A STUDY IN MEDICAL TACTICS.¹
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Looking through the literature dealing with Staff Rides, one has been impressed with its weakness as to details and analysis of the situations arising in the course of individual rides, also as to the manner of or reasons for coping with those situations. These defects are particularly noticeable in the case of the handling of the medical units. To an officer of our Corps, ordered to take part in a Staff Ride for the first time, the absence of any account of a Staff Ride, in which the details and reasons for action taken are clearly set out, is a serious want. Having recently returned from a typical Staff Ride with the 1st Division which presented situations of some complexity, it has occurred to me that, perhaps, a statement embodying one's own experiences and manner of dealing with the situations might be of use to others. In submitting this account, it is not assumed that the particular action taken, or the dispositions made, were necessarily correct; the statement is but an exposition of what seemed to the writer, as A.D.M.S., to be the best under the circumstances.

The "General Idea" was that for all Staff Rides held in 1913, under the direction of the Northern Army Commander, and for the Medical Manoeuvres in the 2nd Division. It postulated two countries, namely, Northland and Southland. The common frontier of the two countries being the River Indus. Northland includes the minor States of Swat and Buner, which are federated in the Union. Kohat, Bannu and Derajat are independent and neutral States. The capital of Northland is Kabul, which is assumed to be connected with Peshawar by a broad-gauge railway; further, the Ambeyla and Malandri passes from Buner are passable for wheeled artillery. The capital of Southland is Lahore. The armed forces of these two countries are taken to be organized and equipped in accordance with Indian War Establishments, and in peace distributed in the districts after which they are named.

The particular Staff Ride to which this article refers dealt with the early or first phase of the conflict between Northland and Southland. It covers the first movements of the Abbottabad

¹ Being an address given to medical officers and assistant surgeons at Peshawar on January 10, 1913.
Scale = 13.33 miles to the inch approximately

Fig. 1.
Division and the Abbottabad Cavalry Brigade, belonging to Southland, who invade Northland's territory on January 1, 1913, by crossing the Indus at Pihur (sketch, fig. 1). These troops are weakly supported by the Campbellpur Infantry Division and Cavalry Brigade now at Attock, also by a division at Fatehjang, and one at Rawalpindi. Northland's forces consist of an Infantry Brigade at Mardan, two Infantry Brigades and one Cavalry Brigade at Nowshera; these are mobilized. There are in addition, a division at Peshawar, a division at Swat, a division in Buner, and one in Kabul, all of these will be completely mobilized in about two weeks.

By 8 a.m. on the morning of January 2, all the Abbottabad Division was clear of the Indus. At that time the division was at Topi, and the Cavalry Brigade at Maneri. From this hour the Cavalry Brigade disappears from the narrative of the Staff Ride, except as a means by which information was received from our front. The history of its medical units did not come within the sphere of activity of the writer, who was A.D.M.S. of the Infantry Division. The Cavalry Brigade had its own Senior Medical Officer, and his dispositions were independent of the Divisional Assistant Director of Medical Services. At 8.30 a.m. the G.O.C. of the Abbottabad Division received the following instructions from General Headquarters, Southland: "According to reliable information at least one brigade of the enemy is at Mardan. The bulk of the Nowshera Cavalry Brigade appears to be still at Nowshera, and there appear to be no signs of a forward movement from Peshawar. No change in the location of our forces. The C. in C. intends to advance at daybreak to-morrow with the Campbellpur Cavalry Brigade, and the Campbellpur, Fatehjang and Rawalpindi Divisions towards Peshawar, with the object of engaging the enemy's forces in the Peshawar Valley before reinforcements arrive. Your task will be to secure these operations from interruptions on the part of the Swat and Buner Divisions. Reports from secret service agents in Swat and Buner state that these two divisions will be in a position to move in some strength earlier than was anticipated. Your advanced base will be Hund, and the I.G.C. has been directed to push up supplies to that place; these may be expected to commence arriving by the morning of January 4. General Headquarters remain for present at Attock."

The outcome of this was that the G.O.C. issued immediate orders for the advanced guard to be formed of one Squadron Guides Cavalry, one battery R.F.A., one company of Sappers and Miners,
the 1st Infantry Brigade and complementary ammunition, medical and supply columns. The D.A.A.G. inquired what medical units were to be detailed in Orders. The A.D.M.S. detailed Section A of No. 2 Field Ambulance and Sections A and B of No. 102 Field Ambulance. It may be stated here that the authorized medical units for the division were five, namely, two British and three Indian Field Ambulances. The numbers were Nos. 1 and 2 British with Nos. 101, 102 and 103 Indian. In the narrative which follows the qualification British or Indian will be omitted, partly to secure brevity, but mainly because practical experience indicated that with large numbers of casualties it is impracticable to discriminate between British and Indian; in other words, a field ambulance is a field ambulance no matter how labelled.

The question arises here on what principle did the A.D.M.S. select A of No. 2, with A and B of No. 102 to go with the advance guard. Why not have detailed some Sections of Nos. 1 and 101? A consideration of the situation, as outlined in the "General Idea," coupled with the information and orders from headquarters, indicated that the division was evidently being pushed into the enemy's country more or less unsupported, and that for the next three days we should not be able to feel ourselves fully linked up with an organized line of communication. It was necessary to be prepared to make a provisional line of communication with our Supply Park, then at Pihur, and ultimately to be able to link up with the true head of the Line of Communications which would be at Hund on January 4. On this assumption or appreciation of the situation, it was deemed desirable to earmark from the outset at least two field ambulances for evacuation work and if need be distribute them over a series of posts; at the same time utilizing their bearer companies as a basis for one or more ambulance columns. From an administrative point of view it was clearly better to keep to the same numbers in place of utilizing indiscriminately sections from ambulances with different numbers. For these reasons, therefore, No. 1 and No. 101 were at the outset held in reserve as essentially evacuating field ambulances. The former was a so-called British and the latter a so-called Indian Medical Unit. As events developed, this principle was adhered to, only Field Ambulances 1 and 101 were detailed for post and evacuation work. In the name of the G.O.C. the A.D.M.S. inquired by telegram of the I.G.C. on what date a clearing hospital might be expected to be open at Hund. The reply received was to the effect that such would be open on the evening of January 4 and be capable of receiving 200 sick and casualties.
The advanced guard was ordered to march at 9.30 a.m. January 2, and halt at Naudeh. It was timed to reach there at 5 p.m. The main body was ordered to leave Topi at 10.30 a.m. for Maneri; it consisted of Divisional Headquarters, two squadrons of Guides Cavalry, two Batteries of Field Artillery, two Mountain Batteries, a Sapper and Miner Company, the 2nd and 3rd Infantry Brigades, and Ammunition Column, the remainder of the field ambulances not detailed for the advance guard, that is all No. 1, Sections B, C, and D of No. 2, all No. 101, Sections C and D of 102 and all No. 103. There were also details comprising the supply and transport column. This main body reached Maneri at 3 p.m. While on the march, the A.D.M.S. counted and noted the suitability of all country carts met with either on the road or found in villages for supplementary sick transport. Twelve were noted on this day and, on the assumption that were it actual warfare only a fourth of these would be left, three were impressed and added to the columns to meet subsequent requirements.

At Maneri, the A.D.M.S. made a tour of all the bivouacs, received reports as to quality and quantity of water available and generally satisfied himself as to the arrangements. This was followed by a critical inspection of the village and adjacent buildings to determine how far local conditions would lend themselves to the organization and location of a post hospital. An excellent police thana was available, also a commodious civil officer’s rest house. These were noted and appropriated as suitable adjuncts for the formation of a post hospital to be organized with two sections of field ambulances as an administrative nucleus. These steps were necessary as it was obvious that Maneri would in the course of the next few days play an important part as a connecting link or post with the Lines of Communication, whose head would be Hund after January 4. Orders were then issued that Section D of No. 1 and Section D of 101 Field Ambulance would remain at Maneri, open and establish a post hospital capable with local impressments of accommodating 150 casualties and sick. Only the tent divisions of these two sections were to remain; their bearer divisions were ordered to advance with the column when it moved off next morning.

During the evening, the G.O.C. received information that the enemy were holding the Jaffir pass and the Gelo pass and were also in some strength in a position between Gharai and Shahbazgarhi. Orders were issued at once that the advanced guard, then at Naudeh and hereafter referred to as the 1st Brigade, should march at 6 a.m. on January 3 via Jalal and Gulaman and get in contact
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with the enemy holding the Jaffir position. The 2nd and 3rd Brigades or main body were to march to Naudeh at 7 a.m. January 3.

By 1.30 p.m., on January 3, the 2nd and 3rd Brigades with their associated units were at Naudeh. The G.O.C. received intelligence in the course of the afternoon that the 1st Brigade had come in contact with the enemy at Gulaman, a severe action had followed and that there were 207 wounded and 54 killed. The wounded were 65 British and 142 Indian; of the former 23 were serious, and of the latter 49 were serious cases. Some forty cases were classed as light. On being informed of these facts, the A.D.M.S. ordered the bearer company of No. 1 Field Ambulance to proceed at once to Jalal, halt there for the night and march at 5 a.m. and join the 1st Brigade column as soon as possible on the next morning. The A.D.M.S. next proceeded to make a critical inspection of the village and surroundings at Naudeh with a view to the formation and organization of a post ambulance. They were not so favourable as those at Maneri, there being only a comparatively small inspection bungalow but sufficient to aid materially the tent division of the field ambulances for the organization of shelter for from 150 to 200 casualties. The tent divisions of Sections A and B of both No. 1 and No. 101 Field Ambulance were accordingly ordered to open and, by making use of the P.W.D. bungalow, to organize and prepare for the reception of casualties. On the road and in the village 26 country carts had been noted as suitable for sick transport. Under war conditions only 5 were held as likely to be available. These with the three obtained on the previous day gave 8 country carts over and above the transport present with the bearer companies. Inquiries were made of the Transport Officer as to how many of his carts were proceeding back empty on the next day to refill at Maneri. He reported 22 carts leaving Gulaman on the following morning and 35 moving back from Naudeh. At the request of the A.D.M.S. orders were sent to Gulaman holding these 22 carts back until such time as the convoy of wounded could leave that post on the next day and placing them at the disposal of the S.M.O. of the 1st Brigade for evacuation of such sick and wounded as he could despatch on the following day. The A.D.M.S. wired to the S.M.O. 1st Brigade at 5 p.m. “No. 1 Bearer Company should report to you by 7 a.m. to-morrow. Stop. Evacuate as many casualties as you can to-morrow to Naudeh by No. 1 Bearer Company and 22 supply carts placed locally at your disposal. Stop. Evacuate remainder on following day. Report number and time of departure.”
Practically no further intelligence was received by the G.O.C. The only news that came in was that the Gharai-Shahbazgarhi positions were still held by the enemy. Orders issued that evening directed that the 3rd Brigade, supported by a squadron of cavalry, a field battery and a company of sappers and miners, should march at 5 a.m. to Gharai via Yar Husain. To accompany this force the A.D.M.S. detailed Section B of No. 2 Field Ambulance, Sections C and D of No. 102 Field Ambulance and the whole bearer company of No. 101 Field Ambulance. The tent divisions of Section C of No. 1 and No. 101 Field Ambulances were also ordered to accompany this force, but not to proceed farther than Yar Husain, where they were to remain until further orders, to act as a clearing hospital in the event of developments in front. These sections were timed to reach Yar Husain at noon, and the rest of the force to reach Gharai by 3 p.m. The 2nd remaining Brigade with the other troops of the original main body was ordered to march at 6 a.m. to Gelo, being timed to arrive there at 9 a.m. The medical units accompanying this force were the tent and bearer divisions of Sections C and D of No. 2 and the whole of No. 103 Field Ambulances.

As the situation clearly indicated one if not two probable actions on the morrow at Gelo and Shahbazgarhi, the A.D.M.S. issued the following order to the S.M.Os. of the 2nd and 3rd Brigades: “Clear your field ambulances of all sick. Transfer them this evening to the post ambulance at Naudeh. All field ambulances must march to-morrow morning empty of sick.” The result of this order was the transfer of 33 cases to the post ambulance. The S.M.O. at Naudeh was ordered to transfer these in the morning to Maneri, utilizing the empty transport carts leaving to refill at Maneri. This action left all the field ambulances with the brigades empty and also left the post ambulances at Naudeh empty to receive casualties evacuated from Gulaman. The A.D.M.S. also arranged for the despatch of the 8 empty country carts which had been impressed, to Gulaman with a convoy of supplies in 15 carts leaving for that place in the morning.

By 10 a.m. on January 4, the 2nd Brigade had arrived in front of the Gelo position, which was a small pass evidently strongly held. The G.O.C. gave orders for the attack. The A.D.M.S. satisfied himself that the location of the Sections C and D of No. 2 and the whole of No. 103 Field Ambulances were satisfactory and that they were open. Similarly, the disposition of collecting and dressing stations was arranged for. The attack developed slowly, and it was not till 4 p.m. that the position was carried and the pass secured.
The casualties reported were 43 killed and 101 wounded. Thirty-one of these were British and 70 Indian: of the former 11 were serious and 10 slight, of the latter 31 were serious and 15 slight. Owing to the difficulties of the ground, all of these 101 casualties could not be removed to the field ambulances until 7 p.m. The brigade bivouacked that night at Usai, all the casualties being taken over by No. 103 Field Ambulance. The two Sections C and D of No. 2 joined and bivouacked empty with the brigade at Usai, ready for any advance in the morning.

Events, during this day, had been occurring on our left, where the 3rd Brigade had come in contact with the enemy between Gharai and Shahbazgarhi, late in the afternoon. The action resulted in an evacuation of the latter place by the enemy, when the 3rd Brigade following up reached their bivouac at Bakhshali soon after dark. The casualties reported were 51 killed and 120 wounded, of these 55 were British and 64 Indian, 47 were said to be serious. All these casualties were reported to be in Section B of No. 2 and in Sections C and D of No. 102 Field Ambulances. These medical units were at Shahbazgarhi at 7 p.m. The brigade had gone on to its bivouac accompanied only by its regimental medical personnel and equipment, and the bearer divisions of Section B of No. 2 and of Sections C and D of No. 102 Field Ambulances. The A.D.M.S. visited and looked into the situation at Shahbazgarhi that evening; after inspection of the situation he wired the following order to the S.M.O. at Yar Husain: “Section C of No. 1 and 101 Field Ambulances to march at 4 a.m. to Shahbazgarhi and relieve Section B of No. 2 and the two sections of No. 102 by clearing. Stop. Report when relief completed.” Another telegram was dispatched by A.D.M.S. in the name of G.O.C. to the I.G.C. at Hund to this effect: “Please relieve Maneri on 6th of casualties, also on following days.” This was repeated to S.M.O. Maneri and supplemented by another telegram from the A.D.M.S. to the same officer at Maneri to the following effect: “Advise I.G.C. at Hund of your daily clearing requirements.” This was repeated to the I.G.C. for his information.

In the meantime a telegram had been received from S.M.O. 1st Brigade to this effect: “85 casualties left for Naudeh at 10 a.m. of 4th. Stop. Remainder will be evacuated to-morrow by bearer divisions of A and B 102 and supplementary transport.” This information was confirmed by the following telegram from S.M.O. at Naudeh to the A.D.M.S. Divisional Headquarters then at Usai: “85 casualties arrived from Gulaman. Stop. Similar number
expected to-morrow. Stop. Will evacuate first convoy to Maneri on 5th.”

The situation, therefore, on the evening of January 4 was sufficiently serious to one acting as the A.D.M.S. of the division. Naudeh had 85 casualties from the 1st Brigade and would unload on Maneri on the morrow, also receiving the remainder of casualties from that brigade on the same day, probably not less than 90, even allowing that some had probably succumbed and some were sufficiently slight to be retained for treatment regimentally or in the field ambulance sections with the brigade. No. 103 Field Ambulance was practically full with 101 cases at Gelo and remained there. At Shahbazgarhi there were 120 casualties, which practically

immobilized B Section of No. 2 and C and D of 102, until they could be cleared by the arrivals of Sections C of 1 and 101 from Yar Husain. The relief could hardly be expected to be carried out before 8 or 9 a.m. on the morrow. In the meantime, the 2nd and 3rd Brigades had joined and were bivouacking on the line Usai-Bakhshali. Orders were out for a further advance on the following morning at 6 a.m. towards Chagulai in pursuit of the enemy, who were reported to be concentrating and receiving reinforcements from Buner at some point between Chagulai and Rustam. These movements all indicated the likelihood of further casualties next day. The only redeeming feature was the absence of any news that the 1st Brigade had been further engaged or produced any more casualties.
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At a conference held on the evening of January 4, under the Director of the Staff Ride, the whole situation was discussed in all its bearings. As A.D.M.S., the writer was called upon to express his appreciation of the situation, to explain the movements and disposition of all medical units on January 2, 3, and 4, and to outline his proposals. As explanatory of the movements and disposition of the medical units, diagrams, made up on the evening of each day, were handed in. Fig. 2 is the explanation of the situation of all the medical units on the evening of January 4. The appreciation of the situation was as stated in the preceding paragraph. As regards proposals for action, it was explained that two courses were possible: Either evacuate the casualties through Mardan and Naudeh, or only through the latter place. The former course would be possible only provided that the advance of the other divisions on Nowshera had been sufficiently successful to necessitate an evacuation by the enemy of Mardan. To this, the Director stated that Mardan could not be considered as yet unoccupied by the enemy, though certainly but weakly held. This decision, of course, ruled out any immediate chance of evacuating casualties in that direction. There remained then only to evacuate to Hund via Maneri, and the rapidity with which this could be done depended on the receiving capacity of Naudeh and Maneri; this was known to be at the outside 200 per diem at the one place and with difficulty 150 at the other. Therefore, any daily evacuation was limited to these numbers, if undue congestion at Maneri was to be avoided. The A.D.M.S., therefore, proposed only to evacuate 80 or 90 of the most pressing cases in the morning from Shahbazgarhi and Gelo into Naudeh on the 5th, which movement would entail this latter post receiving that day some 220 cases, namely, some 90 from Gulaman and 130 from Gelo and Shahbazgarhi. Inquiries made of the Transport Officer showed that 15 carts were available at the latter place returning empty.

To carry out these proposals, the A.D.M.S. issued the following order to the S.M.O. at Shahbazgarhi: "On arrival of Sections C of Nos. 1 and 101 Field Ambulances from Yar Hussain, transfer all cases to them from C and D of No. 102. These cleared sections of No. 102 must proceed at once via Usai to rejoin the division at Chagulai. Sections C of Nos. 1 and 101 will stand fast at Shahbazgarhi until further orders, holding all cases from C and D of No. 102. The bearer company of No. 101 Field Ambulance should clear all cases from Section B of No. 2 Field Ambulance and with the aid of such empty transport carts necessary and available..."
transfer 80 of the cases now in Shahbazgarhi to Naudeh. Report numbers evacuated and remaining to both divisional head­quarters and to Naudeh. On being cleared by No. 101 bearer company, Section B of No. 2 Field Ambulance must proceed at once via Usai to rejoin the division at Chagulai.” This was dispatched by mounted orderly at 8 p.m., and received by 9.15 p.m.

At the same time, the following order was dispatched by A.D.M.S. to the S.M.O. at Gelo: “No. 103 Field Ambulance will stand fast at Gelo until further orders. By your bearer company send 50 cases to Naudeh. The company to return to Gelo same day. Report numbers remaining at Gelo after this movement.” This order was despatched by mounted infantry and acknowledged by 10 p.m.

Early on the morning of January 5, the 2nd and 3rd Brigades with divisional headquarters advanced on Chagulai; with them were Sections C and D of No. 2 Field Ambulance only and their bearer divisions. Section B of No. 2 and Sections C and D of No. 102 Field Ambulance were not expected to join the division until 2 p.m. The 1st Brigade was reported as having occupied the Jaffir Pass on its evacuation by the enemy, and was now covering the Jaffir-Machai line in its advance to make a junction with the two other brigades. It reported no further casualties. At 11 a.m. the enemy was found to be holding a strong position near Hamzakot in front of Rustam, evidently having been much reinforced from Buner via the Ambeyla and Malandri Passes. Orders were issued for all three brigades to attack, communication having been established with the 1st Brigade. The medical units with that brigade were Section A of No. 2 and two tent divisions only of Sections A and B of No. 102 Field Ambulance. The A.D.M.S. having satisfied himself as to the best location and opening out of the Field Ambulance Tent Divisions, and the suitable placing of collecting and dressing stations, awaited developments.

At 2 p.m. the Director intimated that the attack had failed, and that the division must fall back and take up an entrenched position covering the Jaffir-Machai-Chagulai line. As the result of this morning’s engagement, 44 were reported killed and 117 wounded, namely, 38 British and 79 Indian troops. A conference was held, and the G.O.C. directed to prepare a scheme for falling back and preparing an entrenched position. To the A.D.M.S. the task was given of showing how the existing casualties could be evacuated, assuming no further change in position of the division was made during the next thirty-six hours.
The A.D.M.S. made the following appreciation of the situation. There were 117 casualties and 21 sick in the field ambulances near Chagulai. Section B of No. 2 and Sections C and D of No. 102 Field Ambulances had joined the division at 3 p.m. All sick and wounded had been evacuated from Gulaman to the number of 179 out of the original 207 reported, 15 having died and 17 being sufficiently slight to return to duty, the others transferred being casual sick. At Gelo, the Officer Commanding No. 103 Field Ambulance reported 64 sick and wounded to be remaining. The S.M.O. at Shahbazgarhi reported 82 cases as sent to Naudeh by No. 101 Bearer Company and other transport, and that 55 cases were still remaining there in the tent divisions of Section C of No. 1 and No. 101 Field Ambulances. At Naudeh there would be in the evening 226 cases, namely, 82 from Shahbazgarhi, 50 from Gelo, and 94 from Gulaman. At Maneri there would be 85 cases received during the day from Naudeh. These would be evacuated into Hund next morning. The situation of medical units on the evening of January 5 is shown in fig. 3.

To meet the situation, the A.D.M.S. asked the Transport Officer how many of his empty carts would be available at Shahbazgarhi, at Gelo, and with the division at 7 a.m. the following morning. The reply received was 12 carts at Shahbazgarhi, none at Gelo, but 25 moving down to refill from the Brigades. The A.D.M.S. then asked whether these carts from the brigades would move via Gulaman or via Shahbazgarhi. The reply was by the latter route as the road was better. He therefore issued the following order to the Officer Commanding No. 103 Field Ambulance at Gelo: "By your bearer company transfer 50 cases from Gelo to Naudeh to-morrow morning. Report number evacuated to divisional
headquarters and to Naudeh. Be prepared to receive 80 fresh cases to-morrow.” This was dispatched by field telegraph. To the S.M.O. at Shahbazgarhi: “Twelve transport carts are at disposal of your post; 15 others will be at your disposal from headquarters by 9 a.m. to-morrow morning. By carts evacuate all your cases to Naudeh to-morrow. Be prepared to receive 60 cases to-morrow from the brigades. Report departure of cases to divisional headquarters and to Naudeh.” This was dispatched by field wire. To the S.M.O. of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Brigades the following order was given: “Two ambulance columns will leave at 7 a.m., January 6, for Shahbazgarhi and Gelo. No. 1 column for Shahbazgarhi will consist of the bearer divisions of Sections A and B of No. 2 Field Ambulance, and 15 carts available from the Supply Column. No. 2 Column for Gelo will consist of the bearer divisions of Sections C and D of No. 2 and Sections C and D of No. 102 Field Ambulances, and 10 carts available from the supply column. The S.M.O. of 1st Brigade will detail a Major, R.A.M.C., and a Captain, I.M.S., together with an Assistant Surgeon and Sub-Assistant Surgeon for command and duty with No. 1 Column. The S.M.O. of 2nd Brigade will detail a Major, I.M.S., and a Captain, R.A.M.C., an Assistant Surgeon and Sub-Assistant Surgeon for command and duty with No. 2 Column. Officers detailed for respective commands of these ambulance columns will arrange for point of assembly and collection of transport and loading up of their columns in consultation with S.M.Os. of brigades. Each S.M.O. of a brigade to see that his field ambulances are cleared of all sick and wounded. Only slight cases likely to recover in a few days are to be held back. S.M.Os. of brigades will report to A.D.M.S. numbers evacuated from and numbers remaining in their field ambulances. The Officer Commanding No. 1 Ambulance Column will transfer his casualties to the S.M.O. at Shahbazgarhi, and then return with his medical personnel and bearer division, less supply carts, to divisional headquarters. The Officer Commanding No. 2 Ambulance Column will transfer his casualties to the Officer Commanding No. 103 Field Ambulance at Gelo, and then return with his medical personnel and bearer division, less supply carts, to divisional headquarters.” A copy of this order was repeated to Gelo and Shahbazgarhi. To the S.M.O. at Naudeh the following order was telegraphed: “No. 1 Bearer Company will arrive empty from Maneri on 6th, use it with supplementary empty supply carts to evacuate at least 130 cases to Maneri on 7th. No. 103 Bearer Company will arrive from Gelo and Shahbazgarhi
on 6th. Order it to return that evening to Shahbazgarhi for further evacuation of cases on 7th. The bearer division of Sections A and B of No. 102 Field Ambulance will arrive empty from Maneri on 7th. It should proceed in early morning of 8th to Gelo, and be placed at disposal of Commanding Officer No. 103 Field Ambulance for return that day to Naudeh with such casualties as he may be able to evacuate that day; assuming no other orders for its movements are issued subsequently."

These arrangements would ensure the complete clearing of all advanced field ambulances of their sick and casualties by the morning of January 6. Their bearer divisions, except those of A and B of No. 102, would have rejoined them by the evening of the 6th, as the distances were only eight and seven miles each way.

The situation, therefore, on evening of January 6, would be as follows: field ambulances with the divisional headquarters practically empty. At Shahbazgarhi some 60 cases. At Gelo some 100 cases. At Naudeh, assuming that 130 cases had been sent on to Maneri on 6th, there would be 181 cases: while Maneri would be holding 130 cases. On 7th, Sections C of No. 1 and No. 101 Field Ambulances could and would be cleared, enabling them either to fall back on Gelo or Naudeh and relieve the congestion there, or be moved elsewhere if the military situation changed.

The above solution of the medical problem was submitted as meeting the circumstances. It is not held to be ideal or, perhaps, incapable of improvement. One weakness is in the fact that Sections A and B of No. 102 Field Ambulance, which originally accompanied the 1st Brigade, are without their bearer divisions, and certainly must remain so until the 8th. It was difficult to avoid this, as the numbers of casualties produced in the three days' fighting were so heavy, and the obvious need to clear the ambulances at the front as much and as quickly as possible necessitated their utilization as part of the evacuating ambulance column. The situations occurring on this Staff Ride are neither unreasonable nor improbable. They clearly show that with a division operating by itself and loaded with some 600 casualties within three days at least half of the medical units allowed to a division will need to be employed as links in the chain of the line of evacuation. In this particular case, only two field ambulances with their bearer companies were ear-marked originally for this duty. As events turned out, it will be seen that the tent divisions of these field ambulances, namely, those of No. 1, No. 101 and No. 103, have been utilized in the later phases for clearing work, and that three and a half bearer
companies, or those of No. 1, No. 101, No. 103, and half of No. 102, have had to be employed as ambulance columns.

A further doubt presents itself as to the solution made. It is whether both ambulance columns detailed to proceed on January 6 from the brigades to Gelo and Shahbazgarhi should have been ordered to rejoin that evening at divisional headquarters. In the absence of any instructions that a retirement was contemplated, it is held that such action was right, particularly as an advance was not out of the question. On the other hand, had there been any indication of a retirement on January 7, then the retention of one ambulance column at either Gelo or Shahbazgarhi would have been a necessity.

In submitting these details and analysis of this particular Staff Ride, one is fully conscious of its imperfections. Still, as an attempt to give a sequential narrative, with details, appreciations and copies of orders issued, it may be of help to others as a guide what to do or what not to do, should they find themselves in similar circumstances. One thing must never be omitted. That is the need to keep simple but frequent notes of the position and condition of the various medical units under control. These must be made up accurately each evening. What form they take is best left to the individual. The system of graphics explained by Colonel Macpherson is quite workable and effective. If the movements are complex, one's experience suggests their being drawn on a large scale. Personally, one has found a series of skeletal maps, such as shown in figs. 2 and 3, quite enough and giving a better mental picture of the situation. But, as already said, these are details as to method about which each man should think for himself. The essential thing is to be alive to the facts through every hour of the day, and be able to answer correctly any question arising as to the position and condition of each medical unit at any time. An A.D.M.S. able to do this attracts the confidence and respect of his G.O.C. and is, himself, free from all doubt or worry as to what to do, should unforeseen circumstances arise. As a matter of fact, assuming that the A.D.M.S. is a live A.D.M.S., there should be few contingencies which he has not foreseen.