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Small Arms Training

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Bayonet

1937

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GENERAL

1. The bayonet is the weapon of attack for hand-to-hand and night fighting; full effect will be gained only by the collective efforts of platoons or sections. The use of the bayonet, or the threat of it, will often enable infantry to drive the enemy from his position or cause him to surrender. Under such conditions, the use of the bullet must not be forgotten.

2. In an infantry assault, the greatest moral effect will be attained by a steady advance in formation. But, once hand-to-hand fighting begins, it is unlikely that any regular formation can be maintained. Such conditions will often occur during the looser fighting when the enemy's foremost line of defended localities has been penetrated, in unexpected encounters by small bodies of men in woods or confined places, or at night.

3. The object of bayonet training is to fit the soldier to take his place as one of a team, with confidence in his own and his comrades' skill with the weapon, and to instil determination to close with the enemy. The importance of the offensive spirit will, therefore, be emphasized throughout training.

4. It is as impossible to drill men into becoming good bayonet fighters as it is undesirable for those of different physique to adopt exactly the same style. Words of command will, therefore, be reduced to a minimum and men encouraged to develop a style suitable to their size and build, provided that the methods laid down are followed.

Once hand-to-hand fighting begins, it should be the instinctive action of the man either :—

- i. to go straight for an opponent, who may have offered some opening; or
- ii. first to parry an opponent's attack and then immediately to counter-attack.

5. By his own example the instructor must instil a spirit of energy and determination in his squad. During bayonet training all movements of individuals or squads, unless otherwise specified, will be carried out at the double. Words of

command should be replaced by quick signs or signals, preceded by such caution as is necessary. The squad will thus be quickened up to work by eye and ear as rapidly as possible.

6. When considered necessary, the scabbard should be tied on by a loop of string fixed to the scabbard stud and tied round the piling swivel or foresight protectors.

Bayonets may be damaged if they are not sharp or not drawn clear of the dummies when advancing. Dummies should be placed on soft ground.

7. **Competitions**—Bayonet training lends itself to competitions, and, when opportunity occurs, these should be arranged for both individuals and sections.

In framing them, the use of the bullet should not be lost sight of, and it may sometimes be possible to employ the portable equipment, *i.e.* dummies, canvas screens, etc., in conjunction with a 30-yards range.

LESSON 1.—ON GUARD, HIGH-PORT AND CONTROLLED CHARGE

Instructor's Notes

Squad falls in in single rank, bayonets fixed, scabbards on, actions cocked and safety catches applied. Open squad to two ranks, 8 paces apart, and with 5 paces interval.

1. On guard.—

i. Explain that the attacking infantry will bring the rifle into the *on guard* position during movement when about 20 yards from the enemy. The position will also be used when an individual is about to engage in close combat with an opponent.

ii. Demonstrate *on guard* and *rest*.

iii. Repeat demonstration with detail:—

On guard from the *order*.

Take a full pace forward with the left foot, and at the same time cant the rifle forward, adopting a threatening attitude (see Fig. 1).

Rest from *on guard*.

Place the *butt* on the ground without moving the feet.

iv. Practise squad individually and by word of command.

2. High-port from the order.—

i. Explain that this position is suitable for close formation, reduces the risk of accidents in crossing obstacles and can be maintained with the left hand alone, allowing free use of the right if required. It is the most convenient position for the rifle when either the use of the bullet or the bayonet may be suddenly required, such as in attacking under cover of a smoke screen.

ii. Demonstrate with detail:—

Bring the rifle to a diagonal position across the body, grasping it as in the *on guard* position (see Fig. 2).

iii. Practise squad individually and by word of command.

3. High-port from on guard.—

- i. Demonstrate with detail. When *on guard* at the halt, raise the rifle to the *high-port* position; at the same time bring up the rear foot level with the other.
- ii. Practise squad by word of command.

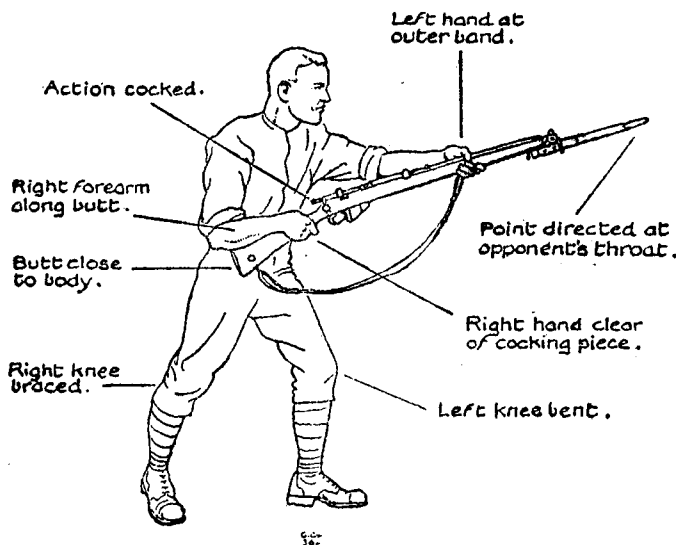


Fig. 1.—On guard.

iii. Explain how ranks will pass one another, *i.e.* right shoulder to right shoulder.

4. Practise squad *on guard* and *high-port* both in quick time and at the double in single rank extended to two paces.

5. The controlled charge.—(Scabbards on.)

- i. With squad in single rank extended to two paces, instructor explains exercise and object, *i.e.* to practise men working as a team.

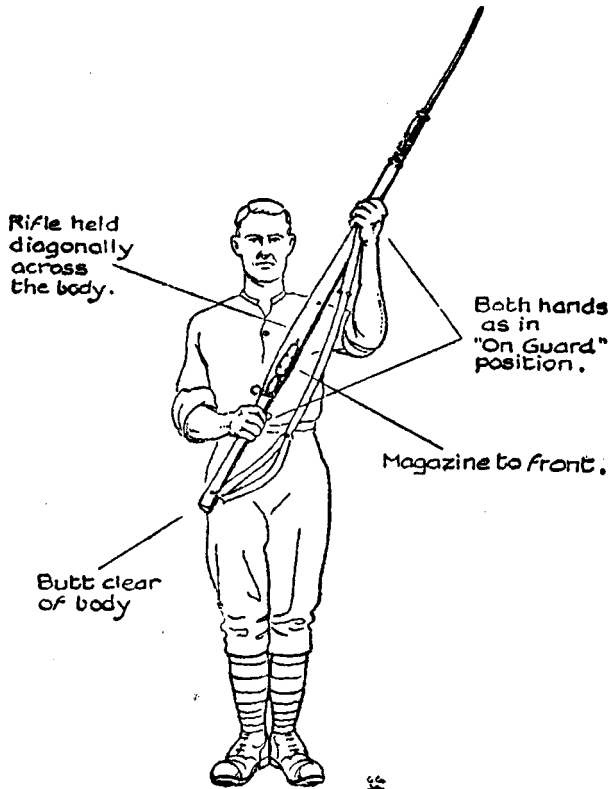


Fig. 2.—The high-port.

- By prearranged signal, squad advances at a steady double at the *high-port* towards the instructor, who places himself about 80 yards away to the front.
- iii. When about 20 yards from the instructor, squad assumes the *on guard* position and *charges*.
 - iv. Instructor halts squad and gives a fire order.

Instructor's Notes

Emphasize—

- i. *Control while advancing steadily at the high-port.*
- ii. *Keeping touch with men on right and left.*
- iii. *Dash and determination during the last 20 yards.*
- iv. *Resumption of control and opening of fire after completion of charge.*

LESSON 2.—THE POINT

Instructor's Notes

Stores. Rifles and bayonets ; standing dummies.

Form squad in two ranks about 10 yards from and facing dummies. Each file covers off a dummy. Scabbards off.

Points will first be carried out with pauses, each action being distinct, e.g. At the throat (a pause) Point (a pause) Withdraw.

As progress is made, the pause between the point and withdrawal should be shortened until the men reach a stage when they withdraw, and come on guard directly after making the point without further word of command, a position being assumed on the left side of the dummy in readiness for meeting another opponent.

To obtain direction quickly they should sometimes be made to point at two or more parts of the body, e.g. At the throat, then At the right groin—Point. For the purpose of direction, right or left will be considered to be the right or left of the man pointing.

1. The point.—

- i. With squad assembled on right of dummies, call out one man and indicate vulnerable parts of the body, e.g., throat, right and left breast, stomach, right and left groin, kidneys. Inform squad that the *point* will generally be made on the move and should be delivered against an opponent at a range of about four or five feet. A penetration of two or three inches is effective. For purposes of instruction this lesson is first taught in a stationary position.
- ii. Demonstrate *point* and *withdraw*.
- iii. Repeat demonstration with detail :—
 - (a) Grasping the rifle firmly, deliver the point from the *on guard* position, the weight of the body pressed well forward with the fore part of the right foot, the heel being raised (see Fig. 3).

The power of a *point* is derived from the right arm and rear leg, with the weight of the body

behind it; the left arm is used to direct the point of the bayonet.

The rifle will never be drawn back to make a *point*; the impetus of the body and the forward punch of the arms supply the necessary force to penetrate. Unless the rifle is firmly gripped, it is liable to injure the hands.

- (b) Draw the rifle straight back until the bayonet is clear, and come *on guard* (see Fig. 4).

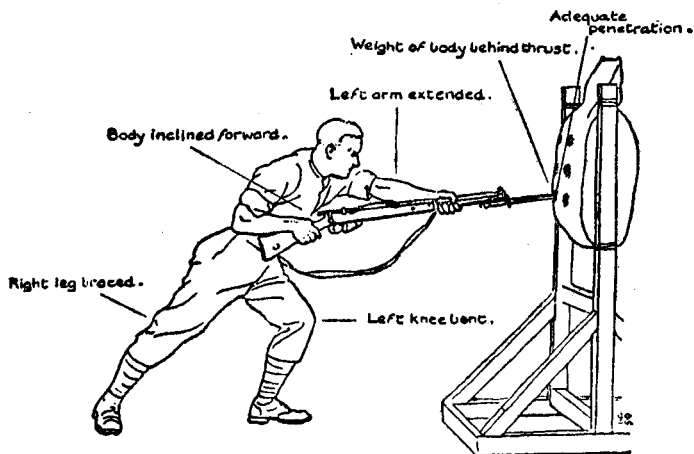


Fig. 3.—The point.

2. Practise as follows :—

i. **Front rank—On guard.**

Rank place themselves in front of dummies.
Check correct distance.

“ *At . . . point and remain—Point* ”.

“ *Withdraw and remain—Withdraw* ”.

“ *On guard* ”.

ii. “ **Pass through** ”.

Pass through dummies in *on guard* position.
After clearing dummies, come to *high-port*, and, when about 10 yards from dummies, halt, turn about and rest.

iii. Repeat for rear rank and then for whole squad without pauses.

3. The point, advancing rear foot.

- i. Explain that the *point* will normally be delivered when advancing.
- ii. With squad on right of dummies, demonstrate the point, advancing rear foot.

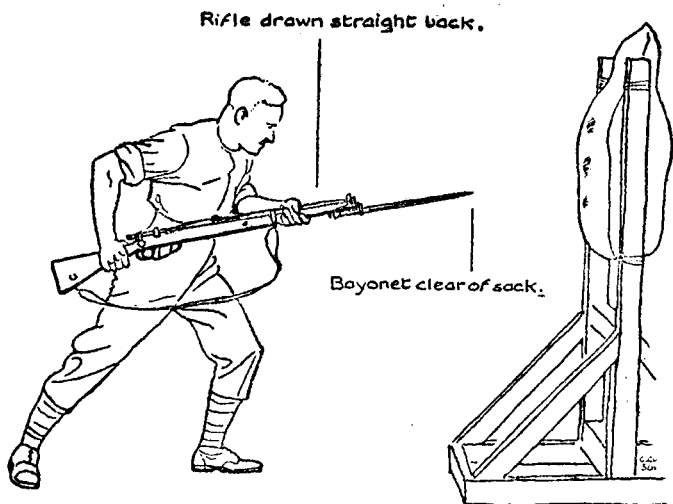


Fig. 4.—The withdrawal from the point.

iii. Repeat demonstration with detail. This is the same as a stationary *point*, except that the rear foot is brought forward as the *point* is delivered. If a strong withdrawal is required, the left hand may be slipped up the rifle to assist. This applies to all *points* stepping in or advancing.

4. Practise as follows :—

- i. "*Front rank—On guard*". Check distance.
"*At . . . point and remain—Point*".
"*Withdraw and remain—Withdraw*".
"*Pass through*".

- ii. Repeat for rear rank.
- iii. Repeat without pauses.

5. The point at the walk or double.

- i. Instructor explains that the *point* may be delivered with either foot forward or by jumping in, whichever is most natural to the man.
- ii. With squad on right of dummies, demonstrate *point* at the walk.
- iii. Practise squad at the walk and at the double.

LESSON 3.—TWO POINTS

Instructor's Notes

Stores.—Two rows of standing dummies—back row placed about a foot in rear and to the left flank of front row.
Ground dummies.

Squad on the right side of dummies.

1. Two points.

- i. Explain that *two points* would be used when meeting two opponents in quick succession, and that occasions may arise in which a man will have to deliver a *second point* from the *withdraw* position, as time and room will not allow the rifle to be brought to the *on guard* position after the first point.
- ii. Demonstrate *two points*.
- iii. Repeat demonstration with detail. Deliver a *point* advancing at the walk, and remain in the *withdraw* position; direct the point of the bayonet on to the second opponent, deliver a *point* and *pass through*.

2. Practise at the walk.

- i. " *Front rank—On guard* ".
" *At the centre—Point—Withdraw and remain—Point* ".
" *At the . . . point* ".
- ii. Repeat for rear rank.
- iii. Practise without pauses and at the double.

3. Pointing at ground dummy.

- i. Explain that, in order to avoid accidents, the feet must be clear of the dummy when the *point* is made. To assist withdrawal, the left foot will be placed on the dummy close to the bayonet (see Fig. 5).
- ii. Demonstrate :—*Point* at ground dummy.
- iii. Practise squad, advancing the rear foot and at the walk.

4. Further practice at the double at ground and standing dummies placed at irregular distances apart and arranged so as to present a variety of targets, the relative positions of the dummies being frequently changed.

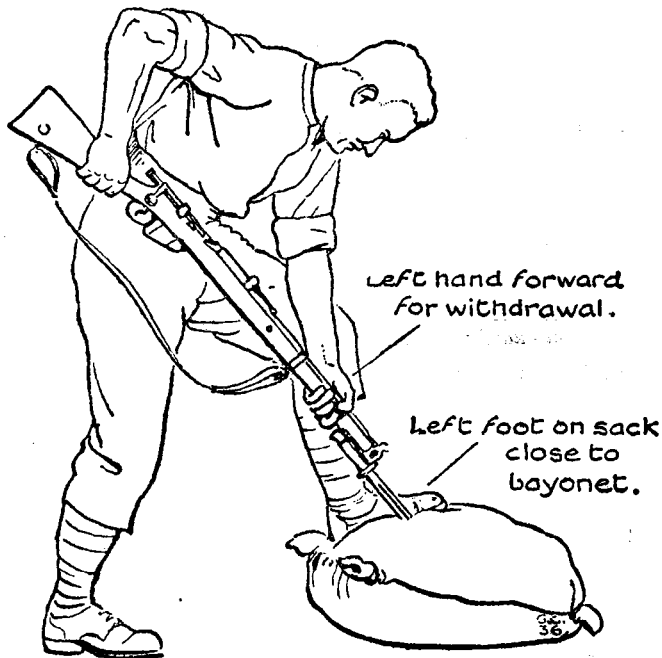


Fig. 5.—The withdrawal (using foot).

LESSON 4.—THE TRAINING STICK

Instructor's Notes

Stores.—One training stick for each pair of men in the squad. Scabbards tied on.

The training stick, efficient instruction in which forms an important part of bayonet training, should always be used with vigour. The individual using the stick will act as "master" and the individual using the bayonet as "pupil". The value of the practice to the pupil depends entirely on the energy displayed by the master.

For exercising trained soldiers or for quickening up at any period of instruction after the training stick has been introduced, the instructor, by forming his squad round him in a circle, can exercise each man in turn in points and parries, as he wishes.

The training stick should be light and the pad and ring so made as to ensure no damage being done to the rifle.

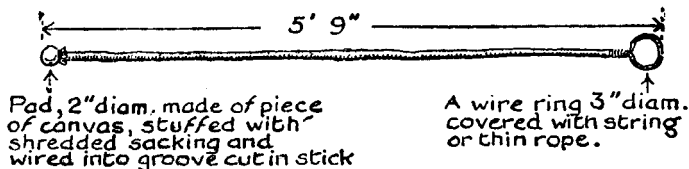


Fig. 6.—The training stick.

1. Instructor calls squad round him and explains how to use the training stick (see Fig. 7).

- i. The padded end will represent the point of the opponent's bayonet. Whenever it is directed towards the man, he will immediately assume the *on guard* position.

The ring will represent a vulnerable part of the body. When it is presented, an advancing point will be made at it.

- ii. The method of holding the stick is as follows:—With the padded end forward, adopt the *on guard* position, the right hand about one foot from the ring. To present the ring upright for a *point*

withdraw the left arm until it is close to the body and at the same time place the ring to the right, or alternatively withdraw the left arm as before and at the same time step back with the left foot, placing the ring clear of the left of the body. The distance from the ring to the bayonet must be such as will cause the man to make an *advancing point*.

- iii. This method of using the stick ensures that the position of the hands need never be changed, no matter what action is being practised, and complete control of the stick is maintained at all times.

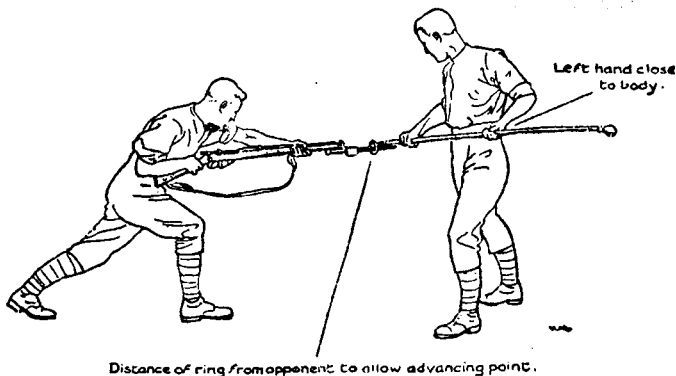


Fig. 7.—Use of the training stick.

- iv. Instructor with training stick, man with rifle and bayonet, both in *on guard* position.

Instructor demonstrates method of using stick for man to make a *point* on the right and then on the left.

2. Practise the *point*, stepping in, in pairs as "master" and "pupil", the instructor, with training stick, exercising any individual that he may select.

3. Demonstrate method of using stick for *two points*. Practise squad.

4. Instructor orders squad round him in a circle and exercises each individual in turn.

LESSON 5.—SELF-DEFENCE

Instructor's Notes

Stores—Rifles, bayonets, training sticks. . Scabbards tied on.

1. Instructor explains that the object of this lesson is to show the soldier measures of self-defence. But it must be emphasized that, when an opponent has obtained a temporary advantage and his attack has been withstood, it is essential that the counter-attack should immediately be resumed.

2. Right parry and kill.

i. Explain :—When an opponent has been the quicker in making a *point*, a *parry* is the means of making an opening for a counter-offensive, either by a *point* or a *butt stroke*.

ii. Demonstrate :—

From the *on guard* position vigorously straighten the left arm, punch the rifle far enough forward and to the right to beat off the opponent's weapon, direct the bayonet on to the opponent, deliver the *point*, *withdraw* and come *on guard*.

iii. Instructor with stick outside man's guard, man with rifle and bayonet, both in the *on guard* position ; instructor warns man that he is going to attack him on the right side, breast high, the stick representing the opponent's rifle and bayonet. Instructor makes a *point* by sending the stick in straight and vigorously with the right arm, not stepping in. Man parries off to right—makes a stationary *point*, *withdraws* and returns *on guard*. (See Fig. 8.)

3. Explain the use of the training stick.

i. Held as taught *on guard* with pad just outside opponent's guard.

ii. Thrust with stick to be straight and vigorous.

iii. Man who is using stick must not step in.

4. Practise squad in pairs, with pauses, and later without pauses. Instructor exercises each man and tests him in the correct use of the stick.

5. Left parry, butt stroke and kill.

- i. Explain that *left parry* must be made fairly wide to beat off opponent's weapon; therefore opponent is inside man's guard. Man cannot use his bayonet; therefore the butt must be used first, then *kill* with the bayonet.
- ii. Demonstrate :—From the *on guard* position vigorously straighten the left arm, punch the rifle far enough forward and to the left to beat off the opponent's weapon, advance the rear foot and swing the rifle round horizontally to hit the opponent's chin with the toe of the butt (see Fig. 9), direct the bayonet on to the opponent, deliver the point, withdraw, return on guard and pass through.
- iii. Instructor with stick outside man's guard, man with rifle and bayonet both in *on guard* position. Instructor warns man that he is going to make a *point* at his left side, breast high. Instructor makes the *point*, not stepping in; man parries off to the left—makes a *butt stroke*. Instructor places ring for the *kill* (see Fig. 10). Man points, withdraws, returns on guard and passes through.

6. Explain use of training stick.

- i. Stick held and *point* made as in right parry.
- ii. Pad will not be placed in position for *butt stroke*.
- iii. Ring placed in correct position for *kill*.

7. Practise squad in pairs, with pauses, and later without pauses. Exercise each man and test him in correct use of stick.

8. Other methods of attack.

Instructor, with training stick, calls out one of squad, who has rifle and bayonet.

- i. Instructor makes an advancing point at man's left breast; man parries to the left.
- ii. Explain that, as the training stick represents his rifle and bayonet, he is in a position where neither the bayonet nor the butt can be used. Both opponents are now inside each other's guard. Some kind of offensive action is necessary, and the exact nature of this will depend on the openings offered by the opponent; but, whatever action is taken, it must

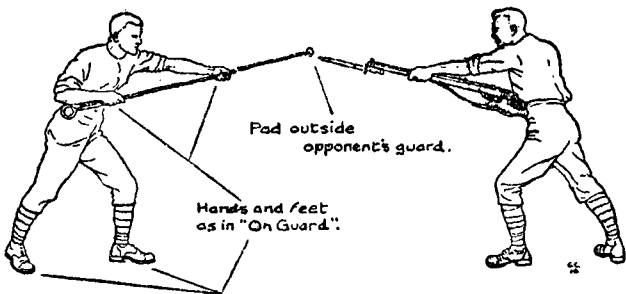


Fig. 8.—Use of the training stick—Position for teaching parries.

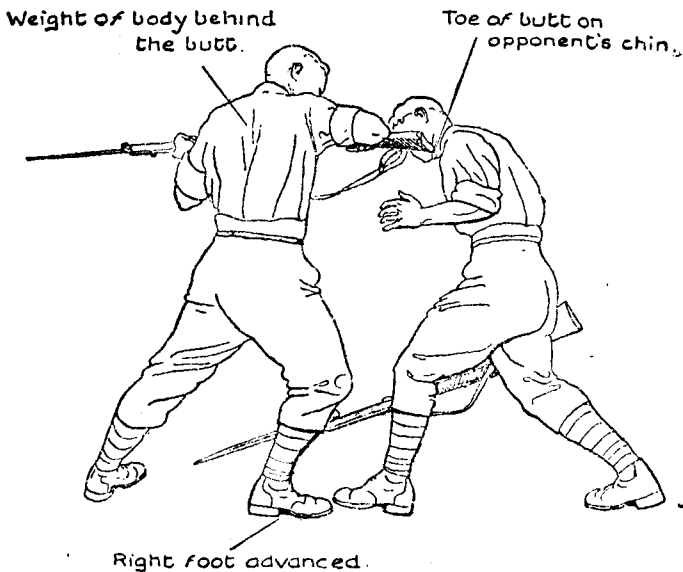


Fig. 9.—The butt stroke.

be instinctive, rapid and energetic. Instructor will suggest the following: Closing with the opponent and strangling him, striking him with the fists, tripping and pushing him over, kicking him with either foot or knee, etc. These measures will not be practised.

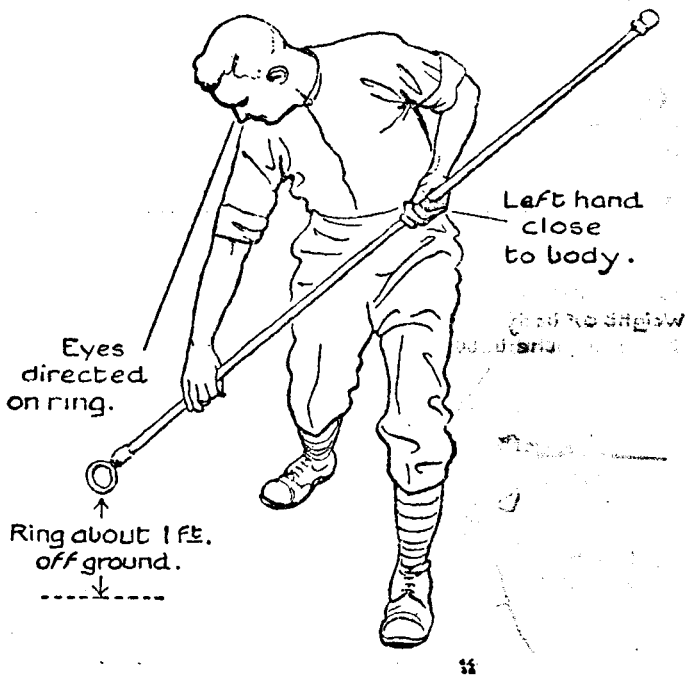


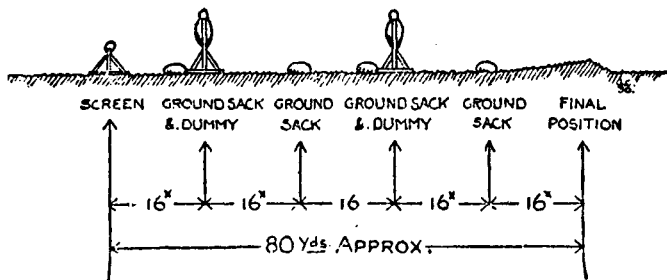
Fig. 10.—Ring in position for kill.

LESSON 6.—ASSAULT PRACTICE

1. The **assault practice** will approximate as nearly as possible to the conditions of actual fighting. The men should begin the assault or close combat from a trench or screen, or from behind a bank or wall, as well as from the open.

During the elementary stages it is advisable to use a well-defined enemy position as the objective, with firm ground over which the attacking sections may advance. During the later stages of training, however, sections will be practised to assault over broken ground.

BAYONET ASSAULT COURSE



The assault practice is not a tactical exercise, but in carrying it out the following points will be observed:—

- i. Fire should invariably precede and follow movement.
- ii. All members of the attacking party will leave the trench, or rise from cover, simultaneously.
- iii. The first stage of the advance will be at a steady double—not faster than the pace of the slowest man. Each man as he advances should select an opponent to kill and act with determination to do so.

2. Such an advance has a decided moral effect on the enemy, ensures a degree of cohesion on contact, and allows the assaulting party to reach its objective without undue exhaustion. If the final rush is allowed to develop without control, the moral

effect is lost, and the defenders may be given time to dispose of their opponents in detail.

The actual "charge" will be made over a distance not greater than 20 yards.

As soon as the enemy position has been captured, the pursuit by fire and repulse of a counter-attack will be practised, with or without ammunition according to the type of assault course.