

Comments by the translator have been added to help clarify aspects of the instructions. These are noted in brackets [] and are in addition to the translation. The translator also added some captions to the figures to aid understanding, the original figures were only numbered. Commands are left in the original Italian, the translation provided the first time the word/phrase is used. All footnotes are from the original.

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Chapter II

THE RIFLE SQUAD (La Squadra Fucilieri)

205. It is the smallest organic unit of the infantry that acts with movement and fire for action.

206. It consists of
a gruppo mitragliatori [machinegun group] (2 *f.m.*);
a gruppo fucilieri [rifle group].

207. The gruppo mitragliatori can be split up into weapon sections [1 *f.m.*] when, for exceptional characteristics of the ground or for large existing intervals between the adjoining squads, is convenient to position the *f. m.* to the wings.

208. Formations (tav. A.):
IN FILA [IN LINE] (FIG. 1);
APERTA [OPEN LINES] (FIG. 2);
SPIEGATA [OPEN ORDER] (FIG. 3).

The first two are only good for movement, the last, can also execute fires.

209. Distances and intervals vary in relationship [due to]:
the shape and the coverage of the ground;
the distance from the enemy.

These [factors] facilitate movement, making fire possible, and decreasing vulnerability, without harming the cohesion and control of the unit.

210. The formations, the distances, and intervals are modified while advancing by using commands and signals (¹).

211. The movements are performed with promptness and without concern of alignment.

212. The comandante di squadra [commander of the squad] regulates the movement of the squad;
directs the fire of the gruppo mitragliatori;
acts in perfect cohesion with the other squad of the platoon assuring, if necessary, mutual support of fire;
motivates the assault or the counterassault.

213. The vice comandante di squadra [deputy commander of the squad]
leads the gruppo fucilieri, of which he regulates their movement and fire;

¹ commands are used to order the formation and movements (" in fila! di corsa! - apearta! Passo! - Spiegata! Gruppo mitragliatori to the right or to the left or 1st or 2nd weapon to the left or to the right" etc.),
Signals are used to increase or tighten intervals and distances and it is pointed out when and whether to begin or to continue the bounds. - Every other movement is performed by imitation, or initiative,
The squad is reunited with the platoon, forming in closed order, to the command of " adunata ".

assists the comandante di squadra in directing the action of one of the f. m. if the group mitragliatori is divided into weapon sections.

214. The discipline and effectiveness of the fire, the intelligent use of the ground, the promptness of the movements, the impetuosity of the assault or of the counterassault, the tenacious drive to reach at whatever cost the objective, these constitute, for the squad, the best guarantee of success.

TACTICAL GROUND RECONNAISSANCE

215. The squad can execute the functions of the reconnaissance patrols.

For employment, see the following section for squad reconnaissance (n. 330 and following).

SECURITY

216. The squadra fucilieri can be used: normally, to establish an observation and signaling position (n. 55); exceptionally, to furnish one security patrol (as a rule 4-5 riflemen) or, sometimes, to assume its functions (nu. 49 and 347).

APPROACH

217. In the beginning when the platoon assumes open formation and the squad, to advance, has to choose the route and cover so the formation is less vulnerable.

The movement is regulated on the lead squad (determined at the time by the comandante di plotone), without fixed alignment, or rigidity of intervals and distances.

Small open lines [areas], beaten by fire of artillery, are crossed, by only bounds, the whole squad in open order formation.

The men in the rear, or if the squad is in open order, those [men] on the extreme right and left, protect the flank of the unit and maintain line of sight with the adjoining squads.

218. The comandante di squadra:

commands the squad and assures it maintains the formation ordered, from time in time, from the commander of platoon or choice of initiative;

imposes order from his own men, cohesion, silence; if the ground, for particular difficulties, forces him to close-up or to excessively open the intervals or distances, insures that the squad returns to the normal intervals and distances as soon as possible;

with simple signs or a low voice he corrects, he reprimands, he adopts every cunning device that is valuable to maintain a hidden march, both in the respects of ground observation as well as aerial;

if the squad is subject to fire of artillery or machineguns, without halting, he makes it assume a less vulnerable formation (i.e. apearta or spiegata, in the case of squad in fila);

during halts, he also concerns himself to maintaining the squad under cover, he chooses in the immediate an area favorable for observation, holding ready to enter action in the direction and on the objective that was assigned to him;

in the choice of the postings for the *f. m.*, he prefers those [posts] dominant over the ground on which the riflemen will move (banks, embankments, etc.);

he constantly maintains a [line of sight] connection with the comandante di plotone;

if there is danger to be struck by chemical weapons, he orders the men to place their respirator in « posizione di allarme » [position of alarm] (suspended on the breast);

in case of losses (wounded or dead), he prepares for the recovery of the material, particularly of the ammunition. For the transportation of the wounded he provides the appropriate personnel; any man of the squad can be employed to such purpose.

ATTACK

219. When the **attack is imminent** the comandante di squadra receives, orally, from the platoon the orders and the indications for the action of the unit.

Particularly:

assignment [mission];

objective clearly visible (as a rule the same as that of the platoon or part of it);

direction (if necessary).

220. The **comandante** must therefore resolve problem that is fundamental for successful actions: *to arrive on time and in strength against the enemy.*

Therefore:

orientation (to see the place to be attacked and the ground to be crossed? which line of reference on the ground to use for maintaining direction? where to effect the first bound?);

decides which formation to assume (group *f. m.* united or separated; united to the right or to the left);

moves to follow [another unit] or [upon] an agreed upon signal.

221. As long as it is possible, the squad advances with **ample bounds, without firing**, facilitated by the fire of the artillery and the supporting weapons. When the advance has to make use the fire of the [squad] weapons, the *f. m.* enters into action.

222. When employing the gruppo mitragliatori, is worthwhile to alternate the movement and the fire of the two weapons.

The gruppo fucilieri regulates its movement on the weapons in action, only worrying to maintain direction, to effect the bounds with the greatest possible promptness, and concealment. [What is meant is that the gruppo fucilieri doesn't fire as it moves forward, allowing the supporting weapons and the *f. m.* to provide covering fire. The gruppo fucilieri focuses on bounding forward using cover/concealment to close with the enemy.]

223. When face with light hostile reaction, it can be worthwhile to coordinate movement and fire within the platoon.

In such cases, while a squad performs the fire with their respective gruppo mitragliatori, another one [squad] advances. [Here the gruppo fucilieri is adding their fire to the *f. m.*]

224. As the distance decreases man by man from the enemy, the bounds are shorter and the squad advances in groups of men.

To assure continuous fire, or to increase its volume, it might be necessary to add the fire of the riflemen to the fire of the *f. m.* [What is implied is the gruppo fucilieri is no longer moving as a group, but as rushes by 2-3 men at a time. The fucilieri which are not moving add their fire to cover the bounding men.].

225. When about 30 or 40 paces from the objective, the riflemen, together with those of the other squad of the platoon [an Italian infantry platoon has only two squads], throws their hand grenades and, to the cry of « Savoia », they launch the assault.

226. The comandante di squadra conducts the assault with his men; but not to exclude that, he fails, that touches the bravest among the infantrymen as an example to his comrades to assure the success of the squad.

227. The fucilieri mitragliatori, only stopping their fire only for safety reasons, advance in the immediate success of the fucilieri.

228. If they don't succeed in reaching the objective, the squad facilitates with fire the progress of those adjoining [squads], ready to exploit every favorable circumstance to resume the advance.

229. In the attack with the support of tanks, the squad follows, in open order formation, the tanks that operate to its front. To the moral and material effect produced by the tanks the squad must add their fires and actions, without breaks in continuity, to the decisive assault.

The commander of squad has to know how to exploit and merge the action [of the squad with those] of the tanks without waiting to see them [the tanks] eliminate all resistance that was present, and at the cost of any sacrifice, to come to the defense of the same tanks if these are immobilized by damage or other [reason].

DEFENSE

230. fundamental principle: **the few withstand against the many.**

231. The squad can be employed:
in the security zone;
on the position of resistance.

232. In the security zone, it is lined up, initially, to the front edge (L. S.) [line of security].

The **comandante**, based on the orders received, prepares:
Selects the positions for the *f. m.* with the criterion to act at as long a range as possible and to be able to mass the fire of the two weapons on the primary lines that greatly facilitate the attack;
to position the riflemen to observe all the area assigned.

233. To a hostile attack, the squad develops the action using fire, massing their fire to engage the more numerous or threatening hostile groups.

This action must be conducted with the maximum violence, avoiding nevertheless to becoming engage in a close struggle. When the assignment is completed, the squad withdrawals.

234. The withdrawal happens:

on order of the comandante di plotone;
executed by squad,
to positions previously established and on a direction
fixed with the criterion not to hamper the action of fire of the
defensive positions and the artillery.

235. With successive bounds, logically continuing their
own action, the squad withdraws by bounds to the P. R.
[position of resistance] in its designated place.

236. On the position of resistance the squad can constitute:
a centro di fuoco [fire center] either forward or
blocking.

237. In principle, in the deployment:
the **gruppo mitragliatori** is consolidated;
the **gruppo fucilieri** is divided into sections, on the
wings, with the particular assignment of overseeing the areas
between adjoining centers.

238. The assignments of the centro di fuoco result from an
order regarding, particularly:
the sectors of action (normal-possible) of every *f. m.*;
the formalities of welding together with the other
advanced centers or of supporting of those in front;
the directions for the automatic blocking (fires at night
or during natural or artificial fog);
the security measures (vendettas or patrols) and the
modes of alarm (conventional signals with artifices etc.).

239. The **comandante di squadra**:
Knows the anticipated plan;

conducts to the end with maximum alacrity the duties
of strengthening, camouflage, and concealment that have been
ordered by the platoon commander platoon;
take the necessary steps, if necessary, to clear the fields
of fire;
minutely set on the ground the automatic blocking fires
of every *f. m.*;
during the enemy attack; insures the timeliness of the
intervention, the discipline of fires, and the continued
observation.

240. The **vice-comandante di squadra**:
assists the commander of squad in the setup of the
center and is in the control of the security;
supervises the restocking of the ammunition.

241. Delineates during the enemy attack:
the **centers of forward fires**, the sector limits and in
the arcs of effectiveness of the weapons, engaging to the front,
defeating time over time the more numerous or dangerous
hostile forces;
the centers of blocking fires superimpose the fires of
their own weapons to that of the forward centers;
with the scheme fixed from the plan of the fires,
guarding spaces between centers to quickly intervene against
hostile elements that succeeded in infiltration.

242. To the hostile assault the squad hand bombs and side
arms; if turned or bypassed, it defends in place to the last man
and the last cartridge.

243. To face an attack supported by tanks the squad:

in the moment of the penetration, to reduce the readily individual [tanks], maintaining cover;
if possible, to act against tracks, loopholes etc.;

if bypassed by the wave of the tanks to take up, without hesitation and with the maximum vigor, the fire action against the attacking infantry.

244. RESTOCKING AMMUNITION.

To take the necessary steps to resupply ammunition during the fight:

with those of the men out of the fight and with ineffective weapons;

with direct restocking (by means of the reinforcements from the company), prepared by the commander, based on the applications of the comandante di plotone;

exceptionally, by means of the ammunition carriers, to direct them to withdrawal to the ammunition place [trains] of battalion or by exchanging with the reinforcements from the company.

In the defense, the individual issue is normally increased for the weapons.

TRAINING

GENERALITIES

245. *The training of the squad for the fight.*

is fundamental for the greatest operational effect of the large units;

*it [the squad] must not be considered as a part of the program of education, on the contrary it is a **substantial activity of the whole cycle**, also it is inserted progressively in*

the training of the platoon, of the company and of the battalion;

*it [the training] is **personally taken care of by the comandante di compagnia**, assisted by the junior officers and the noncommissioned officers;*

*it is **initiated** as soon as the fucilieri has reached a degree of technical knowledge of the weapons and have performed some shooting lessons.*

246. *Large areas of ground are not necessary for training the squad; it requires, instead, the greatest possible **varieties** of locations, environments, and procedures.*

247. *In every lesson:*

a) *the **enemy** (supposed or represented) has to be present*

with his observation,

with his fire,

with his movement.

b) *the action of the squad is always directed toward an **objective** to be reached.*

248. *Particular care must be taken to instill the understanding of the decisive importance of continuous fire in the attack and the simplicity of the means [plan, maneuver] used.*

*The instructor has to insist that **continuous fire**, in the squad, doesn't always means **continuous fire** of every weapon at all times.*

249. *For the squad, continuous fire means; a weapon in action or in degree to perform the fire under good conditions of effectiveness to neutralize an enemy center of fire and to*

facilitate the movement of the other weapons and the gruppo fucilieri.

250. *The instructor also must insist that the f. m. fire is always performed in bursts of a few rounds, immediately stopping when the enemy desists from firing or moving.*

*At the end of the training they [f. m.] must reach a level of **automatic actions** in starting and stopping their fire.*

251. *During the training, one must frequently practiced the alarms for airplanes and, desultorily, also the alarm for gas.*

APPLICATIVE EXERCISES

252. Reconnaissance and security:

appreciation of the ground to the objective of the movement and the observation (selection of covered routes, to those partly covered, and those that are easier);

survey of distances objectives varied, under different conditions of environment;

evaluation at distances of marching and stationary units;

reconnaissance of isolated houses, inhabited [areas], wooded underbrush etc.;

reaction of the reconnaissance patrols against enemy elements of inferior - equal - superior - strength;

construction of a place of observation and signaling and its operation in the cases of attack from fast elements (cavalry-bicyclist-tanks etc.);

transmission of information (always in writing).

253. Approach:

selection of the formations and adjustments to the distances and intervals due to the varied types of ground; maintenance of the direction (in the daytime, at night, with the fog, in the woods);

hiding from aerial and ground observation;

training to complete rapid long movements;

immediate reaction against surprises to the flank or rear.

254. Attack:

occupation of the base of departure;

movement and bounds under enemy fire (use of cover);

selection of posts for f. m.;

discipline of fire and the use of initiative;

continuity and coordination of the movement and fire.

preparation and execution of the assault;

organization of the defense of the conquered objective;

cooperation with tanks (exploitation of the action of the

tanks; defense of the tanks;

restocking ammunition.

255. Resistance:

action of observation and reducing [the enemy] in Z.

S.;

maintenance of the direction in the withdraw from the Z. S. (bounds of varied lengths, use of initiate, anticipating others);

execution of the work to strengthen a center of fire (emplacement for f. m. - individual positions - trenches - barbed wire);

camouflage and concealing of the defense;







moving rapidly towards the objectives and the positioning of the f. m.;

*assured manner of a good execution of the automatic
blocking fires;
counterassault;
restocking ammunition.*

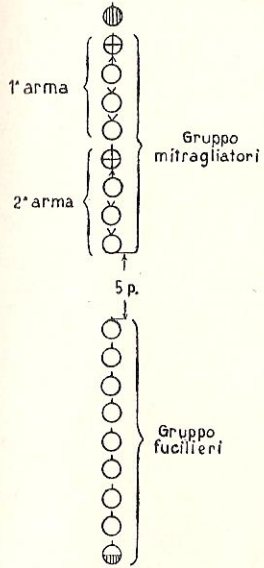
SQUADRA FUCILIERI

TAV. A.

Segni convenzionali

-  Comandante di squadra
-  Vice comandante di squadra
-  Capo arma
-  Porta arma
-  Porta munizioni
-  Fucilieri

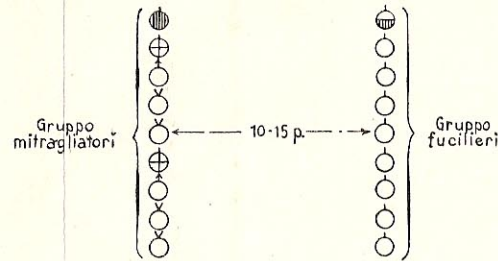
In fila
Fig. 1



Aperta

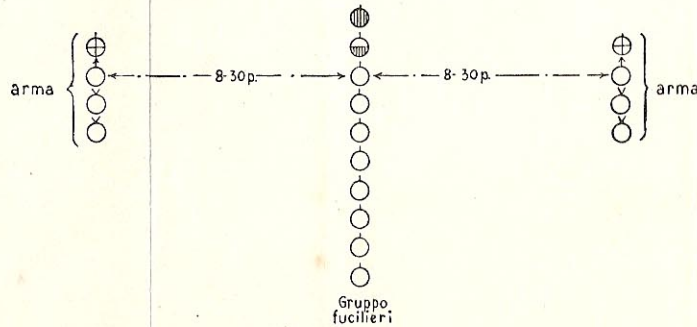
Fig. 2

a) con il gruppo mitragliatori riunito, a sinistra o a destra del gruppo fucilieri



oppure

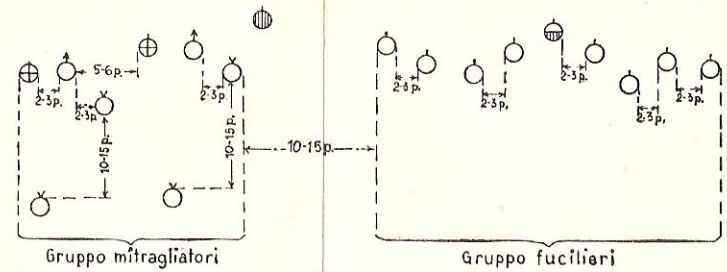
b) con il gruppo mitragliatori scisso in nuclei di un'arma ciascuno



Spiegata

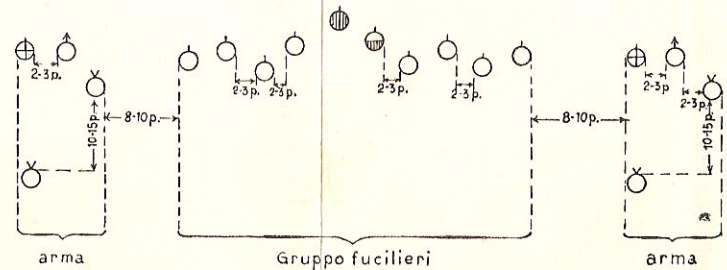
Fig. 3

a) con il gruppo mitragliatori riunito, a sinistra o a destra del gruppo fucilieri



oppure

b) con il gruppo mitragliatori scisso in nuclei di un'arma ciascuno



NOTA — Gli intervalli e distanze indicate non hanno alcunchè di tassativo; possono quindi essere variati anche notevolmente, per ordine di comandanti di squadra o di plotone. I portamunizioni, quando necessario, possono essere disposti in linea con i serventi delle armi.

Analogamente dicasi per il comandante di squadra, il posto del quale è dove meglio si può regolare l'azione del reparto.