

# MARKSMANSHIP FOR BOYS

BY  
LTGEN SIR ROBERT  
BADEN-POWELL

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NET

THE RED FEATHER  
&  
HOW TO WIN IT

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# MARKSMANSHIP FOR BOYS

THE RED FEATHER  
AND  
HOW TO WIN IT

BY

LT.-GEN SIR ROBERT BADEN-POWELL K.C.B.

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## INTRODUCTION

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Every boy ought to know how to shoot, so that, if called upon, he may be able to help in the defence of his country.

I hope, therefore, that the hints given in this little volume may prove of value.

I have also included some notes on drill for the benefit of Boy Scouts between the ages of fifteen and seventeen who are fitting themselves to become defenders of their country in time of need. As a distinguishing badge, these Scouts will wear a Red Feather in their hats.

R. S. S. B.-P.

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# Marksmanship for Boys

## CHAPTER I

### MARKSMANSHIP WITH THE RIFLE

STRAIGHT shooting by the soldier is of the highest value, because if he knows he can hit his enemy every time he grows all the more plucky, while the enemy grows more funky. We have seen it in this war; our men say that the Germans are “rotten” shots, while the Germans complain that our men never miss them, and shoot them always through the head! So they don’t like facing us unless they are three or four to one.

You may have to stand up against big numbers when it comes to your turn to take the field; therefore practise all you can of the art of shooting so that you may be able to do it successfully as our men at the Front are doing it now.

### TARGET SHOOTING.

Many years ago, when I was with some Boers in South Africa, we had several shooting matches by teams of British against teams of Boers.

When we fired on the rifle range the British team generally beat the Boers easily. That was when we were firing at fixed targets and at distances which had been marked out; but when we fired the return match out on the veldt against moving objects, at distances unknown to us, the Boers beat our heads off.

Theirs was, after all, the more practical shooting. You do not, in the battlefield, have an enemy so obliging as to stand still for you, at a known distance; he is generally dodging and hiding, and you have to guess how far away he is, and to guess very quickly and shoot quickly.

Therefore, although a fixed target is a good thing for a recruit to learn at, in the way of taking deliberate aim and pulling the trigger at the right moment, when once he had acquired this he should practise as often as he can at moving or disappearing targets as much like men as possible, and at distances which he can only guess for himself.

Many people are inclined to laugh at miniature rifles, as being unlike those used on Service, but at the same time they are most useful for teaching the art of shooting, and the fellow who can use a miniature rifle accurately is pretty certain to be a good marksman with the service rifle.

Besides, at short distances — up to 200 yards — a miniature rifle can wound a man and kill him if the bullet strikes a vital spot. It is not a toy by any means.

Generally one of your eyes is stronger than the other, and everybody should find out which is his strong eye and use that one for shooting. If his right eye is the stronger, he should fire off the right shoulder, and off the left if the left eye is the better.

Most fellows’ eyesight can be developed and made much stronger if they practise their eyes a good deal, especially at such games as “Spotty-face,” which is described in *Scouting Games*. (C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., 1s.; 1s 3d. Post free.)

## HOW TO HOLD THE RIFLE.

### STANDING POSITION.

Apart from eyesight, a great deal of your success in rifle shooting depends on how you hold the rifle.

The standing position as given in the books is a very good one for most people; that is, with the supporting elbow well underneath the rifle, and the firing elbow up in line with the shoulder; but many people fire better — especially at a moving object — if they catch hold of the rifle at the full extent of the supporting arm and draw the rifle well in to the shoulder.

King George is one of the best shots in England at the quick and accurate shooting required for killing birds.

He always holds his gun with his left hand and arm stretched out as far as it will reach.

Colonel Maude, C.B., who is a practised marksman, believes that a great many men would shoot better, especially in hurried firing in action, if they imitated the King, and put their left hand as far along the rifle as possible (see picture).

He advises you to catch hold tightly of the sling with the left hand, just as if you were shooting with the long bow, the right hand pulling against the left arm.

Try both ways and see which give you the better result.

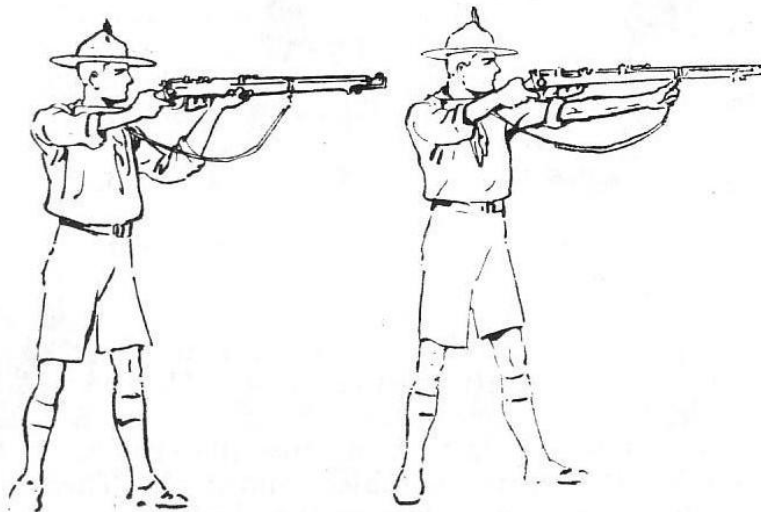
In quick firing standing, fellows often have a knack of throwing the muzzle of the rifle upwards when at the "Ready," and then canting it down on to the object, using the left hand as pivot. They very often overdo it and miss the mark.

The better way is to bring the rifle straight to the shoulder, level with the object aimed at. Then keep you head and eye back from the block.

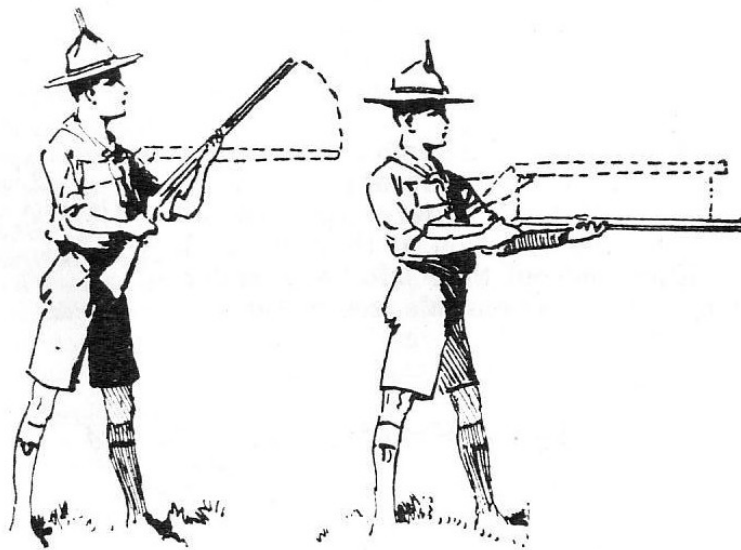
A tenderfoot will hunch himself down to it and wonder why his rifle wobbles and misses the target.



*Hold your rifle with the supporting elbow well beneath it and the firing elbow in line with the shoulder.*



*When firing standing, these are the two best positions to adopt. His Majesty the King always holds his gun as shown on the right.*



*Ready—the wrong position.*

*Ready—the correct position.*

### THE PRONE POSITION.

The standing position would not be much use in action unless you were in a trench, when you would have rests for your elbows or rifle. It would expose you too much to the enemy's fire in the open. Therefore the lying down position is much more used in the field, as giving you more protection from fire as well as a steadier means of taking aim.

But even then you would naturally protect yourself by hiding behind any cover that you could find, and would further steady your aim by making use of any kind of rest that you could discover.

Therefore, when practising in peace time, you should lie yourself as flat as possible when aiming and firing, and practise using rests.

In using an object as cover, a fellow who has no brains puts his head over top of it to take aim; then it doesn't matter if the enemy's bullet comes and takes him in the head; but the fellow who has brains and can't afford to lose them puts his head round the side of the cover, where it is not so easily seen.



*The Prone Position.—Lie flat, with legs sprawled out—right leg in line with the rifle.*

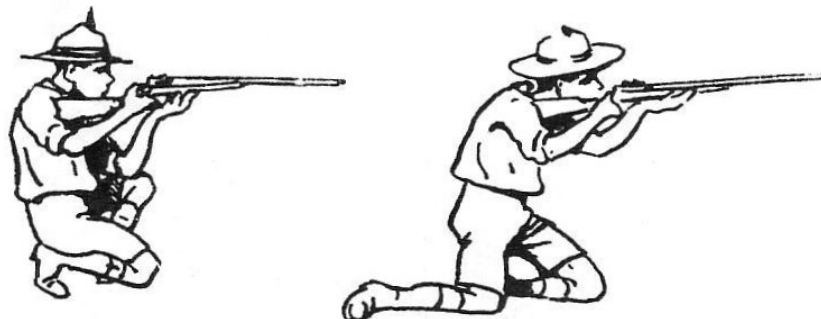


*The wrong way to take cover.*

*The right way.*

### KNEELING POSITION.

The kneeling position is used when you have cover, or when you cannot see far enough when lying. Practise getting into this position, sitting well down on your heel to get steadiness.

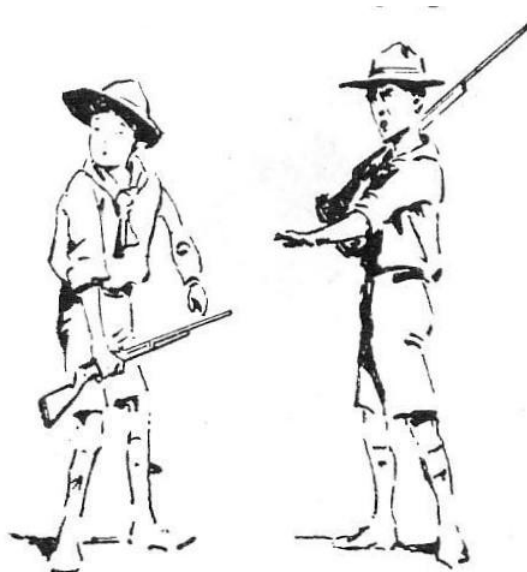


*The Kneeling Position—  
Steady and straight.                      Wrong and wobbly.*

### HOW NOT TO HOLD THE RIFLE.

A sad accident occurred recently whereby a Boy Scout was killed by a comrade. The comrade was showing him how the action of his miniature rifle worked, when the weapon went off and the bullet went through the poor Scout's head, killing him on the spot. In one brief moment the owner of the rifle had brought this horrible shadow on the rest of his life through his thoughtlessness in letting the muzzle of his rifle point towards his companion.

The first thing that a true rifleman learns is to hold his weapon at all times so that it never points towards anyone else. It doesn't matter whether it is loaded or not. No backwoodsman would ever do such a thing, nor would he ever leave his rifle lying about loaded.



*Toby Tenderfoot is very careless with his rifle—he holds it  
with the muzzle pointing at his friend.*



## HOW TO AIM.

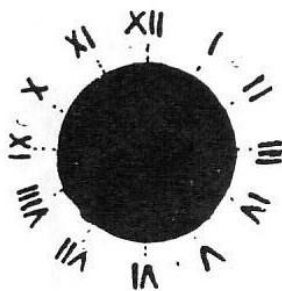
The object of learning how to hold your rifle steady is to enable you to take aim at your target. And on your aim depends your success as a marksman.

The American hunters talk of aiming as “drawing a bead” on your enemy; that is, you direct your foresight (which is shaped like a bead or a thin upright) on to your target so that you can just see it through the notch in your back sight.

Notice the difference between a “true sight,” and a “full sight,” and a “fine sight,” in these drawings, then practise getting one or the other with your rifle.



Try to imagine the centre of your target to be the centre of a clock face, and then aim your shots at “six o'clock.”



*Imaginary clock face round bull's-eye.*

Watch where they go, and correct your aim accordingly; thus if your first shot which you aimed at “six o'clock” strikes high and to the left, you take a fine sight at “five o'clock”: and if you hit with that sighting it is easy to remember and say to yourself when aiming for the third shot: “Fine: five o'clock.”



*Imaginary clock face round your enemy.*

A very important point in aiming is to see that your sights are perfectly upright; if they are allowed to cant over ever so slightly, the bullet will go to that side and strike low.

At six hundred yards this may mean a difference of some three or four feet from the bull's-eye.



*Sight inclined to left. Shot will go low and left.*

### ALLOWANCE FOR WIND.

When the wind is blowing from one side, it will catch the bullet and drive it sideways to some extent from its proper line, and for this you have to make allowance, and instead of aiming straight at the bull's-eye you will "draw your bead" a little to that side from which the wind is blowing.



*5 o'clock allowance for wind  
from right.*



*3 o'clock allowance for wind  
from right front.*

The amount of allowance depends on the strength of the wind and the distance at which you are firing. At a very short distance you would hardly make any allowance, while at five hundred yards you might aim two or three feet to the side of your object.

With the wind blowing towards you, you would have to give a little more elevation, as the wind would be stopping the bullet all the time, although, of course, on a very small scale, since the bullet being end on would give very little surface of resistance to the wind.

Similarly, a wind from behind will be helping the bullet, and therefore you would aim a little lower than if there were no wind.

### ALLOWANCE FOR LIGHT.

On a dull, dark day, or towards evening, your sights do not show up very well, and consequently without thinking of it you will be inclined to use more of the foresight than usual. This will make your bullets fly high. Therefore, on a dark day, or when the weather is *bad*, your sight should be *fine*.

On the other hand, in bright weather you see your sight so clearly that you are apt to take less of the foresight than usual.

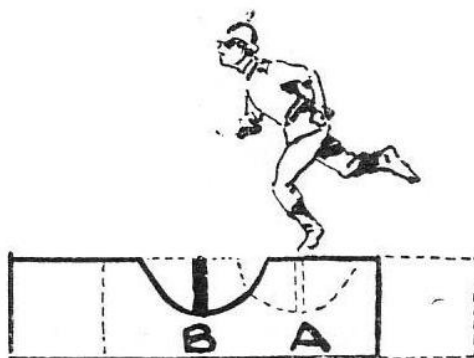
So "*with light up, sight up.*"

A good deal of shooting has to be done by night when, of course, it is most difficult to see your sights at all.

A practised marksman knows pretty well by the feel of his rifle where he is aiming, but many men get their aim by tying a small white rag round the foresight.

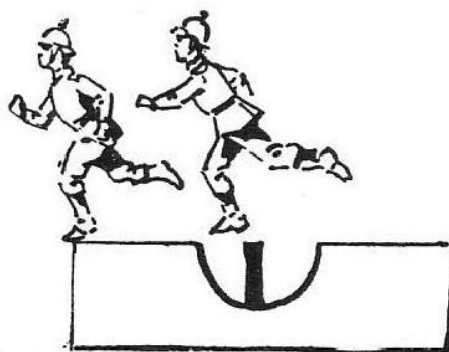
## ALLOWANCE FOR MOVEMENT.

In firing at a rapidly moving object crossing your front, you should aim your sights first straight on the object and then move them in the direction in which it is moving but at a faster pace, so that very soon your muzzle is in front of the object; then without stopping, fire your shot with the sort of feeling that you are sending the bullet along in front of your target so that he will run into it.



*Aim at your man when he is at A and carry your sights on ahead of him to B, and then fire without checking your swing. As he reaches B, your bullet will meet him there. Allow one foot ahead for every 100 yards if he is walking; 2 feet if he is running.*

**B      A**



*If you aim and fire at your man when he is at A, he will have reached B by the time your bullet gets to A. So you will miss him.*

If you aim straight at him and then fire, the bullet will probably pass behind him at the spot where he was a second ago.

A very useful way of learning quick aiming and firing at a moving object is to practise it continually with your stick or staff when walking about by yourself. An old gamekeeper taught me this tip many years ago and I found it improved my marksmanship tremendously.

Frequently aiming with your rifle gets your eye accustomed to seeing the sights and the target along them, and gets you into the way of "drawing a quick bead," which is what you need for good shooting in battle.

But before aiming or snapping your rifle, you must never forget to open the breech; and be sure that there is not a cartridge in the chamber. Every old soldier does this as a matter of habit, but recruits often make fools of themselves by letting off a rifle by accident.

For a man on horseback you have to allow more than for a man on foot, as he is going faster, so:

For a trotting horse allow 3 feet for every 100 yards distant.

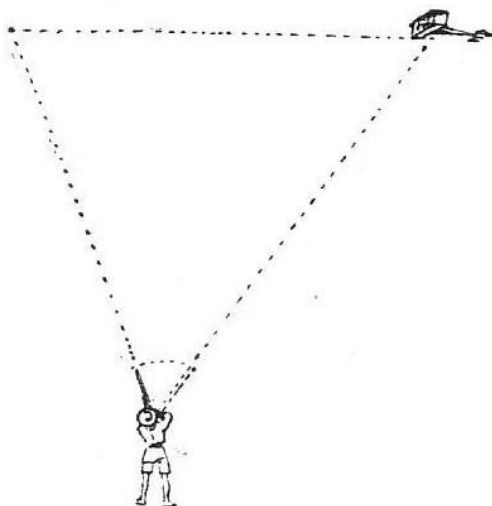
For a galloping horse allow 4 feet for every 100 yards distant, or nearly a horse's length in front of him.

For an aeroplane or airship it is most difficult to judge the amount of allowance — partly because it is so difficult to judge its distance from you as well as the pace at which it is going. The airship, of course, travels slowly compared with an aeroplane.

The airship is going at the pace of a galloping horse.

The aeroplane is going as fast as a fast train.

So you have to make a very big allowance in either case. But you do it on the same principle as when firing at a moving man or horse — aim at the airship first and then carry your muzzle along in the same line well ahead of him before you fire.



*Aim at the aeroplane first, then carry your muzzle along in the same line well ahead of him before you fire.*

*Note for Instructor:— When you have a service rifle for instruction purposes, it is useful and interesting to the pupil if you draw out the bolt and let him look through the barrel. He will see for himself and understand about rifling and the necessity for keeping the bore clean and free from rust, the evils of leading or gas-pits. Also, when, having aimed his sights, especially if they incline ever so slightly to one side, by looking through the bore, he can see where the bullet would have gone.*

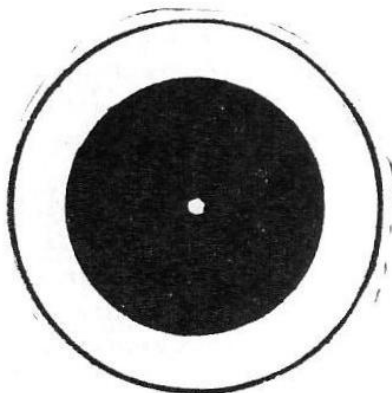
*A certain rough-and-ready method of judging distance can also be taught by looking through the rifle, since a man standing at two hundred yards' distance exactly fits into the bore; at five hundred yards he comes exactly half way up the bore, etc.*

*The Triangle of Error.— For teaching aiming, there is no better practice than that included in "finding the triangle of error."*

*The rifle is placed on a sandbag or other rest, and instead of a target a piece of paper is hung on a wall at a distance of some ten yards from the muzzle.*

An "aiming disc" is used by an assistant. This is a white circle or cardboard, or tin, about an inch and a-half in diameter, on which is painted a black bull's-eye, an inch or less in diameter, and in the centre of this a tiny hole is pierced. The disc is attached to a handle so that it can be held by the assistant on the target. The accompanying diagram can be traced and pasted on to a card and fixed to a split stick handle.

The instructor first aims the rifle at the bull's-eye of the disc. The pupils then look along the sights in turn to see what a true aim looks like. Then the assistant removes the disc after pencilling, through the hole, the position of the paper of the centre of the bull.



*This aiming disc should be traced, pasted on to a card, with a small hole punched in the centre, and fixed to a split stick handle.*

Without moving the rifle, the first pupil then looks along the sights and tells the assistant where to place the disc so that the bull's-eye comes directly at the spot aimed at by the sights. When this is found, he marks the spot with a pencil through the hole in the centre and removes the disc. This practise is repeated three times for each pupil. At the end of his three aimings the three spots which he had made on the paper are joined up and the triangle thus formed is called the "triangle of error."

From it and from its comparative position in regard to the instructor's bull's-eye, it is easy to discern the mistakes made in aiming, such as too full a sight being taken, or the sights not being aimed on a central line. The longest side of a triangle of error should not exceed one-third of an inch.

## CHAPTER II

### HOW TO BECOME A GOOD SHOT

Now, almost anyone can become a good shot provided that he takes a little trouble about learning.

Many fellows think that they will become marksmen straight away, and get disappointed when they find that hitting the target is not so easy as it looks; and they put their missing down to some fault in the rifle or in their eyesight, and give up all hope of ever being a good shot, when probably all the time they have been committing some little fault in their position or aiming which has sent their bullets wide of the mark, but which could easily be corrected.

Successful marksmanship is made up of a number of small points which a fellow has to learn and to carry out when shooting. I have already told you about the best position to get into, also how to hold your rifle, and how to “draw your bead” or take aim. Now we come to the shooting.

#### HOW TO LOAD.

In the first place, you have to be careful about your loading. See that the muzzle of your gun is not pointing towards anyone else; cartridges have been known to go off in the act of loading. The next thing, when firing on the range, is to look towards the target and see that no markers are moving about there. It is wonderful what a lot of markers have been accidentally shot owing to the firers not taking the precaution to look before they aim.

When lying down, or firing from behind a bank, tilt the muzzle of your rifle upwards in order to make sure of its being clear of the ground; so many rifles have been burst by men letting a little mud get into the muzzle.

This has been especially noticeable in the mud of the trenches at the Front, as many as three rifles being burst in one trench in one night from this cause.

Also be careful that your cartridges are clean, not rusty or muddy. This has been a great cause of rifles jamming at the Front.

When loading, and especially in the lying-down positions or behind cover, keep your head down and try to do the loading with the least possible movement of your weapon and yourself, because in the field a man who is well hidden is very difficult for the enemy to discover until he proceeds to load his rifle, and then a flash of sunlight on the moving barrel, or the movement of the man himself, has frequently given away his position to the enemy.

While loading, you should not take your eye off the enemy, and in order to do this you should, by constant practice, be able to load rapidly by feel and touch rather than by sight.

Quick loading is often of the greatest importance, and only comes with practice. The man who has not practised this will probably lose his life through fumbling at the critical moment.

When at “the ready” you will be abused as a Tenderfoot if you put your forefinger on the trigger. The true rifleman does not touch the trigger until he is actually taking aim. This prevents accidents.

## AIMING.

In taking aim, get your foresight first of all in view. Then bring up the back sight until the foresight is seen in its proper place in the centre of the notch or V. Then bring both up in line with the object.

Then fix your eye on the object, and *not on the sights*; this is a very small matter, but it is one of the secrets of success in good shooting.

Draw in a deep breath, and while you are breathing out take steady aim at “six o’clock” underneath the object.

## HOW TO PULL THE TRIGGER.

This sounds easy enough, but lots of fellows do it the wrong way, and spoil their shot accordingly.

Your forefinger should be hooked round the trigger so that the line marking the first joint should be on the front of the trigger. When you have got your aim exact, you do not *pull* the trigger, but you *squeeze* it. You squeeze it until the rifle goes off.

If you pull the trigger, your shot will go low, as your tendency is to drag the rifle down when pulling, whereas a steady squeeze does not alter the aiming.

Many beginners are apt to snap the trigger with the forefinger at the moment of firing from fear of the report and the kick of “recoil” of the rifle. Others, again, are apt to throw up the rifle hurriedly directly the shot has been fired, and if they get into the habit of this they often begin to jerk the rifle before the bullet has left the muzzle, and thus they spoil their shooting.

The best way is to aim calmly and steadily for not more than ten seconds, with the head well back from the cocking piece, and a firm hold with both hands, keeping the aim on the bull’s-eye for a second or two after firing, just as before pulling the trigger. This tends to steady shooting and sure hitting.

*[Note for Instructor: For teaching the recruit how to squeeze instead of pulling the trigger, which is an all-important step towards good shooting, the instructor can with advantage place his hand over the right hand of the pupil and give the right kind of pressure, steadily increasing while the aim is on.]*

## TARGET PRACTICE.

The result of your shooting on the target is nowadays judged, at any rate in the early stages and in some competitions, by the “grouping” of your shots, and not by the number of “bulls,” “centres,” and “inners,” etc., as formerly.

For grouping, you aim every shot at the centre of your target, and endeavour to make each one hit as nearly as possible in the same spot. The whole lot may go wide of the painted bull’s-eye; that does not matter; the point is that they should hit the target close together in a bunch or “group.” The value of the group is judged by the smallness of space that it covers.

The following sizes of groups are used for classifying Scouts as marksmen on a 25 yard range:

*For Marksmen.*— Five shots within a 1½-inch circle.

*For First Class.*— Five shots within a 3-inch circle.

*For Red Feather.*— Five shots within a 4-inch circle.

The position may be either standing, kneeling, sitting, or lying down.

## TARGETS.

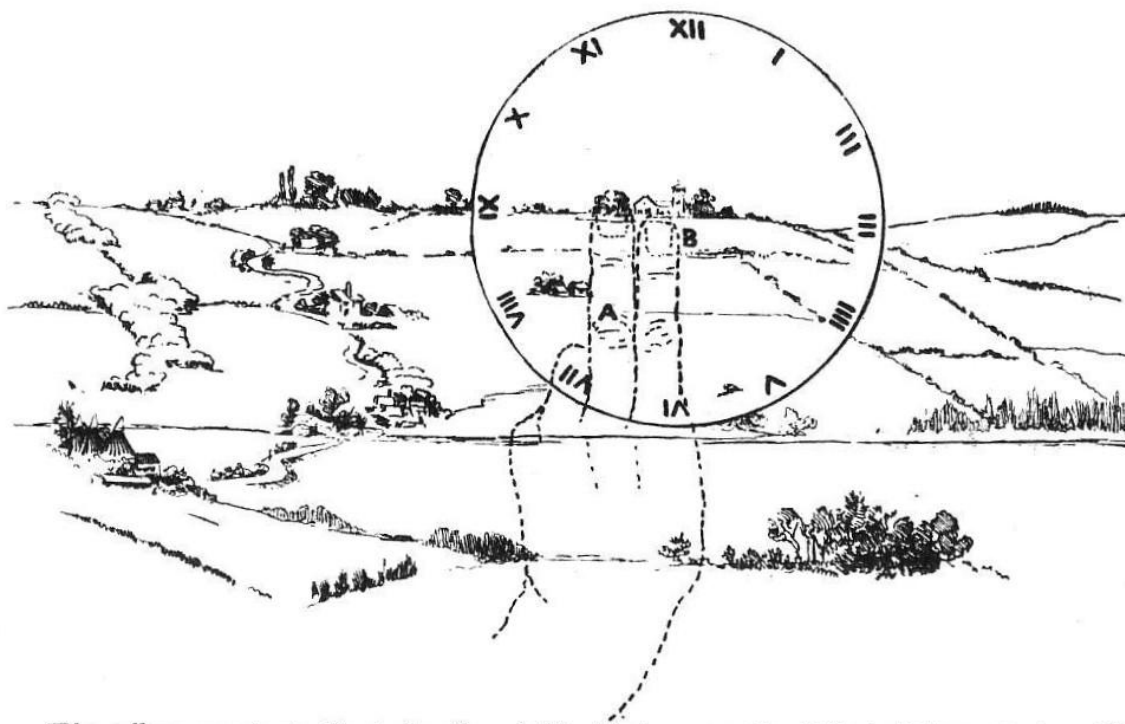
The old-fashioned bull's-eye target, with a round dot in the middle and circles round it, is only used for training recruits and Tenderfoots. After becoming a trained shot a rifleman should always practice at "figure" targets, and those that move or disappear; in this way he gets into the habit of taking quick aim at an enemy as he would really appear, and then in shooting straight and quickly.

In "snap shooting," the figure only appears for four or five seconds, so you have to keep a sharp lookout and get your aim on to him very smartly in order to get your shot off before he disappears and it is too late.

It is only with practice that you can get good at this kind of shooting, but it is just this practice which makes a fellow a really good shot in the field.

The figures at which you fire on miniature ranges are generally made of the exact size that they would look supposing you were firing at them at a long distance away in the field. Thus, although you are only twenty-five yards from them on the miniature range, some of them are made as they would appear at 300 yards' distance; others are a size for 500 yards, and so on.

A great many corps now use "landscape" targets, as they teach you a great deal and are much more interesting to shoot at.



*The officer wants to direct the fire of his platoon on the little building at A. His best way to point it out to them is to say : " You see the tower on top of the ridge (B). Towards 8 o'clock from that (observer's arm extended), a small building (A), 900 yards distant."*

Across the end of your range a landscape is put up. This is generally a picture of an ordinary bit of country, supposed to be at a distance of from half a mile to one mile from you. Grooves are made in the



picture, along which little figure targets can be put up or moved. In the upper half of the picture, that is, in the sky, an exact copy of the scene is lightly sketched out.

In some targets you may fire direct at the figures, houses, bushes, etc, according to the orders of your officer. If your target is an iron one, this is all right, but if it is of canvas or paper it will soon be destroyed by your shots; to avoid this you can put up your sights as if for a long distance, and, though you still aim directly at the figures, your shots will fly high and strike the overhead scene in the sky, and your good shooting will be judged by the "grouping" of your shots.

These targets are rather expensive to buy, but it is quite easy for a troop to make their own either out of wood and cardboard, or by building up natural hills of earth, with houses, woods, and hedges made upon them, and pathways along which cardboard figures can be moved.

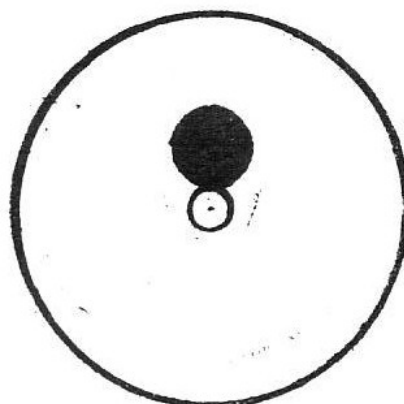
Also, inside clubrooms, where a bullet-proof ceiling can be made, moving aeroplane targets can also be set up for overhead practice.

A valuable bit of practice which can be learnt from landscape targets is that of getting the direction of your fire from your officer or leader.

Thus it is often difficult in the hurry and excitement of action for an officer to explain exactly the point in the distance at which he wants his men to fire, but with a little practice of the "clock face and fingers" system it comes quite easy.

The picture opposite explains the method. Patrol-leaders would do well to practise it frequently when out in the country with their patrols.

*[Note for Instructor: In developing efficiency in aiming, valuable instruction can be afforded by use of the "aiming disc." This is a small disc with a bull's-eye marked upon it, which the instructor holds up facing the recruit at four or five feet distant from him. There is a small hole in the centre of the disc immediately below the bull's-eye, through which the instructor looks. If the sights are correctly aligned on the bull's eye, they will be pointing straight into the instructor's eye, and he can accordingly correct any errors in the aiming.]*



*Aiming Disc.*

*The diagram should be traced, bored, pasted on to a card, and fixed in a split stick handle for the purpose, or it can be pasted on the back of the disc already described for judging the triangle of error in aiming. The triangle of error, if made competitive, gives added interest, and therefore better value for aiming drill.*

*Marksmanship, like golf, depends on so many tiny details being carried out correctly. A golfer has to remember, it is said, now fewer than thirty-seven different points of attitude and eye in driving off the tee;*

*similarly a marksman has to practise at least half a dozen which must be inculcated before he can hope to be an efficient shot. The instructor's main duty, therefore, is very carefully to watch the firer in the initial stages of his first few shots, and to correct faults before they degenerate into habits.*

*He should not watch the target and the result of the shot, but rather observe the firer and such things as the*

*Correct position of the body.*

*Eye back from the cocking piece.*

*Grip.*

*Sights upright.*

*Aim.*

*Breathing.*

*Trigger pressure.*

*Retention of aim after firing.*

*The instructor will do well to make the firer say immediately after his shot whereabouts on the target he considers it has struck.*

*As regards target practices, the landscape target enables the instructor to introduce a great deal of actual field firing instruction into his training, and also affords the opportunity for many interesting and practical competitions on tactical schemes. A number of these will be found in "Musketry," Imperial Army Series: price 1s. "Landscape" targets can be obtained through the Boy Scouts' Headquarters if desired, as well as "figure" targets, aiming discs, grouping rings, etc.*

*A very useful practice for developing quick and accurate shooting is to match one firer against another, or team against team, in firing at small model figures, tiles, or bottles, which represent opponents.*

*The practice should be carried out with a good deal of doubling and jumping and finally opening fire at the word of command at unknown distances. Directly a target is knocked down the corresponding man of the opposite team falls out as killed. It is a practical practice, and never fails to interest both the competitors and the onlookers. It has a wonderful effect in making men good, practical marksmen in the field. Figure targets of exact equivalent size for men at 300 and 500 yards on a twenty-five yards range can be obtained from the Boy Scouts' Headquarters, 116, Victoria Street, London, S.W.]*

## CHAPTER III

### THE CARE OF THE RIFLE

TAKE care of your rifle, and it will take care of you.

The first thing towards becoming a good shot in the field or backwoods is to know your rifle and to take care of it.

I heard of some troops in the trenches in France who had been on duty for hours in the wet and mud. They were dog tired and wanted to lie down anywhere and sleep.

But their officer said, No, their first duty was to clean their rifles. (These had got dirty and, in many cases, all clogged up with mud.)

The men, like good soldiers, carried out their orders, though, as you may imagine, they would much rather have left that work until after they had had a rest.

They had scarcely finished cleaning when there was a sudden rush of the enemy in overpowering numbers upon them.

It was thanks to their rapid and accurate fire that they were able to stop the hordes of attackers, and so to save themselves and the position that they were holding.

Had they lain down to sleep with sticky rifles to their hand, they must have been overwhelmed.

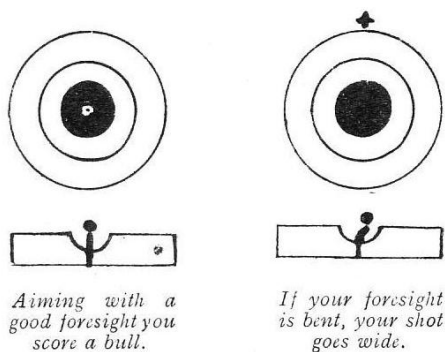
The Sikh soldiers have an expression by which they describe any dishonourable act as being "as disgraceful as having a blunt sword."

With good rifle shots, and especially hunters of big game, it is counted equally disgraceful to have a dirty or damaged rifle. The really good shot and fighting-man takes more care of his rifle than of any other article of his equipment; he is continually cleaning it and oiling it and carefully tending it at odd moments of the day when he has a few minutes' leisure.

It is so easy for dust or grit to get into it and to hamper the working, or for the sights to get blunted or dented with rough usage, and the rifle is at once spoilt, so far as accurate shooting goes.

### RIFLE SIGHTS AND RAW EGGS

"Rifle sights is like raw eggs; you've got to handle them very carefully," said an old hunter. "If you knock 'em, they're done for. If you take care of them, they can be a big blessing for you." This sketch shows you how a rifle that has been badly cared for by its owner can take its revenge by spoiling his shooting.



You know the story of the dog who got run over by a steam roller? His owner, in telling the tragedy afterwards, wound up by saying: "And he was never no more use after that — leastways, not as a dog!"

It is the same with a rifle that has become dented or rusted; "it is never no more use afterwards — leastways, not as a rifle."

Personally I generally carried a little tin of vaseline oil with me, an old toothbrush, and a little piece of very soft cloth, with which to titivate my weapon whenever possible.

Beginners often make the mistake of having their rifle smeared with oil or grease; this is almost as bad as leaving it dirty, since the grease catches any dust that is flying about and soon clogs the rifle as badly as rust would do. You must wipe the grease and oil off again before putting your rifle away or when taking it to the field.

### WHAT IS A "FORE-BE-TOO"?

I once heard a sergeant instructing his men on the subject of rifle-cleaning, and he said:

"You take your fore-be-too and pass it carefully through the barrel, but if it sticks don't attempt to force it, or it will only ball-up and get harder to remove. Take it to the armourer if there is any difficulty, before you damage the rifle, but never forget your fore-be-too; next to your rifle, it is the most important part of your kit."

I was longing to hear what a "fore-be-too" was, and at last I discovered that it meant a little piece of soft rag, *four inches by two*, and he meant that any piece larger than this would not pass through the barrel, and that to keep your rifle clean was a most important thing on service — and so it is.

A "four-by-two" is of course much too big for the bore of a miniature rifle. It is the size to use with the Service rifle — .303. (This means that the width of the bore of inside of the barrel is decimal 303 of an inch across.)

I have known many a man who was for a long time returned as a bad shot at the target, whose eyesight was quite good, as were also his nerves; and it was only after he had made any number of poor scores that it was found that the fault lay with the rifle and not with the man — that the sights were damaged, or the rifling in the bore had been destroyed by having been allowed to get rusty. (The rifling is a groove, or number of grooves, cut along the whole length of the bore. It has a slight twist in it. The bullet, as it passes along the bore, is pressed along this grooving, and so gets a spin on it, which makes it fly all the straighter through the air when it leaves the barrel.

### CARE OF YOUR CARTRIDGES.

It is also of great importance to keep your ammunition clean. Cartridge cases are very apt to get a little green rust on them unless they are wiped with an oiled rag occasionally. This rust will cause them to stick in the breech of the rifle, and they will be difficult to unload after firing. This would cause a check in your rapid firing, and might lose you your life.

At the Front our men have had some terrible experiences with dirty cartridges. In groping about at night in the muddy trenches their hands have become plastered with mud. Then, in fingering their cartridges when loading, these have become muddy. Consequently they have stuck in the breech-chamber or have so clogged it that the next cartridge would not go in, and the soldier had thus been rendered defenceless and unable to use his rifle.

So you want to take care that you keep not only your rifle clean but also your cartridges, and even your hands. And remember it is not only the outside of the rifle that must be clean, but especially the inside of the barrel — bore, breech, and muzzle.

## CHAPTER IV.

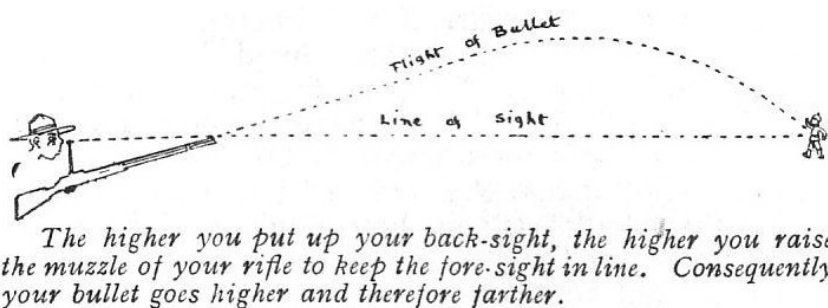
### HOW TO JUDGE DISTANCE

THE Boers' excellence at shooting in the field was largely due to their being able to judge distance well.

You know that when you want to throw a cricket ball or a stone a long distance you throw it well up in the air, because its own weight brings it to the ground in a curve, which will happen very soon unless you throw it well up; and it is the same with a bullet from a rifle.

If you want to fire at a long distance, you point the muzzle upwards and send the bullet well into the air, so that it will go a long way before it comes to the ground.

The higher you raise your back-sight, the higher you will have to raise the muzzle in order to bring the fore-sight in line with the notch of the back-sight, so that for long distances you use a higher back-sight than for shorter ones.



The Zulus, when they first got rifles, learnt that if you put up the back-sight the rifle carried farther. They very naturally thought that this meant the force of the powder was increased, so they put up the back-sight when attacking our troops at short distances, thinking that the bullets would go bang through and kill two or three, instead of sticking in the first man.

Of course, the bullets went over everybody's heads. The Zulus consequently soon lost faith in these new-fangled weapons and threw them away, trusting more to their old friend, the assegai.

On the back-sight are marked the heights to which you have to raise it for the different distances to be fired at, and it becomes very necessary that you should be able to guess very exactly the distance that your target is from you, so that you can put up the back-sight to the right height.

A good deal of fighting takes place at night, so you must practice judging distance at night as well as by day. You should be able to tell the distance away of a house by its windows lit up from within, and of people carrying lanterns, striking matches, etc.

Then, also, it is very important to be able to judge by sound, especially of people talking, dogs barking, carts moving, and by footsteps of men or horses, etc.

The best way to start practising this is for other Scouts to go out, so that you can hear their footsteps and voices. They should pace their distances so that, when you make your guesses, they can tell you how nearly correct you are.

Judging distance is a thing that you can teach yourself by practising it whenever you have a spare minute, or when out walking, etc. The best way is to learn to recognise the appearance of people or things at short distances away to begin with.

Remember that at eighty yards you can just see a man's eyes. At a hundred yards you can see that he has a face, and can recognise him. But at four hundred yards the face is only a tiny dot.

As the strength of people's eyesight is not the same, no regular rules of this kind can be laid down; you must by practice find out for yourself, and then remember what people look like to you at different distances.

There are four usual ways of judging distance.

*The first is to get to know what a hundred yards' distance looks like.*

To do this, you either send other Scouts out for a hundred yards in different directions, and when you have got accustomed to their appearance let them move either farther or nearer, or remain standing, and then have another look at them and judge again. Then you can guess for yourself what objects, such as trees, lamp-posts, etc., are a hundred yards away, and then pace up to them, and see how nearly you were right.

Remember, you have to stretch your ordinary pace to make it one yard. It generally takes 120 ordinary paces to make one hundred yards.

It is a useful thing to measure off, by pacing, the distances of certain objects round about your home or club-room, such as other houses, trees, etc., and get to know the appearance of them and of people, animals, carts, etc., near them day by day. In this way you will become able to judge the distances of objects by their appearance.

When you have got to know pretty well what the distance of fifty yards or a hundred yards looks like, you can take a more distant object, and look at the ground between you and it, and then think how many distances of one hundred yards come in, and so make up your total.

In a short while you will find that you can tell straight off pretty nearly what is the whole distance.

*The second way to estimate distances is to imagine for yourself what is the greatest distance that the object can be away, and then what is the nearest that it could be.*

Thus, supposing you see a man a good way off, you think to yourself he may be five hundred yards away—at any rate he could not be more than six hundred yards—and I am certain that he is not nearer than three hundred yards. So you would halve the distance between the extremes, namely, 300 and 600, and that would be 450.

*Another way to judge a distance is to look out for some object halfway to it, and guess how far this is from you, then double the result, and that will give you about the correct answer.*

That is to say, supposing you see a man two fields away from you and the two fields are about equal width, you think to yourself: "How far is it to the hedge across the first field—300 yards?" Then the total distance is 600 yards.

*Another way is to measure a distant man by the foresight of your rifle.* The "knife edge" foresight on the service rifle just covers a man standing at 400 yards, or a man kneeling at 250 yards. If you pull the bolt out of your rifle and look at the distant man through the barrel; if he is standing and just fits the bore, he is 200 yards away. If he only comes half way up the bore, he is about 550 yards distant.

When you have practised well in these different ways, you will be able to set your sights on your rifle at once and accurately when in action. Then the thing is to fire your first shot at the object and to take care to notice where it strikes the ground, whether beyond or on the near side of the target, and then to correct your sighting for your next shot accordingly.

Generally, in the field your enemy will be lying low, so that, although you may know whereabouts he is, you will not be able to see very much of him. Therefore, in order to judge his distance with a view to sighting your rifle, you must judge on some object close to him.

Remember that objects look much nearer than they really are:

- On bright, clear days.
- When the sun is behind you.
- When looking across water.
- Or across a valley.
- Across snow.
- On a plain.
- Up or down a hill.
- On a skyline.

Things look farther than they really are:

- When you are kneeling or lying down.
- When the enemy is kneeling or lying down.
- When the target is the same colour as the background.
- On misty, dull days.
- In country with many hedges.
- In looking along a street or avenue.
- When there is a mirage or heat haze.

I remember an instance of how a mist will deceive you in judging distance. I was on the staff of Sir John French at manœuvres on a misty day, when suddenly there loomed up before us a hill on which some kind of movement appeared to be going on.

The different officers on the staff each had a different suggestion to offer as to what it was. One thought that it was the enemy's cavalry advancing, while another was certain that it was a battery of artillery coming into action. A third swore that it was spectators.

An imperial orderly was sent forward to ascertain what really was there. The supposed enemy turned out to be a lot of sheep in rather regular looking groups, but the fog had made the hill appear farther off than it really was, and all imagined that they were looking at larger objects than sheep at a long distance away.

## CHAPTER V

### TEN POINTS TO REMEMBER.

FOR becoming a good marksman in the field, therefore, you must practise, for yourself, correctness in the ten following points, most of which I have described in the foregoing pages:

1. CLEAN AND UNDAMAGED RIFLE AND AMMUNITION.
2. CORRECT POSITION AND GOOD HOLD OF RIFLE, with head back from cocking-piece.
3. JUDGE YOUR DISTANCE ACCURATELY: adjust sights.
4. ALLOWANCE for wind, or light, or movement of enemy.
5. AIM, steadied by control of breathing and muscles; keep cool yet quick; sights upright.
6. TRIGGER PRESSING: squeeze, don't pull.
7. HITTING: note the strike of your shot and correct your aim for the next one.
8. COVER: keep hidden when loading as well as when firing. Use a rest.
9. DISCIPLINE: keep calm and look out for orders and signals from your leaders all the time.
10. SOBRIETY: over-smoking, over-drinking, over-strong tea ruins you for shooting.

*[Note for Instructor.— It is a good thing to put out a man or two in hiding as objects to judge distance upon after the first few elementary lessons. The men should appear for a moment and fire a shot and dodge out of sight again.; This not only develops good judging of distances, but also good, quick sight which is an essential thing.]*

## CHAPTER VI

### DRILL WITHOUT ARMS.

WHY drill when we want to fight?

Because you are not much good to your commander in battle if you have not been drilled so as to carry out the required movements quickly and in good order.

In a football match, where would your side be if every man played in whatever part of the field he felt inclined to? Or if he played without knowing how to run, or to kick the ball, or to pass it on?

In battle, each unit — that is, each company or battalion — is like a player in the game, so he has to be trained to it — to be able to run and dodge, dribble and kick, and to play according to the rules. In the same way, a soldier has to learn to shoot and to drill and to fight according to his orders. Then each unit had its place in the battlefield, just as each player has his place in the football field.

Drill is chiefly used to get parties of men from place to place quickly and in good order, under the command of their leader, instead of their rushing about and doing it in a confused mob.



## MARKSMANSHIP FOR BOYS

Drill is very quickly learnt if every fellow means business and pays close attention to what the instructor says, and to carrying out his orders exactly himself. If he is sloppy and inattentive, he puts out the whole squad and keeps it back.

When drilling in two ranks, remember what a "file" is. It is not a carpenter's rough-faced implement, but two men in the ranks, the front rank man and the man immediately behind him. These two are always called a file. The rear rank man is always sixty inches, or five feet, behind his front rank man.

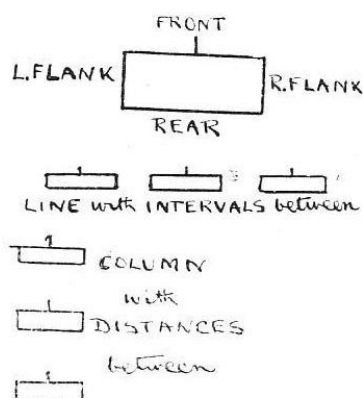
In marching, don't forget to step off with the left foot, and take the same length of step as your neighbour so that you keep exactly in line with each other. This is called *keeping your dressing*.

*Line* means when you are side by side. (Line is used when you want as many men as possible in front to use their rifles or bayonets.)

*Column* when you are behind one another. (Column is used for getting troops easily from place to place.)

*Intervals* are spaces between units in line.

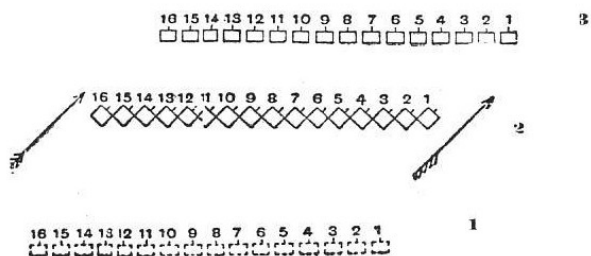
*Distances* are spaces between units in column.



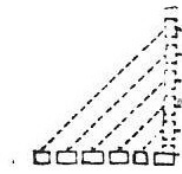
*These diagrams show you clearly what the terms "line," "column," "intervals," and "distances" mean.*

If the squad is to be moved partly to the front, and partly to one flank (a *flank* is a side), it is done by the squad *inclining*. That is to say, each man in the squad turns himself half right or half left as the case may be, and moves in that direction, still keeping his dressing till ordered to *front* again.

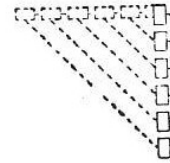
Below is a sketch of how this and other usual moves are carried out.



*The lowest figure (No. 1) shows the first position, the centre (No. 2) the right incline, and the top (No. 3) the second position.*



*Changing direction.  
At the Halt, Rightform.*



*Forming to front from column.  
On the Right, Form Squad.*

*In all the above figures of the diagonal march to right front a single rank squad is shown. When working in double ranks, the rear rank men form just in the same way as their front rank men.*

[Note for Instructor.— After doing a few drill movements with the squad, apply them to some tactical idea.

Use one squad, or a wagon, or a building, as an enemy in position. You want to get near it by moving from one bit of cover to another and eventually to get round to its “blind side” and attack it with the bayonet. By employing wheels and inclines quickly, show how necessary it is for men to know their drill and do it smartly if the squad is to come to the attack in good order.

If there is more than one squad at drill, let the next squad do the same exercise with the others looking on.

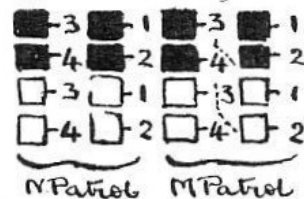
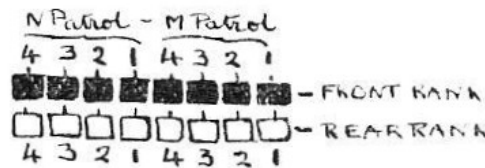
Make it a competition to see which carries it out in the best order.]

The usual drill laid down for Scout patrols is good enough for all ordinary work; but for platoon and company drill, Army squad drill, in double rank, should be practised and especially *forming fours* quickly and neatly.

A *four* is composed of two front rank men and their two rear rank men (who are called *coverers* or *covering files*).

When the patrol is drilling as part of a section, the patrol-leader is in the ranks.

The front rank of the squad is numbered from the right.



IN LINE.

IN FOURS, RIGHT.

*From line to form COLUMN OF FOURS.*

FOURS RIGHT.

*The whole rear rank steps back a pace to give room. All turn to the right. Even numbers move up on right of their next-door odd number.*

### TO GET BACK TO LINE.

*On command "Front" all turn to front (left). Even numbers move up on left of odd numbers. Rear rank closes up to 60 inches from front rank. In column, the leading four is called "Head of the column."*

*Column of fours* is the formation in which troops go on the march along roads, etc., or advance across difficult ground where they could not go in line, as, for instance, through a lot of gorse bushes, through gates, etc.

### ON THE MARCH.

On the march, strict obedience to the rules is necessary. Men must keep exactly in their fours, and each four must keep close to the one in front of it.

If a four loses a foot or two of proper distance, and those behind it do the same, the column soon becomes not only several feet, but many yards longer than necessary, and takes all the longer to get into position. The men in rear have then to be constantly hurrying and running to close up the gaps, and this soon tires them out on a long march.

There is another reason why gaps should not be allowed, and that is because the enemy's aeroplanes flying overhead will often mistake a column of khaki troops for a bit of road, but if there are gaps and spaces in the column they quickly see their mistake.

If you want to get yourselves laughed at by old soldiers, and abused by staff officers, spread yourselves well over the road when on the march.

A smart, well-disciplined corps always marches close to the left side of the road, and leaves the rest of it clear for traffic, so that orderlies and mounted officers can pass freely along.

When marching "at ease," these rules should be stuck to just the same as when marching at "attention." It is easy for an outsider to judge from troops on the march whether they are disciplined or not.

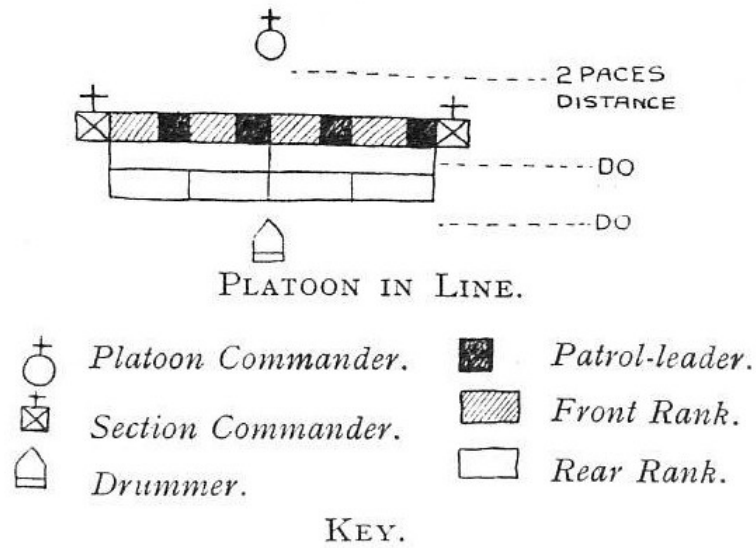
When marching at attention, remember to keep your attention fixed on your officer, and not to go gaping about, and grinning at passers-by.

When marching at ease you can do a lot of singing and whistling, it helps to pass the miles away.

*[Note for Instructor.— In practising marching, let the men lose distance, and then show how it increases with a long column, and how it harasses the rear lot of men. Teach the head of the column to go slow after rounding a corner, otherwise the rear is likely to lose distance. Each man must look to his front and be made responsible that he does not lose distance. Practise strict discipline on the march from the very first, when proceeding through the streets, etc. Slackness once started is the more difficult to cure.]*

### PLATOON DRILL.

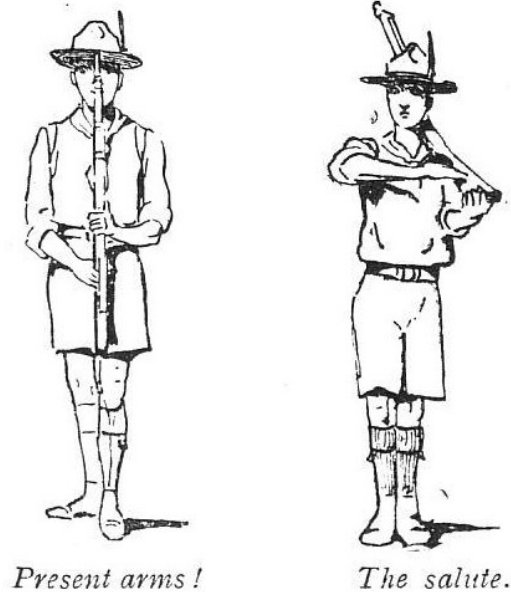
When patrol and squad drill are thoroughly understood by every fellow in the ranks, and well carried out, the platoon gets to work at platoon drill, so that the different sections become smart at their work, and fit for taking part in the larger work of company drill. But the quickness with which they learn their work and become efficient depends entirely on the amount of attention that everybody pays to what they are told and in carrying out their orders. If one or two are slack and lazy it throws the whole platoon back.



## CHAPTER VII

### DRILL WITH ARMS

YOU already know how to drill with staves, and drill with rifles is almost the same in the order, slope, trail, shoulder, support. Squads should practise doing the movements well together.



“Present arms” is the salute for Generals and field officers. “Field officers” are majors and colonels.

In the “present arms,” the rifle is brought to the front of the body in an upright position either from the order or the shoulder with the hands close to the body, in the position shown in the picture.

Sentries march with their rifles at the slope.

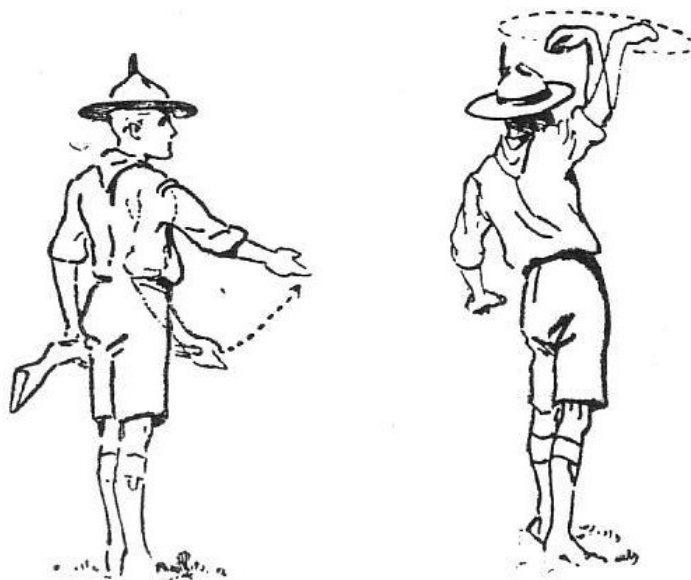
For saluting officers below the rank of major, the rifle is kept at the slope; you halt when the officer is three paces distant, turn to your front, and carry the right hand smartly across to the small part of the butt, the right elbow being kept well up and fingers straight; after a pause bring the right hand sharply away to the side again.

Saluting does not necessarily make you a good fighting man, but it helps you to show respect to your officers, and, what is more, it makes outside officers think more of you and of your corps if you do it smartly to them as well as to your own officers.

## CHAPTER VIII

### DRILL BY SIGNAL

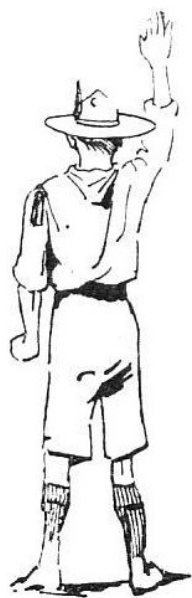
A GREAT many years ago, when I was a captain, I was leading my squadron on a foggy day in some manœuvres against other troops, and although we could not see their position, we knew where it was by the shouting of the orders and the bugle calls. Therefore, in order to surprise them, we worked up to them as quietly as possible, and instead of giving orders I made signals to the men, which they obeyed without any further word of command.



*Advance.—Forward.*

*Retire.—About.*

This moving by signal instead of by orders has now become general, and is most useful when the troops are working in extended order, or when, as frequently happens, in the noise of a battle, the officer's words of command cannot be heard by the men; they can always see his signals and obey them; it means, however, that every man must be on the look-out, watching his officer all the time, and that he must know exactly what each signal means, and must carry it out the moment he sees it.



*Halt.*



*Double.*

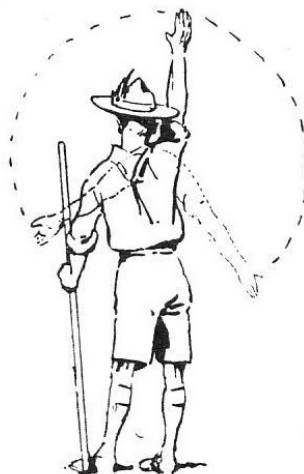
Often in woods, at night, or in thick fog, it is impossible for men to see the signals of the commander. The orders are, in that case, passed along from man to man, each had to repeat them to the next. You can understand that you have to be very careful to do this without making a mistake, otherwise the order would be wrongly given to some of the men, and it might bring about disaster.



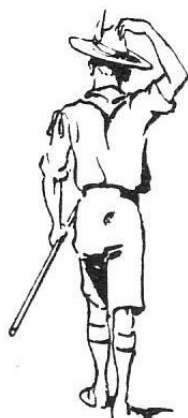
*Lie down.*

So pay great attention to the message when it is given to you, and remember every word of it, and give it clearly and correctly to the next man.

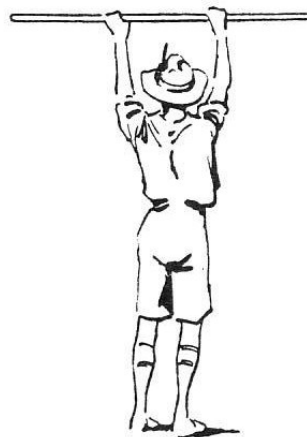
The receiver of a verbal message, or of any signal, when he is acting alone should salute when he has got it to show that he understands.



*Extend.—Arm waved widely from side to side.*



*Close in, or Rally from extended order.*



*Enemy in sight. If enemy is in large numbers, move the weapon up and down several times.*



*No enemy in sight.*



*Reinforce.—Arm swung from rear overhead.*

## WHISTLE SIGNALS

*A short blast* means "Look out, I am going to signal."

*Several short blasts* mean "Come here quickly. Rally."

*Long, short, long, short blasts* mean "Alarm. Fall in quickly."

[*Note for Instructors.*— *Practise making these signals, and move your patrol in different directions without any word of command at all.*]

## CHAPTER IX

### WORKING IN EXTENDED ORDER

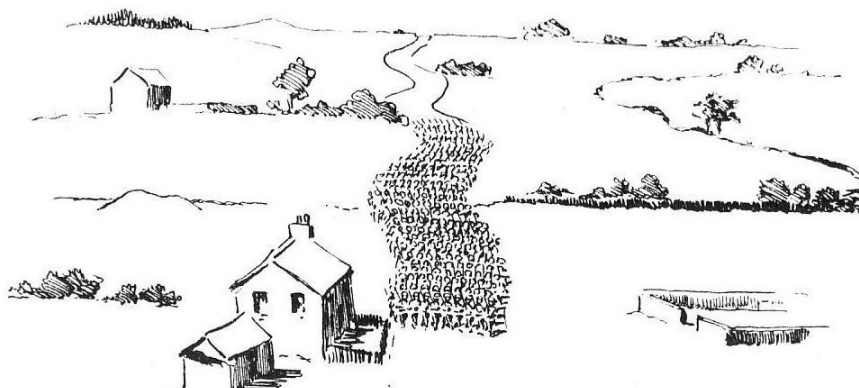
WHEN I was in Germany a few years ago, watching the Army manœuvres, the Kaiser asked me what I thought of the German method of attack.

I replied that I thought that, when such a large number of men advanced to attack in a great mass, there would be a great many lives lost.

The Emperor answered:

"That may be so, but in England you go to the opposite extreme, and teach your men to spread out and to take cover behind every little mound in order to escape the bullets; in fact, you teach them to be afraid of the bullets before they have even heard them. But in the German Army we teach the men that, if they advance in good order and in heavy masses, they are bound to win in the end by sheer force of numbers — and this gives them the confidence to go on."

That is all very well in an army where you have an endless number of men, and even then — as has been shown in this war — it does not always prove successful, as such a vast number get shot down before they ever reach the enemy's lines.



*Troops marching in close order; as you will see, they are very clearly visible and form an extremely easy target for the enemy.*



With our system, with the men well spread out and taking cover, very few of them get hit, and when they get close up to the enemy there are still a large number left alive to collect into a body and rush in with the bayonet, which, after all, is the weapon which decides battles.

The Germans seem to have found that out in this war, but it is too late for them to change the methods which they have practised in peace time.

It is not at all an easy thing now for them to learn how to work in extended order and to take cover, and to be at the same time under the control of their officers. It is a thing that cannot be picked up in a day, and therefore wants a great deal of practice by soldiers learning their work.

The best step towards getting efficient at this work is for every man to think carefully what he is doing all the time, and more especially the Patrol-leader. He must keep his eye on his officer, watch his signals and see what he wants, and then move his men accordingly, keeping them extended all the time so that they do not get hit, and making the best use of cover.

Each man must watch his Patrol-leader and obey his signals at once.

The two drawings on page 32 and 33 show you troops moving over the same bit of country.

Suppose you were firing at them, which would be the easier to hit — those in close order or those in extended order?



*When in extended order, troops can be seen a few at a time only ; you can make out their heads here and there under cover of hedges and buildings.*

Also you see that those in extended order can all be firing at you, but when they are in close order only the front rank can fire or use their bayonets.

When you are practising extended order at manœuvres, you have to imagine that you are under the fire of the enemy all the time. Therefore you get over the open stretches of ground as quickly as possible, and hide behind every bit of cover you can find.

Whenever you are halted in extended order, if in the open, you lie down as to make as small a target of yourself as possible to the enemy.

Remember this — that in action most men get hit just when they stop to lie down, or are getting up again; when on the move they are, of course, more difficult to hit.

So don't waste time about lying down or getting up — do it at one bound; it may save your life.

When in extended order you need not keep step or dressing as if marching on parade — you have to look out for yourself and for the best cover. But you should keep generally in line with the other fellows.

If you get too much in front you are very liable to get accidentally shot by those farther back, and if they stop firing on your account you may prevent some of the enemy getting shot.

You must be careful to keep your interval from your neighbours. Men are apt to come close to each other, and if they do this it at once gives a target for the enemy to fire at. You are much safer if you are alone.

You will generally be told to “extend from the right” (or from the left); this means the right-hand man moves straight on, and the rest all edge away to their left till they get the proper amount of interval — it may be two yards or five, or whatever the officer orders. Then you must keep looking to your right every now and then to see that you are keeping about that distance from the man next to you.

*[Note for Instructor.— Extended order should be taught first as a mere drill, in accordance with “Infantry Training” (pages 90-93), and afterwards as a practice in the field, showing how to take advantage of cover and of good positions for firing. Patrol-leaders to take complete charge of their groups and act in co-operation.]*

*Place patrol in a circle, facing outwards, and make every man do the signals as you order them; being back to back, they cannot crib from each other.*

*Have an enemy clearly defined, so that every man can direct his movements on it and endeavour to approach it, so far as possible, behind one bit of cover after another. Personate the enemy yourself, and give a bad mark to every man who exposes himself to your fire during the advance.*

*You should make each unit carry out the practice in turn, and make it a competition to see which does it with the fewest black marks.]*

## CHAPTER X

### HOW TO WIN THE RED FEATHER

A RED FEATHER is the hat badge of the Scout between the ages of fifteen and seventeen who has been enrolled for the defence of the country in case of need. He can only get it when he had passed his tests as a recruit, namely, in Scoutcraft, Equipment, and Military Drill, as follows:

#### 1. Scoutcraft.

To win the Red Feather a fellow must be a good Scout, carrying out his Scout Promise daily, and serving his country for love and not for swank.

But as a defender of his country he had got to be something more than a Scout, and that is a soldier. So, besides having the scouting spirit, he must also have the feeling that he is entering another brotherhood, the brotherhood of men who are ready to shed their blood that the old flag may be kept flying.

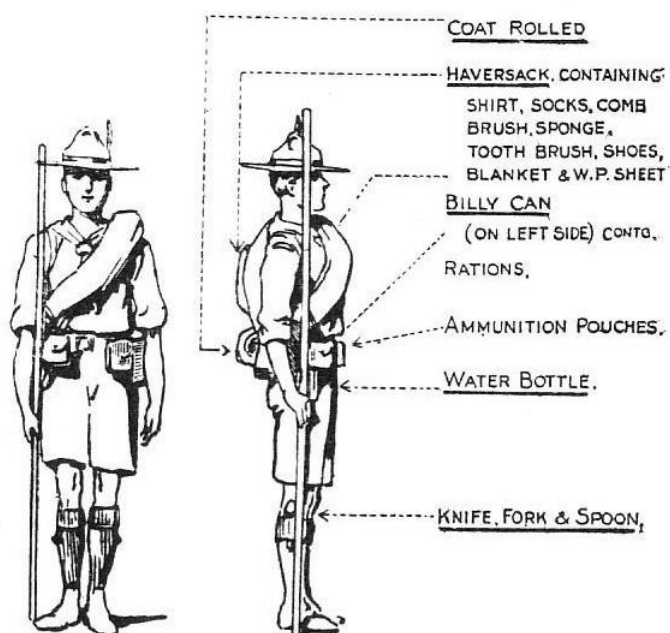
He must think of the number of our forefathers and of those who in the present war have died for their country. He must remember that the Union Jack stands as a monument of the heroic dead who have fallen to defend it, and that in joining this brotherhood he may in his turn have the chance of sacrificing his life, if necessary, in order that the flag may be kept flying.

If a boy has been a Scout it is already a big step towards becoming a good soldier. He will be able to rig his own shelter, cut his firewood, and book his billy, to read a map and find his way by day or night, to hide himself, to watch and report what the enemy are doing.

A Scout who has any of the following badges will naturally come up more easily for promotion in rank:— King's Scout, Pathfinder, Signaller, Ambulance, Marksman, Master-at-Arms, Cyclist, etc.

### 2. *Kit.*

The necessary equipment for the Red Feather Scout is Scout uniform, haversack, billy, staff, great-coat, extra shirt, stockings and boots, and blanket and waterproof sheet, so that he may be ready to go on service at any time in "Marching Order."



*Marching order. Everything triced up, not hanging loose.*

"Marching Order" means Scout uniform with all the above equipment carried; "Drill Order" means the ordinary Scout uniform with staff.

Scout Scouts may think that on this sort of work they ought to wear something warmer than shorts — they don't want to be catching cold.

I may say that I always tend to wear shorts, myself, winter and summer, and I never seem to have a cold. You might as well expect to get cold from having your face and hands exposed.

The Highlanders and the Light Infantry Regiments at the Front — and they are supposed to be the pick of the British Infantry — wear shorts, as do the regimental scouts in many battalions, and also the hardy little Gurkhas from India; and I don't suppose members of our Scout Corps are ashamed to be dressed like any of these.

Of course, if the Defence Corps makes itself so efficient as to be recognised and accepted by the War Office, it will receive the regular military uniform and rifles. But in the meantime, while Scouts are merely training themselves to be efficient, it is hardly worth the expense to them of getting a special uniform.

But if any Scout feels the cold and thinks he will suffer from bare knees, let him by all means get trousers, or breeches, or let him tie comforters round them — so long as he learns to drill and to shoot and to obey orders.

It is always easy to wear an extra pair of stocking legs and pull them up over the knees in specially cold weather.

The wearing of breeches, trousers, and overalls is of course permitted to Scouts who are doing duty where they are much exposed to wind and weather, or are doing night work. But for ordinary training parades, in fine weather, the regulation shorts should do well enough.

### 3. *Military Training.*

The particulars of military training to be acquired are to be found in the books, "Infantry Training, 1914." The points to be learnt are these:

- (a) Squad and Section Drill according to Army Drill.
- (b) Marching with proper discipline, as in the Army.
- (c) The use, care, and cleaning of the rifle.
- (d) Judging distances practice.
- (e) Rifle shooting.

When a Scout has completed the above three requirements, he is awarded the Red Feather to wear in his hat, and this will also count towards getting the War Service Badge.

Many Scouts have already got the things needed under headings (1) and (2) in the way of Scoutcraft and Kit, and all they have to do then is to practise the military drill mentioned in (3). I will give a few words of explanation of this:

First, you must know the difference between the different military units:

A *Squad* is the same as a patrol of seven Scouts and a Patrol-leader.

Two Squads from a *Section* under a Section Commander.

Two Sections form a *Platoon* under an Assistant Scoutmaster.

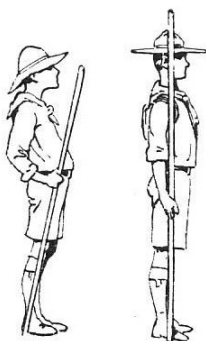
Four Platoons form a *Company* (128 Scouts) under a Scoutmaster.

Four Companies form a *Battalion* under a Commissioner.

Squad Drill is much the same as patrol drill, and can be taught by a Patrol-leader.

A Patrol-leader can best teach recruits by standing in the correct positions and performing the movements himself, and not merely by telling them what to do; his commands must be given in a clear, short, and sharp way.

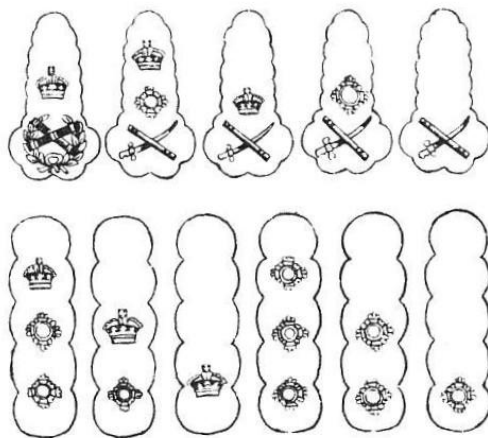
Scouts already know how to stand at the alert, stand-at-ease, salute, march, halt, and dismiss. Though they know how to do these things, one very often sees a boy standing all wrong at the alert.



*The first sketch shows how the Tenderfoot stands, and the second how straight the Scout holds himself at the alert.*

Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood reminds men that the proper way to stand at attention is to look straight to the front and draw the chin in until it touches the collar. Keep your dressing all the time, whether on the move or halted, without waiting to be told to do so. Don't rub your noses and look about.

As to saluting, don't forget the badges of rank worn by officers on their cuff or shoulder strap.



*Badges worn by military officers : Reading from left to right, the badges in the top row denote a field marshal, general, lieutenant-general, major-general, brigadier-general. Those in the bottom row show the shoulder straps of a colonel, lieutenant-colonel, major, captain, lieutenant, second-lieutenant.*

What I have told you in the preceding chapters are merely points which you have to know in order to gain the Red Feather, but you must not therefore think that when you have learnt these, and even when you have fully practised them in the field, you are therefore a trained soldier.

The passing of your tests for the Red Feather merely means that you have passed your entrance examination into the Scouts' Defence Corps. After this there lies before you all the fun of learning the soldiers' work in the field, that is to say, you go through the practice of:

- Outposts,
- Advanced guards,
- Reconnaissance and scouting,
- Tactics and attacking the enemy,
- Field firing,
- Entrenching,
- Pioneering,
- Night attacks,
- Bayonet fighting,
- Bivouacking and cooking, etc.

The practice of these, besides being good fun, will entail hard work on you. You should not therefore take them up merely for the fun of the thing, nor as amusement, but wholly with the idea of becoming an efficient fighting man, ready to be of real use to your Country and Empire.

## CHAPTER XI

### TESTS FOR THE RED FEATHER

#### A SUMMARY FOR OFFICERS CONDUCTING EXAMINATIONS AND FOR SCOUTS DESIROUS OF QUALIFYING TO WEAR THE RED FEATHER.

THE object of the Scouts' Defence Corps is to form a trained force of young men who would be immediately available for the defence of the country should their services be required during the war.

Their distinctive badge will be a red feather in the hat. This feather will only be issued to Scouts after they have passed their course of recruits' training.

The Scout must be between fifteen and seventeen years of age. Any over this age must prove that they are physically unfit for service in the Royal Navy or Army.

Scout between fourteen and fifteen are allowed to join as drummers and buglers or as first-aid stretcher bearers.

To gain their Red Feather they must pass the same tests as the older Scouts, and, in addition, must prove their efficiency either as drummers, buglers, or as first-aiders.

Except in the case of these, and of Lone Scouts, the smallest unit is the patrol of eight Scouts under a Patrol-leader.

Each Scout must possess, in addition to his Scout uniform and equipment, the following articles:

Blanket and waterproof sheet. (Rolled as bandolier over left shoulder.)

Haversack.

Cooking billy.

Great-coat.

Extra pair of boots.

Ditto socks.

Ditto flannel shirt.

Staff to be carried when rifle not available, and to be used for drill purposes.

Each patrol should have its own tent.

Each section or platoon should if possible have its trek cart.

Each Scout will be tested by an approved military or other officer as to his efficiency in the following subjects:

#### DRILL.

Efficiency as a Scout as vouched for by a Scoutmaster or by badges.

Squad and Section Drill ("Infantry Training" 1914).

Smartness on parade.

Smartness in dress.

March discipline.  
Drill with arms.  
Drill by signal.  
Extended order drill.

### MUSKETRY (ORAL AND PRACTICAL).

Care of rifle.  
Manual exercise.  
Firing positions.  
Aiming.  
Allowance for wind and movements.  
Judging distance.  
Trigger pressing.  
Target practice.  
Five shots on twenty-five yards' miniature range to be grouped within an inch circle.

If he is successful in passing the foregoing tests, the Scout is awarded the badge of the Red Feather, and is then able to go on to the further training for making him fully efficient for defence service.

The Red Feather is worn in the hat band on the left side. The winning of it counts as fourteen days towards obtaining the War Service Badge.

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