

TRENCH ORDERS

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4TH DIVISION.

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TRENCH ORDERS.

1. DUTIES.

(a) One officer per company and one N.C.O. per platoon will always be on duty. They will remain in the fire trench during their tour of duty.

(b) By night the officer and N.C.O. on duty will frequently patrol the trench line, to see that the sentries are alert and to enquire whether they have any information about the enemy to report.

(c) The N.C.O. coming on duty will go round and post new sentries with the N.C.O. coming off duty.

(d) The length of each tour of duty will naturally depend on the number of officers and N.C.O.s available in the company. **Normally**, each tour should be, by night 2 hours, by day 4 hours, day commencing at morning "stand to" and night commencing at evening "stand to." In inclement weather the tour of duty must be reduced.

(e) N.C.O.s after posting sentries will report "All correct" or otherwise to the officer on duty.

(f) The officer on duty will be responsible for sending in the reports required by battalion H.Q., unless there is anything unusual to report, when this duty will be performed by the company commander.

(g) Men will be warned for duty by the platoon sergeant on duty. This will be done at evening "stand to."

(h) On being detailed for duty, a man will be informed at which hours he will come on duty.

(i) When possible to do so, notice boards will be placed in each section's trench, on which will be pinned, daily, all orders regarding working parties, and a list of the men in the section, giving the times at which they will come on sentry and other duty.

(j) Except under special circumstances, such, for instance, as a sentry being killed or wounded, no sentry will be relieved by another man unless the relief is properly carried out in the presence of a N.C.O.

2. SENTRIES (by Night).

(a) Sentries will be posted every two hours, except under bad weather conditions when the length of the tour of sentry duty will be reduced.

(b) From evening "stand to" till morning "stand to" one sentry to every four men will be posted. This number is dependent on the number of troops holding the line. If wiring or digging parties are out in front, this number may be reduced.

(c) The next relief will remain within reach of the sentry.

(d) Every sentry is to be regularly posted by a N.C.O., who will explain to him his duties and ascertain that the sentry and his relief are aware of the position of the section and platoon commanders, the sentries on either side, and whether there are any patrols or working parties out in front. Should there be salients in our line, the sentry will be carefully instructed, so as to avoid any possibility of him firing towards our own trenches.

(e) In places which have the reputation of being dangerous, *i.e.*, where enemy are suspected of mining, advanced posts, &c., no man should ever be posted alone. There should either be a double sentry post or the next relief should rest within kicking distance of the sentry.

(By Day).

(f) The number of sentries required depends on the proximity of the enemy's trench line and whether a good view to the front can be obtained.

(g) Well-protected "look-out" posts for sentries will be built along the front trench line.

(h) **Sending out of Patrols.**—Patrols will never be sent out without definite orders as to what is required of them. Patrols will go out *via* one listening post (if such exist), and return by another. Each listening post will be warned of the strength of the patrol and the approximate hour of departure and return. Word will be passed quietly along the line of sentries that a patrol is out in front.

(i) As little challenging as possible will be done by sentries, and then only in a low tone of voice.

3. RIFLES, EQUIPMENT, AND AMMUNITION.

(a) **Carrying and Wearing of.**—Equipment will always be worn by men in front and support trenches. Men in reserve trenches when off duty may be permitted to remove their equipment.

(b) Ration and carrying parties, orderlies, &c., will wear equipment and carry rifles.

(c) Parties at work between the front line and reserve trenches may be permitted to "pile" or "ground" arms. Wiring and digging parties out in front of the fire trench will sling the rifle.

(d) **Loading of Rifles.**—Except when it is necessary to shoot, a round will never be kept in the chamber. Cut-offs will always be "in" and the safety catch "back."

Many accidents have been caused through neglect of these precautions. A sentry when posted will load his rifle, *i.e.*, place a round in the chamber, and unload this round when relieved.

(e) The magazine will be kept charged with five rounds.

(f) By night, bayonets will be fixed except in the case mentioned in 3 (i).

(g) **Care of Rifles.**—Rifles and ammunition will be inspected at morning and evening "stand to."

(h) N.C.O.s and men in the firing line and support will at all times be in possession of their rifles and bayonets. Men will sleep with the rifle by their side and their arm through the sling.

(i) In very cold weather sentries will occasionally work the bolt of the rifle to prevent the striker becoming frozen. For the same reason, in cold weather men will sleep with their rifles close to the body.

(j) On no account is the rifle to be used for the purpose of carrying camp kettles and other loads.

(k) **Disposal of Rifles, Equipment, and Ammunition.**—Men wounded and going sick will, if able to walk, wear their equipment and carry their rifles. The rifles and equipment of men unable to carry them and also those of dead men will be sent back to the dressing station. All rifles, however badly damaged, and equipment, damaged or not required, will be sent back to the quartermaster. Damaged cartridges and empty cases will be collected and returned to the quartermaster.

(l) Every man will have 120 rounds in his possession.

(m) Platoon commanders will report at "stand to" whether their ammunition is correct or otherwise.

(n) Except in the case of emergency no bandoliers will be issued to men in the trenches.

4. **"STAND TO"** will take place one hour before daylight and one hour before dusk. At this parade every available man will be present. Rifles, ammunition, equipment, clothing, etc., will be inspected. The firing position of every man will be tested at dusk to see that the rifle pressed down on the parapet is aimed at our own wire. Gas helmets and respirators will be inspected in accordance with the orders in force. Orders will be issued and steps taken to see that the men understand them.

5. CARE OF BOMBS AND GRENADES.

- (a) Only 20 per cent. of the number allotted to a company will be kept in the front trench.
- (b) Each platoon will have a well-protected and dry bomb receptacle.
- (c) The battalion grenadier officer will make frequent inspections of all bombs and grenades.
- (d) The alarm posts of grenadiers will be close to where the bomb stores are placed.
- (e) No one, other than an officer of the grenadiers in charge, will interfere with the bombs and grenades.
- (f) Ammunition boxes in the trenches will be examined frequently to see if the lids work easily.

6. MACHINE GUNS.

- (a) The concealment of machine gun emplacements is important—for this reason, except in case of emergency, machine guns will not be fired from their regular emplacements.
- (b) Unless emplacements are well concealed, guns will not be mounted except between evening and morning "stand to."
- (c) Two men per detachment will always be on duty with the gun.
- (d) Before dusk, while there is still sufficient light, each gun will be laid on some particular spot either in or behind the enemy's front line.
- (e) Range cards will be prepared and kept with each gun.

7. FIRING AT AEROPLANES.

Firing at aeroplanes will not be permitted except by order of an officer.

8. UNDERCUTTING TRENCH SIDES.

- (a) The undercutting of trench sides to make shelters is forbidden.
- (b) When shelters are made, the required space from the ground level downwards will be cut out and a roof supported on reliable posts will be made.

9. SANITATION.

- (a) The importance of strict attention to sanitation should be impressed on all ranks.
- (b) Empty tins or other refuse will be collected in receptacles kept for the purpose in the trenches.

(c) Latrines will be constructed in trenches leading from communication trenches. Where the bucket system is employed, chloride of lime or creosol will be freely used. The soil will be removed at night and buried in a deep pit at least 100 yards from the trenches; these pits will be filled in when nearly full and labelled. When filled pits should have at least 2 ft. of soil on top.

(d) The commanding officer is responsible for sanitation in his unit, and the Medical Officer will advise him in sanitary matters, making frequent inspections of latrines, refuse pits and water arrangements. Under the Medical Officer, latrines and refuse pits will be attended to by the regimental sanitary men and water duties by the R.A.M.C. details attached.

10. TIME-TABLES & ORGANIZATION OF WORK.

- (a) A time-table will be drawn up by each company commander. In this time-table he will allot hours for work, rest and meals.
- (b) Working parties will be properly organized. Definite tasks will be allotted. Each commander of a working party should know what work is expected from his party before the hour appointed to commence, so that no time is wasted in getting to work.
- (c) Unless it cannot be avoided, men should never be taken for sentry duty without having had a reasonable period of rest, and when this becomes necessary a report should be made to the C.O.

11. LOG BOOKS AND TRENCH STORE BOOKS.

- (a) Each company commander will keep a log book in which will be entered up daily the work done. This log book will be handed over from one commander to another on relief.
- (b) A trench store book will also be kept in which will be entered up all trench stores issued to the company. On relief, the incoming company commander will give a receipt to the outgoing commander for all trench stores taken over.

12. COMMUNICATIONS.

- (a) Artillery lines will be laid on the north and west sides of trenches. Infantry lines on south and east.
- (b) The infantry brigade signal officer will exercise general supervision over all lines in the brigade area, and will notify the orderly officer of the artillery brigade when any artillery lines require attention or relaying. He will assist the artillery whenever it may be possible to do so.

(c) Lines will be laid as low as possible, preferably not more than 9 inches from the bottom of the trench. They will be pinned to the side of the trench by means of wire staples, but lines in communication trenches should be reduced to a minimum. All essential command lines should be buried to a depth of 6 ft.

(d) Lines will be clearly labelled at every hundred yards, and at every junction with another line.

(e) All lines will be carefully patrolled at least once daily.

(f) One telephonist will always be on duty.

(g) Telephone communication to battalion headquarters and the company on each flank will be frequently tested.

(h) All "dead" lines will be reeled up at once.

(i) Every man is to know the position of his platoon commander's shelter and the company headquarters.

(j) At least two men per section of the support and reserve companies must be able to act as guides to all the company headquarters of the battalion.

(k) All officers must know the shortest route from their own headquarters to those of the company on their flanks and to their own battalion headquarters.

13. ALERTNESS.

Anything seen or heard in connection with the enemy, such as movements of individuals, transport wagons, troops, working parties, etc., is to be reported to the nearest officer.

14. RUM.

(a) Rum when authorised will be kept under the personal charge of the company commander.

(b) The best time for a rum issue is in the early morning.

(c) No issue of rum will be made, except in the presence of an officer.

(d) Men undergoing punishment for drunkenness will receive no issue of rum for fourteen days after the offence, unless it is necessary for medical reasons.

15. ARRANGEMENTS IN CASE OF ATTACK.

(a) Company commanders will ensure that all ranks know what to do in case of bombardment, gas or attack by the enemy. They will occasionally test their arrangements by practising an alarm.

(b) All officers' servants, grenadiers, orderlies, etc., will have duties allotted to them in case of attack.

16. WORKING PARTIES.

(a) All work on a fire trench will be carried out by the garrison of the trench, assisted if necessary by the garrison of the support and reserve trenches.

(b) All work in rear of fire trenches will be carried out by the garrison of the support and reserve trenches.

(c) If possible, working parties will consist of complete units, i.e., section, platoon, or company. Each unit will be commanded by its own commander.

17. WORKING PARTIES OUTSIDE THE FRONT TRENCH.

(a) A covering party will be provided for digging and wiring parties outside the front trenches.

(b) Men not wiring or digging or otherwise employed will remain in the front trench while any work is being carried on outside it.

18. PRECAUTION WHEN ONE OF OUR MINES IS EXPLODED.

In the event of one of our own mines being exploded, a clear space of 5 yards will be kept on either side of the mouth of the mine shaft.

19. RATION PARTIES FOUND FROM FRONT TRENCHES.

Usually rations and stores will be carried up to the trenches by supports and reserves. If this is not possible, and it is necessary that men from the front trenches have to be employed, not more than 10 per cent. of the men in the firing line are to be away from the trenches at the same time.

20. RATIONS.

(a) Ration parties from the support and reserve trenches will be made up in complete units as in 16 (c).

(b) The company quartermaster-sergeant will accompany the ration parties for his company, and report his arrival to the company commander.

(c) Great care is to be taken that ration and carrying parties make as little noise as possible.

(d) Where cooking is done individually, definite times should be allocated for the purpose.

(e) Unused rations will be returned to the quartermaster.

(f) Waste in any form will be discouraged.

(g) Arrangements should be made to ensure that soup or some hot drink is available for the men between midnight and 4 a.m.

21. VERMOREL SPRAYERS.

(a) Vermorel sprayers form part of trench stores. They are provided for clearing gas out of trenches and shelters after an attack, and for re-spraying helmets if necessary during a prolonged gas attack.

(b) They will be distributed at easily accessible points in the trenches, and protected from shell-fire.

(c) They must be kept one-third full of water. Six gallons of the following solution to be used in them must be kept in corked rum jars close to each sprayer. It must not be kept in the sprayers owing to its corrosive nature:—

Water.—3 gallons (one large bucket).

Sodium Thiosulphate (Hypo).—1½ lbs. (¾ mess tins).

Sodium Carbonate (Washing Soda).—3 lbs. (1½ mess tin).

(d) Each company will have a squad of men in charge of a N.C.O. trained in the care and use of sprayers.

(e) On taking over trenches, the N.C.O. in charge of sprayers will take over from the outgoing N.C.O., and will see that each is in order, and provided with solution.

(f) A man will be told off to each sprayer; he will be responsible for testing it every day, and in case of a gas attack he will stand by to use it when ordered.

RELIEFS.

22. RECONNAISSANCE.

Prior to taking over a new line of trenches, the commanding officer, adjutant, machine gun officer, and company commanders will reconnoitre the trenches.

23. POINTS TO BE NOTED BY COMPANY COMMANDERS.

(a) Number of men holding line to be taken over and distribution.

(b) Shelter accommodation.

(c) Work being done and proposed.

(d) Condition of the wire and defences generally.

(e) Information as to the enemy, his habits, snipers, the work he is doing, etc.

(f) Water supply.

(g) Artillery support.

(h) Communications.

(i) Sanitary arrangements.

24. GUIDES.

(a) Arrangements will be made between the C.O.'s of relieving and about to be relieved battalions as to places where guides will be provided by the latter to conduct the incoming troops to the trenches.

(b) One guide per platoon, one for each company H.Q. and one for battalion H.Q. will be provided.

These guides must know the exact spot where they will meet the relieving troops and the best and safest way to the trenches.

25. SMOKING AND TALKING.

After leaving the rendezvous there is to be no smoking or talking till arrival in the trenches.

26. RATE OF MARCH TO TRENCHES.

The rate of marching to the trenches from billets will not exceed 2 miles an hour.

27. PROCEDURE ON ARRIVAL IN TRENCHES.

(a) The troops being relieved will not leave the trenches till all trench stores have been handed over and receipts received, till the relieving troops are in position, new sentries have been posted, and orders to move have been received from the company commander.

(b) Platoon commanders will at once personally examine all firing positions and satisfy themselves that each man can fire on the foot of the nearest part of the wire entanglement.

(c) They will examine the ammunition and bomb magazines, vermores and other sprayers, and anti-gas solution vessels.

(d) When the relief is completed, O.C. companies will report to that effect to battalion H.Q.

When the shelters are some way behind the fire trench men should not be allowed to go into them during the night, unless the relief has been carried out by daylight.

(e) Men will not be dismissed till the O.C. company has received reports from all his platoon commanders that everything is in order.

ARTILLERY.

1. DUTIES.

One officer will always be present with the guns. An officer should always be with the wagon line, or visit it as often as possible.

Staff sergeants and senior N.C.O.s of batteries will be trained to act as officers, and those who prove themselves efficient will be employed to relieve officers when necessary.

During the day each battery will have an officer and a trained N.C.O. observer at the O.P.

During the night, the officer will remain at the headquarters of the affiliated battalion or in the trenches as is considered best—the N.C.O. observer remaining at the O.P.

Attention must be paid at all times to horse management and care of equipment and ammunition, harness and saddlery. Constant inspection is necessary to ensure that these are being properly looked after.

Gas helmets, respirators and other appliances to combat gas should be carefully inspected once a day in accordance with the orders in force, and steps taken to see that the men understand their use.

Gun drill with gas neutralizing appliances worn by the detachments will be frequently carried out in emplacements.

2. SENTRIES.

Sentries should be posted every two hours, from evening "stand to" to morning "stand to," but in inclement weather the tour of duty will be reduced. They should receive precise instructions as to their actions in case of anyone unknown to them visiting the precincts of the position.

Sentries must be alert for signals at night. He must also be made acquainted with the rocket signal.

During the day an "aeroplane" look-out man will be posted at each battery position, who will give warning by means of the prescribed whistle signal of the approach of aircraft. On hearing this signal, all men will get under cover, and remain there or stand still, and on no account look up, until the aeroplane has passed over, or until it is definitely ascertained that it is not a hostile one.

3. BOMB-PROOF TRENCHES, etc.

The undercutting of trench sides to make shelters is forbidden. When shelters are made, the space required from the ground level downwards will be cut out, and a roof supported on reliable posts, will be made. Surface or subsoil water should not be allowed to accumulate; and ventilation of bomb proofs, etc., should be attended to.

4. ALTERNATIVE POSITIONS.

Alternative battery positions and observation posts should be made, and every officer should know those in his own and in the adjoining sectors, and the best routes to them.

It is also necessary that all concerned should know the best routes for a withdrawal from a battery position, according to the varying circumstances that may arise. Any routes across country should be marked, so as to be found by day or night. Temporary bridges, if required, should be prepared and passages through wire left open.

Work on retired positions should be progressive and improved as material becomes available. Men that can be spared from the ammunition columns may be employed on these duties.

5. DUMMY POSITIONS.

Dummy positions will be made as realistic as possible. Paths leading up to and around them should be cut, wheel tracks made, etc., etc.; such men as can be spared should be sent up to them on clear mornings when aeroplanes are about; puffs should be fired from the emplacements when batteries are firing, etc., dummy observing posts should also be arranged for.

6. NIGHT LINES.

Night lines of a battery should, as a rule, be on its particular portion of the defence, but batteries must be prepared also to assist on either flank. In the case of howitzer or heavy batteries, night lines should be laid out on specially dangerous or important localities.

7. OBSERVATION STATIONS.

Every precaution must be taken to keep the positions of observing stations concealed from the enemy. They should be strengthened as far as this can be done without attracting attention. Alternative positions should be arranged in case the original is discovered and shelled.

On relief, all documents, papers, etc., such as range cards, panorama sketches, etc., pertaining to the observing stations are to be handed over to the relieving battery, together with a summary of information regarding the German works, etc., in the battery zone of fire.

8. SANITATION.

The strictest attention to sanitation must be impressed on all ranks. Medical officers must make frequent inspections and report to commanding officers all points requiring attention.

9. COMMUNICATIONS.

(a) Artillery lines will be laid on the north and west sides of the trenches. Infantry lines on south and east.

- (b) 1. The whole of the communications of the divisional artillery will be planned at divisional artillery headquarters.
2. Orderly officers of artillery brigades are responsible for the proper maintenance of all communications within their brigades.
3. The officer of the divisional signal company attached to H.Q. divisional artillery will act as technical adviser to G.O.C., R.A., representing the divisional signal company in all matters connected with artillery lines. He will keep in close touch with artillery brigade orderly officer, who will consult him on all matters affecting brigade and battery lines which require expert advice.
4. The infantry brigade signal officer will exercise general supervision over all lines in the brigade area and will notify the orderly officer of the artillery brigade when any artillery lines require attention or relaying. He will assist the artillery whenever it may be possible to do so.

(c) Lines will be laid as low as possible, preferably not more than about 9 inches from the floor of the trench. They will be secured to the side of the trench by means of wire staples.

(d) Lines will be clearly labelled at every hundred yards and at every junction with another line.

(e) All lines will be carefully patrolled at least once daily.

(f) One telephonist will always be on duty.

(g) Each artillery brigade will be in direct communication with the artillery brigades on its flanks, whether they belong to the same corps or not.

(h) All unused lines will be reeled in at once, under supervision of brigade signalling officer.

10. ALERTNESS.

Though not always actually necessary for all men to be round their guns, detachments must be ready to fall in at the shortest notice in case of alarm. Readiness for action should be tested by means of the test rounds.

Gas helmets and respirators should always be carried ready to put on at once in case of a gas attack.

11. POSITION OF WAGON LINES.

Horses, ammunition wagons and other vehicles should be kept under cover of trees or sheds, or close into hedges so as to be as inconspicuous as possible from the air.

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1871-1872



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