

An t-Ogláic

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"CLOSE!"

It was pointed out in the leading article of our last issue that the political changes which have taken place have left the Army of the Irish Republic absolutely unchanged. The Irish Volunteers were established "to safeguard the rights and liberties of all the people of Ireland." They were always and are still the servants and defenders of the Irish nation. The Irish Republic was established by the votes of the Irish people at a General Election and until the Irish people decide otherwise the Army of Ireland continues to be the Army of the Irish Republic. One of the outstanding characteristics of the good soldier is steadiness. He does not lose his head in any sudden emergency. He is not affected by political propaganda from his duty or his discipline. He realises that the safety of the nation in a time of national unsettlement depends upon the discipline, solidarity and steadiness of its Army. He obeys his orders and preserves the same outlook as has brought us through so many vicissitudes and dangers—the outlook of the true soldier citizen, loyal to the nation. The soldiers of Ireland have been the friends and defenders of the Irish nation in the past; they will always remain so. They are of the people, for the people; they have not taken arms to bully or cow the people but to help and defend them; their strength lies in this fact, that they interpret the national will, constitutionally expressed. The Army continues under the same command the personnel of its officers is unchanged and differences of opinion with regard to questions of political expediency will not be allowed to affect the fine spirit of brotherhood and common discipline for which our Army is renowned.

PROTECTION.

Protection implies two forces, one of which is protecting the other. Thus the Commander of an advance guard has a double duty to perform to protect some other force, usually that from which he is

detached, and also to secure the safety of his own force.

It is accepted that a force employed on protective duty must at all cost protect; its own security is a secondary matter, and consideration for that security cannot excuse any failure to fulfil the paramount duty. When the whole force is small, and the protective body therefore contracted, there is not usually any difficulty in reconciling the two aims, but with large forces it becomes necessary to push the protective screen far out.

In considering the question of the strength of a force which is to be detailed for protective duty, a Commander should give weight to both aspects. If he should limit the strength to the bare requirement of protection, he may render it impossible for the protective force to take any measures for its own security; the safety of the main body is then secured only at the risk of sacrifice of the protective party.

The strength of a protective force should be sufficient to enable its Commander to fulfil three conditions; two of protection, and one of security—to give due warning to the main body of the enemy's presence or approach; to prevent the intrusion of the enemy's scouts; to obtain such warning for himself as will give him a chance of saving his own force.

The proportion between the strength of any protective force, and the extent of front which should be allotted to it is governed by these conditions, the requirements of which vary according to the strength, proximity, and activity, of the enemy, and also according to the nature of the country. If on the march he employs large advanced and flank guards, his control is lessened thereby. If, at the halt, he should strengthen his outpost with a view to ensuring complete safety from surprise, he will correspondingly deprive more men of their rest. The strength of a force for protective duty should be estimated so as to allow for the proper performance of its duties, and a reasonable chance of its safety, and should be limited strictly to that standard.

A reconnoitring patrol is one which is sent out to ascertain the absence of the enemy from any particular area.

Very often, of course, the ground in front of an outpost position, is of such a nature that periodical investigation in certain directions is necessary, and in such cases reconnoitring patrols must be used, but

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NOTES ON SCOUTING. II.

The information contained in documents which may come into the possession of a scout is likely to be of more use to the chief of his Intelligence Department than to the scout. Any documents which appear to be of any possible value should be handed over immediately.

To ensure that the best use may be made of information, it is necessary that every item of intelligence reaches the person who is able to utilise it to the greatest advantage. This can only be done by a proper system of transmission. It is very seldom that the man who actually gains the information can select the particular officer to whom it will be most valuable. As a rule a scout cannot be expected to do any more than pass his information on to his own Intelligence Department.

The first and indispensable method is by the ordinary channels from inferior to superior. The responsibility for this first transmission must rest on the Unit by which the information is first obtained.

If two Units acquire the same information independently it would, of course, reach the higher authority through two channels, and the separate reports would be corroborative.

When a fixed method is adhered to, the responsibility for the transmission of information is definitely fixed, and any failure in communication can be brought home to the responsible person.

In order that intelligence reports may be clearly understood, and their significance appreciated by those who receive them, every report should have on it a number, the date and name of the place where it is written, or from where it was despatched. The importance of the date and place is evident. The value of consecutive numbering is not, however, so generally recognised, except as a convenience in the matter of acknowledging receipt or asking for further particulars. Yet, of course, if numbering is carried out properly it is more than a convenience; it is a safeguard in establishing continuity, either in reports or in instructions, but to be of any value it must proceed on a recognised system.

NOTES ON TACTICS.

Not alone is it the young officer of our Army who is ignorant on tactics, but also those who have seen service are often very backward on those points in minor tactics which they have not learnt through actual experience in the field. The battle field is an expensive place to acquire knowledge which can be gained elsewhere, and it behoves us all to learn what we possibly can under peace conditions, for the ordeals we would have to encounter in the presence of an enemy in case of fresh hostilities.

Training which in another army would form a course of study for years, has to be crammed into a few months with us, and it stands to reason that much which is essential remains unlearned.

It is generally found that the best way to train officers in minor tactics is to give them as realistically as possible little problems to solve, and afterwards to discuss their proposed disposition in the presence of their brother officers, and then to tell them clearly what they ought to have done, giving reasons for every step taken.

The reading of the following notes may help our officers not alone to solve certain little problems in peace time, but to actually help them out of a tight corner on the field of battle.

- (1) Do not put off taking your measures of defence till the morrow, as these are more important than the comfort of your men, or the "ship shape" arrangements of your camp. Choose the position of your camp mainly with reference to your own defence.
- (2) Do not, in war time, show stray civilians over your camp, be they ever so kind and sympathetic, and do not be hypnotised, by the numerous people they have sheltered or may know.
- (3) Do not let sentries advertise their positions to the whole country side, including the enemy, by standing on the top of a hill, or by making much noise.
- (4) Do not, if avoidable, be caught in the open when bullets are whizzing about; at such times a ditch or a hole in the ground is the place for a soldier.
- (5) To guard a place does not necessitate sitting on top of it, unless the locality is suitable to hold for other and defensive reasons. It may even be much better to take up your defensive position some way from the spot, and so away from concealed ground which enables the enemy to crawl up to very close range concealed, and to fire from cover which hides them even when shooting. It is always better to have the enemy in the open, or to have what is called a clear "field of fire." A non-bullet-proof shelter which is visible serves merely to attract bullets instead of keeping them out.
- (6) When in camp or ambush positions it is not enough to keep unfriendly or strange civilians away from your actual defences, letting them go free to warn the enemy of your existence and whereabouts, even though they do not know the details. It would be much better to gather all such strangers, and kindly, but firmly, to take care of them, so that they would be under no temptation to impart



- any knowledge they may have obtained.
- (7) It is not business to allow male civilians to sit and pick their teeth whilst your men are breaking their hearts trying to do heavy labour in a short time. It is much better to teach these people the dignity of labour, and by keeping them under guard to prevent them going telling their neighbours in the next village about it, until your task is completed.
 - (8) When collecting the friendly stranger and his son in order to prevent their taking information of your whereabouts to the enemy, if you are wishful for a "surprise packet" do not forget to gather in his wife and daughter who have also tongues; if this is impossible, do not then hope to surprise the enemy.
 - (9) For a small unit and a large active enemy, there are no flanks, no rear, or to put it otherwise, it is front all round.
 - (10) Beware of being taken in reverse; take care when placing and making your defences that when you are engaged in shooting the enemy to your front, his pal cannot sneak up and shoot you in the back.
 - (11) Beware of being enfiladed. It is nasty from one flank—far worse from both flank.
 - (12) Do not have your position near rising ground over which you cannot see, and which you cannot hold.
 - (13) As once before cover from sight is often worth more than cover from bullets.
 - (14) To surprise the enemy is a great advantage.
 - (15) If your wish to obtain this advantage, conceal your position.
 - (16) To test the concealment or otherwise of your position, look at it from the enemy's point of view.
 - (17) Beware of convex hills and dead ground. Especially take care to have some place where the enemy must come under your fire. Choose the exact spot of your firing position with your eye at the level of the men who will eventually use it.
 - (18) A hill may not, after all, though it has a good command, necessarily be the best place to hold.
 - (19) A little bluff after all is not bad. A few decoys here and there may cause the enemy to waste much ammunition and draw the fire away from the actual position.

ELECTRIC SIGNAL LAMP.

1. *General Description.*—This lamp is rectangular in shape and is fitted with an attachment having a ball socket clamping ring and screw, for securing it to the stand, which is the same as that used with the heliograph and the Begbie lamp. It has three compartments: front, centre, and rear.

The front compartment contains:—(i) Three cells, electric, inert, "S" in series, carried in a compartment by itself, with a drop door and catch. (ii) The optical arrangement—which consists of a $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch parabolic glass reflector, fitted in an aluminium tube. The electric bulb (3.5 volt) is held horizontally in a sliding carrier, which is clamped to an ebonite block on the outside of the tube by means of a milled clamping nut. The carrier is capable of movement for focussing purposes. The tube has, on the outside, a metal slide which fits into a dove-tail and holds the tube in position. (iii) A small terminal board of ebonite, with two terminals, and a brass tube which holds three spare lamp bulbs. (iv) The sending key and leads. The centre compartment contains:—Three cells, electric, inert, "S" (spare.)

The rear compartment contains:—A small kerosene oil lamp for the use of the writer and caller. The lamp is detachable and has a drop cover with side pieces which act as wind screens.

The flame is protected by a mica window. A small quantity of oil is carried in a tin held in a recess on the right of the lamp.

The sending key is enclosed in a watertight case, and slides into a recess on the top of the lamp. It is connected to the lamp by 8 feet of flexible lead to enable the key to be removed for working under cover. When not in use the lead is coiled up and carried in separate recess beside the key.

A sighting tube is fitted to the underside of the lamp for aligning purposes. The lamp is carried in a leather case, with shoulder strap.

Weight of lamp 12 lb. 3 oz.

Weight of case 3 lb. 7 oz.

2. *To Signal with the Lamp.*—(i) Fix the lamp on the stand. (ii) Uncover the small glass window in front. (iii) Open rear door, remove burner cap and light oil lamp, the wick being only slightly raised, or it will smoke. (iv) Open key cover remove key, and align on the distant station by loosening the ball socket clamping ring. Clamp when alignment is correct. Note.—At all times avoid a continuous light with an electric lamp, so as to save the battery. To enable this to be done the "end of message" signal should be answered by the General Answer, instead of "light up."

3. *Electrical Connections.*—The battery consists of three inert cells ("S" type) joined in series. The positive of the battery is connected by a short lead to one of the terminals on the outside of the lamp.

tube. From the other terminal a short lead is taken to one terminal of the terminal board, which has connected to it the flexible lead. The other terminal of the terminal board is connected to the negative pole of the battery.

4. *Connections and Instructions for the Use of Electrical Signalling Field Lamps*—(i) The lamp when issued is ready for use. (ii) To ensure that connections are correct, press the key, when the lamp should light up. If the lamp does not light up with the key depressed, see that all connections are correct, and all terminals screwed up tight. If the connections are correct and the lamp does not light up, put in a new bulb. If there is still no light, or if the light is poor, connect up a new cell or cells.

If there is no light after carrying out the above, probably some of the leads are broken. The wiring should then be renewed.

(iii) To focus lamp.—Lift the lid of live cell compartment, withdraw the aluminium cylinder containing the reflector, unscrew clamping suit, and move sliding focussing bracket in or out until the beam is approximately parallel. Then screw up clamping nut firmly. This adjustment should not be touched again unless it is necessary to remove the lamp bulb or replace it.

The greatest care should be taken to see that the battery is not left on when the lamp is not in use for signalling.

The three spare cells are not active, and should be made so as directed on the labels on the cells before being connected up for use.

(iv) To replace new bulb.—Lift the lid of live cell compartment; withdraw the aluminium cylinder containing the reflector about half way; loosen clamping nut, and withdraw the complete lampholder, which slides in a groove in the aluminium cylinder; put in a new bulb, and replace.

(v) Great care should be taken not to disturb the packing at the back of the reflector. Should the screw back (or bayonet-jointed back) become loose, the felt packing (or cotton wool) will move, causing the reflector to be thrown out of alignment. Under such circumstances it is almost impossible to align the lamp, except at night when the beam of light can be seen.

PROTECTION. (Continued from page 1)

there are serious objections to the indiscriminate use of this system in front of an outpost line.

The range of an infantry soldier is so limited that the additional warning they could give can be of but little value. The fact that patrols are in front lessens the sense of responsibility of the sentries in a fixed observing line, and also causes doubt as to whether any person or party approaching the line is an enemy

or a patrol returning. Any doubt of this kind is sure to lead to a false alarm or unnecessary preparation. At night time it leads to the risk of patrols being shot down by their own men.

If the country is suitable, cyclist patrols may render good service by day, and by night, if patrolling is absolutely necessary. They have an advantage over infantry patrols owing to their silence and the swiftness of movement which the cycle confers.

When on the march the following method is convenient for ascertaining whether a certain part is, or is not, occupied by the enemy. The system consists of employing a line of scouts only, without any supports. It is suitable for patrolling in those directions in which the presence of the enemy, although possible, is unlikely. The value of this method lies in its economy; a weak line of this kind is just as well able to gain negative information as is a big force.

The system is, however, a difficult one to carry out practically, to ensure smooth working. The exact details of procedure must be laid down beforehand, and those who are to take part in it must have a clear knowledge of their duties.

The first essential is, that there shall be frequent communication all along the line, and for this purpose the system of proceeding by stages must be adhered to. The stages should be short, and at each general halt; every scout should communicate with the scout on his right or left. The report "All clear as far as —" should be passed from flanks to the centre, for the information of the Commander of the party, and the messengers who pass on this information from scout to scout should carry back the Commander's order, "Move on at — o'clock."

The chief characteristic of the above system is its uncertainty. The leader of such a patrol can never be sure that his expedition, however skillfully conducted, will not be futile. In the first place he may have been given an unreasonable task such as a passage through a country swarming with hostile inhabitants. There is secondly the consideration that patrols have to depend in a great degree for their success on the faults of the enemy's protective system and it cannot be expected that the enemy will be always obliging in this respect. There will always be faults, no doubt, but sometimes they are not easy to find. Lastly, there is the fortune of war; some accident may spoil the most promising enterprise, or block the most skilful design. For any of these reasons a patrol may fail through no fault of its leader.

One of the most important measures for protection is the organisation of rapid communications. Most important of all is the preparation of simple and unmistakable instructions as to the manner in which the duty is to be carried out, so that officers and men will understand and appreciate their duties and responsibilities.