



During the course of military manoeuvres on Salisbury Plain local people watch members of the Royal Artillery pass by with Stonehenge in the background (1872)
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THE ARMY MANOEUVRES

CONCENTRATION OF FORCES IN WILTS AND DORSET

STRENGTH OF THE OPPOSING ARMIES

REPORTED REDUCTION IN NUMBER

ROYAL REVIEW OF CAVALRY NEAR STONEHENG

In the whole of Wilts and Dorset signs are strikingly visible of the approaching great Army manoeuvres, and a distinctly military air prevails. Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers, and Army Service Corps are marching along the roads in and out of the enormous area selected for the operations, and the inhabitants of many a quaint, old world hamlet are thus afforded a rare opportunity of seeing "Tommy Atkins" under service conditions. Soldiers everywhere are looking forward to the manoeuvres with keen interest. The unusual number of cavalry concentrated and the manner in which it is anticipated they will be employed are expected to clear up a great many of the theoretical problems that have been agitating professional minds for a long time with regard to the mounted arm. It will be impossible, of course, to learn how the cavalry could stand up to infantry armed with magazine rifles, but many important points can be decided if the cavalry leaders make proper use of their chances. Altogether, the first week in September promises to be full of interest for military students.

THE MANOEUVRING AREA

Some estimate of the scale of the operations may be formed from the fact that, apart from the pay and feeding of the troops, the additional expenses though cut down everywhere by vigilant censors, will approach, if they did not, ultimately exceed, £180,000. The area taking in nearly the whole county of Dorset and a great of Wilts, is 48 miles long from north to south, and at its greatest breadth nearly as wide as it is long, though between Templecombe and Cranborne, it narrows in to about 17 miles in width. Roughly it extends from near Devizes in the north to the Dorset coast line in the south; and from Ludgershall, the locality of Salisbury, Cranbourne, and Bournemouth in the east to Trowbridge, Wincanton, Yeovil, and Lyme Regis in the west.

The district includes a large extent of the excellent manoeuvring ground, besides Salisbury Plain, which has become national property for military purposes; and in respect to lands in private occupation all precautions are being taken to prevent intrusion upon what may be regarded as domestic premises, as dwelling houses, gardens, orchards, farmyards, or places of worship, schools, factories, and workshops, enclosed woods and plantations; and any places of the kind are not to be entered by troops without the special permission of the owner occupier. Moreover, officers are cautioned to take care that there is no interference with earth works, ruins, or other things of antiquarian or historic interest, or with any picturesque or valuable timber, or other natural features of exceptional interest or beauty, and they are further empowered to prevent damage to property or trespass by persons not belonging to the forces.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS AS TO DAMAGES

Special arrangements have been made to facilitate a rapid and equitable adjustments of all claims made by owners and occupiers of land for damage done to their property in the course of the manoeuvres. Immediately damage had been done, a report is to be made by the officer commanding the troops concerning the damage to the nearest military compensation officer, or the nearest umpire, if the proper officer is not in view, and either of these is to at once proceed to the spot and make accurate notes of the case. The military compensation offices attached to Brigades and divisions are empowered by the Manoeuvres Commission to adjust and pay on the spot all damage claims which do exceed £5, but all claims of higher amount will be submitted to Army Corps compensation.

THE RIVAL ARMIES

The troops, when all have assembled, will, it is officially reported, number 53,606 officers and men, 9,456 horses, 242 guns and machine guns, and 486 wagons. Of these the Duke of Connaught's northern army will have 26,916 officers and men, 4,828 horses, 74 guns, and 29 machine guns, and 244 wagon's. These numbers are exclusive of the staff of the director and umpire-in-chief, who will supervise the work of the opposing armies. The units forming the latter are 10 regiments of cavalry, six batteries of Horse Artillery, 30 batteries of Field Artillery, six divisional ammunition columns, six field companies, a telegraph battalion, bridging battalion, mounted detachment, balloon section, and two field parks of Royal Engineers, 74 battalion, mounted detachments, balloon section, and two field parks of Royal Engineers, 74 battalions of Infantry (50 of Guards, Line, and Marines, and 24 of Militia), four companies of Mounted Infantry, 22 companies of the Army Service Corps, and four field hospitals, and two bearer companies of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

A later report says that the number of men who will take part will be considerably under that given in the official tables. The rule that men with less than six months' service are not to accompany their corps to the field will reduce the strength of some battalions to about 300, and it is possible that not more than 45,000 men will be on the ground.

SPECTATORS' PRIVILEGES.

In respect to spectators, special passes will be issued to enable the holders to move without hindrance over the authorized lands within the manoeuvre area. Officers in uniform, whether on duty or wearing the spectator's badge (a white band above the left elbow), will also be free to pass everywhere, but officers who attend as spectators in plain clothes will not be allowed this privilege.

THE CAMP AND WATER SUPPLY

The camps – an official list of which we believe we were the first to publish several weeks ago – are planned for the most part in pleasant spots, and it satisfactory to learn that the work of several Companies of Royal Engineers, in some cases extending over many weeks, has, speaking generally, secured that plentiful supply of water for man and beast, without which it would be impossible to hold the training.

FEEDING ARRANGEMENTS

The arrangements for feeding and otherwise maintaining the troops in the field are believed to be as satisfactory as they can be made, and to a large extent the food supply will be dependent upon one of the large civil contracting firms. The daily free rations for each man will be a pound of bread or three-quarters of a pound of biscuit and a pound of fresh or preserved meat; groceries and vegetables will be obtained from the canteen under arrangements made by divisional and brigade commanders. The canteens will be entirely supplied by Lipton (Limited). There is an order that during the manoeuvres no man is to be served with more than one quart of malt liquor a day, a rule which it may be difficult to make absolutely operative.

CONTRACT CAPABILITY

The experiment of testing contract capability for a home service campaign has greatly reduced the strain, which would of necessity devolve upon the transport and supply branches. A goodly-sized battalion of civilian workers, mainly drawn from the ranks of retired soldiers residing in Aldershot, and all more or less acquainted with the duties connected with "dry" and "wet" canteen supply, has been dispatched during the last few days by the contractor for these departments, Lipton (Limited) thus opening up a new era in connection with the provisioning of an Army in the field outside of the Government rations. The system adopted, it is claimed, comes nearest under the heading of "Contract, the delivery of which is to be made at

the base of operations." It relieves the Commissariat Department of duties which, on a necessarily economical basis, they have to perform to meet the ordinary requirements of troops in station; while in the way of transport it also meets a difficulty which would be insurmountable except at great cost where the manoeuvres of upwards of 50,000 troops are concerned. If the experiment is successful that will probably be a great extension of the contract system.

THE CHARACTER OF THE MANOEUVRES

Little is definitely known at present as to the character the manoeuvres will assume, but enough leaks out to indicate the general trend of the operations. The establishment of an umpire camp at Fovant, near Dinton, on the 27th seems to point to a struggle for the passage of the River Nadder, an affluent of the Avon, at the beginning of the campaign, and its removal to Wishford, on the 4th September, probably indicates a rush for the Wily and the Valley of the Avon in the later stages. The Northern defending army of the 1872 campaign moved south from a point as distant as Pewsey, while the Southern invading force started northward from near Blandford Forum, when war was declared. This year the opposing armies will be much nearer each other at the opening of the campaign, but will have a much better run for their money. Sir Redvers Buller's Southern Army, after its preliminary training at Trigon drill camp, is to be launched from somewhere near Shaftesbury, while the Duke of Connaught's Northern Army of defenders will be concentrated at Homington, Ford, and Wilton camps, in the immediate vicinity of Salisbury, which of course must be the ultimate objective of the invader, as in 1872, involving some closing battles on Salisbury Plain, near Amesbury. The operations will be difficult to follow, owing to the daily changes of camp, the uncertainty of these moves until decided by battle, and, above all, the lack of sleeping accommodation for visitors. Hotels and Inns at Salisbury, Amesbury, and all villages near Avon and the Wily are already full or booked in advance for the operations, and the work of the Army Corps drill camps will afford much to interest between now and the 1st September. The formation of a visitors' camp, to be moved about as the necessity arises, is in contemplation.

A "general idea," applicable, as far as possible, to the whole duration of the manoeuvres, will be issued by Lord Wolseley (director of manoeuvres) at the commencement; and "special ideas" for the first day's operations will be sent to Army commanders and senior umpires. The "special ideas" for subsequent days will usually be prepared by the director daily on the ground at the close of operations, which will be attended by the director's staff, senior umpires, and umpires, commanders of armies, accompanied by their deputy-adjutant-generals, and commanders of cavalry brigades. No other person will be permitted to be present at or within earshot of the conference, unless by special sanction of the director, which will hold good only for the day for which it may be given. On the last day of operations a conference will be held by the director, which will be attended by all commanding officers.

THE TELEGRAPH SERVICE

Respecting the military telegraph service it has been arranged that the following telegraph service it has been arranged that the following shall be provided:- A field telegraph for each Army Corps; neutral semi-permanent lines connecting each Army Corps head-quarters of the several camping grounds with their respective divisional Director and Umpire-in-Chief's Camp with the headquarters of the several camping grounds with one another. The opposing forces are not to damage any telegraph lines or offices within the manoeuvre area; but, in certain circumstances, a field line may be put out of action. The neutral lines will only be available to the two Army Corps for those purposes would be used. They are not to be tapped or interfered with, nor are they to be used for the purpose of deceiving the enemy or for giving information in regard to either side, which should be withheld from the enemy. Field post-offices will be established by the Post-office Corps at the head-quarters of each Army Corps, Infantry Division, and Cavalry Brigade.

CONCENTRATION OF THE FORCES

The period of three months during which, by order of the Queen in Council, under the Military Manoeuvres Act of last year, manoeuvres may be executed within the area above referred to, commenced on Monday, when the concentration of the forces officially began, although for some time past a considerable body of troops, intended to take part in the manoeuvres, which will extend over the first eight days in September, have been assembled on Salisbury Plain.

Wareham Camp, where General Sir Redvers Buller has established the head-quarters of the Southern Army, has filled up rapidly with artillery and infantry, and yesterday (Thursday) the bulk of these arms had arrived. The Cavalry will not march in for some days, and the Militia battalions, which have been attached to Sir Redvers Buller's Army, will not join for a couple of weeks yet. Most of the Militia require a good deal of licking into shape before they are fit to operate in the field with the regulars. This necessary operation is being carried out at various camps in England, Ireland and Scotland, where the Militia regiments have been

“called up.” The troops composing the Northern Army did not begin to gather in the camps formed for their accommodation until yesterday, but inasmuch as practically the whole of the Aldershot command is included in the Duke of Connaught’s force, mobilization will not be so difficult as in the care of the Southern Army. The 2nd and 3rd Division are assembled at Aldershot, and the 1st Division at Perham Down, near Ludgershall. By the beginning of next week the infantry and artillery brigades will have been completed in both armies, and the “preliminary drills” can then commence at once.

Each of the two Army Corps may be divided into five principal parts, viz, the three great Divisions, the Independent Cavalry Brigade, and the Corps troops under the immediate command of the General Commanding the Corps. Each of the three Divisions consists of two brigades of Infantry, three batteries of Artillery, one squadron of Cavalry one company of Army Service Corps, one company of Engineers, and a Medical Detachment forming half a field hospital establishment. Each of the two Infantry Brigades consists of four battalions of Regular Infantry and two battalions of Militia, with one company of Army Service Corps. The Division thus forms a little Army of all arms, complete in itself, and represents about the force that has been usually employed on each side in our ordinary manoeuvres. In addition, however, to the divisions, there is under the orders of each Corps Commander for the period of actual manoeuvre a Cavalry Brigade, of which the duty at the beginning of the manoeuvre period on September 1st will be to watch the enemy’s Cavalry in close contact with it, to obtain all the information it can of the enemy’s movements, and to prevent the enemy’s Cavalry from getting knowledge of the movements on its own side. It will be rather more than a day’s march in advance of the main bodies when they first move forward. Each Cavalry Brigade includes three Regiments, one battery of Horse Artillery, the half of a Mounted Infantry with a machine gun section, and one Company of Army Service Corps. The fifth body of which we have spoken consists of the Corps troops. These include three squadrons of Cavalry, two batteries of Horse Artillery, six batteries of Field Artillery, a body of Engineers under Lieutenant-Colonel, consisting of a half-battalion for bridging, a section of a Telegraph Battalion, and Field Park and Balloon Section, one Infantry Battalion, one Company of the Army Service Corps and of the Medical Corps, a half Hospital Detachment, and a Bearer Company.

With regard to the Northern Army, full particulars as to the composition of which, together with the dates of the arrival of the Regiments at their various grounds, have already been given in the Western Gazette, it may be repeated that the staff of the Duke of Connaught will go direct from Aldershot to the head-quarter camp at Homington, near Salisbury, on the 25th inst., the day on which the first of the troops come in by march or railway. The Ford Company, also near Salisbury, will be occupied by the Cavalry Brigade, which will not be occupied by the Cavalry Brigade, which will not be fully constituted there till about the 30th, when most of the troops at Bulford Camp will march in. The whole of the troops of the First Division, which have been assembling during the past two or three days and continue to assemble on Perham Down, near Ludgershall, for “preliminary drills,” under Lieutenant-General Sir F. Forestier-Walker, are to be encamped half-a-mile to the north-west of Wilton, where the two Brigades and Corps troops will be assembled by the evening of the 27th. The Second and Third Divisions are to be encamped at Homington, and they will arrive from Aldershot between the 25th and 27th inst. The Army Corps troops—distinct from those of the Cavalry Brigade and Infantry Divisions—are to be encamped at Ford with the Cavalry Brigade, and arrive on the 26th and 27th inst. Many of the sites selected as camping in Wiltshire are already in possession of some of the advance parties, and were on Saturday viewed by the Duke of Connaught, when he was in the district for the purpose of inspecting the Cavalry at Bulford Camp. In a number of instances it was noticed that great quantities of stores had been accumulated at various points by Messrs. Lipton’s agents in readiness for the troops.

Messrs. C. Moody & Son, of Salisbury, have supplied and furnished further tents for the use of the Wesleyans at Perham Down and the Church of England at Ford Camp.

THE CAMP AT TRIGON.

The camp of the Southern Army is situated on Trigon Heath, the property of Mr. Edward Sturdy, nearly three miles to the north-west of Wareham Station, and between the highway to Bere Regis and the Carey-road. The main part of the encampment lies in a broad depression some square miles in extent, covered with dry grass and heath, and surrounded by rising knolls, created with lines of fir trees, with, in some parts, a thick undergrowth of heather, fuize, rhododendron, and fern bracken. The whole camp lies within a ring fence, the diameter of which is about two miles. The tents were pitched by detachments of 25 men from each Infantry Battalion and units of the Royal Engineers, drawn from widely separated parts of the country, and of the Army Services Corps. The water supply of the camp is drawn from springs which have been struck by the engineers, and to which pumps have been affixed. The water for watering the horses is delivered into large canvas troughs. The A.S.C. with their water-carts covey this necessity of life to the different parts of the camp where it is required. The military police attached to the head-quarters and divisional camps are supplemented by the County Constabulary, specially engaged for the occasion of the manoeuvres by the War Office, some mounted, some cyclists, and the remainder to do duty afoot. The detachments of civil police is under the command of Superintendent Marsh. The ample space between the streets of tents and

the different portions of the camp, and the open, breezy situation, should make the camp extremely healthy, and, if the weather remains fine, pleasant into the bargain. The Church of England and the Wesleyan Denomination have mission tents at the camp, and arrangements have been made for services and Reading-rooms.

A picturesque lane leads into the Army Corps Staff Camp. This has been arranged and laid out with great precision and nicety of detail. Here are the head offices of the postal and telegraph departments, and the head-quarters of the police. Broad paths are marked out with whitened bricks laid at short intervals in lines of geometrical exactitude. The mess tents of the commanding officer and his staff are furnished with a degree of comfort and even elegance. In the centre of a greenward square is a prettily designed flowerbed, from which rises a flagstaff. Opposite this is pitched the tent which is the lodging of Sir Redvers Buller, the general officer commanding the Army. This is an exemplification of soldier-like plainness and simplicity. Around it are pitched the tents of the chief officers of the staff.

Occasional detachments of troops arrived at Wareham Station during Monday, but the great influx, however, really did not begin till the early hours of Tuesday morning, and has since continued with but little intermission.

Naturally, a tremendous strain is pit on the railway officials to cope with this enormous addition to the regular traffic, as there are not only the trains conveying men and horses, but also those laden with the bulky stores needed for huge a body of men. The regular staff of the Wareham Station, under the direction of Mr. Tinsley, the stationmaster, has been supplemented by about 25 extra hands, including half-a-dozen of the Company's police. Three staff officers have been detailed to do duty at the station in co-operation with the railway officials and superintending the detraining of the troops. These are Lieut.-Colonel J. Stacpole, Major R. B. Williams, and Captain F. S. Maude.

The men, the majority of them in heavy marching order, have been much distressed by the heat, and it was noted that several fell out by the way, and had to be attended to by the medical staff for slight attacks of heat apoplexy.

The Southern Army will, on 31st inst., assume the role of an army of invaders, who have effected a landing on our shores, and from that date, in common with the troops of the Northern Army Corps, they will occupy fresh quarters each day. Sir Redvers Buller does not share with the Duke of Connaught the advantage of having had two-thirds of the troops he will command in the field under his personal direction for months past. The Southern Army Corps is composed of troops coming, roughly speaking, from everywhere but Aldershot.

ON BLANDFORD DOWNS.

The first batch of troops - outside the Engineers and the Army Service men, who have been making camp preparations for some time - to arrive on the Blandford Downs came on Tuesday. They were the 3rd and the 7th Dragoon Guards, which come over from Bulford Camp, and proceeded yesterday (Thursday) to join the southern forces at Wareham. The men marched from the Winterbourne Ford Camp to Blandford, leaving about nine o'clock in the morning, and arriving about two. Most of the journey, about 23 miles was done on the road, and the terrific heat and the loose and dusty state of the roads made the march very unpleasant. The last few miles were the best part of the journey, as the road was left on coming out of Tarrant Hinton, and the Downs resorted to. The regiments were stationed on Snow's Down, adjoining the Langton Lodge, and a most desirable spot it is for a camp. It is situated low, and is practically hemmed in by trees, with a wood on one side. The troops looked particularly well as they marched in, considering the extreme heat, but the horses had suffered a good deal, so much so that the regiments postponed their departure for Trigon from Wednesday to Thursday morning. Numbers of people from Blandford visited the scene of the camps during the afternoon and evening of both Tuesday and Wednesday.

On Tuesday morning the 11th Field Company of Royal Engineers arrived on Hungry Down from Wareham. They came the whole distance by road, and presented a tired, hot, and dusty appearance as they marched through the town. They will be on the Down for probably the rest of the present week, and their operations are the affixing of water supplies to the different camps. On leaving Blandford they will proceed to Iwerne Minster to make similar arrangements for the big body of men shortly expected in the Park

As regards supplies everything was in readiness for the camps. Mr. J. Clarke, military manager to Lipton (Limited), made the general arrangements for the camp, assisted by Mr. Lee and Mr. Willimont. The forage contract is in the hands of Mr. H. Marlow, Government contractor, of Alton, and Mr. R. Old's traction engine has accomplished the haulage of some 2,000 quarters of corn. The fuel has been obtained from the Langton Estate. As regards water, nothing but praise was heard from the troops. The quality is almost without limit, and the quality cannot be surpassed. The source of supply is the Water Company's reservoir.

It is stated that the end of the month will see some 26,000 troops near Blandford, and they will remain there, according to present arrangements, for three days.

DORSET CHIEF CONSTABLE'S WARNING

Captain Granville, as chief constable of the county, has issued notices warning pedestrians and drivers of vehicles, &c., as to the penalties of willfully obstructing or interfering with the execution of the Manoeuvres and also as to the rule of the road strictly adhered to. By last evening the whole force was practically under canvas.

OPERATION AT BULFORD CAVALRY CAMP

INSPECTION BY THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

Operations on a large scale are still being conducted at Bulford Cavalry Camp under the direction of General Sir George Luck.

Thursday was left free from all military work, except camp duties, in order to enable officers and men to enjoy some improvised races and polo; and on Friday another spell of rest was allowed in view of a very big event on Saturday, when the Duke of Connaught paid a visit to the camp for the purpose of inspecting the Division. At 10 o'clock was witnessed the rare spectacle of a Royal review on Salisbury Plain, and some of the rank and fashion of Wiltshire assembled around the most prominent barrow of the Down to witness it. Among the aristocracy present some well known faces were conspicuous, including Lady Altie, wife of the noble Colonel of the 12th Lancers, Lady Pembroke, Admiral Sir Algernon C. F. Heneage, Colonel Antrobus, of the Grenadiers, from the Abbey House, Amesbury, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, from Netheravon House. A Chancellor of the Exchequer is no more to a trooper keeping the ground than any other civilian, and it was amusing to see how, when Sir Michael pushed his horse's nose beyond the orthodox line of sentries, he was sternly ordered back by one of the red-capped military police, and meekly obeyed. It was a beautiful example of the habitual British respect for authority. The Duke, who was accompanied by several of his staff, had been the guest overnight of the Earl and Countess of Pembroke, at Wilton House. The troops were put through a series of movements, and acquitted themselves in the manner that was favourably commented upon. During a charge a trooper's horse fell with him and broke his leg. The poor fellow was at once placed in an ambulance and rapidly conveyed away.

On Sunday, the church parade was a most imposing one, and was attended by crowds of country folk from the surrounding villages, who wended their way to Bulford in wagons, carts, and any vehicle procurable.

No operations, or drill even, were ordered for the whole division on Monday, but Dickson's heavy Brigade of 2nd, 3rd, and 7th Dragoon Guards left the Camp, the Bays (the second) going to Perham Down, and the 3rd and 7th Dragoon Guards proceeding on its three days' march to Trigon, near Wareham. The E and O Batteries of Royal Horse Artillery and some additional mounted Infantry came in. The 3rd and 7th Dragoons took a circuitous route on leaving, and conducted the march as an armed reconnaissance in the presence of an enemy. They halted at Ford, where they encamped for the night and on Tuesday went on to Blandford, where they encamped, completing their journey to Trigon on Wednesday.

On Tuesday morning the two Brigades of the Cavalry Division still remaining at the camp went through some exceptionally interesting operations, in which they were supported by the reinforcements of Horse Artillery and mounted Infantry, who arrived on Monday. The operations were something of an experiment, since it was the first time these three branches of the service had been used in combination. Only one accident marred the success of the drill. A trooper of the 1st. Royals had his eye cut open by the jerk of the horse's head. He was stitched and bandaged up, standing at the tail of the ambulance wagon, and pluckily mounted his horse instead of the wagon to ride home.

There was another rest day for the cavalry on Wednesday, when various sports were again indulged in. Yesterday (Thursday) there were operations against a skeleton enemy, consisting of the Bays from Persham Down; and today (Friday) here will be a fight of Brigade against Brigade. Sir Evelyn Wood was announced to be present in his capacity as Adjutant General.

REMOVAL OF A NOTED PACK

Sportsmen will hear with regret that the famous Tedworth hounds, which have for many years been kenneled beneath the stately trees of Tedworth House, on the borders of Hants and Wilts, have now to break up old associations and seek a fresh home.

The fine picturesque old mansion which gave them name has, with its environs, passed into the hands of the Government along with the property acquired by the War Office for military purposes on Salisbury Plain, and in consequence the present popular Master of the Hunt, Mr. C. P. Shrubbs, has received notice to quit as far as the housing of the hounds is concerned.

Mr. R. R. and Lady Susan Sutton, who themselves run a capital pack of harriers, have come forward with a generous offer to find Tedworth a temporary home at their beautiful seat at Penton Lodge, near Andover.

The pack has certainly never looked in better trim, thanks to Huntsman Perrin's care, and although they are to be dislodged from the home where they rose to such popularity under the Mastership of that keen sportsman the late Mr. Asheton-Smith, it seems safe to predict for them a still prosperous career in the hunting field.

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