136. Gebitgsjäger

Ausbildungbuch

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Primary sources for squad, mountain and drill material are the original WWII German field manuals and now unclassified publications prepared by the U.S. War Department Military Intelligence Division in 1944 and 1945.



Oberst Brian Webster

We keep the lamps lit high in the mountains Until our fallen comrades return.

136. Gebirgsjäger Safety Policy

GENERAL RULES & PRINCIPLES

CONDUCT: Safe and ethical conduct is always the top priority.

INSURANCE: Events require event insurance, which in turn requires a signed liability waiver holding harmless the property owner and the event-sponsoring legal entity. Therefore all participating members will sign the liability waiver as a condition of participation.

LEGAL WAIVERS: While a waiver places the legal weight of liability for an accident on the shoulders of the individual participant, safety is a shared responsibility and relies on all participants to execute such in good faith. Re-enactors who fail to understand this place themselves and others at risk. Event administrators have and will keep out entire units from event participation due to safety concerns.

MINOR INJURIES and accidents (sprains and broken bones) are infrequent but happen every year. The minute you are humping kit into the field, you are at risk of injury. Have fun but use common sense, take into account how your actions will affect others and be prudent. Not only will you ruin your weekend, you'll cause a disruption for dozens of other guys who paid their money and took time off to be there.

MAJOR INJURIES are rare, but can and have resulted in a variety of serious and sometimes fatal outcomes. Examples: a) Death due to tank main gun explosion in Texas; b) Fatal heart attack in the field in Pennsylvania—reenactor alone, found too late and too far from EMT to save his life; c) Loss of finger due to improper handling of weapon. PA Nat Guard permanently cancels Battle of the Bulge event after 40 years. SAFETY OFFICERS: "Every unit member is a Safety Officer." Regardless of seniority, you have a role to

SAFETY OFFICERS: "Every unit member is a Safety Officer." Regardless of seniority, you have a role to play. If you see something, say something...either stop what is happening or report it to the senior unit member present immediately.

SENIOR UNIT MEMBERS: The senior unit member at any event is responsible for unit safety and morale. He will not place, or allow unit members to be placed in any position which compromises safety. He is to lead by example, ensure that his men are rested, fed, hydrated, and that the men avoid unnecessary hardship that could compromise safety and morale.

LIVE AMMUNITION: With the exception of a training event which contains range time for live fire, no live ammunition is to be brought to a re-enactment event.

DRUGS (other than prescription) are STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

ALCOHOL: No alcoholic beverages are to be consumed at events which prohibit them. No unit member will drink alcohol prior to, or during any battle, nor will he participate if he appears to under the influence of alcohol. Alcoholic beverages may be consumed at events which allow them after duty hours as defined by the senior unit member in attendance. At any event, unit members are expected to control their personal alcohol consumption and maintain the highest standards of integrity and respect towards others.

FAILURE TO COMPLY: Refusal to obey Safety Regulations may result in dismissal from the event and/or unit.

BEFORE THE FIELD

UNIT APPELL: The senior unit member at any event will hold an Appell prior to movement into the field. During the Appell, squad leaders will conduct a safety inspection of their men and report up the chain of command. Senior unit member will see that each safety issue is satisfactorily addressed prior to movement into the field. The safety inspection will cover the following:

- Weapons are unloaded/clear, clean, in safe working order and the operator is trained to handle it in a safe manner.
- 2) All ammunition is blank and in compliance with event regulations.
- 3) Any pyrotechnics are in compliance with event regulations
- 4) Clothing worn and/or carried is appropriate for weather conditions
- 5) At least 1 liter of water per unit member is being carried.
- 6) Each squad has the following:
 - a. At least one first aid kit
 - b. At least one wool blanket
 - c. At least two zeltbahns (to provide shelter or make a stretcher)
 - d. A mirror and a whistle for signaling
 - e. A compass and a map
 - f. A working wristwatch
 - g. A cell phone

EVENT APPELL: Unit members may be subject to a safety inspection by the event sponsor's appointed safety officer and will comply with the event sponsor's safety rules.

IN THE FIELD

LEADERS: are expected to manage the mission with respect to the health and safety of their men. You can only move as fast as your slowest member. Don't leave anybody behind alone. Assign the tougher terrain to those most fit; keep the less fit closer to roads and trails.

LOADING WEAPONS: Weapons will not be loaded until the Event Administrator has given the command and the senior unit member has given the order—he must control and maintain awareness of his command's safety footing. Normally, the command to load weapons will be given once in the field or battle site. Even at the field site, weapons should be placed on "Safe" and rounds unchambered when not actually participating in action against enemy forces.

FIRING: No weapon is to be pointed at or discharged directly at a person within 20 yards. Blank ammunition can hurt, maim and kill if not handled properly. Muzzle discipline is paramount. You may point the muzzle up and fire or say "bang" within 20 yards. Do not fire your weapon when standing behind someone in such a way that the muzzle discharge will harm their ears. Ear plugs are optional but a wise choice. To prevent concussion injury, weapons will not be discharged above or behind the heads of personnel in positions to the firer's front.

URBAN TERRAIN: All battles involving urban terrain (buildings, bunkers or other man-made structures) will be conducted in a manner which minimizes potential injury to any participant. This includes prohibiting the blind firing of weapons around corners or through windows, the throwing of grenades or other pyrotechnics in close proximity to other personnel or within confined spaces, jumping from upper level windows, or any other act deemed unsafe based on circumstances.

BAYONETS: No bayonets will be affixed to weapons.

UMPIRES: When used, all unit members will abide by the umpire rulings and treat them respectfully. Umpires are not easy to find and keep. We never have as many as we would like, and especially for large events, they keep the play fair.

INJURY: If anyone, including a member of another unit or a bystander, is injured during a battle, stop the action until the injured person is tended to or removed from the battle area. The senior unit member may need to report the injury up through the chain of command and request a cease fire. Conversely, if a cease fire is called due to an injury elsewhere, any unit member who hears "cease fire" should disengage from combat and pass the

word immediately. You may hear this from the opposing side—follow it as you would if you heard it from our own.

VEHICLES:

GENERAL: Vintage vehicles are notorious for consuming fingers, hands, toes and feet. Doors, wheels and tracks, even when the vehicle is stationary (in fact ESPECIALLY when stationary) are danger points. Do not lean, rest a hand or foot on wheels, tracks, bumpers, etc. The driver may have limited visibility and be unable to see you when they decide to move the vehicle. When communicating with a vehicle operator, do so from the front. The driver may not be the vehicle commander (this applies to armor, especially a tank), so be sure you are speaking to the individual responsible for directing movement, which is the vehicle commander.

<u>QUALIFIED OPERATOR</u>: All motor vehicles participating in an event must be driven by a licensed driver in a sensible and safe manner. Some event organizers require vehicle insurance and a working fire extinguisher. It is the vehicle owner's responsibility to ensure all event requirements are in compliance.

OFF ROAD: Any vehicle being driven off-road in grass or foliage deep enough to conceal personnel must be preceded by a ground guide. All armored vehicles require a ground guide while operating in reverse gear.

MOUNTED INFANTRY: Weapons will be placed on "Safe" when embarking or disembarking from any mode of transportation. Members will not embark or disembark vehicles while the vehicle in motion. Members need to be particularly safety-conscious around armored vehicles which have limited visibility, marginal maneuverability and increased stopping distances. One crew member of each vehicle (except motorcycles and light-skinned vehicles) will be designated to monitor passengers, particularly while loading or unloading. Members may ride on the outside of vehicles with permission of the vehicle owner/operator but in a manner that will not compromise the visibility of the driver or the safety of himself or other passengers.

ATTACKING A VEHICLE: No devices are to be thrown or projected at the windshield or near the driver of a vehicle. When engaging a vehicle, be respectful of the owner's investment. Never hide in grass within 20 yards of a tracked vehicle. Use cover that cannot be run over, such as boulders, trees, etc. If you are laying in a field, your ability to see and hear what is happening around you is compromised. Even a vehicle ground guide may not be able to see you. "Casualties" should not fall within 20 feet of vehicles. These casualties should remain aware of their surroundings and prepare to move immediately if the situation dictates.

<u>PASS AUF</u>: When you hear "Pass Auf!" that is the German command to yield to oncoming traffic, or in English, "Make a Hole"—this means clear the road so vehicles may pass.

PERSONAL SAFETY

OVERALL FITNESS As a practical comparison, tactical events and deer hunting require about the same level of fitness. You need to be able to hike, sit in cold temperatures, and maneuver over a variety of terrain (mountains, marsh, hills, meadows) and surfaces (rock scree, dirt roads, etc.)

MEDICAL DISCLOSURES: We cannot by law force personnel with medical conditions/medication allergies to disclose that information, but they are strongly encouraged to be prudent and disclose to at least their immediate superior and battle buddy. If you are injured and cannot communicate, medical treatment may be ineffective or further endangering (i.e. allergies to certain medications). However, everyone is required to place a slip of paper with an emergency contact in their left breast pocket. Your contact should be empowered to speak for you if you cannot.

<u>WATER SOURCES</u>: Do not drink water from local streams, rivers, ponds, or lakes unless as a last resort with filtration/boiling precautions to prevent death by dehydration Do not foul the water with human waste or garbage.

<u>WASHING HANDS</u>: Wash your hands whenever handling food, water and so forth and after using the latrine. <u>FIRE</u>: If brush fire occurs, immediately stop the battle and extinguish the flames. In some geographic areas, fires will spread out of control very quickly.

FIRST AID: Each squad must have one member trained in first aid. The squad must carry at least one first aid kit, one blanket and two zeltbahns (for a stretcher) at a minimum. Each soldier should carry a small mirror and whistle for signaling if they cannot move or speak due to injury. Smoke grenades are also effective for signaling.

<u>CLOTHING</u>: Most events take place in cool to cold temperatures, but unseasonably warm weather is not uncommon. Be prepared for either extreme. Stay hydrated, dress in layers and carry extra socks. Wool socks or wool/synthetic blends are strongly encouraged. Wool breathes, it better protects your feet from blistering, is better at moisture-wicking and dries faster when wet. Cotton is inferior for these events.

HYDRATION IN ALL WEATHER: Drink at least 1 liter of water before fielding, 1 liter in the field and 1 liter upon returning to camp, regardless of outside temperatures. You can just as easily dehydrate in the cold as in the heat. New guys tend to under-estimate the rate of dehydration wearing uniforms with full equipment.

HEAT MANAGEMENT— Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are serious situations. Someone who is used to summers wearing a t-shirt and shorts may not adjust well to uniform and kit.

- If you are seriously overheating, pour water over your head and neck (this can be done with a handkerchief if water is scarce. Soaking hands and feet in mountain streams can also help. Notify your immediate superior.
- Wear light clothing (e.g., HBT uniforms) when ambient temperatures are high. The wearing of an undershirt (without tunic) under the smock may be authorized by the senior unit member.
- Always take a full canteen to the field.
- · Rest frequently as necessary.
- Loosen restrictive clothing and equipment.
- Do not carry unnecessary items into combat that add no value to the mission, while adding weight to your kit that will only increase the risk of heat issues.
- Eat lighter than you normally would.
- Do not be embarrassed or apprehensive about reporting the onset of heat-related sickness. It can lead to serious injury or even death if not treated. If at any time you begin to feel the onset of a headache, feel nauseous, weak or disoriented due to excessive heat, do not continue to participate in strenuous activities to prove your strength or dedication. Immediately sit down in a shaded area, take a break, loosen restrictive clothing and equipment and drink plenty of water. Once you have regained your composure, you may continue to participate in the activities. Remember, the effects of heat-related sickness are cumulative.
- Keep a watchful eye on your Kameraden for signs of heat related sicknesses and prepare to treat them if they become a heat-related casualty.

COLD MANAGEMENT:

- Just like in heat, extremities are important. Head, hands and feet are where heat escapes. Keep them
 covered. Despite cold conditions, always take a full canteen to the field
- Expect to layer up and down in the field. The anorak, windjacket, smock or zeltbahn (configured as a smock) are excellent for keeping wind, snow and rain at bay, while the wool feldbluse underneath serves as the primary insulator against the cold. Beneath that should be some combination of tank shirt, long underwear, service shirt and sweater, depending on the temperatures. Wear just enough to stay warm when moving. What you don't wear, keep in your rucksack to wear in case you are sitting for extended periods.
- Bring extra socks, boots, uniforms and gloves in the event the first uniform becomes wet.
- Bring a scarf, toque and earmuffs to protect the face and ears.
- Waterproof your footwear.
- Know the warning signals for the onset of hypothermia.

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Owner's Manual

for the Care and Use of





German Mauser 98K of WWII

in 8mm Mauser Caliber

Mauser: the Crown Jewel of Bolt Action Rifles!

This Owner's Manual should always accompany the rifle and be transferred with it upon change of ownership. Become thoroughly knowledgeable with the instructions contained here and review the entire booklet each time you intend to use your rifle.

This rifle must be thoroughly cleaned before use.

Mitchells Mausers Cleaning Rod **3ayonet** Drift-adjustable Front Sight Upper Handgyard This illustration is intended to identify all exterior component parts for easy reference as you go through this owners manual in detail. High-strength laminated Stock Range-adjustable Rear Sight Parts Identification Recoil Lug Controlled Round Feeding 0 Magazine Floor Plate Safety Mauser 98K Two stage Military Trigger Visible Firing Pin Cocking Indicator Curved Bolt Handle Sling Slot Butt Plate Steel Fig 1 – Exterior Components 2

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Responsibility

As a responsible firearms owner, <u>you must read this Owner's</u>

<u>Manual</u> thoroughly and become completely comfortable with it before you handle your rifle! Then examine your rifle carefully after you've read this manual and make sure you understand all of the basics associated with it.

Your rifle is well made and will give you a lifetime of reliable service, security and pride of ownership. You, the owner, must use it intelligently, keep it clean and call us with any questions.

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Congratulations

on your purchase of a world-class rifle representing the leading edge of firearms technology in its day. While that day was long ago, the Mauser K98, also called 98K, is the basis of virtually all modern bolt-action rifles, even today.

German manufacturing involved a coded system to conceal the identity of the many factories that produced the rifles for the German military. In addition, the year of manufacture is stamped into the receiver ring of every K98 rifle.

The Mauser K98 is available in three distinct models. They are:

Infantry Model SS Model Sniper Model

The <u>Infantry Model</u> has matching serial numbers on all normally numbered parts. It also has German military acceptance marks of various sizes throughout the rifle, even on some small parts. The German military was extremely sensitive about quality and had a highly refined quality control system. After all, this was intended to be a world-class combat rifle.

The <u>SS Model</u> is an Infantry rifle that has special markings and a unique history. These rifles were built by and for the German SS (Gestapo) in the Mauthausan concentration camp near the Steyr factory in Steyr, Austria. Because captives built it under close supervision, the Gestapo had extreme quality control over every step in manufacturing.

The <u>Sniper Model</u> K98's were selected at the final production QC point and then fitted with a sniper scope. Selection was based on having the tightest manufacturing tolerances, which would therefore make the most accurate rifles.

All three models are operationally identical. Parts are generally interchangeable between models, except for the sniper scopes.

A Little Mauser K98 History:

Much has been written about the genius of Paul Mauser and his brother Wilhelm and their invention of the famous Mauser rifle. It is the forerunner of virtually every modern bolt action rifle made in the 20th Century. Many books have been written about Mauser rifles. Even today, most bolt action rifles are based on the principles of the Mauser brothers, regardless of the brand.

Your rifle, a Mauser 98K, was built before or during WWII. It was manufactured in preparation for a renewed and rearmed German military after the Treaty of Versailles was renounced. After the war the production of semi-automatic and full-automatic rifles in Europe then rendered bolt action rifles functionally obsolete for the main body of an army. During the long decades since that time, your rifle was stored in a combat ready condition, just in case.



Your rifle is in near-new condition and shows only 'garrison marks'. These are handling and storage marks accumulated over the years together with the preservatives of the day that, in some cases, tended to change the hue and wear of the bluing. Over the years the preservative affected the color of the wood in different ways so that no two rifles are exactly alike.

Your rifle was recently 'honorably discharged' from the military and is now a civilian! The K98 rifle is a very strong rifle, originally designed for the rigors of combat. As such it provides you with an excellent platform for sporterizing or you can use it for hunting just as it is. Its 8mm Mauser caliber is ballistically similar to our .30-'06 Springfield.

It is a functionally new rifle. It has preservative in it and on it. **Before use, it must be thoroughly cleaned and examined by you.**

You must assure that the rifle is clean, complete and normally functional as described in this manual. Please pay particular attention to the section on cleaning your rifle, as well as Safe Handling.

As an owner, that responsibility rests with you.

Characteristics and General Description of your Rifle:

The Mauser 98K is a shoulder mounted, trigger actuated, striker fired, magazine fed, bolt action rifle. It is designed to be fired from the shoulder only, not in any other position, whether standing, sitting or prone.

The rifle is equipped with features that were standard for the time and are still considered 'advanced' today. It has, for example, 'controlled round feeding', a long, heavy claw extractor, two heavy-duty front locking lugs and an additional safety lug built into the rear of the bolt. It also has a superb gas shield. The long claw extractor serves as a bolt guide along with a built-in bolt guide that is built into the body of the bolt. The bolt body has gas escape ports to handle cartridge failure. It is generally accepted that it has the best safety mechanism ever designed. Your rifle is quite possibly the strongest bolt action rifle ever built.

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Your rifle is now a 'civilian' and, as such, is perfect for collecting, target shooting, big game hunting, or sporterizing. **It is a rarity** because of its like-new condition for its age.

Note: Some rifle models may come with the original leather accessories including a sling, ammunition pouch and belt hanger for the bayonet scabbard. The leather is 50 years old and has varying degrees of color and age marks. You can easily make it look its best with any good commercial leather cleaner, shoe polish or leather preservative.

Your rifle was once a complete battle ready 'soldier'. It is now a 'civilian'.

Rifle Specifications — German K98 Mauser

Action Type: Large Ring Mauser Bolt Action,

Striker fired, Magazine fed, with Long Claw Extractor.

Action Bedding: Pillar Bedding with locking screws

and Cross-bolt Recoil Lug

Magazine Capacity: 5, with Controlled Round Feeding.

Caliber: 8mm Mauser (also described as

8x57JS Mauser or 7.9mm)

Bullet Diameter: 0.323" Barrel Length: $23\frac{1}{2}$ "

Rifling: 4 groves, right twist.

Rear Sight: Standard V-notch, adjustable to

2,000 Meters.

Front Sight: Inverted V, forming a

clean sight picture.

Stock Material: Oil-resistant Laminated Wood

Over-All Length: 43.5"

Weight: 8.9 lbs. +/-

Safety:

Safety is your responsibility and your primary concern. Of course, you know the basic handling rules governing the use of any firearm. Nevertheless, we repeat them here:

- 1. Never point this rifle at **anything** you are not willing to destroy, even if it is not loaded. This rifle fires the powerful 8mm Mauser cartridge. You must know what you're doing.
- 2. Don't load or fire this rifle until you are thoroughly familiar with it and all of its handling characteristics. If you don't understand something or need to ask a question, please call us.
- 3. Don't handle or clean this rifle without assuring yourself and those around you that the rifle is empty and safe.
- 4. Don't load your rifle or shoot it until you have examined it completely and know that it is clean, complete, safe and fully functional.
- 5. Don't put or keep a live round in the chamber unless the safety is on.
- 6. If you have been drinking or have been using any drugs, prescription or not, put the rifle away and come back another day. You won't perform to the standard of the rifle, you could get in trouble or, worse yet, hurt yourself or someone near you.

This Rifle is NOT a Toy. Be Careful.



Safety Lever Functions:

Your rifle has one of the most advanced safety mechanisms in existence, even today. It is generally recognized that no other rifle safety is as good, no matter the brand or the cost.

The safety lever is located on the top rear of the bolt. It has three positions; full left, middle and full right.

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- 1. **Fully safe position:** Same as the 'full right' position. With the lever easily swung over to the full right position, the rifle cannot be fired, and the bolt cannot be opened. The rifle is fully safe.
- 2. **Safe-unload position:** Same as 'vertical' or 'middle' position. With the lever standing straight up, the rifle cannot be fired but the bolt can be opened for unloading. If you change your mind and choose not to shoot, you can safely unload you rifle without putting it in the fire position (unlike many newer designs). If you attempted to fire your rifle in the 'safe-unload' position, you would quickly see that the vertically standing safety lever would interfere with the sights and at the same time, the trigger is disabled! You have an advanced hunting rifle, even by today's standards!
- 3. **Fire position:** Same as 'full left' position. With the safety lever in the full left position, the rifle is ready to fire. **It will fire if the trigger is pulled.**

As an added feature, you can tell if your rifle is 'cocked' by just looking at it; without even picking it up! Just look at the rear of the bolt and see how far the firing pin base protrudes rearward from the gas shield. If it protrudes about a half inch, you **know** it is cocked, so be extra careful. If it protrudes only one quarter inch, you know it is not cocked. The difference is easy to see or even feel, in the dark.



1. Right: Safe & Locked



2. Vertical: Safe & Unlocked



3. Full Left: Fire

Caution: A decocked rifle with a live round in the chamber is NOT a safe condition. An accidental blow could fire the rifle. **Always use the safety lever**

Loading:

There are two ways to load your rifle. Put the safety lever in the straight up (middle) position before you do anything.

- 1. The fastest way to load is to have ammunition on 'stripper' clips. Notice that there is a cut-out in the top rear receiver ring designed specifically for stripper clip loading. With the bolt open, simply fit the loaded clip into the cut-out and then smartly 'strip' the cartridges into the empty magazine as far as you can push them. There is a cutout provision in the left rear of the receiver to allow room for your thumb to push the cartridges down into the magazine. The stripper clip will then be standing empty. You can lift it out by hand or when you close the bolt, it will be pushed up and out of the rifle.
- 2. <u>The simplest way</u> is to simply open the bolt and push cartridges into the magazine, one at a time. Simple, fairly quick, and very easy.

You should practice with the safety lever until you are comfortable and sure of its three positions and how the different positions affect the rifle. When Paul Mauser designed the rifle, he successfully designed it to be 'soldier proof' (which really means combat-ready). You are holding one of the most copied designs in the firearms world! Your rifle is extraordinarily rugged, very accurate, and a joy to own.

Sights:

The sights of the rifle are adjustable from one hundred meters all the way out to 2,000 meters! In one hundred meter increments. At its rearmost setting the sight is set for one hundred meters. This is an ideal setting for hunting with open sights. For longer ranges, the sight can be adjusted simply by squeezing the two locking lugs together and sliding the sight up its ramp to the desired distance. At ranges beyond 200 yards, the rifle and the cartridge will perform admirably well, **but you won't**. The human eye just can't cut it for game animals or silhouette shooting without optical assistance at that distance.

The front sight provides you with 'windage adjustment'. In reality you'll use "Kentucky windage" once you set the front and rear sights in the way you like them for the particular style and weight of hunting bullet you are using. To adjust the front sight, start by taking the bolt out of the rifle and removing all ammunition from the area. Lay the rifle down on its side and support the front sight base securely because you will be 'tapping' on the

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sight alone; to move it in its groove. It is a dove-tailed friction fit and it will not move easily. However, not much movement will be required to make even large adjustments. Movement of the sight should only be done by using a small brass tool (rod) and tap the rod with a hammer using only light blows. **Be sure of what you are doing.** Do not scar or damage your rifle.

To move the impact point to the left, move the front sight to the right. To move the impact point to the right, move the front sight to the left. Just remember that slight movement of the sight means a lot of movement of the impact point out at 100 meters. Your rifle will be very accurate right out of the box. Do not adjust windage unless really necessary.

We suggest you limit yourself to what is comfortable for your eyes as far as distance is concerned. If you're tired, boozy or distracted, forget about shooting. Come back when you're alert, focused and ready to perform up to the ability designed into your rifle.

The Correct Sight Picture:

The rear sight has a 'V' notch, and the front sight has an inverted 'V' post. Simply match them up and make sure they are level and centered; the front in the rear and level. That forms the correct sight picture. The inverted 'V' post centered in the rear 'V' notch of the rear sight is the correct (and only) sight picture you should use.



Trigger:

Your rifle has a two stage 'military' trigger designed for safety and reliability. It requires that you practice with it to know it well. Its first 'stage' is simply a take-up stage and the second stage is the firing stage. You'll feel the trigger come to a definite firmness after you take-up the first stage and as you feel the firmness, you feel the trigger 'break', firing the rifle. To be as accurate as the rifle, you must learn the trigger and know when it will fire. It is simple and easy to learn, but it does require practice. If you shoot for group size, trigger control is paramount. Your rifle will perform, but only as well as you are able to hold it.

Firing:

Your rifle is designed to fire only the 8mm Mauser cartridge. It is readily available and can be purchased where you bought the rifle.

Your rifle is a shoulder fired rifle and requires the use of two hands. It should not be fired in any other way. Grasp the semi-pistol grip in your right hand, and with your left hand, grasp the rifle as far forward as is comfortable for you. Bring the buttstock firmly to your shoulder and as high as is comfortable. You want to get a secure 'weld' between the stock and your cheekbone. In this way you have full control of the rifle and will be the most accurate. Remember, control is everything.

You must be certain of your target before you shoot. You must know where your bullet will go before you shoot, even if you miss, because you can't call it back. Your bullet is very powerful and, depending on the type you choose to use, can have very high penetrating characteristics. You must be sure of the backstop for your bullet because you may shoot right through your target and hit something you weren't intending to hit.

Hit or miss, the responsibility is yours. Be sure of what you are doing.

Government Safety Warnings:

WARNING

Discharging firearms in poorly ventilated areas, cleaning firearms, or handling ammunition may result in exposures to lead and other substances known to the State of California to cause birth defects, reproductive harm, and other serious physical injury. Have adequate ventilation at all times. Wash hands thoroughly after exposure.

NOTICE

If you leave a loaded firearm where a child obtains and improperly uses it, you may be fined or sent to prison or both.

In light of everything contained in this manual, keep three things in mind:

1. Be safe! 2. Be careful! 3. Have fun!

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Unloading Your Rifle:

If you change your mind and choose not to shoot, just follow these simple instructions. Keep the rifle pointed safely down range. Raise the safety lever to the vertical position. (If the rifle is not cocked, lift the bolt handle first, and lower it again, then put the safety on.) Open the bolt and extract the loaded round. If there are cartridges in the magazine, you may unload the magazine by cycling all cartridges with the bolt while the safety lever is still in the vertical position. Just cycle the bolt for as many cartridges as remain in the magazine untill the magazine is empty.

Cleaning Your Rifle:

Your rifle has fifty years of preservative in it and on it. It must be thoroughly cleaned before use.

Disassembly:

- 1. Unload your rifle and remove all ammo from the area.
- 2. Remove the Bolt. (Rifles are shipped with the bolt already removed.)

 Point the rifle in a safe direction. Put the safety lever in the vertical (upright) position. (If the rifle is not cocked, lift the bolt handle and lower it again to cock it, then put the safety on.) Open the bolt and pull it to the rear. It will stop against the bolt-stop.

On the left side of the rear part of the receiver is a spring loaded, hinged, release lever, which will release the bolt stop. It swings from the front, being hinged in the rear. Swing it all the way out and that will allow you to pull the bolt out of the rifle.

3. Remove the Magazine Floor Plate and Follower.

- a. Turn the rifle upside down so that you can see the magazine floor plate. At the rear of the floor plate, near the trigger guard you will see an opening that provides access to a small, spring loaded plunger. To remove the floor plate, use a brass rod that is about the size of the little button plunger and fully depress the plunger as far as it will go, about 1/8th inch. While holding the plunger depressed, slide the floor plate and the rod firmly rearward. The floor plate will move back about 1/8th inch only.
- b. Release the pressure on the plunger and the floor plate will come away from the rifle by the force of the follower spring.

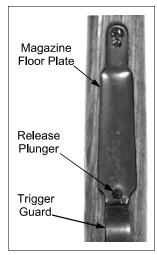


Fig 2 Magazine Floor Plate.

Lift out the whole assembly as one piece, the floor plate, the follower spring and the follower. (We'll take it apart later.)

- c. Now thoroughly clean out the magazine well with a good quality solvent. Wipe clean the inside of the receiver (where the bolt goes) with solvent and make sure there is no trash or shipping material residue anywhere in the receiver or magazine well.
- d. Take the follower assembly apart for cleaning. Simply slide the flat spring out of the base of the follower and slide the other end out of the top inside of the floor plate. (Thou shalt pay close attention to what thou art doing as the spring will go back into the floor plate and the follower in only **the same way** they came out.) If you put it back together wrong, the follower may jam the cartridges during feeding and that is a bummer (it could also be dangerous!). Make sure you do it right! After you've cleaned all three parts, you can re-insert them into the rifle.

4. Clean the Barrel Thoroughly:

Use a good solvent and keep going at it until you get a clean patch through the barrel. Change patches every time; use one patch one time only. Look through the barrel from the breech end and the barrel should be sparkling clean with the spiral grooves clean and sharp! This is a tribute to the quality of your rifle. The cleaning rod under the barrel is screwed into position. It alone, is too short to clean the barrel. Soldiers, together, screwed two rods together, to make one long one and then cleaned both rifles as the rod is too short by itself. We suggest you simply buy a one piece rod to clean the barrel and leave the original one screwed in tight, right where it is (and where it belongs).

5. Clean the Receiver.

Thoroughly clean the trigger sear, the locking lug recesses, the slide ways and all of the surfaces inside the receiver.

6. Disassemble and Clean the Bolt:

The preservative grease inside the bolt will cause the rifle to fail to fire. To clean the bolt, you must become knowledgeable about its disassembly and reassembly. You may require some help here as this is somewhat difficult (it requires some strength in your hands and you are dealing with a very powerful firing pin spring, so pay careful attention).

- a. Check the position of the safety lever. It should be in the vertical (upright) position. If it isn't, put the bolt back in the rifle and close it. Swing the safety lever up to the vertical position. Then remove the bolt from the rifle and proceed.
- b. Separate the firing pin assembly from the bolt body as follows. Observe the small spring-loaded plunger on the rear of the bolt opposite the bolt handle. It is the Bolt Sleeve Lock Plunger. Grasp the bolt in your left hand and with

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your left thumb, push in the plunger. With your right hand, grasp and turn the whole rear assembly counter clockwise. After one or two complete turns, the rear assembly will turn easily without pressure on the locking plunger. Unscrew the assembly and lift the firing pin assembly out of the bolt body. You will likely find it covered with protective grease, which would likely cause a failure to fire. Soak both the entire empty bolt body and the firing pin assembly in solvent.

c. Notice that the bolt body has two gas vents in the bottom of the bolt body. These serve two purposes. First, they serve as the primary gas escape holes in case of a cartridge failure and second, they are two lubrication ports giving you access to the whole bolt internally because you won't want to take it apart very often.

d. Clean the bolt body:

- i. Swab the interior of the bolt body. Make sure there is no dried grease left inside.
- ii. Clean all of the little nooks and crannies. A tooth brush is handy. Carefully inspect everything.
- ii. Observe the long claw extractor. It should easily rotate around the bolt through the full range of its guide slot. Do not remove the extractor. Simply clean it. Restore it to its original position in line with the locking lug, otherwise you won't be able to get the bolt back into the rifle.

e. Clean the Firing Pin Assembly:

Notice that the firing pin is in the cocked position, the very powerful firing pin spring being compressed and held in position by the safety lever. Do not attempt to release the safety. Normally this assembly can be cleaned without further disassembly. Soak the assembly in solvent and then wipe, brush, and blow it clean.

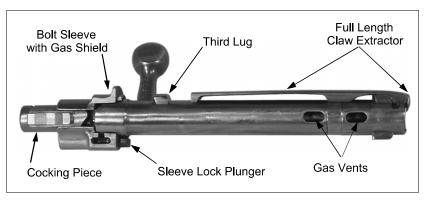


Fig 3. Bolt Assembly, Bottom View.

Further disassembly is difficult and not normally necessary. Also there is some risk of bending the firing pin. Skip the following italicized steps unless you have a real reason to completely disassemble the Firing Pin Assembly.

- f. Disassemble the Firing Pin Assembly, which consists of the Firing Pin, the **highly** compressed Firing Pin Spring, the Bolt Sleeve, and the Cocking Piece.
 - i. Caution: Notice that the firing pin protrudes about 2" beyond the front of the compressed spring. Be careful not to bend it when compressing the spring. Do not apply force to the tip of the firing pin. It is best if you have a work table or a block of wood with a small hole into which the front of the firing pin will fit, right up to the squared off enlarged portion just in front of the spring. (If this is not available to you, do not proceed.)
 - ii. Caution: From this point on you will be dealing with a highly compressed and powerful spring. You must wear eye protection. If you don't have it, stop the procedure until you get eye protection because you will be decompressing and compressing the spring (in the re-assembly process).
 - iii. Compress the spring: With the firing pin inserted into the work table hole, firmly grasp the bolt sleeve while leaving the cocking piece free to move. This takes considerable pressure and strength. Exert downward pressure on the bolt sleeve, compressing the spring until the cocking piece can be freely turned 90 degrees in either direction (you may well need some help here).
 - iv. Remove the cocking piece: With the cocking piece turned 90 degrees, you can slowly relax your downward pressure on the spring tension and the whole assembly will come apart. The firing pin and its spring will come apart (you can see how powerful it is) as well as the bolt sleeve and safety lever. Swing the safety lever over to full right (otherwise it won't come off) and then pull it straight back. It will come right out.
 - v. Now you can clean everything in detail. You won't want to disassemble the bolt too often (for obvious reasons). You can see that the firing pin and its spring live deep inside the bolt body so you want a light film of oil over the entire surface of all parts; especially inside the bolt body. Never use grease inside the bolt, it could cause a failure to fire.
- g. Re-assemble the firing pin assembly.

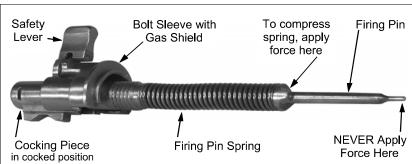


Fig 4 - Firing Pin Assembly.

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- i. Insert the safety lever into the bolt sleeve with the lever going in at the full right position (otherwise it won't go) and then swing it up to the vertical position and keep it there during bolt assembly. The vertical safety position is necessary for bolt assembly, and in that position it can be used as an additional surface to apply force when compressing the firing pin spring in the next step.
- ii. Put the firing pin spring back onto the firing pin and put the firing pin tip into the worktable hole. Slide the bolt sleeve assembly over the rear of the firing pin. It can go on only two ways, because the firing pin has flat sides.
- iii. While you hold the spring almost fully compressed, install the cocking piece over the firing pin. It too will slide on two different ways, but after you rotate it to lock it on, the sear must be oriented so that it slides into the corresponding slot in the bolt sleeve.
- iv. Make sure the safety lever is in the vertical position. If it is not, compress the spring again and turn the safety lever to the vertical position. The bolt is now 'cocked' because the spring is compressed and ready for installation into the bolt body.

Now that you have seen some of the internal parts, you can appreciate the superior engineering and extra strength built into your rifle. Now you can begin the reassembly process.

Reassembly:

- 1. Reassemble the bolt: Make sure the firing pin assembly is 'cocked' with the safety lever in the vertical position. Insert the firing pin assembly into the bolt body and turn it clockwise until the bolt sleeve stop plunger engages the bolt body and prevents further rotation. On the final one or two turns, it may be necessary to compress the plunger so it will clear the bolt handle.
- 2. Re-install the Magazine Follower Assembly. Fit the follower through the magazine well. Notice that the front of the floor plate has a lip cut into the leading edge. This lip will fit into the front of the lower edge of the magazine well when assembled. There is a similar arrangement at the rear of the floor plate around the plunger hole. To assemble it, position the floor plate slightly to the rear of the assembled position, press down on the rear of the floor plate to compress the plunger, and slide the floor plate forward so that both the front and rear lips of the floor plate engage the slots in the magazine well. The plunger should spring into the hole in the rear of the floor plate, thereby locking the floor plate in place. Only moderate pressure is required to do so.
- 3. From the top, make sure the follower is in position and moves up and down freely. Its job is to lift cartridges so it must be free.
- 4. Re-insert the bolt assembly into the rifle. Make sure the claw extractor is lined up with the right-hand locking lug, or it will not go in. After the bolt is started into the rifle, but before you can close it further, you may have to

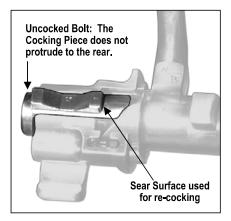
16

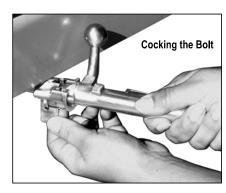
- depress the magazine follower. Confirm the proper working of all functions: bolt open and close, safety lever in all positions, and trigger.
- 5. Wipe all sections of the rifle free of preservative grease in and around the rear sight and the forward metalwork. Carefully wipe away all preservative grease and lay on a thin film of oil; even on the wood.

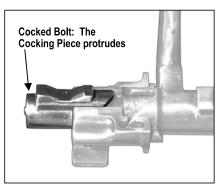
Re-Cocking the Bolt

If the bolt is not cocked, you will not be able to either disassemble the bolt or put it in the rifle to cock it. If you try to put an uncocked bolt into your rifle, you will probably succeed in putting an ugly scar on the wood stock just behind the rear tang, because the gas shield will dig into the wood! Remember, two things are required before putting the bolt into the rifle: (a) the bolt must be cocked, preferably with the safety vertical, and (b) the gas shield must be screwed all the way onto the bolt body and locked by the plunger.

- 1. Turn the bolt upside down and identify the cocking piece and the sear surface as pictured to the right.
- 2. Hook the forward side of the sear surface on something substantial, like the underside of your workbench, as shown to the right.
- 3. Pull on the bolt body so that the cocking piece comes out of the bolt body/gas shield. You'll have to pull hard, you are compressing the firing pin spring.
- 4. When the cocking piece is out far enough, rotate the safety lever to the vertical position. The bolt is now cocked.
- 5. Before putting the bolt into the rifle, also make sure that the bolt sleeve/gas shield is fully screwed onto the bolt body and the stop plunger engages the bolt body as described on page 16.







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Removing the Stock from the Barreled Action

Our recommendation is: **Do Not remove the stock!** You run the risk of damaging or scratching something. There is normally no need to remove it. There are no parts needing service. Normal attention to gun care will go a long way toward preservation and will also prevent rust between the wood and the metal.

If you must, here is how to do it:

- 1. Safety First!
 - a. Make sure the rifle is unloaded and remove all ammunition from the
 - b. Remove the bolt with the safety lever in the upright position as described on page 12.
 - c. Check the chamber to make sure there is not a round in the chamber.
 - d. Remove the magazine floor plate, spring, and follower as described on pages 12 & 13.
- 2. Remove the cleaning rod by simply unscrewing it and pulling it straight out.
- 3. Remove the wide front barrel band. Notice that it is connected to the narrow rear barrel band by a steel bar that is actually a long spring located between the barrel bands on the right side. The forward end of this spring has a pin that engages the front barrel
 - of the front barrel band, there is a raised surface. Pressing on this surface will depress the spring, which will disengage the pin from the front barrel band, which

band. On the spring, just aft



Depress Spring Here. Until Pin releases the band.

will then allow the front barrel band to be tapped forward and removed. Be Careful NOT to Scratch wood or metal when removing the band!

Depress the spring with a suitable tool, such as large vice-grips or a C-clamp. Whatever tool you use, protect your rifle with a heavy cloth or a piece of leather so the tool does not actually touch the rifle. This will prevent scarring the wood or metal of the rifle. Engage the raised surface of the long spring and encircle the stock just behind the barrel band. Exert enough pressure until you see that the locking pin is out of its hole in the front barrel band.

With the spring depressed, gently tap the band forward, using a brass punch or a wooden block to make sure you do not scratch anything. Tap it completely off and remove it. It is not difficult.

- 4. Release the tool compressing the spring and lift the spring out.
- 5. Tap the rear barrel band off just like the front one. BE CAREFUL not to scratch the wood. You may have to tap a little on one side and then a little on the other side.
- 6. The Upper Handguard will fall away when the rear barrel band is removed.
- 7. Remove the Trigger Guard/Magazine Well. It is held in place by two large screws and two locking screws. Remove the locking screws and remember where they came from. They are NOT interchangeable. The front lock screw goes only in the front locking hole and the rear lock screw only goes in the rear-locking hole. Remove the front and rear screws from the trigger guard.
 - Grasp the trigger guard and lift it out of the stock. It will come straight out. Lift the stock away from the action and barrel. It will lift right off. If it is tight, wiggle it back and forth as you lift.
- 8. Separate the stock from the barreled action, if they haven't already fallen apart. There is a steel cylindrical spacer associated with the rear trigger guard screw inside the rear screw hole in the stock. Do NOT lose it! It is vital for accuracy. The equivalent front spacer is actually 'built-in' to the front of the trigger guard; therefore you can't lose it.

If you wish, you may take out the trigger assembly. Do so by driving out the trigger hinge pin around which the trigger 'rotates'. Naturally it doesn't 'rotate' very much, about 10 degrees. The hinge pin comes out easily but still must be driven out with a small punch.

Once out, the trigger frame and assembly will literally fall out of the receiver; it is that well designed. It has a small coil spring that lives in a small cavity in the trigger frame. The spring is small and easy to lose. It is also expensive to replace so be careful. The spring is the trigger return spring. Without it the rifle will fail.

Congratulations...you have now stripped the Mauser Model K98.

To Reassemble, simply reverse the procedure.

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Other Mitchell Products:



K98-M48 Series WWII Era Mauser Rifles
Collector grades in Original Military-New
Condition with Original Accessories.

Presentation Grade Historical German Pistols from the time of the Great Wars, WWI, WWII and the special period between the wars.

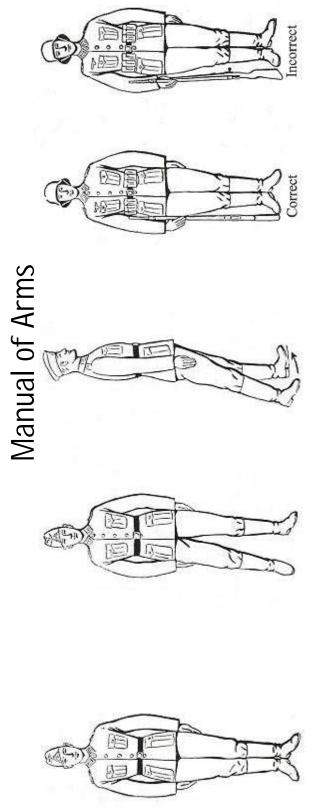






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Left Face / Links Um About Face / Kehrt Um (repeats Left Face 1x) Right Face / Rechts Um

Feet just under 45 degree angle

Attention / Stillgestanden

Basic Position

Middle finger on pant seam

Hands on upper thigh

Basic Position for Order Arms Order Arms / Gewehr Ab Achtung also means "Attention" but is most appropriately used when commanding the attention of men that are not in formation.

"At Ease" is Rührt Euch. Not illustrated here, but modify the Basic Position so that the left foot is slightly and comfortably ahead of the right foot.

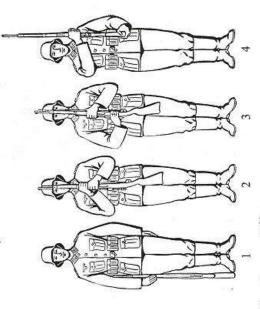
Rifle Drill and Shouldering the Rifle

In General

With practice, only the arms are moved; the rest of the body remains in erect and still posture. The individual motions of the drill are quickly and tightly executed. They occur without haste. It is forbidden for the Rifle to be caught with both hands at the same time and the Buttstock pushed up. {The rifle is passed from hand to hand, not flipped and caught by both hands at the same time.}

Drill with Shortened Sling

(Performed only with the Carbine 98k and G 98.)



"Shoulder arms!"26

The right hand brings the Rifle vertical in front of the middle of the body, Barrel to the right, Lower Ring about at collar height. The left hand holds close under the right hand.

Without hesitation, the right hand enfolds the Receiver at about the upper half of the Bolt Handle. The thumb lays straight on the Stock. The right hand guides the Rifle, the Barrel turned toward the front, in front of the left shoulder and pushes it quickly from the

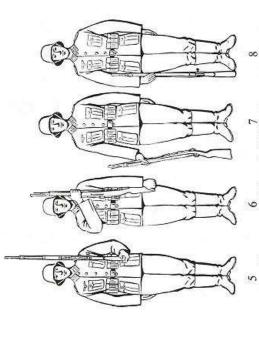
Shoulder Arms / Das Gewehr über

bottom onto the shoulder. The Buttstock is thereby held by the left hand so that the Butt Plate lays between the thumb and index finger. The left lower arm has a slight space from the Cartridge Pouch. The Rifle lays parallel with the button row, the Bolt Handle is about one hand width below the collar, the Buttstock is at the Cartridge Pouch.

After a pause, the right arm goes quickly to the basic position.

"Order arms!"

The left hand pulls the Buttstock, Barrel turned to the right, toward the left hip. The right hand holds the Rifle at the height of the shoulder, elbow pushed slightly outward.



The sequence 1 – 5 shows the drill for the command:
"Shoulder arms!"

The sequence 5 – 8 shows the drill for the command:
"Order arms!"

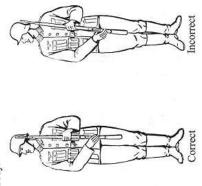
After a short pause, the right hand brings the Rifle vertical to the belly, turns it a little toward the outside and brings the Buttstock to the point of the right foot, whereby the left arm quickly goes into the basic position. Often, the Gunner thereby allows the Rifle to glide a bit through. A too far out angle is prevented by pushing the thumb against the Rifle.

Order Arms / Gewehr Ab

While in the Shoulder Arms position, you may be ordered to Present Arms as a form of salute to an inspecting superior:

"Attention! Present arms!"27

The accomplishment occurs from the position "Shoulder Arms". The left hand brings the Rifle – without lowering it –in front of the left body half so that the Barrel shows to the right and the Gunner can see to the right over the Rifle with the left eye. At the same time, the right hand holds the Buttstock Neck, the thumb is turned toward the body.



The left hand holds so far toward the top, that the point of the thumbs lays on the extended length of the rear Sight, even with its upper end. At the same time, both hands turn the Barrel to the body and pull the Rifle in a jerk in front of the left half of the body, so that the Receiver Head lies on the right edge of the left Cartridge Pouch. The man must still be able to see with his left eye over the Rifle to the right. The four fingers of the right hand lay extended close under the Trigger Guard on the Buttstock Neck, the thumb under the Cocking Piece.

On the command "Eyes – right!" ("The eyes – left!"), the Superior is looked at. Each man follows the Superior with his eyes with turned head during the pacing of the front until he is the second man away (2 paces), and then he turns the head straight forward.

If the front is not straight ahead, "Eyes straight ahead!" ends the salute.

If you are drilling with rifle slings extended, you perform Shoulder Arms accordingly:

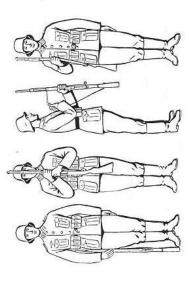
Drill with the Sling Long

(Performed only with the K 98k and K 98b.)

"Shoulder - arms!"

The right hand brings the Rifle vertical in front of the middle of the belly, Barrel toward the right, Lower Ring at about collar height. The left hand holds close under the right hand.

The right hand holds the Sling with the thumb from below and pulls it tight to the breast. Then the left hand places the Rifle on the



right shoulder. The Rifle hangs vertical. The right fist is at breast height, thumb extended behind the Sling. The right upper arm pushes the Rifle on the body.

Without pause, the left arm goes from the right shoulder quickly to the basic position.

"Order - arms!"

The right hand swings the Rifle in front of the middle of the body, the left hand catches it with the Lower Ring about at collar height.

The right hand lets the Sling loose and grips the Rifle above the left hand.

Salutes

In General

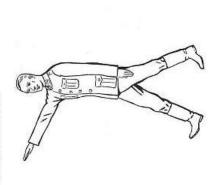
Salutes, greetings and returned salutes are the expression of attention, solidarity, and camaraderie. Together, they are a gauge for the spirit and discipline of a Squad.

Salutes are performed for all Superiors and Flags.

All salutes are performed quickly and tightly. They begin 5 steps before and end 2 steps behind the Superior, or are performed upon entering and exiting from rooms.

Salutes without Head Cover while moving and standing

When moving, the salute is performed while passing by in erect posture. The German greeting is held for the duration of the salute. The Superior is free to be looked at.



For the German greeting, the extended arm is raised curtly forward and upward at an angle. Finger points of the extended hand are to be at the same height as the crown of the head. The left

arm is held still, unforced, without touching the body. After the salute, the right arm is quickly brought down.

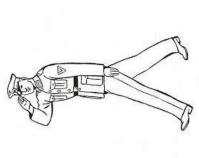
When standing, the salute by is performed by standing still while facing the Superior and giving the German greeting for the duration of the salute.

The salute is performed in erect posture during the passing by, or by standing still if the room circumstances prevent the performance of the German greeting, or with personal hindrance such as carrying or holding {an object}.

During dispatches and talks with Superiors, the right arm is immediately brought down, however the basic position is maintained.

Salutes with Head Cover when Walking and Standing

When walking, the salute occurs by placing the right hand on the head cover and looking at the Superior. Free stride is to be maintained. The right hand is briefly placed on the head cover, the wrist slightly angled down, the fingers as in the basic position. Index and middle fingers touch the bottom edge of the Head Cover a bit above the outward angle of the right eye.



The right elbow is raised to about shoulder height, the left arm is held still, unforced, without touching the body. After the salute, the right arm is quickly brought down.

For re-enacting, our unit does not use the German greeting, though we understand its authenticity.



DER SOLDAT IN DER GRUPPE

THE SOLDIER IN THE SQUAD

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

Learn enough field-craft to apply the original doctrine and tactics to present day.

4 STEPS TO SUCCESS:

- 1. FIND THE ENEMY
- 2. COMMUNICATION
- 3. THE ATTACK
- 4. GET HOME SAFE



RULE OF THUMB:

When adapting original WW2 methods to re-enacting, everything "scales down."

- Time Compression:
 - o Most re-enactor field events simulate over a 6 hour period what would be a real military operation requiring 48 hours or more to complete
- Soldier Simulation
 - Age, health, training & fitness vary, therefore performance cannot match real military. Unit "training events" are necessary to establish a minimum standard for performance and teamwork.
- Weapons Range Compression:
 - Blank fire can be heard at the same distance as live ammo, but cannot "hit"
 if the re-enactor taking fire can't see a muzzle flash and be reasonably sure
 that the "bullet" was intended for him.
- Conclusion: The limits of time, training and blank fire scale down the size of the "battlefield"

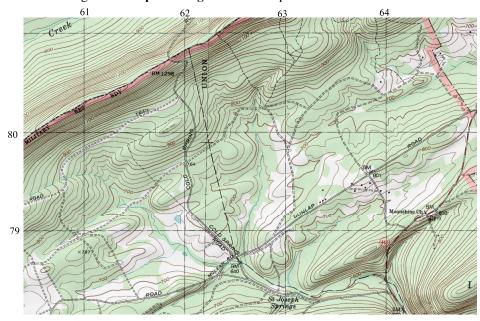
STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass

- If your unit Leader can't do this, make sure YOU can.
- Off grid roads twist and turn, trails come and go, landmarks are few—it all looks the same
- Understand the military implications of the ground between you and the battle
 - What areas dominate the battle field
 - Where are the chokepoints
 - o Know the march time between you and your objective
 - o Is there cover and concealment available on your route.
 - Where did Mother Nature place obstacles like swamps
- Injury or undisclosed medical condition + unreliable 911 reception- you MUST know where you are and how to get back
- Negative consequences for getting lost
 - o Men are tired, bored, and at risk—how will you extract injured man?
 - o Event Command sees you as unnecessary burden and a liability for safety and event success. If invited to return expect to spend all day in reserve

STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

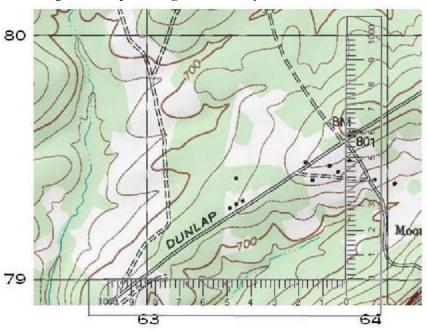
Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass



- Grid Squares are 1 sq km
- · Green shaded areas: forest
- Brown concentric lines are contour lines and indicate slope
- · Blue denotes water
- Double solid lines are hardball roads.
- Double dotted lines are 4 wheel drive roads.
- Single dotted lines are foot trails

STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass



- Read RIGHT then UP: Above is grid square 6379
- From line 63 to 64 is 1 km and from line 79 to 80 is 1 km
- The intersection of 63 and 79 is read, "630790" and the intersection of 64 and 80 is read 640800. It is 1 km between those two points
- What are the coordinates of the road junction marked "BM"?

Easy Method

- 1. Divide grid lines into increments of 10.
- 2. You can do this with a protractor as above, or you can do it mentally by "eyeballing" it.
- 3. "Eyeball" is good enough for re-enacting but far more precision is required in the real military.
- 4. The junction at BM is at 638796

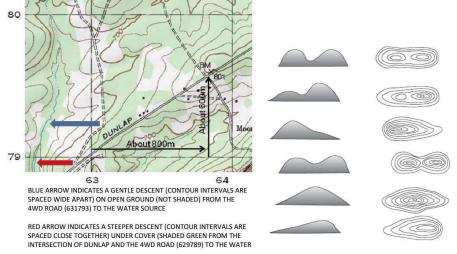
STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass

CONTOUR INTERVALS Interpreting the Map Visual WHAT YOU SEE ON YOUR MAP 3-D VIEW OF LANDMARK DIANT DIANT

Contour Interval is the space between contour lines, is expressed in feet and can be found in the map key when viewing a complete map. The contour index line is in bold shows the altitude in feet (note the "700" on the map below)

Common Slopes

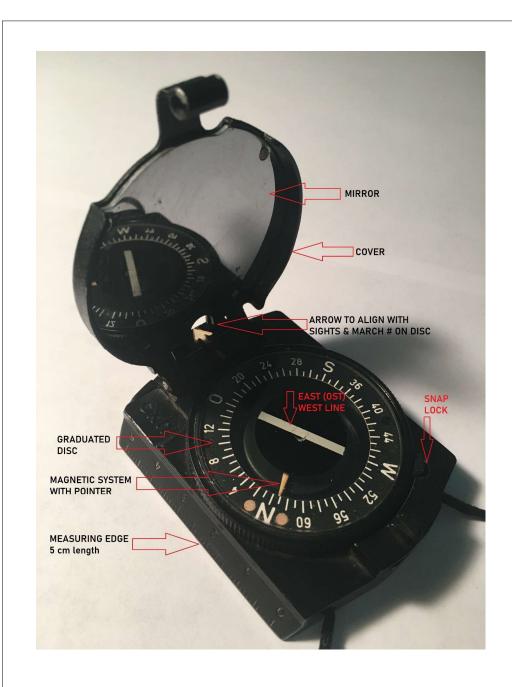


You can also determine the contour interval by counting the number of contour lines between two different altitudes: If there are 10 contour lines between the index line at 700 and another index line at 500, then you take the difference between the index lines (200 ft) and divide it by 10. Contour interval is 20 feet.

STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass

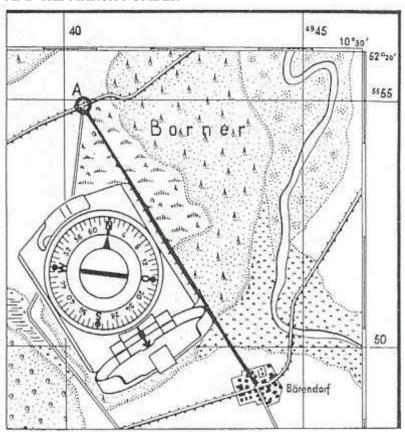




STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass

1) FIND THE MARCH NUMBER



- Draw a line of march from our position (A) to our destination (Bärendorf) and place the compass edge next to the line.
- Align the N on the graduated disc with the magnetic needle. The number on the disc that lines up with the sights and compass arrow is our March Number, which is 25.

STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass

2) CALCULATE DISTANCE & ETA



The line of march from point A to Barendorf is almost the same length and almost parallel to the diagonal from gridsquare corner to corner. The gridsquares are 1 sq km with diagonal of 1.44 km, so round it up to 1.5 km and look at the chart below.

			1	Vlar	ch T	ime	in N	linut	tes										er :												
Distance	March	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1 Mile	Hard		ì																												
1 Mile	Easy			ý.,				-	ev.														6								
1 km	Hard		I																						П						
1 km	Easy																				, V										
1/2 Mile	Hard		Т																												
1/2 Mile	Easy		1	Ò					1/4																					8	
0.5 km	Hard		Ţ																												
0.5 km	Easy																														

Hard March:

- · Soldat carrying 20 lbs. kit plus weapon.
- Terrain difficulty varies
- Enemy presence likely
- If ice or snow present, march time could increase further

Easy March:

- · Soldat carrying 20 lbs. kit plus weapon.
- Terrain flat, surface dry
- Route clear of enemy

Since we are not using a road and we are uncertain of enemy presence, presume we have hard march at 20 minutes for each km, so our march time is 30 minutes for 1.5 km.

STEP 1: FIND THE ENEMY

Land Navigation / Map Reading / March Compass

3) SET YOUR COURSE



- 1. Raise your compass to eye level.
- 2. Align the rear and front sights, keep the magnetic arrow on the N so that your sights stay aligned on the march number. The mirror will show you where the N is since the disc will be too high for you to see.
- 3. Find a landmark that is in the distance as far as you can see which lines up on the compass sights. March to that landmark and repeat until you arrive at your destination.

STEP 2: COMMUNICATION

Field Commands / Signals / Messages

- Use Rule of 3:
 - o Memorizing long lists difficult if not using every day.
 - o Differences in language increases difficulty
 - o Make your goal to master 3 of each at a minimum.
 - 3 Common Field Commands
 - 3 Common Hand Signals
 - 3 Whistle Blasts
- Verbal commands can only be heard within a few feet, and they must not be heard by the enemy, therefore they are short, efficient.
- Whistles can be used as a prepartory signal to get someone's attention for a hand signal or can be used as a command (see below).

LEARN AT LEAST 3 OF THE COMMON FIELD COMMANDS:

• Schützenreihe Skirmish line, extended

• Schützenkette Squad column

<u>Rechts:</u> Right
 <u>Links:</u> Left
 Fertig: Ready

Angriff: Attack (1 long whistle blast)
 Zuruck ziehen: Withdraw (2 long whistle blasts)

Zu befehl: As ordered
Jawhol: Yes, indeed
Mir nach: Follow me

• Stellung: Get into position

• Bereiten: Be ready

Los! Unleash/Loose
Feuer frei: Fire at Will
Einstellen: Cease fire
Decken: Take cover

Continuous whistle blast: ALARM4 short whistle blasts: REGROUP

STEP 2: COMMUNICATION

Field Commands / Signals / Messages

LEARN AT LEAST 3 OF THE COMMON SIGNALS



STEP 2: COMMUNICATION

Field Commands / Signals / Messages

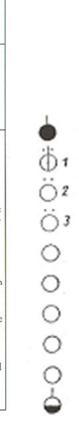
- Sent, received and carried by any soldier in any circumstance. Must be physically fit, skilled at movement, and have situational awareness
- Message traits
 - o Brief but complete
 - o What time was the observation made?
 - o What was seen: NUMBER and TYPES of men, weapons, vehicles
 - o How was enemy seen: moving, or in position, doing what else?
 - o Where: Use map coordinates and/or a location description
- Order the messenger to deliver message to a specific recipient leader (if known) & return with a reply, for example:
 - "Message for Lt Schmidt from Hpt. Lang of the 136. Geb: At 13:45 hours, 2 squads of dismounted enemy infantry west of the bridge at 645832. They are marching Eastward on the N-30 Road. Followed by 1 armored car 100 meters behind and 5 jeeps with mounted MG crews. Reply is requested."

STEP 3: THE ATTACK

Squad Composition / Squad Tactics
4. The Squad in Combat.

Classification, equipment, and tasks of the squad.

	Equipment	Tasks
Gruppenführer (Squad Leader)	M.P. with 6 magazines in a magazine pouch, Magazine filler, Binoculars, Wire cutters, Signal whistle.	The squad leader is leader of his squad. He is responsible for: 1. accomplishment of his battle mission, 2. Directing the fire of the light M.G. and, as much as the
,		combat allows, the riflemen, 3. Fitness and completeness of the weapons for battle, munition and equipment of his squad.
Gunner 1	M.G. 34 with mounted belt drum, Pistol, Tool pouch, Flash light.	Gunner 1 is the shooter. He is responsible for: 1. Operation of his M.G. in battle, 2. Inspection of the M.G. for shooting, 3. Maintenance of the M.G.
Gunner 2	Barrel guard with a spare barrel, 4 Belt drums, of these, 1 with armor piercing munition, 1 Cartridge can, Carry Strap 34, Pistol, Short spade, Sunglasses, With provision of carry pouch: a) 1 Carry pouch for belt drums, b) 4 more belt drums instead of the cartridge can.	Gunner 2 is the assistant to the shooter in combat. After going into position he lies sideways to the left, or sideways to the rear of the light M.G., if possible in full cover. He remains lying next to the light M.G. when cover is present or the fire advantage is achieved. Gunner 2 is responsible for: 1. Sufficient belt drums, 2. Help with going into position when loading from the cartridge can, 3. Refilling empty shot cartridge drums with belt pieces from the cartridge can, 4. Support with clearing stoppages, barrel change, and straightening the bipod, 5. Support in the maintenance of the M.G.



Gunner 3	Barrel guard with one spare barrel, 2 Cartridge cans, Carry belt, Rifle, Short spade.	Gunner 3 is the munitions gunner. In a firefight he lies to the rear in full cover, depending on possibilities. Gunner 3 is responsible for: 1. Sufficient munition, 2. Refilling the empty shot belt drums with belt pieces from the cartridge cans, 3. Care of the remaining munition and equipment with position change, 4. Inspection of the munition for shooting, 5. Independent action as a rifleman and close combat fighter, when the situation
Gunners 4 – 9	 a) Rifle, 2 cartridge pouches, Short spade. b) The most proficient hand grenade thrower of the squad also hand grenades. c) Further depending on orders: Belt drums, especially with armor piercing munition, Smoke hand grenades, Balled charges, Munition, Tripod. 	requires. a) Gunners 4 – 9 lead the firefight with rifles, they are close combat fighters. b) The substitute squad leader is also responsible for: 1. Preservation of the cohesion within the squad (no gunners left behind), 2. Supervising the performance of all orders, 3. Communicating with the platoon leader and the neighboring squads, 4. Signaling the front line. He carries the flag to the front line.

STEP 3: THE ATTACK

Squad Composition / Squad Tactics

WWI machine guns proved too heavy for rifle squads to move and maintain mobility to exploit the opportunity created by the MG fire. After WW1, Germany developed the first light machine gun (MG 34) to be the rifle squad's primary weapon. This was also a response to the Versailles Treaty limitations on the size of the Reichswehr (fewer infantry requires better firepower).

German Rifle Squad

- Light Machine Gun (LMG) is the squad's primary offensive weapon.
- Squad advances in Schützenkette (column) to present minimal forward target
- Leader always near Gunner 1
- Gunner 1 always forward for fastest deployment.
- Squad moves the LMG as close to target as possible, staying concealed, deploying into Schützenreihe (skirmish line) as dictated by the ground and enemy position
- On order from squad leader and in rapid succession:
 - 1) LMG opens fire on target
 - 2) Riflemen throw grenades to disrupt enemy response
 - 3) Riflemen open fire and advance on target to exploit opportunity created by LMG and grenades.

U.S. Rifle Squad

- Full strength was 12 men
- Rifle teams were paired with 1 Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) gunner.
- US did not have an LMG. The 30 cal and 50 cal MG were too heavy for a rifle squad to move quickly and were therefore not organic to the rifle squad.
- BAR provided distraction or covering fire while rifle teams went for the flanks.
- Squad could call for support from MG squad and artillery.
- Riflemen may have been equipped with Sprinfield 1903 bolt action which was replaced with the M1 Garand semi-automatic rifle.

Weapon	Comp	arison

MG 34:	Full auto/1,000 rounds/900 rpm	BAR:	Full auto/200 rounds/600 rpm
	Effective max range: 2,000m		Effective max range: 1,500m
K-98:	Bolt action/5 round clip	M-1:	Semi-auto/10 round clip
		1903:	Bolt action/5 round clip

STEP 3: THE ATTACK

Squad Composition / Squad Tactics

Squad Movement

• Attack is the Best Defense.

Attack with as large and concentrated formation as possible... 2/3 in the initial assault with 1/3 reserve.

• Keep formation tight.

• Reconnaissance

Better control plus massed fire power.

Re-enactors more likely to take hits from entire squads at close range than few isolated rifles.

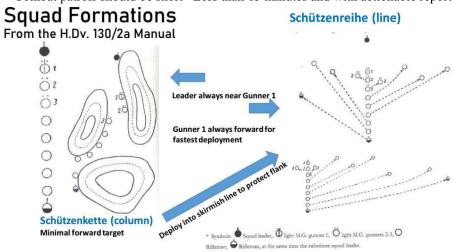
Seams between squads are better than scattered squads which are combat ineffective

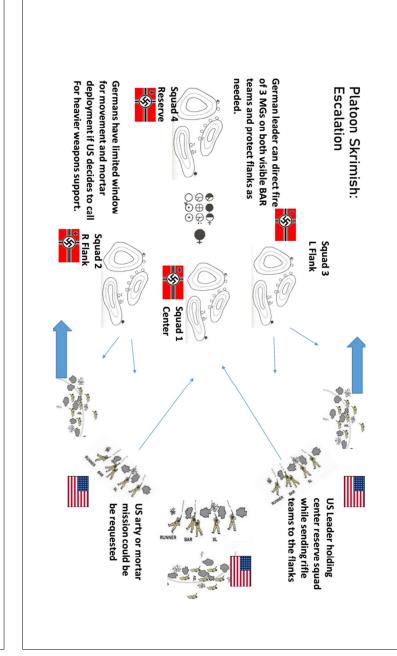
- Keep a Flank March Under 250m. Be in position for assault in 15 min. Plan to secure objective in 20 min.
- Be Ready to Re-deploy Rapidly.

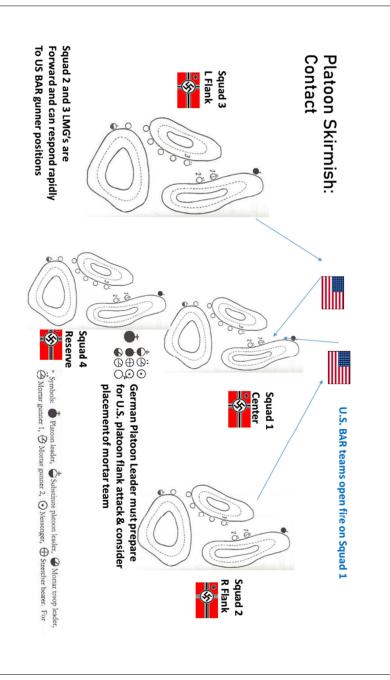
 Goal: Report to new objective within 5 minutes of receiving orders to move.

 Be able to collect men within 2 minutes and on new position 3 minutes later.
- Keep Flank and Rear Security.

 Frustrate the enemy flank march with a solid 360 perimeter with no opening.
 - Leaders: 5 minutes out and 5 minutes back with a plan formed Combat patrols should be short—Less than 15 minutes and with actionable report





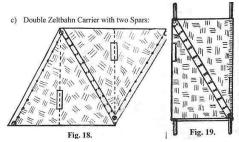


STEP 4: GET HOME SAFE

Review the Unit Safety Policy before every event.

Quick Tips:

- Know safe distance protocols for blank fire and armored vehicles
- Be trained in safe operation of any weapon you carry
- Verify that your ammo is blank
- At least 1 squad member w/first aid training
- Squad has at least 2 zelt quarters to make a stretcher and at least 1 blanket



Zeltbahns are buttoned to each other on the shank sides so that the middle seams lay parallel and point toward the ground (Fig. 18). The fabric is now folded on the middle seams, the corners are folded back toward each other and thereby likewise buttoned together on each of the other two shank sides. Thus is made a rectangular Zeltbahn blanket, two layers thick, with its long base sides as end seams. Here are the support spars stuck through (Figs. 19 & 20).

- At least 2 soldiers carrying a map, compass, paper and pencil (for messages if injured man cannot be moved)
- Everyone carries:
 - o Fire starter (carry at least 2 lighters plus matches or ferro rod)
 - o Water
 - o Small mirror & whistle for signaling
 - Neosporin
 - o Cloth Bandage & Band Aids
 - Material for sling and tourniquet
 - Duct Tape
 - o Pocket Knife, Buck knife, or boot knife
 - Extra socks
 - o Small towel
 - o Campsuds or other concentrated all-purpose soap
 - Wool blanket
 - o Zelt quarter for emergency shelter/rain poncho

APPENDIX
Complete List of Common Commands

	Commands								
No.	Page	English	German						
1	4	Command withdrawn	Kommando zurück						
2	5	Attention	Stillgestanden						
3	6	Attention	Achtung						
4	6	At ease	Rührt Euch						
5	6	Right face	Rechtes – um						
6	6	Left face	Links – um						
7	7	About face	Ganze Abteilung – Kehrt						
8	8	Eyes right	Augen – rechts						
9	8	The eyes left	Die augen – links						
10	8	Eyes straight	Augen gerade – Aus						
11	8	Dismissed	Wegtreten						
12	8	To the left	Nach links						
13	8	To the right	Natch rechts						
14	8	To the front	Nach vorwärts						
15	8	To the rear	Nach rückwarts						
16	9	Without step	Ohne Tritt						
17	9	In same step	Im gleichschritt						
18	9	Drill march	Exerziermarsch						
19	9	Section – march	Abteilung – Marsch						
20	11	Section – halt	Abteilung – Halt						
21	15	Order arms	Gewehr ab						
22	15	Lie down	Hinlegen						
23	16	Up	Auf						
24	17	Load and safe	Laden und Sicher						
25	18	Unload	Entladen						
26	20	Shoulder arms	Das Gewehr – über						
27	22	Present arms	Präsentiert das – Gewehr						
28	24	Sling arms	Gewehr umhängen						
29	24	Rifle on the back	Gewehr auf den Rücken						
30	24	Rifle on the neck	Gewehr um den Hals						
31	24	Bayonet - mount	Seitengewehr pflanzt auf						
32	25	Bayonet - dismount	Seitengewehr an Ort						
33	26	Line of one row	Linie zu einem Gliede						
34	26	Column	Reihe						
35	26	March order	Marschordnung						
36	28	Right (left) pivot	Rechts (links) schwenkt						
37	30	Place the – Rifles	Setzt die – Gewehre						
38	31	To the rifles	An die Gewehre						
39	31	Rifle in the hand	Gewehr in die Hand						



DER SOLDAT IN DEM BERGEN

THE SOLDIER IN THE MOUNTAINS
Mountain Warfare Doctrine & Special Training



SECTION 1: MOUNTAIN WARFARE DOCTRINE

"Specially trained mountain troops may influence decisively the outcome of a larger campaign, even though the decision is almost always sought and achieved on the flat by the main forces."

CONTENTS:

- Offense
- Defense
- Focal Point
- Strategic Differences
- Tactical Differences

SECTION 1: MOUNTAIN WARFARE DOCTRINE

OFFENSIVE PURPOSE:

Specialized troops secure the advance of main force through the mountain passes.

Main force reaches terrain of its own choice in the highest state of combat readiness.





DEFENSIVE PURPOSE:

Wear down enemy power: Prevent, impede, harass or channel main enemy force through the valleys When enemy main force is engaged by friendly main force he is exhausted and forced to fight defensively on unfavorable terms.





SECTION 1: MOUNTAIN WARFARE DOCTRINE

FOCAL POINT of Mountain Combat: The Heights

Mountain troops must gain and maintain control of the mountains

- Observation posts
- o Gun emplacements



Can only be seized by *surprise*



Bebirgs-Jäger-Regiment 98 Mittenwald

STRATEGIC DIFFERENCES

- Infantry/artillery is ascendant over armor and air power (opposite on the flats)
- Heavy weapons difficult to move, so the brunt of battle falls on infantry
- Shock action, close combat and smaller task units become more important



SECTION 1: MOUNTAIN WARFARE DOCTRINE

TACTICAL DIFFERENCES

- Basics are same as "the flat"
- Modify tactics to adapt to sudden extremes in weather in high terrain.
 - o Movement slower
 - o Signals unreliable
 - o Supply problems acute.

Movement Slower

- Attack proceeds slowly due to rugged terrain.
 - Artillery & heavy weapons cumbersome
 - Good defensive positions with scarcity of roads fosters defense
 - Keep reserves close as a result

Signals Unreliable

- Limited communication once battle engaged.
 - Initial plan must be thoroughly conceived
 - Commander stays close to decisive point.
 - Junior NCOs & Officers must be able to act independently





Supply Problems Acute

- Few routes: limited or no alternatives if blocked
- Food, forage and ammunition on narrow roads and trails
- Motor transport gives way to mules/horses then on the backs of soldiers
- Carry only what is essential
- Cannot live off country in mountains
- Large rucksack instead of assault pack

SECTION II: MOUNTAIN SOLDIER TRAINING

CONTENTS

-Training Philosophy -Techniques & Equipment

-Heeresgebirgsführer -Marching -Rope -Scale of Requirements -Climbing -Crampons

-Minimum Proficiency -Descending -Ice Axe -Bivouac -Snow & Ice -Pitons, Snap Links

-Self-Preservation

-Re-enactor Implications

TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

- Leverage the recruit's inner pride in his Alpine heritage so that he only ever wants to serve as a Gebirgsjäger
- Build self-confidence with patient and systematic pace
- Raise physical and technical requirements gradually to unconsciously build the calm confidence required.
- Climbing and skiing for recreation encouraged but always supervised by mountain guide officers.
- Service in the mountains quickly tests character, revealing which men are best to become NCO's
- Use of Mountain Guide leaders: Heeresgebirgsführer
 - All officers of mountain divisions
 - A portion of NCOs and enlisted personnel
 - Staffs of mountain training centers
 - Entire personnel of high mountain battalions
 - No special pay but is pre-requisite for promotion
 - Make climbs of utmost difficulty and act as rope leaders
 - Learn to select routes for a climb- mistakes jeopardize the military mission
 - Extensive testing of orientation ability in both bad weather and night
 - Must have some skiing experience
 - Ski training has a 15:1 student:instructor ratio to afford individual attention
 - Ski training eschews expert technique for simpler practical technique that can be executed in various snow types with a rucksack
 - Mountain soldiers are taught to avoid speed that involves unnecessary risk.
 - Extensive testing of map reading and technical understanding of hazards and rescue techniques.

SECTION II: MOUNTAIN SOLDIER TRAINING

SCALE OF REQUIREMENTS

- Training is systematized by grades of difficulty based on <u>terrain</u> and <u>length of</u> march:
 - o Easy Walking
 - o Difficult Walking
 - o Easy Climbing
 - o Moderately Difficult Climbing
 - o Difficult>Very Difficult>Extremely Difficult
- Plus 1 Degree Concept: the degree of difficulty is increased by at least one degree (i.e., Easy Walking becomes Difficult Walking) when:
 - o Bad weather or coat of ice is present
 - o Movement under full pack and arms
- Easy Walking: Pathless terrain, including ridges and slopes, over which men can walk without danger of falling.
- Difficult Walking: Steep rock ridges and ragged slopes over which the men can move without using their hand if they choose the right route, but where they run the risk of slipping
- Easy Climbing: Exposed grass or rock ridges where even the trained climber must use his hands to keep his balance and sense of security, BUT has not trouble choosing a route.
- Moderately Difficult Climbing: ridges and faces of grass or rock with small but good handholds and footholds. This terrain requires no special technique but calls for acumen and experience in selecting a route that avoids major difficulties.
- Difficult>Very Difficult>Extremely Difficult: Very Steep, exposed ridges, some parts of which can be climbed only with special technique and equipment.
- Minimum Proficiency Required:
- Make any STEIGEN (ascent) on road or path free of snow.
 - Walk on easy wooded grass and scree slopes until master fairly difficult terrain on moderately difficult climbs
 - o Walk with snowshoes on roads, easy and difficult terrain
 - o Cover icy stretches on moderately hard climbs
 - o GOAL: Move quietly, orderly and confidently under normal conditions of marching and without wasting time or taking unnecessary risks.

SECTION II: MOUNTAIN SOLDIER TRAINING

TECHNIQUES

Mountain Marching

- Slow and rhythmic pace
- Consistent stride not too long
- Erect stance, not leaning into slope
- Breathe deeply
- Avoid talking
- "Switch back" vs. straight ascent
- Avoid haste
- Maintain prescribed distance between climbers
- Arrive at destination in condition to fight

Climbing

- Start with easy rocks to get a feel for the work
- Use legs slowly and rhythmically; they do most of the work.
- Use arms only for stability and balance; only pull climber when necessary
- Handholds and Footholds
 - o Not too far apart
 - o Grasp slowly and test them
 - o Always keep weight on 3 points going up
 - o Breathe quietly and slowly
 - o Achieve perfect balance

Descending

- Avoid sitting which gives way to sliding too fast for control
- Descend back to rock if not too steep and footholds good.
- Use extra caution on steep grass slopes
 - o Grass tufts are good footholds but not handholds
 - o Kick toe into grass if descending facing slope
 - o Keep inner edge of foot close to slope

SECTION II: MOUNTAIN SOLDIER TRAINING

EQUIPMENT

Basic Principles

- All equipment weight kept to a minimum
- Surface determines equipment:
 - o Rock: Pitons, Snaplinks (carabiners), Rope, KLETTERSCHUE (felt-soled rock climbing shoes), Ice Axe
 - o Grass: Mountain boots or Crampons, Ice Axe
 - o Snow: Snowshoes (on flats), Crampons, Snaplinks and Ice Pitons

Rope

- Most Important piece of equipment
- 100 feet of twisted hemp, highest quality, 7/16 inch diameter
- Dries in open air, hung from a peg in loose loops, repaired promptly
- First thing he learns are three basic knots
 - Overhand noose– secures men to rope
 - o Square knot– secures two ropes together
 - o Sling-secures rope to a projection in order to belay
- Climb three men to a rope with a mountain guide for a rope leader
- Men secured to rope around belly with an overhand noose knot
- Used for all difficult climbing as determined by the men

Rope Belaying

- Prevents a climber who slips from falling far
- Climber can belay up or down
- Pay out rope if the next climber is moving away; take up slack if moving toward; keep taut but never pull climber off his holds
- If no suitable rock projection, use axe/piton/snaplink or your body
- Technique for Roping Down:
 - $\circ\;$ Pass rope between legs, up across chest and over shoulder
 - Hold dangling end with one hand and suspending part of rope with other hand
 - o Slide by raising the dangling part over his shoulder
 - o Stop by pulling down over shoulder

SECTION II: MOUNTAIN SOLDIER TRAINING

EQUIPMENT

Pitons & Snap Links (Carabiners)

- When no natural belaying point available or body belay unsafe
- Rock pitons up to 6" long; Ice pitons up to 10" long
- Snaplink inserted through piton eyelet
- Piton is belaying point hammered into rock and left behind
- Snaplinks are collected and used again as men pass down

Crampons

- Whenever possible used rather than the axe on icy slopes
- Steel frames with twelve 2 inch iron spikes attached.
- Fit the bottom of the ski-mountain boot and strap over the top
- Save labor and avoid noise involved with cutting steps
- Can also be used on difficult grass slopes

Ice Axe

- Used for extra support for ease and firmness in walking
- Handled with care to avoid injuring self & companions
- On rock with no other holds, used as a hand hold or foothold
- Can be used to belay on grass slopes if thrust in deep
- Used to control glissading
- Tests strengths of snow crossings with it
- Cutting steps with pick end and clearing the step with adze end.

Steep Snow & Ice Technique

- Use crampons or kick/cut steps for yourself
- Short steps and zigzag/switchback to save strength.
- GLISSADING (Sliding down)
 - Only when the bottom of a snow slope can be seen from the top
 - Never with crampons
 - Never on solid frozen ice
 - Ice axe used to turn, slow down or stop

SECTION II: MOUNTAIN SOLDIER TRAINING

SELF PRESERVATION

Bivouacs

- Must get all rest possible under difficult conditions
- Adequate rest necessary for mountain operations. Means difference between life & death
- Types
 - o Lean-to using rock ledge for roof and one wall
 - Snow holes
 - Snow huts

Orientation: Natural perils cause more casualties than combat

Rockfalls Landslides
Cornice fractures Snowdrifts
Avalanches Glacial crevasses
Icefalls Ice slides

Weather

- Lightning
- Snow blindness, glacial sunburn, exhaustion, exposure
- Rain, Snowstorms and Coldsnaps occur suddenly
- Learn to Forecast:
 - Bad weather incoming: ring around the moon, unusual twinkling of morning stars, rising clouds, bright red sunrise, early morning warmth, sun shine through mist.
 - o Fair dry weather: red sunset, evening clouds in valleys, lack of wind in clearing weather, heavy morning dew, cold nights. Up valley wind during day and down valley wind at night.

Protection

- Goggles for snow blindness
- Lanolin for glacial sunburn
- Clothing must be warm but shouldn't make you sweat—moisture is disastrous
 - o Light clothing while moving
 - Heavy clothing during rest and bivouacs
 - Newspaper for body insulation
 - o Keep feet and hands dry
- Must stay awake when there is danger of freezing to death
- Must be able to describe orally and in writing the terrain and paths they have traversed. Memory retention is essential

SECTION II: MOUNTAIN SOLDIER TRAINING IMPLICATIONS FOR RE-ENACTORS

Re-enactor Training Objectives:

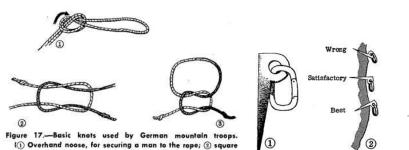
- 1. Physical fitness adequate for Appalachians
- 2. Movement in steeper, densely covered terrain
- 3. Executing surprise
- 4. Securing the heights
- 5. Observation & FO for Artillery
- 6. Junior NCO decision-making

Key Kit Differences from Regular Infantry

1 liter Mountain Canteen BerghosenWickelgemaschen Bergschuhe

• Short-brimmed Bergmutz Rucksack w/belt hooks (no Y Strap)





knot, for joining ropes together; ③ sling, for securing the rope

D.—German piton and snaplink ①, and ways of inserting pitons ①.

pitons ②.

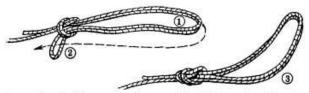


Figure 18.—Double overhand noose. (This is the preferred knot for roping up. The end of the simple overhand noose (1) is inserted in the loop (2), and pulled through. The result is the noose (8).)







Figure 21.—Rock climbing

This is an excerpt from *Truppenführung*, which was the doctrine that emerged from the efforts to reform the Imperial Army of WWI and anticipation of what an army of the near future would require for success.

- 1. War is an art, a free and creative activity founded on scientific principles. It makes the very highest demands on the human personality.
- The conduct of war is subject to continual development. New weapons dictate ever-changing forms. Their appearance must be anticipated and their influence evaluated. Then they must be placed into service quickly.
- 3. Combat situations are of an unlimited variety. They change frequently and suddenly and can seldom be assessed in advance. Incalculable elements often have a decisive influence. One's own will is pitted against the independent will of the enemy.* Friction (*Reibung*)† and errors are daily occurrences.
- 4. Lessons in the conduct of war cannot be exhaustively compiled in the form of regulations. The principles enunciated must be applied in accordance with the situation.

Simple actions, logically carried out, will lead most surely to the objective.

- 5. War subjects the individual to the most severe tests of his spiritual and physical endurance. For this reason, character counts more in war than does intellect.†† Many who distinguish themselves on the battlefield remain unnoticed in peacetime.
- 6. The command of an army and its subordinate units requires leaders capable of judgement, with clear vision and foresight, and the ability to make independent and decisive decisions and carry them out unwaveringly

*In On War, Book 1, Chapter 1, Clausewitz noted, "War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will."

[†]Clausewitz introduced the concept of friction on military operations in *On War*, Book 1, Chapter 7. "Friction is the only concept that more or less corresponds to the factors that distinguish real war from war on paper."

††In explaining the selection criteria for the *Kriegsakademie*, Hartness wrote, "And here let me emphasize that strength of character, will, is the attribute most highly valued" [*Hartness Report*, p. 3].

Truppenführung, Part I: 1933

and positively. Such leaders must be impervious to the changes in the fortunes of war and possess full awareness of the high degree of responsibility placed on their shoulders.

- 7. An officer is in every sense a leader and a teacher. In addition to his knowledge of men and his sense of justice, he must be distinguished by superior knowledge and experience, by moral excellence, by self-discipline, and by high courage.
- 8. The example and personal bearing of officers and other soldiers who are responsible for leadership has a decisive effect on the troops. The officer, who in the face of the enemy displays coolness, decisiveness, and courage, carries his troops with him. He also must win their affections and earn their trust through his understanding of their feelings, their way of thinking, and through his selfless care for them.

Mutual trust is the surest foundation for discipline in times of need and danger.

- 9. Every leader in every situation must exert himself totally and not avoid responsibility. Willingness to accept responsibility is the most important quality of a leader. It should not, however, be based upon individualism without consideration of the whole, nor used as a justification for failure to carry out orders where seeming to know better may affect obedience. Independence of spirit must not become arbitrariness. By contrast, independence of action within acceptable boundaries is the key to great success.
- 10. The decisive factor, despite technology and weaponry, is the value of the individual soldier. The wider his experience in combat, the greater his importance.

The emptiness of the battlefield (die Leere des Gefechtfleld) requires soldiers who can think and act independently, who can make calculated, decisive, and daring use of every situation, and who understand that victory depends on each individual.

Training, physical fitness, selflessness, determination, self-confidence, and daring equip a man to master the most difficult situations.

11. The caliber of a leader and of the men determines the combat power (*Kampfkraft*) of a unit, which is augmented by the quantity, care, and maintenance of their weapons and equipment.

Superior combat power can compensate for inferior numbers. The greater this quality, the greater the force and mobility in war.

Superior leadership and superior unit readiness are guaranteed conditions for victory.

12. Leaders must live with their troops and share in their dangers and deprivations, their joys and sorrows. Only thus can they acquire a first-hand knowledge of the combat capabilities and needs of their soldiers.

The individual is a part of the whole and is not only responsible for himself alone, but also for his comrades. He who is capable of more than 19

Out of such a foundation grows genuine comradeship, which is as important between the leaders and the men as it is among the men themselves.

13. Units that are only superficially held together, not bonded by long training and discipline, easily fail in moments of grave danger and under the pressure of unexpected events. From the very beginning of a war, therefore, great importance must be attached to creating and maintaining inner strength and to the discipline and training of units.

It is the duty of every officer to act immediately and with any means at his disposal-even the most severe-against a breakdown in discipline or acts of mutiny, looting, panic, or other negative influences.

Discipline is the backbone of an army, and its maintenance is in the best interests of all.

14. The readiness and strength of units must be capable of meeting the highest demands in decisive moments. The commander who needlessly tires his unit jeopardizes success and is responsible for the consequences.

The forces deployed in battle must be committed in proportion to the objective. Orders that are impossible to execute will reduce confidence in the leadership and damage morale.

15. Every man, from the youngest soldier upward, must be required at all times and in all situations to commit his whole mental, spiritual, and physical strength. Only in this way will the full force of a unit be brought to bear in decisive action. Only thus will men develop, who will in the hour of danger maintain their courage and decisiveness and carry their weaker comrades with them to achieve deeds of daring.

The first criterion in war remains decisive action. Everyone, from the highest commander down to the youngest soldier, must constantly be aware that inaction and neglect incriminate him more severely than any error in the choice of means.*

*Emphasis in the original.

COMMAND

27. Great success requires boldness and daring, but good judgement must take precedence.

28. One can never be strong enough at the decisive point. The commander who tries to be secure everywhere, or who wastes his forces on secondary missions, acts contrary to this basic rule.*

The weaker force can become the stronger at the decisive point through speed, mobility, great march capability, and the use of darkness, terrain, surprise, and deception.

29. Space and time must be correctly calculated. Favorable situations must be quickly recognized and decisively exploited. Every advantage over the enemy increases one's own freedom of action.

30. Rapidity of action can be facilitated or hindered by the route and by terrain conditions. The season, the weather, and the condition of the troops are also important influences.

31. The duration of operational and tactical engagements cannot always be estimated in advance. Even successful combat often develops slowly. Frequently the success of a day's fighting can only be determined on the following day.

32. Surprise is a decisive factor in success. Actions based on surprise are only successful if the enemy is given no time to take effective counter measures.†

The enemy also will attempt surprise. This must be taken into account.

33. Knowledge of the enemy's methods of leadership and combat can

^{*}In On War, Book 3, Chapter 11, Clausewitz noted, "The best strategy is to be very strong, first in general, then at the decisive point. Apart from the effort needed to create military strength, which does not always emanate from the general, there is no higher and simpler law of strategy than that of keeping one's forces concentrated. No force should ever be detached from the main body unless the need is definite and urgent."

[†]In On War, Book 3, Chapter 9, Clausewitz noted, "The two factors that produce surprise are secrecy and speed."

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influence one's own decision and support mission execution, but should not lead to preconceptions.

- 34. Account must be taken of conditions that facilitate the conduct of war in one's own country, but make it more difficult in enemy territo-
- 35. In periods of strenuous combat, heavy demands exhaust units quickly. They must promptly be provided with replacement officers, men, horses, weapons, and any necessary equipment.
- 36. The mission and the situation define the course of action (Grundlage für die Führung).

The mission dictates the objective. The responsible commander must not lose sight of it. A mission that consists of multiple tasks can easily distract attention from the main objective.

Uncertainty always will be present. It rarely is possible to obtain exact information on the enemy situation. Clarification of the enemy situation is an obvious necessity, but waiting for information in a tense situation is seldom the sign of strong leadership-more often of weakness.*

37. The mission (Auftrag) and the situation (Lage) lead to the decision (Entschluss) of the course of action. If the assigned mission no longer suffices as the basis for action, or if it is overtaken by events, the course of action must take these circumstances into account. An officer who changes a mission or does not carry it out must report his actions immediately, and he assumes responsibility for the consequences. He always must act within the overall framework of the situation.

The course of action must designate a clear objective that will be pursued with all determination. It must be executed with the full will of the commander. Victory often is won by the stronger will.

Once a course of action has been initiated it must not be abandoned without overriding reason. In the changing situations of combat, however, inflexibly clinging to a course of action can lead to failure. The art of leadership consists of the timely recognition of circumstances and of the moment when a new decision is required.†

The commander must allow his subordinates freedom of action, so long as it does not adversely affect his overall intent (Absicht). He may not, however, surrender to his subordinates decisions for which he alone is responsible.

- 38. An engagement (Gefecht)—which when it involves larger units is called a battle (Schlacht)—is the forceful armed struggle arising from an encounter with the enemy.
- 39. The attack is launched on the enemy in order to defeat him. The attacker has the initiative. Superior fighting qualities of leaders and units provide the best advantage in an attack. Numerical superiority does not always guarantee victory.

In special situations the objective of an attack may be limited.

The possibility that an attack might fail should never justify limitations on the leadership effort with which it is executed.*

- 40. Pursuit (Verfolgung) guarantees the culmination of victory.† The purpose is to annihilate the enemy†† when such action was not possible in the preceding engagement. Only a relentless pursuit, one that does not allow the enemy the chance to regroup and make a stand, will prevent additional friendly casualties in follow-on actions.
- 41. The defense waits for the enemy. The aim is to prescribe the terrain of battle.

The defense is adopted when one's own inferiority leaves no other choice, or for other reasons when it seems advantageous.

Its purpose is to break up the enemy's attack. In such cases the attack is met on selected terrain, which is held to the end.

The commander may set a time limit on the defense.

A decisive victory can only be achieved through judicious resumption of the offense.

A delaying action has the objective of inflicting the highest possible loss on the enemy, while at the same time avoiding decisive engagement. To accomplish this it is necessary to disengage from the enemy at the appropriate time, and to trade space for time.

42. An engagement is broken off to terminate a battle, or to yield a

^{*}Wedemeyer noted: "Better a faulty plan or decision permeated with boldness, daring, and decisiveness, than a perfect plan enmeshed in uncertainty." [Wedemeyer Report, p. 18]

[†]Prior to World War I, it was standard practice in the Germany Army for higher commanders to assign missions solely for the purpose of developing a situation, and then change assigned missions accordingly in mid-action. Based on World War I experience, changes in assigned missions became the exception. [Hartness Report, p. 27]

^{*&}quot;The German sees the solution of his tactical problem in the attack, for it is through the attack that the unclarified situation can be best clarified, and a basis reached upon which the commander can best estimate his future action. It may be said almost without danger of contradiction that in a nebulous situation the average German commander will attack." [Hartness Report, p. 27]

[†]Clausewitz discussed the culminating point of victory in Book 7, Chapter 22 of On War.

^{††}Many post-World War II military historians have criticized German doctrine as focusing too exclusively on attempting to annihilate the enemy with a single decisive battle. While such an approach generally works at the tactical level, it is the antithesis of sequencing, which is the heart of the operational level of war.

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position so as to continue the engagement from a more favorable position. In the latter case, a delaying action often is employed.

- 43. The withdrawal is employed to avoid further combat. The fight must be broken off and security must be provided for the withdrawing units.
- 44. The changing situation of combat often requires transition from one type of engagement to another.

The transition from attack to defense can occur when holding a position that has been taken, or when necessary, under enemy pressure. Units are reorganized and disposable forces are withdrawn from the line.

In the transition from the defensive to the attack, strong forces must be assembled at the decisive points in a timely manner.

45. Decision is avoided in a delaying action. The objective is to gain time, to keep the enemy occupied, and to confuse him.

Deception can be achieved through feint attacks (Scheingefechte).

46. The width of battle zone depends on the intent, on the disposition of adjacent support, and on the terrain. It is influenced by the breadth and conduct of the enemy and on whether or not one or both flanks are open. The width of zones and sectors is different. Greater width can be allowed in favorable terrain, especially if it had been fortified. It also can be used through the employment of battle groups. Great width can bring the effect of weapons into full play at an early stage, but it also can bring one's own forces to a premature standstill. Too great a width produces the danger of penetration. If the width is too small, especially if there is not enough depth, there is a danger of being outflanked or enveloped. An attack having width superior to the enemy's can result in great success.

Organization in depth ensures the commander's freedom of movement in uncertain situations. Initially, it is always appropriate in the face of a quicker or more mobile opponent. The follow-through of a battle usually requires depth of formation at the decisive point.

The commander must distribute his forces before contact with the enemy, and in battle distribute them according to the width and depth required by the situation.

47. During the course of a battle the commander influences the action most directly by the increase and concentration of fire and the commitment of his reserve.

Keeping ammunition supplies mobile will allow him, at the decisive point and at the decisive moment, to increase his firepower to the maximum and to continue to influence the course of the fighting, even if the reserve is already committed.

Assessing the strength of the reserve, constituting the reserve, and

committing the reserve requires careful consideration. Mobility increases the opportunities for its commitment.

Allowing units already committed to the battle to weaken, while protecting the reserve, often leads to failure and increases the danger of defeat in detail. There are instances where it is better not to retain a reserve. Combined arms units are particularly effective as reserves because they are capable of independent action. One should avoid dispersing such units or any piecemeal commitment of the reserve.

The position of the reserve depends on its intended use and on the terrain. The reserve must be committed in a timely manner. Usually it is positioned behind a wing. The distance and interval from the wing increase with the strength of the reserve.

Holding back the reserve protects it and makes it easier to commit in different directions. Holding the reserve farther forward accelerates its commitment. The surer the commander becomes about its commitment and the more imminent this becomes, the farther forward he brings it. An operational reserve must be held well back as long as its commitment is not required.

By committing his reserve, the commander plays his last card regarding the shock elements at his disposal. He must not be led into doing this too early. On the other hand, he must not hesitate if committing the reserve means achieving a decision or if the battlefield situation requires it.

Once the reserve is committed, the rapid formation of a new reserve is critically important.

Communications, Dispatches, Reports, and Situation Maps

48. Communications and reports concerning the enemy provide one of the most important bases for the estimate of the situation, for the commander's decision, and for its execution.

The initial elements of intelligence about the enemy usually are obtained from general knowledge of enemy methods or from special information sources. Knowledge of the enemy takes on a more solid form through aerial and ground reconnaissance, through establishing contact with the enemy and keeping him under constant observation, and through information secured by special means. Apart from accurate information and reports, one also must reckon with incomplete and inaccurate information. Drawing on the entirety of information from different sources, the commander will be able to reach the appropriate conclusions. Apparently unimportant details take on significance in the context of other information.

Erwin Rommel was awarded the EKI in 1915 for this action. Compare his method here to the doctrine in paragraphs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 27 of *Truppenführung*, published after WWI.

CHAPTER 4

ATTACK IN THE CHARLOTTE VALLEY



SHORTLY BEFORE CHRISTMAS I WAS RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL, but my wound had not healed and hampered my walking. Service in a replacement battalion was distasteful so I returned to my outfit.

In the middle of January 1915, I joined the regiment in the western part of the Argonne. The bottomless road from Binarville to the regimental CP was indicative of conditions in the Argonne Forest. I assumed command of the 9th Company which needed a commander. A narrow, corduroy footpath led forward from the regimental CP for a distance of about half a mile. Occasional rifle bullets flew through the winter woods and a few shells whistled overhead, forcing me to dive for cover in the deep clayey communications trench. By the time I arrived at my company CP my uniform had lost the telltale marks of the soldier returning from leave.

I assumed command of about two hundred bearded warriors and a 440-yard company sector of the front line. A French reception committee greeted me with a concentration of "Whiz Bangs." The position consisted of a continuous trench reinforced by numerous breastworks. Several communication trenches led to the rear. Shortages in barbed wire prevented the erection of obstacles out in front. In general the position was poorly developed, and surface water had kept the trench depth to three feet or less in some places. The dugouts, built to accommodate from eight to ten men, were of necessity equally shallow, and their roofs stuck out above the ground level making them excellent targets. Their roofs were nothing more than a couple of layers of thin logs which at best were only splinterproof. During the first hour of my

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command a shell landed smack on one of them and severely wounded nine men. My first order was that whenever artillery opened on us all dugouts would be vacated and the men would take cover in the trench proper. I also issued orders that the dugout roofs would be strengthened so that they could at least withstand field artillery fire. This work started at dark. Several large oak trees near our position proved to be dangerous to our safety. Whenever shells burst against them they deflected the fragments straight into our trenches; so I ordered several of them chopped down.

Stimulated by my new command, it was not long before I was my old self again. For a twenty-three-year-old officer there was no finer job than that of company commander. Winning the men's confidence requires much of a commander. He must exercise care and caution, look after his men, live under the same hardships, and—above all—apply self discipline. But once he has their confidence, his men will follow him through hell and high water.

Each day brought plenty of work. We lacked boards, nails, clamps, roofing paper, wire, and tools. The headquarters dugout which I shared with a platoon commander was four and a half feet high and contained a table and cot made of beach sticks tied together with wire and string. The walls were bare earth, and water trickled down constantly. During wet weather, water also leaked through the roof, which was made of two layers of oak trunks and a thin layer of earth. Every four hours the dugout had to be bailed out to prevent flooding us out. We built fires only at night, and in damp winter weather were cold all the time.

We could not see anything of the enemy position across from us because of the thick underbrush. The French were in better shape than we. They did not have to cut trees for lumber, for they received all the necessary materials from their supply dumps. Their location in extremely thick woods and our shortages in artillery ammunition limited the amount of harassing fire to which they were subjected. The enemy positions were some three hundred yards away on the other side of the small valley. To hinder our work parties, the enemy frequently sprayed us with small-arms fire. Unpleasant as this was, we disliked the "Whiz Bangs" even more because of the short time interval between their discharge and

impact. Whoever was caught in the open by one of these shells hit the dirt immediately if he hoped to avoid being hit by the shell fragments.

Toward the end of January 1915 it rained and snowed on alternate days: and from January 23 to 26 the company went into reserve about five hundred feet behind the front line. There the dugouts were still worse, hostile artillery fire more troublesome, and daily losses equal to those up front. The company was used for service work: *i.e.*, transport of materials, construction of dugouts, improving communication trenches, and laying out corduroy footpaths. We were glad when the time came us to go forward again. Morale was high and officers and men alike were willing to endure any hardship in order to defend our native land and achieve the final victory.

On January 27 two of my men and I went on reconnaissance which mok us up a trench leading toward the enemy from the left of my company sector. At this time we were located in an old French position which had been taken on December 31, 1914. After removing some obstacles in the trench we proceeded cautiously; and about forty yards down the trench we came upon some dead Frenchmen who had probably been rung unburied between the fronts since the attack. To the left of the trench was a small graveyard and, at the end some hundred yards from our own position, a deserted medical aid station which, located in the deepest depression between the lines, was well dug in, well sheltered, and capable of holding twenty men. During the tour we saw nothing of the enemy although he delivered his usual harassing fire against our positions. Judging from the sound of his weapons he was about five hunared feet away on the other side of the valley. I decided to turn the dugout into an advanced strongpoint, and we started work that same afternoon. From this position we could even hear the French talking across the way. I did not believe it wise to send any scouts forward, for would have had too hard a time getting through the dense underbrush without being seen, and they would have been shot before obtainany worthwhile information.

In order to pin a maximum of the enemy strength in the Argonne, small diversionary attacks were ordered for January 29, 1915; and all regiments of the 27th Division were to participate. Following the blow-

ing of a French mine shaft, our regiment was to conduct a heavy raid in the 2d Battalion sector. While the raid was progressing, artillery would open up and pin the enemy in front of the 3d Battalion. For this purpose a howitzer battery from the 49th Field Artillery was made available and given time to complete its registration fire. During the operation the 10th Company would have to shift, while the 9th Company was not to advance but to cut off all enemy attempts to escape on the flanks.

January 29 dawned cold with the ground frozen. At the start of the operation I was up forward in our new strongpoint with three rifle squads. We were a hundred yards ahead of our positions and heard our own shells whistling overhead, some striking the trees, others landing to our rear. Then they blew the mine; and earth, sticks, and stones rained on the landscape. Hand-grenade blasts from the right and intense small-arms fire followed the explosion. A lone Frenchman ran up to our position and was shot.

A few minutes later the adjutant of the 3d Battalion came up, reported that the attack on the right was going well, and said the battalion commander wished to know if the 9th Company cared to join in the fun. To accept was a distinct pleasure.

I realized that I could not move my company from our trenches in deployed formation, for enemy artillery and machine guns had our range and any advance on our part would be reported by his treetop observers. To avoid this I had my men crawl up a trench that extended to the front from the right of our position. After they reached the end of the trail, they deployed to the left; and after about fifteen minutes the company was assembled in an area a hundred yards in front of our position and on the slope leading down to the enemy. Carefully we crawled through the bare underbrush toward the enemy; but before we could reach the hollow he opened on us with rifle and machine-gun fire that stopped us cold. There was no cover, and we could hear the bullets slam into the frozen ground. Up ahead a few oak trees sheltered a handful of my men. I could not locate the enemy even with my binoculars. I knew that to remain where we were would cost us dearly in casualties, for even though the enemy fire was unaimed, it made up in volume what it lacked in direction. I wracked my brains to find a way out of this mess without suffering

I had just decided to rush for the hollow sixty yards ahead, since it offered a little more cover than our present location, when we heard the attack signal far off to the right. My bugler was right beside me and I had him sound the charge.

In spite of the undiminished volume of fire directed at us, the 9th Company jumped up and, cheering lustily, dashed forward. We crossed the hollow and reached the French wire entanglements only to see the enemy hurriedly abandon his strong position. Red trousers flashed through the underbrush and blue coat tails were flying. Totally oblivious of the booty left behind in the abandoned positions, we rushed after them. By sticking close to the enemy's heels we managed to smash through two other defensive lines which had been well provided with wire entanglements. At each position the enemy ran before we got to him. As proof of the meager resistance, we had no losses whatever. (See sketch 9.)

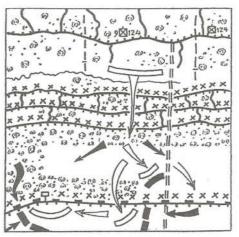
We passed over a height and the woods began to thin out. We could see the enemy running before us in a dense mass, so we pounded after him, shooting as we went. Some of the company cleaned out the dugouts, and the rest of us kept going until we reached the edge of the woods six hundred yards west of Fontaine-aux-Charmes. At this point we were half a mile south of our initial position. Here the terrain sloped down again, and the fleeing enemy had disappeared in low undergrowth. We had lost contact on both flanks and to the rear and on both sides we heard the sounds of a bitter struggle. I assembled the company and occupied the edge of the woods west of Fontaine-aux-Charmes and then tried to reestablish contact with the adjacent units. To the accompaniment of general laughter, a soldier brought some articles of feminine wearing apparel out of a dugout.

A reserve company arrived, and after giving it the job of reestablishing contact, we moved off down hill to the southwest through the light shrubbery of this sector where the terrain had been largely cleared of troops. My unit advanced in a column behind strong security elements. We had just crossed a hollow when strong fire from our left

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forced us to the ground, but the enemy could not be seen. In order to maintain our impetus, we moved off to the west, by-passed the hostile fire, and then resumed our advance to the south through open woods.

At the upper edge of these woods, we ran into a wire entanglement the like of which we had never seen. It was more than a hundred yards



Sketch 9. The attack against the "Central" position, January 29, 1915.

wide and stretched out to the flanks as far as the eye could see. The French must have cut down the whole forest here. I could see three of my men waving at us from the far side of the wire, and I concluded that the enemy had yet to occupy the strong position. That being the case, the smart thing to do was to hang on until reserves came up.

I tried to move on down the narrow path that led through the wire, but enemy fire from the left forced me to

hit the dirt. The enemy was nearly a quarter of a mile away and certainly could not see me because of the density of the wire, yet ricochets rang all around me as I crawled through the position on all fours. I ordered the company to follow me in single file, but the commander of my leading platoon lost his nerve and did nothing, and the rest of the company imitated him and lay down behind the wire. Shouting and waving at them proved useless.

This position, constructed like a fortification, could not be held by three men alone, and the company had to follow. By exploring the west, I found another passage through the obstacle and crept back to the company where I informed my first platoon leader that he could either obey my orders or be shot on the spot. He elected the former, and in spite of intense small-arms fire from the left we all crept through the obstacle and reached the hostile position.

To secure the position, I had my company deploy in a semicircle and dig in. The position was called "Central" and was constructed in accordance with most recent design. It was part of the general defensive system which ran through the Argonne and consisted of strong blockhouses, spaced some sixty yards apart, from which the French could cover their extensive wire entanglements with flanking as well as frontal machinegun fire. A line of breastworks connected the individual blockhouses, and this wall was so high that fire from the fire step could reach any part of the wire entanglement within range. The wall was separated from the entanglement by a ditch some fifteen feet wide which was water-filled and, at this time of the year, frozen over. Deep dugouts were provided behind the wall, and a narrow road ran along some eleven yards from it. The height of the wall was such as to offer concealment and defilade to any vehicles using the road.

From the left we were subjected to considerable small-arms fire, while over on the right the installations appeared to be unoccupied. Around 09:00 I sent the following written message to my battalion:

"9th Company has occupied some strong French earthworks located one mile south of our line of departure. We hold a section running through the forest. Request immediate support and a resupply in machine-gun ammunition and hand grenades."

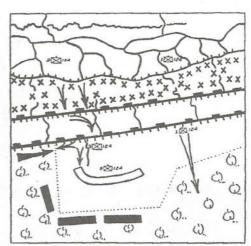
Meanwhile the troops were trying to make an impression on the frozen ground with their spades, but it was only by using the few available platoons and crowbars that we made any progress. We had been working for some thirty minutes when the left outpost reported that the enemy was retiring through the wire some six hundred yards to the east in closed column. I had one platoon open fire. Part of the enemy headed for cover, but others who were still north of the obstacle turned farther to the east and apparently reached the covered road behind the works, for very shortly after our opening fire we were attacked from that direction.

Our digging had produced meager results, and, in studying the situation, I noticed a bend in the position in the vicinity of Labordaire. This bend would make an excellent strongpoint to hold if we were to retain our foothold in the enemy position. My company fought its way to this new position where we quickly found shelter behind tree trunks and

began returning the enemy fire in sufficient volume to keep him some three hundred yards away, and he soon began to dig in. Shortly after this the fire slackened and soon died.

My foothold included four blockhouses, my company being deployed in a semicircle with a platoon of fifty men in concealed reserve between the wire entanglement and the position. Here another narrow zigzag passage led through the wire field. Time passed and we began getting anxious about our reinforcements and supplies. Suddenly reports from the right indicated that more French were retreating through the wire some fifty yards from us. The platoon leader wanted to know if he should open fire. What else was there for us to do? We were about to get into a nasty scrap, and there was no use allowing the French to start it free from casualties. If we fired at once, then the French would turn to the west and get into position through the next passage; it was also possible that they might get across our line of communication and so surround us. I opened fire.

From the high French breastworks rapid fire struck the nearby enemy, and a bitter struggle developed, with the French fighting bravely. Fortunately most of the new enemy, estimated as one battalion, turned off to the west, traversed the wire entanglements 350 yards away, and

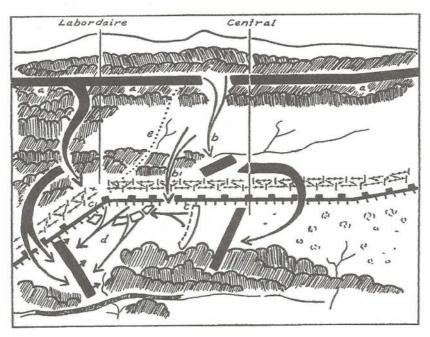


Sketch 10: The attack against the "Central" position.

moved toward us from the west on a broad front. The ring about the 9th Company closed leaving but one narrow path through the wire to connect us with the battalion. Even that lifeline was swept by enemy fire from the east and west. On the right our heavy fire kept the enemy pinned to the ground, but the enemy on the left had made progress and was getting dangerously close. Ammunition was getting

scarce, and I stripped the reserve platoon of most of its equipment. I decreased the rate of fire in order to conserve ammunition as long as possible, but the enemy on the west kept crawling closer. What was I to do once my ammunition was exhausted? I still hoped for help from the battalion. Minutes seemed like hours.

A fierce battle raged around the blockhouse on the extreme right, and we expended our last grenades in its defense. A few minutes later, about 10:30, a French assault squad succeeded in taking it and used its embrasures to pour rifle and machine-gun fire into our backs. This report reached me at the same moment that a battalion order was shouted across the entanglement by a runner: "Battalion is in position half a mile to the north and is digging in. Rommel's company to withdraw, support not possible." Again the front line was calling for ammunition, and we had enough for only ten more minutes.



Sketch II: The attack against the "Central" position, January 29, 1915. View from the south. (a) Third French position. (b) 9th Company exploits the breakthrough and penetrates as far as the "Central" position. (c) 9th Company holds portions of "Central" and Labordaire positions. (d) Attack prior to breaking off combat. (e) Route followed during retirement.

Now for a decision! Should we break off the engagement and run back through the narrow passage in the wire entanglement under a heavy cross fire? Such a maneuver would, at a minimum, cost fifty per cent in casualties. The alternative was to fire the rest of our ammunition and then surrender. The last resort was out. I had one other line of action: namely, to attack the enemy, disorganize him, and then withdraw. Therein lay our only possible salvation. To be sure, the enemy was far superior in numbers, but French infantry had yet to withstand an attack by my riflemen. If the enemy in the west were thrown back, we would have a chance of getting through the obstacle and only have to worry about the fire of the more distant enemy on the east. Speed was the keynote of success, for we had to be gone before those we had attacked could recover from their surprise.

I lost no time in issuing my attack order. Everyone knew how desperate the situation was, and all were resolved to do their utmost. The reserve platoon drove to the right, recapturing the lost blockhouse and carrying the whole line along with its impetus. The enemy broke and ran. With the French running away to the west, the proper moment to break off combat had come. We hurried eastwards and negotiated the wire entanglement in single file as fast as possible. The French on the east opened up on us, but a running target was not too profitable at a range of three hundred yards. Even so, they got a few hits. By the time the enemy on the west had recovered and returned to the attack, I had the bulk of my outfit on the safe side of the wire. Aside from five severely wounded men who could be taken along, the company reached the battalion position without further incident.

The battalion, with my company on the left, was established in the dense forest directly south of the three occupied French positions. The 1st Battalion was having trouble and was out of direct contact with our left, but by means of liaison squads we managed to keep in touch with their right. My company dug in some hundred yards from the forest edge. Digging in the frozen ground was no fun.

So far the French artillery had devoted its entire attention to our old position and to the rear areas; and during the attack we had been spared its attention, probably due to poor infantry-artillery liaison. This had been remedied now, and we were subjected to a very heavy volume of retaliatory fire which interfered with our digging since the forward edge of the forest received particular attention. I prepared my report of the morning's activities on a message blank and accompanied it with a sketch.

Late in the afternoon, following a heavy artillery preparation, the enemy counterattacked. Masses of fresh troops stormed through the underbrush only to be met by our small-arms fire. They fell, sought cover, and returned our fire. Here and there a small group tried to work its way closer, but in vain! Our defensive fire smothered the attack with heavy losses, and large numbers of dead and wounded lay close to our lines. Under cover of darkness the French withdrew to the edge of the forest one hundred yards away and dug in.

The infantry fire died down, and we too began to dig, for our own trenches were only twenty inches deep. French artillery again interrupted this work and sharp-edged shell fragments whistled about our ears, struck, and destroyed trees as if they were matches.

Our positions offered inadequate cover for the harassing fire which, with few breaks, kept up all night. Wrapped in overcoats, shelter halves, and blankets, we lay shivering in the shallow trench. I could hear the men jump as each new concentration hit near us. During the night we lost twelve men, which was a heavier loss than we had sustained during the entire attack. No rations could be brought up.

At dawn the hostile artillery activity slackened and we began to work on deepening our positions; but we were not allowed much time. At o8:00 artillery fire forced us to quit, and the fire was followed by a strong infantry attack which we threw back with little difficulty. The same fate met succeeding attacks, and by afternoon our positions were deep enough so that we could stop worrying about the effects of artillery fire. We had no communication trenches to the rear; so we had to wait until dark for our first hot meal.

Observations: The attack on January 29, 1915, showed the superiority of the German infantry. The attack of the 9th Company was no surprise, and it is difficult to understand why the French infantry lost its nerve and abandoned a well-prepared defensive position lavishly protected by

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wire, three lines deep, and well-studded with machine guns. The enemy knew the attack was coming and had tried to stop it by means of heavy interdiction fire. The fact that we were able to resort to offensive action and break from the encircled Labordaire position is ample proof of the combat capabilities of our troops.

It was unfortunate that neither the battalion nor the regiment was able to exploit the 9th Company's success. With three battalions in line, inadequate reserves were available. Shortages in small-arms ammunition and hand grenades increased our troubles in the defense of Labordaire. Several things happened simultaneously to render our situation most critical: First, the enemy seized the blockhouse on the extreme right; second, we received the battalion order to withdraw; third, we were short of ammunition; and, finally, our way back through the wire was swept by enemy fire. Any decision, other than the one made, would have resulted in terrific casualties if not total annihilation. Above all, it was impossible to wait for darkness; for the last round would have been fired well before 11:00. Attacking the weaker enemy force on the east would not have paid dividends, for the more aggressive attack came from the west; and attacking to the east would have given the western force an excellent opportunity to strike us in rear. Breaking off the fighting in Labordaire confirms the statement in the Field Service Regulations: "Breaking off combat is most easily accomplished after successful offensive maneuver."

In making our hasty preparations for the attack, we gave no thought to heavy entrenching tools. The solidly frozen ground made our light tools almost useless. Even in the attack the spade is as important as the rifle.

Although there was a better field of fire from the edge of the forest, the new position was one hundred yards inside the woods. We had no intention of exposing the troops to a repeat performance of the Defuy Woods bombardment, and still had a field of fire good enough to repel several French infantry attacks with heavy losses.

The losses from hostile artillery fire during the night of January 29–30 were so heavy because the troops did not dig in to a proper depth.