



SKIRMISH DRILL

FOR

MOUNTED TROOPS.

RICHMOND:

PRINTED BY RITCHIE & DUNNAVANT.

1861.



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SKIRMISH DRILL

FOR

MOUNTED TROOPS.

Confederate States of America

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1861.



T. R.


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THE system of instruction prepared by First Lieutenant D. H. Maury, Mounted Riflemen, under the orders of the War Department, as an addendum to the Cavalry Tactics for the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen, having been approved by the President, is adopted for all mounted troops. The single-rank formation on which it is based will be used in all service against Indians; but the two-rank formation will be preserved for the present in garrison service.

JOHN B. FLOYD,
Secretary of War.

War Department, April 9, 1859.



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ARTICLE I.

§ 1. Composition of a company acting singly, and posts of officers, non-commissioned officers, &c., &c.

A company consists of one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, one brevet second lieutenant, four sergeants, four corporals, one farrier, one blacksmith, two buglers, and sixty-four privates minimum, seventy-four maximum.

A company is divided into two platoons, which are numbered from the right, FIRST platoon and SECOND platoon.

Each platoon contains two sections. The first and second sections make up the first platoon; the third and fourth sections make up the second platoon.

The sections are called from the right in the order in which they stand—first, second, third and fourth section.

Each section is made up of “sets of four,” which are called in the order in which they stand in their respective sections, from the right, “first set,” “second set,” “third set,” &c., &c.

Posts of officers and non-commissioned officers of a company in line of battle, viz :

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| No. 1. Captain, ten yards in front of centre of company. | } Meas'd from face to face. |
| No. 2. 1st lieutenant, five yards in front of centre of 1st platoon. | |
| No. 3. 2d lieutenant, five yards in front of centre of 2d platoon. | |
| No. 4. Brevet 2d lieutenant, five yards in rear of centre of company, (not replaced when absent.) | |
| No. 5. 1st sergeant, on right of 1st section, not counted in the rank. | |
| No. 6. 2d sergeant, on right of 2d section, not counted in the rank. | |
| No. 7. 3d sergeant, on right of 3d section, not counted in the rank. | |

No. 8. 4th sergeant, on right of 4th section, not counted in the rank.

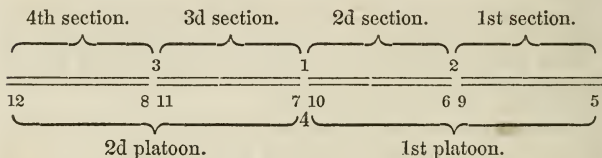
No. 9. 1st corporal, on left of 1st section, not counted in the rank.

No. 10. 2d corporal, on left of 2d section, not counted in the rank.

No. 11. 3d corporal, on left of 3d section, not counted in the rank.

No. 12. 4th corporal, on left of 4th section, not counted in the rank.

Farrier and blacksmith in the rank; bugler near and behind the captain, or on right of 1st sergeant, and one yard from him.



In line of battle there will be an interval of one yard between the corporal on the left of each section and the sergeant on the right of next section. In column of platoons the same interval will be observed.

In column of platoons the captain will be habitually on the side of the guide, and about ten yards outside the centre of the column. The other officers, non-commissioned officers, &c., will occupy the positions above indicated.

In column of sections the captain will be ten yards outside the flank of the column on the side of the guide.

The first lieutenant will be five yards outside the flank of the column on the side of the guide, and opposite the centre of the interval between the 1st and 2d sections.

The second lieutenant will be five yards outside the flank of the column on the side of the guide, and opposite the centre of the interval between the 3d and 4th sections.

The sergeants will be one yard in front of the centre of their respective sections, and will command them. The corporals will be in the rank of their respective sections.

The buglers will accompany the captain, or will be on the right of the leading sergeant of the column.

In column of fours, twos, or file, the captain will be ten yards outside the centre of the flank of the column, on the side of the guide.

The 1st lieutenant will be five yards outside of the centre of the flank of his platoon, on the side of the guide.

The 2d lieutenant will be five yards outside of the centre of the flank of his platoon, on the side of the guide.

The sergeants (except the sergeant of the leading section) will be abreast of the leading four, two, or file, of their respective sections, and on the side opposite the guide.

The sergeant of the leading section will be in front of its leading four.

In all columns the brevet 2d lieutenant, when there is one serving with the company, will be five yards outside of the centre of the flank of the column, and on the side opposite the guide.

The corporal will, in all columns of fours, twos, and file, be on the side opposite the guide, abreast of the last set, two, or file. In columns of companies, platoons, or sections, he remains in the rank.

The company having been thus formed, will be drilled by the means and directions laid down in Cavalry Tactics for the squadron.

The section will be drilled by the means and directions laid down in Cavalry Tactics for the platoon.

The only changes necessary in order to make the one answer for the other, are those which result from the diminished depth of the rank and the use of the words "company" and "section" instead of "squadron" and "platoon":—(c. g.)

In forming to left into line from column of fours, the command must be changed to, "By fours, left wheel."

To Mount.

§ 2. The command being dismounted in line of battle, the men standing to horse, to mount, the commands of the Chief are:

1. PREPARE TO MOUNT.
2. MOUNT.

At the first command, the sergeant and numbers two and four of each section move five yards to the front, stepping off with the left foot, and regulating by the right. The corporal and numbers one and three stand fast until the others have cleared them; all then prepare to mount according to the principles laid down in Cavalry Tactics, except that they take the end of the reins in the right hand, draw them through the left, which holds them above the middle of the neck of the horse between the thumb and hand, with the palm down, until the horse just feels the bit; then with the right hand adjust the stirrup to the left foot, and with the left hand take up a lock of the mane so that its end comes out by the thumb; then take the surplus part of the reins in the right hand, between the thumb and hand, with the palm up, and seize the right side of the pommel with the right hand.

At the second command all mount together, and the corporals and numbers one and three immediately move forward, and place themselves boot to boot with the sergeants and numbers two and four.

The Chief corrects the alignment, if it be necessary, commanding "Right dress." The Assistant places himself at this command on the right of the line, looking along it, and correcting the files who are out of place.

The Chief remains in front, in order to superintend the alignment. The Assistant commands "Steady," when the files are all correctly aligned; and then the Chief commands "Front."

To Dismount.

§ 3. The command being mounted in line of battle: to dismount it, the commands are:

1. PREPARE TO DISMOUNT.
2. DISMOUNT.

At the first command, the sergeant and numbers two and four in each section move to the front five yards; the corporal and numbers one and three stand fast. All then prepare to dismount in other respects as laid down in Cavalry Tactics, except that they take the reins in the left hand with a lock of the mane, and carry the right hand to the right side of the pommel.

At the second command all dismount, leaving the reins over the pommel; the sergeants and numbers two and four stand to horse, while the corporals and numbers one and three lead forward and form rank with them.

To Link.

To link after dismounting, the man stands to horse, faces about to the rear, takes the link which hangs from the halter ring of the horse of his left file in his right hand, seizes his own horse by the bit near the mouth, and draws the horse of his left file towards his own until he can hook the snap into the curb ring; in hooking, the nails of his right hand are down.

When he dismounts he leaves his reins over the pommel of the saddle.

To facilitate the linking, the horse-holder should bear his horse's head well towards number three.

§ 4. Form and course of inspection for the single rank formation: The company being formed in line, in one rank, mounted, the officers and non-commissioned officers in their places, (see section 1,) to inspect it—the commands are:

1. FOR INSPECTION—PREPARE TO DISMOUNT.
2. DISMOUNT.

At the first command, the first and second lieutenants move forward ten yards. The brevet second lieutenant places himself upon the line with them, in front of the left file of the company; they all then return sabre and prepare to dismount.

The non-commissioned officers move forward ten yards, and prepare to dismount.

Numbers two and four move forward five yards, and prepare to dismount.

Numbers one and three prepare to dismount in their places.

At the second command all dismount and stand to horse. They then shift the pistol holster towards the front of the body sufficiently to enable the inspecting officer readily to withdraw the pistol. The men then unsling rifles, order arms, and spring rammers without noise, with the right arm

passed through the rein; they then allow the rifle to fall across the body obliquely into the hollow of the left arm, which holds it, with the fore arm extended down, the barrel between the thumb and closed fingers. In this position they await the inspection.

As soon as the inspecting officer perceives that the second command has been executed, he returns his sabre, dismounts, gives his horse to a trumpeter to hold, and commences his inspection on the right of the line of officers. He passes along the front of the line, around its left, and along its rear; he then passes to the front of the line of non-commissioned officers, which he inspects in the same manner. He draws and inspects the pistol of each man as he comes to him, and, after inspecting, returns it to the holster. He then passes to the right of the front line of men, draws and inspects the pistol of the man on the right of that line, returns it to the holster, takes the rifle from the position in which it rests, and, after inspecting, returns it to that position; and so on throughout the line. Each man slings his rifle and re-adjusts his pistol, as soon as the inspector has passed one file beyond him. After having completed his inspection of the men, horses, arms, equipments, &c., from the front, the officer passes around the left and along the rear of the line, examining as he goes the condition of men; horses, arms, and equipments. He then inspects the rear line of men in the same manner.

After which he mounts, and commands :

1. PREPARE TO MOUNT.
2. MOUNT.
3. FORM RANK.
4. RIGHT DRESS.
5. FRONT.

At the first command all prepare to mount in their places. At the second command all mount, and the rear line of men move forward to their places, boot to boot with the front line of men. All then move forward together to the line of non-commissioned officers, on which they are aligned by the fourth and fifth commands.

The sabres are then inspected, as directed in Cavalry Tactics, by the command :

1. INSPECTION SABRE.

If the company be in tents or other quarters, the valises or saddle bags and clothing are inspected in the quarters.

If in the field, the men will unstrap and display them on the ground at their feet, as they stand to horse, before they unslung rifles.

The trumpeters will be near and in rear of the inspecting officer when he gives the first command. They will dismount with the rest. One of them holds the horse of the other who goes to take that of the inspector.

ARTICLE II.

Skirmish Drill for Mounted Troops.

§ 5. Preliminary remarks.

For this drill the men should be dressed, so as to secure the greatest freedom of action, as in the blouse or sack, and in the forage cap with the chin-strap down. The revolver will be worn in a belt-holster upon the right side of the man. The gun will be slung across his back, with the butt near his right hip. In addition to the usual equipment of a cavalry soldier, each man will be provided with a "link," for the purpose of securing his horse whenever he dismounts. It will be buckled in the halter-ring of the headstall, and when not wanted for immediate use, will be hooked up by the snap in the same ring.

At the signal "boot and saddle," the horses will be saddled and bridled.

At the signal "to horse," the command will be formed according to the instructions already given in section 2.

Should the command be less than a complete company, the officer in charge of it will make such changes in its organization as are necessary in consequence of the absence of members.

Every command, be it a full company or a scouting party less than a company, will be divided into four equal sections if possible.

A section must contain at least eight men.

Some portion of every command will be held in reserve, unless it is so small as to manifestly render it unwise to divide it. Any section may form the reserve; and its com-

mander will be assigned by selection, and not according to rank.

A "set of four" means the four men who tell off together.

A "chief of four" is the right file of the set, or "number one" of the set, and will be habitually the guide of his set; when in column of fours, he will command the set to which he belongs.

He will be responsible that the men of his set never separate from each other, and for the interval, distance, and alignment.

The senior officer on drill is termed the "Chief;" his next in rank is termed the "Assistant."

Before skirmishing, two or three men will be detailed to accompany and protect the Chief.

Preparatory to skirmishing, a section will take open order.

The interval between men in open order, measured from "boot to boot," is twenty-seven inches.

In a column of fours, open order, the distance between the sets of four, from croup to head, is four yards.

In a column of twos, open order, the distance from croup to head is eighteen inches.

In a column "by file," open order, the distance from croup to head is eighteen inches.

These distances and interval are deduced from the length and breadth of the horse, and from the agreement which must exist between the depth of a column and the length of the line into which it will wheel.

The interval of twenty-seven inches will be found in practice ample to enable the men to mount and dismount in their places in line or in column, without the necessity of the alternate files moving out to the front for that purpose.

In an enemy's country, or when in danger of sudden attack or ambush, the leading section of the company or scouting party should march in open order, so as to be able to get at once into action.

To take Open Order.

§ 6. Being in line, right in front, the commands of the Chief are :

1. 1ST SECTION, (*or 2d or 3d, as the case may be,*) OPEN ORDER—GALLOP.
2. MARCH.

At the first command all gather their horses; at the second command all take the gallop, except the centre file of the section, which trots out directly to the front. Those on the right of the centre oblique to the right, each man continuing to oblique until he has an interval of twenty-seven inches between him and the next file on his left; those on the left of the centre continue to oblique to the left, until each man has twenty-seven inches interval between him and the next file on his right. They all then align themselves on the centre, take up its gait, and continue to move to the front until the next command of the Chief.

To return to Close Order.

Being in line, right in front, in open order, the commands of the Chief are:

1. CLOSE ORDER—TROT.
2. MARCH.

At the first command all gather their horses; at the second command the centre file moves to the front at the walk, the others close in towards him at the trot; each in succession taking up the walk, and aligning on the centre as he gains his position in the line.

§ 7. The section being in line, right in front, open order, breaks into columns of fours by the commands:

1. BY FOURS—TROT (*or* GALLOP.)
2. MARCH.

At the first command the first set of four gathers its horses, and takes the trot together at the second. After the first set has cleared the front of the line, or marched three yards, the second set moves out at the trot (*or* gallop,) marches straight to the front until clear of the line, and then obliques to the right until in position in column exactly behind the first set, and at four yards distance from it, when it marches to the front to take its place in column. The third set follows the second, and so on throughout the section, according to the foregoing directions.

Care must be taken to avoid losing distance in this movement. The sets of four must move out promptly in turn, and oblique together. The Chief commands "Guide right" when the first set is out.

A column of "twos" and "file" may be formed on the same principles and by the same means, except that the distance in these cases is only eighteen inches from head to croup.

In all formations of this drill, the same principles will be observed in regard to increasing the gait as are now established in Cavalry Tactics.

When in column of fours, twos, or file, the various methods of forming into line (front, right, or left) can be executed by the commands and means laid down in Cavalry Tactics for the platoon.

Observe: that as there is no rear rank, lines can be formed at once on either flank by wheeling by fours to the right or left. When the right of the column is in front, and the wheel is made by fours to the right, the sets will be in line by inversion. The men of each set will not be inverted.

When the men are not well instructed in the drill, the deployments from close order into open order, and from open order into skirmishing order, should be made at the walk or trot. Habitually they should be executed at the gallop; and in action, with the greatest possible celerity compatible with steadiness.

In deploying, the officers and non-commissioned officers will fall to the rear of the line in order to superintend the movement.

Every movement not fully described in the following pages will be understood to be executed, as is now ordered, in the system already in use.

§ 8. To form column of twos, open order, from column by file, marching at the walk, right in front, the commands are:

1. FORM TWOS, OPEN ORDER—TROT.
2. MARCH.

At the second command numbers two and four oblique to the left at the trot, and move to the front when in rear of their places in column of twos, until in line with their respective ones and threes. The leading set of twos then being at the walk, all the others close up at the trot to their places, with distance of eighteen inches, and interval from boot to boot of twenty-seven inches.

§ 9. To form column of fours, open order, from column by file, when marching at the walk, right in front, the commands are :

1. FORM FOURS, OPEN ORDER—TROT.
2. MARCH.

At the first command number one of each set continues to march at the walk to the front ; twos, threes, and fours of every set, oblique to the left at the trot, each moving to the front when in rear of the place he will occupy in his set of four ; when they have gained their places in line with numbers one, the leading set being at the walk, the others take up the trot, which they keep until each has arrived at the distance of four yards from the one preceding it ; each in turn then takes up the walk. The Chief commands "Guide right" when the first set is formed.

§ 10. To form column of fours, open order, from column of twos, open order, when marching at the walk, with right in front, the commands are :

1. FORM FOURS—TROT.
2. MARCH.

At the second command threes and fours oblique to the left at the trot, until opposite their places in the sets of four, when they move to the front, taking up the walk when in line with ones and twos. The Chief commands "Guide right" when the movement is completed. Ones and twos preserve the walk and direction during the movement ; and after the other files have moved out must take care not to diminish the distance left by them. If the column is trotting when the movement is ordered, it will be executed at the gallop.

§ 11. To break from column of fours into column of twos, open or close order, marching at the walk, with right in front, the commands are :

1. BY TWOS.
2. MARCH.

At the second command numbers three and four halt until numbers one and two have cleared them, when they oblique to the right, promptly, into their places in column of twos. The Chief commands "Guide right" as soon as the movement is completed.

§ 12. To break a column of twos, in open or in close order, into column by file, when marching at the walk, right in front, the commands are:

1. BY FILE—TROT.
2. MARCH.

At the second command number one of the leading set takes the trot. As soon as he has cleared number two of the first set, number two obliqués to the right at the trot, and enters the column behind number one. Number three then moves in his place in column at the trot, followed by number four; who, by obliquing at the trot, takes his place in rear of number three; and so on throughout the column, each even-numbered file obliquing at the trot as soon as the odd-numbered file on his right has cleared him. The files must move very promptly and exactly in their proper time, so as not to lose distance in this movement.

Being in column of twos, wheels to the left may be executed when the right is in front; or to the right with the left in front; but not the reverse of these, for then the twos would be inverted in their respective fours, and confusion would result on account of the change in position of the horse-holder.

§ 13. To deploy forward as skirmishers, from a line, right in front, halted, or marching at any gait, the commands are:

1. ON (*such*) SET—DEPLOY AS SKIRMISHERS—GALLOP.
2. MARCH.

At the second command all take the gallop except the designated set, which trots out to the front. Those on the right and left of it oblique at the gallop to the right and left, each set taking up the trot when on line with the directing set, and at fifteen yards from the nearest file of the next set on the side of direction.

In this movement the chiefs of four will be held responsible for the direction and interval and alignment of the men of their respective sets, and will see that the sets are at proper intervals from each other. The Chief will halt the line when it has reached the point where it is to act.

The following movements will enable cavalry, when on a

march, to get into action with the least possible delay, in case of an attack when passing a defile or of any other ambuscade.

It is understood that always, when dismounted to fight, the horse-holders remain mounted, unless otherwise ordered.

In all the manœuvres of this article, the commands numbered "1" are cautionary.

ARTICLE III.

§ 14. To dismount to fight when in column of fours, open order, right in front, halted or marching at any gait, to meet an enemy on the left of front, the commands are :

1. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
2. ACTION FRONT AND LEFT.
3. COMMENCE FIRING.

At the first command all halt, spring to the ground, link horses, unsling rifles, and step one yard to the front. At the second command the first set moves forward four yards, and at the third command commences firing. The other sets move at the double quick obliquely to the left, and take their places on the line with the first set. Each set, as soon as it arrives upon the line, commences firing.

In case it be desired to form the line towards the right of the head of the column, the commands are :

1. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
2. ACTION FRONT AND RIGHT.
3. COMMENCE FIRING.

All the sets except the first will then gain their places in the line by obliquing to the right. The sets will be in line by inversion. The men in each set will be in direct order.

§ 15. Being in column of fours, open order, right in front, marching at any gait, or halted, to meet an attack on left of rear, the commands are :

1. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
2. ACTION REAR AND LEFT.
3. COMMENCE FIRING.

At the first command all halt, spring to the ground, link

horses, unsling rifles, and step one yard to the front. At the second command the men of the rear set face to the right, and, led by their chief, file to the right around the rear set of horses to a line five yards in rear of their croups.

At the second command all the other sets face to the left, and move at the double-quick. Each man as he clears the column moves obliquely to the left and rear to his place on the line with the rear set.

If it be desired to get at once into action, the Chief commands "Commence firing" as soon as the set first on the line is established. This set then commences the fire; and each of the others takes it up in succession as it arrives upon the line; and in all of the following movements the same rule will be observed.

§ 16. Being in column of fours, open order, right in front, marching at any gait, or halted, to meet an attack from the right of the column, the commands are :

1. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
2. ACTION RIGHT.

At the first command all halt, spring to the ground, link horses, unsling rifles, and step one yard to the front. At the second command all move briskly upon a line five yards outside the right flank of the column, where they take their places, in line of battle, faced to the right. The sets will be in order by inversion; but the men in each set will be in direct order, the chief being on the right. From this position they may be deployed forward as skirmishers, if it be desired.

§ 17. When in column of fours, open order, right in front, halted or marching, to meet an attack from the left, the commands are :

1. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
2. ACTION LEFT.

At the first command all halt, spring to the ground, link horses, unsling rifles, and step one yard to the front. At the second command all move briskly to the left, and place themselves on a line five yards outside the left flank of the column, facing to the left of it, and in their proper places in line of battle. From this position they may be deployed forward as skirmishers, if desired.

§ 18. Being in column of twos, with right in front, marching at any gait, or halted, to meet an enemy on left of front, the commands are :

1. BY TWOS, LEFT WHEEL—MARCH.
2. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
3. ACTION FRONT AND LEFT.

At the first command twos wheel to the left and halt. At the second command all dismount, link horses, unsling rifles, and step one yard to the front. At the third command the leading set moves to a line five yards to the right of the right flank, as now formed, and facing in that direction. The others move obliquely to their right and front, at the double-quick, and take their places on line with the first.

If it be desired to form the line towards the right of the head of the column, the commands are :

1. BY TWOS, LEFT WHEEL—MARCH.
2. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
3. ACTION FRONT AND RIGHT.

Each of the sets in rear of the leading set will then gain its place in the line by passing through the interval on the right of its set of horses, and moving obliquely to the right and front, to its place in line with the leading set. The sets will be in line by inversion.

§ 19. Being in column of twos, right in front, marching at any gait, or halted, to meet an enemy in rear, the commands are :

1. BY TWOS, LEFT WHEEL.
2. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
3. ACTION REAR AND LEFT.

At the first command all wheel by twos into line to the left, and halt. At the second command all dismount, link horses, unsling rifles, step one yard to the front, and await the next command. At the third command the rear set faces to the left, and moves at the double-quick to its place on a line five yards to the left of the left flank, as now formed, and facing in that direction. The other sets face obliquely to the left, and move off at the double-quick to their places in the line with the rear set.

If it be desired to form the line to the right instead of the left the first two commands are the same as in the other case; the third command is: "ACTION REAR AND RIGHT;" at which the rear set takes its place on the line as before, and the others pass through the intervals to the left of their sets of horses, respectively, and take their places in succession on the left of the set first established. The sets will then be in line by inversion.

§ 20. Being in column of twos, marching at any gait, or halted, with right in front, to dismount to fight, in order to meet an enemy on the right flank, the commands are:

1. BY TWOS, LEFT WHEEL—MARCH.
2. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT—ACTION RIGHT.

At the first command the twos wheel into line to the left and halt. At the second command all dismount and link. In linking the men remain faced to the front, and take the link in the left hand and the bit in the right. After linking they face about, unsling rifles, and take their places in a line five yards outside the croups of the horses. The cautionary words "ACTION RIGHT" should be uttered immediately after "DISMOUNT TO FIGHT."

The method of linking is changed in this instance to avoid the inconvenience which might result from the men having to stoop under the links, after linking, in order to pass to their position in rear of the horses.

§ 21. Being in column of twos, right in front, marching at any gait, or halted, to dismount to fight, to meet an enemy on the left, the commands are:

1. BY TWOS, LEFT WHEEL—MARCH.
2. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.

At the first command wheel by twos into line to the left and halt; and at the second command all dismount, link horses, unsling rifles, step five yards to the front and stand fast.

In case it should be desired in any of the preceding manœuvres to form the line in an oblique direction, the commands would be the same; but the set first in the line would be placed in the desired direction, and the others would con-

form to it. The Chief will judge from the circumstances which of the manœuvres to adopt—whether the flank, the front, or the rear.

In all the cases of this article the command “Commence firing” will be the signal for the set first on the line to open fire. The other sets, if not on the line when it is given, will commence firing as soon as practicable after they arrive on the line.

ARTICLE IV.

§ 22. To deploy as skirmishers, when dismounted, the command is:

1. ON (*such*) SET—DEPLOY—FORWARD.

At this command the section springs forward at the double-quick. The sets on the right of the directing set move obliquely towards the right until opposite their places in line of battle, when they move to the front, aligning by the left.

The sets on the left of the directing set move obliquely towards the left until opposite their places in line of battle, when they move to the front, aligning by the right. All move forward until halted by the Chief.

When in proper position in line of battle, thus deployed, there will be fifteen yards between sets and three feet between files in each set.

The firing will commence at the command of the Chief.

If it be desired to deploy on the line already occupied, the command will be “ON (*such*) SET—DEPLOY.”

The directing set stands fast; the sets to the right and left of it face to the right and left, respectively, and move at the double-quick to take their intervals; then face to the front, and align themselves on the directing set.

§ 23. To deploy as skirmishers, mounted, from a column of fours, right in front, the commands are:

1. ON (*such*) SET—DEPLOY—GALLOP.
2. MARCH.

At the second command the directing set trots out to the front; those in front of it oblique to the right at the gallop;

those in rear to the left at the gallop; and all take the tro when they have gained their intervals of fifteen yards, aligning themselves by the directing set. The Chief will halt the line when it has arrived where it is to act.

To assemble the skirmishers into line or column again, the Chief will place himself at, or otherwise indicate, the point at which the directing set is to rest, and have the rally sounded. At this signal the sets will close in at the gallop upon the indicated point and take their places in line of battle.

When the line is formed, it will be broken into column, in order to advance or retire as may be necessary.

§ 24. Having been thus deployed into line for skirmishing, to commence action, the commands are :

1. DISMOUNT TO FIGHT.
2. FORWARD.
3. HALT.
4. COMMENCE FIRING.

At the first command, all, save the horse-holders, dismount, link horses, unslung rifles, step one pace to the front, and await the next order. At the second command the line moves forward at the double-quick until halted. At the fourth command the right file of each set delivers his fire, and he is followed in succession by the other two.

The chief of four will take care that there is always one gun loaded in his set; this will never be neglected, whether in advancing or retreating. The files of each set must depend upon each other for support and assistance; they must never separate; every kind of cover must be seized and occupied by the skirmishers; each chief of four must be alert to perceive such advantages for his set, taking care, however, that in attempting to secure them he does not separate too far from the other sets of the line to receive or give support when necessary.

The horses will be habitually kept at about one hundred yards in rear of their riders, though they should be nearer, when they can find shelter from fire which will admit of it. Fifty yards will be far enough when the enemy does not use fire-arms.

They will be under charge of a non-commissioned officer ; and when it is desired to remount rapidly, should be advanced to meet their riders. The reserve will be kept mounted and where it can best protect the horses of the dismounted men and get into action best.

The deployed line will be manœuvred by the commands, signals, and means provided in the Cavalry Tactics.

If it be desired to fight mounted, the Chief will command the charge. The men will then draw sabre or pistol and charge.

§ 25. The section being in column of fours, open order, right in front, and at the walk, to take close order, the commands are :

- 1. CLOSE ORDER—TROT.
- 2. MARCH.

At this command number one of the leading set marches to the front at the walk. The other men of his set closing upon him at the trot until each has gained his place in the set of four in close order. The set then walks. The other sets close at the trot in the same manner, each walking when it has closed to eighteen inches from that in its front.

§ 26. The section being in column of twos, right in front, open order, to take close order, the commands are :

- 1. CLOSE ORDER.
- 2. MARCH.

At this command numbers two and four incline to the right, slightly quickening the gait, and place themselves boot to boot with numbers one and three.

§ 27. To form column of fours, in close order, when marching in column of file at the walk, with right in front, the commands are :

- 1. FORM FOURS.
- 2. TROT—MARCH.

At the second command number one of the leading set continues to march to the front at the walk. All the others oblique to the left at the trot ; each man marching to the front when in rear of his place in his set of fours in close order, and aligning by number one of his set. All of the

sets (except the leading set) continue the trot until they have closed up to within eighteen inches of each other, and then take the walk.

ARTICLE V.

§ 28. To sling rifles, from carry arms, the command is :

1. SLING RIFLES.

At this command raise the piece with the right hand a little higher than the hip, inclining the barrel over the right shoulder, and in rear of the head; at the same time, with the left hand near the right shoulder, move the sling out from the barrel, thrust the head, right shoulder, and right arm through the opening, let the piece fall into its position, steady it with the right hand, and drop the hands by the side.

To unsling rifles, the command is :

1. UNSLING RIFLES.

At this command pass the right hand through the opening between the sling and piece near the right hip, bear the piece towards the front with the right arm, seize it with the right hand as in carry arms, and raise it a little above the right hip; at the same time, with the left hand, free the sling from the head and lower the piece to the position of carry arms.

§ 29. All of the movements described herein are supposed to be executed when the right is in front. It will be understood that they can all be executed when the left is in front upon the same principles by inverse means.

The men should always, after dismounting, leave their reins over the pommel of the saddle.

When more than two full companies are serving together, and their front in single rank would be unduly extended, all lines should be formed of companies in column of platoons at wheeling distance.

As far as possible, the composition of the different sets will remain unchanged; and every thing should be done which will promote the mutual dependence of the men of each set on each other.

They should act together as much as possible on all kinds of duty, as well in the fatigue duties of the camp or garrison as when on drill or in action.

All details should be made as much as practicable of sets of four rather than of individuals from different sets; and the chief of four should be always in command of his set, and invested with the authority of a non-commissioned officer over it. He must see that his men stand by each other in action, and whether in the charge, in pursuit, or in retreat, that they never separate. After the men and horses are familiar with the drill, all of its movements should be executed at the gallop.

The men should be made to saddle up with the greatest possible despatch whenever the "boot and saddle" sounds.

Always before using their guns the men must dismount.

In order to avoid fretting the horses, the men should be at least five yards from them before they commence firing.

When the men are in action on foot, they should be manoeuvred with due reference to the safety of their horses.

While the horses should be so far in rear of the men as to be out of the range of the enemy's fire, they should not be so far that their riders cannot reach them before the enemy, if an attempt should be made to capture or stampede them. Generally, in open ground, one hundred yards will be about the maximum distance. They should be nearer, if they can be safe from fire.

One of the non-commissioned officers of each section should be left in charge of its horses when the men dismount to fight, and he will be held responsible for their security and proper management. The other will dismount with his section, linking his horse to that of the nearest number one.

In this drill inversions of platoons, of sections, and of sets of four should be frequently practiced, but the individual men of the sets should never, either when mounted or on foot, be inverted in their sets.

When the company is about to be formed, two or three men will be detailed to accompany the Chief during the drill or skirmish.

Whenever the men are dismounted, at the command "mount" they will run to their horses without unnecessary noise, unlink, and mount.

When the "rally" is sounded, the skirmishers will close upon the indicated point at the gallop, and by the quickest means.

When charging in line with pistols or sabres the officers must ride in the rank; the captain on the right of the first platoon, the first lieutenant on the left of it, the second lieutenant on the right of the second platoon, and the brevet second lieutenant on its left. In case of the absence of any one of them, his place must not be supplied by the next in rank, except on the flank of the company.

All the commands should be habitually given with the trumpet; and, on drill, the trumpeters should always accompany the Chief. It is very important that, in this drill, the men should learn perfectly what the signals mean.



