movement and fire.

4. *Infantry must not maneuver in dense formations.*

Throughout the entire zone of artillery fire, columns of squads are absolutely prohibited.

5. *The Infantry has an extremely sensitive morale.*

Attacking troops must be "put in condition." When circumstances allow, rehearsals of attack in all kinds of weather should take place in rear on terrain where there can be reproduced the hostile position to be captured—each unit receiving a mission which is identical in every respect with that which will be assigned to it in the combat. It is well to show the men large scale relief maps (in cement, for example), constructed in the open.

The commander must bring the morale of his unit to the highest point. By daily contact with his troops, he builds up this quality and brings them to the point of desiring the attack. He avoids countermanding orders, delaying their execution, inexplicable shifting of units, and everything that might be interpreted by the men to be hesitation and lack of decision.

CHAPTER III

Infantry Weapons

Rifle and Bayonet

Instruction in rifle fire must be given to all men in the company. The rifle remains the first weapon of the infantry in all the circumstances of war. Hand to hand fighting is carried on with rifle fire, bayonet and rifle butt. The gunner and first carrier of an automatic rifle team must use rifles (weapons and ammunition of disabled comrades) when their automatic rifle is no longer serviceable.

Hand Grenades

On the offensive, the hand grenade makes it possible to reach the sheltered defender who has escaped the bombardment; it is the weapon for cleaning up the trenches; for advancing along communication trenches and over terrain filled with shell holes.

On the defensive, the hand grenade makes it possible to produce an excellent barrage at short range, and especially to cover the important elements of the defense, such as salients, machine guns, command posts, outlets of communicating trenches, etc. All soldiers must know how to throw grenades.

Rifle Grenades

On the offensive, the rifle grenade extends the radius of action of the hand grenade. In numerous local combats, where it is not possible to have artillery support, the rifle grenade supplies this support by the accurate bombardment of hostile centers of resistance. It isolates hostile groups which are attacked by hand grenades by cutting off their retreat and preventing the arrival of reinforcements and supplies.

The rifle grenade is, moreover, an extremely effective weapon against counter-attacks. It is well to employ it for concentrated fire.

On the defensive, by such means, it is possible to harass the enemy and sometimes to neutralize his trench mortars. Rifle grenadiers should be able to establish an almost impassable barrage at a range of from 80 to 150 meters.

Automatic Rifle

The characteristics of the automatic rifle are: Extreme mobility; assured effectiveness at short ranges, its fire being automatically low; a fair degree of effectiveness at medium ranges; a certain flexibility, sweeping fire being easy to execute and changes of objective instantaneous, and the possibility of marching fire, which, in certain cases, makes it possible to oblige the adversary to remain underground during the last rushes of the assault.

This weapon possesses neither the rigidity nor the rapidity of fire of the machine gun, which it can not replace completely. Nevertheless, its fire produces a moral effect analogous to that of the machine gun; and, moreover, it is at the disposal of small units at moments and under conditions when the installation of machine guns would not be possible.

The automatic rifle is, therefore, above all things, the accompanying weapon of the infantry; the weapon to neutralize the enemy's machine guns, to hold on to captured ground and to stop the counter-attack. This power is due to the density of fire that it is possible to produce at the moment an objective is taken, to the mobility of this fire, and to the fact that such fire makes it possible to bring up the machine gun without haste to favorable points, especially with a view to flanking fire.

For the occupation of the captured position, the automatic rifles are placed preferably outside of the fire and communicating trenches and are used either for flanking or for covering the probable approaches of the enemy's reserves.

Machine Guns[1]

Machine guns with attacking battalions are called upon to fulfill the following missions:

1. To give the assaulting troops, at the commencement of and during the combat, the support of very powerful fire, making it possible especially to neutralize the enemy's machine guns.
2. To cover the flanks of the attack.
3. To occupy an interval.
4. To occupy the captured ground.
5. To help re-establish contact on open ground.

The machine gun battalions and the machine guns with battalions not engaged may be formed into a divisional machine gun group charged with delivering indirect fire at long range with the following missions:

Harassing and prohibitive fire.

Fixed barrages.

Concentration and boxing fire.

One-Pounder Gun

The characteristics of the one-pounder gun are mobility sufficient to accompany the infantry in all circumstances of combat; extreme precision; great facility for ranging, with an effective range of 1,500 meters; and the possibility of executing masked fire.

[1] Machine gun fire (with corrector) and the collective fire of rifles and automatic rifles should be reserved for aviators flying low.

The shell produces effects comparable to those of the grenade, but has a force of penetration sufficient to penetrate two or three rows of sand bags, a wooden sheeting, or a steel plate.

This weapon has been constructed for the purpose of annihilating visible machine guns by direct fire, with the full service charge.

The one-pounder gives good results also against troops if they can be taken in enfilade.

Mortar for Accompanying the Infantry

The lightness of this weapon, its range (more than 1,000 meters), its precision, the rapidity of its fire, and the effectiveness of its projectile render it eminently fitted for searching out shell holes and covers and for destroying or neutralizing hostile machine guns.

It is capable of bringing powerful support to infantry fire.

It may help to complete the breaches in the accessory defenses. It must not be forgotten, however, that this last mission necessitates large carrying parties for ammunition supply, and that these parties must be taken from the infantry.

The firing of phosphorous shells from this mortar makes it possible to blind the hostile points of resistance and thus facilitates the maneuver intended to reduce them.

Flame-Throwing Apparatus

These are machines for throwing inflammable liquids. In the course of the attack the flame-projectors facilitate and complete the cleaning up of shelters, islands of resistance, houses, cellars and dugouts. They advance with the infantry detachments charged with the cleaning up. They may co-operate in the barrage on communicating trenches or in protecting the flanks.

CHAPTER IV

Features of Infantry Combat[1]

Whether infantry combat consists in an offensive against lines well organized for a long period, in small engagements forming parts of the general battle or in meeting engagements on open ground, this combat must finally culminate in some form of the attack of a position.

Artillery destroys or neutralizes. It covers the advance of the infantry and protects it when that advance is checked.

Tanks crush the accessory defense of the hostile organized resistance, and by their fire complete the opening of a way for the infantry.

Infantry captures the ground, cleans it up, occupies it, organizes it and holds it.

The culmination of the infantry attack is the assault.

The infantry attack commences at the moment that the advance in-

[1] The distribution of infantry among the attacking divisions includes *assault troops* and *reserve troops* (at the disposal of the division commander).
The assault troops include usually the entire number of battalions placed under the command of the divisional infantry commander or of the brigade commander.
These battalions are divided into:
First line battalions.
Second line or support battalions (at the disposal of the colonel).
Battalions at the disposal of the divisional infantry commander or the brigade commander.

fantry elements are forced to deploy in order to reply to the enemy's fire, and the advance is unable to proceed farther except by the combination of movement and fire.

The attack is preceded by the approach.

When the assault is launched from an organized position,[1] or is executed immediately after a passage of lines, such efforts are features of the attack proper. The approach includes those movements which are intended to bring the infantry into the position from which the assault is made.

I. Organization of the Terrain for an Assault[2]

The preparation of the terrain for an assault is a military operation intimately connected with the initial disposition of the troops and with the method of launching the attack. Planned and conducted by the commander, he should consider the following:

Departure trenches and shelters (light shelters in the advanced trench) for first line troops.

Assembly places, sheltered and lighted, for supports and reserves.

Command posts, observation posts and first aid stations (at a suitable distance from the command posts).

Organization of the liaison system.

A complete system of communicating trenches provided with turnouts, doubled by trails with hand-rails and sign-posted (the same applies to cover and fire trenches, as well as to the parallels).

Shelters for ammunition and pyrotechnics, rations, water and equipment for protection against gas.

Tool depots, sortie ladders and steps, and miscellaneous materiel.

The most advanced departure trench must be opposite the objective and at the proper distance for assault. This distance depends upon the following considerations:

It must not be more than 400 or 500 meters, in order that the entire number, or at least the greater part, of the assaulting battalions may be able to debouch while sheltered from the hostile artillery barrage; it must not be less than 200 meters, in order that the battalions may not suffer from fire delivered against the enemy's first line by friendly heavy and trench artillery.

To protect the assaulting battalions more surely from the hostile barrage, it is usually well to arrange departure trenches so that they may be echeloned at short distances. This arrangement toward the front can be greatly facilitated by the construction of shelters. The assaulting waves can start at the same time and can gain their distances after crossing the zone of the hostile barrage.

In certain cases it will be well to place the two echelons of the company in the same trench. This method can not often be employed. However, if the terrain permits, and it can be done without the enemy's knowledge, a great advantage can be obtained. But the troops thus crowded may be exposed to counter-preparation fire delivered on the information of hostile aviators.

[1] Thanks to powerful artillery resources, the assault will sometimes be launched from a base not organized or only slightly organized (in a battle of long duration or in order not to lose the effects of surprise).

[2] Make a liberal use of camouflage.

II. Formations

The assault is executed by units disposed in depth.

These various successive lines have taken the name of "waves," but this term does not imply a uniform formation. The wave is not a rigid line advancing directly forward. *Waves are formed by placing elements abreast, either in one line of skirmishers or in line of small columns.* These elements are thus well controlled and flexible, and are always capable of being handled at the will of the commander. The assault formation must be accommodated to the terrain and to the hostile dispositions.

III. Observations

Knowledge of the enemy's situation is an element of supreme importance for the commander in arriving at his decision.

Commanders of small units must thoroughly study the documents of every sort which are transmitted to them by their commander. These consist of vertical or oblique photographs, battle maps, relief maps, sketches and intelligence bulletins. But the preparation of these documents necessitates the collaboration of the troops and must be constantly verified by them. Information from the air and that which the troops collect during the development of the success, especially from the questioning of prisoners, is often all that the commander and the artillery have at their disposal.

Information may be collected by the troops, but its co-ordination and transmission is the work of the *Regimental Intelligence Service.*[1]

Observation of the enemy is one of the principal sources of this information. This service must be permanently organized in all units.

It is not every man who has the gift for observing. Certain men are more apt than others, and this aptitude is developed by practice. The training of individuals who are particularly fitted for observers is one of the most important tasks of the infantry.

Proper observation is possible only when it is conducted without the enemy's knowledge; observers must therefore conceal themselves by all possible means.

Observers must not only know how to watch, but they must have tenacity and patience. They must note every detailed event concerning the enemy, and they must endeavor to learn all his habits. They are provided with large scale battle maps, and are instructed as to the points to be specially watched.

The commander takes a personal part in the observation as far as he possibly can. No report can take the place of direct observation.

IV. Reconnaissance

Every attack is preceded by a reconnaissance in all echelons of the command. This is equally true whether the attack is resumed after a halt provided for in the plan of combat or prior to the delivery of a counter-attack.

During combat, commanders of small units endeavor to ascertain the

[1] All information, even that which appears to be unimportant, must be communicated to the immediate commander.

situation of their own forces, especially that of the first line and the apparent front of the enemy.

During periods where no action is in progress there must be a complete and minute reconnaissance, which should embrace all matters pertaining to the situation of the enemy, his weak points, and complete information of the ground.

This reconnaissance must be particularly extended to the progress in the artillery destruction. Patrols, together with some artillery noncommissioned officers, must determine the size and the completeness of the breaches made in the enemy's wire. The formation of the assaulting troops will be adjusted to these breaches.

V. Assault[1]

At a fixed hour, watches having been set with the utmost care, the assaulting units, guided by the compass, begin the advance. Normally they move in a single body, but with complete order, and press as closely as possible behind the creeping barrage. At times they may have the advantage of tanks, which have damaged or completely destroyed the enemy's defenses. They march straight toward their objective, on the direction point of the indicated azimuth. They accommodate themselves to such changes of direction as may have been provided for in passing a known obstacle, to use a favorable road, or to carry out an enveloping movement arranged for in advance.

In each battalion, certain machine guns are assigned to cover the assault, and, in connection with the one-pounder guns and the infantry mortars, to neutralize the fire of any hostile machine guns.

As a rule, the waves, without halting, cross the trenches which separate them from their respective objectives; but whatever power the artillery may bring into action, it can not always hope totally to destroy the hostile defenses, especially those on the reverse slope. Hostile groups will come out of their shelters, machine guns will rise up in the open field, out of shell holes, from behind a slope or from a fold in the ground.

These points of resistance must be immobilized by the fire of all the weapons that can be brought into action, then enveloped by neighboring or reinforcing units.

Counter-attacks must be in accordance with the same principles.

The attack must not cease to be rapid, vigorous and continuous.

Properly speaking, speed must not be sought for in the pace of the infantry. It is characterized by instant conception and unhesitating execution of local maneuvers; by eagerness to overtake without delay the creeping barrage as soon as the points of resistance are overcome, and by keeping within the specified time limit of the halts provided for between the successive phases of the combat, and by reducing, to the minimum, any checks in the advance that the enemy may cause.

In short, above all things, the infantry marches *in order* and on guard, keeping close to the creeping barrage.

The ground gained must be bitterly defended.

There must be no falling back.

[1] A garrison must always be provided for the departure trenches. This is usually a regimental problem.

VI. Cleaning Up

The mission of cleaning up the trenches, shelters and dugouts passed by the assaulting waves falls to tactical fractions of variable strength. These units may vary in strength from a half-platoon to a battalion, according to the available information as to the enemy's dispositions.

These units will sometimes have to undergo hard fighting; certain of them, while waiting for the operation of cleaning up to be effected by the moral weakening of the enemy, will have to content themselves with immobilizing the points of resistance which the commander has decided to have the assault waves envelop.

The plan for cleaning up is a part of the plan of engagement.

VII. Halt at Intermediate Objectives

The halt at intermediate objectives, as provided for, allows the assault units, held up by local combats, to overtake the accompanying barrage, to form themselves in depth, and to re-establish their liaison, especially with the artillery.

The necessity for the closest possible liaison between infantry and artillery dominates the entire combat.

Aviators can render the greatest service in liaison. In certain cases tanks provided with wireless apparatus will help to insure it.

During the halt the different waves utilize fire trenches, communicating trenches, shell holes or accidents of the terrain.

At the specified hour, or at this hour plus the time specified in the change of the schedule, the advance is resumed, the first wave pressing close behind the barrage.[1]

VIII. Continuation of the Combat During the Night

If the assailant has not succeeded in reaching the designated objective during the day, it may be necessary to utilize the darkness in order to exploit his success before the enemy is able to consolidate his position.

A night attack can be carried out only by surprise and when the hostile positions are in part destroyed, or are weak, or are still occupied by troops which there is reason to believe are demoralized. It should never have a distant objective.

Such an attack must never be demanded of troops that have arrived by night on their terrain, and so have had no opportunity to make the necessary reconnaissances by day.

The methods of combat by night are the same as those indicated for combat by day.

Nevertheless, the intervals between the skirmishers of the assault waves are diminished so that the half-platoons remain under the immediate command of their leaders.

It is to be noted that fire is less effective by night, even by moonlight; success is achieved above all by surprise, accompanied by silent movement.

If the enemy uses searchlights or rockets the units lie down and do not resume the march until the light has disappeared.

[1] If there is a change in the barrage schedule, the battalion commanders rectify the marching time table with the greatest care.

Recognition signals must be agreed upon in order to distinguish various friendly groups taking part in the combat.

Fighting in a fog is analogous to fighting by night. It must be kept in mind, however, that the fog may suddenly disappear.

Night may be profitably utilized to modify the dispositions existing at the end of the day, to reform the units, to re-establish liaisons, and to cross a zone that it is impossible to pass by day.

IX. Occupation of the Objective

As soon as the normal objective is reached, the assaulting troops insure its occupation, while maintaining or re-establishing themselves in depth.

The reserve troops halt at their proper distance behind the assault units, ready either to reinforce them or to pass them, or to crush any hostile counter-attack by fire or by shock. Until such conditions arise, their officers must restrain them from rushing into the firing line.

The first duty of the commanders of all ranks is to insure order and the reformation of their units. These measures are the surest means of maintaining the gains acquired and of developing them later. It will often be well to prescribe, on lines where halts are made, that the reorganization of the company or battalion will be made on a base unit designated in the plan of action.[1]

The search for observation posts, the verification of liaison, communication by signals with divisional aviators and balloons, the supply of ammunition and materiel, the determination of the missions falling to each unit, the written reports and sketches showing the information acquired constitute the essential duties of officers and non-commissioned officers during the halt at each objective.

Reconnaissances Beyond the Normal Objective

These reconnaissances are performed by designated units at the specified hour or according to signals agreed upon between the infantry and artillery.

They are made under the protection of a box barrage executed by the artillery and machine guns.

Some of these reconnaissances have for their object the *capture* or *destruction of hostile batteries.*

But whether their mission is to reconnoiter or to destroy, they are not expected to engage in combat with hostile elements still unshaken and strongly prepared.

Consequently, if this latter case arises, they collect all the information that might be useful, and try to locate the points where the enemy is holding out. This accomplished, they rejoin their units. Should they be able to advance with little opposition, they should halt at the limit of the box barrage and from there send back the prearranged signals.

At the sight of these signals, the march toward the possible objective is started in accordance with the provisions of the plan of engagement. No advance is made beyond the original objective without the orders of the proper commander.

[1] It goes without saying that this reorganization can be carried out upon a base unit only during the march of approach and on the lines designated for halts.

In the advance during the assault, each unit insures its liaisons with neighboring units, while keeping the direction of attack originally assigned it. This direction is departed from only momentarily in order to maneuver against the enemy and to deal with local combats.

X. Advance Over Open Ground

As soon as it has succeeded in forcing the enemy beyond the zone of his organized positions, the infantry must form in still greater depth. Column of march is resumed as soon as the range of hostile guns permits, security detachments are always sent out, and the cavalry maintains contact.

Should the cavalry or aviators discover hostile guns within range, infantry must take up the approach formation and make ready to reconnoiter and to attack.

When the advance elements encounter extensive resistance which they cannot overcome, they try to establish themselves so as to cover the artillery and to retain their observation posts. They thus form a screen of fire behind which the battalions can maneuver with a view to making an assault. The assault ordinarily takes place only after artillery preparation.[1]

PART II

CHAPTER I

The Platoon, Half-Platoon and Group

The combat can not always be carried to a finish by the original units. The necessity for overcoming difficulties attending the formation of temporary combat groups has led to the formation of the half-platoon as an elementary unit, and providing it with the necessary means for infantry action. Whenever temporary groups can not be avoided on account of the incidents of the fight and the conditions of terrain, each one of them, even though composed of a handful of men, must have a leader. This leader, whether he be non-commissioned officer or private, must rise spontaneously to direct his comrades, carry them forward when they hesitate, and prevent them giving ground.

Before the engagement, it is imperative that the commander of the company designate those who may have to replace the leaders of platoons, half-platoons and sections, so that the assumption of such command will be automatic.

These temporary groups deploy, advance and fire the same as normal units. All that is stated below about the platoon and the half-platoon applies equally to the group, whatever its strength.

I. Leaders

The platoon is commanded by a leader, aided by one assistant. This assistant replaces the platoon leader when occasion demands.

In accordance with the captain's order for the engagement, the platoon leader prescribes the general formation for his platoon and that of both his half-platoons. In the course of the fight, he orders such dispositions as are best calculated to overcome the enemy's resistance. He launches counter-attacks instantly the opportunity is offered, and keeps in touch with his half-platoon leaders so that he can always control their action. His post is where he can best exercise command and set an example for

[1] Take every precaution against aerial observation.

his unit. This position is at the head of his platoon during the approach, and at its head or in the center during the attack.

The leader of the half-platoon guides his unit. He looks at it only when his exercise of control demands it—his eyes should be fastened on the enemy.

The half-platoon must be bound to its leader, who, under all circumstances, is the rallying point. His bearing and his pace set the standard for the unit.

At the halt, and when fire is opened, the leader of the half-platoon takes post on line with his advanced elements or slightly in rear of them.

At short ranges the platoon and half-platoon leaders abstain from useless gestures, which might disclose their location to the enemy.

The file closers are designated by the platoon leader and one of them is generally his assistant. They maintain the positions assigned them and see that the platoon leader's orders are executed. They are thus able to follow all the phases of the action.

II. Formations[1]

A. *Formation of Approach.*—The platoon is formed either in line of half-platoons (half-platoons abreast) or in column (one half-platoon behind the other).

The half-platoon is formed either in line of groups (groups abreast), or in column of squads, or column of twos.

The group advances in single or double file.

These formations permit an easy march across a terrain filled with obstacles and do not offer a good target for artillery.

Under infantry fire, the half-platoon may have to deploy, especially if it should be enfiladed.

The platoon advances, with variable distances and intervals, in order best to utilize the terrain.

B. *Formation for Combat.*—The platoon is in combat formation *when it is able to open fire,* either immediately without change of formation, or after a simple and *prescribed* change. In the first case it advances *in line of skirmishers;* in the second case it advances in line of small columns (by half-platoons, or groups), *with sufficient intervals for deployment as skirmishers.*

The combination of these two formations is possible. For instance, a platoon in column of half-platoons may have its leading half-platoon deployed in one or two waves and its rear half-platoon in line of groups (single file) at deploying intervals.

C. *Formation for Assault.*[2]—The platoon is usually formed as follows:

(*a*) In column of half-platoons, so that one half-platoon forms a part of the assaulting echelon and the other half-platoon forms a part of the supporting echelon.

(*b*) In line of half-platoons abreast, the platoon being a part of one echelon only—either for assault or in support.

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[1] These are shown in plates in supplement herewith. The normal assembly formation of the platoon is given; and, in addition, other necessary formations which may be required. However, they are only examples. Automatic rifles may be placed as circumstances require.

[2] See diagram in supplement herewith.

These two formations give the same depth to the company. The first formation lessens by half the front of the platoon and makes it easier for the leader to exercise control. It is thus possible to reinforce an assaulting half-platoon with the other half-platoon (support half-platoon) and so avoid mixing the platoons.

The platoon formed in column of half-platoons can fight normally on a front of 60 to 65 meters. This front requires an interval of 4 to 5 paces between skirmishers; which, in each assaulting half-platoon, are formed in two waves. The distance between these half-platoons varies from 60 to 100 meters. With four platoons abreast, the company has a normal front of 200 to 250 meters.

The *second formation* brings the whole platoon close to the enemy, so that it can surround any local resistance.

The platoon formed in line of half-platoons can fight normally on a front of 100 to 125 meters (4 to 5 paces between the skirmishers, formed in two waves). With two platoons in the first line, the company holds its normal front of 200 to 250 meters.

The *half-platoon* is usually formed as follows:

(*a*) As an assault unit of a first line company. This formation is in two waves, each wave generally containing the following: Leading wave, half of the automatic riflemen and most of the hand-bombers and riflemen; rear wave, the rifle grenadiers and the remaining hand-bombers, riflemen and automatic riflemen.

Automatic riflemen are particularly valuable in the leading line under the following circumstances: When the terrain lends itself to marching fire; when, upon reaching the hostile position, it may be expected to encounter resisting elements that must be overcome immediately by fire; when communicating trenches can be enfiladed.

The waves advance separated by a distance of 10 to 15 paces, and are generally deployed as skirmishers.

(*b*) As a support unit of a first line company, of a battalion reserve company or of a second line company. The formation is habitually in line of groups, each group formed in column of files or column of twos.

On account of the terrain, and especially in a battalion reserve company and in the second line companies, it may be advisable to form the half-platoon in column of files or of twos.

III. Combat

Assault Half-Platoon.—The assault half-platoon (or both half-platoons, when the platoon is formed in line of half-platoons) debouches from the departure trench at hour H[1] and moves on its objectives without stopping to search hostile shelters. Offensive grenades are thrown on defenders who may be in the vicinity or into shelters that may be passed.

It is essential that the advancing line keep as close as possible to the creeping barrage, and that by the rapidity and the continuity of such advance full advantage be taken of the surprise effect on the enemy. When the skirmishers meet an obstacle (such as an impassable section of wire entanglement) they must move around it, making use of any passage that exists in the wire. They do not hesitate, under the protection of automatic rifles and grenades, to clean out with their tools the passages that are not sufficient.

[1] Special hour fixed for the assault.

When a half-platoon encounters hostile resistance (machine gun, hand bombers, etc.), it endeavors to overcome it by combining movement and fire. The automatic rifles and the rifles take care of whatever rises above the ground, and thus oblige the defenders to conceal themselves, while the hand and rifle grenades take care of whatever is hiding below the ground. Rifle grenades are especially valuable for this purpose. The advance of a few gallant soldiers, especially when they can succeed in outflanking the resistance, will generally compel the enemy to surrender.

But the half-platoons will not always be able to win the fight with the means at hand. When this occurs, it will be necessary to hold the enemy by fire in order to allow a neighboring unit or a support unit to attack in flank and in reverse. Such action, as well as efforts necessary to break counter-attacks, is taken by platoon leaders in order to relieve the pressure on their unit or on a neighboring platoon which may have met with more difficulty in its advance. If the platoon leader cannot intervene immediately, leaders of half-platoons must take such initiative.

As soon as a platoon or a half-platoon has overcome such resistance, its leader reforms it rapidly and the advance is resumed. If it be impossible to advance for the time being, the ground must, under no circumstances, be abandoned. The dogged resistance of small elements, clinging to the ground, will, in most cases, check a hostile counter-attack and allow the offensive to be resumed.

Support Platoon or Half-Platoon.—The support platoon or half-platoon advances toward its objective, taking care not to get too close to the assaulting waves when the necessities of the combat do not demand its assistance. However, when the necessity does arise, the commander must, on his own initiative, engage his unit wholly or in part, for the following purposes:

(*a*) To fill gaps that occur in the assaulting lines and which break the tactical cohesion of these lines.

(*b*) To co-operate in surrounding any local resistance which cannot be reduced by the preceding assault unit or by neighboring units which have been delayed in their advance.

(*c*) To break up counter-attacks.

Combat in Trenches and Communicating Trenches.—Such combat is to be avoided by assault and support units so long as they have not reached their final objectives. This combat is reserved for the cleaning-up units.

The training and tactical handling of such units is prescribed in the "Manual for the Drill and Tactics of Hand Bombers and Rifle Grenadiers."

IV. Platoon and Half-Platoon

In Open Ground.—Upon resuming contact in open ground, the rôle of the platoon and half-platoon leaders consists, as in war of position, in combining fire and movement.

(*a*) *Fire.*—Except in unusual cases, rifle fire is not advisable against distant objectives. Long-range firing devolves upon machine guns; medium-range firing upon machine guns, automatic rifles and rifles.

When the half-platoon leader seizes a favorable opportunity for surprise fire, he gives the proper orders for the range and objective, and requires such preparations to be made without noise. Each man quickly observes the objective and aims. Fire is immediately commenced.

The platoon or half-platoon leader controls the firing—he causes it to commence or to cease. He uses field glasses to determine the objectives.

When necessary to advance, fire must be instantly stopped. If the leader's commands cannot be heard, he rises and moves forward.

(*b*) ***Movement.***—The advance of the platoon is executed in the approach or combat formation prescribed for position warfare. The advance is made in one body, if under cover, at quick time; if in the open, and exposed to fire, by smaller elements employing short rushes at full speed. These can also advance by filtering over ground furnishing but little cover.

Combat Patrols.—Combat patrols in front of advancing infantry are not advisable where the assault units debouch close to the creeping barrage; but they are indispensable for maintaining or re-establishing contact, especially in covered or broken ground.

The patrols, preceded and flanked by hand-bombers, get in touch with and feel out the enemy, determine his location and strength and send information to the captain. They endeavor to drive back weak rear-guards by combining fire and movement.

If they cannot overcome resistance, they screen the dispositions made by the captain; or, in case artillery preparation is deemed necessary, they act likewise in covering the movements which will bring the company on the line from which the assault will be made.

CHAPTER II

THE COMPANY

I. Formations

A. *Approach Formation.*—The most usual formations are the double column or the lozenge[1] with variable distances and intervals.

The platoons may have to follow one another in order to avoid crossing a zone swept by hostile artillery.

The captain remains at the head of his company. He designates a base platoon.

The first line, or advance guard, company is preceded by patrols or a small advance guard.

B. *Combat Formation.*—When the company has to open fire, before reaching the line from which the assault will be made, it takes a combat formation. This is an approach formation preparatory to the assault formation.

The platoon, or half-platoons, which are to open fire, advance in the combat formation described above (Part II, Chapter I). The captain combines movement and fire in order to bring his company within suitable distance for assault.

C. *Assault Formation.*—The front of attack for the company varies from 200 to 250 meters. Its usual assault formation is in two echelons and may be one of the following:

(*a*) Each platoon forms both echelons; that is, it has a half-platoon as the assault echelon, and a half-platoon as the support echelon.

(*b*) Whole platoons are used for the assault echelons and whole platoons in the support echelons.[2]

[1] See diagram in supplement herewith.

[2] There are two assaulting platoons and two supporting platoons—each assaulting platoon being followed by a supporting platoon. Platoons on the same duty are abreast of each other.

(*c*) A combination of the above formations (*a*) and (*b*).

It should be well understood that a support platoon or half-platoon is not always placed exactly behind the platoon or half-patoon which precedes it. It may be either to its right or left.

In order to determine the formation to be taken by the company, the captain considers the following:

The application of the two formations mentioned above (Part II, Chapter I).

Information about the enemy; his defensive weapons, especially machine guns.

Points against which the efforts of the company should be made.

The most favorable approaches.

Openings in the accessory defenses.

Dispositions which seem best suited to overcome the hostile resistance.

Counter-attacks that may develop and their probable direction.

Means to be taken to cover the flanks of the company.

The force deemed necessary to keep at his own disposal.

The assault platoons or half-platoons form the first echelon of the company.[1]

The support platoons or half-platoons form the second echelon.

The distance between the two echelons is from 60 to 100 meters. The captain marches at the head of the second echelon. Between the two echelons, at thirty meters from the first, usually march cleaning-up parties. As an alternative these parties may march behind the support echelon.

II. Company Orders

The success of an attack depends greatly on the perfection of the preparation. This perfection must be insured by the company commander's order for action, which is submitted for the approval of the commander of the next higher unit.[2] The final attack order most frequently consists merely in indicating the hour for beginning the assault.

Company Order.—The order is based on the following general considerations: The mission assigned to the unit; the obstacles to be overcome in order to execute this mission; the means at the disposal of the unit.

The order for action of the company includes the following matters:

1. *Information of the enemy.*

2. *Mission of the battalion.*

Mission of the company and of the neighboring companies.—Phases of the attack; objectives or successive objectives.

Direction of the attack given with the compass.—Indication of a distant direction point.

3. *Limits of front assigned to the company.*

4. *Mission of each platoon;* objectives or successive objectives; its line of advance.

[1] When the assault echelon is debouching, it is usually formed in two lines very close to one another.

[2] In open ground, and in the case of troops brought on the line of departure for an attack within a very short time, it will be impossible to write a complete order and have it approved by the superior authority. The leader will often have to limit himself to giving the essential orders. The first thing he will make known is "Information of the enemy."

Route of advance.

When necessary, designation of the base platoon for reassembling the company when an objective has been reached.

5. *Attack Formation of the Company.*—General formation. Formation for each platoon. Formation for the assault echelon and for the support echelon—distance between echelons.

Fire Reserve of the Captain.—Automatic riflemen (if the situation requires).

6. *Formation Prior to Assault.*—Occupation of the departure trenches—position for each platoon.

7. *Cleaning Up.*—Number and composition of the cleaning up parties to operate in the assigned front.[1]

Their initial position prior to assault, duties assigned to each, in detail.

8. *Advance.*—How it will take place, keeping close to the creeping barrage. Schedule for the movement of the barrage.

Use of signal fireworks.

Conditions under which a new advance will be made after halting at an intermediate objective.

9. *Machine Guns.*—Machine guns that are to support the company—their duties in detail.

10. *One-Pounder Guns and Accompanying Mortars.*—Their duties, in detail, as far as the company is concerned.

11. *Divisional Machine Guns.*—Schedule of overhead fire.

12. *Mission of the Tanks* operating in the front assigned to the company. Liaison between the tanks and the infantry.

13. *Liaison.*—Liaison within the company, with neighboring companies, with the battalion commander, runners.

Position and line of march of the captain; position and line of march of the battalion commander; successive command posts of the colonel.

14. *Marking Out the Front.*—Means for indicating the front when a certain line has been reached, or at a particular hour, or on request of the aviator.

15. *Organization of the Captured Ground.*—When the company is passed by a unit executing a passage of lines; occupation of the normal objective; patrols to be sent out; provisions regarding the strong point and combat groups; distribution of duties for the execution of these works (sketches); order of construction of the works, in importance; conditions under which the advance will be carried to the final objective.

16. *Dress, Equipment, Pack of the Men.*

17. *Supplies.*—Organization, establishment of depots, munitions and fireworks, rations, water, miscellaneous materiel (tools, barbed wire, sand bags).

Carrying parties (generally detailed from units other than the company); how distributed within the company.

18. *Medical Service.*—Location of battalion and regimental first aid stations.

19. *Prisoners.*—Measures to be taken; assembly point.

[1] The captain makes sure before the assault that the cleaning-up parties assigned to him are in place and understand their duties.

The order for action is widely circulated in the company. It is communicated, at least, to the officers and N. C. O.'s, who communicate it to their men.

III. Combat

The company commander directs all of his energy to overcoming hostile resistance and executing the plan of the battalion commander. He sees that the support fractions are not absorbed, without an imperative tactical reason, in the assault echelon, and that they remain ready for their missions of reinforcement, of counter-attack and organization of the captured ground. As soon as a company commander has succeeded in penetrating the hostile position, he endeavors to break it up by proper use of combat groups lending one another spontaneous and mutual help. All resistance must be shattered by employing all the means at hand. It is by concentration of efforts that success is achieved.

Elements which resist and are held fast in front fall when they are surrounded, and, most often, as soon as they are outflanked.

The captain strives to settle these local fights as rapidly as possible, so that the whole of his assault echelon can catch up immediately with the creeping barrage.

He gives his constant attention to the maintenance of order and liaison.

As soon as the combat has a tendency to disintegrate, the leaders of half-platoons or groups must maintain liaison, either visually or vocally or by means of weighted messages thrown from one shell hole to another. The captain must use every means to maintain the closest cohesion in his unit. Upon reaching the position designated, intervals and distances are taken on a base platoon, and the company itself takes its intervals and distances on the company designated by the battalion commander.

As soon as he loses contact with the enemy, the captain re-establishes it by the further advance of the combat line. In covered ground, the advance is preceded by patrols whose only mission is to prevent surprise. The captain keeps the battalion commander in touch with the situation and sees that the location of the line is indicated as prescribed or when the aviator requests it.

IV. Organization of the Captured Ground

When the company has reached its objective or is momentarily checked, the captain should think first of organizing *in depth* as strongly as he can, of reforming his unit and re-establishing liaison.

If organization of the ground is to be accomplished, following an unforeseen halt, the first work is necessarily left to the initiative of the captain, and even of the platoon leaders (including the machine gun platoon leaders). The aim is to establish a barrage of infantry fire covering particularly the flanks, preparing counter-attacks, and determining emplacements for automatic rifles, machine guns and combat groups.

Within the shortest possible time, measures should be taken to protect the front with such accessory defenses as can be laid rapidly, and fire and communicating trenches should be dug.

If the assigned objective has been reached, the company organizes the ground according to the plan of combat. This plan may be only partly followed, owing to an insufficient knowledge of the ground or a situation at the end of the combat different from that which has been anticipated.

The captain, after reconnoitering the ground, will then make necessary modifications in the plan until the battalion commander assumes control.

A strong point is prepared and the combat groups are organized according to "Instructions on the Organization of the Ground."[1]

Efforts to secure locations giving good views of the enemy's positions are of the highest importance. Flanking observation is particularly important. The observation posts are designated without delay to the command and the artillery is informed about them.

In order to facilitate the rapid preparation of reports, company commanders are given sketches of the ground and writing pads showing the information to be furnished.

V. Company on Open Ground

Re-establishing Contact

The responsibility of a captain commanding a company of a first line battalion, advancing in open terrain, embraces many matters. In general, he is charged with the following duties:

To push forward toward his direction point, keeping clearly within the front assigned to him.

While in the approach formation, so to conduct his company by all covered approaches that only indistinct and fleeting targets will be presented to artillery fire in the earlier stages, and the same with regard to artillery and infantry as the enemy is approached.

To have all routes reconnoitered, to maintain liaison in all directions, and to keep in touch with his battalion commander in all matters about which he should be informed.

When the company is the *advance guard* of a battalion, it advances on a wide front, covering its flanks and sending forward either patrols or a platoon preceded by small parties. These smaller advance guards (companies) precede the battalion at variable distances (300 to 600 meters).

Fire is opened as late as possible, and usually by machine guns and other special weapons that may be attached to the battalion.

The formation in small columns should generally be continued by the advance elements until, in order to be able to advance, they are compelled to reply to the enemy's fire with rifles and automatic rifles.

The company then assumes a combat formation. The fire is executed either from a commanding position over the advancing units, or in the interval between two advancing fractions.

This combination of fire and movement must be one of the first considerations of the captain and of the platoon leaders. Fire immobilizes the enemy, destroys him or at least neutralizes him; movement outflanks him or encircles him, then seizes him.

If the enemy offers a strong and dogged resistance, the advance guard company holds him fast by its fire in order to allow another company, designated by the battalion commander, to rush forward and to execute an outflanking or encircling movement. If this movement be impossible, the companies then engaged establish themselves in a position determined

[1] Being translated.

by the battalion commander and assume a formation for assault according to the principles laid down for the assault on a fortified position.[1]

Usually the assault then takes place only after an artillery preparation.

VI. Battalion Reserve Companies and Second Line Companies

The captain marches ahead of his company and as close as possible to the battalion commander. His constant effort must be to cover the flanks of the preceding companies. He also rallies when necessary all the supports of these companies.

In emergencies he must not hesitate to act, and he must do so without waiting for orders—such necessities might be, for example, to cover a flank or to stop a counter-attack.

The plan of combat of the company commander is drawn up on the same basis as that of the commander of a first line company. Close liaison with the preceding companies must be assured.

CHAPTER III

THE BATTALION

I. Formations

A. *Approach Formation.*—The most usual formation is in double column or in lozenge, with variable distances and intervals.

If a machine gun company be attached to the battalion, it usually marches as follows: If the battalion is in double column, and a first line battalion, in rear of the interval between the rear companies; if a reserve battalion, in front of the interval between the leading companies, or on a flank of the formation. If the battalion is in lozenge formation, and a first line battalion, in the center of the lozenge, or behind one of the flank companies; if a reserve battalion, in front of the formation.

The battalion may also have two companies abreast, the other companies being in rear, one behind the other.

The battalion commander marches in front of the company he has selected as base company or at the center of the formation.

A first line battalion advances with its front and flanks covered.

B. *Combat Formation.*—As in the case of the company, it is a formation preparatory to the assault formation.

The battalion commander so modifies the formation during the course of the attack that, by a combination of movement and fire, he can bring his battalion within the distance necessary for the assault.

C. *Formation of Assault.*—The formation of the battalion in depth is necessary under all circumstances. The battalion commander usually has two companies in the first line and two companies in reserve. If a machine gun company is attached, the situation determines the disposition of its platoons.

The distance between the first line companies and reserve companies is from 200 to 400 meters. As a rule, the reserve companies follow directly in rear of the companies of the first line. However, this formation may

[1] The above principles of combining movement and fire apply to a battalion marching into combat with two companies in first line, each of them sending forward a small advance guard.

be varied into checkerboard type, or the reserve companies may be echeloned behind one of the leading companies. These formations are used to meet the particular situation at hand, as, for example, to facilitate the advance, the reserve companies to support the leading companies, the execution of an enveloping attack, or where the particular battalion is on a flank of the division.

As a rule the battalion commander establishes his command post near the departure trench.

During combat he takes such station as is best suited for observation and to receive information.

The personnel accompanying the battalion commander moves in an open formation, according to the principles set forth for the half-platoon.

II. Battalion Orders

The battalion commander's order comprises the following headings:

1. *Information of the Enemy.*

2. *Mission of the Regiment.*

Mission and general attack formations of the *battalion* and of the neighboring battalions.

Phases of the attack. Objective or successive objectives. Intentions of the battalion commander.

Direction of the Attack given with the compass. Indication of a distant direction point.

3. *Limits of the Front Assigned to the Battalion.*—Limits of front of the first line companies.

4. *Mission of Each Company.*—Mission of each first line company. Mission of the reserve companies. Their detailed routes of advance.

When necessary, designation of the base company for reforming the battalion when the objective has been reached.

5. *Attack Formation of the Battalion.*—Formation of each first line company.

Composition of the assaulting echelons and of the supporting echelons.

Formation of the reserve companies.

Distance between the first line companies and the reserve companies.

Flank protection.

6. *Formation Prior to the Assault.*—Occupation of the departure trenches. Positions of the companies and of machine guns, one-pounder guns and mortars, when so attached.

7. *Cleaning Up.*—Number and composition of cleaning-up units. Sometimes furnished by the reserve companies from such other units as are placed at the disposal of the battalion commander. Their positions prior to assault. Mission of each unit (very minutely). Liaison between the battalion commander and the commanders of the cleaning-up units. Duties assigned flame-throwing units.

8. *Advance.*—How it will take place, keeping close to the creeping barrage.

Schedule for the movement of the barrage.

Use of signal fireworks.

Conditions under which a new advance will be made after halting at an intermediate objective.

9. *Machine Gun Company (if attached).*—The assignment, mission and route of advance of each platoon—position in the attack formation. Successive points to be reached—objectives to be fired on.

10. *One-Pounder Guns and Accompanying Mortars (if attached).*—Positions in the formation. Routes of advance—successive points to be reached—objectives to be fired on.

11. *Divisional Group of Machine Guns.*—Concise information as to execution of overhead fire.

12. *Tanks.*—Mission of the tanks operating in the sector assigned to the battalion. Liaison between the tanks and infantry.

13. *Liaison.*—Liaison within the battalion, with the neighboring battalions, with the colonel and with the supporting artillery.

Runners.

Position and line of march of the battalion commander.

Successive command posts of the colonel.

14. *Marking Out the Front.*—Arrangements for indicating the front when halted on a certain line or at a particular hour, or on the request of the aviator.

15. *Organization of the Captured Ground.*—When the battalion is passed by a unit executing a passage of lines. Occupation of the normal objective. Patrols to be sent out. Disposition of units. Approximate location of command posts. Distribution of work among the units. Conditions under which the advance is to be carried on to the possible objective. Reconnaissance. Capture or destruction of hostile batteries.

16. *Dress, Equipment, Pack of the Men.*

17. *Supplies.*—Organization, location of depots, munitions and fireworks. Rations, water, other materiel (tools, barbed wire, sand bags).

Assignment of units for above special duties. Anti-gas equipment.

18. *Medical Service.*—Locations of battalion and regimental first-aid stations.

19. *Prisoners.*—Measures to be taken. Assembly point.

The battalion commander must carefully consider the conditions under which the movement can be executed and consider the various eventualities that may arise. The operations to be arranged for must be carefully organized in their smallest details and duties carefully assigned.

III. Cleaning Up

The cleaning up of captured positions is an extremely important operation which must be executed with method and rapidity. As a rule the first line companies do not furnish cleaning-up units. The battalion reserve companies may, in exceptional cases, participate. The battalion commander determines the assignment and duties of the cleaning-up units placed at his disposal by the colonel or taken from his battalion. With great care he assigns to each one of them certain dug-outs, trenches and communicating trenches and determines the new mission that will arise[1] when these units have completed their duties. Several units are kept in reserve to be used against dug-outs which may have escaped notice.

Cleaning-up units may be divided between the first and second echelons, advancing behind them; or all may follow the second echelon.

[1] In particular, the occupation of the important points of the cleaned-up position until the arrival of the support units.

While dug-outs are being cleaned up, automatic rifles, rifle grenades and even machine guns are placed in position in order to prevent the enemy from debouching through exits that have not been discovered. It is advisable to give to members of the cleaning-up unit a special insignia (an arm band, for instance).

The battalion commander must determine the use to be made of flame-throwing units. He issues specific orders in regard to their co-operation with the cleaning-up units to which they are attached.[1]

IV. Machine Gun Company

If a machine gun company is assigned to a battalion, the battalion commander employs it in accordance with the prescribed principles governing the tactical use of such weapon. In the main they are used for initiating and advancing the attack and for the occupation of successive objectives.

Machine guns under all circumstances must be echeloned in depth.

The combat plan of the battalion commander must determine the mission of each of his machine gun platoons, their position just prior to and in the attack, their line of advance, the points to be occupied, the probable targets, and the dangerous sectors (especially with reference to hostile counter-attacks).

It is the duty of the commander of the machine gun company to apportion to the platoons the different missions assigned to his unit, but it is imperative, in order to insure the proper unity of action between the companies and the machine guns, that the battalion commander provide for the duties of these platoons in his plan of combat.

As often as circumstances allow, the battalion commander, before drawing up his plan, should consult with the machine gun commander as to details of employment of the machine guns.

The combat plan of the machine gun company will repeat the battalion commander's plan and will elaborate it by such detailed orders as will insure the execution of the assigned mission, including the liaison and the ammunition supply.

The machine gun company commander should, as a rule, march near the battalion commander. He keeps informed about the combat and maintains personal touch with his platoon leaders by all possible means.

He, himself, makes sure that the platoons support the companies engaged in the manner intended, and that the necessary personnel is provided for replenishing ammunition for his unit. His whole energy must be directed in securing the successful outcome of the battalion commander's plan.

V. One-Pounder Gun

In combat, the one-pounder gun is, as a rule, a battalion weapon. The colonel may, however, put several pieces at the disposal of one battalion. If this weapon is attached to the battalion, the commander must use it to prepare and accompany the attack, to break hostile resistance developed during the assault and to co-operate in the occupation of the captured position.

[1] The flame-throwing units must be, as much as possible, sent in advance of the infantry units to which they are assigned, in order to participate in the preliminary reconnaissance and in the rehearsals of attacks.

Preparation and Accompaniment of the Attack.—Before the attack starts, the one-pounder gun takes position where it can be used efficaciously, either for demolishing any machine gun emplacements that may disclose themselves at the last moment, for sweeping ground dangerous to the flanks of the attack, or for fire against the enemy's second and third lines.

In order that it may not be destroyed prematurely, it should not be put into action until the last moment. The chiefs of piece prepare for fire on points where, from the latest information, it may be expected that machine guns will disclose themselves. The one-pounder gun lies in wait for them.

Use During the Assault.—The one-pounder gun is carried forward as soon as it can no longer be used in its first position or when infantry needs it to destroy hostile resistance.

Its change of position must be anticipated in the combat orders, but, on his own initiative, the chief of piece has it carried forward in time for use against hostile machine guns.

On account of its vulnerability the one-pounder is never placed in the first waves, and its use at too short a range must be avoided. Masked fire should be resorted to whenever possible.

Occupation of the Captured Position.—The one-pounder gun assists in holding this position, under the same conditions as the machine guns. It is placed so as to fire on, and preferably obliquely, points from which hostile counter-attacks may be expected.

It is advisable to prepare a certain number of masked positions, thus precluding easy registration by the hostile artillery.

VI. Mortars Accompanying Infantry

If these weapons are placed at his disposal, the battalion commander determines the precise use he intends to make of them. He must consider the duties to be assigned them, their positions and provide for changing these positions. He must know how to get the maximum effects from this offensive weapon. They support the infantry from the very beginning of the attack.

When the assault begins, they should have been placed so as to fire effectively on the enemy's second and third lines, his approach trenches, trench mortars and machine guns.

After the attack has gained a footing, they advance with or behind the reserve companies and take positions as ordered by the battalion commander, ready to complete their work of destruction and to dispose of any local resistance. They are of powerful assistance in the consolidation of captured ground by their barrage fire and by opening an immediate and rapid fire on hostile counter-attacks. The battalion commander must anticipate the lines of advance and points from which these counter-attacks may be launched.

VII. Tanks

The infantry assault can be supported by tanks launched at an appointed hour and following in the wake of the assault units.

The tanks should not be used at the beginning of the assault on terrain very much cut up by our artillery. Where shell holes interfere with the required formations of the tanks, they must nevertheless cross such ground, the infantry making use of trails and marked out routes. They

then come into action in a zone where large spaces free of shell holes allow easier maneuvering.

But the tanks advance in front of the infantry from the departure trenches in the case of a surprise attack on a position which has not been subjected to systematic destruction fire.

The mission of the tanks is as follows:

(*a*) To destroy the hostile accessory defenses, to neutralize the fire of the defense and to reduce points of resistance encountered—particularly the machine guns.

(*b*) To assure protection of the front and flanks during the halt at an objective.

(*c*) To break hostile counter-attacks.

(*d*) To co-operate in the work of cleaning up.

The following principles should be adhered to:

A tank, having cleaned up a trench ahead of the infantry, will not resume its advance before the infantry is nearly abreast of it.

If a tank is surrounded by hostile infantry, our infantry must free it immediately, not only by counter-attack, but by fire of its machine guns, rifles and automatic rifles, without fear of hitting the tank, which is bullet-proof.

Any success obtained by a tank must be followed up immediately by the infantry.

VIII. Combat

Rôle of the battalion commander. The battalion commander gives special attention to the following points:

1. *Advance.*—Keep the first line companies moving forward.

2. *Order.*—See that the units maintain order. At every halt they should be reorganized.

3. *Liaison.*—Maintain constant liaison with first line units, with neighboring battalions, with the colonel and with the supporting artillery.

Keep continually informed as to the exact situation of the companies which are engaged—their needs, and the nature of the difficulties they encounter.

Observation.—The combination of liaison and observation gives the battalion commander the information he needs. This information is immediately transmitted to the colonel and to the artillery, using every means of liaison. It is imperative, above all things, that the battalion commander make known to the artillery the exact line reached by his battalion, so that the artillery can determine immediately the line on which the barrage must be placed. He also informs the artillery of observation posts that can be used. He must also send information to his company commanders and commanders of neighboring units.

4. *Safety.*—He must anticipate possible counter-attacks, be able to detect and to check any menace against his flanks. It is the essential rôle of units not engaged to be able to act immediately in the threatened directions, especially the machine guns and mortars, which follow the attack from one position to another. Dangerous localities must be especially watched.

5. *Covering the Flanks.*—The battalion must employ a small detachment (platoon, half-platoon, group), supported by designated machine guns, the mission of which is to:

(*a*) Sweep the interval which may be opened between the battalion and neighboring units.

(*b*) Protect the flank of the battalion in case the neighboring battalion be checked in its advance.

(*c*) Bring oblique or enfilade fire against such weapons of the defense as might hinder the advance of the neighboring battalion.

The detachment of infantry marches, as a rule, on the dividing line between the two battalions and abreast of the cleaning-up wave.

It will often be advisable to form a mixed detachment by taking one-half from each neighboring battalion.

Between two divisions, this detachment will be more important and will be echeloned from the assault wave inclusive.

IX. Employment of the Reserve Companies

The battalion commander engages all or part of his reserve companies and machine guns (if attached) for the following purposes:

To assure the continuity of the forward movement and the integrity of the first line by filling up gaps in it. These units must not be allowed to get out of hand and merge themselves into the first line. This danger is principally to be avoided when the combat line is completely checked in front of a hostile strong point, powerfully organized. In this case, reinforcing often does not give any result and a flanking movement is necessary. It may be advisable, either at the beginning or during the course of the combat, to place one or both of the reserve companies behind a wing of one of the first line companies. Thus placed, their mission would be to outflank and to take in reverse the centers of resistance. This would then tend to prevent the combat line giving way, and also permit driving back a counter-attack.

When the battalion commander has been obliged to engage his reserve units, he endeavors to have other troops replace them immediately.

X. Occupation of the Captured Ground

The organization of the position is undertaken immediately and in accordance with the plan of combat. If developments of the combat do not allow such plan to be executed, the battalion commander modifies it after having reconnoitered the ground and the hostile advance line. In this modification, he considers the following matters:

The greatest advantage is obtained by establishing the foremost line at such distance from the hostile trench to be taken as will permit artillery preparation to be made on this hostile objective without having to evacuate the selected line.

If the assault troops have been checked within a short distance of a hostile position, security detachments only are left during the night on the line that has been reached. The other units are withdrawn a distance of 200 to 300 meters from the enemy's line of resistance and, after having been reformed, begin at once to construct the next departure trench for continuing the advance. The battalion commander begins the work under the above conditions without waiting for orders.

Behind this departure trench, the trace of which must provide for good flanking, the battalion commander has a series of strong points organized, thus forming a second line.

He makes sure of covering the flanks of the battalion and organizes his formation in depth.

The choice of the observation post of the battalion commander determines the location for his command post. This location must be suitable for complete liaison in all directions. The supporting point is organized according to "Instructions on the Organization of the Ground."

XI. The Battalion on Open Ground

Within range of the enemy's guns the battalion marches toward its successive direction points in the *sector of advance* assigned to it and in an approach formation properly suited to the terrain. The companies vary their intervals or form column in order to make full use of favorable approaches (defiles and other cover). Distances and intervals are increased when crossing ridges that can not otherwise be avoided. At times it will be advisable to cross particularly dangerous lines by surprise and whole companies at a time. The units take good care not to debouch from cover at the same point. They avoid the zones swept by the hostile artillery. The lines of advance are carefully reconnoitered.

Open warfare can be considered only as an approach march of more or less length, followed by an attack on new lines more or less fortified.

Whether or not preceded by cavalry, commanders of first line or advance guard battalions, according to the information of the enemy and the terrain, employ either a small advance guard for each first line company or a battalion advance guard (usually one company) at variable distances (300 to 1,000 meters) to the front.

Machine guns are distributed so that they may support the battalion as soon as the enemy is encountered and the best location for the one-pounder guns and mortars are decided upon. Flank protection is provided and proper liaison assured. It must be remembered that artillery is at hand to support the infantry.

The advance elements re-establish contact and strive to reduce any resistance encountered.

If the battalion commander thinks he can carry the hostile strong points with the means at hand and without undue losses, he starts an immediate and simple maneuver (in most cases outflanking or encircling). If unable to do so, he holds the enemy in place by fire and threatens an assault so as to allow the regiment to come into action.

If the colonel decides that long preparation is necessary, the commanders of first line battalions dispose their troops in the position from which the assault will be made. These dispositions are completed under cover of darkness, if the enemy's activities have not allowed them to be carried out during daylight.

The assault on the hostile position is carried out according to the principles set forth above.

XII. Matters Pertaining to Second and Third Line Battalions

In the attack of a fortified position the second line battalion conforms to the movement of the first line battalion, and covers its flanks, especially with machine guns.

It advances in approach formation, always ready to intervene. At the commencement of the assault it follows close on the heels of the first line

battalion, so as to escape the hostile artillery barrage, and later resumes the prescribed average distance.

If the battalion executes a *passage of lines,* it begins by halting in the same formation as the battalion that it has to pass. It re-forms on the base company designated, and, while marching in small columns, advances until its leading elements reach the advance elements of the preceding battalion.

The battalion commander causes appropriate signals to be given when the movement has been completed, and the battalion advances according to the plan of action established by the battalion commander prior to the attack.

This order includes the same headings as the order for a first line battalion.

As soon as it has passed the line, the assault echelon can deploy.

The passage of lines creates a *critical moment* during which the density of the waves is doubled or at least very much increased. In consequence, the duration of this period must be reduced to a minimum. This demands that the passage should not begin before the hour set for the resumption of the offensive, or only for such a period before that hour as may be necessary for the passage itself. In addition, a few minutes must be allowed in order to make sure that the passage executed by the assault echelon shall not be completed before the creeping barrage resumes its advance. The necessity for co-ordinating the advance of this barrage and that of the infantry is of prime importance.

The third line battalion marches in approach formation from cover to cover over open ground or by making use of the communicating trenches.

On open ground, within range of the enemy's guns, the regiment is generally disposed over an extensive front. Its formation in width and depth must permit proper control, and its advance is preceded either by an advance guard battalion or by advance guards sent forward by each first line battalion.

The second line battalion or battalions and the third line battalion (provided there be one) advance in approach formation according to the principles set forth for the advance of the first line battalions.

As soon as an engagement becomes imminent, the battalion, or the battalions, at the disposal of the colonel, are advanced closer to the units in front of them and are held in readiness, either to guard against counter-attacks, especially on the flanks, to reinforce the first line battalion by extending the front so as to clinch a temporary success, or to undertake the organization of a position from which the support battalion will follow in the assault.

They are not employed, as a rule, without the order of the colonel.

When the advance of the above-mentioned battalions is checked, the battalions at the disposal of the brigade commander takes such position and formation as will permit them to be concealed and at the same time ready for instant action. The battalion commander remains near his immediate superior, but joins his unit as soon as it advances to take part in the engagement. He sees that all approaches toward the enemy are reconnoitered.

All commanders of second and third line battalions keep in close liaison with neighboring troops and with commanders of the battalions whom they may be called upon to support.

CHAPTER IV

THE REGIMENT

The colonel must conduct the combat of his regiment. The usual formations are:

(*a*) Two battalions in the first line and one in the second line, the latter may be in support, at the disposal of the brigade commander, or in reserve and under the control of the division commander.[1]

(*b*) Three battalions, placed one behind the other, one in the first line, one in the second line or support battalion, one battalion at the disposition of the brigade commander, or in reserve and under control of the division commander.

The colonel establishes his command post on line with the units at his disposal. He takes advantage of the halts to arrange for changing the location of his command post and he never proceeds to a new command post until the liaison is in operation. When he gets in personal touch again with his first line battalion, he leaves someone to represent him at his post.

All commanders of second and third line battalions keep in close liaison with neighboring troops and with commanders of the battalions whom they may be called upon to support.

I. REGIMENTAL ORDERS

1. *Information of the enemy.*

2. *General Situation.*—Mission of the division (briefly); mission and general attack formation of the regiment; units of the regiment at the disposal of the brigade commander; units at the disposal of the division commander; neighboring troops.

Phases of the attack: Objective or successive objectives; purpose of the action; direction of the attack to be given by compass; indication of a distant direction point.

3. *Limits of the sector for the regiment.*

Limits of the sectors of the first line battalions.

4. *Mission of each battalion.*—First line battalion or battalions; second line battalions; distance between the first and second line battalions; battalion in reserve; mission and distribution of the pioneer detachment.

5. *Attack formation of the regiment.*

6. *Formation prior to assault.*—Occupation of the departure trenches and the assembly points; garrison for the departure trenches (not taken from the first line battalions).

7. *Cleaning up.*—Detailed plan. Unit should not belong to battalions; units placed at the disposal of each battalion; assignment of the engineering units taking part; flame-throwing units.

[1] The battalion may be wholly or partly in support, at the disposal of the brigade commander or in reserve.

8. *Advance.*—Conditions under which a new advance will be made after halting at an intermediate objective. Passage of lines.

9. *Supporting artillery.*—Artillery for each battalion; creeping barrage; combing fire; schedule for the movement of the barrage.

10. *One-pounder guns and accompanying mortars.* — Distribution among the battalions.

11. *Divisional machine guns.*—Arrangements provided for overhead fire to be executed over the first line battalions.

12. *Tanks.*—Distribution among the battalions; missions; liaison with the infantry; signals from a tank to the infantry; from the infantry to a tank.

For purposes of information, a unit of dismounted cavalry or infantry accompanies the tanks.

13. *Liaison.*—Complete organization of every kind of liaison during the course of the advance. This would include:

Detachment for artillery liaison.—(Distribution between the colonel's command post and the battalion command posts).

Telephone system, signal telegraphy, wireless, sound telegraphy, visual signaling, panel signaling, pyrotechnics, signal codes, runners, carrier pigeons—their distribution to first line battalions.

Liaison airplane—infantry; signals between it and the infantry; liaison balloon—infantry.

Successive command posts and line of march of the colonel.

Successive command posts of the brigade commander.

Command post of the division commander.

14. *Marking Out the Front.*—Arrangements for marking out the front on reaching a certain line, at a particular hour, or on request of the aviator.

15. *Organization of Captured Ground.*—Disposition of the command; regiment to be formed in depth; construction of lines of fire trenches; communicating trenches; supporting points; strong points;[1] flank protection; approximate location of command posts; assignment of work and duties to infantry and engineers; work to be done by each battalion; arrangements for continuing the advance against the final objective; reconnaissance; capture or destruction of hostile batteries.

16. *Dress, Equipment and Packs.*

Arrangements for storing packs and individual bundles that may be left behind.

17. *Supplies.*—What are required; location of depots and guarding same; carrying parties; anti-gas equipment.

18. *Sanitary service.*—Organization; location of first-aid stations; trenches for evacuation.

19. *Prisoners.*—Measures to be taken; assembly points.

20. *Trains.*—Position of regimental and combat trains.

21. *Matters to be Considered in Case the Enemy Falls Back:*

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[1] A combat group is the smallest organized point of resistance.
A strong point contains several combat groups—the total garrison being usually a company.
A supporting point (center of resistance) is a group of strong points—the total garrison being usually a battalion.

Mission of the regiment. Limits for front of advance of the regiment and of the battalions; mission of the battalions; method for forming up and for advancing during the first rushes; duties assigned the tanks; lateral liaison.

The colonel must assure himself that units (to include companies) are furnished with all necessary information. Officers and N. C. O.'s are issued battle maps on which are shown, in colors, the successive objectives of the regiment and the sectors of the various units—to include the platoon; table showing the movement of the creeping barrage.

II. Cleaning Up

As a rule, the first line battalions in their original disposition are not charged with "cleaning up" until they are replaced by other battalions executing a "passage of lines."

The following method is given as an example (considering the regiment to be in three lines):

The cleaning up of the first position is left to the third line battalion, the detachment assigned to the duty may be considered as the advance guard of this battalion. At the proper time, it proceeds to the assigned position. Between this position and the forward objective, the cleaning up is carried out either by the third line battalion or by the reserve companies of the first and second line battalions.

III. Supplies

The organization of supplies is a particularly important task. Whatever the nature of the supplies, special effort must be made, under all circumstances, to bring the animals and the machine gun carts as near as possible to the troops in order to lessen the distance for the carrying parties. Mules and donkeys are especially useful. The supply parties must be commanded by very energetic leaders.

Rations.—The amount of prepared rations that a man must carry is determined by the plan of action. This food must be such as can be eaten without preparation. Canteens are filled and the men are furnished solidified alcohol.

Ration depots are established near the command posts of the colonel and of the commanders of the first line battalions.

The colonel has the cooking of rations by the field kitchens resumed as soon as possible.

Supply of Ammunition and Pyrotechnics.—The use of quick firing weapons makes the ammunition supply a vital necessity. A depot for munitions and pyrotechnics is established near the command posts of the colonel and battalion commander. Advance depots are located near the departure trenches. The munitions and pyrotechnics are carefully apportioned.

The depots for the whole regimental sector should comprise, at least for an offensive action,[1] the following:[2]

[1] A position organized for assault.

[2] These tables are to be considered as guides only.

AMMUNITION

	Units	No. of Units
Cartridges	Boxes of 1,200	500
Cartridges, D. A. M., for automatic rifles.	1,920	40
For machine guns, on bands, one-fifth on clip bands: Hotchkiss	Number	130,000
Cartridges for automatic pistols	2,000	3
One-pounder shells	Box of 33	30
Mortar shells	Number	1,200
Rifle grenades	Number	15,000
Hand grenades	.....	18,000
Incendiary grenades, 1916	.....	500
Suffocating grenades, 1916	.....	400

PYROTECHNICS

Illuminating rockets	Number	2,000
Signaling rockets:		
Asking for artillery fire	Number	600
Artillery firing too short	Number	500
For lifting the barrage	Number	300
I am here	Number	300
Various signals (not ready—objective has been reached—gas attack—signal of attack—of change in schedule, etc.)	Number	variable

Supply of Materiel.—The depots for the materiel of the regimental sector should comprise, at least, for the whole:

TOOLS (transported)

Shovels	400
Pick mattocks	400
Axes	30
Bill hooks	15
Sledges	10
Strong pliers	30
Saws	20
Tool handles	50
Bridging ladders	100

MISCELLANEOUS MATERIEL

Planks, logs, boards, gallery frames, etc.[1]	variable
Rolls of barbed wire	100
Reels of smooth wire	100
Rolls of chicken wire	10
Elements of Brun spiral	300
Chevaux de frise	50
Iron or wood stakes	600
Light corrugated iron sheets	30
Sandbags	12,000

[1] In sufficient quantities to undertake without delay the construction of shelters and works of all sorts.

Carrying parties.—As a rule the carriers are provided as follows:

(*a*) From the rear and as far forward as the command post of the battalion commander, by units not taken from the regiment (second line division). The personnel can be greatly reduced if the division is provided with caterpillar tractors.

(*b*) From the command post of the battalion commander to the troops, by the regiment or by the battalion itself.

IV. Combat

All that pertains to the duties of the battalion commander during combat applies equally to the colonel, but to a larger degree. It may be sufficient for the colonel merely to give his battalion commanders the necessary orders, but, on the other hand, he may find it necessary to provide for matters more in detail. Such would depend upon the individual characteristics of the subordinates.

The colonel carefully observes the action of his advance guard battalion or of his first line battalions, corrects any errors, makes good the omissions and strives to be fully informed on everything that takes place in his sector. He makes sure of continuous liaison with neighboring units and that the battalion and regimental reserves are properly handled.

The most important duty of the colonel is to insure efficient artillery support for his infantry. This result can be secured if he is able to inform the artillery at all times of the following:

The exact location of the first lines of the regiment; points in front of this line on which the artillery shall fire; observation posts.

It is therefore of the greatest importance that the regimental liaison and observation service work efficiently.

The above information will be forwarded to the artillery supporting the first line battalions and to the command.

If the regiment is checked and is unable to carry the position through its own efforts, the colonel decides upon the main features of organizing the position, but leaves the details of execution to his battalion commanders. He immediately provides for artillery barrages in front of his first line and, if necessary, on the flanks. He must inform the command as well as his battalion commanders on the exact situation of the regiment. He organizes the supply of ammunition and of materiel of all kinds.

Whether the task confronting the colonel be the attack of a fortified position in position warfare, or an attack over open ground, his rôle may be summed up as follows:

To decide upon the attack formation for the regiment.

To assign proper missions to his battalions and place at their disposal all the necessary means for executing their tasks.

To insure the constant support of the artillery.

To make proper arrangements for supplies.

To maintain the proper working of liaison.

To protect the flanks of his unit.

To keep at hand a reserve that can be used for following up a success or for delivering a counter-attack.

PART III

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

CHAPTER I

Individual Instruction

Individual instruction is the basis for all other instruction given in the various units. It must be very carefully organized. Detailed instruction of the privates and non-commissioned officers must be thorough and constantly aimed at preparing them for offensive combat.

The essential points of this instruction are as follows:

1. *Physical Exercise:* Bayonet fighting.

2. *Target Practice,* with rifle, automatic rifle, machine gun and mortars. Grenade throwing—including German grenades; practice grenades—both hand and rifle—should be freely used. When it can be done without jeopardizing other instruction within the units, the training of non-commissioned officers and selected privates in the use of all infantry weapons should be carried to the highest possible degree of perfection. All hand bombers and rifle grenadiers should be given the same training with the rifle as is received by those who are exclusively so armed. Special attention should be directed toward developing rapidity in aiming and firing. The gunner and carriers in each automatic rifle team should receive the above instruction. Machine gunners should be trained in rifle firing and grenade throwing.

3. *Training* of telephone operators, wireless operators, signalers, observers, agents of liaison, runners, sapper-pioneers and trench mortarmen.

4. *Combat Exercises by the Half-Platoon.*—The number of men in a half-platoon allows the instructor to observe each soldier personally, to correct his errors and to show him their disastrous consequences. The half-platoon is trained in situations resembling those which will occur in combat. The enemy is outlined by a few men whose leader receives all necessary instructions from the director of the exercise.

Special training will be given in the following:

Approach march in single or double file.

Advance in the assault formation—in both the duties of assaulting and supporting units.

The encircling maneuver to reduce a local resistance or to repel a counter-attack, practising the duties of hand bombers, rifle grenadiers, and automatic riflemen.

Elementary work in the organization of the ground.

Occupation of the captured terrain, digging in immediately, connecting shell holes by a trench.

The rôle of the combat patrol in re-establishing contact.

Rapid deployment on debouching from shelter or starting from a rallied formation in a shell hole, a fold of ground, etc.

The barrage in a fire or communicating trench.

The execution of raids.

Instill into each man individual order and precision; require the most rigid discipline in ranks, and inculcate the necessity for mutual co-operation and unity of effort in combat.

Develop initiative in the individual. Simulate situations in which non-commissioned officers are disabled, and train privates to perform the momentary duties falling to them.

Have frequent exercises in the rapid use of gas masks. Train the men to keep on the mask as long as possible. Take various precautions against the effects of blister gas.

Practise all phases of combat until each individual can perform his part without hesitation.

CHAPTER II

COMBAT DRILL[1]

I. Platoon and Company

These exercises should consist in practising episodes of combat. All details should be thoroughly executed, including all reconnaissance connected with the exercise and the complete preparation of the ground.

The hostile positions can be either imaginary, or indicated by appropriate means, such as flags, stakes, etc. At times the enemy should be outlined, and he will act under the control of the director of the exercise. Exercises improperly executed should always be repeated.

The training just mentioned should include:

Marches in approach and combat formation.

Debouching from the departure trenches.

Attacks against points of resistance.

Occupation and preparation of positions.

Men must be made to understand that work required in digging trenches and preparing necessary shelters is a phase of fighting. Non-commissioned officers must be taught that one of the best means of restoring order in their units after an assault is to undertake immediately the methodical organization of the ground. In addition, other exercises can be employed, such as, for example, operations of cleaning up, and raids; the march of a second line company; protection of the flanks of first line companies; *encircling* a point of resistance that has not yielded.

The platoon and the company must be frequently practised in meeting counter-attacks such as may occur during the course of various phases of

[1] The command will be practised in exercises in which tanks participate. The infantry will be trained to assault in the wake of the tanks and to exploit their success. Liaison between the infantry and the tanks will be practised in every detail.

combat and in regaining control after the enemy has been repulsed. Situations should be framed to illustrate and practise reforming on a designated base unit.

The director of the maneuver will pay especial attention to:

1. The combination of movement and fire, including the use of machine guns, one-pounder guns and accompanying mortars. Their use will not be a separate phase, but will be considered in conjunction with the employment of the companies.

2. *Mutual and spontaneous* support among the combat groups, exemplified in breaking points of resistance by encircling them.

3. Training the units to march in the general direction assigned to them (by compass, landmarks, etc.).

Machine guns and automatic rifle units will be trained to fire immediately, and without waiting for orders, on any hostile machine guns that appear in their zone of action.

II. Battalion

Special care will be devoted to the proper execution of the maneuver as a whole, and to every detail involved. All phases of offensive trench combat will be practised. These should include the employment of first and second line battalions, regaining contact with the enemy, the duties of cleaning up units, ammunition supply.

The director will introduce varied situations to illustrate actions on the front and *flanks*, and during the course of a prearranged halt, he will have practised rapid reforming on a base company, as well as having the captured terrain organized,[1] and the lines staked out.

The training of the battalion for combat is of prime importance.

Liaison of every sort must be thoroughly practised. The training of battalion observers, signalers, telephone operators and runners must be exactly simulated to that in combat.

The importance of the concentration of effort must be insisted upon, and especially of vital importance is the co-ordination of the work of the infantry and artillery. The advance of the assault units must be adjusted to the artillery barrage, which should move according to the arrangements agreed upon for the exercise.

An officer and several non-commissioned officers of the artillery should be detailed to be present with the battalion commander during the exercise.

Every exercise must have a useful aim and must teach its lesson. The director will bring out all the advantages of a surprise and seek to develop the spirit of decision in the officers and the spirit of initiative in all.

In going to and from the maneuver, the battalion should take advantage of favorable terrain to execute various evolutions at attention by battalion, company, platoon or half-platoon. The object of these exercises is to develop the flexibility of units. They should consist in marching at attention with changes of direction.

The approach or combat formations will be accommodated to the terrain. The men march at ease, their eyes fixed on the half-platoon leader.

[1] See *Instruction on the Organization of the Ground.*

As soon as the half-platoons are sufficiently trained, begin with a battalion drill in order to show concretely the formation of the combat unit —the battalion.

Each company will afterwards repeat this drill, at the next assembly, on the same area, carefully observing the corrections made in the course of the battalion exercise. Afterwards the exercise will be repeated by each platoon and half-platoon under the same conditions. It is impossible to attach too much importance to these detailed exercises by platoons and half-platoons. It is often by maneuvering of these units (immobilizing the front, flanking, encircling), that local resistances are reduced.

Finally, the same battalion exercise will be executed to test the detailed exercises in the light of criticisms made at the first exercise.

The officers and troops will thus become imbued with the idea that initiative, which must be exercised in various incidents of the fight, must also be directed to the end desired by the battalion commander, and that *all the efforts of a unit must contribute to the accomplishment of the commander's plan of action.*

III. The Regiment

Regimental exercises (approach march, attack, assault, passage of lines, re-establishing contact) are as a rule practised with the artillery. When the latter cannot be actually represented, it should be simulated in such a way as to allow the functioning of liaison. The colonel will develop to the highest degree the flexibility of maneuver and the offensive spirit of his regiment.

CHAPTER III

EXERCISES FOR OFFICERS

It is always very desirable to carry out combat exercises of the company, platoon and half-platoon with troops. Exercises for battalion and regimental officers must bring out the principles of combat set forth above. This instruction can be given by exercises without troops. As in exercises with troops, it is essential to select simple situations, to consider only limited phases of an action, and to have conditions as real as possible, thus reducing to a minimum the part left to the imagination.

There should be exercises for battalion and regimental officers devoted exclusively to practice in the mechanism of movement and the installation and operation of liaison, especially with the artillery and the aeronautic service. These exercises of simple mechanism should also be participated in by officers of these services. All means of liaison will be brought into play, telephone, wireless telegraph, ground telegraph, visual signaling, fireworks, runners, pigeons, etc.

The technical instructions of junior officers will be given particular attention. It should bear especially on the following points:

Study of these *Instructions,* of the *Manual for the Chief of Platoon,* of the *Instructions* on the *Organization of the Ground, the Tactical Use of the Machine Gun and Liaison;* reading of the 1/80000 scale map and large scale battle maps; study of aerial photographs and relief maps; orientation, including the compass, and luminous compass, with practice by day and night in small units; drafting orders and reports (with

sketches) that would arise during combat; principles of the organization and tactical capabilities of the various arms, particularly of the field artillery.

The attention of officers will be constantly directed to the prime importance of *liaison between infantry and artillery* in combat. This appreciation of the matter should not be limited to the use of material means, but the moral support and necessity of mutual helpfulness should be accentuated.

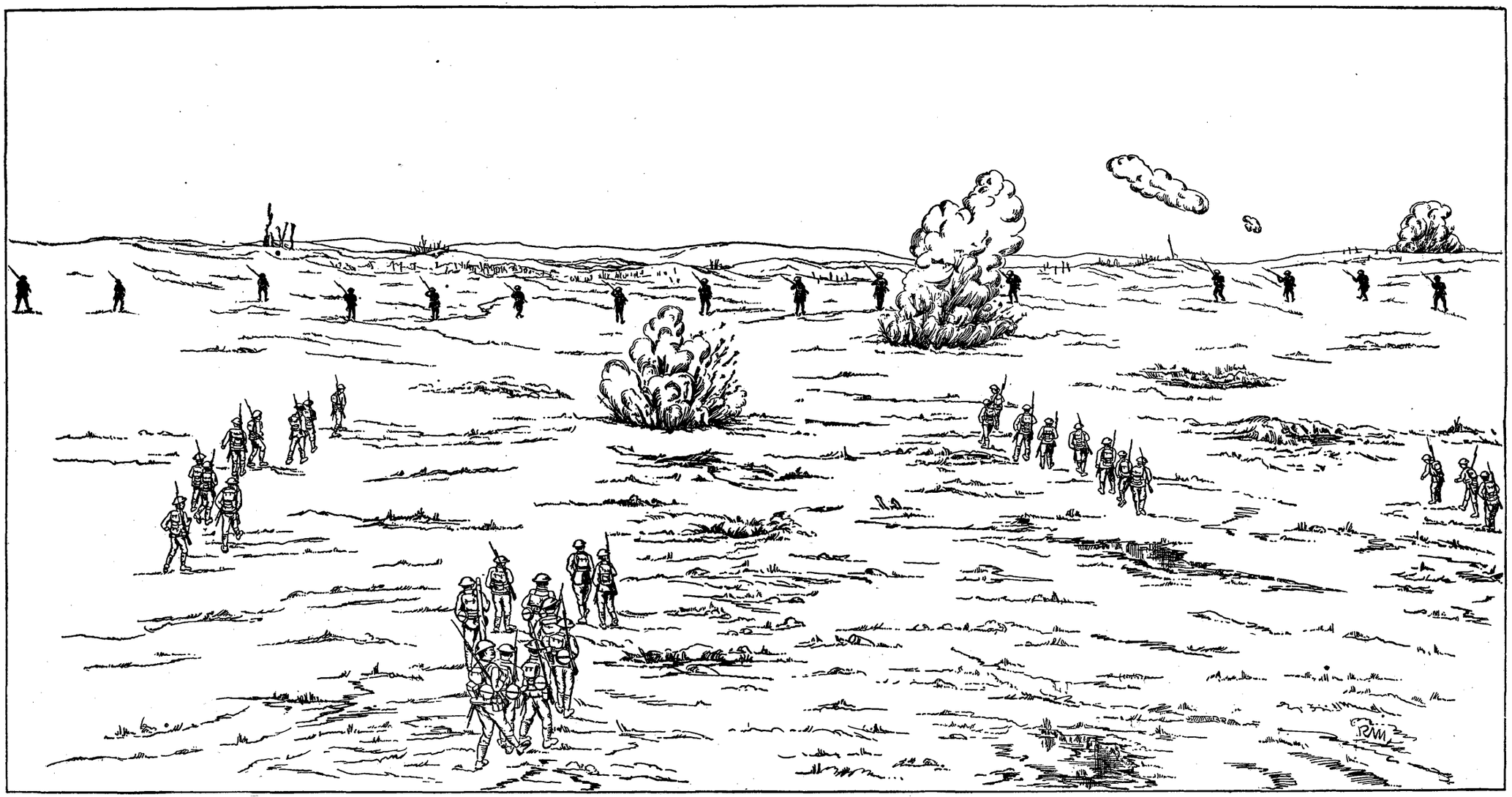


Plate Ia. **A PLATOON ADVANCING TO ATTACK**

One section thrown out as a line of skirmishers, three sections advancing in single file.

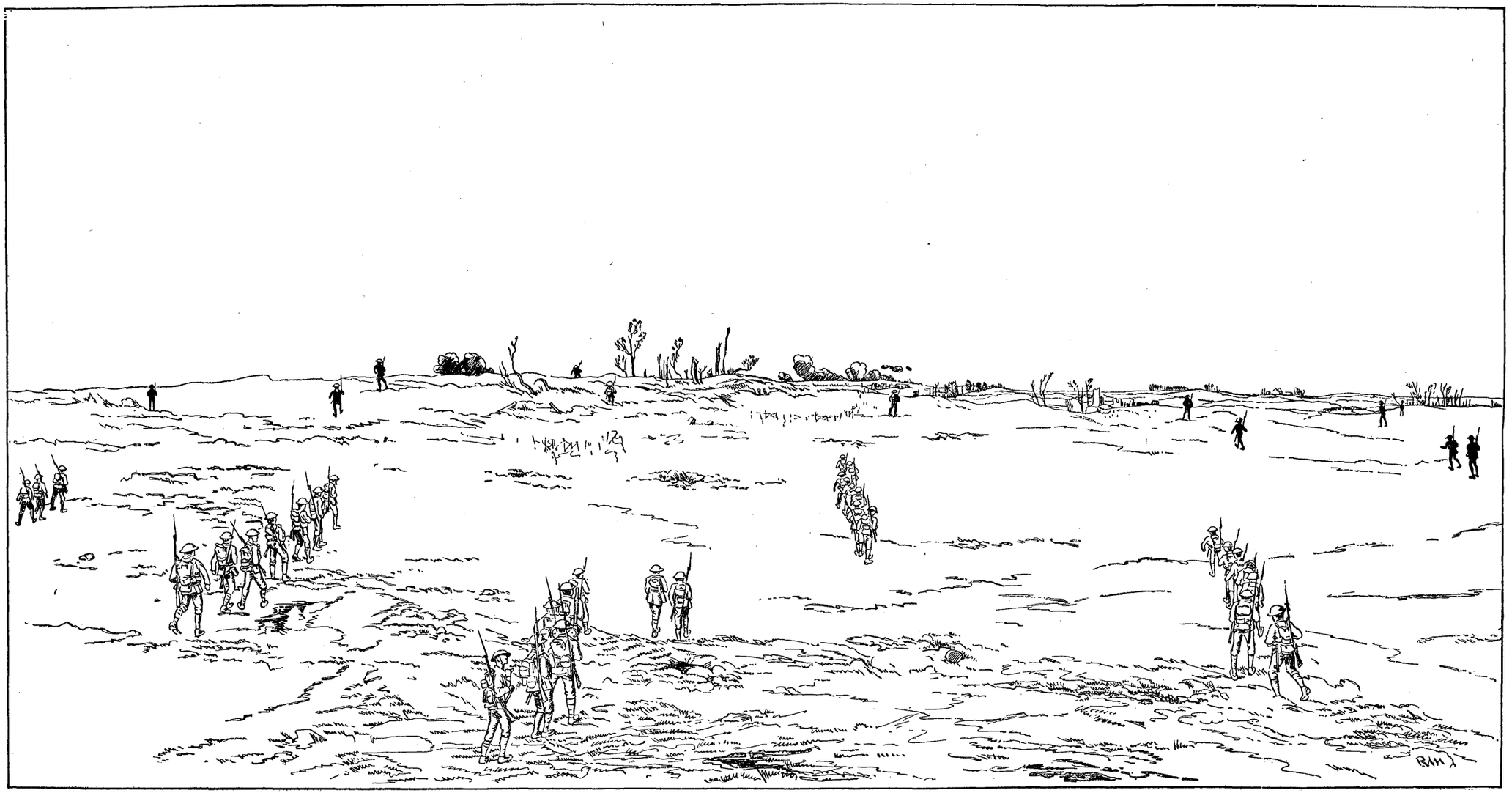


Plate Ib. A PLATOON ADVANCING TO ATTACK

Sections advancing in single file, each preceded by its two scouts.

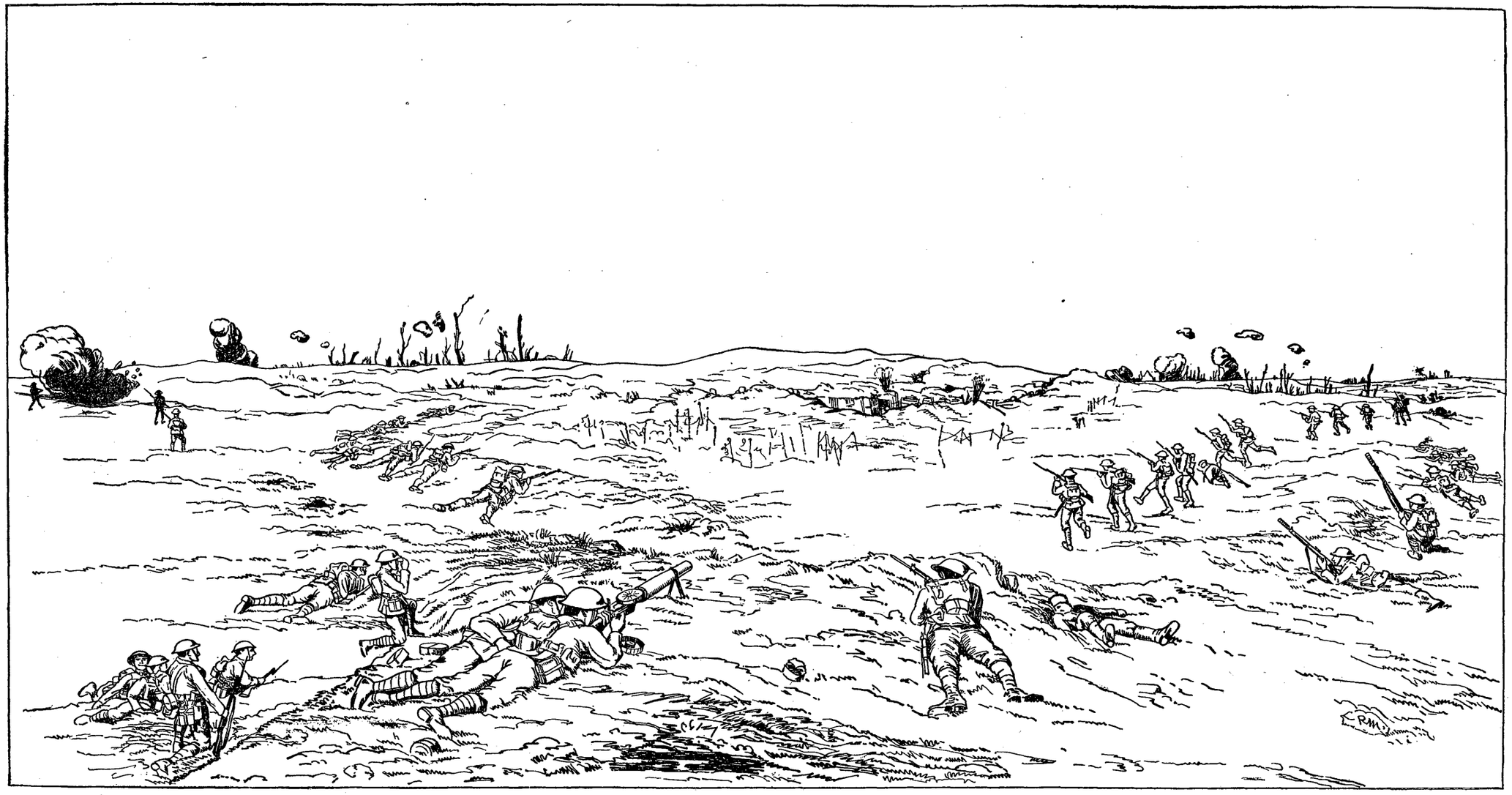


Plate II. A PLATOON ATTACKING A STRONG POINT

Note the covering fire supplied by the Lewis gun section and by rifle bombers.

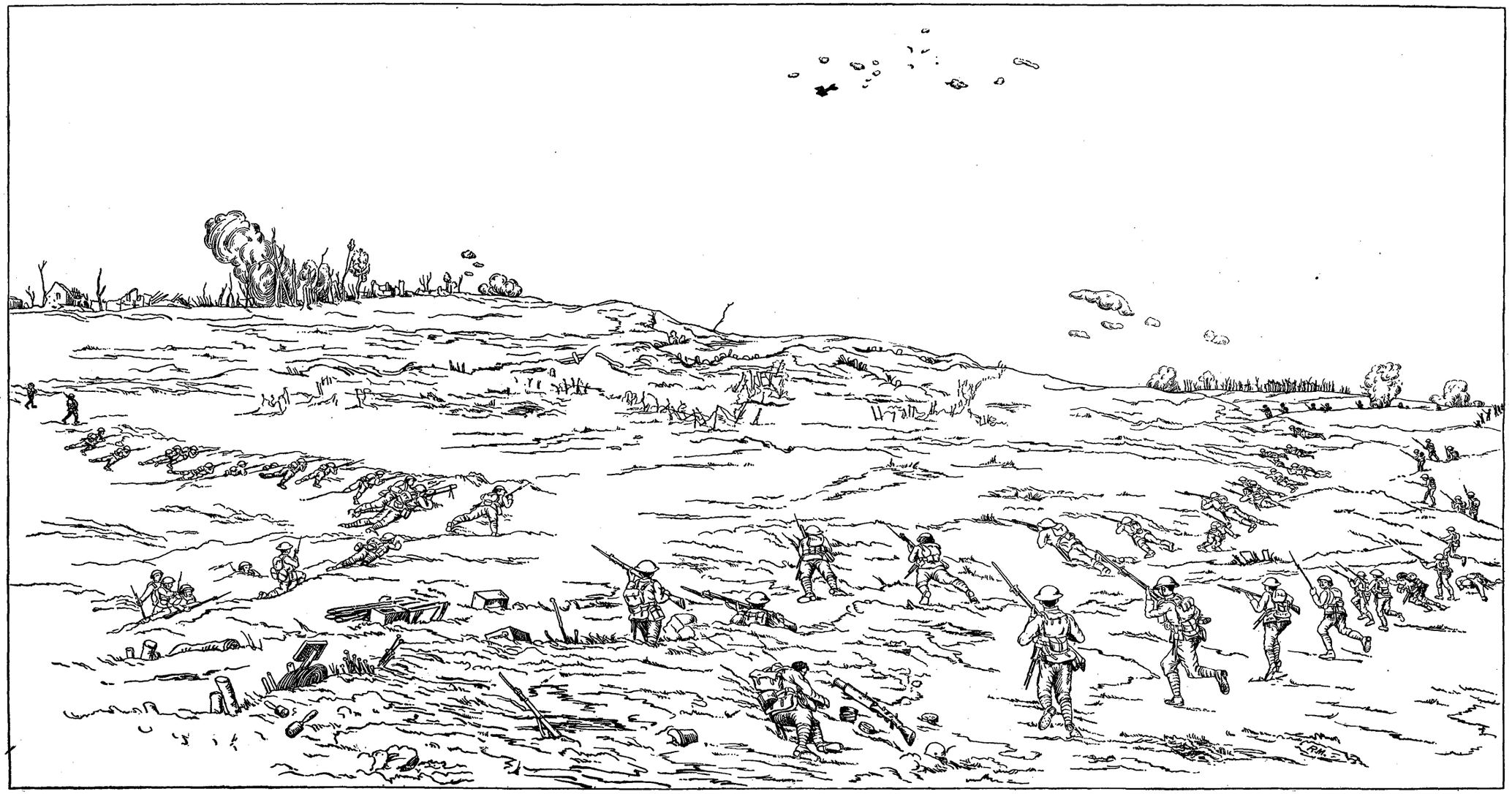


Plate III. CO-OPERATION OF PLATOONS ATTACKING A STRONG POINT

The Platoon on the right has been checked and its Lewis gun put out of action. Note the reinforcing section and the action of the Lewis gun section of the platoon on the left giving flanking fire.



Plate IV. **PLATOON ATTACKING FARM** (Semi-open Warfare)

Note the enveloping movement by one section on the extreme left, and the Lewis gun section giving covering fire on the right with scouts thrown out to the flank.

SUPPLEMENT TO INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE

Offensive Combat of Small Units

Adapted from the French at General Headquarters
American Expeditionary Forces, France

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, May 6, 1918.

The following pages, entitled "Supplement to Instructions for the Offensive Combat of Small Units," are published for the information and guidance of all concerned. The deployments shown herein are suggestions only. They will not be considered as normal formations to be used in all circumstances. The formation adopted in a particular situation will be such as best meet the requirements of that situation.

(062.1 A.G.O.)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

PEYTON C. MARCH,
Major General, Acting Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

H. P. McCAIN,
The Adjutant General.

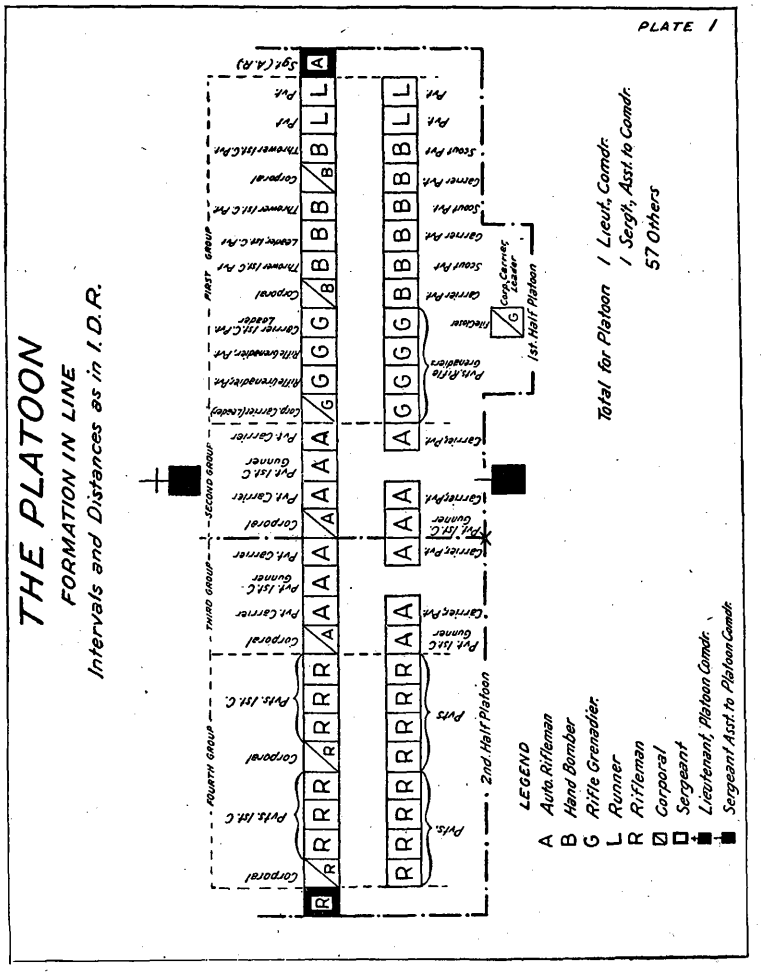
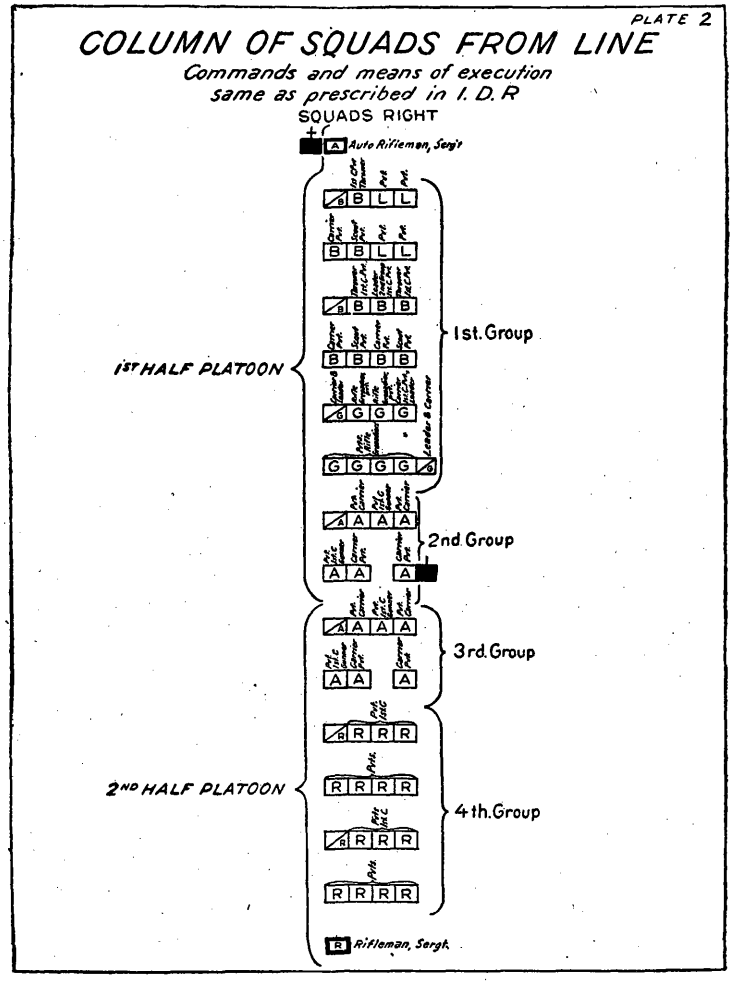

PLATE I
THE PLATOON
FORMATION IN LINE
Intervals and Distances as in I.D.R.
Total for Platoon 1 Lieut. Comdr.
1 Sergt. Asst. to Comdr.
57 Others
LEGEND
A Auto. Rifleman
B Hand Bomber
G Rifle Grenadier
L Runner
R Riffeman
Corporal
Sergeant
Lieutenant, Platoon Comdr.
Sergeant Asst. to Platoon Comdr.
1st. Half Platoon
2nd. Half Platoon
FIRST GROUP
SECOND GROUP
THIRD GROUP
FOURTH GROUP

PLATE 2

COLUMN OF SQUADS FROM LINE

Commands and means of execution same as prescribed in I. D. R

SQUADS RIGHT



THE HALF-PLATOON

The platoon is subdivided into half-platoons. Both half-platoons contain automatic riflemen. The addition of the rifle section usually completes one half-platoon and the addition of the hand bomber and rifle grenadier sections completes the other half-platoon. The half-platoon is not trained as a separate unit. It is commanded in action by the rifle sergeant or the automatic rifle sergeant.

FORMATION

The formation of each of the half-platoons is as indicated on Plate 3.

The platoon being in column of squads (Plate 2) to form line of half-platoons, by command (*a*) or by signals (*b*):

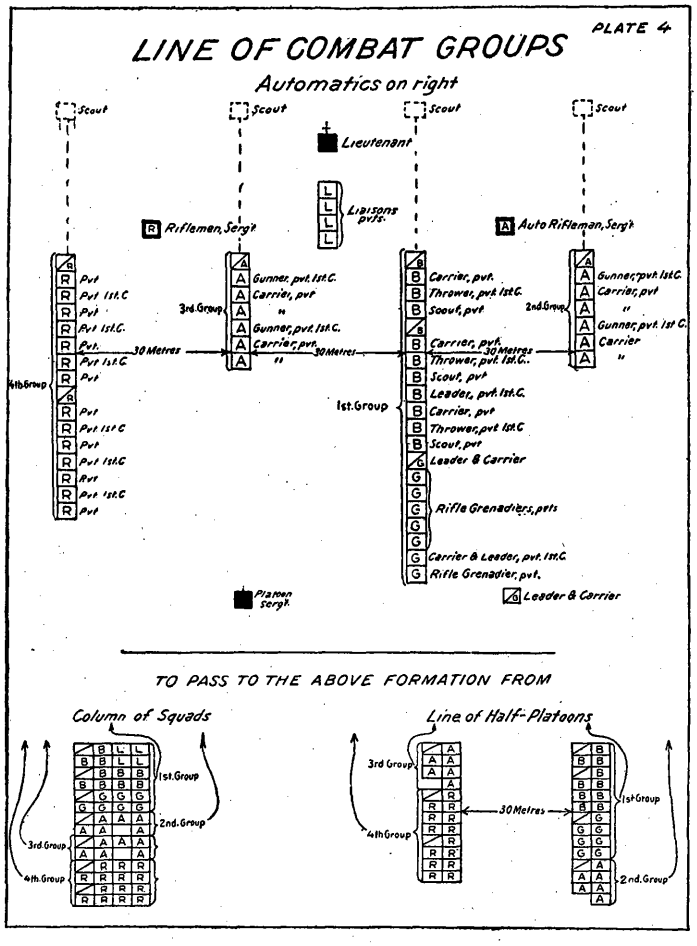
(*a*) The commands are: 1. *Line of half-platoons,* 2. MARCH. At the command of execution, each half-platoon at once begins to execute "left by twos," under the direction of the half-platoon leader who commands "FOLLOW ME." When the leading half-platoon has completed the movement "left by twos," it is halted by its leader; the rear half-platoon is conducted to the left front by its leader and is halted when it arrives abreast of the first half-platoon and at about thirty meters interval.

(*b*) Signals: Signal "Platoon," followed by two or three sweeps of the arm in a vertical plane perpendicular to the front. A company commander making use of this signal will first point towards the platoon or platoons affected.

The above is the usual method of forming line of half-platoons. However, should it be desired to retain the half-platoon in column of squads or to form directly in column of files, the command "in column of squads" or "in column of files," as the case may be, is added to the preparatory command. These formations are unusual.

THE SECTION

The section consists of riflemen, hand bombers, rifle grenadiers, or automatic riflemen. It is commanded by the appropriate non-commissioned officer prescribed in Tables of Organization, who is responsible, under the platoon commander, for its training as a section and for the training of the individual soldier in the use of his particular weapon. The training of each section as such is prescribed in the appropriate manual.


PLATE 4
LINE OF COMBAT GROUPS
Automatics on right
Scout
Scout
Scout
Scout
Lieutenant
Liaisons pvts.
R Riflemen, Sergt
A Auto Rifleman, Sergt
Pvt
Pvt 1st C
Pvt
Pvt 1st C.
Pvt.
Pvt 1st C
Pvt
Pvt
Pvt 1st C
Pvt
Pvt 1st C
Pvt
Pvt 1st C
Pvt
4th Group
3rd Group
30 Metres
Gunner, pvt. 1st C.
Carrier, pvt
"
Gunner, pvt. 1st C.
Carrier, pvt.
"
30 Metres
1st Group
Carrier, pvt.
Thrower, pvt. 1st C.
Scout, pvt
Carrier, pvt.
Thrower, pvt. 1st C.
Scout, pvt
Leader, pvt. 1st C.
Carrier, pvt
Thrower, pvt 1st C
Scout, pvt
Leader & Carrier
Rifle Grenadiers, pvts
Carrier & Leader, pvt. 1st C.
Rifle Grenadier, pvt.
2nd Group
30 Metres
Gunner, pvt. 1st C.
Carrier, pvt
"
Gunner, pvt. 1st C.
Carrier
"
Platoon Sergt.
Leader & Carrier
TO PASS TO THE ABOVE FORMATION FROM
Column of Squads
1st Group
2nd Group
3rd Group
4th Group
Line of Half-Platoons
3rd Group
4th Group
30 Metres
1st Group
2nd Group

PLATOON AS ASSAULT ECHELON

In arriving at the assault formations shown in Plates 5–7, the usual sequence of movements is as follows: The platoon being in column of squads (right in front), forms line of half-platoons, then line of combat groups in the particular formation desired, as shown in the above mentioned plates, then deploys in the assault formation.

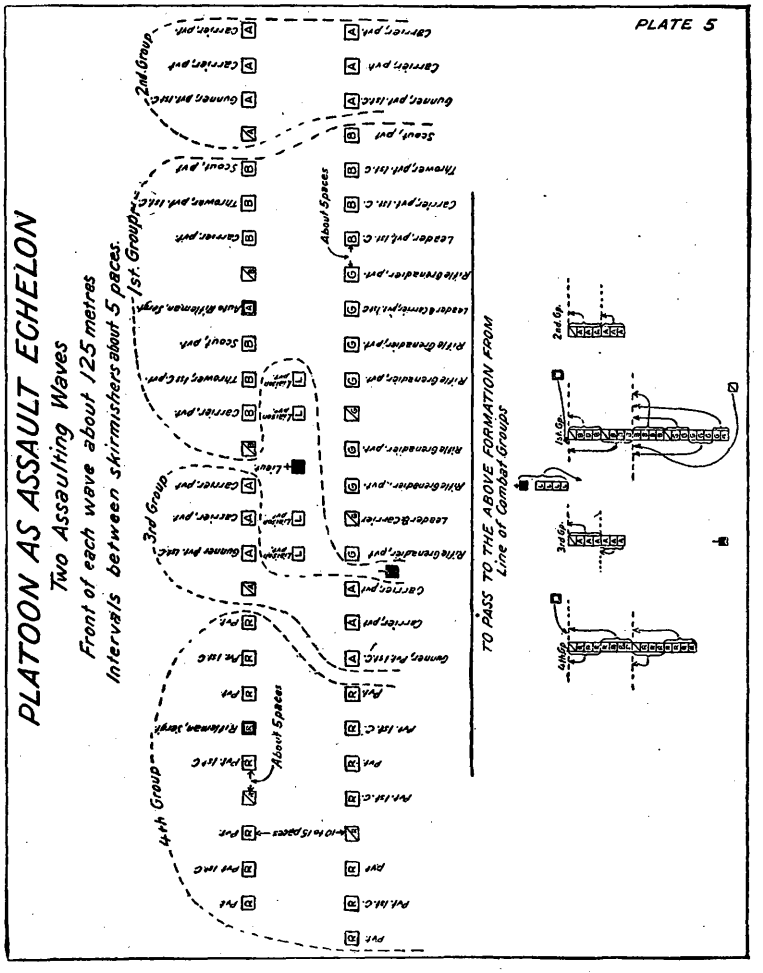
Being in line of Combat Groups, to form for assault:

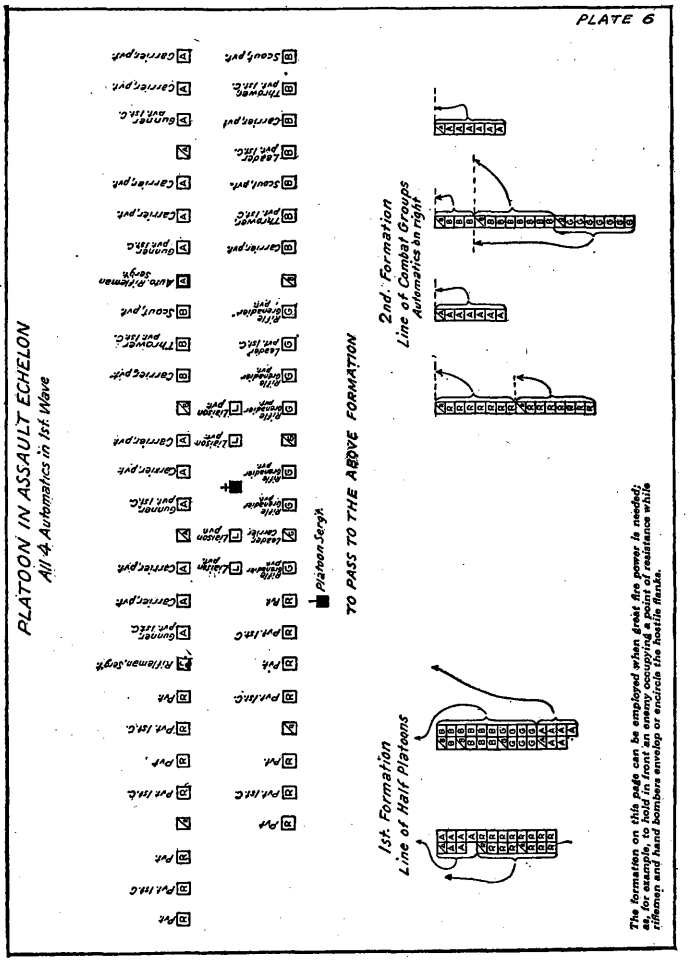
(*a*) The commands are: 1. *As skirmishers, in two waves* (*one wave*), 2. MARCH. The details of execution are shown on the opposite plate.

(*b*) Signals: Signal "As skirmishers." The deployment will ordinarily be made in two waves. If desired in one wave, follow the signal "As skirmishers" by raising either arm, extended vertically, and immediately repeat the signal "As skirmishers." The signal will be preceded by pointing successively to the half-platoons to execute the movement, the base half-platoons being indicated first.

It is to be noted that the deployment of rifle squads and rifle grenadiers is made as prescribed for deploying the squad in par. 124, I. D. R. The rifle grenadier corporal as file closer takes his proper place during the deployment. Hand bombers and automatic riflemen deploy on the leading man of the particular group and always to his right, as shown on the plate. Note that rifle grenadiers work in groups of three, with the carrier between two rifle grenadiers; hand bombers in groups of four, with the leader on the left; automatic riflemen in groups of three with the gunner on the left, except when deploying from "Automatics left," one carrier (scout) should be on the left of the gunner, in order to give protection on the left flank. (See note on Plate 7.)

Rifle grenadiers are always in the second wave. Hand bombers can be used as riflemen.


PLATOON AS ASSAULT ECHELON
Two Assaulting Waves
Front of each wave about 125 metres
Intervals between skirmishers about 5 paces.
1st. Groups
2nd Group
3rd Group
4th Group
About 5 paces
About 5 paces
TO PASS TO THE ABOVE FORMATION FROM
Line of Combat Groups
PLATE 5


PLATE 6
PLATOON IN ASSAULT ECHELON
All 4 Automatics in 1st. Wave
Platoon Sergt.
TO PASS TO THE ABOVE FORMATION
1st. Formation
Line of Half Platoons
2nd. Formation
Line of Combat Groups
Automatics on right
The formation on this plate can be employed when front fire power is needed; as for example, on hard ground where cover is scarce and resistance within rifleman and hand bombers envelop or encircle the hostile flanks.

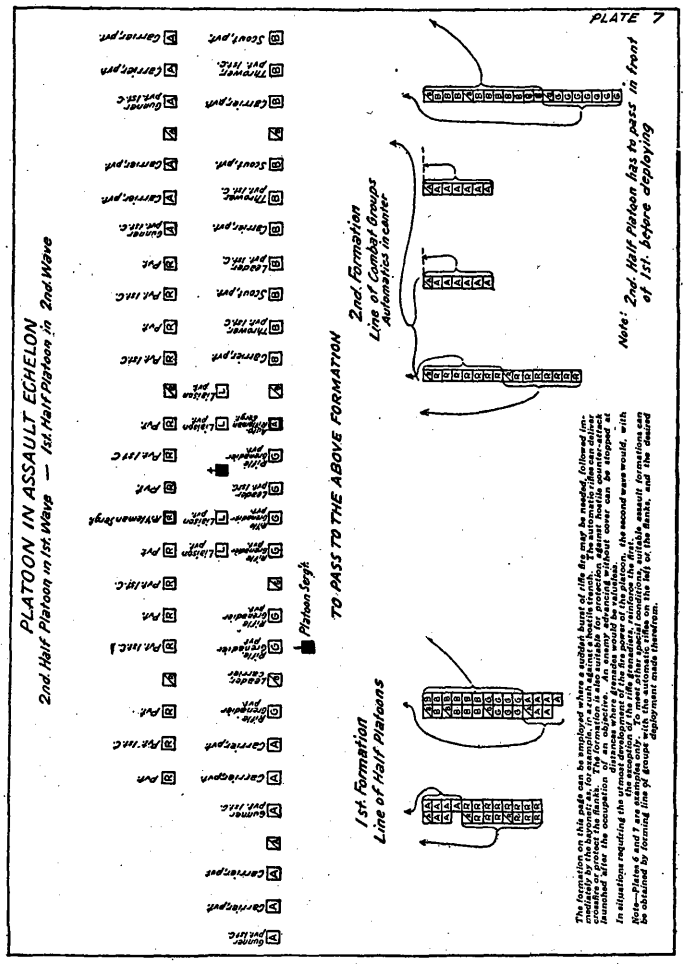
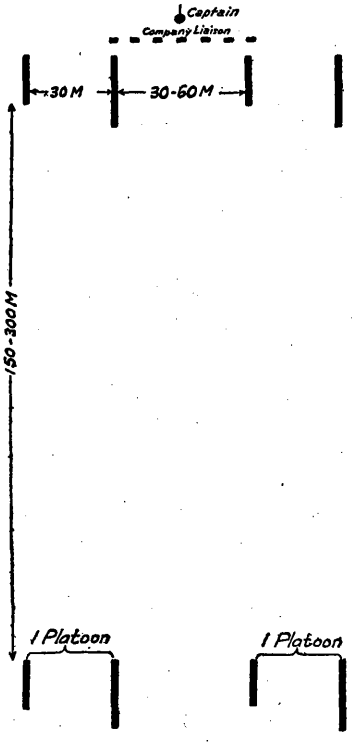

PLATE 7
PLATOON IN ASSAULT ECHELON
2nd. Half Platoon in 1st. Wave — 1st. Half Platoon in 2nd. Wave
Platoon Sergt.
TO PASS TO THE ABOVE FORMATION
1st. Formation
Line of Half Platoons
2nd. Formation
Line of Combat Groups
Automatics in center
Note: 2nd. Half Platoon has to pass in front of 1st. before deploying

PLATE 8

APPROACH FORMATION

COMPANY IN DOUBLE COLUMN

Each platoon in line of half-platoons
Each half-platoon in column of two's



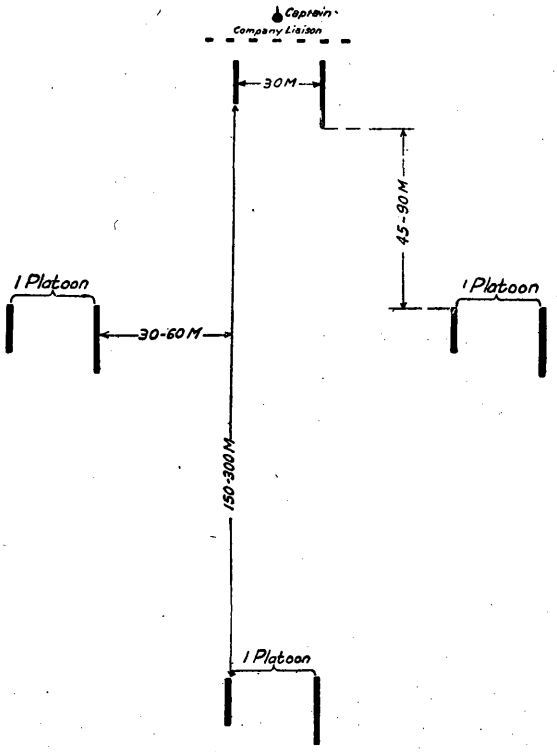
This formation is suitable for a company advancing under artillery fire. The intervals and distances between fractions are such as to prevent two from being included in the burst of one shell or shrapnel.

PLATE 9

APPROACH FORMATION

COMPANY IN LOZENGE

Each platoon in line of half-platoons
Each half-platoon in column of two's.



The lozenge, like the double column, offers a poor target to hostile artillery. It is easily maneuvered in any direction.

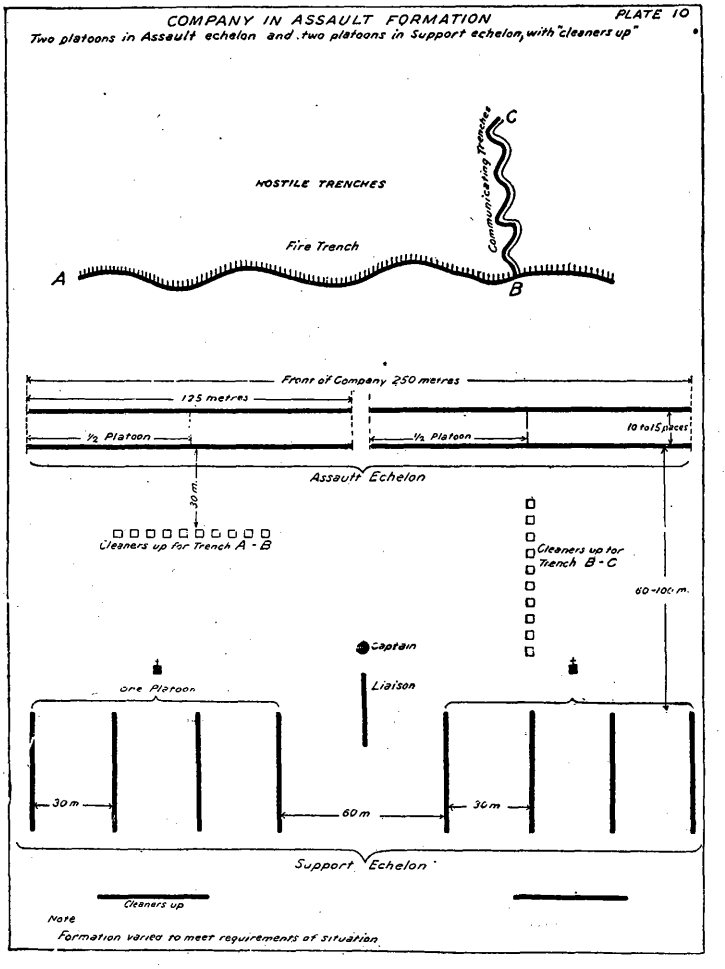
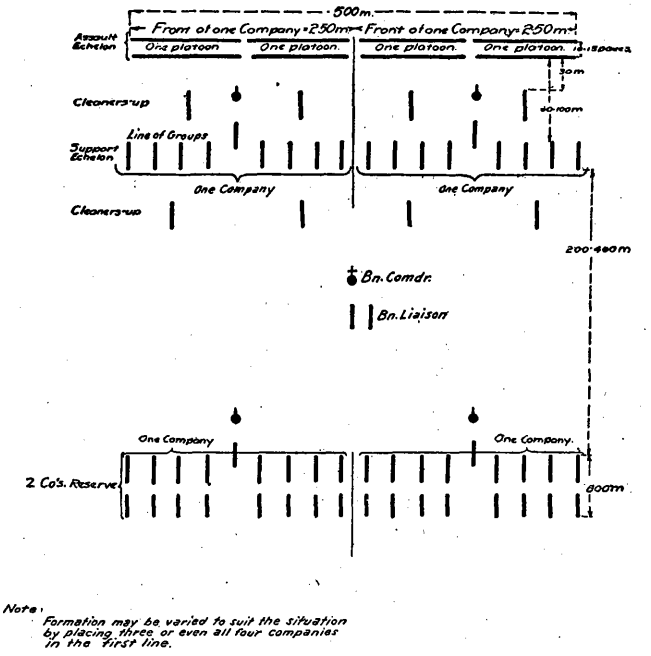

COMPANY IN ASSAULT FORMATION
PLATE 10
Two platoons in Assault echelon and two platoons in Support echelon, with "cleaners up"
HOSTILE TRENCHES
Communicating Trenches
C
Fire Trench
A
B
Front of Company 250 metres
125 metres
½ Platoon
½ Platoon
10 to 15 paces
Assault Echelon
30 m.
Cleaners up for Trench A - B
Cleaners up for Trench B - C
60 - 100 m.
Captain
Liaison
One Platoon
30 m
60 m
30 m
Support Echelon
Cleaners up
Note
Formation varied to meet requirements of situation

PLATE II

BATTALION IN AN ASSAULT FORMATION
Two Companies in Reserve



Note:
Formation may be varied to suit the situation by placing three or even all four companies in the first line.