

104. I have seen the whole of the Mounted Rifles in field-work, in nearly every case in combined operations with the other arms. One of these operations required considerable restraint in launching an attack—a forbearance that is not common with mounted troops: the result was a flank attack delivered at the exact psychological moment when it was wanted.

There is sometimes a tendency to begin dismounted action too far from the enemy; Mounted Rifles are not at all suited for a long advance under fire on foot, which usually cannot succeed unless it is supported in depth. Every use should be made of cover and mobility to get within close ranges before dismounting for action. These remarks are only meant to have a general application. Cases might arise when it would be of great importance to make the enemy believe they were being attacked by Infantry. Under such circumstances the horses must, no doubt, be left a long way in rear.

105. Coming into action the led horses were generally well and quickly handled, and there was a commendable absence of talking and noise. Sometimes these led horses were injudiciously placed. Cover from view, behind a belt of trees for example, may be better than nothing, but cover from fire behind a fold of the ground is what should be taken whenever it is available—which is almost always.

In moving from cover to cover over a narrow strip of ground that is watched by the enemy's Artillery it is generally best to gallop suddenly across in formed bodies instead of dribbling the men across in a steady stream of twos and threes. Artillery, even if it has carefully registered the ground, takes an appreciable time to bring effective fire on to any given point.

Finally, I can only say I have served in war already with New Zealand Mounted Rifles, and I should esteem myself lucky indeed if ever I had the good fortune to encounter Continental Cavalry in reasonably broken ground with them at my right hand.

Field Artillery.

106. The system under which the permanent cadre of men and horses is always distributed among the batteries is excellent. It is an example of the best way in which an army organized on Militia lines should utilize its stiffening of Regulars.

The barracks constructed for the batteries are well suited for the purpose, and they are conveniently situated, so that the home training in gun drill, laying, equitation, driving, &c., can be carried out efficiently and economically, and the best use can be made of the permanent cadre.

The horses that have been bought are of a good type. Most commanders keep them in one subsection while the battery is in camp, and this I consider a better plan than to distribute them among the hired horses throughout the battery. Perhaps in the first days of camp it may be necessary to steady raw teams with a trained horse or two; after that a subsection horsed entirely with the well-trained permanent horses will steady the whole battery, and set up a high standard to the drivers of the other subsections. The hired horses were lacking in stamina for a long spell of heavy work.

107. For the present, at any rate, it will be best to train each ammunition column in close connection with one of the batteries: the men of the ammunition column become in war the first relief to make up the casualties in the batteries, and the training done with the battery in peace will be of use to them. In addition, the battery has the advantage of using the ammunition-column vehicles as first-line wagons.

In one battery that I inspected, the Staff sergeants and Nos. 1 were nearly all Volunteers of long standing, and the advantage to the efficiency of the battery was very apparent.

Many of the public schools have Artillery Cadets, who train in connection with the Territorial batteries. If these Cadets go on into the Territorial Artillery as recruits, the batteries will have the best of material on which to work.

108. In the combined operations that I witnessed, the Artillery was generally well handled; the batteries were boldly dispersed to give cross-fire, and they had definite roles allotted to them. In the opening stages of an action care should be taken not to push the Artillery into positions of undue exposure. The deployment of the Infantry will often secure a safe zone of manoeuvre for batteries, and allow them to get into action in good time and without having special escorts told off for them.

When taking up a position intended to be under cover, the battery commander must take care that the guns are really out of sight of all probable observing-stations in the enemy's hands.

In a recent war it was found that telephones were very difficult to hear in the noise of a battle, and it is always worth taking trouble and running danger to get a direct control of fire.

In some cases I found that sufficient attention was not paid to care of the harness; the equipment is of the best manufacture, but it cannot be expected to last unless preservatives are intelligently used. Care of harness is as important as any other item of a driver's training.

109. An Artillery recruit requires no more, and perhaps less, training than an Infantryman before he is efficient to take his place in a well-trained battery; a great part of his work is mechanical, and he is not required to think for himself so much as his brother of the Infantry. When the training of the units—the battery and company of Infantry—are considered, things are very much otherwise, and I think it certain that the Territorial batteries will be unable to maintain an efficiency equivalent to that of the Infantry unless they have a longer period in camp. The present nine days does not really give enough time in which to learn manoeuvre and to carry out gun practice. The Artillery is a popular arm, and I should say that there would be little difficulty in filling the ranks of the batteries even if fifteen days' camp were made compulsory. But I am in full sympathy with the economists, and I do not wish this report to be used as a handle for incurring serious fresh expenditure at present. Could not a compromise be arrived at and an extra three days be given to the Artillery? I have the less diffidence in making such a suggestion because in New Zealand the Artillery should be *better trained relatively* than the Infantry. The reason is that, in the general organization of the Army, the proportion of guns to Infantry and Cavalry is smaller than that recognized as right in other armies.