A COMMAND STAFF EXERCISE.

By MAJOR W. EGAN, D.S.O.
Royal Army Medical Corps.

(Continued from p. 363.)

Supplies for Consumption, June 11.
1st Division with units.
2nd Division in train lorries en route from S.R.P. to troops (owing to darkness, bad roads and upset lorries).
Corps Troops with units.
1st D.A.C. (Full). Parkend.
2nd D.A.C. (Full). Pitcox Smithy.
1st Division M.T. Company } Ammunition Section } Cockburnspath.
2nd Division M.T. Company } M.A., H.T. Company
1st Reserve M.T. Company 1 Advanced M.T. Vehicle Reception Depot parked on Dunbar—Cockburnspath Road.
No. 1 Auxiliary H.T. Company } Doon.
Headquarters 2nd Division Train } Baggage Section of No. 1 Company, 2nd Division Train. Head at Belton House.
No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station. Open at Grantshouse.
No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station. In process of erection at Cockburnspath.
1st M.A.C. Grantshouse empty, having evacuated wounded to C.C.S 7th Field Ambulance. Grantshouse.
No. 1 V.E.S. Innerwick.
Note.—With reference to the whole Front units, Administrative and otherwise not mentioned above may be located as convenient.

D.D.M.S.
D.T.
From 1st Corps "A."
A.5. 11.6.24.

D.D.M.S. will move No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station to Dunbar by rail. D.T. will arrange transport. No. 1 M.A.C., 7 Field Ambulance, 3 Sanitary Section to Dunbar by road. AAA D.T. will arrange for an Ambulance Train to be sent to Dunbar AAA Moves take place forthwith.
Addressed to D.D.M.S., D.T.
Copy to "G." Time of origin 12.30 hours.
Commanding 1st Casualty Clearing Station.
From Medical 1st Corps.
M.5. June 11.
Close and prepare to move by rail to Dunbar and open there AAA D.T. arranging transport AAA Ambulance train will evacuate from Dunbar to-day AAA Advanced Depot Medical Stores moves to Dunbar with you. Time of origin 11.30 hours.

Commanding 1st M.A.C.
From Medical 1st Corps.
M.6. 11.6.24.
Move to Dunbar forthwith AAA Report arrival and location AAA M.T. of 7th Field Ambulance will move with you. Time of origin 11.35 hours.

Commanding 3rd Sanitary Section.
From Medical 1st Corps.
M.7. 11.6.24.
Proceed to Dunbar forthwith. Time of origin 11.36 hours.

Commanding 7th Field Ambulance.
From Medical 1st Corps.
M.8. 11.6.24.
Proceed by road forthwith to Dunbar AAA Your M.T. to move with M.A.C. Time of origin 11.37 hours.

Medical 1st Division.
Medical 2nd Division.
Medical Cavalry Brigade.
From Medical 1st Corps.
M.9. 11.6.24.
Report present location main dressing stations, number of casualties and transport classifications AAA M.A.C. cars will evacuate to No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station at Dunbar AAA Advanced Depot Medical Stores Dunbar. Time of origin 12.00 hours.

Commanding No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station.
From Medical 1st Corps.
M.10. 11.6.24.
Close and park ready to entrain on receipt of orders. Time of origin 14.15 hours.
Commanding 1st M.A.C.
From Medical 1st Corps.
M.11. 11.6.24.

Cavalry casualties eight lying, twenty-two sitting, at M.D.S. Dunskine AAA Evacuate to Dunbar by Whittinghame—Garvald road AAA 1st Divisional Main Dressing Station at Beltonford, 2nd Division at Easter Broomhouse AAA At each approximately 180 casualties AAA Arrange evacuation to No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station at Dunbar.

Time of origin 14.40 hours.

Remarks by the Directing Staff on M.5.

No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station only moved to Grantshouse yesterday and had to take in 500 casualties before it was ready for their reception.

It now moves to Dunbar—when in the midst of opening up—

It is considered that owing to rapid moves this Casualty Clearing Station is useless as a Medical Unit to the force.

(Signed) DIRECTING STAFF (Medical).

1st CORPS ORDER No. 9. SECRET.
Copy No.—

June 11, 1924.

Reference Map O.S. of Scotland, Sheets 32 and 33, one inch to one mile.

(1) The enemy is in full retreat on Edinburgh. His rear guard is occupying the ridge south south-west of Tranent.

(2) The advance guard will be continued on the 12th to the line Musselburgh—Dalkeith.

(3) (a) 1st Cavalry Brigade with 1st Armoured Car Company and one company 2nd Tank Battalion attached will move from Pencaitland at 0.600 hours, 12th inst., on Parth Head. Their first objective will be to make good the high ground between Parth Head and Dalkeith. Thence they will be directed on Lasswade.

(b) 1st and 2nd Divisions will march in accordance with attached March Table. Dividing line between Divisions will be River Tyne to Haddington. Haddington—Pencaitland Road (inclusive to 2nd Division) as far as Cross Roads, one mile northeast of Easter Pencaitland. Thence a line to Winton Station (exclusive of 2nd Division). Railway to Crossgate Hall (inclusive to 1st Division). Northern boundary of Dalkeith Park.

4) The following preparatory moves will take place:

(a) 1st Lancers to detail one squadron to come under the orders of the G.O.C. 2nd Division from 22.00 hours, 11th, at which time the 1st Lancers (less one squadron) will come under the orders of the G.O.C. 1st Division.
(b) 1st Armoured Car Company to move at 22.00 hours from Drem via Haddington to Cuddie Wood, where they will come under the orders of the O.C. 1st Cavalry Brigade.

(c) 1st Tank Battalion will assemble at Newbythe, where it will come into Corps Reserve, all movement to be confined to the hours between 12 midnight, 11th, and 02.00 hours 12th.

2nd Tank Battalion (less one company) will move at 22.00 hours from Beltonford via Dielgrange—Standingstone—Cocklins—Lennoxlove. On arrival at Lennoxlove one company will come under the orders of 2nd Division and one Company under the orders of the O.C. Cavalry Brigade.

One Company 2nd Tank Battalion will move from Beltonford at 03.00 hours on the 12th via East Linton—Athelstane Road to Kilduffs Wood, where they will come under the orders of the 1st Division.

(d) The Air Defence Commander will detail one battery of A.A. Artillery to each of the 1st and 2nd Divisions.

(5) One Brigade, 1st Division, will be detailed as Corps Reserve and march at the rear of the 1st Division.

(6) Corps R.E. will be responsible for the upkeep of the following roads for Motor Transport:—


(7) Inter-communication.

(a) Reports to Anisfield House after 06.00 hours, 12th.

(b) Central Visual Stations will be established at Traprainlaw, call ACOA and Garleton Hill, call ACOB. Messages to the latter will be sent on F. procedure (i.e., the central station will not answer) at 05.30 hours.

(c) Telegraph lines west of Haddington to be cut every three miles as troops advance.

(d) Wireless call—sign—wave-lengths and final letters remain unchanged from those given in Corps Order No. 8 of 10.6.24. Appendix "A."

(e) Dropping station and landing ground will be established at Anisfield Park.

Issued to Signals.

13.30 hours.

* * * *

Colonel,
General Staff, 1st Corps.
SECRET.

Copy No.-

EXTRACT FROM ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS TO ACCOMPANY CORPS ORDER No. 9.

(8) Medical.—The following medical arrangements will be in force from 06.00 hours June 12.

(a) No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station at Dunbar, open.
(b) No. 1 Advanced Depot Medical Stores at Dunbar, open.
(c) No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station at Cockburnspath, closed and parked ready to entrain.

* * * *

Colonel,

D.A.A. and Q.M.G.

1st Corps.

Copies to all recipients of

Southland Corps Order No. (9).

1st CORPS R.A.M.C. ORDER No. 3.

Issued Reference 1st Corps Order No. 9.

Reference Map O.S. of Scotland, Sheets 32 and 33, one inch to one mile.

(1) The enemy is in full retreat on Edinburgh.
(2) The advance will be continued on the 12th to the line Musselburgh—Dalkeith.
(3) Divisional and Cavalry Field Medical Units will march and be employed tactically under orders issued from the Headquarters of their formations.
(4) The opening, location and closing of Dressing Stations must be reported to D.D.M.S., 1st Corps.
(5) 1st M.A.C. March to Haddington.
    3rd Sanitary Section Starting point Dunbar, time 14.00 hours.
    7th Field Ambulance Route, East Linton.

Copy No.-
A Command Staff Exercise

(6) No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station is open at Dunbar.
No. 1 Advanced Depot Medical Stores is open at Dunbar.
No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station is closed and parked ready for forward movement by train.

(7) Road evacuation of casualties from Main Dressing Station will be carried out by Haddington—East Linton Road to Dunbar (medical railhead).

(8) Reports to Anisfield House after 06.00 hours, 12th.
(9) Acknowledge.

* * * *

Issued to Signals hours.

Copy No. 1. A.D.M.S., 1st Division.
2. A.D.M.S., 2nd Division.
3. S.M.O., Cavalry Brigade.
4. O.C., 1st M.A.C.
5. O.C., 7th Field Ambulance.
6. O.C., 3rd Sanitary Section.
7. O.C., 1st Casualty Clearing Station.
8. O.C., 2nd Casualty Clearing Station, etc., etc., for information.

Remarks by the Directing Staff on R.A.M.C. Order No. 3.

Para. 6. No. 1. Casualty Clearing Station is presumed to be capable of opening at Dunbar at 06.00 hours on June 12. This is an impossibility.

As No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station is closed and parked, it follows that no casualty clearing station is available for the reception of casualties on June 12.

(Signed) Directing Staff (Medical).

2nd Division Order No. 10.

Secret.

Copy No.—

June 11, 1924.

Reference Map O.S. of Scotland, Sheets 32 and 33, one inch to one mile.

(1) The enemy is in full retreat on Edinburgh, his rearguard is occupying the ridge south-south-west of Tranent.

1st Cavalry Brigade with 1st Armoured Car Company and one Company 2nd Tank Battalion move from Pencaitland at 06.00 hours on 12th on Parth Head and Dalkeith, thence advance on Lasswade.

The 1st Corps is advancing on the 12th, 1st Division on right on Musselburgh and Inveresk, 2nd Division on left.

Dividing line between Divisions, River Tyne to Haddington—
Haddington—Pencaitland road inclusive to 2nd Division as far as cross roads one mile of Easter Pencaitland, thence a line to Winton Station (exclusive to 2nd Division). Railway to Crossgate (inclusive to 1st Division). Northern boundary of Dalkeith Park.

(2) The 2nd Division and attached troops "A" Squadron, 1st Lancers, "B" Company, 2nd Tank Battalion, will advance on Dalkeith.

(3) The Division will advance on a two Brigade front, 5th Infantry Brigade on right, 6th Infantry Brigade on left. Dividing line between Brigades, River Tyne to its junction with Dru Birns Water—Ormiston Hall—Byres Loan—Coldhame—Dalkeith Station; 4th Infantry Brigade will follow in rear 6th Infantry Brigade. "B" Company, 2nd Tank Battalion, in rear of 5th Infantry Brigade. March Table attached.

(4) (i) "A" Squadron, 1st Lancers (less one troop) will report by 06.30 hours whether bridges over Tyne Water on both brigade roads are intact.

(ii) Report by 08.00 hours whether high ground west of Tyne Water on front Stone Mine D’Arcy is clear of enemy.

(iii) By 10.00 hours whether country west of railway from Sheriffhall Mains to Dalhousie Mains is clear.

By 13.00 hours whether the line Gilmerton Loan Head is clear.

(iv) Inter-communication.—Divisional Headquarters will close at Monkrigg at 08.00 hours, and open at Wolstar, one mile west of Pencaitland, at the same hour.

Reports to head of main body 5th Infantry Brigade.

Dropping station for aircraft messages will be maintained at Monkrigg to 08.00 hours and Wolstar after 08.00 hours.

* * * *

Issued by Signals, 16.00 hours.

Major,

General Staff, 2nd Division.

Copy No. 1. C.R.A.

2. C.R.E.

3. 4th Infantry Brigade.

4. 5th Infantry Brigade.

5. 6th Infantry Brigade.


7. A.D.M.S.

8. Train.

9. D.A.P.M.

10. D.A.D.V.S.

Copy No. 11. G.O.C.

12. "Q."


15. War Diary.

16. 1st Corps.

17. 1st Division.

18. 1st Cavalry Brigade.

19. 2nd Squadron (Army Co-operation).

A Command Staff Exercise

2ND DIVISION R.A.M.C. ORDER No. 10.

SECRET.
Copy No.—

June 11, 1924.

Reference Map O.S. of Scotland, Sheets 32 and 33, one inch to one mile.

(1) Information.—Enemy is in full retreat on Edinburgh. 2nd Division will advance in two columns converging on Dalkeith.
   1st Column, Haddington—Pencaitland—Dalkeith.
   2nd Column, Haddington—Humbie Mill—Fala—Pathead—Dalkeith.

(2) No. 5 Field Ambulance will conform to movements of No. 1 Column under orders of 5th Infantry Brigade Commander.

(3) O.C. No. 6 Field Ambulance will detail one Company to follow No. 2 Column. As soon as casualties are cleared, H.Q. and remaining company of No. 6 Field Ambulance will follow route of No. 2 Column.

(4) M.D.S. at Stenton will be closed as soon as cleared, and 4th Field Ambulance will then move by Stenton—Point 452—Gifford—Leehouses—Point 521, and onwards by route of No. 2 Column. No. 2 Sanitary Section will accompany No. 4 Field Ambulance.

(5) Dressing stations will be opened if, and where, necessary and locations with times of opening and closing notified immediately to A.D.M.S.

(6) Refilling point; supplies for consumption on June 13—Westerbroom House at 20.00 hours on June 12. (2nd Division R.A.M.C. Orders IX, para. 7, cancelled.) Refilling point for 12th, with supplies for consumption on 14th—Road on northern edge of Bolton Moor Wood at 19.00 hours.

(7) No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station is open at Dunbar. Road evacuation of casualties will be carried out by Haddington—East Linton road to Dunbar.

(8) Divisional H.Q. will close at Monkriigg at 08.00 hours and open at Wolstar, one mile west of Pencaitland, at the same hour. Reports to Advanced Division H.Q. at head of No. 1 Column.

(9) No. 5 Field Ambulance will bivouac night June 11-12 Amisfield House—Nungate Area.

(10) Motor Ambulance Cars of 5/6th Field Ambulances will advance in bounds at intervals of two hours. Starting point Begbie at 11.40 hours. Those of No. 4 Field Ambulance will report to O.C. 4th Field Ambulance at Stenton.

(11) Acknowledge.

Issued at 18.30 hours by D.R. A.D.M.S., 2nd Division.

Copies to all recipients of 2nd Division R.A.M.C. Order No. 9.

A General Conference followed the Exercise and the following were the Remarks by the General Staff on the Medical Aspect of it:

(1) Some misconception appears to exist as to what information on medical matters should appear in Operation Orders.
The position of advanced and main dressing stations, which are established by Divisional Headquarters on the advice of the A.D.M.S., should be made known to all units in the Division and should therefore appear in Divisional Orders.

Apart from this, as a general rule no other medical information would appear in Divisional Orders.

The A.D.M.S. will, of course, as O.C. R.A.M.C. of the Division, write his R.A.M.C. Orders based on the Divisional Orders, and will issue them to the three Field Ambulances and Sanitary Sections, copies being sent, if necessary, to Infantry Brigades, C.R.A., C.R.E., the General Staff and A.A.Q.M.G., Divisional Train, etc.

(2) Casualty Clearing Stations.—(a) Casualty Clearing Station accommodates fifty in beds and 150 on stretchers, and takes at least forty-eight hours to be made ready for the reception of casualties.

(b) Its medical personnel consists of 7 Medical Officers, 1 Quartermaster and 76 other ranks, Royal Army Medical Corps.

(c) Its transport consists of 3-ton lorries (1st Line).

(d) It requires ten lorries to move its equipment.

(e) The time in opening is taken up by Royal Engineer works for the provision of water for operating theatres, tent-pitching, railway sidings, roads, etc. It is capable of rapid expansion if suitable buildings or extra tentage is provided. A siding is necessary for the rapid evacuation of a casualty clearing station, as its personnel contains no stretcher-bearers and it has no Motor Ambulance Transport of its own. In open warfare casualty clearing stations are divided into two groups:—

(i) Advanced group seven to nine miles from the front line, and

(ii) The rear group twelve to sixteen miles.

Advances are made by leap-frogging, and as these units are divided into a light and heavy section, the time above quoted, i.e., forty-eight hours, is required for the opening of the light section.

In open fighting the light sections would be trebled in capacity, making the total casualty clearing station accommodation 500 beds per casualty clearing station. With this increase in accommodation twenty-five lorries are necessary.

"It is possible for a casualty clearing station with forty lorry loads to close, pack and repitch and open in a new place in thirty-six to forty-eight hours, which means that they carry as essentials all their canvas, Soyer's stoves for cooking, stretchers, blankets and fifty beds and mattresses, and whatever else the O.C. likes to take to bring up the total to forty loads." (See pages 299 and 300 of the "Official History of the War. Medical Services—General History," vol. iii.)

The above times depend on a party of twenty-five Royal Engineers being available for R.E. work.
At a special conference of the medical officers taking part in the Exercise, the following general remarks were made by the Directing Staff on the whole work of that Exercise:—

(1) Medical Appreciations.—The appreciations on the whole were good, considering that none of the officers, except one, ever wrote an appreciation in his life.

There was one exception, however, which demands comment. Apparently the officer who wrote this appreciation did not realize that he was Medical Adviser to the Staff, and as such their “expert” on matters of disease prevention and the treatment of casualties, with the view of their early restoration to the fighting line.

Appreciations should not be long-winded, but should be short and to the point, with explanatory notes when necessary. The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief is a very busy man, who will only glance through an appreciation, but will dwell on the summary and especially that portion of it asking for Medical Units not laid down in War Establishments. Consequently in writing an appreciation it is well to place your most urgent need close to the bottom of your list, if it is a long one.

(2) Divisional Arrangements.—They were good and, where criticism appeared evident, it was found that a higher Authority had interfered. In a Staff exercise this is inevitable, but on service I want you to realize that as an Assistant Director of Medical Service it is your duty to get what you want out of your Divisional Commander by frequent interviews and constant touch.

A few points, however, call for attention:—

(a) The new Field Ambulance has a Headquarters and two companies. This at first sight—to officers who served in South Africa—is a reversion to the Field Medical organization which existed in that campaign, i.e., a Field Hospital and a Bearer Company. This is not so.

The new organization does not intend that Field Ambulances should ever be split up into their component parts except in case of emergency.

Field Ambulances, like other units, possess their esprit de corps, and if at the beginning of a campaign Field Ambulance personnel get mixed up, efficiency suffers.

(b) Assistant Directors of Medical Services, whilst avoiding interference with the running of Field Ambulances, should, nevertheless, direct their functions. It is too easy to hand over a Field Ambulance to its Brigade and forget all about it. This has happened many times in the 1914 and 1918 retreats, and the medical arrangements of the Division suffered accordingly. The Assistant Director of Medical Services is never absolved from his responsibility as Officer Commanding Royal Army Medical Corps of a Division.

(c) It is unwise to pool Divisional Ambulance Cars—except in a big
battle. In all cases dealing with outpost actions, Field Ambulances should move as a whole and retain their method of evacuation as laid down in War Establishments.

(3) **Senior Medical Officer, Cavalry.**—The instructions issued with the scheme apparently were not comprehensive enough. This officer issued no written orders but made his own arrangements with the Brigade Cavalry Commander. No doubt they were excellent, but how he got rid of his casualties must remain a matter for thought with him for many years to come.

(4) **Deputy Director of Medical Services.**—The casualty clearing stations were moved like pawns on a chess-board, forgetting that it takes some time to move, much less open a casualty clearing station. The following extract is quoted from vol. iii, pp. 299 and 300, "General History—Medical Service":—

"Most of the casualty clearing stations which have moved up to date have moved rapidly and at short notice. At first an attempt was made to move casualty clearing stations with twelve lorry loads. The amount of material, etc., which they could carry on these loads was very limited and quite insufficient to deal with casualties coming in from a big battle. This was stopped and forty lorry loads were allowed. Frequently twenty lorries only were available, and they had to make two journeys in one day; this is quite satisfactory provided the distance moved forward is not too great." (See also remarks at General Conference.)

These casualty clearing stations during this exercise served no useful medical purpose but must have hindered transport arrangements. The casualties arriving at their site would have suffered the greatest hardships. No operations could have been performed and the wounded would very likely have arrived at Berwick-on-Tweed suffering from gas gangrene. I do not see that their field ambulance dressings could have been changed in the majority of cases.

In the hurry of the advance it was forgotten that casualty clearing stations consisted of light and heavy sections, and that advanced operating centres should have been established if necessary with field ambulances. The hygiene and pathological laboratories were also forgotten.

I am indebted to the Royal Army Medical Corps officers taking part in this Exercise for permission to publish their work, and to Colonel R. S. Hannay, C.M.G., D.S.O., D.D.M.S. Scottish Command, for his valuable advice and ready help throughout the Exercise.