

# AN T-OGLACH

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## OUR DUTY.

The officers and men of the Army of Ireland are preserving their discipline during this period of prolonged uncertainty in a manner worthy of their great traditions. They realise that they are soldiers not politicians, who enlisted to safeguard the rights and liberties of the whole Irish people and they will be true to their trust. Those responsible for the control of the Irish Volunteers will see to it that our Army can never become a menace to the Irish people, never be used to intimidate or interfere with any section of our population in the lawful expression of their opinion. Whatever political differences may divide the country will not be allowed to affect the discipline and organisation of the Army. The safety of the nation as a whole depends upon the preservation intact and unimpaired of the united force of an Army to shield the rights and liberties of all. Any acts of indiscipline, any attempts by members of the Army to import political differences into the body, to use any section of that Army to intimidate or to suppress freedom of opinion will be punished in the severest manner. The determination shown by officers and men to remain loyal, disciplined soldiers, the servants of the national will, acting as an organised whole in the common national interests has been one of the most encouraging and inspiring features of this critical time. That determination will be persevered in to the end. The men who have stood together side by side between the Irish people and their enemies at the risk of their lives will remain side by side.

## GENERAL NOTES

There was a serious misprint in the concluding sentence of the leading article in last week's issue of AN T-OGLACH. The last sentence should have read: "The officers and men of the Army, irrespective of their personal views, will continue to work together for the common good and the common security."

## SCOUTING (Continued from last page)

this method the enemy is, therefore, not informed that he has been observed.

In practically every scouting expedition, cover must be left at some point. Having once come under the possible view of the enemy, the best course for the scout to follow is to assume he has been observed, and he must avoid all appearance of apprehension. Even if he is certain that his movements are under observation he must try and appear heedless and unconscious of danger, for the enemy will usually prefer to capture a scout rather than kill him, because he may be a possible source of information.

A scout who has any reason to believe that the enemy is watching and awaiting him, should not, by any sign, betray his suspicion, but should manoeuvre for a favourable position to avoid danger.

If a scout when unconcealed, should, through lack of control, betray by any sign or movement his sudden discovery of a hitherto concealed enemy, there is usually nothing to be done but retire and try another route, for if within range it is almost certain that he will be immediately fired on, and as he is at a disadvantage he should go at once. Even if not fired on, he has given away one of his chief advantages—his supposed ignorance.

The security of a scout depends in a large measure, on recognising and estimating possible dangers. He must see his enemy before he is himself seen, and to ensure this he must try to divine the most likely places for the enemy to be. In order to guess the probable position of a possible enemy, the scout must try and look on the situation from the enemy's point of view.

When a scout, himself unseen, has detected the enemy he must use his own discretion as to his further action.

Scouts must be very gently handled. It is difficult for those who have not personally been engaged in it to appreciate fully the effect on the nerves produced by continuous scouting. The unceasing alertness required, the constant apprehension of danger to life or to success, the sensation of military inferiority, have a wearing effect on the most resolute



## MAP READING ON THE GROUND

The following rules lay down a progressive course of instruction in map reading on the ground. They are intended to serve as a rough guide to instructors who may vary them at their discretion.

The various exercises outlined in the rules should, if possible, be carried out on the ground with the aid of a large and small scale map to accustom men in reading both with equal facility.

The reader must first note the scale of the map and get his eye accustomed to estimating distances on it. He must then carefully examine the heights and contours, noting the vertical interval in feet between successive contours and try to get an idea of the general form of the ground.

He will be assisted in noting the rise and fall of the ground by reason of the fact that spot levels, namely, the height of any particular spot, are often shown on heights, along main roads and railways, at villages, and other places marked on maps. He may gain an impression of the steepness of the hillsides by mentally comparing the country represented with one he knows well.

The direction of the north—both true and magnetic—must then be noted, and the map examined carefully in relation to these points. Time may be spent most usefully in imagining the various details of the map as actual country, and noting the positions of water courses, and the position and direction of streams, rivers, ridges, watersheds, and spurs. Knowledge gained by this scrutiny before moving across country may save hours of unnecessary wandering about in it, due to avoidable mistakes of direction.

In scrutinizing the map the reader should note whether country is wooded or the reverse, the size of the villages and number of farms, the roads, railways, canals, bridges, and artificial features generally and whether roads, rivers, railways, etc., pass under or over the bridges. The distances between some of these objects, a knowledge of which is likely to prove useful, should be measured on the map with the aid of any convenient scale, and noted down or remembered.

When these exercises have been carried out, the map should be taken out to some point on the ground which can be identified, and from which the country itself can be studied. The reader should look well at the country before him, noting its various heights and prominent objects, and mentally converting the distances between them into inches according to the scale of the map used.

When he has thoroughly studied the country, so to speak, and mentally mapped it so that he can imagine what it would look like in a map, the reader must turn to his map, "set" it, and compare it with the actual ground in front of him, and note the particulars in which it differs from his conception of what a map of

the country would look like. The reader will learn more by this system of imagining or visualizing a map by looking at actual country and then comparing it with a map of it, and spend less time, than by the alternative system of comparing the map with the ground piece by piece and object by object by looking from one to the other.

## SNIPING.

Sniping has now become a recognised factor in our warfare. For this work it is absolutely necessary to have the right man.

A sniper is not like any other man in any other special service; he needs more personal qualifications for results. He must think, be able to observe, make use of cover, be able to shoot well, be capable, adaptable and original. The officer in charge of a snipers class must be a strict disciplinarian, and if the strictest measures are not taken at first, failure will be the result when the sniper is sent on active service.

No man but the man best adapted for this kind of work should be picked.

When a man is about to become a sniper, it is too late to begin to learn to shoot. He must already be a good shot. What he wants to think about is how to keep alive while discharging his duties, which is done by knowing how to take advantage of all natural, and the construction of artificial, cover.

Sniping is extremely interesting work; to match yourself against a cunning and experienced enemy, to come out on top, and stay that way. Take all the advantages you can get, and give none. If by any chance the enemy sees you, get him first; to be too slow to shoot is dangerous. A good sniper will be always thinking about his work.

Your duty will be to worry the enemy night and day, give him no peace at any time. The least part of an enemy showing himself by day must be fired at, unless by waiting a little, he will expose himself more, giving you a better chance of putting him permanently out of the way, but this does not mean uselessly blazing away, and so giving away your position immediately.

The qualifications necessary are:—

- (1) Must be physically fit for strain, and hardship.
- (2) Must be an accurate shot, deliberate and quick.
- (3) Must know how to do the right thing at the right time, and to do it quickly.
- (4) Must be keen observer; must be able to see without being seen.
- (5) Must have, and cultivate, great patience.
- (6) Must be a good judge of distance.
- (7) Must have keen eyesight, and good hearing.
- (8) Must know how to take advantage of natural cover, and be able to construct artificial cover.

- (9) Must understand the use of the Compass, and be able to read a map.
- (10) Must have great self control.
- (11) Must have strong will power and determination.
- (12) Must know how to make use of decoys.
- (13) Must be a man who is a sticker.
- (14) Must be a man of courage, combined with coolness.
- (15) Must not be slovenly, fussy, or one who panics.

Any man with the above qualifications will make a good sniper.

It does not matter how efficient a sniper may be if he has nothing to work with, or insufficient equipment, both as to quality, or quantity he is severely handicapped. The very best man in the Company having been picked for this work it is but fair to him that he should have the best equipment obtainable.

**NOTES.**

If using a 1914 Lee Enfield Rifle coming on to dark, fill the foresight protecting hood over your foresight full of white paper, raise your back sight up as far as it will go, (with the screw); use the square opening thus produced for your rear aperture sight, the result being a fairly accurate shot.

Every sniper should carry a pair of good field glasses, a prismatic compass, a wire cutters, and revolver.

Remember persistently hammering at one particular spot tells tremendously on the enemy.

After concealing yourself, you must conceal your fire. This is quite easy to understand, for the flash of a single shot might give away a position which it took weeks to find.

If in the country, place some of the natural surrounding features such as gorse, heather, &c. in front of your position, and shoot through it, thus hiding the flash. Hold your rifle 2 feet in rear of such cover.

When using a loophole, remember it is far easier to see through it when it has a white background, than when with a dark one.

In all cases beware of the silhouette effect.

*Be suspicious; once suspicious, you watch; once you watch, you learn.*

**SCOUTING.**

It is often asserted that a good scout is the product of natural aptitude, and of environment, and that training can do but little to improve men who are by nature fit, while it is wasted on those who are not specially gifted.

There is, no doubt, one attribute which is indispensable; that is courage. There is no other natural gift the lack of which renders a physically and mentally sound man unfitted for scouting. The average sound mind can be unconsciously trained to alertness and

caution by a life of danger, to fortitude by hardship, to swift decision by early responsibility.

What he wants to think about is how to keep alive, while discharging his duties, which is done by knowing how to take advantage of all natural, and the construction of artificial cover.

A man's qualifications must be as follows:—

- (1) Must be physically fit for great strain and hard ships.
- (2) Must be an accurate shot, deliberate and quick.
- (3) Must know how to do the right thing at the right time, and to do it quickly.
- (4) Must be a keen observer; must be able to see without being seen.
- (5) Must know how to stalk without being seen or heard.
- (6) Must have, and cultivate great patience.
- (7) Must be a good judge of distance.
- (8) Must have keen eyesight and good hearing.
- (9) Must know how to take advantage of natural cover, and be able to construct artificial cover.
- (10) Must understand the use of the Compass.
- (11) Must be able to read a map.
- (12) Must have great self control.
- (13) Must have strong will power and determination.
- (14) Must be able to write short and concise reports.
- (15) Must be able to sketch.
- (16) Must be a man who is a sticker.
- (17) Must be a man with courage, combined with coolness.
- (18) Must be a man who is not slovenly, fussy, or one who panics.

The man thus equipped is material ready to be fashioned into a Scout. To make him the finished scout he must complete his training on the battle field and this is very often a difficult matter.

Even a short course of training under a competent instructor will effect a marked improvement. The eye may be trained to swift and definite observation, the mind to correct deduction, the memory to retentive grasp, the body may be trained to move silently and lie close:

The scout who merely gets into danger and out again, achieves nothing. He proves only he is fitted for the first part of his duty, that is, to take care of himself in the immediate presence of the enemy. It may be admitted that this first stage—the means to an end—is the fascinating part of scouting, and it is this which in the popular mind has obscured the final stage—the end to be attained—namely, the acquisition of information.

Every scout must be prepared to take risks, and should be trained in such a way that his chances of surviving the necessary dangers may be increased, but the best scout is he who attains his object while exposing himself as little as possible to danger.

The procedure of a successful scout is guided by a combination of courage and caution; both these qualities are essential, and the lack of either is fatal to efficiency. A timid scout is not of much use, but a dead scout is of no use at all, and a scout who is captured may be a danger.

The final step of a scout's education, and this is also the final test of his capacity, is practice in war, and unless he is fitted for his task by preparation of some kind, his career is likely to be either short or inglorious.

The courage of the efficient scout must be of a fine temper; mere hot-headed, blundering, bravery is useless enough in its own place, but on reconnaissance work its exercises will only lead to disaster.

The precautions which may be observed by a scout in approaching and observing an enemy are many, but so varied are the circumstances under which his difficult duty must be carried on, that there is almost no precaution which may not on occasion be properly neglected. In every case he must balance his chances; he is no use if dead or a prisoner, and yet the information he is in search of may be of urgent importance. One of the first rules is concealment; to see without being seen. Another is, that when concealment is impossible it is judicious to get within close range of the enemy.

The art of concealment may be acquired to some extent by the use of ordinary common sense, by avoidance of crest lines, summit, or open ground; by caution when moving, and quiescence when stationary, and above all by taking advantage of darkness. To these the trained scout adds a knowledge of the effect of different backgrounds, and of visibility of objects in sunlight and shadow.

This knowledge can only be obtained by close observation, aided possibly by instruction. Important also is the power of controlling the body to absolute stillness. The value of this faculty is due to the fact that signs of life and signs of motion are to the untrained eye synonymous, and that to detect the presence of life nine or nine people in a hundred try only to detect motion. A man may consequently remain unobserved, if only he does not move, in a position where concealment seems impossible.

The concealment afforded by the cover of darkness is of inestimable value, not only to approach the enemy but often to escape him. It is generally a good principle when a hostile force is near and must be observed daily, for the scout to make his approach to the enemy by night, so as to reach his farthest point of observation before dawn. He may thus be posted in concealment ready to make use of the first light for his observation. He should have ample warning of any hostile movement which might threaten his safety or his retreat.

Skill in night operations, like most attainments of

the good scout, can be acquired by practice. The principal points for study are, the sense of direction, and judgment of time and space. For the first there are many guides—compass, stars, wind, running water, hills, roads, and fences. Some guide of this kind is usually necessary, without one, movement in the darkness is apt to degenerate into mere groping.

The judgment of time and space by night is almost as important as the accuracy of direction, and is quite as difficult. Time is of importance for two principal reasons; the first, that the hours of darkness are limited and to be exposed by daylight, while still engaged on an operation which can only be safely carried out by night, puts the scout in an uncomfortable situation. The second point is, that time is a useful check on distance, and the estimation of distance is the chief difficult to overcome.

The conditions most favourable to night scouting are a dark night, a clear sky, and a knowledge of the existence of some recognisable land marks. The darkness gives cover; the clear sky gives guidance, and the landmarks make position from time to time certain.

It is necessary to learn to move silently, and although at night the ordinary precautions required are not very dissimilar to those suitable for daylight, yet some extra care is necessary when on foot and off a road. Noise is most likely to be caused by stumbling, owing to unseen obstacles on the ground. Stumbling may be avoided to some extent, by moving with both knees bent, and the balance of the body rather thrown backwards, keeping the weight on the rear foot until the other is securely planted. If close to the enemy the only safe way to move is on the hands and knees, carefully removing with the hands anything that would be liable to crack under the weight of the body.

There is not much difficulty in the scout finding his way about the country by day, he being provided with a compass and map, but he should be taught how to observe land marks, and to remember the general direction of the route he is following.

To take advantage of the concealment afforded by natural objects is, of course, an elementary precaution and any sensible man will utilise obvious cover. It requires some discernment, however, to recognise all the possibilities of cover, and it is astonishing to observe how insignificant are the irregularities of ground which may serve for the concealment of a skilful scout.

Concealment has been given the first place in scouting for the reason that reconnaissance which is carried out unobserved is not only safer for the scout but is usually more satisfactory in its results. By

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