

# The New Musketry Practice at Aldershot.

BY ALBERT H. BROADWELL.

[The Photographs by A. J. Johnson which illustrate this article have been submitted to several officers at head-quarters, who were good enough to express their entire satisfaction with them.]



CAPTAIN E. L. C. FEILDEN.



HE greatest lesson in warfare taught to any nation during the last thirty years has been learnt by Great Britain in South Africa; it has been a thorough lesson in shooting, and it is important to note, therefore, that the authorities at Aldershot have not been slow in taking advantage of the experience of the past two years in teaching our soldiers how to shoot straight.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE for June, 1901, contained an article entitled "A British Commando," describing Dr. Conan Doyle's civilians' rifle club at Undershaw.

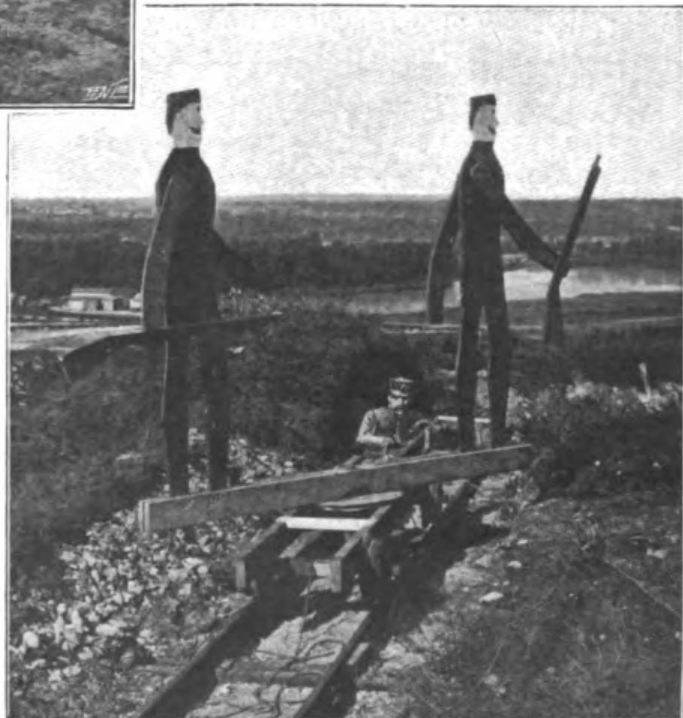
Vol. xxii.—99

Dr. Doyle may well be called the pioneer of civilian rifle clubs, for, ever since Lord Salisbury in his famous speech advised Englishmen to learn how to shoot, Dr. Doyle has given much of his spare time to the organization of a shooting club where bulls'-eyes rank before banking accounts.

The war in South Africa has demonstrated the fact that pretty sword exercises and cavalry charges *en masse* are things of the past so far as success in modern warfare is concerned, and *how to shoot* has become the great problem of the day.

What Dr. Doyle is doing for citizen rifle-shooting Aldershot is now doing for the Regulars on a more elaborate plan on the Ash Ranges at North Camp.

The Ash Ranges, under the supervision of Captain E. L. C. Feilden, to whom we are indebted for the arrangements which have made this article possible, have altered their appearance

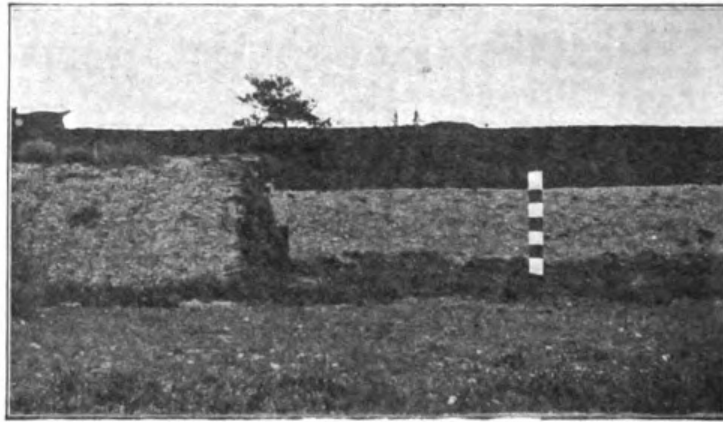


THE RUNNING MEN, SHOWING HOW THEY ARE WORKED FROM THE PIT.

in a startling and eminently practical manner.

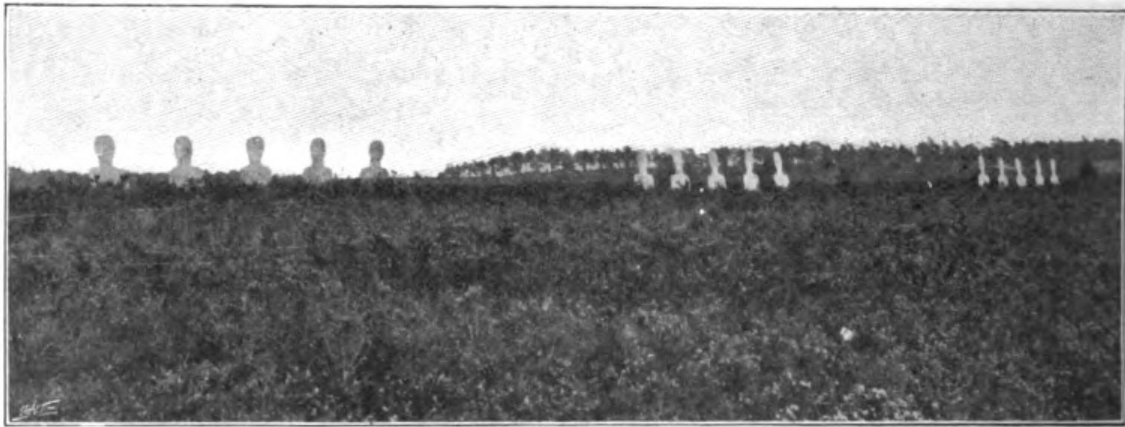
The British soldier has shot at regulation targets too long, and he is tired of the monotony of it. See him on the Ash Ranges to-day and you will

find him full of fun, of enthusiasm. Why? Because he sees a head in the heather and



THE SAME FIGURES ON THE CREST OF THE HILL SOME 400 YARDS AWAY.

the sport is to get a shot home before they are gone. That is what Tommy never had before; it rouses his latent energies and awakens that spirit of sport which is ever ready to show itself when opportunity offers. No better ground could possibly be found for the purpose, for the Ash Ranges



HEADS AND SHOULDERS AMONG THE HEATHER.

a moving enemy on the crest of the hill. Up they pop, down they go, in a twinkling;

comprise a series of kopjes and valleys which lend themselves admirably to the



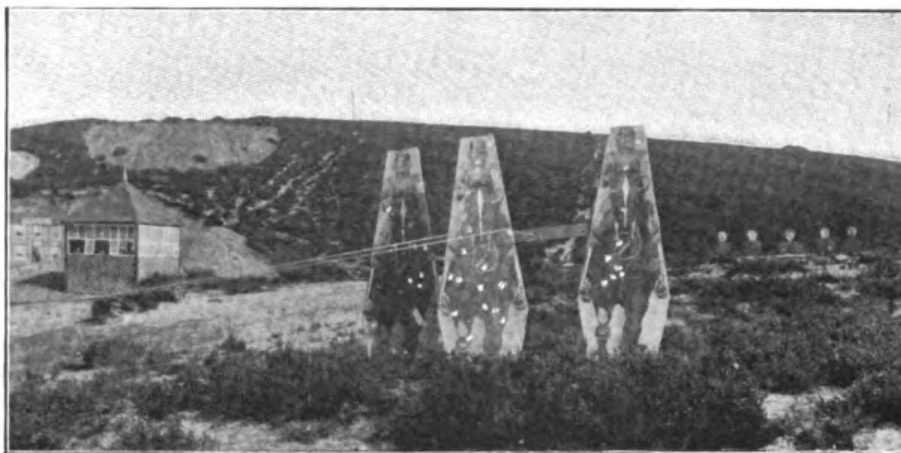
THE DUMMY MAXIM AND WORKING PIT.



THE SIGNALLER.

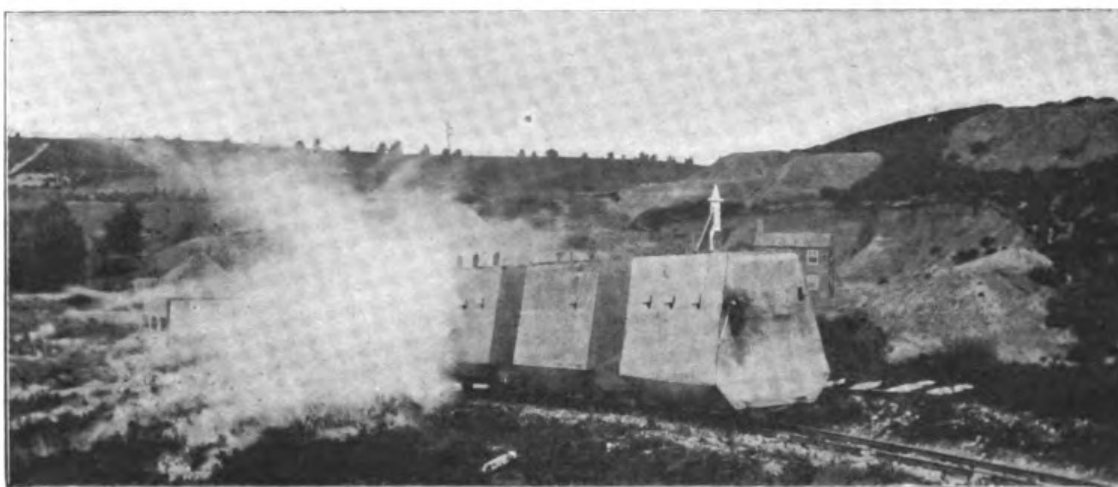


object in view. The various moving targets which are scattered over the field of operation are designed to represent the dispositions of a defending force prepared to meet an idea of a field-day on the ranges we will imagine, for the time being, that we are part and parcel of the attacking force. Forward! march! We scatter and become



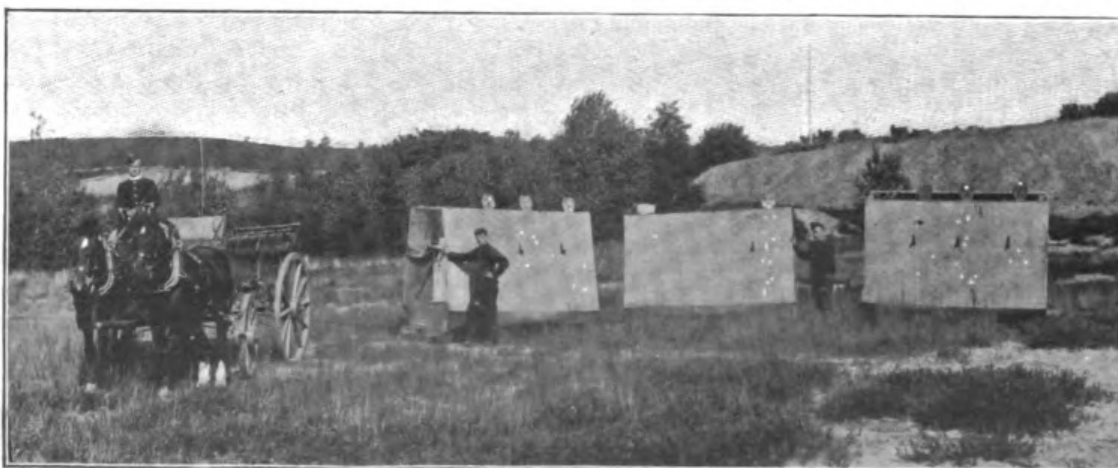
THE DUMMY CAVALRY—NOTE THE ROPES WHICH KEEP THE FIGURES STRAIGHT.

tions are designed to represent the dispositions of a defending force prepared to meet an idea of a field-day on the ranges we will imagine, for the time being, that we are part and parcel of the attacking force. Forward! march! We scatter and become

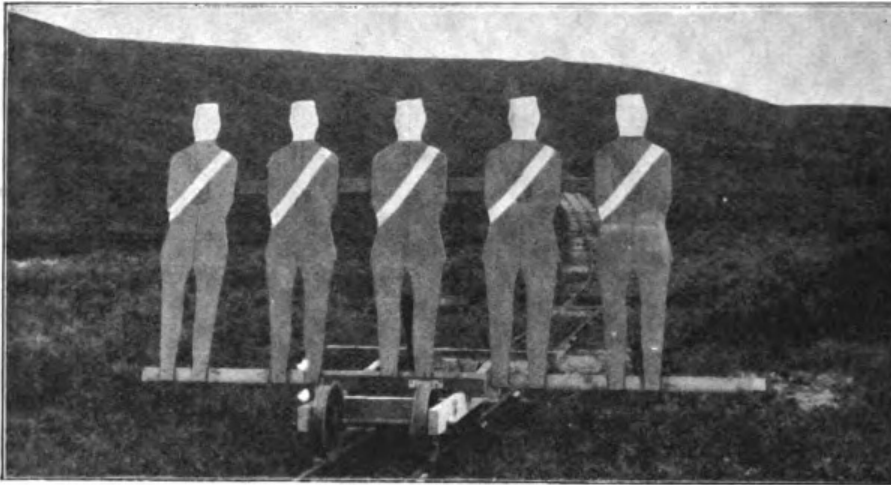


THE DUMMY ARMoured TRAIN SPITS FIRE.

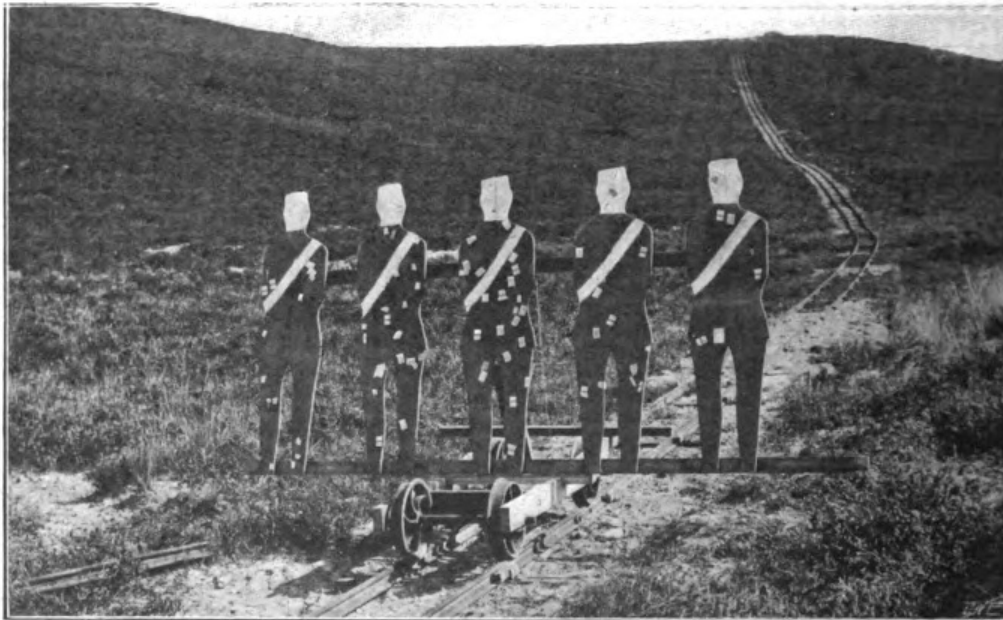
an enemy invading the ranges from the south. In order to give our readers an idea of a field-day on the ranges we will imagine, for the time being, that we are part and parcel of the attacking force. Forward! march! We scatter and become units; that is to say, units of a long, straggling line of creeping, ever-advancing foes! We



THE ARMoured TRAIN "GOING HOME." THE WHITE PATCHES INDICATE THE HITS AFTER A FIELD-DAY.



THE TRAIN-WRECKING PARTY BEFORE—



AND AFTER THEIR CHARGE DOWN THE HILL ON A TROLLY.

avail ourselves of every particle of cover. What is that on the crest of the hill? The enemy? Who said the enemy? Why, yes, surely, there they are again. Watch those two men running along the crest of the hill — but before the words are out they are gone again!

Someone on our left has taken a pot-shot at them. A hit! — no, it isn't. They are there once more. Let us get nearer. On we creep; we reach the coveted hill; we make a dash for the top, and lo! before



THE BOER INNKEEPER.

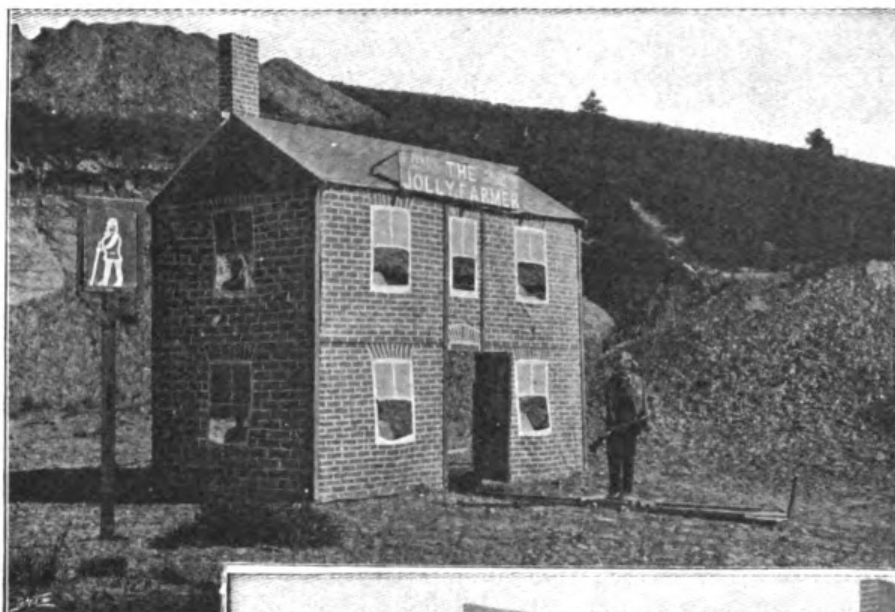
heather, and before we can take aim they are gone again! The magazines are brought into use and we pepper away for our lives. The heads appear again and are lost to view a moment after.

We reach the hill. Behold a signaller! He waves his flag, evidently sending a message to his commander in rear, reporting our advance. He's gone — our excitement grows to a tremendous pitch. There he is again! Ping, ping, ping — he's down! But, alas, it is not the rifle that

us are the dummy figures of the enemy. On our right we detect a Maxim ready to fire. The gunner pops up and down behind the breech. "Shoot him if you can, boys!" — and the peppering begins.

Then, without a moment's notice, heads and shoulders appear in the





THE BOER INN.

has done it, but the man in a protecting-pit behind, who has worked the life-like dummy. We advance cautiously. Five hundred yards ahead there is a house — a Boer inn. We intend to capture it, but we are not there yet. We have first to face a cavalry charge. The intrepid horsemen are

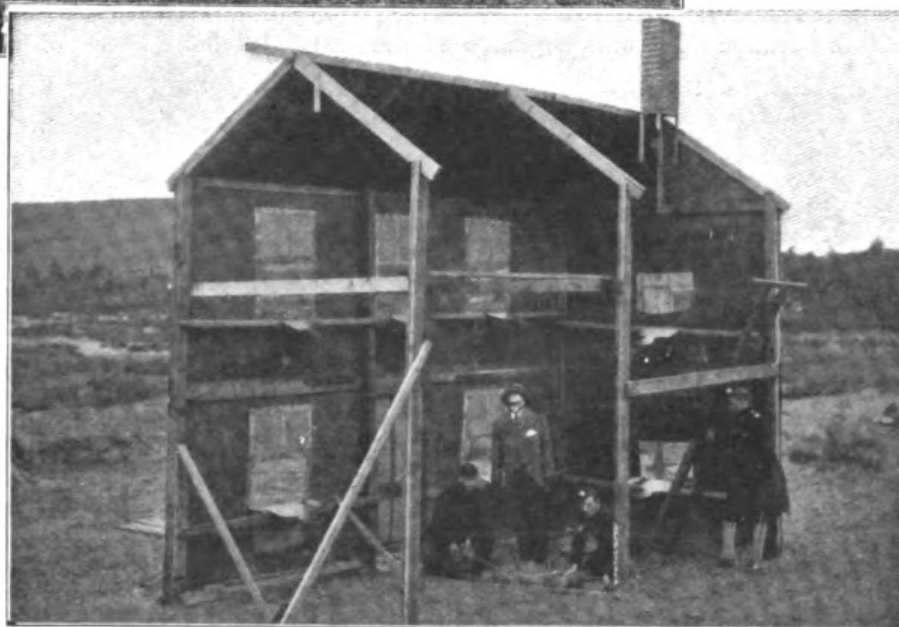
dummies too, but none the less are swift of motion. Note the ropes which give them life. We give the mounted men a lesson. Look at the white patches, each of which denotes a bullet mark, and you will say that we have made good practice to-day.

We must get to the inn at any price ; it must be stormed. We crawl again, down hill, behind hillocks, across ditches and ravines. But what is this? Take cover. A roar and a rumble—it is the armoured train! With a shriek it dashes across the valley and spits fire at us as it goes.

A party of the enemy has been sent to wreck the line as soon as the train has passed. They tear down the hill in front of us and disappear from view. They have had a bad time. Look at their poor dummy

bodies. But, see, they are up again for a few seconds near the signal-box. What is that loud explosion? Halloo! They have succeeded; yes, the line is blown up. They were gallant fellows, but they did not know the value of taking cover.

We do, and on we creep. There's a man

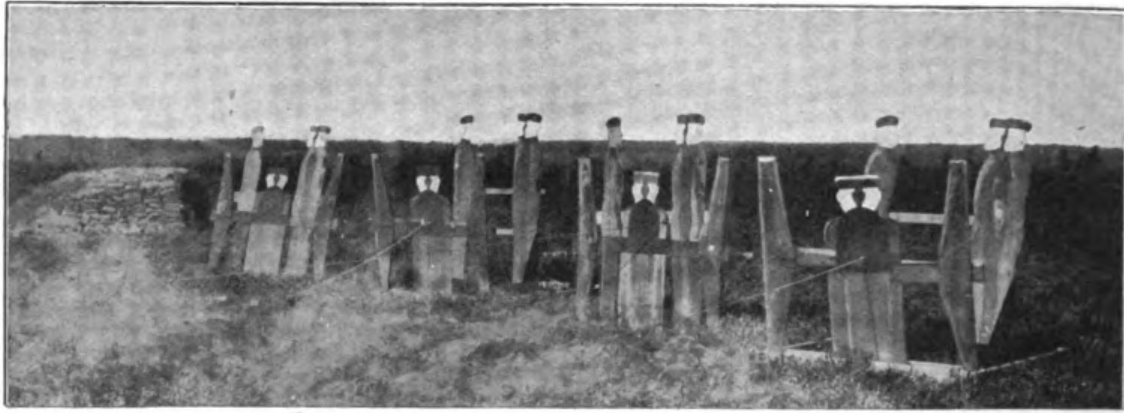


THE BOER INN—BEHIND THE SCENES.

coming out of the inn with a gun—probably the landlord. Steady, boys! Bang! bang!!



THE PIT, WITH MEN WHO "WORK" THE INNKEEPER.



THE DUMMY BATTERY.

We've got him! No, he turns tail and enters the house again. We do our best, however, and give him a parting shot in the back just as he gains shelter.

As we advance we obtain a glance of the

for we have done uncommonly well, but we want to come again.

Taking the matter seriously, too much importance cannot be attached to this new style of field firing; it is what our soldiers

require—unknown ranges, hidden targets, appearing and disappearing in unexpected places, representing an enemy, in place of the old-fashioned large black and white targets. It also gives an interest which was formerly lacking. Let us hope that some similar kind of range will be constructed in every



THE ELECTRIC SWITCHES, BY MEANS OF WHICH THE GROUND MINES ARE FIRED TO REPRESENT SHOTS FROM THE BATTERY.

back of this structure, and we note with satisfaction that we have left our mark on the walls—canvas walls—and on the dummy figures that appeared at short intervals at the windows. We climb another kopje and come under the fire of a battery, just visible in the far distance, craftily concealed under the shadow of a wood. We hear an explosion; it is the 15-pounders opening fire.

Halloa! One of its deadly messages drops and explodes less than twenty yards in front of us. Shrapnel covers our advance, but undaunted we move ahead, unswerving, towards the coveted goal.

We find out afterwards that the battery fire was not so deadly as might have been anticipated by anyone who did not know that the bursting shells were nothing more than ground mines fired, as we advanced, by electricity from the switch shown on this page.

So our illusion is over. We shake hands,

district in the country, and follow the lead which Aldershot has given us.



THE EXPLOSION OF A GROUND MINE.

Original from  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN