

Clinical and other Notes.

REMOVAL OF CASUALTIES FROM A LIGHT TANK (MARK VI).

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THE parts of the light tank referred to in these notes are annotated in fig. A as follows :—

- (a) Cupola (with hatch closed).
- (b) Gunner's hatch (closed).
- (c) Turret.
- (d) Foredeck.
- (e) Upper flap of vizor.
- (f) Lower flap of vizor.
- (g) Transverse ledge.



FIG. A.

Three methods are described :—

- A.—Removal through the driver's seat, head first.
- B.—Removal through the driver's seat, feet first.
- C.—Removal through the cupola.

Of the three, A is, generally speaking, the easiest method ; B is specially for cases of injury to the lower limbs ; and C may be used in cases where the exit through the driver's seat is, for some reason, blocked.

The removal of the driver and the removal of the tank commander or gunner are dealt with separately.

(1) REMOVAL OF AN INJURED DRIVER (OTHER THAN LOWER-LIMB INJURY).

First the vizor (*e, f*) must be opened from inside by the gunner reaching forward over the driver's left shoulder ; meanwhile the tank commander

dismounts and, facing the injured man through the opened vizor, places both his legs to the left of the steering levers (unless the levers can easily be unscrewed at the base and removed).

The gunner then pushes the driver's shoulders forward, keeping his head well flexed to prevent it hitting the upper lid of the vizor. At the same time the tank commander grasps the driver by the hands and pulls him forward (fig. 1). So the driver rotates forwards on his knees and his head passes under the upper flap of the vizor, guided by the gunner from behind.



FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

The second part of the manœuvre is to bring the injured driver across the tank commander's shoulders as for a fireman's lift.

To accomplish this, the commander retains hold of him with his right hand, disengages his left hand and, bending down to the right, passes it between the driver's legs and round his left thigh.

As he bends down to his right he also ducks under the driver's left arm which he is still holding and brings his left shoulder against the lower part of the driver's stomach, so that as the driver swings forward the weight is caught evenly across the commander's shoulders (fig. 2).

In this way the fireman's lift is effected (fig. 3), and with a little practice the manœuvre can be carried out in one smooth and continuous movement with the minimum discomfort to the injured man.

(2) REMOVAL OF DRIVER WITH AN INJURED LOWER LIMB.

The object of this method is to bring the driver out through the driver's seat feet first, keeping his body and legs, as far as possible, in the same straight line, in order to avoid bending the injured limb at any point.

An additional man is required to steady the legs, while the tank commander is responsible for the hips and the gunner for the shoulders.

First an improvised sling, 3 or 4 feet long, is placed round the hip-bone of the injured driver by the gunner who is kneeling behind him in the body of the tank. He then lets the back rest down and lays the driver flat, supporting his shoulders from behind (fig. 4).



FIG. 5.



FIG. 6.



FIG. 7.



FIG. 8.

The commander stands astride the driver's vizor and grasps the ends of the sling; the extra man grasps the driver's ankles and gently straightens the legs by pulling in a longitudinal direction, if necessary bringing the feet up on to the edge of the lower flap of the vizor.

At a signal given by the tank commander the wounded man is lifted by all three simultaneously, until he lies horizontally with his feet just clear of the lower vizor flap (fig. 5).

He is then gradually moved forward out of the tank, at the same time being slowly rotated to the left, to bring his body at right angles to the tank so that he may be lowered comfortably on to the transverse ledge(s) which runs across the front of the driver's dashboard (fig. 6).

From this position the three men, standing the same side of the casualty (fig. 7), lift him and transfer him to a stretcher.

In some cases of broken thigh-bone it might be advisable to adjust a Thomas' splint while the driver is still lying in his seat. This would considerably lessen the risk of further damage in moving and make the actual lifting easier.

(3) REMOVAL OF INJURED TANK COMMANDER (OR GUNNER) THROUGH THE DRIVER'S SEAT.

An essential preliminary is to rotate the whole turret (*c*) slightly to the right, so that the passage between the floor of the turret and the driver's seat is as smooth as possible without angular protuberances.

The casualty is then drawn into the driver's seat feet first. The driver squats in his seat, facing the turret, and grasps the injured man's ankles, while the gunner supports the shoulders from behind.

Together they half lift and half slide him into the driver's seat.

From this point the procedure is the same as that described for removing an injured driver; either head first or feet first depending on whether his legs are injured.

(4) REMOVAL OF TANK COMMANDER (OR GUNNER) THROUGH CUPOLA.

The whole turret (*c*) must first be rotated through a right angle to the left to bring the cupola (*a*) to the front.

The driver then dismounts and climbs on to the superstructure, standing on the highest ledge astride the cupola and facing the back of the tank.

If the injured commander is lying on the floor of the tank, the gunner will first have to lift him on to his seat by the "human crutch" method.

Briefly, this is by wrapping the injured man's left arm round the lifter's neck, and grasping his waist with the right arm.

The gunner then steadies him on his seat and raises his arms up to the driver, who grasps them through the open hatch (fig. 8).

The injured man is now raised by a series of lifts, until he is brought to a sitting position on the front lip of the hatch with his back to the front and his legs inside the turret.

The driver holds him in this position (fig. 9) until the gunner dismounts and comes to stand on the right of the injured man.

The driver then gently lowers him backwards and the gunner lifts his knees out of the turret (fig. 10). He is then lowered on to the foredeck (*d*) in a sitting position with his back at the right-hand edge of the deck, where he is held by the driver. The gunner having dismounted, comes to stand at the side of the tank, back to back with the injured man (fig. 11).

The gunner now bends backwards and grasps him under his armpits and, bending forwards again, carries him off gently by the "back lift," while the driver lowers the legs of the injured man to prevent them dropping suddenly over the edge of the deck (fig. 12).

N.B.—It is unlikely that the driver would be wounded while the tank is in action, unless the whole tank suffered a direct hit head-on. It is possible, however, that he might suffer concussion by knocking his head, and be rendered unconscious.

In such a case he would have to be dragged backwards into the main part of the tank, the back rest having first been lowered. Furthermore, he should be curled up on the floor of the turret so as not to interfere with the rotation of the turret.

The gunner will, of course, have to take his place without opening the vizor if the tank is still under fire.



FIG. 9.



FIG. 10.



FIG. 11.



FIG. 12.

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