

# AN T-ÓGLÁC

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## UNFOUNDED INFERENCES.

In this exceptionally difficult and critical time when the Army has suddenly to shoulder the entire responsibility of maintaining peace and social order in Ireland it is inevitable that a few incidents of an unpleasant and undesirable nature should occur in which Volunteers were concerned. There has been a tendency in outside quarters to exaggerate and distort the significance of these incidents and to deduce from them unfavourable opinions of the discipline and spirit of Volunteers generally. These inferences are entirely unfounded. The officers and men of the Irish Republican Army, faced with a most difficult, arduous and critical responsibility at a time of political and social unrest have, on the whole, behaved with a restraint, prudence, zeal and discipline which are admirable.

No man is infallible; mistakes may sometimes be made, but those in military control of the Irish Republican Army have no reason to be dissatisfied with the spirit shown generally by the officers and men of the Army in the performance of their arduous duties at the present time.

## GENERAL NOTES

The attention of the Director of Organisation has been brought to the fact that in a number of instances Volunteers who have recently been released from internment camps or prisons have not reported for duty to their units. It should be clearly understood that failure to do this will be regarded as an act of desertion. Officers commanding units will take immediate steps to have this instruction brought under the notice of such ex-prisoners.

At the same time attention is drawn to a recent circular which instructed that no officer who had been released should be re-instated unless he could give satisfactory evidence that he had done his best to evade arrest. This instruction has unfortunately been misinterpreted and the spirit intended misconstrued to such an extent that in a number of cases victimisation has taken place. The right of appeal to G.H.Q. against local decisions is not denied in such cases.

## CYCLIST PATROLS.

Common sense rather than rules must guide the conduct of a reconnoitring detachment or patrol. The leader may employ mobility, deception, force, or extreme boldness in order to obtain information, safety may be sought in mobility, secrecy, or wise choice of routes. But to obtain the required information it is essential that the leader must not be drawn away from his mission.

The actual reconnaissance must as a rule be made by the leader of a patrol, the men who accompany him being employed to provide his protection and to transmit his messages.

The normal method of advance in daylight is to move rapidly from one suitable position to another, feeling the way forward on each occasion by detaching scouts. Advancing in this manner the patrol or detachment is less liable to be surprised and the leader obtains more time for observation than would be the case if the rate of march were uniform throughout the journey.

The general rate of advance will depend on the proximity of the enemy and the nature of the country; when there is reasonable ground for belief that the enemy is at a distance the time spent in searching ground will be curtailed.

Protection should be arranged on all sides, but the commander should keep his men as concentrated as the safety of his force permits. Undue dispersion leads to unnecessary fatigue and to loss of control by the leader. The flanks and rear of a patrol may often be sufficiently protected if different men are made responsible for keeping a look out to each flank and to the rear, both when the patrol is moving and when it is halted.

Information will usually be obtained in the daytime; but, when it is impossible to move in daylight without being discovered, it may be advisable to move by night up to the neighbourhood of the enemy, and to observe by day from a concealed position.

When moving by day, every means must be taken to avoid being seen by the enemy. Scouts should keep in shadows as much as possible by day or night. A bright button or a polished bicycle saddle may disclose the presence of an otherwise hidden patrol.

Small reconnoitring parties should not rest.

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Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
IRISH VOLUNTEERS

## TIPS ON UMPIRING

An umpire is *not* a referee to decide which side is winning; he is (or should be) an experienced officer capable of estimating the moral and material effect of fire. Some umpires appear to conceive that their whole duty consists in counting noses (or rifles) and then sending back the smaller force. Numbers are only an important factor when other factors are equal, and an umpire cannot pay too much attention to detail before giving his decision. The following factors at least should be taken into consideration:

Position of the defenders, siting of their trenches, ranges at which fire was opened, nature and volume of that fire, actual fire orders, discipline and control. Existence of range charts, etc., etc.

The formation of the attack, whether adequately prepared, ground scouts, covering fire. Maintenance of direction and intervals during the attack, proper use of ground. Inter-cooperation and cohesion, etc.

The following golden rules will assist umpires to partially escape the ill-will to which their duties usually subject them:

1. Don't make a decision until you have thought the matter out and heard both sides trot out the old stock lies.
2. Verify numbers, and remember these must be thought of in sections, half-companies, and companies, and not (like cattle) by counting heads.
3. Having made a decision, stick to it through thick and thin. If wrong, you must own up to the error at the pow-wow, but not before.
4. Decide as quickly as possible.
5. Avoid prisoners as far as possible. They should be sent back to rejoin their unit unless they could thus divulge valuable information. You can penalise bad work by inflicting imaginary casualties or by imposing delay. For instance, a full company that has made a mess of an attack could be sent back for a quarter of an hour or so, to reorganise itself and told that it now only has the fighting value of two sections. Do not put troops out of action, but reduce their fighting value, for you want all men to go on obtaining instruction.
6. Remember that the one and only object of manoeuvres is to train officers and men for war, and *not to see which side will win*. The umpire is there to see them play the game according to the rules of war and to penalise them when they don't, so that next time they will not commit the same error.
7. Don't permit argument between two opposing parties or with yourself. Give your decision, insist on it being obeyed, and refer any aggrieved party to the pow-wow.

## CYCLISTS IN ACTION.

The rapidity with which a cyclists can dismount and come into action. the faculty with which a cycle can be concealed, and the fact that it can be left without an escort combine to confer great advantages on the cyclist in moments of sudden crisis when dismounted action is necessary.

1. The question how far from his cycle the cyclists should fight cannot be decided by hard and fast rules.

2. In all forms of protective reconnaissance, under conditions of Hedge Row Fighting, when cyclists use their mobility to acquire early information, they should dismount as close as possible to the place where they come into action. They may, however, have to move on foot some distance from the road, e.g., to occupy a suitable fire position or to outflank a strongly posted hostile patrol; in these cases they must understand how to regain their cycles as soon as circumstances allow.

On the other hand, they must realise the importance of maintaining touch with the enemy, once it is gained. Consequently, men must be trained in leading cycles, and keeping them under cover on the roads as near as possible to the dismounted men.

Cyclists must be taught how to make use of existing cover to conceal cycles from view and fire. Such cover will be still more advantageous if it enables the men to remount without being exposed to fire.

Considerable care and attention are required to bring men in and out of action quickly and without confusion. The following points must be remembered:—

- (i) Cycles must not be left on the roadway where they may impede other troops.
- (ii) They must be kept apart and not piled on or leant against one another; otherwise men advancing or retiring singly will be hampered in their movements.
- (iii) They should be left in the best position for remounting and resuming movement.
- (iv) Each cycle should have a distinctive mark or number.

Small bodies of cyclists engaged on reconnaissance may sometimes find opportunities for making a bold dash on their cycles, under cover of the fire of a dismounted party. Such action is usually possible only on broad, straight stretches of road where the covering is not masked.

Similar action, however, should be adopted on other occasions, such as when the enemy offers little opposition or when time is an important factor, for, if successful, it will not only exercise a demoralising effect on the enemy but will also clear up a situation much more quickly than outflanking movements can.

## INDOOR INSTRUCTION.

### (I) Trigger Pressing.

The first thing the soldier will do, when issued with a rifle, is to pull the trigger. He should therefore be taught at once to press it correctly, and not to pull it. This is indoor work. The instructor will first make sure that all recruits can move; then, after a few remarks on the vital importance of correct trigger pressing, and an explanation of first and second pressure, he will give a practical demonstration, noting especially the following points:—

1. He will sit with Rifle rested on a hard cushion or a sandbag, and his own arms rested on the table.
2. The grip with the right hand is so hard, that the blood leaves the tips of the finger nails.
3. The right wrist is in the firing position.
4. Both pressures are taken with the first joint of the forefinger round the lower part of the trigger for leverage; the action is that of pressing, and not pulling, the tip of the forefinger being pressed round towards the top of the thumb.
5. In actual practice, the pressure is taken as the rifle is brought to the aiming position, and the second pressure after the sights are aligned on the aiming point.
6. The breath must be held while the second pressure is being taken; this is so as not to disturb the aim; in actual practice the butt of the rifle is near the right lung. It also ensures steadiness; on the other hand, if the second pressure is too long delayed the effort of holding the breath will render the fire unsteady.

After this demonstration and explanation by the instructor, the recruit will sit down and imitate. In order to ensure correct pressure the manual recommends that the Instructor's hand should be placed over the recruit's, and the recruit's in turn over the instructor's.

If the recruit has a large hand, the instructor may have to use his left hand. The recruit should not be allowed to do so,

The Instructor will correct the detail according to the order of teaching which he has observed.

### (II) Care of Arms.

It is a sound principle to commence the Use of the Rifle with Trigger Pressing and the Care of Arms. These two lessons will be constantly applied at every later stage of the recruit's instruction.

As a preliminary to the Care of Arms, the instructor will describe those parts of the rifle that need to be known for the purpose of cleaning, e.g., the barrel, lead, chamber; the bolt with the bolt head, striker, bolt rib, gas escape, extractor; the foresight and backsight; nose-cap; bayonet boss; the cut-off; the magazine spring; and everything with a hole in it.

It should be mentioned that when the rifle is in the rack, the leaf and slide of the backsight must be

lowered, and the spring eased; the magazine must not be removed but no cartridges must be left in it; bolts must not be interchanged; the safety catch must be on.

### Cleaning Materials.

The Cleaning materials will then be produced and their use demonstrated and explained—the pull-through; the flannelette, 4" by 2"; the wire gauze, 1½" by 2½"; the oil bottle.

The *pull-through* has three loops and a weight; the top loop is to give more purchase in case of a jab, the next is for the flannelette, and the lowest (that nearest to the weight) for the gauze. Show how to pack it. When it is used for cleaning, the weight must be dropped through from breach to muzzle. Remember also to pull through in one motion, or dirt will collect where you stop; pull through parallel to the axis of the barrel, to prevent cord wear at the muzzle; see that there is no grit on the pull-through and no broken strand.

The *flannelette* should be fixed in the second loop of the pull-through; when used as dry rag, a slightly larger piece should be taken than when used as oily rag.

The *gauze* is for quite exceptional use. When used it is fitted into the loop nearest the weight, one end being turned upwards, the other downwards and folded in tightly; always oil it before using.

† "Just one long pull, a straight strong pull, no other pull will do. A man must never take two pulls to pull the pull-through through."

The *oil bottle* contains Russian petroleum, which leaves a water-tight film over the part; oil should be put on flannelette and gauze with spoon, and thoroughly worked in with the fingers. If too much oil is used, it runs down and clogs the trigger.

### Daily Care.

Whether in use, or not in use, all the parts of the rifle which have been mentioned above, especially any part which has a hole in it, should be inspected for dirt, and should be run over with a rag slightly oiled. Special arrangements should be made for this in all school contingents. And on inspection parades, special attention should be paid to the cleanliness of all parts mentioned.

NOTE:—When not in use, the barrel also should be oiled once a week.

### Before Firing.

Before firing, and also before inspection parades, run a dry rag through the barrel.

### After Firing Blank.

After firing blank, the fouling is "superficial", but the filth left by the cordite is greater than it is after firing ball, because it is not swept out by the bullet.

- (a) If cleaning at once, use a dry rag to remove superficial fouling, then oil; oil again on the following day; and then oil at weekly intervals when the rifle is not in use.

- (b) If not able to clean thoroughly at once, run through with an oily rag, and clean thoroughly as above as soon as possible.
- (c) If the rifle is left without attention, the superficial fouling will turn to rust, and the exceptional use of the gauze will be required. When neglect of this kind entails use of gauze, see that it is very well oiled; pull-through three or four time; then use a dry rag; then oil. If paraffin is used for removing rust, dry all out with the flannelette before oiling.

**After Firing Ball.**

After firing ball, there is less superficial deposit of the products of combustion; the fouling is merely "internal", caused by the forcing of gas or other harmful material into the pores of the metal. The pores must therefore be opened with boiling water.

- (a) If cleaning at once, run a dry rag through to remove superficial fouling; then pour five or six pints of boiling water through the bore, from breech to muzzle, using a funnel to prevent it entering the body or magazine; then dry out thoroughly with flannelette; then stand to cool; then oil every other day for ten days; afterwards oil once a week when the rifle is not in use.
- (b) If you cannot clean immediately after firing, run an oily rag through at once, and then proceed as above as soon as possible.
- (c) If the rifle is left without attention, rust will form, and the gauze must be used as in "After Firing Blank."

**Erosion.**

Erosion is the sweeping away of the steel of the bore through the intense heat produced by the explosion. Nothing will prevent erosion. Portions of the barrel become rough, and rust is more readily formed. A rifle so affected, even when not in use, will require more frequent oiling, and an occasional pull-through with the obnoxious gauze. Erosion should be distinguished from Corrosion, which is the removal of the steel in the form of rust. Corrosion, as already stated, is preventable.

**Metallic Fouling**

The two ordinary foulings, "superficial" and "internal", may be removed as above; and permanent ill-effects, are generally speaking, preventable. Metallic fouling is a deposit from the cupro-nickel envelope of the bullet, and appears as a white streak on the lands and a roughness on the edges of the grooves. Where suspected it should be reported for special treatment to the Armourer.

**22 Rifles and Aiming tubes.**

These should be frequently pulled through with a dry rag, certainly after every 20 rounds; aiming tubes should be frequently inspected to see that they are secure.

**CYCLIST PATROLS** (Continued from page 1)

but should remain scattered, so that all will not be captured if suddenly attacked.

Halts for the night should be made in isolated woods or lonely farms, which the enemy's patrols are not likely to visit; when farms are occupied the inhabitants must be seized. If small detachments halt before darkness sets in they should change their position after dark. Patrols should be clear of their resting places before daybreak.

No man should carry any written instructions, private diaries or papers that might give information to an enemy.

In the presence of civilians, whether friendly or otherwise, no mention should be made of the direction from which the detachment or patrol has come or of the intended advance; it is often advisable to give the inhabitants false information.

A patrol on finding the enemy should as a rule send in a report and then, unless such action would be contrary to instructions, should follow him up, watching from safe hiding places. Detailed information as to his strength, dispositions, and movements should be sent in as soon as obtained.

If the enemy is not found where he was expected, the reconnoiterer should consider what his commander would require him to do. Negative information should always be sent back.

Although patrols are not sent out with the primary object of fighting, and although they should seldom fight if without it they can obtain their object by a careful use of the ground, it must be clearly understood that on suddenly meeting small parties of the enemy the assumption of a resolute offensive will often be the best course of action.

If a patrol is cut off by the enemy, its members must make every effort to get away, so that at least one may arrive back with the information already gained; when necessary they will scatter, rallying again at the last halting place if no other place has been pre-arranged. Every member of a patrol must take notice of all landmarks and distances while advancing in an enemy's country so as to be able to find his way back; but subsequently, when moving back, he should usually avoid the road by which he came, as it may lead him into ambushes. When in the presence of an enemy, patrols must never cease their attempts to obtain the required information. They must be both bold and cunning, and if stopped at one point they must try again at some other.

During reconnaissances when the opposing armies are not far distant from each other it may often be advisable for a reconnoitring detachment to dismount and open fire in order to engage the enemy's attention, while its patrols move forward to suitable observing points, from which the attention of the enemy has been diverted.