SCHEME FOR AN EXAMINATION OF MAJORS, ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS, FOR PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL, PART H, HELD IN THE ALDERSHOT COMMAND, FEBRUARY, 1923.

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GENERAL IDEA.

SOUTHLAND is an overseas power, which has invaded England. Its Expeditionary Force landed at Portsmouth and Southampton between February 1 and 7, and advanced towards London, opposed by a hastily mobilized English Force.

The standard of training and the organization of the Southland and English Forces are the same as those prevailing in the British Regular Army to-day.

SPECIAL IDEA—SOUTHLAND—AND NARRATIVE.

Reference—One-inch Aldershot map.

(1) The Southland Expeditionary Force consists of: One corps of three divisions, one cavalry brigade, one infantry brigade for lines of communication.

(2) After the disembarkation of the troops had been completed, Southampton was evacuated and the base concentrated at Portsmouth and Gosport.

(3) During the early part of the advance intense hostility was displayed by the inhabitants who had not hesitated to kill any stragglers and wounded who fell into their hands. Small mobile columns of troops in lorries and armoured cars were organized for the protection of the main roads behind the army.

(4) On February 10 and 11, a hard fight took place on the line Haslemere—Alton, resulting in the withdrawal of the English forces during the evening of the 11th. Both sides had suffered severely, the 1st and 2nd Divisions having sustained about 2,000 casualties apiece, and the Cavalry Brigade 200. About 1,000 enemy wounded fell into the hands of the Southland forces.

(5) At 20.00 hours on the 11th the situation of the Southland Corps was as follows:—

1st Division—In area Hindhead, Headley, Longmoor Camp, Linchmere.
2nd Division—In area Bordon, Alton, Faringdon, Greatham.
Cavalry Brigade—On high ground north-west of Alton.
3rd Division—East Tisted, Medstead, Ripley, West Meon.
The 3rd Division was fresh. The remainder were in touch with the
enemy and the men were very tired.
(6) At 20.00 hours on the 11th orders were issued from Corps head­
quar ters of which the following is a précis:
(a) Enemy appears to be falling back in a north-easterly
direction.
(b) The 1st and 3rd Divisions and Cavalry Brigade will con­
tinue the advance at 08.00 to-morrow—passing through the present
outpost line at that hour. The 3rd Division will pass through the
2nd Division which will come into Corps Reserve.
(c) The 1st Division will secure the line of the Hog’s Back from
Farnham (exclusive) eastwards.
The 3rd Division will secure Farnham, Aldershot and the high
ground about Caesar’s Camp and Hungry Hill.
The Cavalry Brigade will cover the left of the 3rd Division.
The 2nd Division will be prepared to move from its present
area toward Farnham and Crondall by 12.00 hours.
(d) Rail heads for February 12 will be as under:
   1st Division—Petersfield.
   Remainder—West Meon.

For the purpose of this scheme the strength of each division may be
taken as 682 officers and 15,850 other ranks; and a cavalry brigade as
having a strength of 118 officers and 2,722 other ranks, with one cavalry
field ambulance consisting of a headquarters with an establishment of
3 officers and 26 other ranks, and one company of 4 officers and 66 other
ranks. With the cavalry field ambulance are 6 light motor ambulance
cars, 4 heavy motor ambulance cars and 6 light horsed ambulances.
It is further to be noticed that each field ambulance consists of a
headquarters with a strength of 4 officers and 51 other ranks, and two
companies each with 3 officers and 50 other ranks. Each field ambulance
has 6 light motor ambulance cars, 2 heavy motor ambulance cars and
4 heavy horsed ambulance wagons.
A motor ambulance convoy may be considered to consist of three
sections, each with twenty-five motor ambulance cars.
A casualty clearing station accommodates 50 patients in beds and 150
on stretchers, and has an establishment of 8 officers and 76 other ranks.
General hospitals are of two sizes—one to accommodate 600 patients
including 60 officers, and the other to accommodate 1,200 patients including
120 officers.
The establishment of the former is 19 officers, 135 other ranks; and of
the latter, 31 officers and 215 other ranks.
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REQUIRED FROM EACH OFFICER BY FEBRUARY 7, 1923.

(1) A general statement of the medical organization on the lines of communication, giving assumed positions for the various medical units.

(2) A medical appreciation of the situation by D.D.M.S., Corps Headquarters (D.D.M.S. of the Force), on the evening of February 11, after receipt of Corps Orders for operations on the 12th.

Headquarters, Aldershot Command.

January 30, 1923.

SOUTHLAND FORCE.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE MEDICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION, GIVING ASSUMED POSITIONS FOR THE VARIOUS MEDICAL UNITS.

General headquarters at Portsmouth with advanced general headquarters at Petersfield.


General Hospitals.—Two general hospitals of 1,200 beds each, and two of 600 beds each, are established at Portsmouth in existing buildings, and two general hospitals of 1,200 beds and one of 600 beds each, will be opened in existing buildings at Gosport. Total hospital accommodation at base 6,600, or slightly less than 10 per cent of total force. Should the necessity arise each of these units could be expanded at fairly short notice. No account has been taken of beds in casualty clearing stations, or convalescent depots.

Convalescent Depots.—One to accommodate 1,000 men at Portsmouth, and one to accommodate 1,000 men at Gosport; each could be expanded to 2,000.

Medical Stores.—One base depot medical stores at Portsmouth; one advanced depot at Petersfield and one at West Meon.

Ambulance Trains.—Three ambulance trains of 300 beds each, based on Portsmouth.

Motor Ambulance Convoys.—Two of three sections each, twenty-five cars in each section. One M.A.C. will be required for work within the Corps, of which one section of twenty-five cars would be based on Petersfield and the remaining two sections on West Meon. It would be essential to have the second M.A.C. at the base, one section of which would be allotted to Gosport for work at that base, the remaining two sections being at Portsmouth: one of which would be available for assisting evacuation from railheads.

Motor Hygiene and Pathological Laboratories.—One of each posted at the base.
Sanitary Sections.—One sanitary section at the base with a sanitary squad at each railhead. These are in addition to the Sanitary sections employed in divisional areas.

Hospital Ships.—Three hospital ships of 700 beds should be available at Portsmouth.

Casualty Clearing Stations.—Two at West Meon, one at Petersfield; all open on evening of February 10.

Preliminary Remarks on the Appreciation.

After the receipt of Corps Orders issued at 20.00 hours on the evening of February 11, the D.D.M.S. was asked for a medical appreciation for the next day's fight. He was required to appreciate a "situation" occurring during the course of ordinary military operations, with the object of informing the Commander—to what extent—:

(1) The heavy casualties sustained that day would immobilize the field medical units, and so militate against an advance on the morrow.

(2) The general medical organization of the Force was affected by the great influx of wounded.

The D.D.M.S. had an interview with the Commander of the Force in the afternoon of February 11 at 15.00 hours, and informed him that the collection and evacuation of wounded was proceeding satisfactorily, though there were still large numbers to be dealt with.

The Commander then asked for an appreciation of the medical situation by 22.00 hours that evening; in the meantime Corps Orders were issued for the expected engagement on the following day.

Appreciation of the Medical Situation on the Evening of February 11.

From the Corps Orders received at 20.10 hours to-day it is intended that the advance will be continued to-morrow morning.

The casualties of yesterday—10th—were only 500; of these, about 100 were killed or died on the battlefield, and were collected and buried there; and 50 died in the main dressing stations of the 1st and 2nd Divisions.

The number remaining, viz., 350, were with the exception of fifteen unable to be moved at the time, evacuated by No. 1 M.A.C. and the lorries detailed for walking wounded, to the casualty clearing stations at West Meon and Petersfield, and thence transferred by ambulance trains to the general hospitals at Portsmouth and Gosport.

The casualties reported to-day, according to returns received, number 3,700. About 700 of these perished on the battlefield, and the two companies of combatant troops detailed by the general officer commanding 3rd Division—in reserve—have been engaged since 18.00 hours in burying the dead and collecting the wounded. Eighty prisoners of war captured before noon were also employed till 17.00 hours as stretcher bearers.
The bearer companies of the 7th, 8th and 9th Field Ambulances, held in reserve, have been assisting the field ambulance bearers of the 1st and 2nd Divisions since 14.00 hours, and all available motor ambulance cars of the three divisions have been employed in the evacuation of wounded from the advanced to the main dressing stations.

Of the 3,000 (approximately) wounded that require collection and evacuation to the casualty clearing stations, 600 have been dealt with by lorries clearing from the Divisional W.W.C.S.'s direct to Nos. 1, 2 and 3 casualty clearing stations at West Meon and Petersfield, and dispatched from there by rail in passenger coaches to the base.

The chief difficulty has been in dealing with the remaining 600 "lying" and 1,200 sitting cases, but the evacuation from the advanced dressing stations to the main dressing stations has been facilitated by the provision of an ample transport service, viz., 100 motor ambulance cars, 40 ambulance wagons, and 25 lorries which were at the disposal of the two A.D.'s M.S. and the Senior Medical Officer of the Cavalry Brigade.

The evacuation, from the main dressing stations to the casualty clearing stations, was carried out by the 100 motor ambulance cars and the twenty-five lorries at my disposal, which included No. 1. M.A.C. and one section of No. 2 M.A.C. brought up from the lines of communication. This evacuation has been steadily maintained throughout the day and evening.

The last reports from A.D.'s M.S. of Divisions, received at 20.30 hours, state that all field ambulances are clear of both wounded and gassed cases, with the exception of two mixed groups of thirty unable to be moved. It is proposed to leave a medical officer with sufficient R.A.M.C. personnel and surgical material to deal with each of these. They will remain until the patients are considered fit for transportation to the casualty clearing stations.

The field ambulances are now closing and will be ready to move by 06.00 hours to-morrow.

The three ambulance trains, two at West Meon and one at Petersfield, have been regularly employed in the conveyance of wounded from the casualty clearing stations to the base hospitals at Portsmouth and Gosport. It is therefore to be expected, from reports received from railheads, that the casualty clearing stations will be practically clear of casualties at or soon after midnight 11-12th.

The ordinary daily sick, viz., 3 per 1,000 of the Force, have been sent down the line with the battlefield casualties. It was possible to evacuate most of these on the evening of the 10th by issuing instructions for regimental sick parades to take place soon after the fighting was over on that day. This arrangement reduced the numbers reporting sick on the morning of the 11th, easing thereby the evacuation situation for that day.

Owing to the necessity for a rapid transfer of all casualties in the
casualty clearing stations to the base, the surgical teams sent up from the general hospitals at Portsmouth and Gosport confined their work to the performance of emergency operations.

The 4,000 enemy wounded in our hands have been disposed of as follows: After receiving surgical attention and food, those seriously wounded have been handed over to the local medical authorities for disposal. Those slightly wounded have been placed in custody with ordinary prisoners of war, and arrangements made for their daily attention by the medical officers in charge of Prisoners of War Detention Camps.

The A.D.'s M.S. have been instructed to replenish their field ambulance stocks of medical and surgical requirements, including anti-tetanic sera, from the advanced depot of medical stores at West Meon. This depot is requisitioning the base depot of medical stores at Portsmouth in order to meet all further demands.

The divisional medical units are now ready to move, and have their stocks of clothing blankets and stretchers renewed.

It now remains to consider any further medical arrangements that may be necessary, and what additional hospital accommodation is required at the base, to meet the casualties of the morrow.

The motor ambulance cars already mentioned—100—and the lorries—50, besides 15 motor 'buses, are at my disposal, and will be utilized as required.

The casualty clearing stations will be clear soon after midnight, and arrangements have been made with the R.T.O. at West Meon to have the three ambulance trains available by 12.00 hours on the 12th.

The hospital ships have begun to function, and on February 10 transported 1,400 casualties from the base hospitals at Portsmouth to the Home Country.

In addition to the general hospitals already open, which provide a bed accommodation for 3,600 patients, orders have been issued to have ready the two remaining 1,200 bedded hospitals. This augmentation will meet all likely requirements for the present, and there yet remains one general hospital of 600 beds at my disposal.

The R.A.M.C. casualties, officers and men, have all been made up by reinforcements from the base.

**Conclusions.**

I am, therefore, able to report that:

1. The field ambulances and casualty clearing stations are practically clear of sick and wounded.
2. The motor ambulance (M.A.C.) and lorry transport at my disposal should suffice for the evacuation of all probable casualties.
3. The ambulance trains will be ready at railheads.
4. The medical and surgical requirements of regimental units, field ambulances and casualty clearing stations are satisfied.
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(5) There is ample bed accommodation provided in the general hospitals at the base to meet casualties.

(6) The hospital ships are now making regular cross-channel trips with sick and wounded.

(7) The moral of sick and wounded admitted to field medical units has been good.

Headquarters, Southlands Force.
21.00 hours, February 11, 1923.

**Situation No 1.**

(1) The 3rd Division moved off at 08.00 hours through the outposts of the 2nd Division as follows: 7th Brigade group by the Bordon—Farnham Road; 8th Brigade group by the Alton—Farnham Road (these two brigades finding their own advanced guard); 9th Brigade group in Divisional Reserve, and following the 8th Brigade group; divisional headquarters were to be established in turn at East Worldham and Binsted; the Cavalry Brigade moved on Odiham.

(2) At first no resistance was encountered until the line Pt. 374 (Alice Holtwood)—Lower Froyle was reached, when enemy covering troops were met. The resistance gradually stiffened until the advanced guards were at 12.00 hours definitely brought to a standstill on the line Wrecclesham to Roman entrenchment (1 ½ miles S.S.E. of Crondall).

(3) The Divisional Commander ordered a concerted attack by the 7th and 8th Brigades to take place at 14.00 hours with a view to capturing the high ground, Hungry Hill—Beacon Hill; while the 1st Division secured the western end of the Hog’s Back.

The 1st Cavalry Brigade was instructed to operate through Crondall towards Aunts Pool Hill.

The 7th Brigade group had by 12.00 hours suffered some 200 casualties, and the 8th Brigade group fifty.

The Cavalry Brigade (which was placed for medical purposes under 3rd Division) had reported eighty casualties, mostly in the neighbourhood of Long Sutton.

Required:—

(1) Assumed positions of the medical units of 3rd Division and Cavalry Brigade at 12.00 hours.

(2) Orders or instructions given to these units by you as A.D.M.S., 3rd Division.

A G.O.C.’s Conference was held at Corps headquarters, Petersfield, at 16.00 hours on February 11. It was then stated that the enemy was falling back in a north-easterly direction, and was not expected to be met in strength before the forenoon of the following day—12th.

The proposed Corps medical arrangements for the 12th were detailed.
by the D.D.M.S. and discussed, and it was arranged that "Q" should place at his disposal thirty lorries obtained from the reserve mechanical transport companies, and that they should be "fitted" for walking wounded cases.

The D.D.M.S. held a conference of A.D's.M.S. of divisions and the Officer Commanding Cavalry Field Ambulance at Petersfield at 18.00 hours, February 11. The general situation and medical arrangements for the 12th were discussed, and it was decided that the A.D.M.S. 3rd Division should establish a divisional M.D.S. and W.W.C.S. at Binsted by 09.00 hours on that day for the reception of all casualties of the division, plus those of the Cavalry Brigade. The D.D.M.S. stated that he would issue instructions for twenty-five cars from No. 1 M.A.C. and ten lorries for W.W. to report to A.D.M.S. at 3rd Divisional headquarters by 08.00 hours on 12th for evacuation of casualties to casualty clearing stations at West Meon. The cars and lorries to be returned to convoy headquarters on completion of duty.

At 20.50 hours on February 11 the A.D.M.S. 3rd Division was present at his G.O.C.'s Conference at West Meon. The 3rd Division operation orders were issued at 22.00 hours on February 11 and contained the following:—

(8) The Divisional M.D.S. and W.W.C.S. will be established at Binsted by 09.00 hours to-morrow.

The A.D.M.S. 3rd Division held a Conference of Field Ambulance Commanders and Officer Commanding Cavalry Field Ambulance at 21.50 hours February 11, after General Officers' Commanding Conference at West Meon, and the following orders were issued:—

SECRET. Copy No., FEBRUARY 11, 1923.

3RD DIVISION ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS ORDERS, No. 2.

Reference O.S. one-inch map; Aldershot Command.

(1) Enemy is falling back in a north-easterly direction.

(2) 1st and 3rd Divisions and Cavalry Brigade will advance at 08.00 hours to-morrow.

(3) The Division will secure the line Farnham—Aldershot and the high ground about Caesar's Camp—Hungry Hill.

(4) The Divisional M.D.S. and W.W.C.S. will be opened by No. 9 Field Ambulance at Binsted, for the reception of all casualties of the Division and Cavalry Brigade.

(5) Twenty-five cars from No. 1 M.A.C. and ten lorries for W.W. have been placed at the disposal of A.D.M.S. to convey cases from Binsted to casualty clearing station at West Meon. Cars and lorries to return to convoy headquarters on completion of duty.

(6) No. 7 Field Ambulance will conform to the movements of 7th Brigade.
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(7) No. 8 Field Ambulance will conform to the movements of 8th Brigade.
(8) Cavalry Field Ambulance will follow Cavalry Brigade.
(9) Reports to Divisional headquarters at Wyck after 10.00 hours.
(10) Acknowledge.

Despatched by S.D.R. at 22.30 hours.

Copies to:

- 7th F.A. ... No. 1.
- 8th F.A. ... No. 2.
- 9th F.A. ... No. 3.
- Cav. F.A. ... No. 4.

For information:

- "A" and "Q" ... No. 8.
- "G" ... No. 9.
- A.P.M. ... No. 10.
- A.D.M.S. 1st Div. ... No. 11.
- D.D.M.S. Corps ... No. 12.
- File and War Diary Nos. 13 and 14.

(To be continued.)