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JANUARY 25, 1943

# THE GERMAN SQUAD IN COMBAT.

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Washington, January 25, 1943

SPECIAL SERIES  
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# THE GERMAN SQUAD IN COMBAT . . .



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# FOREWORD

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THIS TEXT is the translation of the greater part of a German handbook designed to aid in squad training. The material illustrates, with a wealth of concrete examples, the basic tactics of the German rifle squad. These tactics differ somewhat from those of the U. S. squad, mainly in that the enemy unit is built for tactical purposes around the employment of the squad's light machine gun. It is believed that U. S. company officers and noncommissioned officers will profit by this opportunity to study the combat methods of the basic German infantry unit.



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# Section I. ORGANIZATION AND FORMATIONS OF THE SQUAD

## 1. ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT

The rifle platoon consists of the platoon leader, platoon headquarters (one leader and three men), four squads, and the light-mortar squad (one leader and two men).

The squad is the smallest combat unit. It consists of the squad leader and nine men, one of whom is the second-in-command. The second-in-command is the assistant of the squad leader and represents him in case of necessity. He is responsible for liaison with the platoon leader and adjacent squads.

Members	Equipment	Duties
Squad leader	Machine pistol with 6 magazines (each with 32 rounds) in magazine pouches, Magazine loader, Field glasses, Wire cutters, Pocket compass, Signal whistle, Sun glasses, Searchlight.	The squad leader commands his squad. He directs the fire of the light machine gun and, in so far as the combat permits, that of the riflemen also. He is responsible for the mechanical condition of the weapons and equipment, and for the availability of ammunition within his squad.

Members	Equipment	Duties
Machine-gunner (No. 1).	Machine gun 34 with belt, Magazine 34 (50 rounds), Tool pouch, Pistol, Short spade, Sun glasses, Searchlight.	The machine-gunner op- erates the machine gun in battle. He is responsible for the care of the weapon.
Assistant (No.2)	Barrel - protector with a spare bar- rel, 4 belt drums (each with 50 rounds), Ammunition belt 34, Pistol, Ammunition box (300 rounds), Short spade, Sun glasses.	This member of the squad is the assistant to the machine-gunner in com- bat. He insures the sup- ply of ammunition. He assists the machine-gun- ner in the preparation for firing and in going into position. Then he usu- ally takes position under cover, several paces to the left flank or rear of the machine-gunner. He is always ready to aid the machine-gunner (for ex- ample, by correcting jams, changing barrels, righting the gun on bipod) or to replace him.

Members	Equipment	Duties
Assistant (No.2) —Continued.	<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/>	After the gun has gone into position, if there is suitable cover present he lies down near the machine-gunner and aids him in serving the machine gun. He also aids the machine-gunner in the care of the weapon.
Ammunition-carrier (No. 3).	Barrel - protector with a spare barrel, 2 ammunition boxes (each with 300 rounds), Ammunition belt 34, Pistol, Short spade.	If possible, the ammunition-carrier takes a position to the rear, under cover. He inspects the ammunition belts and ammunition. He also operates as a close-in or hand-to-hand fighter.
Riflemen (Nos. 4-9).	Rifle (each), 2 ammunition pouches, Short spade. <i>And when ordered:</i> Hand grenades, Smoke grenades, Explosive charges, Ammunition, Machine-gun tripod.	The riflemen execute the close-combat fighting with rifle fire and bayonet.  One rifleman is the second-in-command. He is the assistant of the squad leader and commands the squad in the absence of the leader. He is responsible for liaison with the platoon commander and with adjacent squads.

## 2. SQUAD FORMATIONS, CLOSE ORDER <sup>1</sup>

	SQUAD LEADER		ASSISTANT
	SECOND-IN-COMMAND		AMMUNITION-CARRIER
	LIGHT MACHINE-GUNNER		RIFLEMAN

Figure 1.—Squad symbols

The formations in figures 2, 3, and 4 are taken at once upon the following orders, respectively:

1. SQUAD LINE, ONE DEEP, 2. FALL IN.



Figure 2.—Squad in line

1. SQUAD COLUMN, 2. FALL IN.

1. IN MARCH ORDER, 2. FALL IN.

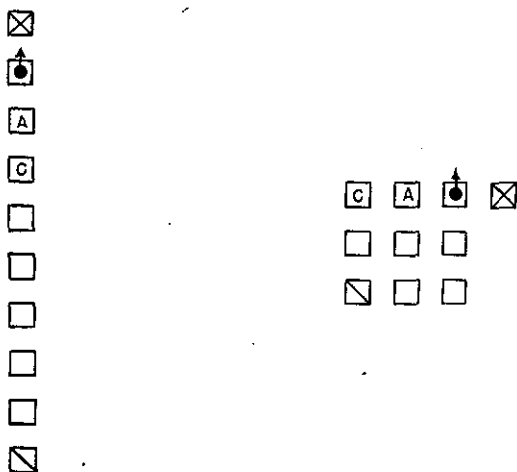


Figure 3.—Squad column

Figure 4.—Squad in march order

<sup>1</sup> See FM 22-5, "Infantry Drill Regulations," August 4, 1941, paragraphs 114-130, for comparison with U. S. Army squad formations. Figure 1 gives the U. S. symbols used to represent the members of the squad.

### 3. SQUAD FORMATIONS, EXTENDED ORDER

When the situation, terrain, and hostile activity no longer permit close-order formation, the squad adopts open formation—that is, deployment. The deployment of the squad usually follows immediately after the platoon develops. It is executed upon signal, order, or command.

The principal deployed formations are the squad column (fig. 5) and the skirmish line (fig. 6). The squad is always deployed as a unit, with the machine-gunner (No. 1) as the base man.

#### a. Squad Column

The squad column formation is used for approaching the enemy during the fire fight when only the light ma-

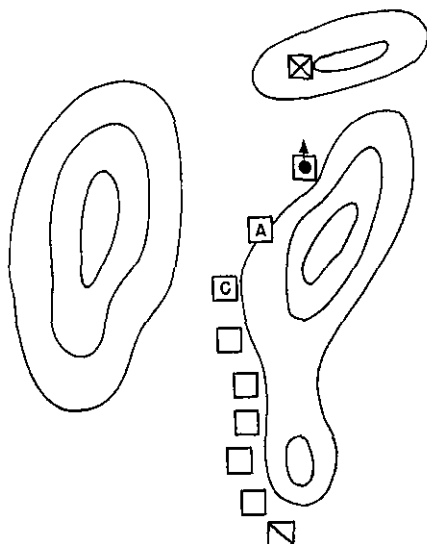


Figure 5.—Squad column moving forward

chine gun is firing and the riflemen are held back. The second-in-command is at the tail of the column to insure that the members of the squad keep closed up (see fig. 5).

### b. Squad Skirmish Line

If the immediate, combined fire action of both the light machine gun and the riflemen is required by the situation, the skirmish-line formation should be adopted.

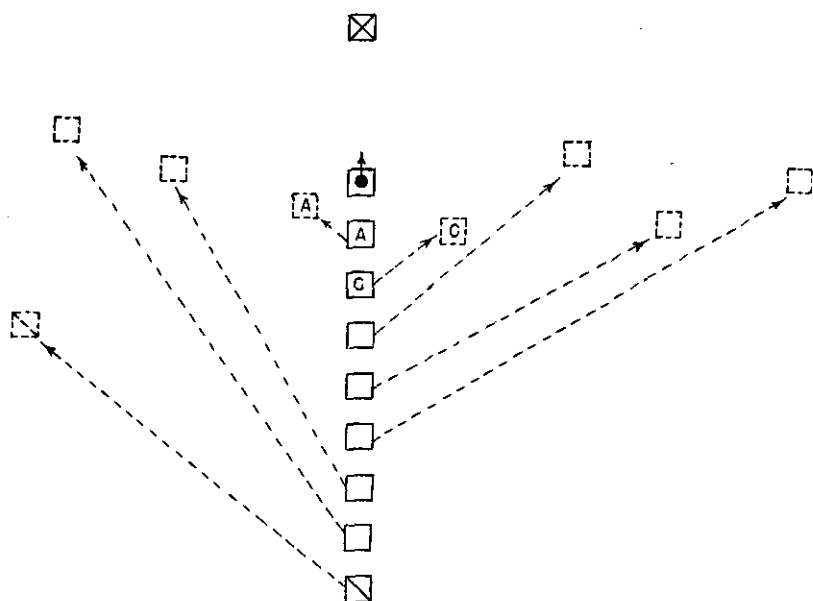


Figure 6.—Squad in skirmish line

If the whole squad is to engage simultaneously in fire fight, the riflemen take positions according to the terrain, usually building up a skirmish line on both sides of the light machine gun (see fig. 6). The light machine gun remains centrally located in the squad skirmish line, ex-

cept where the terrain or situation suggests the deployment of all the riflemen to the right (or to the left) (see fig. 7).

If it is desired to change the formation from squad column to skirmish line in order to take up the fire fight immediately, the leader gives the signal or command to deploy. Bunching around the machine gun must be avoided under all circumstances.

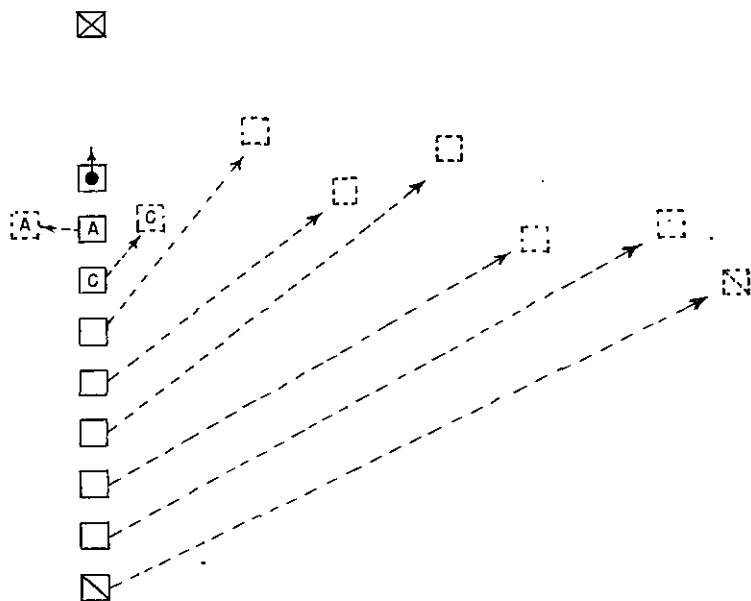


Figure 7.—Skirmish line echeloned to the right

In order to form the skirmish line from the squad column, the forward half of the riflemen deploys to the right of the machine-gunner, and the rear half to his left. The interval between men is approximately 5 paces, unless a different interval is expressly ordered. If it is

desired that the riflemen deploy all on one side, it must be so ordered. If the deployment is executed from the march order (fig. 4), the riflemen take the same positions as indicated in figures 6 and 7.

### c. General

The use of other formations, or the omission of parts of the squad, is permissible only when the situation makes it necessary. In this case special orders should be given. Cohesion within the squad must be maintained at all costs.

The formation of the squad may be changed from column to skirmish line (or vice versa) to reduce casualties from hostile fire or to negotiate difficult terrain. Formation changes in rough terrain are often necessary in surmounting or avoiding obstacles of all kinds, or in closing up on rear squads.

It is less important that the distances and intervals be maintained exactly than it is that the squad avoid losses—in other words, that it reach the enemy position in full strength. The attention of the riflemen should be directed more in the direction of the enemy and less on the formation.

The squad leader is not restricted to any given position or place. *As a rule, he moves before his squad.* On occasion it may be necessary for him to leave his squad temporarily in order to observe the enemy, reconnoiter the terrain, and maintain connection with adjacent units. His place is then taken by the second-in-command.

## **Section II. COMBAT METHODS OF THE SQUAD**

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### **4. SQUAD LEADERSHIP**

#### **a. General**

In modern combat the squad is usually the largest unit which can be controlled by an individual leader on the battlefield.

The efficiency of a squad depends essentially on the personality of its leader, his conduct in emergencies and in danger, his example, his power to make decisions, and his coolness. A good leader, one with a good personality, means a good unit, and a poor leader means a poor unit.

The development of the personality of the squad leader is one of the most important training objectives during peacetime. He must learn the way to the hearts of his subordinates and win their confidence by understanding their feelings and their way of thinking, and by justice and solicitude for their welfare. The subordinate wants to feel that his superior has a heart for him, looks after him, and intercedes in his behalf. It is only in this way that in the field the squad leader can be at the same time a stern father and a kind mother.

In the first few battles, where the inexperienced soldier may be influenced and frightened, the strong will and strict discipline of the leader will assist the soldier in overcoming his fear and in carrying out his mission coolly.

## b. The Squad Leader

The squad leader must be an example—and a combat example—for his men. The most effective means for gaining the respect and confidence of subordinates, and for getting the most out of them, is to set an example. But in order to set an example, the squad leader must have a stronger will than his men, must do more than they do, and must himself always faithfully discharge his duties and obey orders cheerfully. A superior can make his subordinates reliable and conscientious in the carrying out of orders only by setting them a good example in this respect, even in the smallest things. In order to be a leader in the field, a superior must display an exemplary bearing before his men in the moment of danger and be willing, if necessary, to die for them. The weak and vacillating are then guided by his example and by his disregard of self in accepting privations and dangers.

The way in which the squad leader gives his orders exercises a great influence upon subordinates. Calmness and certainty, as well as clearness in the dispositions and the orders; immediately create in subordinates the feeling that the leader is competent and make them confident of success. They want to see and feel that their leader is superior to them in knowledge, ability, calmness, behavior, and experience.

In offensive action, the squad leader comes after the platoon leader in driving power. He must continually keep alive the will to conquer the enemy.

Under heavy fire, only a real man maintains the composure necessary for calm judgment, so essential to proper decisions. Only the man who does not fear dan-

ger, or who can control his fear, can lead his men against the enemy, and such a man, in spite of discouraging progress during the course of the battle, will lead his men on.

In defense also, the squad leader, by his personal fearlessness and coolness under heavy fire, retains the unswerving loyalty of his men. The troops in the front-line units look to their squad and platoon leaders for strong leadership when attacked by a numerically superior enemy. Lastly, it is the squad leader who incites his men to engage in vigorous hand-to-hand fighting or to launch swift counterblows when the enemy closes in the final assault upon them.

If the squad leader conducts himself in the presence of his unit in an exemplary and calm manner—in other words, acts like a real man—his men will also do their duty and carry out his orders conscientiously. The squad leader will then be able to depend upon them in every situation.

## 5. THE SQUAD IN THE FIRE FIGHT

### a. General Principles

The squad is usually employed in combat as a unit. The division into two groups—a light machine-gun group and a rifle group, with different combat missions—no longer applies. The fire fight is now conducted through the concerted effort of the entire squad.

If the situation requires the opening of fire—in the attack usually at the shorter ranges—the squad leader, as a rule, employs initially only the machine gun, the fire of which he personally directs. In many cases (for example,

if the target is small and the range short) it is preferable to employ a good rifle marksman.

In order to obtain the most effective results, the riflemen will be employed early. This employment should be effected at short ranges and when the riflemen have sufficient cover so that they will not lie on the field of battle merely as targets. When the squad is organized for penetration, the riflemen are deployed in the front line in preparation for the final assault upon the defender. Those parts of the squad which are not actually engaged in the fire fight are held under cover. However, the tactical integrity of the squad must be retained. The opening of fire is normally ordered by the squad leader.

The employment of the light machine gun in the fire fight emphasizes the heaviest concentration of fire against the more threatening and most dangerous targets. Selection of the target is determined by the combat mission of the unit. It is most important that the unit defeat that portion of the enemy, or take under fire those targets, which may prevent the accomplishment of the combat mission. For effective distribution of fire, careful coordination with adjacent units and with the heavy infantry-supporting weapons is essential.

When a squad is operating under hostile fire, the breadth and depth of its deployed formation often render control of the entire squad by one person very difficult. Therefore, the riflemen assist in the fire fight of the squad by conducting their fire independently, unless the squad leader concentrates the fire of his riflemen upon one target.

## b. Fire Discipline

(1) *Targets.*—The rifleman fires upon that portion of the target designated to him, and in the case of very broad targets he directs his fire at that position directly opposite him. If the selection is left to the rifleman, he himself fires upon the target which interferes most with the accomplishment of the squad's mission. All the riflemen must therefore know the combat mission and must understand the squad leader's plan for its accomplishment.

The selection of the aiming point is usually left to the rifleman. In the case of small targets, the aim should be at the bottom; in the case of large ones, at the middle. If a target is moving to one side, the rifleman must aim ahead of, or move his sights with, the target, taking into account the speed of movement and the velocity of the bullet.

Unless the command FIRE AT WILL has been given, the rifleman will not fire except at targets that suddenly appear at close range. Even this is not permissible if the squad leader has ordered the withholding of fire.

(2) *Ammunition.*—Ammunition supply plays an important role. Hence, every leader must supervise its expenditure carefully and provide for its replenishment. All leaders must know how much ammunition they have at their disposal, and when and how they can supplement it. Each light machine gun must hold back as long as possible 200 to 250 rounds as a reserve.

(3) *Range estimation.*—Usually the estimate made by the leader provides the basis for the initial sight-setting. By the action of the enemy and by the impacts of the

bullets, the leader and the men should try to determine whether or not the range has been correctly estimated. The fire is being aimed well when a part of the bullets are observed in front of the target, and the majority fall behind the target. If poor observation in the vicinity of the target renders it difficult to determine the correctness of the range, then a point in the vicinity of the target which may be more clearly observed should be fired upon, and the correct range determined.

### **c. Employment of the Squad in Surprise Fire**

(1) *General.*—Light machine-gunners and riflemen cannot conduct a fire fight over a long period of time. An effort should always be made, therefore, so that they may go into position and fire without being discovered. Victory comes to the one who fires the largest number of well-aimed shots against his opponent in the shortest time.

After a fire action of brief duration, or as soon as the purpose of the fire is attained, the light machine-gunners and the riflemen take cover. If necessary, they move to another position. These changes in position must be made under cover; otherwise, they will be worthless. Fire pauses should be utilized for improving the position.

If the terrain permits or the riflemen have dug in, the opening of fire is always prepared under cover. Not until then do the riflemen and light machine-gunners go into position for fire by surprise. Every moment which is not used to good advantage weakens the fighting power of the unit.

The conduct of a surprise fire attack is divided into

preparation and execution. The initial preparation includes all activities which may be conducted under cover (for example, designation of targets, sight-setting, distribution of extra ammunition, fire distribution in so far as necessary, etc.). The execution includes the occupation of positions and actual firing.

The amount of ammunition to be used in rapid fire may be ordered if it can be foreseen that the amount prescribed is adequate to attain fire superiority or to accomplish the object of the firing.

When a light machine gun fires through a gap in the line, it should be located behind the center of the gap, and the distance from the gun to the gap should be less than the width of the gap (fig. 8). Overhead fire with the rifle and light machine gun is undertaken only when the weapons are located on high ground immediately above the troops over which the firing is directed.

The employment of rifle fire must always be determined by the terrain and the situation. Using riflemen in surprise fire, the squad leader from a covered position points out the target to the riflemen before the beginning of fire, and indicates the range and the target. At the commands *POSTS, FIRE AT WILL* the riflemen rush to the firing positions (approximately even with the leaders), thrust rifles forward, push the safety to the "off" position, and open fire immediately.

Easily recognizable targets may be pointed out under cover. If it is not possible to designate the target while the men are under cover, the leader first lets them occupy their firing positions and then designates the target. Fire may be opened by an arm signal, a command, or a whistle.

During pauses in the firing, every rifleman and machine-gunner must inspect independently his weapon and ammunition. By questioning the men, the squad leader finds out the amount of ammunition on hand. The

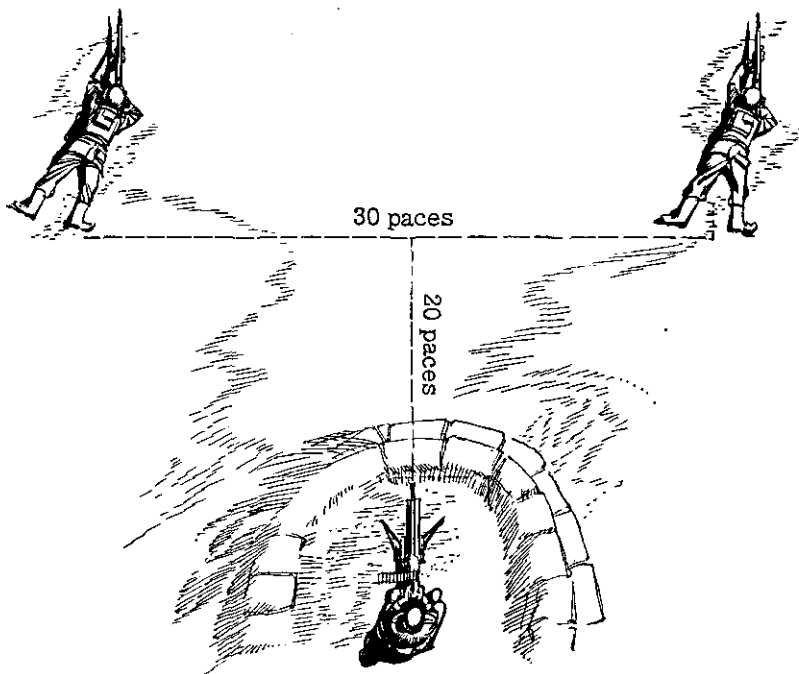


Figure 8.—Relative positions of machine-gunner and a line of riflemen  
dual-purpose machine gun (MG 34)<sup>2</sup> is always prepared to fire by having the bolt in the forward position and the ammunition belt or magazine in the firing position.

<sup>2</sup> This is the standard German machine gun. It is used both as a light and as a heavy machine gun, depending on whether it is mounted on a bipod or a tripod. For details, see TM 30-450, "Handbook on German Military Forces," paragraph 77.

(2) *Examples.*—(a) To accomplish surprise fire, the light machine gun is brought into position as follows:

Taking advantage of cover and concealment, the squad leader points out the target to the machine-gunner (the field glasses may be used), for example:

Direction: farm houses, pile of bright stones. One finger to the right, an enemy machine gun.

The gunner shows that he understands, for example:

There appears to be smoke from the machine gun's fire; (*or*) The machine gun appears to be about 100 yards behind a bright green bush.

The squad leader gives the range (for example, RANGE 700), and indicates the location of the gun position. He may prescribe the number of rounds to be fired (for example; 50 ROUNDS).

While these orders are being given, the assistant (No. 1) often aided by the ammunition-carrier (No. 2), makes the light machine gun ready under cover as close behind the firing position as possible, sets the range, and loads the light machine gun.

At the command POSTS, FIRE AT WILL the gunner brings the machine gun forward to the firing position, unlocks the piece, and opens fire.

The assistant helps in putting the gun into position; then he lies down, usually a few paces to the left or to the left rear and under as good cover as possible, always ready to assist the machine-gunner: for example, in removing stoppages or in replacing him. Only when there is ample cover available will he remain beside the machine-gunner to assist him. The ammunition-carrier lies to the rear under cover.

If haste is ordered, or if it is necessary to open fire in uncovered terrain in the face of enemy fire, then target and range are ordered briefly and quickly: for example, 1. SQUAD, 2. POSTS, 3. MACHINE GUN IN BUSHES, LEFT OBLIQUE, RANGE 450, 4. FIRE AT WILL.

If fire is to be discontinued, CEASE FIRING and immediately thereafter, as a rule, TAKE COVER are ordered. Before the gunner leaves the position, he locks the gun. If the gunner has fired the prescribed amount of ammunition, he independently discontinues fire, locks the gun, takes cover, and awaits further orders.

(b) Opening of fire with light machine gun and rifles successively begins with the following command:

1. LIGHT MACHINE GUN, 2. POSTS, 3. 400 YARDS TO OUR FRONT A ROAD FORK, TWO FINGERS RIGHT, A MACHINE GUN, RANGE 400, 4. FIRE AT WILL.

If during the fire fight it becomes necessary to use riflemen—for example, if to the right of the enemy machine gun riflemen also appear—then the further command is given:

1. RIFLEMEN, 2. POSTS, 3. HOSTILE RIFLEMEN TO THE RIGHT OF THE MACHINE GUN, RANGE 400, 4. FIRE AT WILL.

The following are examples of the opening of fire by the entire squad:

1. RIGHT OBLIQUE, AT THE WOOD, RIFLEMEN, 2. POSTS, 3. ENTIRE SQUAD, RANGE 350, MACHINE GUN, 100 ROUNDS, 4. FIRE AT WILL; (*or*) 1. ENTIRE SQUAD, 2. POSTS, 3. RANGE 400, ATTACKING ENEMY TO FRONT, 4. FIRE AT WILL.

If haste is ordered, or if fire must be opened from positions offering no cover in the face of enemy fire, then

target and range are usually left to the riflemen, and the order becomes 1. POSTS, 2. FIRE AT WILL.

Fire is discontinued at the command 1. SQUAD A, 2. CEASE FIRING, and usually this is followed by the command FULL COVER. Before the rifleman leaves the position for full cover, he must lock his rifle. If the ammunition ordered for the surprise attack has been fired, the riflemen stop fire of their own accord, lock their rifles, and take cover.

The commands SQUAD A, CEASE FIRING and FULL COVER are to be passed along by all the riflemen. All the other commands and orders are to be passed along when the situation requires.

#### **d. Hints for Training in the Fire Fight**

(1) *General.*—For the mechanical drill of the squad, a situation that conforms to reality in every particular is not required. It is sufficient, for example, to assume that the squad is in a defensive position and arranged as a combat group.

Upon a prearranged flag signal, several targets in succession and at various ranges may appear. If there is a shortage of personnel or means by which an enemy may be represented, any target may be designated for the purpose of training. The essential thing is that the squad leader be trained to recognize the target quickly and correctly, point it out distinctly and briefly, and give the correct fire order. If he is given several targets simultaneously, he should learn to recognize and combat the one that is the most dangerous and most important for the time being.

(2) *Examples.*—The squad is entrenched as a combat group along a ridge:

(a) At about 1,500 yards riflemen appear, advancing singly.

The squad should not open fire, either with the light machine gun or with rifles, because the distance is such that there is little or no prospect of effective results. The squad leader reports his observation at once to the platoon leader, retains the enemy under observation, and prepares to open fire later.

(b) At 500 yards, three to four individual hostile riflemen are observed carefully crawling forward, apparently a reconnaissance patrol. Otherwise, nothing else is visible.

Firing is still withheld. Permit the enemy to advance, in order to take prisoners or to permit firing at short effective range.

(c) The situation is the same. Close behind the individual riflemen, at a distance of 400 yards, a machine gun is observed being put into position.

This is a paying target and also one which can make things very unpleasant for the squad. Open fire immediately with the light machine gun and rifles, by quick designation of target and brief fire order, and strive for surprise fire attack.

(d) The situation is the same. The enemy machine gun has disappeared.

Cease firing immediately. Move the light machine gun quickly to the alternate firing position.

(e) The situation is the same. At 600 yards, about 50 or 60 enemy riflemen are advancing on a broad front upon the squad.

Immediately have the entire squad fire rapidly. Divide the entire advancing hostile line into sectors to insure that the squad covers the target. Strive for surprise fire. The essential thing is to stop the advance of the enemy and force him to take cover.

(f) Enemy riflemen throw themselves to the ground and return the fire. Suddenly a hostile machine gun fires upon the squad. With the naked eye, the location of the enemy machine gun cannot be determined. The squad leader has discovered the position of the gun with his field glasses, and it is very difficult to point out the target to his squad.

The squad leader orders his riflemen to continue the fire upon the enemy riflemen; then he himself operates the light machine gun, firing short bursts in order to designate the target to the machine-gun crew. The machine-gunners resume their posts and continue to fire.

Other targets may be designated in a similar manner. The chief problem is to develop in the squad leader the ability to adapt himself readily to various and unexpected situations, and, on the basis of a sound decision made quickly, to issue a brief and clear order.

(3) *Points for special attention.*—In all these and similar exercises, which should be rehearsed frequently on various types of terrain, pay particular attention to the following points:

(a) Has the target been designated briefly and clearly? Have all of the riflemen recognized the target? (Many times the target designation is too verbose.)

(b) Have all the infantrymen made the correct sight setting, or have they made the proper sight changes?

(This preparation is frequently forgotten.) Check the firing position.

(c) Has the squad leader ordered an immediate change in position for the light machine gun, after he is told that his machine gun has been recognized and is under considerable aimed fire? How is the change in position executed? Is the machine gun taken back under cover at once for unloading, and is it prepared for fire before occupying the alternate firing position?

## 6. COORDINATION WITH OTHER WEAPONS

### a. General

Infantry brings the final decision in combat. All other arms have the mission of supporting the infantry. The infantry itself carefully coordinates its light and heavy supporting weapons. As the infantry presses forward in the attack, in addition to coordinating its own weapons it must make skillful use of the terrain and supporting weapons and must fully exploit any weakness discovered in the enemy.

The close coordination of all arms presupposes close liaison and a prompt, mutual cooperation by all units. Success will be determined by the employment of all available combat means at the right time and at the right place. Every one, even the lowest noncommissioned officer, must clearly understand that only the careful coordination of all arms will insure success.

Light infantry weapons include all the weapons of the rifle company. Heavy infantry weapons include the heavy machine guns, the heavy mortars, the infantry cannon, and the antitank cannon. In the attack the light

infantry weapons are the attack weapons, and the heavy infantry weapons are the close-support weapons.

In combat the heavy infantry weapons must maintain constant liaison with the infantry units which they are supporting. They must quickly recognize, and destroy or neutralize, hostile forces which are most dangerous to the advancing rifle companies. In the attack the most dangerous hostile elements are usually the machine-gun nests located in the rear of the main battle positions; in the defense, they are usually the close-support heavy infantry weapons or tanks which may be well forward in the enemy attacking formation.

### **b. Coordination in Attack**

The enormous increase in rapid-fire automatic weapons (light machine guns, heavy machine guns, light and heavy mortars, infantry cannon, antitank rifles, antitank cannon, and submachine guns) during and after the World War (1914-1918) has so greatly increased the defender's power that well-concealed and covered positions organized in depth may be successfully attacked only by the closest coordination and full cooperation of all arms.

The careful regulation of fire and movement in the attack involves the most skillful leadership. Fires are arranged to permit the advance of part of the force under cover of fire from other parts. The artillery supports the infantry on a large scale, operating principally against distant targets. Close-in support is provided by light and heavy infantry weapons. The lighter weapons are brought nearer the enemy under the protection of the heavier ones.

They provide mutual support in advancing against the enemy up to the final assault with cold steel.

During the development phase and when troops are occupying assembly areas, particularly in difficult terrain or under conditions of poor visibility, artillery and heavy machine guns, and often the infantry cannon, are promptly put in position in order to insure protection and support of the infantry, and in order to subject at once to fire any enemy that emerges.

Usually the artillery supports the infantry by firing counterbattery missions against the hostile artillery and by placing concentrations upon the enemy infantry. If possible, the enemy artillery should be taken under fire by friendly artillery before the advance of the infantry to the attack. When the infantry attack begins, the artillery places the mass of its fire upon enemy targets which offer strongest resistance to the infantry. The infantry must then exploit this fire support at once and with lightning-like rapidity. If at various places the infantry has worked forward within range of assault, then all heavy weapons increase their rate of fire against these places and continue to place their supporting fires in front of the advancing infantry. At the shorter ranges, the infantry must engage the forward enemy nests with its own close-support weapons. It can do this in an effective manner, particularly at close range, by increasing the number of light machine guns, and by employing light and heavy mortars. When the infantry breaks into the enemy lines, the artillery, coordinated with the heavy infantry weapons, must be prepared to concentrate on any enemy flanking action or counterblows. If, during

the further course of the advance, the artillery can no longer support the infantry from its position, then the batteries must displace forward to new positions.

The light infantry cannon are employed against targets which, because of extraordinary tenacity and powers of resistance, the machine guns cannot overcome, or which cannot be reached by flat-trajectory weapons (for example, behind steep slopes and in dugouts). The heavy infantry cannon are used to break particularly tough resistance at strongpoints in the enemy position.

Using indirect fire, from well-concealed positions if possible, the heavy machine guns engage the targets indicated to them, particularly the enemy machine-gun nests. If they cannot carry out their combat mission from covered positions, then they must fire over the heads of the infantry from elevated and open positions, or fire through the gaps left by the advancing infantry. In the course of the combat, they follow the infantry in echelon formation and provide mutual fire support. As the critical points in the hostile line are reached, the coordination between the heavy machine guns and the advanced infantry elements becomes increasingly important. In this situation it is often necessary to attach a heavy machine gun or a heavy machine-gun section (two heavy machine guns) to the advanced rifle companies or platoons.

In the attack, the light and heavy mortars are employed against those "point targets," immediately in front of the assault units, which machine guns cannot reach. These "point targets" are usually the suddenly appearing entrenched machine guns at close ranges which, on account of dispersion, can no longer be brought under fire by the

artillery. Shooting at random over the ground occupied by the enemy accomplishes nothing. Supported by other weapons, the infantry squads, without firing their own weapons, work forward as close as possible to the enemy. These squads carefully exploit all available cover and concealment which the terrain offers: ditches, wooded areas, bushes, etc. They should advance by marching, running, or crawling as the situation demands.

The light machine guns open fire at effective ranges when they are obliged to give the riflemen fire support in their advance over terrain which offers limited cover. The riflemen also open fire when they no longer have any cover for working forward, or when they must facilitate the advance of their light machine gun.

Supported by all arms, the squads work up as close as possible to the enemy position without firing, carefully exploiting all cover offered by the terrain, and, if necessary, using detours so as to conserve all their shock power until the final assault against the enemy position. In working forward, the men should take lightning-like advantage of every weakness shown by the enemy: for example, when the enemy is under heavy fire temporarily, or when his observation is hindered by hits (high-explosive, gas, or smoke shells). The assault and penetration are then launched upon the initiative of the squad leader. In these operations the light machine gun accompanies the squad in the assault and fires while moving.

Tanks used in mass and by surprise facilitate the penetration of the infantry. Antitank weapons (antitank rifles and antitank cannon) follow closely behind the assaulting infantry.

Fighting after penetration of the enemy main position requires continuous effort to maintain close coordination of fire power and shock action, because during this phase of the battle it is very difficult to maintain contact between the various units. However, such contact permits the concerted effort which is vital to the success of the breakthrough. By prompt concentration of separate infantry detachments with heavy weapons under one leader, assault groups are formed for further concerted action. They overwhelm the separate enemy nests of resistance one after the other. The method of fighting and the cooperation of weapons in each of these separate combat actions are essentially the same, but the manner of execution will differ with the situation. Whenever the terrain or enemy fire will permit, the most forward squads push on in the direction of the attack without allowing themselves to be held up by isolated nests of resistance which are still intact in front of a friendly unit. By their advance straight ahead, they can best help that adjacent unit. The heavy infantry weapons cover the flanks and rear of the detachments that have advanced far ahead.

If, however, the platoon leader decides to employ a squad to support the assault of adjacent squads, this supporting squad concentrates heavy fire against the point of penetration, or against the enemy flank or rear positions which cover that point with hostile fire. The light machine gun, all the rifles, and, at close ranges, the submachine guns are all employed in such situations.

### c. Coordination in Defense<sup>3</sup>

The defense is based upon the careful arrangement of all weapons for meticulously coordinated fires (fig. 10). The essential thing is not that the position be occupied without gaps—many parts of the terrain may be left unoccupied—but rather that the defender, by a carefully

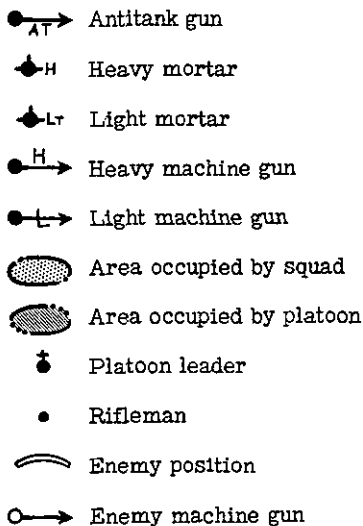


Figure 9.—Tactical symbols

thought-out fire plan, be able to lay down before his position, particularly at night, a curtain of fire that will have no gaps in it.

In defense, rapid signal communications (runners, telephone, portable radio sets, flagmen, messenger dogs, etc.), between the various units are even more important than

<sup>3</sup> See figure 9 for tactical symbols used in the following illustrations. For the reader's convenience, the German symbols are ordinarily converted into U. S. symbols, here and later.

they are in attack. They are needed in order that the enemy advances, supporting weapons, and observation posts may be discovered and immediately brought under effective fire.

The light and heavy infantry weapons as well as the artillery supplement each other in the fire support accord-

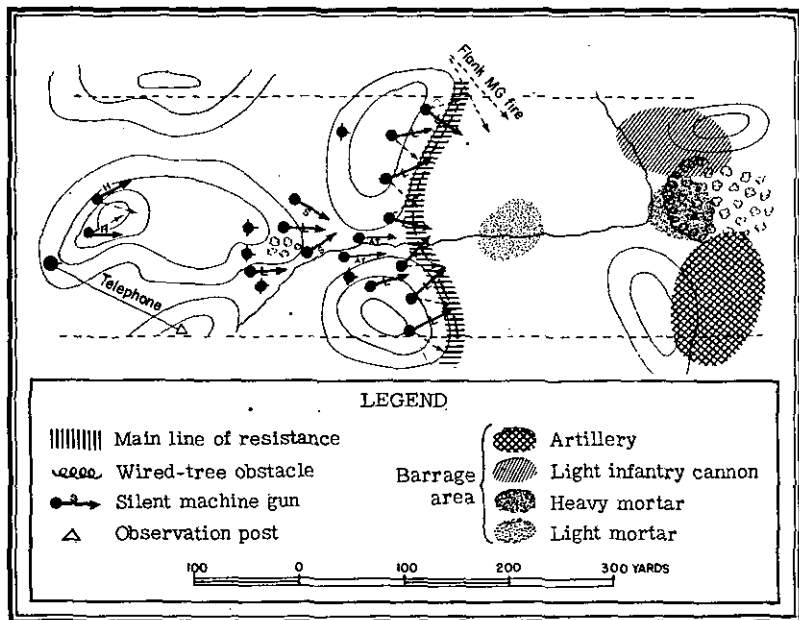


Figure 10.—Coordination of weapons in defensive positions

ing to their range and fire effect. Firing is started at the maximum ranges. The terrain in advance of the main line of resistance is covered by continuous interlocking bands of fire, and the defender insures that dangerous approaches are covered by fire. Preparation must be made by all units to deliver promptly barrage fires upon prearranged signals such as Very lights.

The light and heavy machine guns are organized in depth, in nests of resistance, and in strongpoints in such manner that the terrain in front of and within the position may be dominated by the frontal and flanking fires, leaving no unprotected gaps in the position. This fire is supplemented and reinforced by the heavy machine guns of the reserves. These guns are usually disposed to the rear in depth, in such manner as to permit firing through gaps and over the main line of resistance. Arrangements are made for flanking fire, chiefly by machine guns close to the main line of resistance, at places where the artillery at closest range cannot place its fire owing to danger to our own troops. Isolated silent machine guns set up in the main defensive position out of sight of the enemy do not participate initially in the combat, but they overwhelm the enemy at close range with surprise fire just before the enemy penetrates the position, or after the enemy has already broken into it.

In defense, the light and heavy mortars operate chiefly against those targets which the heavy machine guns, the infantry cannon, and the artillery cannot reach. Such targets would be those at very short ranges and under cover: for example, defiles. The mortars likewise take part in barrage fires. The submachine guns are used for close-range defense at not over 200 yards.

The infantry cannon engage chiefly those infantry targets in or behind cover (for example, enemy concentrations located behind steep slopes, in defiles, in ditches, in woods, etc.) which cannot be reached by flat-trajectory weapons. When the enemy is about to assault the position, both the light and heavy infantry cannon contribute to

the final barrage by placing their fires immediately in front of the main line of resistance.

Platoons of antitank guns are usually held in positions of readiness covering places most likely to be used by enemy tanks. These weapons employ direct fire only.

The antitank rifles are employed within the company sector, and do not open fire until the hostile tanks are within a range of about 300 yards.

Part of the artillery may be located in advanced positions in order to reach far to the front. Initially the artillery places its fire upon any avenue of approach available to the enemy, and then it concentrates on the enemy as he develops and deploys (in recognized or conjectured assembly areas). It also fires on enemy observation posts and artillery positions (discovered by artillery plane reconnaissance), but as soon as the advance of the enemy infantry is observed, the artillery opens fire with most of the batteries on that target. The remainder fires upon the enemy batteries and observation posts.

Tanks are held initially in the defense as part of the reserve. They are employed to support counterattacks and to combat hostile tanks. For antiaircraft defense, antiaircraft artillery and machine guns are employed.

The squad leader must realize that the coordinated fires of the light machine gun and rifles of his squad and of squads adjacent to his position will often stop the advancing enemy in front of the main line of resistance. Upon remunerative targets, he may open up fire with the light machine guns even at long range. Generally, however, he will leave this task to the heavy infantry weapons. Usually the fire of the light machine guns is first directed

at those elements of the enemy which cannot be engaged in a sufficiently effective manner by the artillery and heavy infantry weapons. At very close ranges the sub-machine guns may be effectively employed.

If sections of the main defensive position are lost, the squad leader's first concern must be to concentrate heavy fire upon the enemy force which has broken through. If this does not stop the enemy, swift counterblows are employed to destroy him or force him back before he has established himself in the captured terrain. At the conclusion of the fire fight, the squad should have complete control of its original defensive position.

## 7. THE SQUAD IN OFFENSIVE COMBAT

### a. General

The offensive implies a feeling of superiority: The attacker has the initiative; he determines where and when the battle will be fought. Superiority in numbers is not always the decisive factor. Superiority in leadership, in the capacity of the troops (better training), in surprise effect, and in quick, active seizure and exploitation of favorable opportunities may lead to complete success against a numerically superior enemy. The World War (1914-1918) presented many examples of this.

### b. Development

(1) *General*.—Development is normally the initial phase in preparation for the attack. It is the extension of the force both along the front and in depth—in short, a breaking up into smaller groups. In the platoon and the company this extension usually concerns only depth. In

developed formations, advancing troops take advantage of all available cover. It may be necessary to change the formation in order to take full advantage of cover. The force must develop if hostile air or ground observation, artillery fire, or long-range fire from machine guns is expected. During this phase rifle companies leave the march route and break up into the three platoons. When the rifle platoon develops, its four squads separate (figs. 11 and 12), but each squad remains in a close formation.

The platoon leader is not bound to any certain point. Other kinds of development are possible, and the distances and intervals are not fixed. Usually the order for the development contains information of the enemy, objectives or purposes of the development, and the formation.

The order may provide additional instructions, such as special contact measures, direction of advance, information pertaining to adjacent units, the advance of heavy infantry weapons, the location of the platoon headquarters and of the light mortar section, and the location of the combat train and the platoon leader. If not otherwise ordered the combat train of the platoon follows the last squad in the development of the platoon.

The light machine-gun equipment is removed from the cart and carried by hand just as soon as it is no longer feasible for the combat train to follow closely, or when an increased combat readiness is necessary.

(2) *Examples.*—When sufficient time is available, the platoon order for development is given in detail:

“Enemy still entrenched on the other side of the woods.

“The battalion reaches the woods in developed formation in order to attack the enemy.

“The company advances in developed formation to the right of the road.”

1. PLATOON, 2. PLATOON WEDGE, 3. DIRECTION, RIGHT CORNER OF FOREST, 4. SPREAD OUT.

If time is limited and the development must take place quickly, the following command is given: 1. PLATOON WEDGE, 2. SPREAD OUT (fig. 11); (*or*) 1. PLATOON, 2. BROAD WEDGE, 3. DIRECTION, LEFT CORNER OF WOODS, 4. SPREAD OUT (fig. 12).

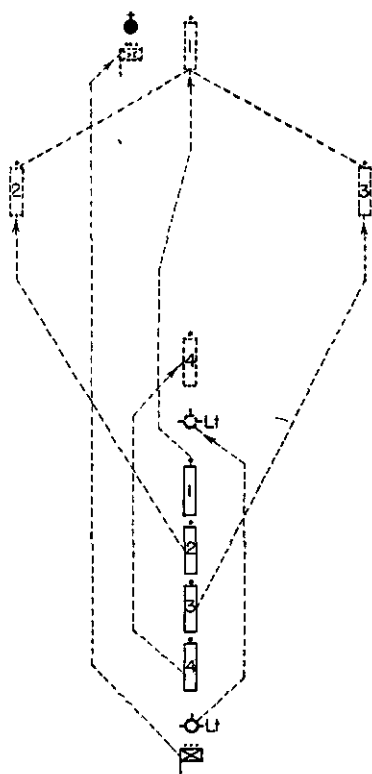


Figure 11.  
The platoon wedge

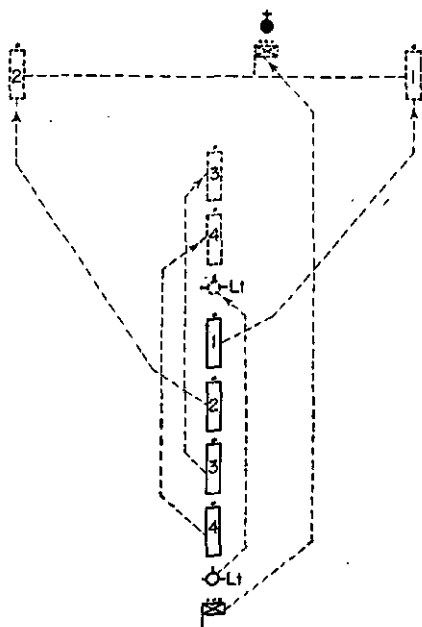


Figure 12.  
The platoon broad wedge

All additional orders that are necessary are given after the development.

On terrain where observation is difficult, and when the enemy situation is comparatively vague, the forward platoon leader will often use only one squad initially as a leading element and will form a wedge. The remaining squads follow, ready to be shifted quickly later as the situation develops.

At the order SPREAD OUT the platoon extends itself along the front and in depth. So long as the situation and the terrain permit, the squads move forward in close formation, exploiting carefully all available cover against fire and observation.

Invariably the development and the advance in developed formation are protected by elements of the artillery and by heavy machine guns from covered positions. These supporting weapons give prompt protection to the advancing infantry in case of a sudden encounter with the enemy.

### **c. Deployment**

Deployment is the organization of troops for combat by disposing them in battle formations. The time to deploy is determined by the proximity of the enemy, by the terrain, and by the necessity for opening fire. The deployment of the squad usually follows immediately after the development of the platoon.

The squad leader receives his mission from the platoon leader. Often, however, he will have to act independently within the limits of the platoon's mission.

The manner in which the squad advances in deployed formation depends on the terrain, the proximity of the

enemy, and the enemy fire action. In rough terrain, the squad column is usually the best formation by which the squad advances, taking advantage of depressions and any available cover. The squad advances at a walk when it is under cover and receives no fire. Under fire, the squad rushes as a unit or by individuals, takes cover where the terrain permits, or opens fire.

#### **d. Advancing in Battle**

(1) *General.*—The squad works forward in extended formation. The squad leader's control and his influence on the action of the riflemen must be assured.

The light machine-gun group usually forms the spearhead of the attack within the squad. The longer the riflemen are able to follow the light machine gun in squad column, the longer may rearward, supporting machine guns fire safely past advancing squads through existing gaps.

If under effective hostile fire, the advance of the squad must be supported by its own fire. Here the fire can serve its purpose only if it is used quickly and decisively to gain fire superiority, thus permitting the men to work forward. Fire and movement must always be closely coordinated. The terrain must be used in a skillful manner. In terrain with little cover the infantrymen must dig in quickly. Here the machine guns must protect the entrenchment until a makeshift cover has been provided.

If possible, areas covered by enemy artillery fire are avoided or circumvented insofar as the terrain and mission permit; otherwise, quick rushes are made during a pause in the firing.

In working forward the men advance as a group or singly, by bounds or by crawling. The nature of the advance and the length of the bounds will depend on our own fire support, the enemy fire action, and the terrain.

If the situation and enemy fire permit, the squad leader takes advantage of the support of adjacent units or heavy infantry weapons in order to permit the entire squad to rush forward simultaneously. This method of advance during the fire fight should always be used when possible.

If the light machine gun or the riflemen are engaged in the fire fight before an advance is made, a change to the alternate firing position is first ordered. If the terrain permits, the light machine-gunner and the riflemen immediately lock their guns, take full cover, and make all preparations for the bound. The light machine gun is unloaded. If the light machine gun 08/15<sup>4</sup> is being used, with the ammunition belt, then the belt stays in the magazine feed and the steam hose is rolled up or taken by the machine-gunner. In the case of machine gun 34, the gunner puts a full magazine in the magazine container, without pulling back the bolt handle. As soon as the machine-gunner (No. 1) is ready for the bound, he reports "Ready."

When the machine gun goes into action, the assistant (No. 2) sees that ammunition is available (also water, in the case of the LMG 08/15). He supplements his ammunition supply from the ammunition-carrier (No. 3).

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<sup>4</sup> The light machine gun 08/15, an obsolescent water-cooled machine gun, is still used in some German units. See TM 30-450, "Handbook on German Military Forces," paragraph 76.

The latter sees that neither equipment nor ammunition is left in the last position. All the riflemen make themselves ready for the rush.

At the command 1. ENTIRE SQUAD A, PREPARE TO RUSH—(*long pause*)—2. UP, the members of the squad rush forward. Before this command the objective which is to be reached is often announced (for example, NEXT BOUND, THE ROADWAY).

The bound is ended by a signal or by the command FULL COVER OR POSITION.

If the squad is not engaged in a fire fight, or if the light machine gun is not prepared to fire, the command CHANGE POSITION is not necessary and is not given. The location to which the next bound is to be made is then ordered. A description of the place to which the bound is to be made is given, and the members of the squad prepare to make the bound.

The command for the bound is often replaced by a signal or an order (for example, FOLLOW).

If the infantrymen are to go forward singly, then the objective to be reached is definitely indicated (for example, "Each man work forward to the crossroad"). In this case it is important that the men lock their weapons, close their ammunition pouches, and work forward independently at irregular intervals of time and space to the objective.

If there is frequent change of position, the squad leader may have one gunner with ammunition (generally No. 2) advanced forward. The latter selects the new gun position, prepares it, and places ammunition within reach. He will then often take over and fire the machine gun

when it is brought up to the position by the machine-gunner (No. 1).

(2) *Examples.*—(a) Hostile artillery fire covers a bridge which must be crossed by our squad.

Solution: Long bounds, with the squad closed up, are made during each pause in fire.

(b) High ground which is under hostile observation and which is being strafed by enemy machine-gun fire has been ordered captured.

Solution: Advance as close to the hill as possible under cover, and then the entire squad will rush forward in a bound to the next cover.

(c) The effective fire of friendly artillery compels the enemy to take cover.

Solution: The entire squad will advance in long bounds, to utilize fully the support afforded by the artillery.

(d) A squad is fired upon at close range by an enemy located in a strong defensive position. There is little fire support by other arms.

Solution: The riflemen advance individually by bounds or by crawling; short bounds only are possible.

### **e. Attack**

In the attack the fire fight is conducted initially by the heavy weapons. The destruction or neutralization of enemy strongpoints is the most important mission of the artillery, the infantry cannon, and the heavy machine gun. At effective ranges the light machine gun is also employed. The riflemen participate in the fire fight in the early phases only when good results may be expected, or when they have insufficient cover. But it is not the

task of the riflemen to engage in fire fights of long duration in order to gain fire superiority. In the attack, in the final analysis, it is the vigorous shock power of the riflemen with bayonet which overcomes the enemy. Fine leadership on the part of the squad leader consists in bringing his riflemen into contact with the enemy in as strong condition as possible. The faster the leader brings his squad forward within the mission of the platoon, without exposing it to unnecessary losses, the greater will be his success. The outcome of the attack will depend upon the will of each individual soldier to attack, and particularly upon the will of the leader.

If the squad, under the fire support of the artillery and of the heavy infantry weapons, and by a careful exploitation of the terrain, has worked itself within effective rifle range, then its mission is to wrest fire superiority from the enemy. This requires strict fire discipline, the prerequisite for successful fire fight. It is reflected in the choice of the firing position by the individual rifleman, the way he gets ready in his position, the correct setting of sights, the selection of the target, the way in which fire is opened and distributed, and the employment of ammunition. Fire effect is the most important consideration, taking precedence over cover. A guiding principle follows: work forward as far as possible without firing, that is, so long as the terrain permits covered advance, or so long as the fire support of the artillery and heavy infantry arms permits. The squad does not engage in the fire fight until the terrain no longer offers sufficient cover, or until the support of the other arms no longer suffices. In the latter case, the squad will first open fire with the

light machine gun against the enemy positions which offer resistance to further advance.

The following is an example of an order to open fire:

(The squad still lies in a depression, under cover. The squad leader points out the target to No. 1.)

"At about 450 yards a pile of potatoes and on its left edge a machine gun."

No. 1 confirms: "Movement at the machine gun!"

The squad leader orders: 1. POSTS, 2. RANGE 450, 3. FIRE AT WILL.

If there is no cover under which the machine gun can be made ready for fire, then the command POSTS is given before indicating the target.

Only special reasons (as, for example, the loss of the light machine gun in a critical situation, or the appearance of particularly favorable targets, etc.) would justify the temporary employment of the riflemen for a fire fight at mid-ranges. The riflemen are then employed in volley fire.

When, at the closer ranges, the fire support of heavy infantry weapons and artillery is no longer fully effective, and the fire power of the light machine gun alone no longer suffices to obtain fire superiority and keep the attack going, the riflemen are employed in the fire fight. Their fire should be in heavy bursts of short duration.

#### **f. Penetration**

Penetration into the enemy positions often originates with the squad leader. He seizes every opportunity for penetration, even without any special order. Usually a signal for the heavy arms to lift their fire will be given.

In penetration, the whole group rushes or fires as a unit. If possible, the platoon leader employs several squads advancing from various directions against the objective. In this way the defensive fires of the enemy will be scattered. This form of attack is no longer carried out by the squad, but by the platoon.

When the enemy is entrenched in strongpoints, it will be advantageous to throw hand grenades just before the assault. The throwing of grenades will then be limited to designated grenade-throwers.

The squad leader insures that there is proper coordination and full cooperation between grenade-throwers and the other riflemen and the machine gun.

The period of disorganization and confusion after the assault requires both special caution and vigorous action on the part of the squad leader. He must hold what he has won. The squad, which has become disorganized during the assault, must be quickly brought under full control by the squad leader.

Enemy counterattacks must find the squad ready for defense.

If the squad leader is given orders as to the time for the penetration, he brings his riflemen forward to launch the assault at the moment fixed for the penetration. The squad penetrates the enemy's position before he has had time to recover and to offer further resistance. To do this, terrain is captured by moving alternately at double time and at a walk. The riflemen follow the method of advance as undertaken by their leader.

Every squad leader takes advantage of any opportunity to penetrate or break through the enemy position, even in the absence of orders. By his personal example

he carries his squad forward in the assault and breakthrough.

Before and during the assault the enemy must be subjected to the greatest volume of fire by all available weapons. The light machine gun takes part in the assault and breakthrough, firing even while in movement.

With hand grenades, submachine gun, rifles, pistols, and spades, and shouting "Hurrah," the men charge the last enemy position. The whole squad takes part in the hand-to-hand fighting.

### **g. Continuation of the Breakthrough**

After the assault the squad should be quickly reorganized and prepared for further coordinated offensive action. Bunching-up should be promptly remedied. The squad should as soon as possible resume the advance deeper into the enemy position.

If the platoon leader orders one squad to support (by fire) the advance and assault of the other squads, the squad so designated concentrates its fire upon the place of penetration, or fires at the enemy in flanking or rear positions which are covering the point penetrated. Under these circumstances the light machine gun and all the rifles are employed. At close ranges the submachine gun is also used.

In occupying a position the squad should be organized in such a way that the squad leader can control the entire squad. The front of the squad is 30 to 40 yards.

The riflemen are grouped about the light machine gun, within calling distance of each other. Some of the riflemen should always be located in close proximity to the light machine gun.

## **h. Summary of Basic Principles**

(1) If at all possible, the squad works forward under cover without actually firing, taking advantage of areas where there is little fire and where there is strong fire support by the heavy weapons.

(2) The squad leader need not, in advancing, restrict himself rigidly to the sector assigned. He should turn aside temporarily if by so doing he can avoid or minimize losses by the use of cover from observation and fire. However, he should not permit his men to bunch up, and he should also avoid masking the fire of the heavy machine guns in the rear.

(3) The entrenching tools should always be made readily available prior to the first advance on the battlefield.

(4) The squad leader is not restricted to any given position. His place is at decisive points in the action, and where there exists the most responsibility. Until the squad has started the fire fight, he always moves out rapidly at the head of his men and reconnoiters personally in order to determine by what routes, formations, and methods he can advance his squad with the greatest possible protection and cover. The squad leader seeks out elevated points from which he can observe the enemy and the terrain. He leaves his squad under cover and directs them by calls and signals.

(5) Usually, the light machine gun forms the spearhead of attack by the squad, so that if necessary it can immediately support the squad by fire—if, for example, the squad suddenly comes under fire.

(6) In covered terrain, if there is the possibility of a sudden appearance of the enemy, the squad leader has the riflemen move out ahead of the light machine gun, thus providing better protection of the machine gun against surprise.

(7) If the squad suddenly runs into artillery fire, the men at once throw themselves to the ground and take cover from the splinters. Then, in closed formation, they rush forward to the nearest cover against fire or observation, or, if necessary, they rush obliquely forward. By running quickly forward they can best escape the enemy artillery fire. The squad must never try to escape such fire by going to the rear. Areas under heavy fire are avoided by promptly turning aside. If this is not possible, then the squad runs through such areas as fast as possible in one long rush.

(8) Every forward movement within sight of the enemy should be covered by fire from the rear or adjacent weapons; otherwise, there will be heavy casualties. If necessary, the machine gun and the riflemen within the squad provide mutual fire support.

(9) Whether the members of the squad rush forward together or individually depends upon the distance to the enemy, the effect of enemy weapons, and the terrain (the nearest cover). At longer distances, the members of the squad may often make one long bound together. As the distance to the enemy becomes shorter, the bounds must usually be proportionately decreased. As a general rule, the bounds should be short enough so that the fire aimed at the men rushing forward will arrive too late—in other words, so that they will not be hit during the bound. Thus, at 700 to 800 yards, the bound should be about 40

paces, at 400 to 500 yards, about 15 to 20 paces. The more the bound is characterized by surprise, the smaller will be the losses. If the opposing enemy is held down by the fire of heavy weapons, then lightning-like advantage should be taken of this fire support for longer bounds.

(10) When covered advance is no longer possible, fire by the squad is usually opened first with the light machine gun.

Every burst of fire, particularly that of the light machine gun, takes the form of a surprise attack. In order to effect this surprise, it is necessary that the machine gun be made ready under cover and be well camouflaged. This is done while the squad leader is surveying the objective and determining the range. If the machine gun is unsuccessful in effecting surprise fire, it may at short ranges often be destroyed by fire before it has the opportunity to open fire itself.

(11) First, the target which most hinders accomplishment of the mission should be engaged. The squad leader must exploit every opportunity to fire upon large, close, and clearly defined targets. The individual rifleman, when no definite target has been indicated, usually fires directly at the target nearest or most dangerous to him—at the target the fire of which hinders the advance of the squad.

(12) All the riflemen should exploit at once every opportunity to win ground: for example, when the enemy opposite is under heavy fire or relaxes his fire. For this purpose the squad leader must from time to time exercise particularly careful control over his men.

(13) Moving the light machine gun to one side on uncovered terrain and under accurate enemy fire is

useless, because the gun would be neutralized while changing position. If there is no cover in the vicinity to which it can be withdrawn temporarily, the gun must endure the enemy fire and defend itself as best it can.

(14) For the penetration, the squad leader must take his squad very firmly in hand, because his example is of utmost importance at this critical moment to lead his men forward to a vigorous assault.

## 8. THE SQUAD IN DEFENSE

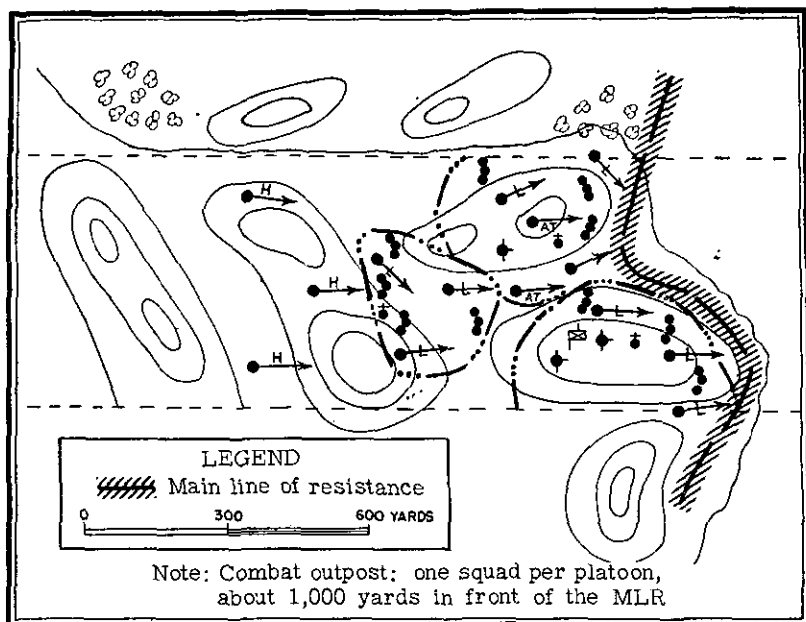
### a. General (fig. 13)

The defender seeks to compensate for his inferiority by selection of ground that assures him the most favorable fire effect. He tries to make the attack difficult for the enemy. But a position is of value only when it forces the enemy to attack. A force which is equal to the enemy in men and weapons can defend itself locally with weaker forces, in order to be stronger for an attack on another part of the front, or to pass later from the defense to the attack.

By skillful disposition of forces (organization in depth, security of flanks) and strong organization of the position on suitable ground (camouflage, natural obstacles, artificial barriers, etc., before the front) a force numerically inferior, but equal or superior in morale and equipped with the modern strong defensive power of many automatic weapons may stop, either temporarily or indefinitely, an attacking force which is greatly superior in numbers and weapons.

Good observation posts, as well as favorable firing conditions (fields of fire) for the heavy and light machine guns,

are the chief factors in determining the framework of the position, because heavy weapons constitute the backbone of every defensive position. The machine guns must be located so that they can cover the entire area in front of the position with effective frontal and flanking fire.



**Figure 13.—Organization of a rifle company in the defense**

In the defense the main line of resistance is established in an integrated manner. The forward light machine-gun nests and rifle strongpoints are located in that line. By the combined fire of all arms the enemy attack must be broken up in front of the main area of resistance.

If sections of the line are captured by the enemy, they must be retaken by the defender. In the defense the

position must be held to the last man. There must be no withdrawal.

The forces in the main defensive position are distributed in depth, in order to scatter and render less effective the enemy fire, to insure a more concentrated volume of fire from the defender's guns in the rear, and, furthermore, to inflict heavy losses by flanking machine-gun fire when the enemy attacks the main line of resistance or breaks into the main defensive position. If parts of the main area are lost, a vigorous effort must be made immediately to destroy the penetrating enemy by fire. Otherwise, he must be thrown back by a surprise attack of the defender's rear infantry units. This must be done before the enemy has had time to establish himself in the position he has won.

Outposts are usually located in front of the main line of resistance to provide reconnaissance and security, and also to deceive the enemy as to the location of the main line. These outposts are not located so far out that they cannot be supported by some light artillery fire.

Often the combat outposts defend themselves for only a limited period of time. They are given orders specifying their location, how long they are to hold out, and how and where they are to withdraw. When it is at all possible, the outposts hold their positions until dark.

## **b. Basic Principles for the Squad Leader in Defense**

(1) In the sector assigned to him by the platoon commander, the squad leader, after personal reconnaissance, assigns the riflemen their places in the position and supervises the organization and the camouflage. The

front of the squad is about 30 to 40 yards. If the squad occupies greater frontage, the squad leader cannot control his squad in combat. The front of the platoon is about 200 to 300 yards. Gaps between the squads must definitely be covered by fire. The position is organized hastily or thoroughly (by foxholes, joining of foxholes, obstacles, etc.) depending on the time available (proximity of the enemy).

(2) The squad leader first finds the most suitable location for the light machine gun within his squad, a position providing the most effective field of fire and also insuring a good opportunity to support adjacent units with flanking fire. Several alternate firing positions are reconnoitered at once and chosen, and they are organized later. Alternate firing positions must not be located too close to other positions. They should be at least 50 yards apart; otherwise the machine gun will not evade the hostile fire. Furthermore, it should always be possible to occupy alternate firing positions well concealed from enemy observation.

(3) Next, in compliance with the platoon leader's orders the squad leader posts the riflemen as a reserve or establishes them in the front line. In the latter case the riflemen are located so that the whole forward terrain can be swept with fire, principally at close range and very close range. As a rule, two riflemen are grouped together, usually in a small trench or ditch sufficiently close so that they can easily understand each other even in combat. In order to decrease the effectiveness of enemy fire, these separate nests or groups should not be on the same level but should be echeloned. If sufficient time is available after the squad groups (units) have been estab-

lished, the platoon leader may order the squad members to dig foxholes or trenches somewhat to the rear of their firing positions. The foxholes should be concealed from ground observation and, if possible, from air observation. The men may remain under such cover until the squad is employed in the fire fight.

(4) During the reconnaissance of the position and the construction of the trenches a member of the squad is always designated to observe and warn against the approach of the enemy troops and airplanes.

(5) The squad leader selects a position from which he can best direct the fire of his squad, particularly that of the machine gun. He determines in advance all pertinent firing data, including ranges to conspicuous points, and has the field of fire cleared in an inconspicuous manner. He discusses the situation and possible methods of employing fire with members of the squad.

(6) Conspicuous terrain features, such as solitary trees, bushes, the highest point of an elevation, the edge of woods, etc., should be avoided in occupying a position. They offer the enemy a good landmark and quickly draw fire. If there is sufficient time, clear away conspicuous trees, bushes, etc., for they facilitate the fire of the enemy's heavy infantry weapons and artillery.

(7) The trench work is almost always betrayed by the fresh excavated earth (either lighter or darker in color), by sharp edges, and by the shadows of the holes which have been dug. Sharp corners and straight lines should therefore be avoided.

(8) Good camouflage of all field fortifications, and improvised concealment and cover, provided against enemy ground and air observation, are of great importance while

construction is in process, and afterwards. On terrain which is evenly covered with vegetation (meadows covered by short grass) do not lay out pieces of sod (retained for subsequent camouflaging of the fresh earth excavated) in a regular manner near or behind each other, but arrange

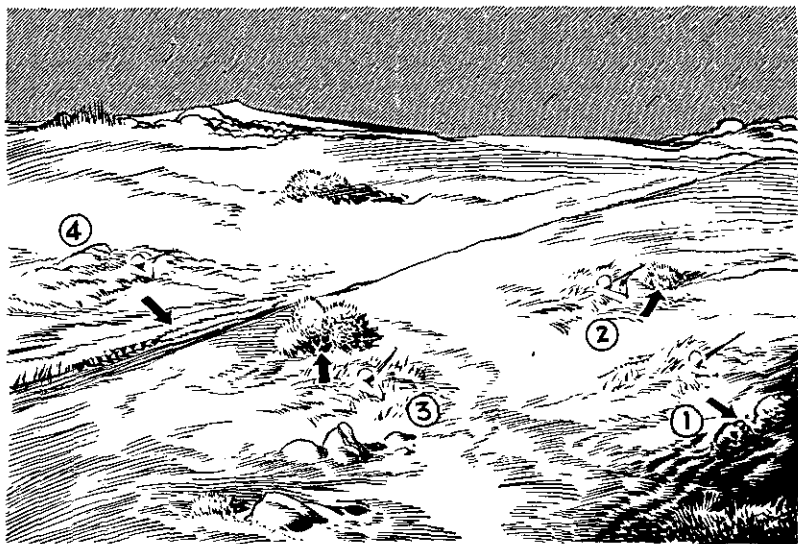


Figure 14.—Well-camouflaged positions

them irregularly if possible, along hedges, between fields, under bushes, etc. (fig. 14). Otherwise even a well-camouflaged position will be clearly revealed on the aerial photograph because of the large, regular, bare spots (fig. 15).

Even before beginning to construct the entrenchments, lay aside enough material for camouflage (natural or artificial) so that the works may be promptly camouflaged in case enemy patrols or aviators appear. If the situation permits, the squad leader views the position of

his squad from those points of observation which may later be available to the enemy.

(9) Avoid all unnecessary movement in the vicinity of the position (walking or running to and fro) if there is possibility of observation by the enemy. The best camouflaged position is worthless if, during or after its organiza-

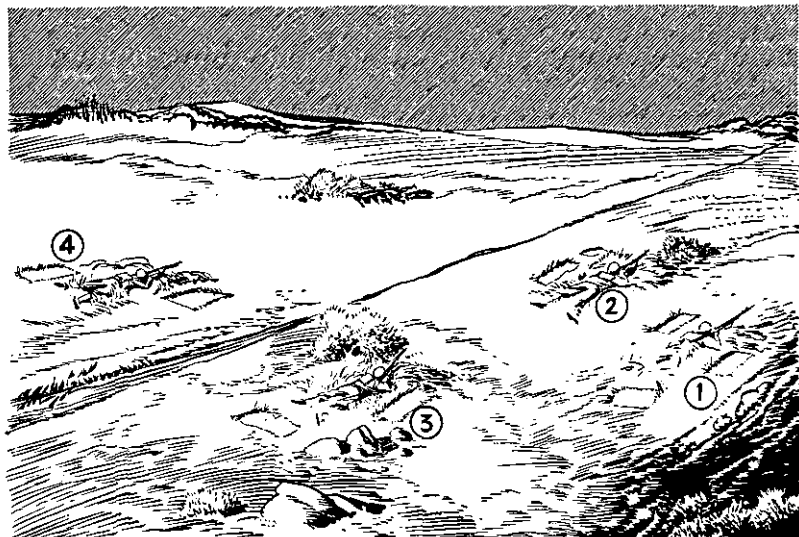


Figure 15.—Poorly camouflaged positions

tion, it is revealed to the enemy as a result of movements on the part of members of the squad.

(10) If an enemy airplane appears, work is stopped at once and concealed through camouflage so that the flier will not discover the position.

(11) Do not reveal the position to enemy scout patrols by premature firing. If possible, allow them to come so close that they can be taken prisoners or shot with comparative safety.

(12) At long ranges the fire fight is first carried on by artillery and heavy machine guns. In the meantime the squad leader keeps his squad under cover and concealment so that it will not be discovered prematurely.

The squad leader opens fire with the light machine gun at effective range only. Light machine-gun fire is directed particularly against targets which cannot be effectively engaged by the artillery and heavy infantry weapons.

When the enemy attacks, every rifleman, without regard to cover, must use his rifle. If an enemy hand grenade falls into the position, he springs quickly into cover, or he seizes the hand grenade and throws it out.

The squad leader fires the submachine gun only at very close range. Otherwise he directs the fire of his squad, principally that of the light machine gun.

(13) In the presence of enemy tanks the squad members take temporary shelter in rifle pits, in holes made specifically for protection against tanks, or, when necessary, by jumping into any available depression. *Running away means certain death.* Rifle and machine-gun fire has no effect against the armor of the tanks. Small arms may have some effect against tanks by firing at the slits, apertures, and openings on the machine-gun and cannon shields, for lead sprays may thus endanger the crews. Tanks are engaged by the antitank rifles, the antitank guns, and by artillery to the rear. The most important targets for the squad are the enemy infantrymen following close behind the enemy tank attack. They must be subjected immediately to concentrated fire by all the rifles. If they cannot be seen because of a smoke screen laid down by the tanks, then fire into the smoke.

(14) If the enemy has penetrated the position of an adjacent unit, the squad must hold its position under all circumstances, until rear squads have driven the enemy back. The enemy is stopped by bands of fire. If the situation to the immediate front permits, the enemy who has made a penetration must be hurled back by a quick counterblow conducted by local reserves kept in readiness for that purpose. After the enemy is driven back, the squad again organizes for defense.

(15) If the squad is placed to the rear of the main line of resistance, it entrenches itself just as the other squads do. The orders of the platoon leader determine its action. Often it will join in the fire action and contribute to the volume of fire in front of the main line of resistance by firing through a gap. Surprise fire (though avoid opening fire prematurely) must prevent the enemy from engaging the squad before the latter's fire effect has had time to operate. The squad leader must establish the position so that his men can bring flanking fire upon an enemy who has broken into the position of an adjacent unit. In preparing for the delivery of a counterblow, the leader must reconnoiter in advance to determine the route for such an attack.

The light machine gun may also be set up in the main defensive position as a "silent gun." As such, it is placed where it is concealed from enemy view for a long time. It does not participate initially in the fire fight, but waits until the enemy has come within very close range or has already broken through the main line. By exploiting surprise, such a silent machine gun may be highly destructive to the enemy just before or at the time of the

penetration, particularly if the gunner is able to employ flanking fire.

*Delaying action* has been dropped entirely from our tactics. There remains the *defense*, which, at the command of a higher authority, may be interrupted—to be resumed in a rear position.

## 9. THE SQUAD AS COMBAT OUTPOST

In the defense, combat outposts are usually located in advance of the main line of resistance. They are generally posted close enough so that they can still be seen by the artillery observers and so that they can be supported by the fire of the light artillery located in the main defensive position. They defend themselves, or, if the situation requires, they discontinue the defense and fall back to resume defensive action farther to the rear.

When there is a temporary lull in the fighting, the attacker may also provide security for his combat position by means of outposts. Usually such outposts consist of pickets, reconnaissance patrols, and observation or listening posts.

The combat outposts provide close-in security. They have the following missions:

- (a) To make the enemy's approach difficult.
- (b) To deceive the enemy as to the nature of the defense, as well as the location of the main line of resistance.
- (c) To protect the forces in rear by retarding the enemy advance until the rearward forces are ready for combat.

(d) To carry out battle reconnaissance and to maintain contact with the enemy if and when contact is established.

One or more squads, often reinforced by heavy machine guns and antitank rifles, are employed as outposts in the sector of the platoon or company. In open terrain permitting unrestricted observation, combat outposts are placed under a designated leader from within the company in order to insure coordinated action and control, especially when they are far advanced. In the latter case, the company commander takes personnel for outposts from platoons in the front line; he will usually reduce correspondingly the forward area of the platoon sectors.

When they are posted, the outposts must know whether they are to defend themselves, or if (and when) they are to withdraw to the position before strong enemy attacks and where they are to take position in line. Furthermore, they must know what friendly reconnaissance patrols or advanced security detachments are before them. The outposts must have orders whether or not they are to withdraw fighting, or whether or not they are to withdraw at one bound. If in the intermediate terrain there are still some sectors that are favorable for defense, they will often occupy these. They must always withdraw in such a way as not to obstruct the fire from the main positions. They must be given information as to passages over streams and marshes, through barbed-wire entanglements, minefields, etc.

The outposts are grouped in individual nests, which are echeloned in depth so that the rear nests can later give fire protection for some time in case the forward elements must withdraw. The battle outposts must

energetically prevent the enemy scout patrols from getting through their line. By means of patrols; and at times by small advances, they themselves reconnoiter the enemy.

After the organization of their positions, the outposts must prepare dummy positions in order to give the appearance of a stronger force. This deception may be made still more effective by changing positions from time to time. In this way they also make more difficult the enemy's minor thrusts against individual nests of the outposts. Such changes are particularly desirable at night if the enemy has had an earlier opportunity to detect the location of individual nests.

When the outposts of his squad go into position, the squad leader goes quickly out ahead with two men to reconnoiter the position. Through the second-in-command he has had the squad either follow at a certain distance or advance to a designated point.

While those accompanying him provide security in the direction of the enemy, the squad leader first looks for the most suitable position for his light machine gun (the best field of fire, the best camouflage, and the best means for going into and leaving the position under cover). With the same considerations in mind, he picks out several suitable alternate firing positions. By firing the machine gun from different positions, the outposts can simulate a stronger force, and their machine guns may also avoid effective enemy fire.

After doing this the squad leader locates positions for his riflemen (arranged in nests of two or three men each) so that by observation and fire they can give each other mutual support, as well as aid adjacent units. The squad

usually does not extend over 200 yards. All positions must be selected so that it is possible to enter and leave them under cover. Conspicuous features, such as isolated bushes, are to be avoided. If necessary, the leader has some men in his squad clear the field at once, and in a manner that will not attract the enemy's attention.

Immediately after his squad arrives at the position, the squad leader provides local security during the organization of the ground by putting the machine gun in a temporary position. He then organizes the position and the dummy works. Next, he establishes communication with the adjacent unit, visually or by sending out several men. As a rule, each squad establishes communication toward the right.

If definite signals (flares, flag signals, etc.) for the evacuation of the position have not been specified, before starting out from the main line of resistance the squad leader reaches an agreement with units adjacent to his position in order to insure coordinated withdrawal. He determines distances to various points on the terrain where the enemy is expected to appear first and notes them on a sketch. In preparation for the night, he and his men study the terrain and the avenues of approach available to the enemy and select a suitable position for the night.

## 10. THE SQUAD IN THE ADVANCE GUARD

### a. General

Every organization or unit marching in the areas where enemy action is at all possible must provide for its own security by its march dispositions. Such security meas-

ures are in addition to the security provided by reconnaissance and security elements (airplanes, armored cars, cavalrymen, and cyclists). As security for the main body, about one-third to one-sixth of the entire infantry force marches at a considerable distance ahead as an advance guard. The advance guard is organized into a support and an advance party. For security the latter sends an infantry point ahead about 500 yards. (Fig. 16 illustrates the formation of a battalion as advance guard.) Because of the continual danger of enemy air attacks, long continuous columns are seldom possible in daytime. Hence, we often allow the columns to march temporarily in "air security formation in depth," and if necessary also in "air security formation in width." "Air march depth" extends each unit to double the ordinary march depth. Protection by antiaircraft batteries and machine guns against air attack is always necessary.

The advance guard commander is not bound to any one place. If an encounter with the enemy is possible, then he stays with the advance party of the advance guard. The main body follows at a distance of 2 to 4 miles.

The advance guard has the following mission:

- (1) To insure the unmolested march of the entire force. (It quickly removes potential causes of delay and brushes aside weak enemy resistance.)
- (2) To protect the main body from a surprise attack.
- (3) To give the main body time and space for deployment in case of an encounter with a strong enemy force.

The distances between individual parts of the column—for example, between the infantry point and the advance party—are sufficient to insure that the next largest unit

will not be involved at once by the combat of the smaller formation, and yet such that the smaller formation can receive timely support from the following unit.

Liaison between the various elements in the column is maintained by connecting files (at times also by cyclists,

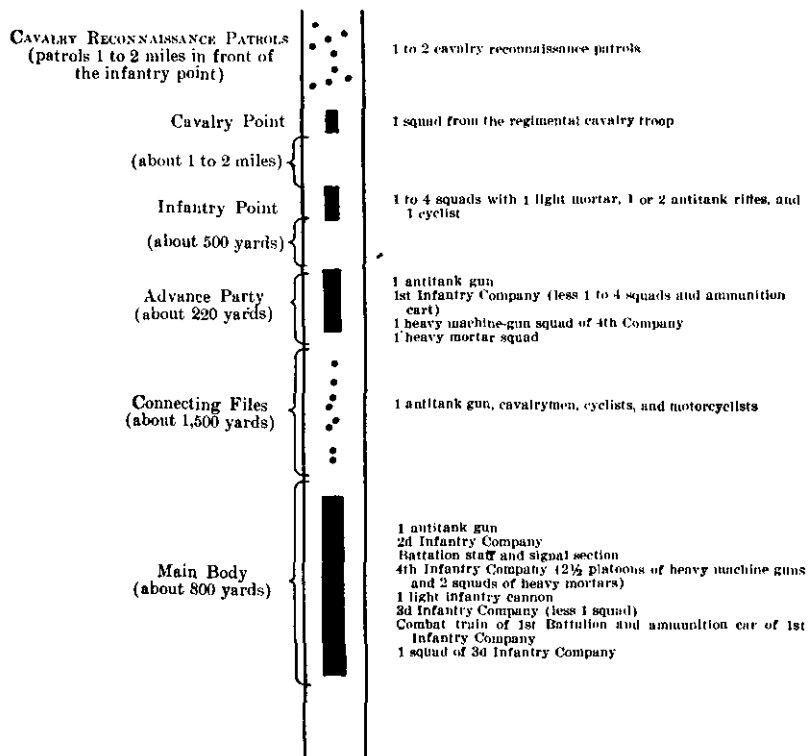


Figure 16.—Organization of a battalion as advance guard

cavalrymen, motorcycleists, and motorists). In daytime the distance between the connecting files is about 100 yards. At night, and in operation over terrain which restricts visibility, distances between elements are reduced.

The files also transmit short messages and orders (at the most one short sentence). If the company halts, the files send the message forward and also halt. But if the point halts independently (for example, because it has encountered the enemy), they either go forward and join the infantry point in the combat, in a manner determined by the situation, or they report to the commander of the infantry point.

Similar to the organization of the advance guard is that of the rear guard, which protects withdrawing troops against the confusion caused by sudden attack. The rear guard withdraws by stages.

#### **b. The Infantry Point (fig. 17)**

About 1,000 yards ahead of the infantry point, the mounted point marches by bounds from one observation point to another. But the knowledge of this protection ahead should not lead the infantry point to relax its watchfulness, or it may experience some unpleasant surprises.

(1) *Mission of the infantry point.*—The infantry point protects the advance party following behind, and drives away weaker enemy forces by quick attacks. If strong enemy forces are met, it gives the elements following time and space for deployment, and at the same time it reconnoiters the enemy positions until the company appears. By employing heavy fire, it stops the advance of the enemy as long as possible.

(2) *Strength of the infantry point.*—The infantry point consists of about one to four squads (usually two squads) under an officer (platoon leader), accompanied usually

by one antitank rifle and a cyclist. One light mortar detachment may also be attached.

(3) *Formation of the advance.*—The formation in which the infantry point advances depends on the proximity of the enemy and on the terrain. If there is no danger of an immediate encounter with the enemy, then the infantry point marches along the road, usually one squad in column

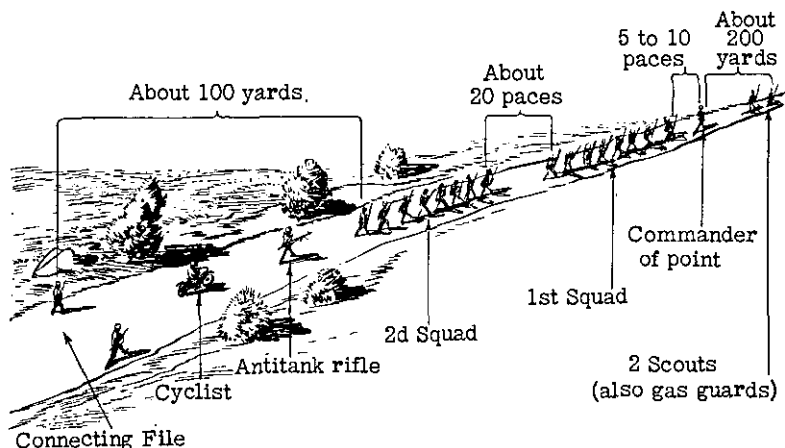


Figure 17.—Bird's-eye view of infantry point

to the right under the trees, and the other to the left under the trees. The leader of the infantry point is at the head with the command group. The light mortar detachment and one or two antitank rifles of the company are at the tail of the column.

Two intelligence men are sent out as scouts about 100 to 200 yards ahead, each equipped with field glasses and trained as gas detectors. One is equipped with a Very pistol in order to signal promptly to the rear announcing the approach of enemy tanks. The leader of the point

also carries a Very pistol. In the infantry point some men are detailed to observe to the front, others to the right, and others to the left and to the rear (toward the company) or toward the connecting files and air scouts. When approaching a defile, the scouts go around both sides in order to preclude surprise. Hills close to the road are used by the point leader for observation, but he must not delay on them too long.

In terrain over which we cannot see (for example, forests), it is best to have the squad riflemen march in front of the machine gun in order to insure protection of the machine gun from surprises.

When the enemy is near, the point often moves in ditches alongside the road, in extended echelon or in line of skirmishers. Any observation of the enemy should be reported through messengers (cyclists) by prearranged signals or by oral transmission through the connecting files. The transmission of long messages from one file to the next is not to be recommended, because by repeated transmission from file to file the message is usually incorrectly stated. In the advance the infantry point does not allow itself to be held up by hostile fliers, but uses the shade of trees or advances in the ditches alongside the road.

If the infantry point receives orders to halt, it need not halt at once on the spot where it happens to be when the order arrives, but, if necessary, may go on to the next elevation from which it can more effectively provide security for the halted column in rear.

All of our scout patrols, when passing either forward or to the rear, ask the infantry point about its observations of the enemy and its mission, and also, without special request, give their own observations. At road forks the rear

man of the point, as well as of the individual files, points out by arm signals the direction of march to those who follow. At night (or in fog) and in terrain of restricted visibility one man takes up a position and stays until the next file has come up.

The leading or smaller detachments must always keep the prescribed distances from the rear or larger ones; hence, the infantry point keeps its distance in front of the advance party. At a halt, the point does not remain on the road but to one side under cover; and in order to provide for its security, it immediately puts a light machine gun and observer in a suitable position, perhaps to one side on an elevation.

(4) *Examples of orders for detailing and starting a point.*—The enemy is reported still 20 miles away. The situation has already been announced. All orders are given loud enough for all the men to hear.

(a) Lance Corporal Herrmann and Rifleman Fuhrmann will act as scouts and as gas detectors along this road via village "A" to village "B." (If Corporal Herrmann has a map, he marks the route on it. If the platoon leader has previously had the opportunity to make a route sketch, he would turn it over to Corporal Herrmann.) You will precede the point by about 200 yards and maintain visual contact. Here is a Very pistol loaded with yellow cartridges, and three additional cartridges. Report enemy tanks at once by firing yellow cartridges. Repeat the order . . . MOVE OUT.

(b) In 2 minutes the squads of Corporal Mueller and Corporal Meier will fall in immediately behind me as an infantry point: Corporal Mueller's squad in squad column on the right side of the road, Corporal Meier's squad in column on the left side of the road, at a distance of 20 paces. The squad leaders will designate observers forward, to the left, to the right, and to the rear. The

light-mortar group and the antitank rifles follow Corporal Meier's squad closely. The cyclist follows behind them.

(c) Corporal Schulz's squad will let connecting files get a start of 100 yards each; the light machine gun and the squad leader march near the third file. The 4th squad remains with the company. Repeat the order . . . MOVE OUT.

### **c. The Infantry Point in Contact with the Enemy**

If the infantry point advances against a village or a woods in which the enemy is thought to be (by report of mounted point or cyclists), then it deploys and goes forward on a broad front. On passing through villages, buildings and grounds are quickly searched for enemy troops.

If the infantry point encounters a weak enemy force—for example, a few riflemen or a light machine gun (forward security)—then it immediately brings its light machine gun (or light machine guns) into position and opens fire. The point leader leads the riflemen in attack upon the enemy, taking advantage of cover and usually working quickly around to outflank the enemy, so as not to delay the advance of the troops following. The light mortars are brought into position at once; they are immediately assigned a target (a light machine gun). Quick action is imperative when the enemy holds an important point: for example, a defile or a commanding height.

Enemy scouts and reconnaissance parties must be fired upon and driven away at once. They must not be allowed to get even a glance at the marching column.

If the point encounters a sizable enemy force, one that

surpasses it in strength, then it initially takes full cover until friendly, rear heavy machine guns arrive and are put in position, and supporting troops come up from the rear. In the meantime the point leader, using his field glasses, determines the extent of the enemy and the location of his machine-gun positions, and, if a covered approach is possible, sends out a patrol for close reconnaissance of the enemy positions (to determine frontage, flanks, and composition) and reports to the company.

If the enemy attacks, then the leader at once commences a heavy fire with the machine gun and all rifles, in order to bring the attack to a standstill. If in terrain offering cover to the enemy the infantry point is suddenly fired upon at very close range (somewhere under 100 yards), then there is no time to open fire. With a shout of "Hurrah!" it rushes at the enemy. If at this close range the men should throw themselves to the ground in order to open fire, they would suffer heavy losses before they had time to fire.

By means of prearranged light signals and bugle signals, tanks are immediately reported to the rear so that the defensive weapons there (antitank guns and antitank rifles) may act in due time. When there is a strong wind or fog, or when in covered terrain (for example, woods), the prearranged warning may also be to detonate a hand grenade as a signal of approaching tanks. In the presence of tanks the point takes full cover close to one side of the road, if possible in ditches, because in such a position the men are usually in a dead space, under cover from enemy tank fire.

## 11. THE SQUAD ON OUTGUARD DUTY

### a. General

Troops at rest and exposed to contact with the enemy provide security against attack by means of outguards. The outguards are under the outpost commander. The outposts have much the same mission as the advance guard on the march, namely: (1) to reconnoiter in the direction of the enemy, so far as is necessary for the security of the troops at rest; (2) to prevent disturbance by the enemy; (3) in case of enemy attack, to give the troops in rear time to get ready for march or combat; and (4) to prevent the enemy from observing the resting troops (strength, organization, or shelter). Preparation must *always* be made for defense against tanks.

The strength of the outposts to be stationed will depend on the proximity of the enemy and on the terrain (road net, commanding heights, natural obstacles, etc.). No more troops should be assigned on outpost duty than are absolutely necessary for the security of the troops at rest (in order to spare the men). Hence, at a considerable distance from the enemy and behind sectors which are easy to defend (narrow passes, etc.), only a weak outpost is necessary. Closer to the enemy, and when there are less favorable defensive positions, a stronger protective force is needed. Here, as in the case of march security, the security detachments become smaller the farther they extend out toward the enemy, but they must always be more prepared for combat and more closely massed together.

First of all, the outposts provide security along the roads and highways leading from the enemy, using stronger

units (companies) reinforced by heavy infantry weapons for the main march roads, and often only outguards or advanced sentinels for the byroads. On the most important roads or highways, we use antitank barriers, mine barriers, and antitank guns. (Figure 18 is an illustration of a battalion on outpost duty in the vicinity of the enemy.)

For security, outguards are posted by the company. Their distance will generally depend on the road net and the defensive possibilities (bridges, road crossings, hills). Usually they will not be over 1,600 yards away. Within the companies the outguards are numbered consecutively from the right flank to the left (outguard No. 1, outguard No. 2, etc.).

The strength of the outguard will depend on its mission, on the nearness of the enemy, on the importance of the road to be protected, on the number of sentries that the outguard itself must post, and on the number of reconnaissance patrols that it sends out. Its strength will vary from a squad to a platoon. To outguards of platoon strength, one or two antitank rifles and possibly one or two heavy machine guns should be assigned. They may also be reinforced by antitank guns. Advanced sentinels will often suffice on the less important roads.

Stronger outguards in turn provide for their own security by means of advanced sentinels, reconnaissance patrols, and observation or listening posts. In addition, every outguard provides security for itself directly by means of a sentry. The outguard constitutes the reserve of its own sentinels. The advanced sentinels who will be relieved by the outguard itself should not normally be posted farther than 500 yards away.

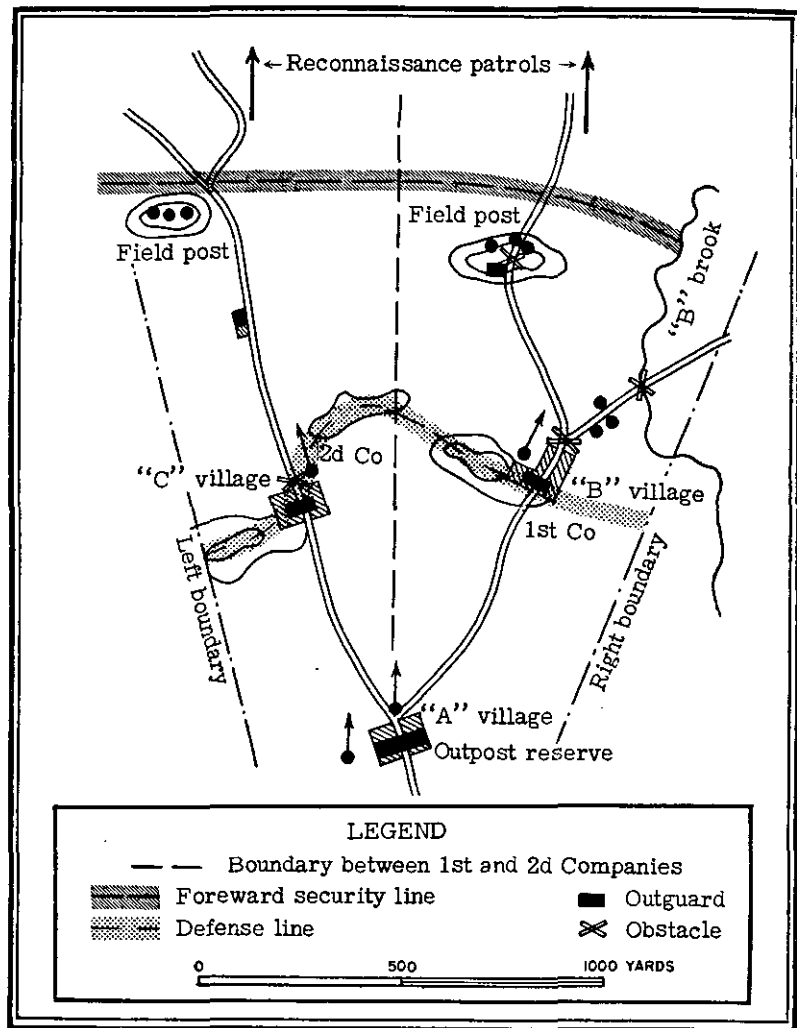


Figure 18.—Organization of a battalion on outpost duty in the vicinity of the enemy

When the terrain is broken, it suffices in the daytime to post a few sentinels at points favorable for observation, at times on one side of the road. At night a close chain of sentries is ordinarily required. All sentries must take up their posts directly on highways, roads, bridges, etc.

There must also be observation over the intervening terrain. In the daytime and on terrain favorable for observation, visual liaison will suffice. The harder the intervening terrain is to observe, and the closer the enemy, the more often must visiting and reconnaissance patrols be sent within the chain of sentries.

### **b. Duties of the Commander of an Outguard**

(1) *Adequate information required.*—Before marching off from the company, the commander of an outguard must know:

What information on the enemy has already been obtained;

Whether or not friendly troops are still in front (cavalrymen, cyclists, armored cars);

Where the company's defensive position is located;

Where the adjacent advanced sentries or outguards are;

What kind of light is to be sent up at the approach of an enemy armored vehicle, and location of the nearest liaison post from which the light signal may be fired, if necessary;

Over what ground and in what direction (right or left) his men are to withdraw in case they are attacked by a superior force.

All the men must be given this information. If they have not heard it at the time it was given to the leader, he gives it to them before the departure, or, in case of haste, during the advance.

(2) *Examples of orders.*—(a) *Before starting:*

1. The enemy . . . (what is already known about him).
2. The regiment is going to rest. Our battalion constitutes the outpost.
3. Our company remains here in "A" village as security. Our platoon is outguard No. 1 and goes to the road fork 1,000 yards to the front.
4. To the left of us, at "C" village, is outguard No. 2.
5. In front of us on this road is one of our own mounted reconnaissance patrols (or cyclist reconnaissance patrols).
6. Here are field glasses for Koch and Huhn. They go first as scouts along this road up to that farm, to which point the outguard will follow. They will take posts there as sentries and protect the establishment of the outguard. I follow with the outguard at a distance of about 100 yards. FALL IN.

(b) *During the march forward.*—The leader has one of his men repeat the situation and the mission. The leader then inspects the terrain for possibilities of withdrawal and discusses these with his men. He and his men get their bearings with respect to the terrain toward the enemy (villages, etc.).

(c) *After arriving at the outguard posts:*

The squads will first put down their packs there (*indicating*) and remove helmets, bring their rifles along and, using the vehicles from the farmyard, establish a road barrier at the road fork. Squad B installs two charges of explosive at this barrier. When this has been done, establish another road barrier at the bridge over "B" brook. Lance Corporal X, come along with your machine gun. You are sentinel post No. 1. Put your machine gun here in position so that it can fire on the road and on the terrain to the right up to . . . and the left up to . . . Camouflage it well. Estimate some distances right away. I will return shortly.

The leader has a movable barrier constructed, which is at first left open. Then, in several nests, he locates suit-

able fire positions (with wide extension) for all men of the outguard. The positions should be well camouflaged and easy to evacuate later on. At the same time, he sees if there are better positions for the machine gun, and reconnoiters for covered alternate firing positions. He assigns positions to the squads and has them prepare the camouflage and dig themselves in. He points out a position for the light-mortar section.

Then he goes to the sentinel post and makes an inspection to determine whether he has disposed his men properly (the two observers must be so close together that they can understand each other easily). He then gives them the following general directions:

Koch is to remain standing here at this tree. Huhn lies here at this bush with the light machine gun, and digs in and camouflages himself. No smoking! No civilian is to be allowed to pass through our line, going forward or to the rear. Fire upon any person who does not stop when challenged for the third time. Any soldiers passing through are to be sent first to me. If superiors are known to you, allow them to pass at once!

Often it will be advantageous to use simple sketches for orientation of the posts. As soon as the men have prepared their firing positions, the leader designates the ones who are to act as relief and likewise orients them on the terrain. He seeks out a covered place in the house, if possible with windows toward the enemy or the road, and allows the infantrymen to rest on the farm premises. Rifles and gas masks are always at hand. He then reports the dispositions of the outguard to his company, if possible with a sketch in which all locations are shown in detail.

When the leader has completed all these arrangements, he prepares on message blanks some sketches (with

carbon copies) of the terrain in front of the position. On these he can later, if necessary, by means of some notations in red indicate observations of the enemy and thus report them to his company.

The commander of the outguard must always be readily available. If he goes away temporarily, he must place his second-in-command in charge.

### **c. The Outguard in Contact with the Enemy**

The outguard allows an enemy patrol to approach as close as possible if it appears that it has not recognized the outguard. It is then either cut off all at once or destroyed by fire at close range (which is important for determination of the troop unit).

After closing the barrier, the outguard takes cover from enemy armored scout cars. The car or tank is engaged by the antitank rifle. Its appearance is reported to the rear by means of signal pistols in order that the company antitank guns can go into action in good time.

If a strong enemy force comes up, all the riflemen begin a heavy fire at once, in order, first, to slow up his advance and, second, to notify the company of the attack. One man is sent back immediately with the report, on a bicycle if possible. The outguard then withdraws to the company over the route which has already been reconnoitered, without, however, restricting the field of fire of rear elements.

## **12. RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS**

Close-in reconnaissance is carried out by infantry patrols in addition to cavalry and cyclist parties and armored

scout cars. The number and the strength of the patrols sent against the enemy, also their equipment and arms (light machine guns), depend upon the situation and the mission.

The reconnoitering patrol must move cautiously and quietly. It should halt frequently in order to observe and listen. Cunning and cleverness, a quick eye and resolute action, a love of adventure, and boldness are the prerequisites for the successful execution of every reconnaissance mission. The reconnoitering patrol should get as close to the enemy as possible without being seen in order that the patrol may obtain information on his position. The men of the patrol must become acquainted with the terrain so that on their return they may give information about it and, if necessary, serve later as guides.

At night—and often during the day, too—observation and listening posts are usually sent out in front of the line of sentinel posts to suitable points (for example, exits from villages, bridges, etc.) in order to provide increased security and information. They remain in position until relieved.

In crossing a sentry line, the visiting patrols must inform the nearest post of their mission and, when they return, of their observations. The same is true of reconnaissance patrols that are met.

Reconnaissance and visiting patrols within the line of outposts observe, chiefly at night and on broken terrain, intervening areas not occupied by posts. The patrols also serve for liaison. As a rule, they consist of two men (including the leader) and are sent out by the outguards.

### 13. TRAINING THE SQUAD IN ANTI-AIRCRAFT PROTECTION

Advantage must be taken of every opportunity to *give the riflemen practice* in estimating the elevation of airplanes. Such opportunities may be afforded while on the drill ground, on the march, etc. In this connection, the instructor should discuss again and again the question of whether and under what circumstances it is permissible to open rifle fire at an airplane.

Practice should also be given at every opportunity in aiming a light machine gun and in taking aim with the rifle. Unless such practice is afforded, no one will hit anything in actual battle. Aiming exercises afford an opportunity for impressing upon the rifleman that modern airplanes move with incredible speed (360 miles an hour, 6 miles a minute, 176 yards a second). This information will assist him in estimating leads.

In training a squad for battle, one often hears the instructor's simulated situation: "You now see an enemy reconnaissance plane approaching from that direction. What do you do?" This situation has not been properly expressed. One should not tell the man what kind of airplane is approaching. Tell him what he will actually see under battle conditions: for example, "You see a single enemy plane approaching from the direction of the village over there, at about 1,000 yards . . .," etc. It must be left to the rifleman or his squad leader to identify the type of aircraft approaching, by inference from the above-mentioned observation and by using his own knowledge of different types of airplanes, especially their formations, and

then to decide upon appropriate action (that is, whether to proceed on his way, take cover, or take the airplane under fire).

#### 14. CONDUCT OF RIFLEMEN IN THE PRESENCE OF ENEMY TANKS

One must count at all times on the possible employment of tanks. It is important for the defense to have the tanks recognized and reported as soon as possible. Riflemen in advanced position will with all possible promptness report back the presence of tanks, by means of prearranged signals (flares or lights), so as to make it possible for the defense weapons (antitank cannon and antitank rifles) to make timely preparation for action.

The tank's effect upon the morale of troops is accomplished by surprise employment and shock action. It is essential that the infantryman does not lose his nerve. Running away is the worst thing he can do, for in all probability he will be shot. He should take cover in fox-holes, depressions in the ground, road ditches, etc., when he sees hostile tanks approaching, or he should leap to the side out of the way of the approaching tank. If no cover is immediately available, open fire at once against the slits and apertures of the tank; the tank crew may thereby be endangered by bullet splinters. Invariably, hostile infantry follows the tank attack and should be met with strong fire by the infantry soldier, whose mission it is to stop the enemy infantry with machine guns and rifles. The antitank guns will combat the tanks. (Figs.

19 and 20 give illustrations of incorrect and correct action by infantry in facing a tank attack.)

Frequently the tanks are equipped to provide smoke clouds in order to cover the closely following infantry. In this case all machine guns and rifles will open rapid fire into the smoke screen for the purpose of inflicting losses upon any infantry advancing with the tanks.

When there is sufficient time to develop the defenses of a place, well-hidden antitank obstacles or traps should be installed by the engineers. But these must be so powerful and so located as to insure that the enemy vehicles are taken by surprise and cannot be diverted in time. (Locate them at bridges, defiles, behind bends in roads, and in villages.)

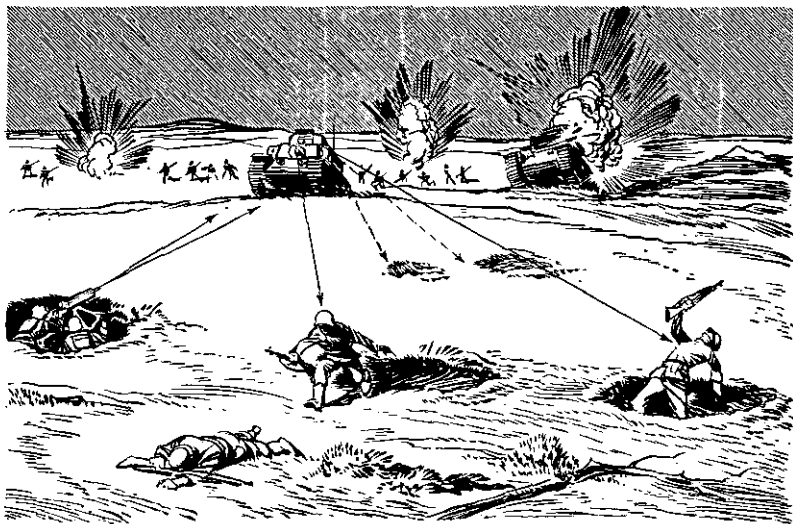
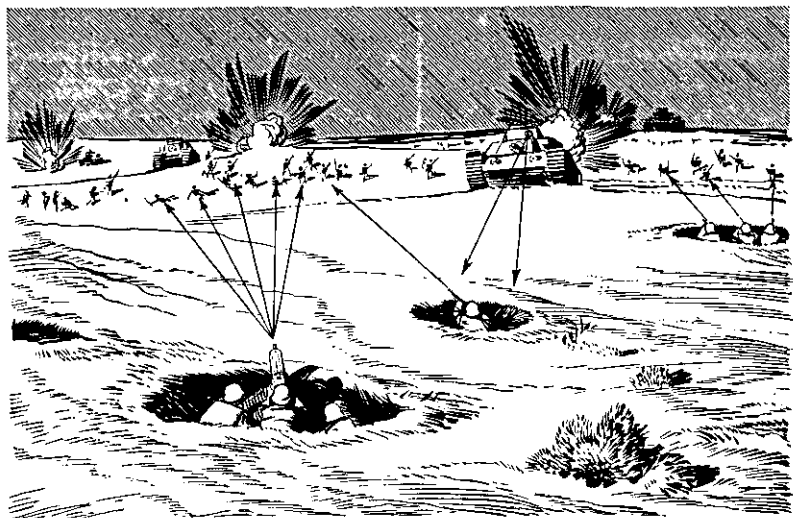


Figure 19.—Infantry squad action in a tank attack (wrong)



**Figure 20.**—Infantry squad action in a tank attack (right)

To protect very important positions, well-hidden minefields should be planted. The mines are located in front of and within the position itself. Water courses over 5 feet deep and 15 feet wide, inclines of more than 45 degrees, and tall, thick woods with tree trunks more than 6 inches in diameter have so far proved insurmountable obstacles for almost all tanks. Strongpoints of defensive systems should be carefully built at points secure from tanks: for example, in woods, behind steep rises, or behind wide ditches.

## **Section III. EXAMPLES OF SQUAD EXERCISES**

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### **15. TRAINING METHODS**

#### **a. General**

This section is intended to show, by means of a few examples and sketches, how squad missions in different situations and types of terrain may be carried out. These examples are to serve as illustrations, not as models. In the execution of battle missions, one should be most careful to avoid the idea that only one solution can be the right one. Only success in battle could prove that a given solution is the right one. A model solution must not be drilled into the soldiers. The soldiers, and particularly the squad leader, should be trained in flexible tactics and should learn to be equal to any occasion.

#### **b. Squad Leader**

Special attention should be given to the way in which the squad leader carries out his decision. Praise should not be stinted if the commands of the squad leader have been clear and his leadership resolute. It increases his self-confidence and resolution. Tactical mistakes must, of course, be clarified through a discussion. One should never forget to make clear how the terrain influences the execution. In the advance, for example, emphasis should be placed on making the utmost use of every fold of the

terrain so that the soldiers will be trained to recognize for themselves how to take advantage of even the slightest favorable feature of the terrain.

In the execution of the following exercises, chief emphasis should be laid on the training of the squad leader. Therefore, the exercises are mostly of the type in which the squad leader makes more or less independent decisions and gives independent orders.

### **c. Speed of Exercises**

It is always of value to *have the exercise carried out slowly* and to use the weapons in about the same way as they would be used in war. The squad leader must be given the time necessary for deliberation and for carrying out thoroughly his mission. Ordinary peacetime exercises, especially in the larger units, are carried out much too quickly, so that the squad leader does not have time for all the arrangements that would be necessary under service conditions. The men often get false impressions in this way and learn nothing. Thoroughness is a fundamental requirement in the squad leader's education. If there is not enough time, one ought to content oneself with a portion of an exercise. The squad is organized as it would be in the corresponding battle sector under combat conditions.

### **d. Use of Real Troops**

One should use real troops as much as possible to represent the enemy. The soldiers will be much less likely to make mistakes in wartime if they see during their training, instead of a flag, a real and active enemy.

An enemy indicated by a flag is but a poor makeshift. And when a flag is used, numerous arbitrary arrangements must be made.

### **e. Stating the Situation**

The preliminary situation should always be stated so that all present can hear it. The situation must not be too long or too detailed. The men would not retain a long-winded discussion anyway, and would only be confused by it. First of all, the enemy's situation and action, and our own mission and disposition, are made known. One should never neglect to repeat the *situation* and *mission*, unless the mission is one that has to be executed quickly. To stimulate the imagination of the men, either the leader or a referee should make known in the course of the battle the things that the squad leader and squad members should be seeing and hearing, the effect of the squad's fire upon the enemy, and the effect of enemy fire upon the squad. Since adjacent units are not usually present in squad problems, they should be designated by flags with or without flag-bearers.

Both the leader of the enemy troops and the umpires should be informed of the expected course of action, and of the proposed development of the situation, before the exercise is begun; otherwise, they (especially the umpires) will not know what to do with themselves. They either will be standing around quite useless or will guide the battle action in directions contrary to the chief umpire's intention.

A discussion around a sand-table, covering the principal features of the exercise before it begins, and a discussion

of umpires' mistakes and of their expected action are highly recommended, especially in winter, when it is possible to have only a short discussion on the ground itself.

## 16. PROTECTION OF ASSEMBLY AREA PRIOR TO ATTACK

### a. Situation (fig. 21)

The enemy has occupied "A" village and the heights to the north. The company (with contact on both flanks) has developed, and is advancing north. Its leading elements have reached the banks of the brook about 1,500 yards this side of "A" village.

The 2d Company, reinforced by one heavy mortar squad, is located in the woods just south of the banks of the brook, prepared to attack. The 1st Platoon is on the right, the 2d on the left, and the 3d 200 yards in the rear of the center. The front of each of the leading platoons extends about 200 yards. (Assembly areas are shown in fig. 22.) The assembly area of the battalion is protected by a detachment of artillery and two heavy machine-gun platoons located to the right rear, behind the first company.

As soon as the 2d Company reached the edge of the woods, a reconnaissance patrol was sent to reconnoiter the positions in "A" village. The leader of the right platoon receives the order to send a squad, together with an antitank rifle, to Hill 133 to protect the company's assembly area.

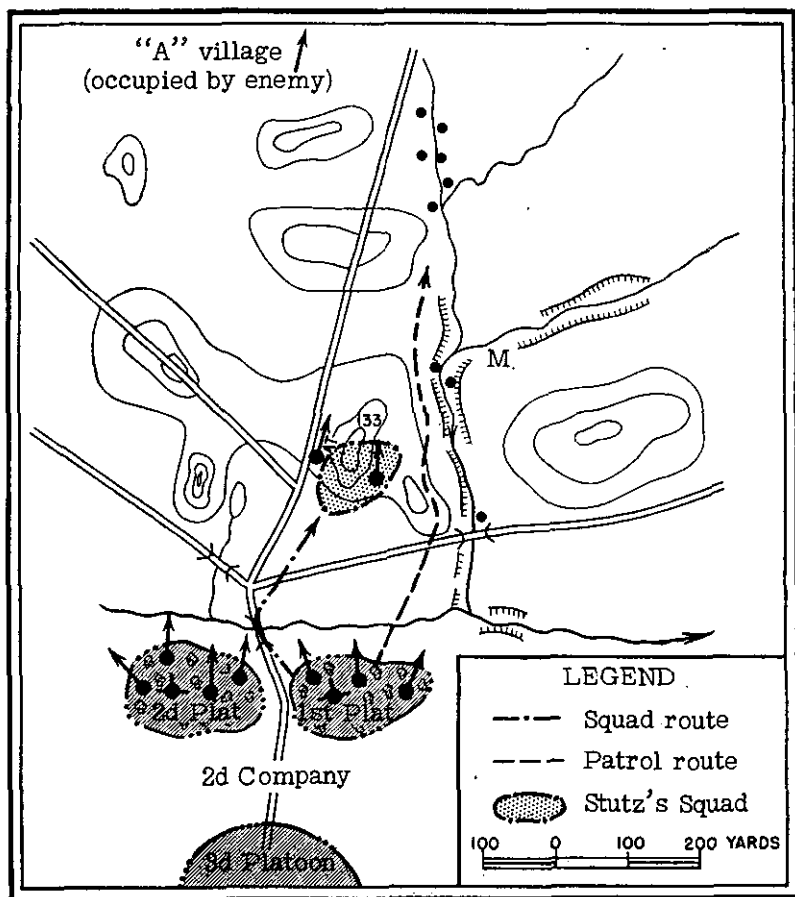


Figure 21.—Safeguarding the assembly area of a company preparing to attack

## b. Orders

The leader of the 1st Platoon gives the following order:

The enemy has occupied "A" village (*pointing out the direction*) and the high ground on the other side, some 1,500 yards away. This company is assembled here in preparation for attack: 1st Platoon on the right, to the far edge of the wood up to the road

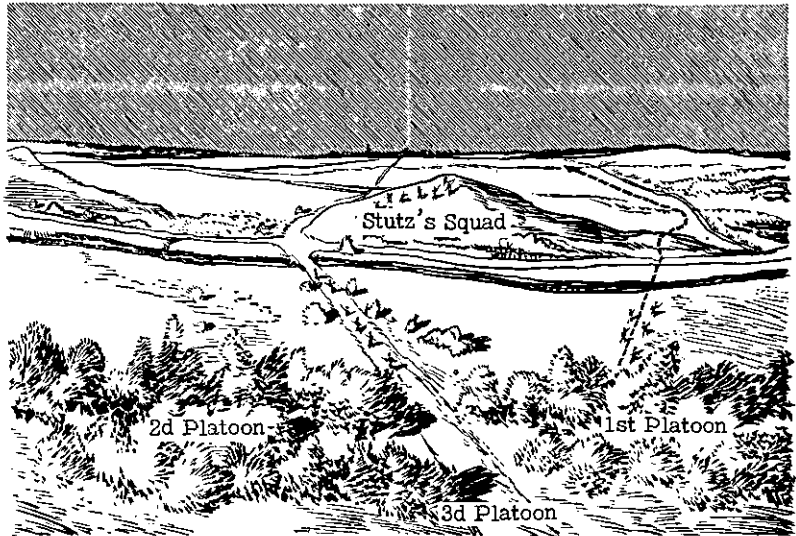


Figure 22.—Bird's-eye view of the terrain drawn diagrammatically in figure 21

(*pointing*): 2d Platoon to the left; 3d Platoon with one heavy mortar squad, in the center to the rear. Stutz's squad goes at once to Hill 133 (*pointing*), and from that point protects the company's assembly area. A company antitank rifle is attached to the squad. The company has just sent a reconnoitering patrol to "A" village via area M. There are no other friendly troops in the terrain before us. Repeat. POSTS.

Preuss and Dauksch (*two riflemen*), come here. We are going to that hill. Ebeling (*second-in-command*), follow me at 50 paces

with the rest of the squad until you are under cover on this side of the hill.

Upon arrival at the hill, the squad leader orders the two riflemen to crawl up to the crest of the hill so that they can just see over it to observe the area beyond. He points out places to be particularly observed. He himself, also under cover, reconnoiters for a position for the light machine gun and the antitank rifle. These will be positions from which as large an area to the front as possible can be brought under fire. For the antitank rifle, he will seek a position close to the road. He has the rest of the squad take cover on the rear slope of the hill, and there makes the light machine gun ready for fire. The machine gun is not yet put into the selected firing position: first, because the squad leader and the two observers are able to see the entire area to the front and there does not appear to be any immediate danger; second, because he does not want to disclose to the enemy any movement on the hill.

The squad leader himself observes the entire terrain before him with his field glasses. He immediately communicates his observations to his platoon leader.

### **c. New Situations**

After these movements and dispositions of the squad have been discussed, the instructor presents various situations in order to train the squad leader in reaching decisions and giving orders—for example:

(1) The squad leader sees three enemy riflemen emerge from two bushes about 300 yards to the right oblique and start running back over an open field.

*Decision:* He at once has both riflemen open rapid fire.

*Command:* 1. THREE RIFLEMEN TO THE RIGHT OBLIQUE, RANGE 300, 2. FIRE AT WILL.

An enemy rifleman is hit and falls. While the two observers continue to fire vigorously, the squad leader sends two men from the remainder of his squad forward along the brook to the right in order to find out the troop unit to which the fallen enemy belongs.<sup>5</sup>

(2) An enemy patrol about 500 yards to the right front is seen advancing along the brook.

*Decision:* The leader lets the patrol continue to advance. At the same time, he has the light machine gun and riflemen come closer to the crest of the hill, points out what he has seen, and makes several estimates of ranges in the direction of the patrol. He has the squad take up positions and open fire with the light machine gun and all rifles (surprise fire) only when the patrol has come within close range, or when it appears that the patrol is aware that the hill is occupied, or when his company's preparations for the advance have been made and the company is about to move forward.

*Orders* (the squad remaining under cover):

On the far side of this hill—six enemy riflemen are advancing in front of the bushes! Range for machine gun and rifle group, 300! Crawl to positions! Open fire upon whistle! Four rounds per rifle!

(3) A friendly heavy machine-gun platoon goes up the hill to the left of the squad, to protect the assembly area, and later to support the advance. (A soldier repre-

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<sup>5</sup> Comment by MIS: note that German squads are thus trained in the importance of securing enemy intelligence at the earliest opportunity.

sents the heavy machine-gun platoon leader.) The squad leader contacts him at once and communicates all of his observations. Preparations of the company for attack are now completed. The platoon leader orders the squad to withdraw to the right in the vicinity of the brook and to rejoin the platoon, following along as the rear squad during the advance.

## 17. ATTACK AFTER PREPARATION

### a. General

The preparations for attack are made in assembly areas whenever the situation requires it. Every assembly area must be protected. This is accomplished, on the one hand, through protective fire of artillery and heavy or light machine guns and, on the other hand, locally by action of the rifle company or the platoons themselves. During the preparation, reconnoitering or security patrols are sent out (they should remain under cover). When necessary, patrols are sent out to protect the flanks (as, for example, when the flanks are exposed).

In training men to advance under cover, the squad can carry out the following simple exercises which do not require representation of the enemy. It is assumed that a hill or the edge of a wood (to be pointed out in the terrain) is occupied by the enemy. (The distance can be variable, at one time 1,000 yards, at another 2,000 yards.) The squad leader must now lead his squad forward toward the enemy, as far as possible within a sector of the terrain not more than 40 to 50 yards in width, insuring that they make the utmost use of available cover against observation and fire. Particular attention should be given to the

squad leader in order to see that he moves out before his squad, constantly observing for routes of approach, and also in order to see that he gives proper orders. One will find that, even in this simple exercise, mistakes will be made by young soldiers. The soldier must, first of all, learn to estimate the terrain accurately in the light of the mission. He must learn how to cross areas exposed to the enemy's view: for instance, a wide rise in the ground which cannot be detoured. He must learn when to advance by crouching or crawling, when to run, and when to move forward alone or with the entire squad.

It is frequently noted that however unwilling a soldier may be to crawl, he will nevertheless crawl over the top of a hill under enemy observation. *This is wrong.* It would be much better for him to make a sudden dash from one cover position to another, often with the entire squad. When this is done, the squad leader has his whole squad under control and reaches the enemy more quickly.

It is a fundamental rule that the squad should move as far toward the enemy as possible without itself opening fire, insofar as the protection of the terrain and heavy supporting fire permit.

#### **b. Situation (figs. 23, 24, and 25)**

The enemy has occupied "B" woods and the heights west of "B" woods (distance about 1,000 yards). The 2d Company, advancing north, has contact on both flanks. It has reached Hill 202 and the wooded area east of the hill, as shown in figures 23 and 25, and is preparing for attack. The assembly area is protected by artillery and heavy machine-gun platoons. A reconnaissance patrol

has been sent forward by the company along the brook, through the Trumpeter Woods, toward the west edge of "B" woods.

### c. Platoon Orders

For the attack, the leader of the 1st Platoon gives the following order to the squad leaders who have assembled about him near the crest of Hill 202:

(1) The enemy has occupied the bright green woods ("B" woods) about 1,000 yards distant, and also the high ground to the left (*pointing*).

(2) The company will attack the enemy in "B" woods and on the left of the woods, at the point where the birch-lined avenue can be seen. The 2d Platoon on the right, 1st Platoon on the left, 3d Platoon to the rear center.

(3) The 1st Platoon with 3 squads, deployed in front, will initially advance to the rise in the ground, about 300 yards in front of us where you see a hedge and wire fence. Becker's squad will immediately send two scouts out.

(*Pointing*) Becker's squad, to the right along this brook, as far as the willow bushes on the bank of the brook.

Eisenblatter's squad, to the right around this hill (202), as far as the cluster of bushes on the right slope of that rise on the ground.

Mueller's squad, to the left around this hill on which we are lying, initially up to the next rise in the ground.

Schoenhoff's squad follows Eisenblatter's squad at a distance of about 150 yards until the sand pit is reached (*pointing it out in the terrain*).

The light mortar detachment will remain with Schoenhoff's squad.

(4) We have a reconnaissance patrol in the area before us.

(5) I shall be with Eisenblatter's squad.

Squad leaders, repeat my orders! (*Each leader repeats only the instructions applying to his own squad.*) POSTS!

### d. Squad Orders

The squad leaders return to their squads, repeat the situation and orders to the men, and proceed to their posts.

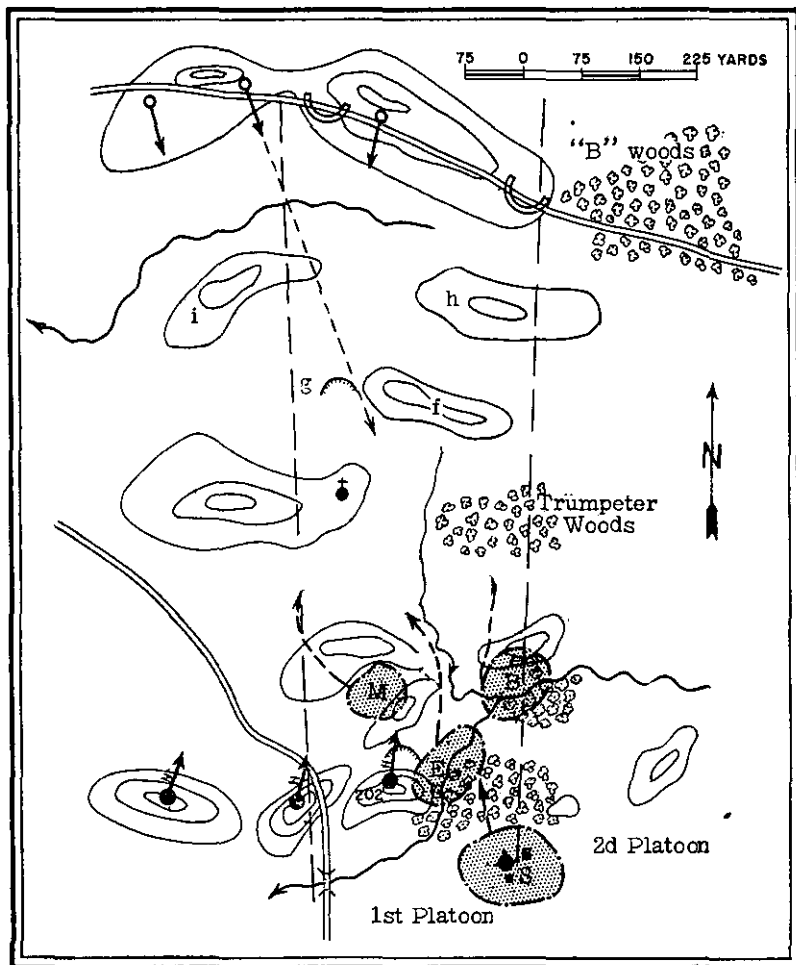


Figure 23.—First stage of platoon advance

Squad leader Becker orders:

(1) Simon and Radau, move out ahead of us as scouts by 200 yards. In the direction of the small woods, some 600 yards in front of us!

(2) The squad will follow me in squad column!

The orders of the other squad leaders are similar. Under the fire protection of the heavy machine guns on

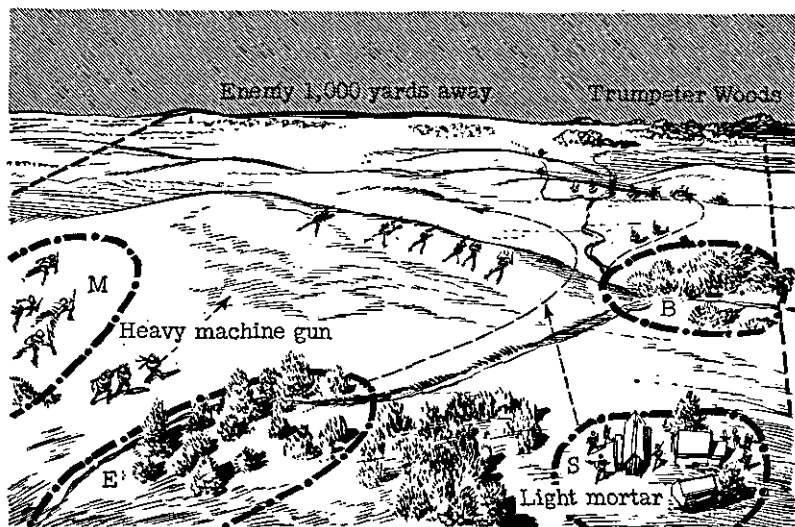


Figure 24.—Bird's-eye view of platoon advance

Hill 202 and to the west, the squads now work their way forward to the indicated positions. (See figs. 23 and 24, showing squad positions at this stage.) As they advance, they keep the platoon leader in sight. Upon arrival at their new forward positions, the squad leaders, noting that there are covered routes to the right and left still available, join the platoon leader. For the purposes of protection, the squads may avail themselves of suitable

cover in the adjoining sector. However, bunching up must be avoided. The important thing about the advance is that the squads should utilize cover. There will often be gaps between the squads through which the machine guns may fire.

### **e. Further Move**

The platoon leader, having made a personal reconnaissance, now decides to move the squads forward up to the next areas (as shown by broken lines in figs. 23 and 24).

For the advance to this second forward area, he issues appropriate orders, as he did for the first advance. When the men reach the positions shown in figure 25, it becomes more difficult to advance under cover and out of sight. Areas, such as that around *e*, which are exposed to the enemy's observation, must be crossed in double-time. In any further advance the platoon is now within effective range of the enemy light machine guns (600 to 800 yards). From this area on, therefore, the squad leader and the other members of the squad must exercise particular caution in order to avoid heavy casualties.

As soon as they have drawn enemy fire and are no longer able to advance under cover, the scouts join the squad which has been following behind them.

The leader of Squad B, in the advance from the south side of the Trumpeter Woods on, must under all circumstances avoid coming again into the line of sight. From the Trumpeter Woods to the next rise in the ground (north of the Trumpeter Woods) it will still be possible to advance under cover. The high ground at *f* should be reached in one bound.

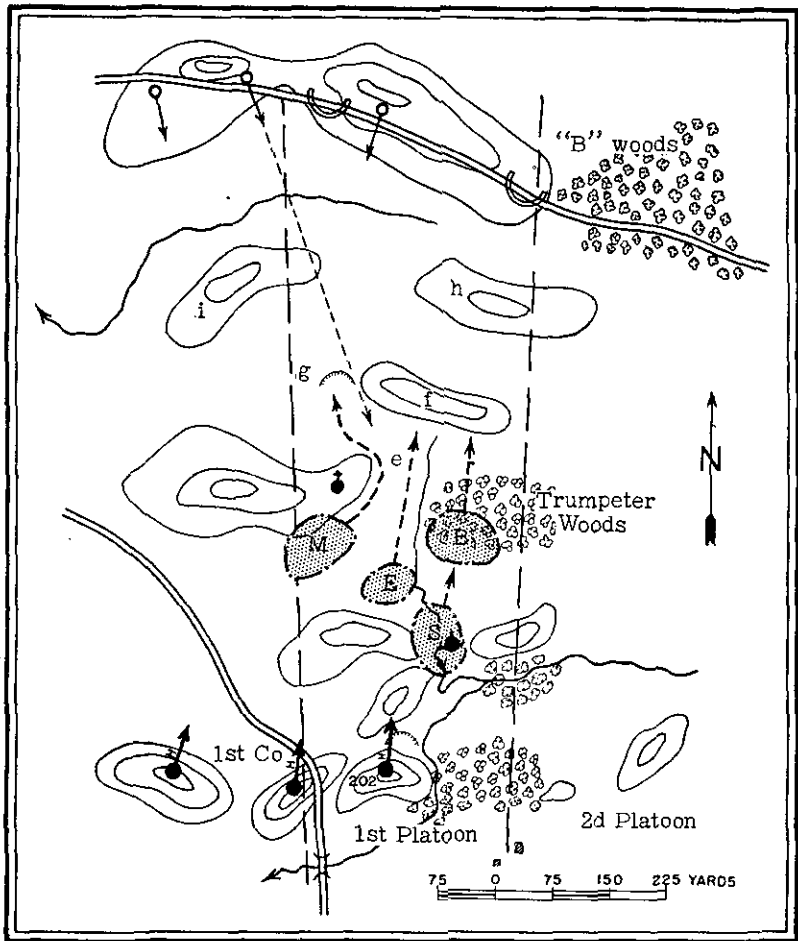


Figure 25.—Second stage of platoon advance

Should the Trumpeter Woods be under artillery fire, so that it is impossible to pause there, the squad should immediately continue on to the elevation at *f* in one bound. If necessary, the squad may move around the woods in advancing to *f*.

The platoon leader finds very difficult the further advance, at this stage, of Corporal Eisenblatter's squad and Corporal Schoenhoff's squad. He decides that the next objective for Eisenblatter's squad should be the steep rise of *g*. But the intervening area offers no cover. Enemy fire from the neighborhood of the tree clumps by the birch-lined avenue is certainly to be expected. In order to keep the enemy down, Corporal Eisenblatter prepares his light machine gun for action. In addition, the light machine gun of Corporal Becker undertakes to protect the advance of Eisenblatter's from the position at *f*. In its further advance, Eisenblatter's squad is protected by the fire of the squad at *f*. Supporting fires of the heavy machine guns, the light infantry cannon, and the artillery will also be utilized to assist the advance. Corporal Schoenhoff's squad moves to the area evacuated by Corporal Becker's squad.

The distance to the enemy is still too great for the employment of the light mortar detachment. Nevertheless, the platoon leader now brings up this detachment.

The squads continue to work their way forward, toward the positions *i* and *h*, under the fire protection of all the heavy infantry weapons, and under their own mutual fire support. At distances under 500 yards, the platoon leader employs the light mortar to combat particularly stubborn resistances.

## 18. PENETRATION OF MAIN LINE OF RESISTANCE

### a. General

It is difficult to simulate penetration into an enemy's position so that it conforms to the realities of war. The

psychological factors of that attack will be lacking in peacetime exercises. They cannot be simulated; the instructor can only describe them.

At the beginning of the exercise the squad is drawn up in assault formation. (The adjacent squads are represented by men with flags.) The enemy is disposed in the forward terrain, occupying positions as if defending in war. The impressions of the battle and the effects of the fire from both sides are thoroughly described so that every one obtains a clear picture. The course of the exercise must first be thoroughly discussed with the umpires.

### **b. Situation**

The 1st Platoon, an interior unit, has worked its way forward in the attack under the strong fire support of all the weapons, until it is within assaulting distance (about 200 yards) of the enemy. The squads are disposed as indicated in figure 26.

The enemy, strongly shaken by our heavy artillery preparation and infantry-cannon and heavy machine-gun fire, still holds a few positions on the opposite hill. Enemy artillery is striking immediately behind the platoon. The fire of an enemy heavy machine gun is passing over the squad into the terrain beyond.

Friendly artillery fire has been directed at the hill in front of the platoon. Now, as directed by flare, it shifts to the area behind the hill. (This fire may be represented by sound or smoke explosives.) Squad A's light machine gun is in position near the group of bushes and fires at the enemy opposite the squad. The riflemen

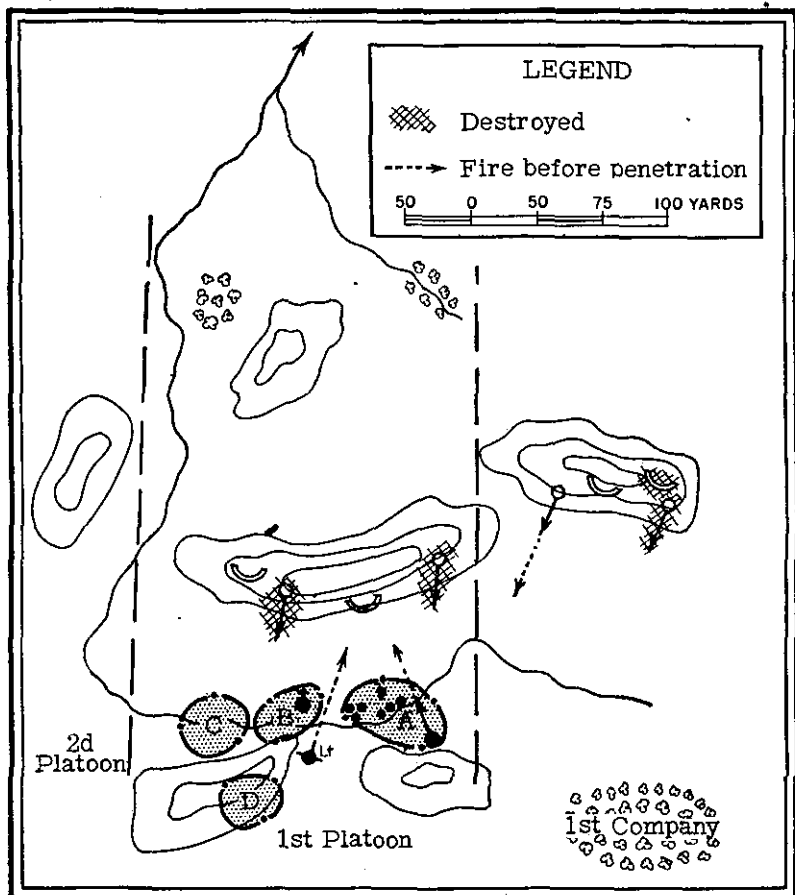


Figure 26.—Squad positions before penetration of enemy main line of resistance

have worked their way forward to the banks of the brook and are also firing. The squads to the left and right have advanced to about the same general line. The platoon's light mortar is also firing on the enemy strongpoint opposite Squad A.

### **c. First Problem: Penetration of an Enemy Position**

The squad leader is in the midst of his riflemen. He has them fix bayonets. (If the riflemen are lying under cover, they will all fix bayonets simultaneously. If they are in the line of fire, some will fix bayonets while the others continue to fire.) The enemy opposite is now firing only sporadically (umpire's decision). Our light mortar is firing heavily and very effectively upon him. The squad leader decides upon an assault. He gives his light machine gun the prearranged signal (this might be done by repeatedly raising his rifle perpendicularly in the air) to join him as quickly as possible and to go forward in the assault with the riflemen.

The squad leader is the first to spring up for the assault, shouting: "Up!" "Double Time!" and "Hurrah!" With his squad he charges the enemy. Remaining enemy resistance is broken by close-in fighting. After the assault, the squad leader at once scatters his squad, which had tended to concentrate during the assault. He has them occupy positions on the captured hill. All the riflemen fire vigorously upon the retreating or counterattacking enemy. If there is no enemy to be seen straight ahead, and if the enemy light machine gun over on the right, which has been firing at his own light machine gun and and also has been holding up the advance of the adjacent squad, is not yet silenced, the squad leader orders:

1. THE SQUAD WILL MOVE TO THE NEXT ELEVATION BETWEEN THOSE TWO CLUMPS OF BUSHES, 2. FORWARD.

#### d. Second Problem: Combat within an Enemy Main Battle Position

(1) *General.*—It is advisable to have a simulated enemy counterattack follow immediately after the assault and capture of the enemy position. It forces the squad leader to quick and energetic action. All participants learn to recognize the value of prompt action on the part of friendly troops and the enemy, either by noting the slow preparation and actions of the enemy to launch his counterblow, or by observing the squad's failure to defend the ground captured because of delay in reorganizing and in preparing for the counterattack.

(2) *Situation.*—As the leader of Squad A is giving new orders, one of his men cries out, pointing out that some 10 or 15 riflemen are advancing for counterattack, having just emerged from the clump of bushes and from behind the high ground to the left oblique some 120 or 150 yards away. (See figs. 27 and 28.) Simultaneously, a light machine gun directly opposite opens fire on the squad. The platoon leader is with the adjacent squad on the left. This squad is now approaching the west end of the captured hill.

(3) *Solution.*—The leader of Squad A at once orders: 1. ENTIRE SQUAD, 2. POSTS, 3. RIFLEMEN LEFT OBLIQUE, 4. FIRE AT WILL. (No sight adjustment is necessary, since the last firing was done with battle sights.) The machine gun and all the riflemen fire upon the advancing enemy riflemen, since the latter present the most immediate danger. The squad leader fires with his machine pistol. The enemy counterattack may lead to the loss of the hill just captured, as well as to heavy casualties in the squad,

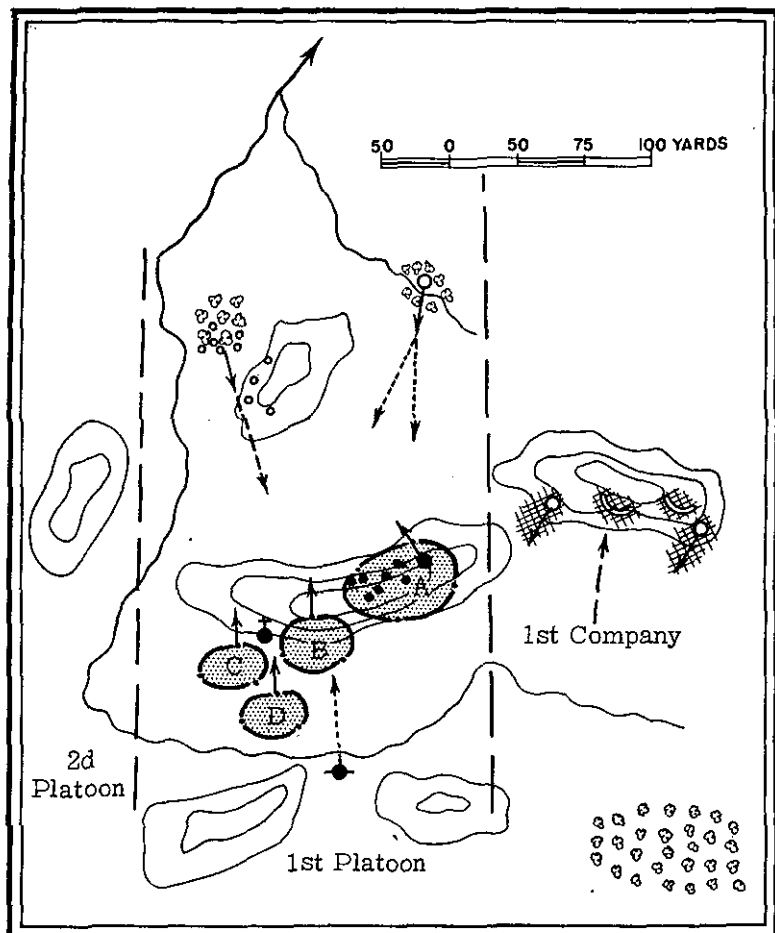


Figure 27.—Organizing a new position within the enemy's main line of resistance

unless the squad leader immediately and energetically employs his entire squad—his riflemen and machine gun. Even the No. 2 and No. 3 fire on the enemy with pistols or rifles.

The enemy counterattack should be judged as successful or as defeated according to the speed with which the leader of Squad A acted, and the rapidity with which the riflemen opened fire.

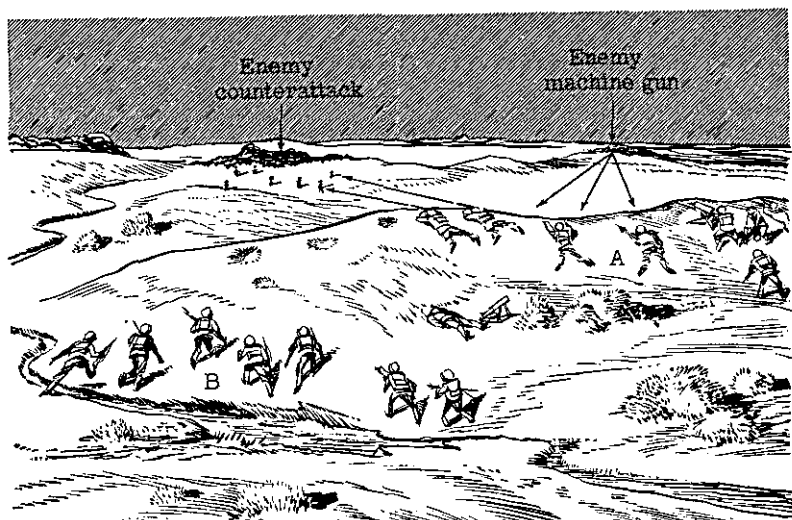


Figure 28.—Bird's-eye view of enemy counterattack

### e. Third Problem: Capturing a Machine-Gun Nest

We shall now assume that the counterattack was repulsed, and that the enemy had retreated with heavy losses under the fire of Squad A and Squad B, the latter meanwhile having reached the hill. The rest of the enemy (about four men) have disappeared into the creek bottom behind the high ground. Two men of Squad A have been slightly wounded by enemy machine-gun fire. They are still able to take part in the fight. The enemy machine gun has been firing continuously on Squad A, without

itself receiving any fire. The squad leader now subjects the enemy light machine gun to the combined fire of his entire squad.

The platoon leader orders Squad A to pin down the enemy machine-gun group by fire while he attacks it with the other squads. He orders the light mortar detachment

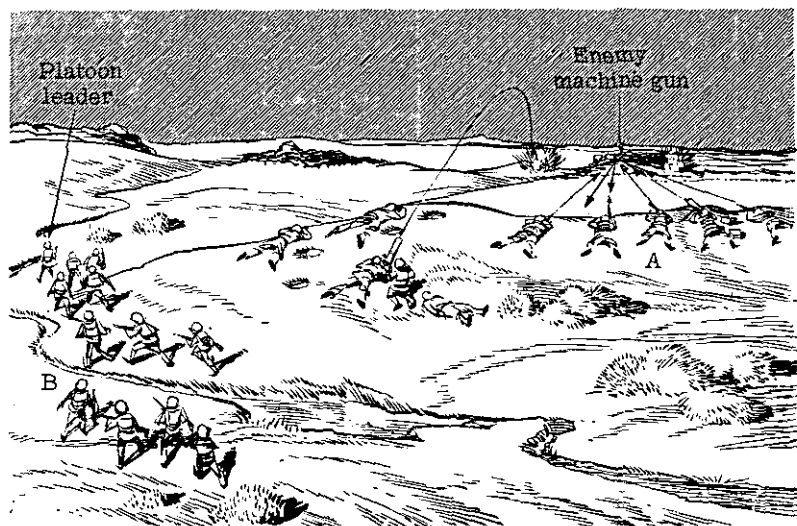


Figure 29.—Flank movement to capture enemy machine gun

to follow the platoon. He fires a green rocket to notify the artillery and the light infantry-cannon platoon that their fire, which is now directed about 150 yards beyond the platoon, must be raised farther ahead. (Fig. 29 shows the position of the platoon preparing the attack.)

The leader of Squad B follows the platoon leader, with his men following him in squad column. The second-in-command follows at the rear of the column. Now crouching, now rushing from cover to cover, they advance along

the creek bottom. The squad leader succeeds in reaching the clump of bushes without loss. When he starts to advance farther, another enemy machine gun joins the action and begins to fire at his squad (see fig. 30). He halts the advance, brings his light machine gun at once

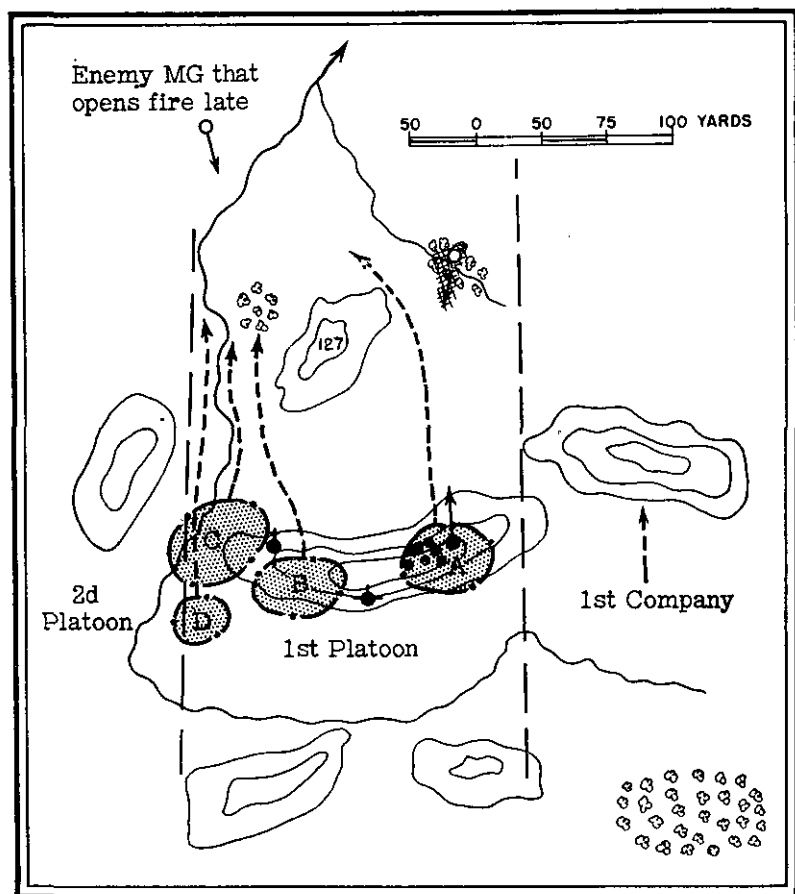


Figure 30.—Development of attack on enemy machine guns

into position, and opens fire on the new enemy machine gun. The riflemen take cover in the clump of bushes, while the squad leader and one man observe the area to their front.

It is now assumed that a heavy machine-gun squad (flag) is with the platoon leader. He at once has it fire upon the enemy light machine gun near the brook, and orders Squad A to surround and attack the machine-gun nest by circling around Hill 127. The platoon leader advances to the attack with the rest of the squads along the creek bottom to the left. He takes the light mortar along with his platoon for use against any objective which might suddenly appear.

#### **f. Remarks**

For the execution of any of these exercises, one naturally needs several squads and light machine guns. These can in part be represented by flags, in which case the effect of fire would be indicated by umpires. It is possible also to use sections of the exercises, but in that case the men must be given an accurate picture of the situation.

The further conduct of the combat in the enemy battle position may be carried on as desired. Various solutions may be worked out without establishing rigid rules for any of them. It will be desirable to have the entire platoon, or at the very least two squads, carry on the fight from the moment of assault on so that the men will see the unquestionable need for cooperation between the squads.

The following general observations should be borne in mind during the penetration and fighting within the enemy positions:

(1) The attack on enemy strongpoints will be successful either through surprise and rapid attack from the nearest approach, or, if the enemy position is farther away, through the support of light infantry weapons advanced for that purpose. The support of heavy infantry weapons in the latter case is even more effective.

(2) The main effect of the attack is concentrated where the enemy position appears weakest, or where the terrain most favors a deep advance into the enemy position.

(3) An advancing squad must not let itself be stopped because an adjacent squad is held up by stubborn enemy resistance. It must continue its own advance, if at all possible. It will help its neighbor best by continuing to move forward. If necessary to protect its flanks, it will use its light machine gun for that purpose.

## 19. COMBAT OUTPOSTS

### a. General

Combat outpost fighting makes heavy demands on the leader of a squad occupying such positions. The squad is more difficult to control because of its broader and deeper formations. The squad leader must frequently make independent decisions during the course of the battle as to when and how he will break off the fight, and when and how he will lead his squad back to the main line of resistance. The difficulty in this situation results from the nature of his mission, which is to hold off the enemy as long as possible and yet be able to disengage his squad and return to the main defensive position before being cut off.

The withdrawal will often have to be executed, as in the advance, under the fire support of alternate elements of his squad. Full cooperation within the squad and utilization of the supporting fire of the heavy weapons behind the main line of resistance are essential.

It is often noticed in peacetime exercises that the return of the outposts over an open terrain is delayed too long. It must be made clear to every squad leader that when he must withdraw his men over open, coverless terrain, he must do so before the enemy's light infantry weapons come within range (that is, about 600 yards). Otherwise, in view of the effectiveness of modern weapons, his squad will suffer heavy losses. When the terrain to the rear is especially well covered (by depressions, woods, etc.), or when cover from artificial smoke is available, he can delay the withdrawal accordingly.

The most important of the combat outpost squads may in appropriate situations be equipped, if the terrain is suitable, with a portable radio or a blinker apparatus to maintain connection with the company.

For the execution of combat outpost exercises, well-covered areas should be chosen one time, and poorly covered areas another.

#### **b. First Problem: Moving into Outpost Position (fig. 31)**

(1) *Situation.*—The company, an interior unit, prepares for defense. The main line of resistance is indicated by flags. Half an hour ago it was learned that an enemy column of all arms was approaching, although still about 12 miles away. Our mounted reconnaissance troops have already clashed with enemy reconnaissance troops.

The company commander orders that combat outposts be sent, within the platoon sectors, to the vicinity of the road lined by willows about 700 yards in front of the main line of resistance. Before the expected attack takes place, they will return *in one group* to the main line of resistance (indicated on the terrain).

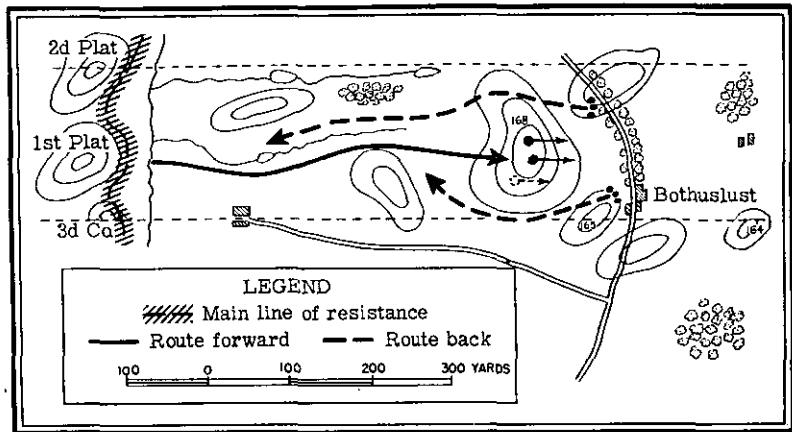


Figure 31.—Establishment of outposts, showing lines of approach and withdrawal

(2) *Platoon orders.*—The leader of the first platoon gives the following orders:

The enemy is about 12 miles away. Enemy reconnaissance elements may be expected. Our own mounted reconnaissance elements are still operating to the front.

The main line of resistance runs there (*pointing*).

Squad N, reinforced by one antitank rifle, will move forward to that first crest in the vicinity of the road lined with willow trees. It will constitute the combat outpost in the platoon sector. The right boundary of the platoon extends from here about 200 yards past the two small farm houses, and from there to a point at

about 700 yards (especially bright red roof—the farm house is included), and beyond that to the highest point of the hill where the signal post is located (Hill 165). The left boundary, adjoining the 2d Platoon, includes the clump of trees about 200 yards, then to the small hill, at approximately 700 yards, with the lone pine one and a half hand-breadths to the left of the farm house with the bright red roof (hill included).

Our company has established a reconnaissance group beyond the village of Bothuslust. Other combat outposts have been placed both to the right and left on about the same level. You will maintain contact with them.

The heavy machine-gun squad attached to the combat outpost of the left (2d) platoon will also fire in front of our combat outposts.

Relatively light attacks by the enemy will be warded off. If an attack is made by superior forces, the squad will withdraw under cover of those hollows there to the left where you see the ponds. Fall back without halting to the left-flank wing of the platoon. A white Very light will be the signal for withdrawal. I will inspect your positions later and also give more detailed instructions for your withdrawal. Repeat your orders! . . . MOVE OUT.

(3) *Squad action.*—The squad leader initially leads his squad as far as Hill 168. Accompanied by two riflemen, he proceeds ahead of the squad about 100 to 200 yards in order to study the terrain so as to lead his squad farther forward without unnecessary exposure (see fig. 32). As he moves forward, he will also study the terrain for possible routes for withdrawal. The main body of the squad will follow in squad column, under the assistant squad leader, utilizing all available cover.

When he has reached the crest of Hill 168, the squad leader orders the two riflemen he has taken with him to advance as far as Hill 165, where they will establish a

position for temporary security. Accompanied by rifleman No. 1, who has come forward in the meantime, he will reconnoiter for a suitable temporary position. Rifleman No. 3 is meanwhile observing, from Hill 168, the terrain to the front, and No. 2 under cover prepares the light machine gun for fire. The squad leader sends three

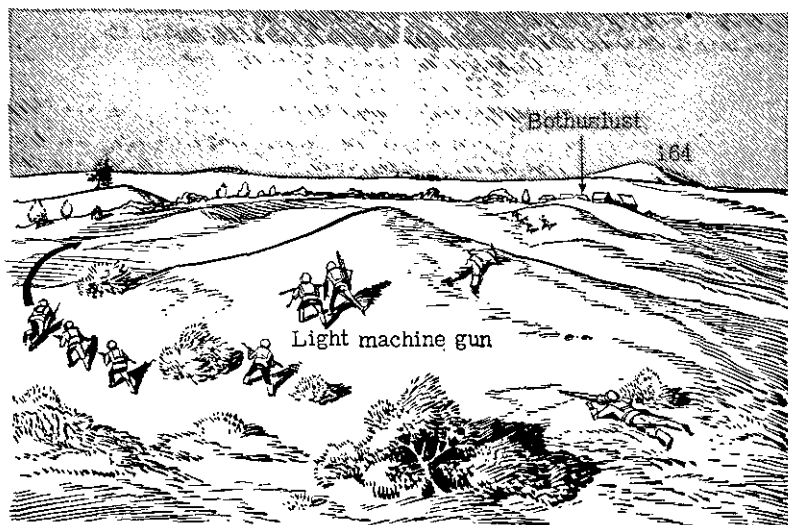


Figure 32.—Outposts going forward

riflemen to the hill with the pine tree, where they will establish a defensive position. The remaining rifleman remains with the squad leader.

The squad leader brings the light machine gun into the most advantageous position where it can also deliver flanking fire at long ranges. He also reconnoiters for an alternate firing position which may be reached under cover, and has it prepared. He orders all riflemen to dig

in and to camouflage themselves. If necessary, he has the field of fire cleared.

Then the squad leader has the riflemen prepare alternate firing positions, as well as dummy positions, and has them camouflaged. (It will be necessary during combat to have individual riflemen fire now and then from the dummy positions, or else these will soon be recognized as dummies.) The squad leader selects positions that may be abandoned or occupied under cover. He discusses with his men their actions in combat and the manner in which the position is later to be abandoned. Visibility over the terrain will determine whether fire is to be withheld until the squad leader gives the order, or whether the men are to fire at will. If, as in this case, the squad is widely separated in individual nests, the men will fire at will. The squad leader will give explicit orders, however, that no one is to withdraw except at his command.

The squad leader then establishes contact with adjacent squads. Unless he can make visual contact, he will dispatch a man to the squad next on the right (every unit must always establish contact toward the right). He will also contact advanced artillery observers as well as observers for heavy infantry weapons supporting the combat outposts.

### c. Second Problem: Outposts in Combat

(1) *Action against hostile reconnaissance patrols.*—After an hour, a hostile mounted patrol (three or four men) approaches at a distance of about 900 yards, and then disappears behind a hill. It would be incorrect to open fire upon the hostile patrol at such a long range, for two rea-

sons: first, there is little likelihood of effective fire; second, the hostile patrol could not harm the combat outpost.

It will be assumed that the hostile mounted patrol again appears and comes closer to our position, and that there are also infantry reconnaissance troops. The outpost should permit the hostile patrol to advance so closely as to permit effective fire or to make possible its capture. Even though only one member of the hostile patrol escapes, or if there is a danger that another reconnaissance patrol has observed the light machine gun and the riflemen, it becomes necessary to move the machine gun to its alternate firing position. It may also be advisable to change the positions of the riflemen. For one thing, the squad will thus avoid a subsequent attack (or fire by the enemy), especially if the terrain is covered. Furthermore, later fire from the new positions will lead the enemy to believe that the outpost is stronger than it actually is.

(2) *Action against an enemy of about the same strength as ourselves.*—Some 10 to 20 hostile riflemen approach in a deployed formation at about 700 yards. No other enemy troops are in sight, not even in front of the adjacent squads.

It would be incorrect for the squad to open fire at this time, for that would reveal the location of the squad's new position and possibly would draw early artillery and heavy machine-gun fire. The effectiveness of the squad's fire would also be slight. Except for a few well-camouflaged observers, every rifleman should remain under cover so as to avoid being seen. Even in this strength, the enemy is not dangerous to the squad. Therefore, provided strong enemy forces are not following, the squad

permits the hostile force to advance within effective range. Only then, when there is likelihood of inflicting serious loss on the enemy, the squad opens fire suddenly from all positions (both riflemen and the light machine gun). The command is 1. ENEMY AT FARM HOUSE WITH BRIGHT RED ROOF, RANGE 400, ENTIRE SQUAD, 2. FIRE AT WILL, 3. ENTIRE SQUAD, 4. RAPID FIRE.

New positions must be occupied after the attack has been repelled.

(3) *Action against attack by a superior enemy.*—The enemy is advancing in much superior force upon a broad front toward the combat outpost, at a distance of 800 yards, supported by his artillery and heavy machine guns. Under these circumstances, the squad leader immediately orders his light machine gun and all his riflemen to open fire, even though at such range the probability of hits with rifle fire is still small. But the important thing is to retard the enemy's advance as long as possible by rapid fire. Furthermore, adjacent combat outposts, the advanced heavy machine gun, and artillery will fire upon the enemy.

During this combat, a hostile plane flies over the squad's position at an elevation of 2,500 feet, toward the rear. It would be incorrect for the squad leader to have his light machine gun fire at this plane so long as there are more important ground targets such as, in this case, the enemy's advancing infantry. Fire upon planes is the mission of designated machine guns and of antiaircraft artillery in the area behind the main line of resistance.

(4) *Withdrawal from the combat outpost position.*—If the enemy succeeds in working forward to within 400 yards of the outpost, the squad leader should begin withdrawing

his squad to the main line of resistance. The terrain described in this problem is favorable for such withdrawal; therefore, it was possible to let the enemy come so close. Depending on the terrain, the withdrawal may take place earlier or later. If the ground and vegetation to the rear offer good concealment, and if the squad can fall back without masking the fire from the main line of resistance, then the outpost can maintain its position even longer. In this situation the withdrawal to the main line of resistance is executed in one bound without an attempt by the squad to offer further resistance on the intervening terrain.

The squad leader remains behind the outpost position, maintaining heavy fire with the light machine gun until his riflemen have withdrawn far enough to be on a line with the machine gun. The fire of the machine gun covers the squad's retreat. The squad leader indicates that the withdrawal has been completed by firing the prearranged Very light to the rear. It is important that the squad promptly take cover in depressions in order to clear the field of fire for troops on the main line of resistance. Upon reaching this line the squad leader reports to his platoon leader, who assigns the squad a position in the main area of resistance.

## 20. THE SQUAD IN RESERVE

### a. Situation (fig. 33)

The 2d Platoon on the left flank of the company (which is not in close contact on its left) has repelled the attack of the enemy advancing eastward. The 2d Platoon is now attacking, from the west edge of "B" village, the

enemy located on both sides of the road leading from "B" to "A" village (indicated by flags). About 200 yards to the left rear of the platoon, the 4th Squad is in position behind Hill 121. Its mission is to move forward about 200 yards to the left rear and protect the left flank

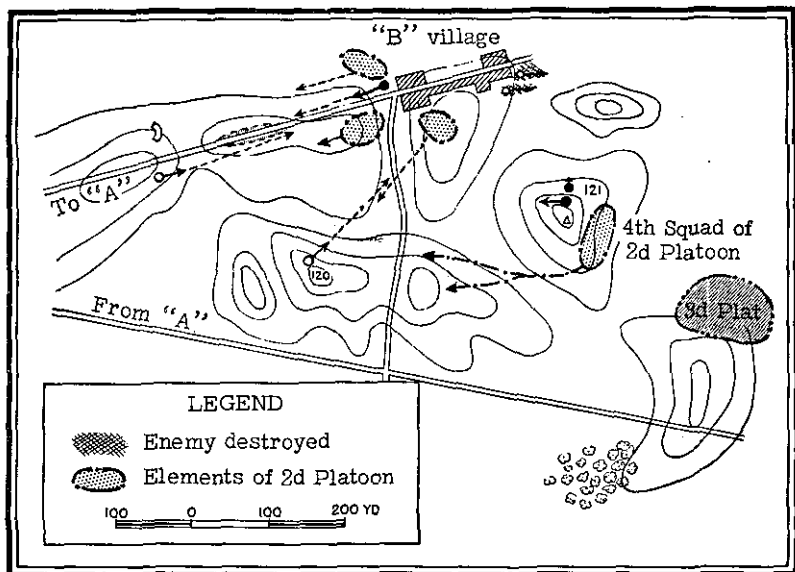


Figure 33.—Squad protecting left flank of platoon

of the 2d Platoon. Behind the left flank of the 2d Platoon, the 3rd Platoon is located as company reserve.

#### b. Position To Be Assigned to a Reserve Squad (fig. 34)

The squad leader, with the light machine-gunner (No. 1), lies on the hill in such manner that he has a full view of the terrain ahead and toward his platoon. He directs the light machine-gunner to observe the terrain to his front, and especially to watch the advancing pla-

toon. The remaining light machine-gunners and all riflemen are for the time being left under cover behind the hill, but within calling distance. The second-in-command is ordered to crawl to the top of Hill 121, at the squad leader's left, and to observe the terrain to the left and

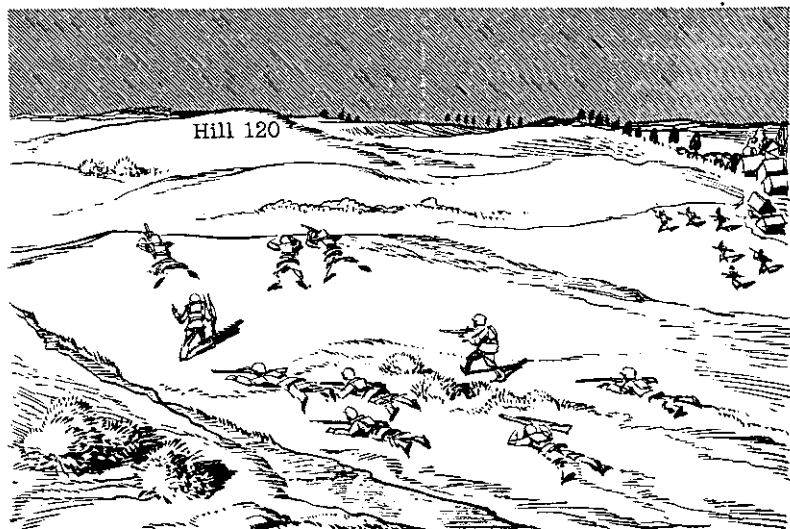


Figure 34.—Squad in reserve

left-oblique of the squad. The squad leader considers the way in which he may employ his squad, particularly how he will conduct it later over the terrain to the front.

### c. Employing the Squad To Capture an Enemy Machine Gun

The situation continues. The platoon is engaged in a fire fight with the enemy on both sides of the road leading toward village "A." The squad leader observes friendly riflemen advancing by bounds on the left flank of the 2d platoon toward Hill 120 about 300 yards away. He

can see an enemy machine gun and two soldiers on Hill 120; there are no enemy troops on the high ground in front of Hill 120 (to the east of the saddle).

*Decision:* To place the light machine gun in a covered position and bring fire suddenly upon the hostile machine gun.

*Execution:* The squad leader points out the target to the machine-gunner (No. 1), and gives the command: 1. POSTS, 2. RANGE 300 HOSTILE MACHINE GUN, 50 ROUNDS, 3. FIRE AT WILL.

He sends a message to his platoon commander reporting his action. The squad leader now considers how he will continue the fight against the enemy machine gun. Should he have his riflemen open fire upon the hostile position, which is at close and effective range? Or should he employ his entire squad in an attack? The terrain offers excellent cover for an advance, particularly around the left.

It is now to be assumed that a messenger comes running up from the platoon on the right in the depression. While still running, he constantly waves his right arm in the direction of the enemy machine gun. He brings a command from the platoon leader:

The 4th Squad will immediately attack the enemy machine gun that has just appeared! The light mortar also has been ordered to silence that machine gun.

The squad leader now gives the following orders to the light machine-gunner (No. 1):

You have heard the orders to the squad. You will at once withdraw your machine gun and follow the rest of the men toward the left (*pointing*).

The squad leader hurries to his squad and issues the following orders:

Mission for the squad: the squad will attack the machine gun that we hear in front of us, range about 300 yards. Follow me in squad column. The second-in-command will see that the light machine gun follows promptly!

The squad leader leads his squad forward, deployed in squad column and under cover, until they reach the next terrain mask, where they will remain under cover for the moment.

The squad leader observes from this point the effect of the mortar that is firing at the hostile machine gun. He orders his men to crawl up under cover close to the summit and prepare for attack. He indicates their objective by showing them where the mortar shells are bursting.

Shortly after the mortar's ranging shots have ceased, the squad leader hears five successive rounds fired for effect by the mortar. He now orders that bayonets be fixed. He quickly takes advantage of the effect of the mortar's fire in order to charge the enemy's position with his entire squad (fig. 35).

As soon as the assault has been successfully carried out, the squad leader leads his squad to the hill about 100 yards in front. He gives the command posts and has his men begin firing upon an enemy machine gun by the side of the road, in order to give further support to the platoon. The squad leader observes the terrain to the west and southwest for additional enemy troops. He also considers plans for further advance, either against the hostile machine gun on the roadside, or for an advance straight ahead in a westerly direction.



**Figure 35.—Advance of the squad with bayonets fixed**

In this problem the functions of umpire can be taken over by the squad leader himself. It is important, in the first place, that every opportunity for cover be taken, and, secondly, that each advance be made rapidly, and that the assault be pushed through with surprise.