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Bayonet

1942

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GENERAL

1. *Object.*—The sole object of weapon training is to teach all ranks the most efficient way of handling their weapons in order to kill the enemy. Instructors will always bear this fact in mind and will continually impress it upon those whom they instruct.

2. 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 will be encouraged to develop a style suitable to their size and build, provided that the methods laid down are followed.

3. 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. In the assault, troops will normally be encouraged to shout, to raise their own morale and to intimidate the enemy. There will be occasions, however, when a silent assault will be necessary in order to gain surprise. 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.

4. Instructors must appreciate that, while the lessons are designed to be taught in one period, more time will be necessary in order to permit of sufficient practice to obtain proficiency.

5. The trained soldier should be exercised by means of the training stick and on the bayonet assault course. Some periods on the bayonet assault course should be held in conditions of fog or smoke, and also at night.

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

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

The rifle should be carried in the most convenient position and when moving in close formation, the point of the bayonet will be held well up in order not to endanger one's own comrades.

7. Dress for all bayonet training will be battle order.

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

In framing them, the use of the bullet, including firing from the hip, should not be lost sight of, and it may sometimes be possible to employ the portable equipment, i.e. dummy enemy, etc., in conjunction with a 30 yds. range. Equipment can also be improvised.

9. *Improvisation.*—Should normal training stores not be available, the standing and ground dummy enemy can be improvised by filling a sandbag, etc. tightly with grass. A stone should be placed in each corner of the sandbag and the four corners tied tightly to a bundle of faggots.

The sandbag can either be tied to a tree or post or laid on the ground. A training stick can be improvised by cutting a forked stick about 5½ ft. long from a hedgerow or tree and by trimming as necessary. A piece of string, if required, can be tied across the jaws of the fork to complete the ring Rags, etc., can be used to form the pad at the other end.

10. *Preliminary arrangements and safety precautions.*—At the commencement of all bayonet training lessons the instructor will inspect rifles, pouches, and drill cartridges. Slings will be loosened. The instructor will order "Without drill cartridges—load." Safety catches will be left forward.

LESSON I. ON GUARD, HIP FIRING, AND CONTROLLED CHARGE

Instructor's Notes.—Before teaching this lesson the squad must have been taught Lesson 7, Pamphlet No. 3.

Stores.—Standing Dummy Enemy.

Preliminary arrangements—see General, para. 10.

Open squad to two ranks eight paces apart, and with five paces interval. Scabbards off.

1. *Explain.*—The bayonet is still one of the primary weapons of the infantryman, since experience has shown that even in mechanized warfare the time almost invariably arrives when hand to hand fighting develops. Such conditions often occur when dealing with airborne troops, or when the enemy's foremost positions have been penetrated, and in unexpected encounters with small parties in woods, villages, and confined spaces, and at night. For this type of fighting, the bayonet, in the hands of a skilled and determined fighter, is often the decisive weapon.

The rifle should be carried in the most convenient position according to the country being traversed.

The object of bayonet training is, firstly, to make the man confident in his own ability to kill with the bayonet, and secondly, by means of collective exercises, to train the section or platoon to work together as a team.

2. On guard

i. Explain: Assaulting infantry will bring the rifle to the "on guard" position when nearing the enemy.

ii. Explain and demonstrate, squad imitating:—

Take a full pace forward with the left foot and at the same time bring the rifle up to a natural fighting position.

The main points to remember are as follows:—

Grip the rifle firmly, with the left hand about the



FIG. 1.—ON GUARD

outer band and the right hand on the small of the butt clear of the cocking piece. The butt of the rifle must be held firmly against the side of the body, in order that the man's whole weight is used in making the point. Concentrate on the opponent and adopt a threatening attitude (see Fig. 1). When ordered to "rest" place the butt between the feet.

iii. Practise squad by word of command and signal.

iv. With squad in single rank and two paces interval, practise at the walk and double over rough ground.

3. *Hip firing*

i. Explain, with squad on right of the dummy enemy, that during an advance and when about 10 yds. from the enemy, it may be advisable to fire a bullet. Such action enables the attackers to deliver an effective blow before getting close enough to kill with the bayonet.

ii. Explain and demonstrate :—

Instructor comes "on guard" 10 yds. from dummy enemy. When in the "on guard" position the muzzle will already be pointing at the opponent, and if about to fire the finger will be on the trigger. There is, however, a tendency to shoot high; therefore, to fire the round, bring the butt up underneath the right armpit, and then press the trigger. Instantly reload, and return "on guard."

iii. Form squad in two ranks, 10 yds. from and facing the dummy enemy. Each file covers off a dummy enemy. Practise by word of command as follows :—

"On guard"—"Fire".

iv. Practise squad at the walk and double.

4. *The controlled charge*

Squad in single rank extended two paces.

i. Explain :—The object of this exercise is to train men to work together as a team. Briefly explain the exercise and stress :—

(a) In order to maintain control whilst approaching the enemy, the advance will be carried out at a steady double, every man keeping touch with the man on his right.

(b) When crossing an obstacle the point of the bayonet will be kept well up to prevent accidents. (Demonstrate.)

(c) Dash and determination during the last 20 yds.

(d) Every man must instinctively select a good fire position and must be prepared to open fire after completion of the charge.

ii. By pre-arranged signal, squad advances at a steady double, rifles at the trail, towards the instructor, who places himself about 80 yds. in front.

iii. When about 20 yds. from the instructor, squad assumes the "on guard" and charges.

iv. Instructor halts squad behind cover and gives a fire order.

Note.—This exercise must be modified to suit the ground. It will be carried out whenever time permits during subsequent periods, and as progress is made, it will be made more difficult by introducing obstacles such as trenches, low walls, etc.

LESSON 2. THE POINTS

Instructor's Notes

Stores :—

Standing and ground dummy enemy.

Preliminary arrangements. (See General, para. 10.)

1. *The point advancing rear foot*

i. With squad assembled on right of the dummy enemy, explain that the point will generally be made on the move when about four or five feet from an opponent.

ii. Explain and demonstrate :—

Point advancing rear foot :—

(a) Grasping the rifle firmly, vigorously thrust the bayonet into the enemy, putting the weight of the body behind it and bringing the rear foot forward as the point is delivered.

(b) To withdraw, draw the rifle straight back until the bayonet is clear. (See Fig. 2.) Then punch forward "on guard" and pass through.

iii. Form squad in two ranks about 10 yds. from and facing the dummy enemy. Scabbards off. Practise squad as follows :—

"Front (rear) rank—On guard—ready".

Rank place themselves in front of the dummy enemy, instructor checks distance.

"At the dummy enemy—point".

2. *The point at the walk or double*

i. With squad on right of the dummy enemy, explain and demonstrate point at the walk, bringing out that the point of the bayonet is kept on the opponent, and that the point should be delivered with either foot leading, or by jumping in naturally.

ii. Practise squad at walk and double as follows :—

"Front (rear) rank—On guard—one point—at the walk (double)—point".

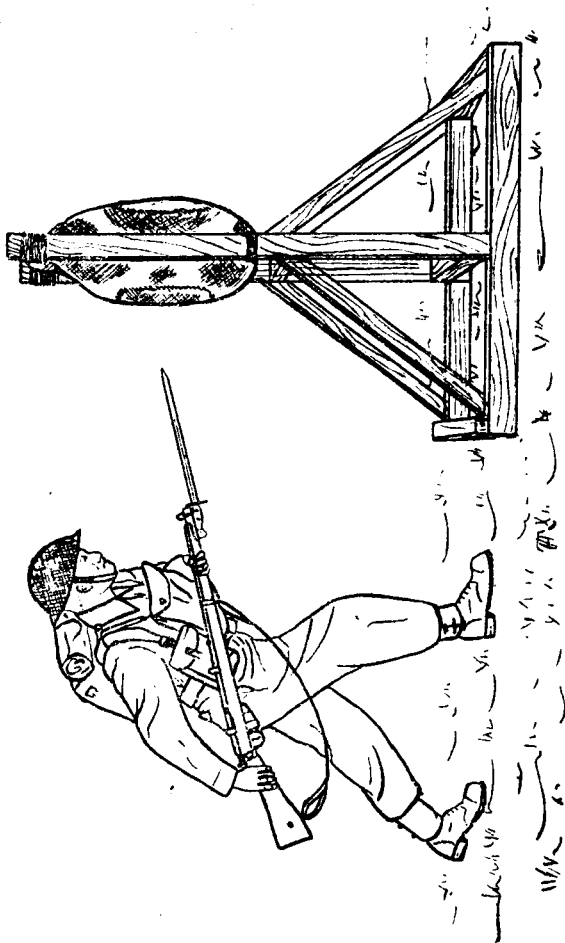


FIG. 2.—THE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE POINT

3. Two points

i. With squad on right of the dummy enemy, explain that occasions may arise when two opponents may be met in quick succession.

ii. Explain and demonstrate :—

Two points at the walk :—

Deliver the first point as already taught. Having withdrawn, direct the point of the bayonet on to the second enemy, step in and deliver the point from the withdrawal position, withdraw and pass through.

iii. Practise squad at walk and double as follows :—

“ Front (rear) rank—on guard—two points—at the walk (double)—point ”.



FIG. 3.—THE WITHDRAWAL (USING FOOT)

4. Pointing at ground dummy enemy.

i. With squad on right of the dummy enemy, explain and demonstrate point at lying dummy enemy, advancing rear foot, emphasizing that the feet must be clear of the enemy when the point is delivered, and, to assist withdrawal, the left foot will be placed on the enemy body close to the bayonet. (See Fig. 3.)

ii. Practise squad advancing rear foot and at the walk.

5. Further practice

Practise squad at the double at lying and standing dummy enemy, placed at irregular intervals and so arranged as to represent a variety of targets, the relative position of the dummy enemy being frequently changed. Occasionally introduce the use of the bullet.

LESSON 3. THE TRAINING STICK AND SELF DEFENCE

Instructor's Notes

Stores :—

Training sticks.

Preliminary arrangements. (See General, para. 10.)

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.

1. The training stick. (See Fig. 4.)

i. With squad in single rank instructor explains :—

At one end of the training stick there is a pad which represents the point of an opponent's bayonet. Whenever this is directed towards the man he will immediately assume the "on guard" position.

At the other end there is a ring which represents a part

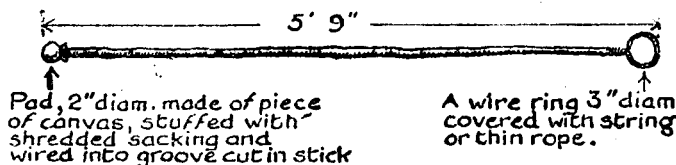


FIG. 4.—THE TRAINING STICK

of a man's body. This will always be so presented that the man makes an advancing point at it.

ii. With squad extended to four paces, instructor explains and demonstrates, squad imitating :—

To hold the stick, grasp it with the left hand about the centre, and the right hand about one foot from the ring, and assume the "on guard" position, padded end to the front. (See Fig. 5.)

iii. To present the ring on the right side for a point, withdraw the left arm close to the body, at the same time place the ring upright to the right. (See Fig. 6.) If two points are required, when the withdrawal of the first one has been completed, take a pace to the rear. To pass through, lower the pad to the ground. To present the ring on the left, withdraw the left arm as before, at the same time step back with the left foot. Pivot on the feet and place the ring upright on the left of the body. Again, if two points are required when the withdrawal of the first one has been completed, step or jump forward a pace. To pass through, lower pad to ground.

iv. Practise squad in using training stick. ?

2. i. Instructor with training stick, man with rifle and bayonet, both in "on guard" position. Instructor explains and demonstrates method of using stick for man to make a point and two points on right and left.

ii. Practise the point and two points in pairs as master and pupil, on right and left. Instructor exercises any individual he may select.

3. *Self defence—left parry, butt stroke and kill*

i. With squad in single rank, instructor explains and emphasizes that when a man has defended himself against an opponent's attack, he must immediately adopt the offensive.

ii. Instructor with rifle and bayonet—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.

iii. Explain and demonstrate :—

From the "on guard" position punch the rifle far enough 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

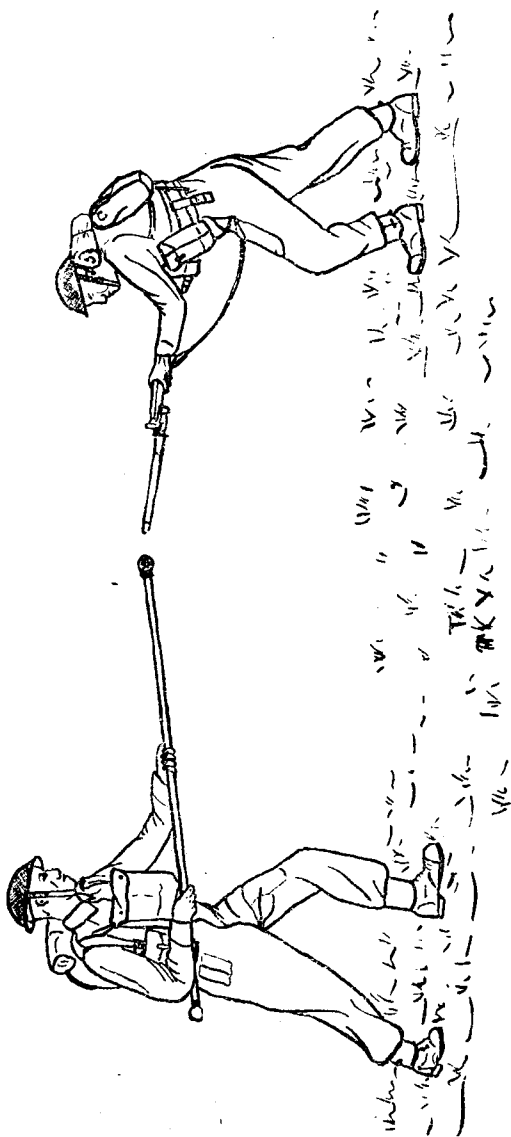


FIG. 5.—USE OF THE TRAINING STICK

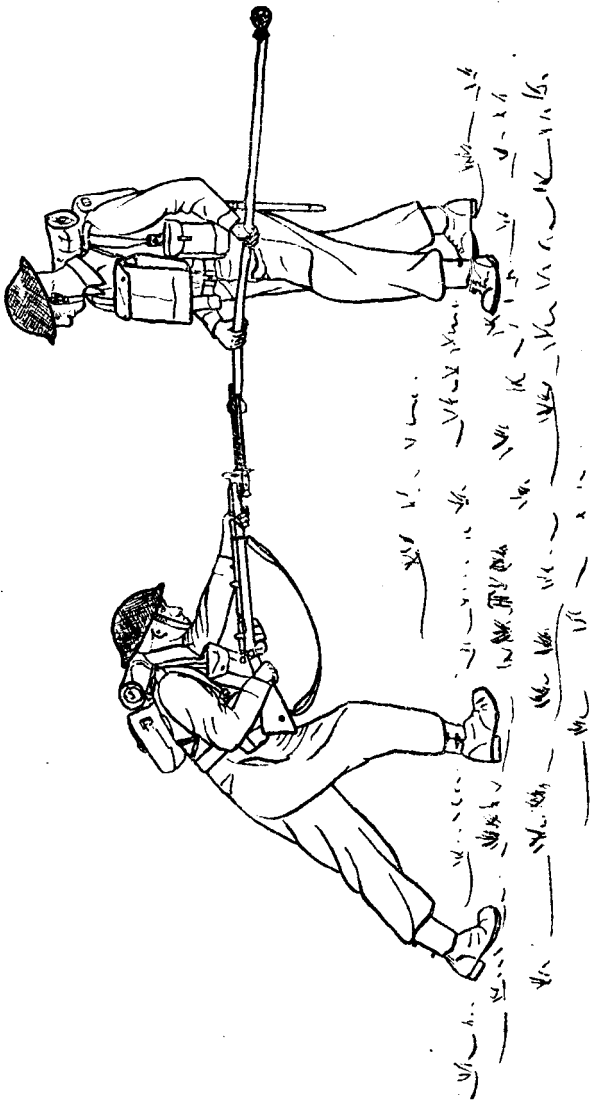


FIG. 6—USE OF TRAINING STICK

(see Fig. 7), direct the bayonet on to the opponent, deliver the point, withdraw, return "on guard" and pass through.

iv. Instructor with stick outside man's guard, man with rifle and bayonet both in "on guard" position. Instructor makes a *point*, not stepping in; man parries off to the left—makes a *butt stroke*. Instructor places ring for the kill. (See Fig. 8.) Man points, withdraws, returns "on guard" and passes through.

v. Explain that should an opponent attack on the right, it will be necessary to parry to the right and point.

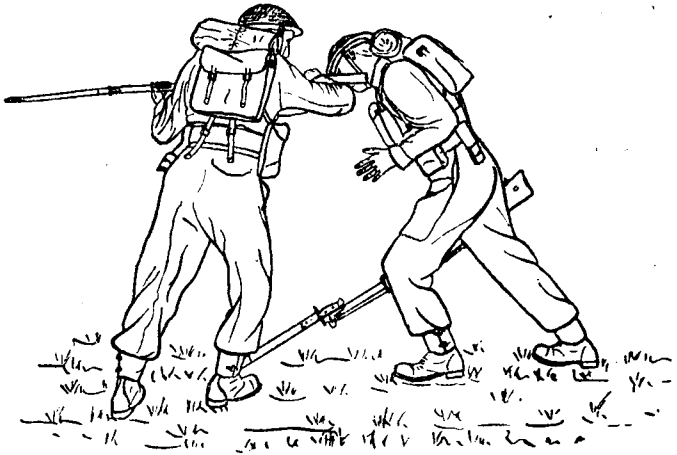


FIG. 7.—THE BUTT STROKE

4. i. Explain use of training stick. Man with rifle and bayonet, instructor with stick.

- (a) Pad must be held outside man's guard. (See Fig. 5.)
- (b) Thrust with stick must be straight and vigorous.
- (c) Man using stick must not step in.
- (d) Pad will not be placed in position for butt stroke.
- (e) Ring placed in correct position for kill. (See Fig. 8.)

ii. Practise squad in pairs as master and pupil, instructor exercises any man he may select.

5. Instructor orders squad round him in a circle and practises each man in turn in complete lesson (except para. 6).



FIG. 8.—RING IN POSITION FOR KILL

6. *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 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.

LESSON 4. ASSAULT PRACTICE

1. The assault practice will approximate as nearly as possible to the conditions of actual fighting. It should be carried out over rough ground, the start normally being made from behind some natural or artificial piece of cover. It is a good plan, if possible, for it to end on a range or area which permits of the actual firing of ball ammunition.

There is no standard layout of assault course. Standing and ground dummy enemy should be placed as desired. The course should include trenches (shallow ones only are required) to jump over and shell holes with dummy enemy. Surprise targets requiring the use of the bullet should be introduced. Obstacles, such as walls, will be included (*see* Fig. 9).

2. In carrying out the assault practice the following points will be observed:—

- i. Fire should invariably precede and follow movement.
- ii. All members of the assaulting party will leave the trench, or rise from cover, simultaneously.
- iii. The first stage of the advance will be at a steady double. Each man as he advances should select an enemy to kill and should act with determination to do so.

3. Such an advance has a decided moral effect on the enemy and ensures a degree of cohesion on contact. If, on the other hand, the final rush is allowed to develop without control, the enemy will be given time to dispose of our troops in detail.

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.

BAYONET ASSAULT COURSE

(Course commences on the bank near "A")

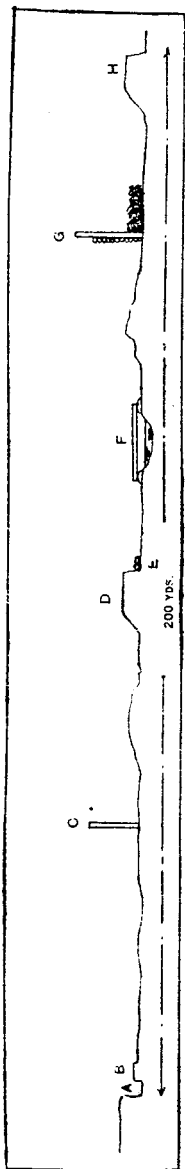


FIG. 9.

A = Shallow trench 2 ft. deep and 7 ft. wide, covered with loosely pegged down jumble of barbed wire.

B = Excavation (roughly piled up) from shallow trench at A.

C = Long stout pole 6 ft. above ground resting in timber forks at each end.

D = Bank sufficiently high to permit an almost vertical drop of 7 ft.

E = Concertina wire 2 coils wide at foot of 7 ft. drop; alternative—a jumble of barbed wire 7 ft. high.

F = Tree trunks lying horizontal across a pond and about 2 to 3 ft. above water and 20 to 30 ft. long.

G = Two poles let into ground and about 6 yds. apart, like goal posts, with horizontal lengths of tree branches fastened across to form a timber wall 10 ft. high. Space between branches to be insufficient to give ladder foothold. Immediately on far side of wall a large jumble of tree branches lying loosely on ground.

H = Position for firing ball ammunition at end of assault course.

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