

## DEFENCE OF A VILLAGE

The defence of a Town or Village may fall under one of the following three categories:-

- (i) Hasty defence and in continual touch with the enemy.
- (ii) Hasty defence out of immediate touch with the enemy.
- (iii) Deliberate defence - i.e. More time for preparation and a possible stated period to be held in defence.

The main principles to be observed in dealing with these different conditions are, in the case of:-

- (A) Part of the force must be forward to cover the remainder, whilst defences are being hastily prepared, this part of the force afterwards either dropping back into defences or reserve. These hasty defences should all be so sited, that in time, they might be connected up to form a permanent defensive position.
- (ii) However hasty, and whatever the situation with regard to the enemy, local protection must be maintained during all the defensive construction. Each sub-unit in this case is responsible for carrying out its own local protection, and all weapons must be at hand, loaded magazines on, and all ready to be put into immediate action within the partially constructed position at any time.
- (iii) No work shall be started before a carefully detailed and co-ordinated plan has been considered, then a priority table of tasks should be made and work should at all times be controlled to cover these tasks in the time available. Whilst this plan and reconnaissance is being done, all ranks should collect all barres, buckets, tools and materials that might be of use, and a central heap made for handy distribution to working parties.

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The most probable form of defence of a village that a Command is likely to be engaged upon is the occasion following the sweeping through of a hostile town or village and the securing of some by putting the outskirts in a state of defence to be held against counter-attacks from outside the village.

In formulating the plan of defence as to whether to use existing buildings as opposed to ground defences outside the town, the following must be considered:-

### (A) TYPE OF BUILDINGS

Brick Built.  
Tinder Built.  
Closeness of Buildings.  
Narrowness of Streets.  
Clearly defined perimeter.

(A number of straggling out-buildings, not incorporated in the defence scheme would enable an enemy to creep closer and get into useful cover; the demolition or turning into booby traps of any such buildings must be considered.)

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### (ii) THE TYPE AND NUMBER OF ARMS OF BOMB

- (a) If well equipped with artillery or air, houses must be strong as they will be ranged on.
- (b) If only likely that S.A.A. will be used, protection and view probably better from buildings than from ground defences.

### (iii) TYPE OF GROUND.

Before committing the defence plan to ground defences to be constructed outside the village, the case of digging must be considered - i.e. Sandy or loamy ground as opposed to rocky sub-strata.

### (iv) PROTECTION.

The shape of the ground must be considered, but in this context, a really strong defensible position need not have an extensive field of fire. Sometimes a good field of fire over only 100 yards is sufficient.

In siting any position, this position must:-

- (a) Permit the most effective use of the weapons.
- (b) Have protection from enemy's weapons.
- (c) Be inconspicuous.

The stages of construction of any defensive position either in buildings or ground should take the following sequence:-

#### 1st STAGE

Constructing obstacles (wire, road-blocks etc.)  
Weapon pits or loop holes in walls.  
Clearing field of fire.  
Manning of S.P.s.

#### 2nd STAGE

Alternative weapon pits or loop holes, crawl trenches or inter-building trenches.

#### 3rd STAGE

Further obstacles - extensive crawl trench communications.

#### 4th STAGE

Widening of all diggings to 3 ft. - drainage - small shelters, both weather and splinter-proof.  
Reinforcing and sand-bagging inside buildings.

#### 5th STAGE

Widening and improving, deepening and rivetting trenches.  
General camouflaging of buildings in defence, and improvement of inter-communication within the buildings.

In building up a defence plan, the following headings should all be considered and put into effect where applicable:-

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1. If in houses, alternative outside positions should be made to go to if building is destroyed or fired.
2. Only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  brick walls ( $13\frac{1}{2}$ " ) are bullet proof. One brick walls (9" ) may be made bullet proof by packing mattresses or furniture filled with earth or rubble against the wall.
3. Firing positions should be back from the windows - if possible.
4. All glass should be broken out of windows before taking up positions.
5. Communications should be improved within the buildings by the knocking of holes in the walls etc.
6. Provision should be made before the battle commences for earth and water within the buildings.
7. Food and water (drinking) should be stored in buildings. (It may not be easy or possible to bring these in once committed.)
8. As far as possible, sanitation and medical arrangements should be sited within the buildings.
9. Walls should not be fired over but loop holed made.
10. The loop holes should be camouflaged by whatever means are possible from enemy view - bushes etc, placed over loop holes.
11. Defences must include places from which grenades can be thrown.
12. Full use must be made of road blocks and obstacles, and all such road blocks and obstacles should be covered by fire.
13. All inflammable objects (haystacks etc.) should, if possible, be burnt before the attack commences.
14. Wire obstacles should be sited outside windows and doors to prevent enemy from getting too close - (See P.S.P.D.)
15. Every advantage must be taken of provision of trip wires, booby traps etc.
16. In siting barbed wire defences, these should be such that the wire can be unrolled by automatic fire and fired lines laid on for smoke or darkness.
17. S.O.S. must be arranged and understood by all ranks.
18. Stress must be made on camouflaging every position.
19. False positions to attract enemy fire should be considered.

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20. All manned positions should have alternative positions sited near, and lines of approach to these positions reconnoitred.
21. If possible, automatic weapon pits should be protected by barbed wire and out of distance of bomb throwing range.
22. During the hours of darkness, consideration must be given for the provision of out-posts - standing patrols etc.
23. Sentry Boxes must be such that the sentry is kept alert, often changed, double sentries where possible, and generally all such sentries made to realize the importance of their task, and that possibly the lives of all their comrades are dependent on them during the period of their watch.
24. FINALE, and of the utmost importance comes the question of surprise, coupled with fire control.  
Rigid control in the withholding of fire to the last second can produce the greatest effect shattering of enemy morale.

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E.S.