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The following Saber Exercise, prepared by Second Lieutenant George S. Patton, Jr., Fifteenth Cavalry, Master of the Sword at the Mounted Service School, and revised by the Cavalry Board, is approved and issued for the information and government of the Regular Army and the Organized Militia of the United States.

By order of the Secretary of War:

Leonard Wood

MajorGeneral, Chief of Staff

SABER EXERCISE

1. For military purposes the nomenclature of the saber is as follows; Blade and hilt.

The blade is divided into the forté, the 18 inches nearest the hilt; and the point, the rest of the blade. The saber, Model 1913, is two-edged. All the front edge, and half the back edge, is sharp, so that it may be more easily withdrawn from a body, and also, on rare occasions, used to cut. Throughout the text the word edge when used alone will mean front edge.

The hilt is divided into the guard, which protects the hand; the grip, which the hand holds, and the pommel, the lower end of the grip, used to strike with in close fight.

2. The saber is solely a weapon of offense and is used in conjunction with the other offensive weapon, the horse. In all the training, the idea of speed must be conserved. No direct parries are taught, because at the completion of a parry the enemy is already beyond reach of an attack. The surest parry is a disabled opponent.

In the charge and in the melee, the trooper must remember that on the speed of his horse in attack, and on his own offensive spirit, rest nine-tenths of his chances of success.

3. Instruction is divided into: Instruction on foot, and Instruction mounted.

Instruction on foot teaches the mechanism of the use of the saber without embarrassing the trooper with the control of a horse. Its chief purpose is to increase the reach, teach accuracy and quickness, and above all, to make the thrust instinctive.

General Plan for Dismounted Instruction.

4. (a) The normal guard; the other guards (four). Practice in assuming the various guards.

(b) The five points (thrusts). Practice in pointing.

(c) Thrusts of precision against instructor.

(d) Increase of distance so as to cause the trooper to take the lunge naturally.

(e) The lung at the right moment.

(f) Exercises to develop the initiative of the trooper.

(g) Replying to attack.

(h) Combat exercises.

(i) Instruction in parrying the lance.

After the trooper, using the exercise saber, has mastered (a) to (d), the last part of the instruction each day should be with the regulation saber, making points and lunges at command, thus developing the muscles and making the trooper familiar with his weapon.

Application of the General Plan for Dismounted Instruction.

5. Grasping the saber. Grasp the grip with all the fingers of the hand, the thumb extending along the back of the grip so as to occupy the lower half of the thumb groove, i.e., the part nearest the pommel. If the thumb occupies the entire groove it will be so near the guard that it may be bruised if the point encounters a strong resistance.



(a) The guards.

6. The normal guard, or guard to the right front. At the command GUARD, carry the right foot about 24 inches to the right and bend the knees to simulate the position mounted. Incline the body to the front from the waist (not the hips). Let the blade fall to the front to a position near the horizontal, elbow well away from the body, forearm and saber forming one straight line, edge of the blade to the right, point at height of adversary's breast, at the same time placing the left hand, closed, 6 inches in front of the belt buckle to simulate the position of the bridle hand. This is the position of guard, dismounted. It is usually taught from the carry, but may be assumed from any position at the command guard. The other guard positions are taught from the normal guard.

In all guards, lunges, etc., the left hand should be kept steady and in place to as to form the habit of not jerking the horse's mouth when exercising mounted.



7. 1. **Left front**, 2. **GUARD**. Carry the right hand to the left so that it is above and slightly in front of the left hand. The saber is held as before except that the wrist is bent slightly to the right so as to decrease the angle between the blade and the neck of the horse. If the wrist is not bent the blade points too much to the left.

In all movements of the saber from one side to the other raise the saber slightly when passing over the horse's head so as not to scare him. This movement should be insisted on dismounted so as to form the habit.



8. 1. **Right**, 2. **GUARD**. Carry the hand, elbow bent and well away from the body, 90 degrees to the right, forearm and blade nearly horizontal and pointing to the right, point at height of breast of adversary, edge to the rear, finger nails down, head and eyes to the right or in the direction of the point; at the same time straighten the body on the hips so that, if mounted, the trooper would be sitting erect.



9. 1. **Left**, 2. **GUARD**. Carry the hand in front of the left breast, fingernails down, elbow well away from the body, forearm and blade nearly horizontal and pointing to the left, point at height of adversary, edge to the front, head and eyes in the direction of the point; at the same time straighten the body on the hips so that, if mounted, the trooper would sit erect.



10. 1. **Right rear**, 2. **GUARD**. Carry the hand well to the right rear, fingernails down, blade pointing downward making an angle of about 45 degrees with the ground, body erect and twisted to the right rear at the waist, head and eyes in the direction of the point.

11. In teaching the guards, as in all subsequent instruction, care must be exercised not to teach the movements "by the numbers," as it has been in great measure due to this tendency that, with the former regulations, the idea of the saber as a weapon largely disappeared from the mind of the trooper.

The manual of the saber (that is, the carry, present, etc.) is the only part that should be exact. The guards, lunges, etc., with the saber are to it what range practice is to the rifle. Results are what count, not useless uniformity at drill. This does not mean that details should be slighted, but it does mean that there should be no idea of cadence.

When the various positions of guard, as taught from the normal guard, have been mastered, they should be taken from any guard, from rest, or from any position whatever at the appropriate command.



(b) The points.

12. Being on guard: 1. **Right front**, 2. **POINT**. Without moving the body extend the saber in the direction in which it is pointing with maximum force and rapidity, rotating the wrist slightly to the left at the same time, so that edge will be up and to the right; resume the guard at once. In drawing back the hand, rotate the wrist to the right until the fingernails are up; when the guard is reached, turn the fingernails down and resume guard as prescribed. The object of this rotation is to give a more secure hold in withdrawing the saber from a body. It must be insisted upon at all times in points and lunges to the right front and in charge saber.



13. Being on guard to the left front: 1. **Left front**, 2. **POINT**. Extend the saber in the direction in which it is pointing with maximum force and rapidity, rotating the hand to the left so that the edge of the blade is up; twist the body slightly to the left at the waist; resume the guard at once. Care must be taken not to move the bridle hand.



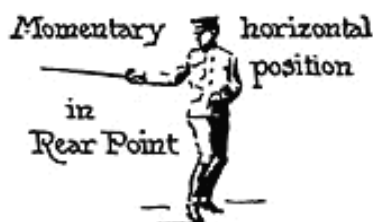
14. Being on guard to the right: 1. **Right**, 2. **POINT**. Without moving the body, extend the saber to the right with maximum force and rapidity; resume the guard at once.



15. Being on guard to the left: 1. **Left**, 2. **POINT**. Extend the saber in the direction in which it is pointing with maximum force and rapidity, rotating the wrist to the rear so that the edge of the extended blade will be up; twist the body slightly to the left at the waist; resume the guard at once. Do not derange the bridle hand.



16. Being on guard to the right rear: 1. **Right rear**, 2. **POINT**. Raise the hand until the forearm and blade are nearly horizontal; then extend the arm to the right rear with maximum force and rapidity, rotating the wrist to the right at the same time, so that when the full extension is reached toe fingernails will be up and the edge of the blade to the right; resume the guard at once.



A momentary pause at the horizontal position is necessary in order to get the saber in the desired direction.

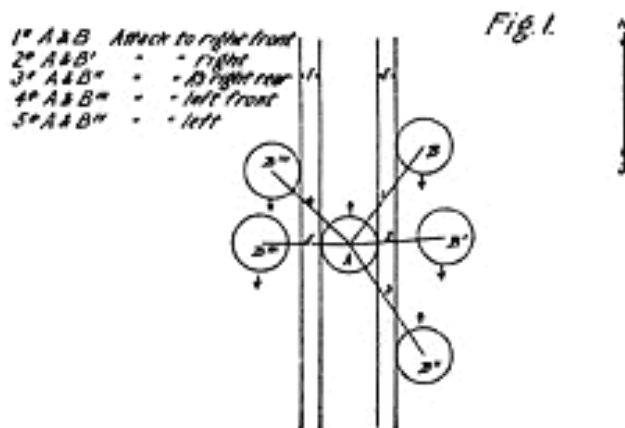
17. The points are explained from their respective guards for simplicity. When they have been mastered they should be executed from any other guard as well as from the appropriate one; also two or more points should be made at one command. Examples, being in any guard: 1. **Right front** and left front; or, 1. **Right front** and right, or etc., 2. **POINT**. Point in the directions named with the utmost rapidity and then return to the guard from which the movement started. Or, being in any guard: 1. **Right front** (left front, or right), 2. Two times, 3. **POINT**. Point twice in the direction named and resume the guard from which the movement started.

Example of going from one guard to a different point: Being on guard to the left front, 1. **Right front**, 2. **POINT**. Lift the saber so as not to strike the horse's head and execute right front point, merely sliding through the normal guard and returning from the extension to the left front guard by the shortest line.

In all the points the eye follows the point.

(c) Thrusts of precision.

18. The trooper uses an exercise saber. The instructor wearing a plastron and mask, but without a saber, approaches him on his right front and causes him to take the position of guard. The instructor verifies the position accurately and in the same way causes him to take the other four guards. He next moves around the trooper, causing the latter to follow him with his point, thus passing naturally from one guard to another.



In this and in all succeeding exercises where men oppose each other dismounted, care must be taken that they do not exactly face each other when practicing combat to the front. If mounted this would be impossible as horses will not run into each other head-on if they can avoid it. Hence if "A," facing north, is attacked by "B," to the right front, "B" will face south, and a zone of indefinite length running from north to south and at least one foot wide will separate, at all times, the lines of advance of the right feet of the combatants.

If "A" is attacked by "B" to the right, they would face as above, but the separating zone would be wider and "B" would be opposite "A."

Similar conventions must be maintained in attacks from left front and left, and from the right rear.

Conditions where men cross each other diagonally will arise in combat and may be practiced mounted; but, dismounted, they cannot be even approximately represented.

Also, in combat troopers should ride down opponents, striking them head-on in the flank, but this cannot be practiced.

When the trooper has gone through all the guards accurately the instructor will begin at the right front, placing himself in the position described and at such a distance the trooper may reach him easily. He will indicate with his finger various places on his body, give the command **POINT**, and cause the trooper to point rapidly at them and resume the guard quickly each time. He will not advance to a new guard until the trooper is accurate in the one he is in.

This same practice should be carried on with the service sabers against a bag of bran or sand fixed at the height of a man's chest, the instructor using a wire circle 3 inches in diameter on the end of a stick to indicate the spot and cause the trooper to point through it.

(d) Practice with increased distance.

19. When the trooper is accurate at (c) the instructor directs him to take the position of guard and to point at him, gradually increasing the distance to that the trooper must lean farther and farther to the front to touch him.



As the trooper extends his arm and body to the utmost he should rotate his hand to the left so that when fully extended the edge of the saber will be up and the fingernails to the right. The blade should be at the height of the eye, the line of sight parallel to the direction of the blade. The body should be bent forward so as to be nearly horizontal, the trooper making every effort to reach as far to the front as possible.

This is the position of Lunge to the right front, also the position of **Charge Saber**.

20. Being at any guard: 1. To the **right** front, 2. **LUNGE**. The above position is taken, making the extension with maximum force and rapidity and returning to the guard at once.

At the command: 1. **Charge**, 2. **SABER**, the above position is taken and held until changed by some appropriate command, such as: Guard, Carry Saber, etc. In returning to any guard or other position from the right front lunge or charge saber, the same rotation of the wrist to the right is made as in returning from the right front point.



21. The instructor now causes the extension to the left front to be taken in the same way. When the extension is completed, the blade should be at the height of the eye and parallel to the line of sight, the edge of the blade up and slightly to the left; the body bent well to the left front so as to be nearly horizontal, left shoulder carried forcibly to the rear so as to be covered by the extended saber. It is taken from any guard at the command: 1. To the **left** front, 2. **LUNGE**.



22. The instructor causes the lunges to the right and left to be taken in the same way. These two lunges differ only from the corresponding points in having the foot on the side away from the lunge lifted slightly, so as to give the maximum reach, and the foot on the side of the lunge turned slightly out as would naturally be the case in the same lunge mounted. They are taken from any guard at the command: 1. To the **right** (left), 2. **LUNGE**.



23. The lunge to the right rear cannot be taken gradually on foot. Being at the right rear guard: 1. To the **right** rear, 2. **LUNGE**. Cause the trooper to raise the forearm and blade to the horizontal, as in the right rear point, and then to extend the saber forcibly to the rear, rotating the hand during the extension, so that at it's completion, fingernails will be up and edge to the right (outside); and at the same time keep the eyes to the rear and bend the body vigorously to the rear from the hips. This lunge may be executed from any guard after it is mastered.

(e) The lunge at the right moment.

24. In the charge the trooper is merely a projectile, the saber it's point. He is a unit in a line rushing on the enemy with the one idea of riding him down and transfixing him with his rigid saber, held at the position of charge saber. In the *mêlée*, the trooper still goes at speed, riding down his opponent, but here the ranks are broken, and both he and his opponent have more room. In this case should he maintain the position of charge saber, he would have less control of his horse and might easily be attacked from either flank or from the rear, and he would be helpless except against attack in front. Hence, he takes the position of guard toward his nearest enemy, crouching slightly in his saddle and alive to all possible attacks. In this alert position he gallops on his adversary and makes a lunge to the right front or left front when he estimates that the point of his saber will reach it's full extension about 6 inches before touching the breast of his adversary. If the trooper does this accurately his enemy will have no time to parry and the speed of approach of the two horses will instantly transfix him. This is called the thrust at the right moment.



25. In teaching this the trooper and instructor face each other at the guard to the right (left) front. The instructor causes the trooper to lunge at him at command: First, too soon, thus losing the advantage of his alert position by lunging at too early a moment; then too late, thus sacrificing his reach and running the danger of letting his adversary beat him to the touch; then at the right moment, so that the saber will reach the extended position when the instructor is about 6 inches from it's point. When the trooper understands what the right moment is, the practice should be continued with the trooper using his own judgment as to when to lunge. This exercise should be practiced to the right front and left front, and much less frequently to the right rear, in the following sequence: Trooper stationary, instructor walking; trooper stationary, instructor at double time; trooper walking, instructor stationary; trooper at double time, instructor stationary; both walking; and both at double time. This exercise is very important.

(f) Exercises to develop initiative.

26. As the trooper is unaccustomed to the use of the saber, should he fail to touch on his first attempt, he will often stay in the position of lunge staring at his enemy while the latter either

sticks him or escapes. To overcome this tendency and to develop initiative, commence as in the exercise of the lunge to the right moment, but have the instructor avoid the first lunge by ducking, swaying his body, or suddenly changing his direction and continuing his course either toward or past the trooper. The latter must immediately resume the guard and instantly lunge or point at his adversary in new directions until he has touched him or until he is out of reach. No matter how often he may have to try, he must come to a guard after each attempt, to assure an accurate aim and sufficient "punch" to stick his opponent. In this case the necessity of the lunges to the right and left becomes apparent.

These exercises are important and should be practiced in the same sequence as under (e).

(g) Replying to attack.

27. Up to this point the instructor has not carried a saber. In order to give the trooper confidence and to teach him to disregard everything and lunge at the body of his adversary, the instructor now takes a saber and causes the trooper to reply to attacks.

The trooper comes on guard to the right (left) front; the instructor attacks him, making faulty attacks, such as cuts, high points, low points, or inaccurate points. To all of these he causes the trooper to reply with a lunge at the right moment, disregarding the saber of the instructor and fixing his full attention on touching him in the body with his point. Should he in so doing encounter the saber of the instructor, he will, simply by the power of his extension, force it to the outside and go on to the touch.

28. In this exercise two things require special attention:

1st; it is a serious error to seek the blade of the adversary instead of disregarding it and seeking the touch, brushing the blade aside as a secondary consideration should it interfere. There is a strong tendency toward this seeking of the blade among men who have fenced under the old rules. It must be prohibited. On foot, at the walk, it is quite possible to make this sort of a parry and still have time to touch; but, mounted, at a gallop, a man who seeks the blade of his foe and parries it may escape uninjured, but so will the other man. The speed of the horses is such that the enemy will be out of reach before the trooper can make an effective lunge at him, whereas if he disregards the other's saber and lunges at his body, he will, in so doing, force his adversary's saber aside and transfix him. Moreover, the very idea of seeking the saber so as to parry it is taking a defensive frame of mind and is contrary to offensive cavalry spirit.

2nd; The instructor who attacks with the cut must carefully avoid hitting the trooper after he had himself been touched. With the exercise saber the touch with the point is hardly perceptible and would not weaken the instructor's cut. In combat, however, the difference in time between a touch with the point and a cut with the adverse edge will usually be sufficient for the spasmodic contraction caused by the entrance of the point to render the cut ineffective. If the instructor disregards this fact, he will get the trooper to parrying, and spoil him as an offensive swordsman. The same is true if the instructor, taking advantage of his superior skill, continually touches the trooper with the point; he will ruin his confidence. These exercises are to instruct the man, not to glorify the instructor. They should be carried on in the same sequence as the exercises under (e) and (f).

(h) Combat exercises.

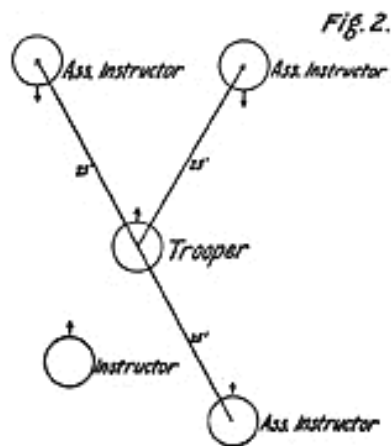
29. In teaching the combat dismounted, every effort must be made to preserve the idea of combat mounted. The troopers must move either on straight lines or large curves; and they must never halt during an attack.

In dismounted work it is not permitted to give any of the exercises of attack or of combat from the position of charge saber, for the charge is an extended position deriving all its great effect from the momentum of the horse. On foot it is impossible to impart this momentum, hence the use of the charging position dismounted would produce incorrect ideas. The position of charge saber should be learned accurately on foot; and then, when mounted exercises are begun, the charge assumes its true place and should be practiced as much as all the guard positions combined. This must be carefully noted or else, the charge being less interesting, will be slighted.

30. First Exercise. Place the trooper on guard. Place around him three assistant instructors, one to the right front, one to the left front, and one to the right rear, each at a distance of 25 feet from the trooper (fig. 2).

The instructor takes his place to the left rear where the trooper cannot see him. He then signals for first one and then another of the assistants to attack the trooper, indicating by a prearranged signal whether they are to use a cut or a thrust.

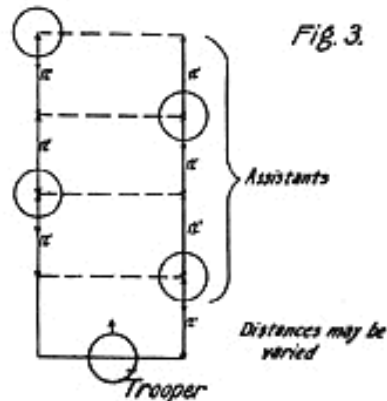
The trooper replies in all cases with a lunge at the right moment, care being taken that he does not shorten his extension. As the trooper becomes accustomed to rapid changes of guard the instructor may decrease the intervals between attacks and cause the assistants to attack at double time.



In order to preserve the trooper's confidence, the attacks of the assistants should usually be faulty, especially at first. The attacks must never be so difficult or rapid that the trooper cannot reply to them, as this is a situation that could not occur in combat owing to the unruliness of excited horses, and to represent it on foot would destroy the trooper's confidence. The men acting as assistants must either be trained assistants or, if such are not available, trustworthy noncommissioned officers who will enter into the spirit of the exercise.

31. Second Exercise. Place the trooper on guard. Place two columns of assistants to face him, the head of one column to his right front, the other to his left front (fig. 3).

At the command of the instructor the two columns advance on the trooper at the gait indicated (slow walk, fast walk, or double time), keeping their relative positions and attacking the trooper successively with various attacks.



These attacks may be prearranged by the instructor at first, and later left to the discretion of the assistants. The trooper in all cases replies to the attacks with lunges at the right moment either to the right or left front. Care must be taken that the assistants do not get out of position so that two attack at once. They must stay as in the diagram so as to attack successively. The same cautions apply to this as to the first exercise. Later the exercise should be conducted in the same sequence as under (e) and (f).

(i) Parrying the lance

32. In attacking a lancer, rapid approach is even more important than against a swordsman. The only moment of danger is when the point of the lance comes within the first reach of the fully extended saber. If, at that moment, the swordsman lunges, forcing the lance to the outside, he is safe and the lancer is at his mercy. The same is true of the charging position, which is a lunge, but as the effect cannot be seen dismounted, it will be explained mounted.

To teach the swordsman to meet a lancer, place the trooper on guard and have a graduate instructor armed with a dummy lance approach him from the right front. As soon as the point of the lance comes within the utmost limit of his reach the trooper should lunge to the front, forcing the lance to the outside and, letting his saber slide the length of the shaft, aim at the body of the lancer. The same exercise is repeated to the left front. A lancer has more control of his weapon to the left front, hence whenever possible he should be attacked on his right front. Exercises with the lance should be taught only by graduate instructors trained in its use.

33. There is no guard taught to the left rear, for if a trooper is attacked from that direction his arm is in the position giving the least reach, while his opponent has the longest reach possible. Hence, whenever attacked from the left rear, incline slightly to the left, then circle to the right on a large radius so as to bring the pursuer to the right rear or right. A trooper should occasionally be attacked from the left rear and then always be required to circle as described. He should attack instructors on their left rear so as to fully appreciate the advantages of that position. Against a lancer the case is different. His left rear is a much stronger position for him than his right rear, so he should be attacked on his right rear.

General Plan of Mounted Instruction.

34. (a) Without arms, and then with arms, at a halt, require the troopers to take all the positions of guard and to make all the lunges, extending slowly.

- (b) Make lunges from various guards at command at the walk, trot, and school gallop. Conduct the exercises near dummies to accustom the horses to them.
- (c) Accustom the horses to the sight and sound of sabers.
- (d) Pass among dummies with sabers.
- (e) Preliminary work against dummies.
- (f) Varied work against dummies.
- (g) Exercise in pursuit.
- (h) Exercises in combat.

Application of General Plan of Mounted Instruction.

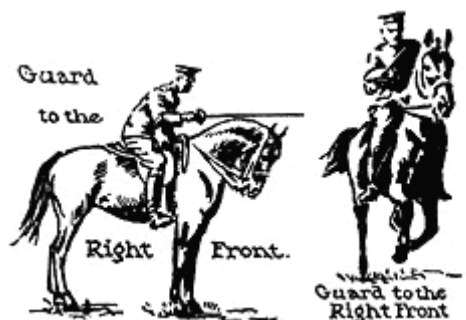
35. Being mounted and in any position: **GUARD**. Instantly assume the position of guard as explained in the instruction dismounted, drawing the saber if not already drawn.

Being mounted and in any position: **CHARGE SABER**. Assume and hold the position of lunge to the right front, at the same time taking the gallop straight to the front unless some other gait and direction are indicated. At the command guard, resume the normal guard. In returning to the guard from charge saber or from the lunge to the right front, the rotation of the wrist to the right is as described in point to the right front. When at charge saber and difficult going is encountered, resume the guard, taking charge saber again when the ground permits.

Never jerk the horse's mouth while making any of the movements with the saber.

(a). Exercises without arms; exercises with arms, at a halt.

36. The troopers being mounted, without arms, and then with arms, in any suitable extended formation at a halt, cause them to take the various guards they have learned dismounted, using the same commands. The general principles of the dismounted instruction apply.



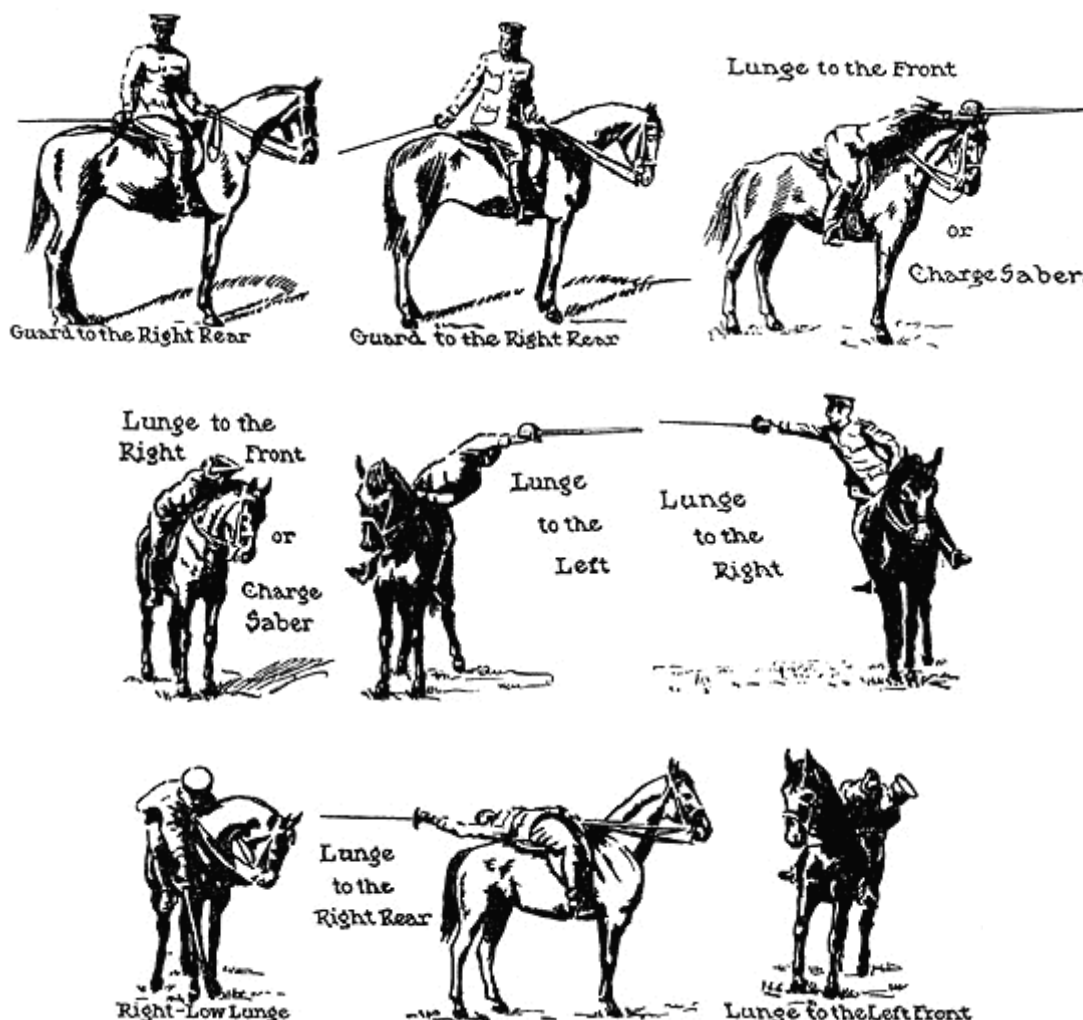
GUARD. Thrust the feet home in the stirrups and crouch slightly in the saddle, bending forward from the waist. The left hand, near the base of the neck, grasps the reins so as to feel the horse's mouth. Otherwise as explained dismounted.

1. **Left front**, 2. **GUARD**. Make the change of guard as described dismounted.



1. **Right** (or left), 2. **GUARD**. The toe on the side of the guard naturally turns out a little, otherwise the position is as described dismounted.

1. **Right rear**, 2. **GUARD**. The right hand, nails down, is rested on the cantle near the center, or may be held in the air near this position; otherwise as explained dismounted. This guard will only be taken in cases of emergency. It is always preferable to circle and receive the attacker on the right or right front.



37. The points and lunges are executed as has been explained dismounted. Care must be taken that the legs remain in place and do not fly to the rear. In making the extension in the lunges to the front and in charge saber, the left hand supports part of the weight on the neck of the horse, and the left forearm rests on the horse's left shoulder.

The positions are simple and natural and can be best understood by consulting the figures.

The lunges should be made very slowly at first, so as not to frighten the horses; when the horses have become accustomed to the movements, snap and vigor must be insisted on.

When using the lunge to the rear in combat, the only way for the man in front to reach his pursuer suddenly to attack him, is to check his horse quickly at the moment of making his lunge to the rear. To do this he closes his legs forcibly behind the girth and increases the pull on the reins, momentarily supporting his weight by them as he lunges and resumes the guard.

At drill, however, the trooper does not make this sudden half halt, on account of the danger of punishing the horse's mouth, but on executing the lunge to the rear allows the reins to slip through the fingers of the left hand, supporting himself by these fingers on the pommel of the saddle.

(b) Guards, points, and lunges at the various gaits.

38. When lunges are first made on a horse he will frequently swerve from his course or change his gait. These tendencies must be overcome.

Place the troopers in formations such as columns of troopers on a circle or on the track with a distance of two horse lengths between horses. Or, being in column of troopers on the track, as the head of the column crosses the short end of the rectangle, have the leading three or four troopers move by the flank straight down the length of the rectangle, each succeeding three or four to follow the first.

Being in such formation commence at the walk and cause the troopers to execute guards, points, lunges, and charge saber at command. See that full and accurate extensions are made and that horses do not change gait or direction. Do not increase gait until troopers and horses go well. Combat the tendency to make only partial extensions. Have charge saber held for considerable periods. The work should be carried on in the vicinity of dummies so that the horses may gradually become used to them.

(c) To accustom the horse to the saber.

39. When handling horses that have not become used to the sight of the saber at drill, it is best to use the exercise saber. Let the trooper carry it and execute the movements under (b) at a walk.

Arrange the troopers with intervals in two parallel lines and cause them to advance as if to pass through the intervals, first at guard and later at charge saber. When the troopers are opposite each other have them halt and raise their sabers, all the while soothing their horses; then resume the guard and continue the march.

When the horses cease being excited, have the troopers strike the flats of their exercise sabers together as they halt opposite each other, and then pass on. Later, strike sabers without halting.

Place the troopers on concentric circles on opposite hands and have them strike the flats of their sabers as they pass.

Finally, lines of troopers with intervals should pass through each other at a gallop, striking their exercise sabers as they pass, exciting the horses as little as possible.

(d) Passing among dummies.

40. Dummies should be movable and not always set up in the same place.

Arrange five or six dummies on a rectangle at varied intervals. Have the instructor on a trained horse lead the column of troopers through the dummies at all gaits. When the horses go fairly well, the troopers should begin thrusting at the dummies and striking their sabers against the supports. Put the nervous horses at the rear of the column.

**(e) Preliminary work against dummies.**

41. Place the dummies in a row with about 10 yard intervals. Have the troopers attack them to the right front in the position of charge saber, at the walk, trot, and school gallop. Insist that the trooper does not flinch, but keeps his full extension until the point has entered the dummy, and the instantly withdraws it and assumes guard with the rotation to the right described in point to the right front. When the trooper is proficient, place a second row of dummies 10 yards behind the first and cause the troopers to attack the first row as before and the second from guard. In the second attack be sure that they make full lunges at the right moment and not too late, as is the usual tendency. After both attacks the guard must be instantly resumed.

There is no trouble in withdrawing the saber from dummies in lunges to the right and left. After charge saber or lunge to the right front, the saber will usually have penetrated deeply. The trooper in withdrawing it should give a decided pull to the rear as he rotates his wrist to the right. This does not remove the saber, but the movement tightens the muscles of the forearm and prevents the wrist from bending and being hurt. There must be no thought of withdrawing the saber until it has gone well home in the dummy.

After lunge to the left front there is a tendency to let the hand come over the head in withdrawing the saber. This is dangerous, as a slip may cut the face. As soon as the blade has gone well home force the hand down, keeping the elbow stiff, straighten the body to the guard position, at the same time the back of the hand will come against the body near the belt and the movement of the horse will easily withdraw the saber.

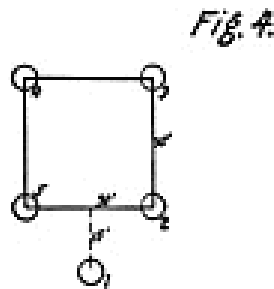
Place a hurdle or low fence so as to form a barrier between the trooper and the dummy and about 5 feet from the dummy. Cause the trooper at guard to pass this on his right hand and lunge to the right as he passes, then turn and taking guard to the left front, lunge to the left front as he passes. The only use of the barrier is to keep the troopers from riding too close to the dummy; if this can be done without the barrier, the latter may be omitted.

(f) Varied work against dummies.

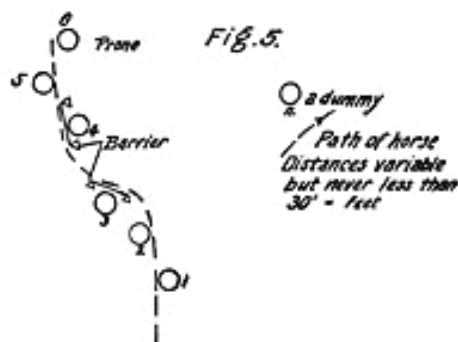
42. The preceding exercises should be practiced until the trooper has accuracy and confidence. As the charge is the chief feature of combat, the first dummy should always be attacked from the charge saber. If a trooper gets careless or flinches, he must go back to (e).

The object of the following exercises is to simulate combat, to develop bold riding, and increase confidence. The exercises given below are examples of what may be done; the difficulty must be proportionate to the ability of the trooper as a horseman.

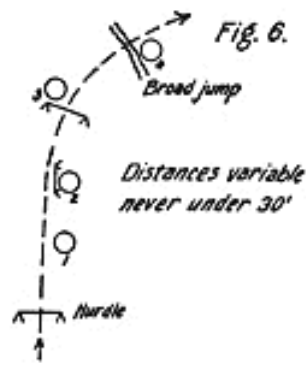
It must be remembered that in all attacks against a dummy from charge saber, the trooper is supposed to be in the front rank of a line charging in close order. His horse is jammed in the press of horses and can only move to the front. If a horse at drill continually avoids a dummy when his rider is at the charge, he should be put in a chute or in some other way made to move straight to the front. When the dummies are attacked from a guard position the trooper is supposed to be in a melee or in line in extended formation. When attacking from guard to the right front or left front the lunge must always be at the right moment; there must be no short lunges or poking. The saber is fully extended in time for the speed of the horse to do the penetrating. In lunges or points to the right or left it is, on the other hand, the power of the man, not the speed of the horse, which causes penetration. Against infantry in line use the charge saber and accentuate the leaning to the front. Against broken infantry or men lying down attack from the guard.



First example. Attack No. 1 at charge saber, then, still keeping the gallop, attack the other four dummies in any suitable order as long as two are attacked to the right or right front and two to the left or left front.



Second example. Attack dummy No. 1 at charge saber, No. 2 with a lunge to the left front, No. 3 with a lunge to the left, No. 4 with a lunge to the right, No. 5 with a lunge to the left front, and No. 6 (a prone figure) with a lunge to the right front low.



Third Example. Jump the hurdle at the guard, attack dummy No. 1 at charge saber, No. with a lunge to the right; jump the second hurdle at the guard, attacking No. 3 to the left while in the air; take a broad jump, or two hurdles fixed to simulate one, and attack No. 4 to the right front in the air.

These examples can be practiced either in a hall or on the drill ground. In addition, dummies may be made of sacks filled with straw and either tied to posts or hung from trees and placed on varied ground. Dummies must always be attacked at the gallop and hence not placed where this gait is impossible.

(g) Exercise in pursuit.

43. This exercise should be carried on in a riding hall, or in some place with clearly marked limits, so that the pursued will have to stay within these limits and hence dodge. Besides being an exercise in riding and handling the horse, it is also most excellent in teaching a man to keep his left rear guard covered.

Example. Fasten a knot of ribbon or paper to the left shoulder of a trooper. Give him a start of a few yards and then have a second man pursue him and try to snatch the ribbon. If, at the end of two minutes, the ribbon is still secure, send out a second man and let the two continue the chase for an additional minute. Obstacles should be placed to aid the trooper in dodging, and at the same time practice him in jumping.

(h) Exercise in combat.

44. Only troopers who have shown marked proficiency in all the previous exercises, and who in addition have sufficient intelligence and discipline to abide absolutely by the rules, should be allowed to participate in this exercise. And even with these precautions the exercise has such a tendency to make men slow up and to frighten horses that it should not be frequently indulged in, and never without an officer as judge.

Individual Combat. Place two troopers armed with masks and exercise sabers facing each other at a distance of 50 yards. At a signal they approach each other at the gallop in the position of guard. Each tries to touch. When one touch is made, or at the end of 30 seconds if no touch is made, a signal is given and the bout stopped. If the bout is part of a competition the scoring is as follows:

Plus one for the man making the touch.

Minus one for the man touched.

If both touches occur at the same moment the man who in the opinion of the judge makes the most serious touch is given plus one and the other man minus one.

If in the above case both touches are of equal value each man is given zero.

If no touch is made in the time allowed each is given minus one.

When one man clearly runs away and the other is unable to catch him, the man who runs is given minus one, the other zero.

Each organization must enter the same number of contestants; the one with the largest algebraic sum at the end wins. Or the combat can be to determine individual championship, in which case each contestant must fight every other contestant; the one losing the smallest number of bouts wins. If several lose the same number they must fight off the tie.

Combat by Groups. Place two groups of four troopers each in line with 6 yard intervals facing each other 50 yards apart. At a signal the troopers gallop toward each other in the position of guard, each trooper passing to the right of the one facing him. When the lines have passed the troopers turn about individually and attack any one of the opponents they please. The signal is given and the bout stops when all the members of one group have been touched, or at the end of one minute.

The following rules must be observed:

1. A man who is fairly touched must hold up his saber and gallop from the enclosure.
2. A man must not touch another if he himself is touched.
3. A man striking his own or another horse is counted as touched.
4. A man using the edge is counted as touched.
5. A man going slower than a gallop or who is forced from the enclosure is counted as touched.
6. A man guilty of dangerous riding is counted as touched.
7. The individual combat should be conducted in some sort of marked off space 50 yards square; the combat by groups in a similar enclosure.

The above seven rules apply to both individual combat and combat by groups.

If the combat by groups is part of a competition the following rules for scoring hold:

That side wins which has the most men left at the end of a minute. It is scored plus one, the losing side minus one.

If each side loses the same number of men, the one first losing them is scored minus one and the other plus one.

If each side loses the same number in the same time, each is given zero.

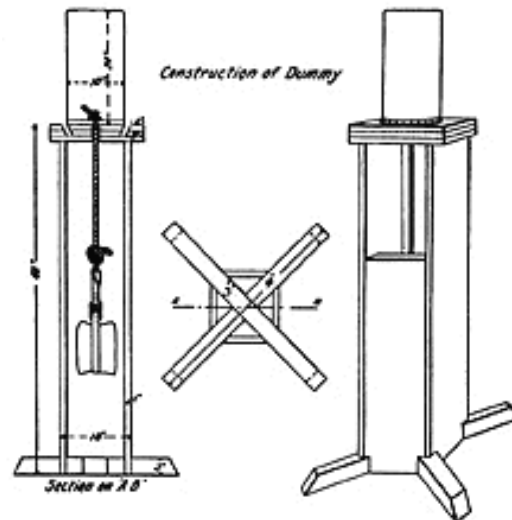
If a man fails to admit a touch, his side is given minus one.

If neither side loses a man, each is given minus one.

The groups are not allowed to charge each other as, to avoid accidents, they would have to pull up or charge with intervals; in neither case could the effect of the charge demonstrated.

Construction of dummies.

45. As nearly all the mounted work with the saber is carried on against dummies it is necessary to have suitable ones. The resistance should be approximate that offered by a human body, and the dummy should be constructed so as to give way in about the same manner as a human body in combat, without hurting the trooper or frightening his horse.



A dummy constructed on the following lines seems to answer the purpose. It can be made out of old material, at small cost, by anyone who can use tools.

The dummy itself is a cylinder of burlap or sacking 10 inches in diameter and 20 inches long. The upper end may be fastened with a string or sewed. The lower end is tacked to the frustum of a right cone 10 inches in diameter at the upper section and 6 or 7 inches at the lower. The frustum is from 3 to 4 inches thick. The sack or cylinder of burlap is stuffed as tightly as possible with straw. A strip of leather nailed around the bottom of the sack where it joins the wooden base keeps the burlap from tearing out.

The wooden support is made as shown in the diagram. The basin at the top in which the dummy moves is made by cutting holes of suitable diameter in two or three 1-inch boards and nailing them together. The diameter of the basin should be 3 inches greater than that of the base of the dummy.

The weight, a bag of sand, should weigh about 40 pounds. It can be changed to vary the stiffness of the dummy.

The weight should hang low in the support to make it more stable.

When the dummy is used outside, iron pins with L-shaped heads may be driven into the ground with the projection over the support to prevent it from being knocked down. In the hall it will occasionally be upset. The supports cannot be made longer or the horses will step on them.

An ordinary sack filled with straw makes a good prone dummy. An old blouse and breeches should be put on it to accustom the horses to go steadily among men.

Rings or other targets which offer no resistance to the saber should not be used. Dummies made by suspending sacks from above are unsatisfactory as they swing up instead of down when struck.
