

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~


No. 160-A.

Not to be taken into Front Line Trenches.

Issued to include Platoon Commanders.

SUPPLEMENT TO INSTRUCTIONS
FOR THE
OFFENSIVE COMBAT
OF
SMALL UNITS

ADAPTED FROM THE FRENCH
AT
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
FRANCE

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General Headquarters American Expeditionary Forces, France.

April 1918.

The following pages are published for the information and guidance of all concerned. The deployments shown herein are suggestions only. They will not be considered as normal formations to be used in all circumstances. The formations adopted in a particular situation will be such as best meet the requirements of that situation.

By command of General PERSHING :

JAMES G. HARBORD,

Chief of Staff.

Official :

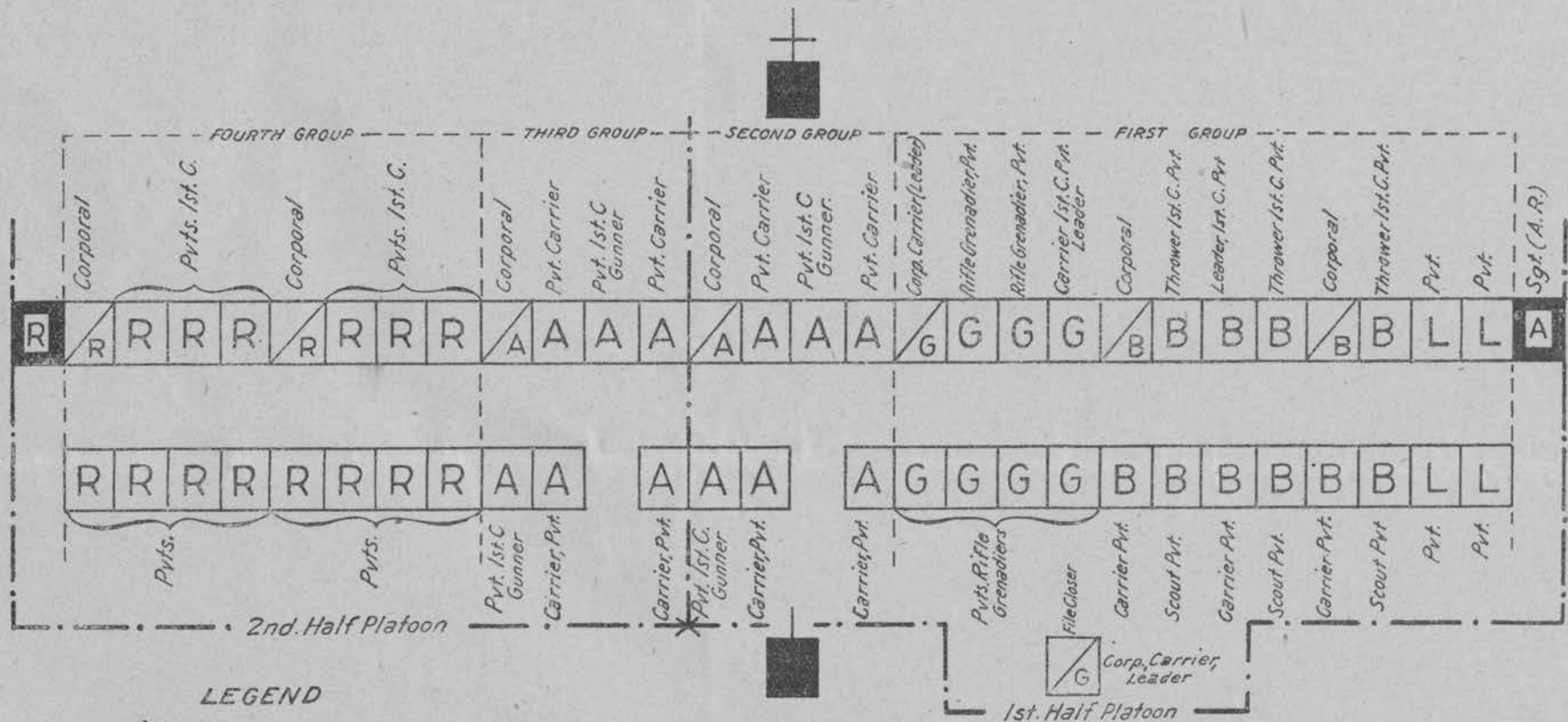
BENJ. ALVORD,

Adjutant General.

THE PLATOON

FORMATION IN LINE

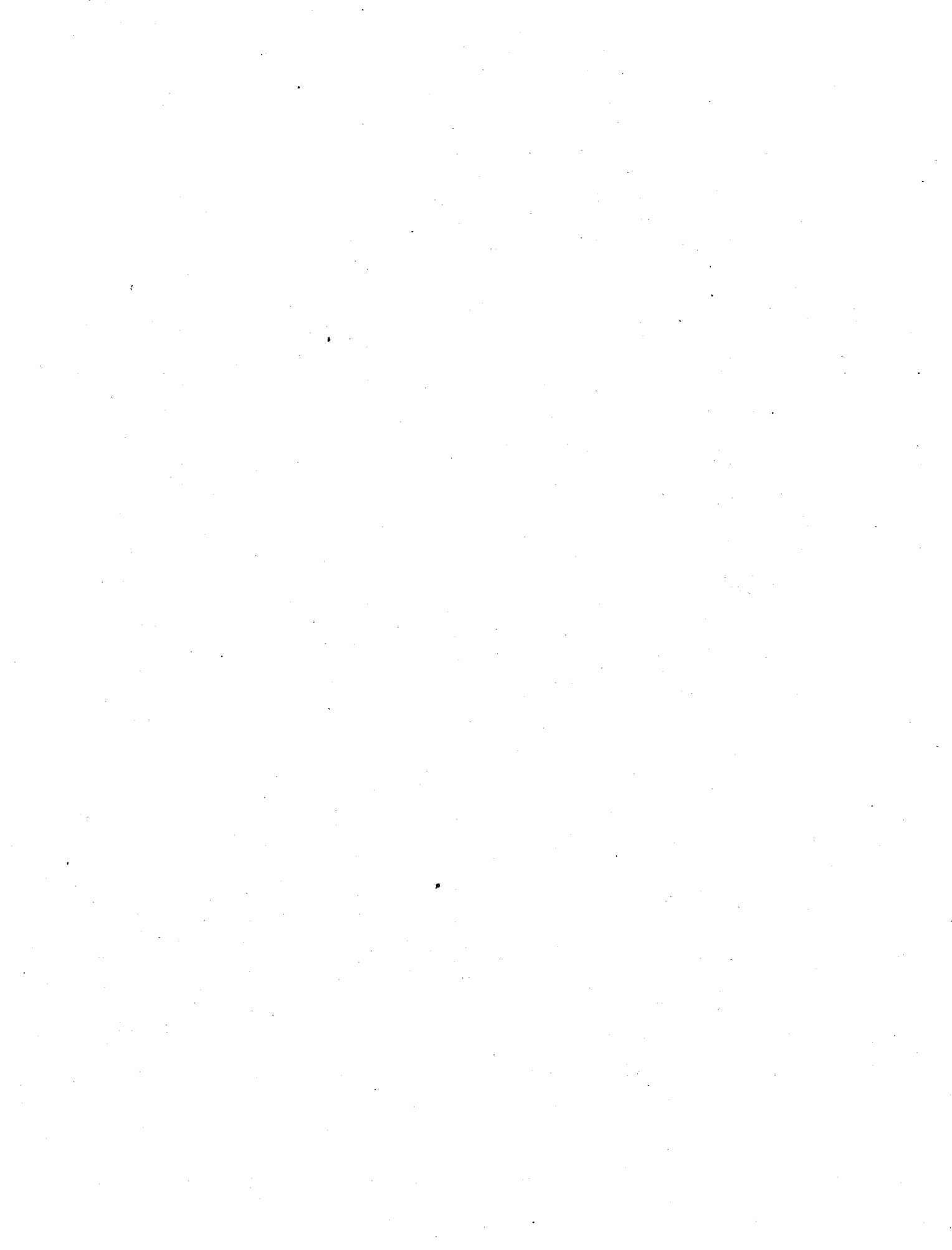
Intervals and Distances as in I. D. R.



LEGEND

- A Auto Rifleman
- B Hand Bomber
- G Rifle Grenadier
- L Runner
- R Rifleman
- ◻ Corporal
- ◻ Sergeant
- Lieutenant, Platoon Comdr.
- Sergeant Asst. to Platoon Comdr.

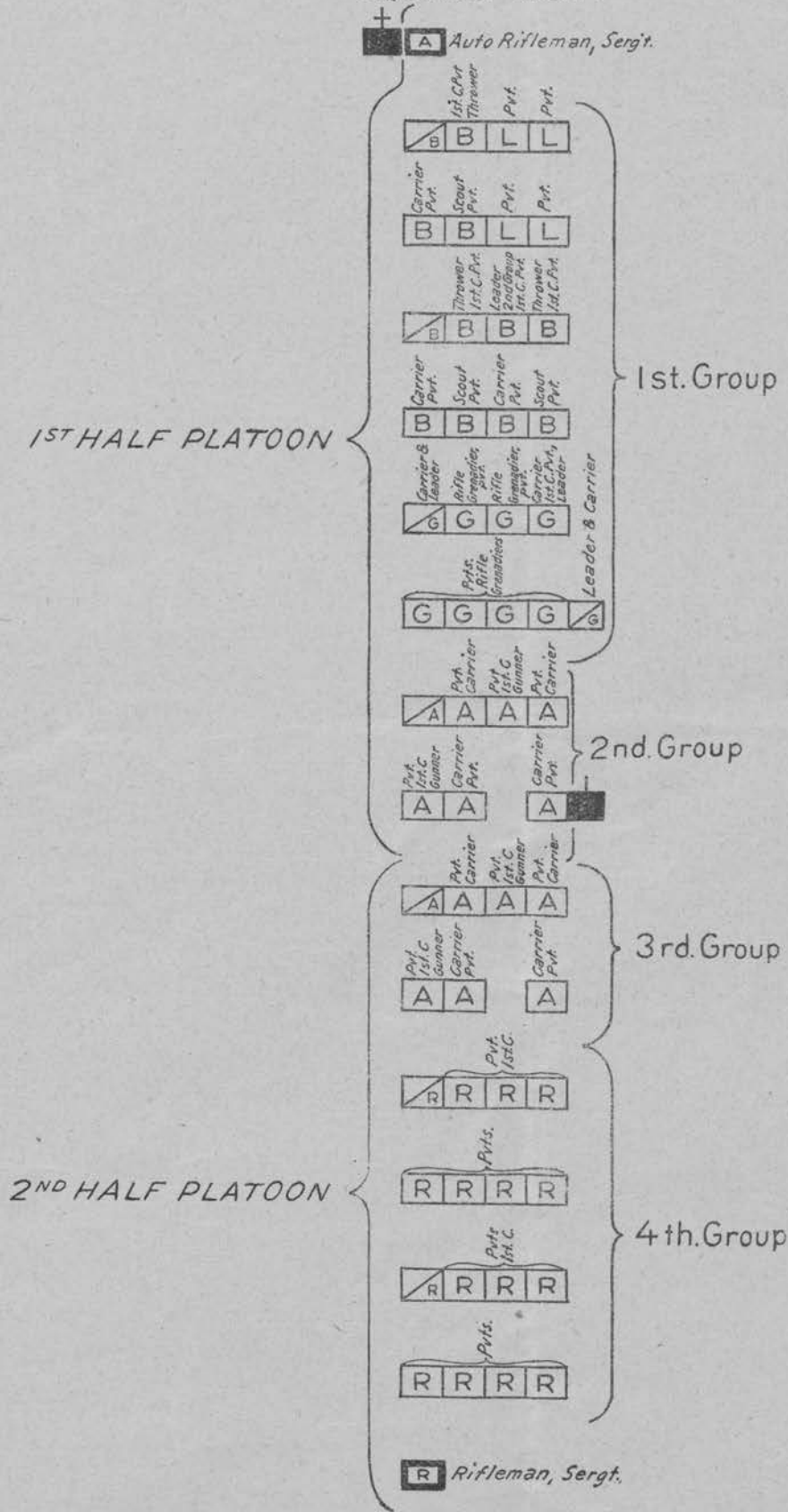
Total for Platoon 1 Lieut., Comdr.
1 Sergt., Asst. to Comdr.
57 Others



COLUMN OF SQUADS FROM LINE

Commands and means of execution same as prescribed in I. D. R.

SQUADS RIGHT



THE HALF-PLATOON.

The platoon is subdivided into half-platoons. Both half-platoons contain automatic riflemen. The addition of the rifle section usually completes one half-platoon and the addition of the hand bomber and rifle grenadier sections completes the other half-platoon. The half-platoon is not trained as a separate unit. It is commanded in action by the rifle sergeant or the automatic rifle sergeant.

Formation.

The formation of each of the half-platoons is as indicated on Plate 3.

The platoon being in column of squads (Plate 2) to form line of half-platoons, by command (a) or by signals (b) :

(a) The commands are : 1. *Line of half-platoons*, 2. MARCH. At the command of execution, each half-platoon at once begins to execute "left by twos", under the direction of the half-platoon leader who commands "FOLLOW ME". When the leading half-platoon has completed the movement "left by twos", it is halted by its leader; the rear half-platoon is conducted to the left front by its leader and is halted when it arrives abreast of the first half-platoon and at about thirty meters interval.

(b) Signals : Signal "Platoon", followed by two or three sweeps of the arm in a vertical plane perpendicular to the front. A company commander making use of this signal will first point towards the platoon or platoons affected.

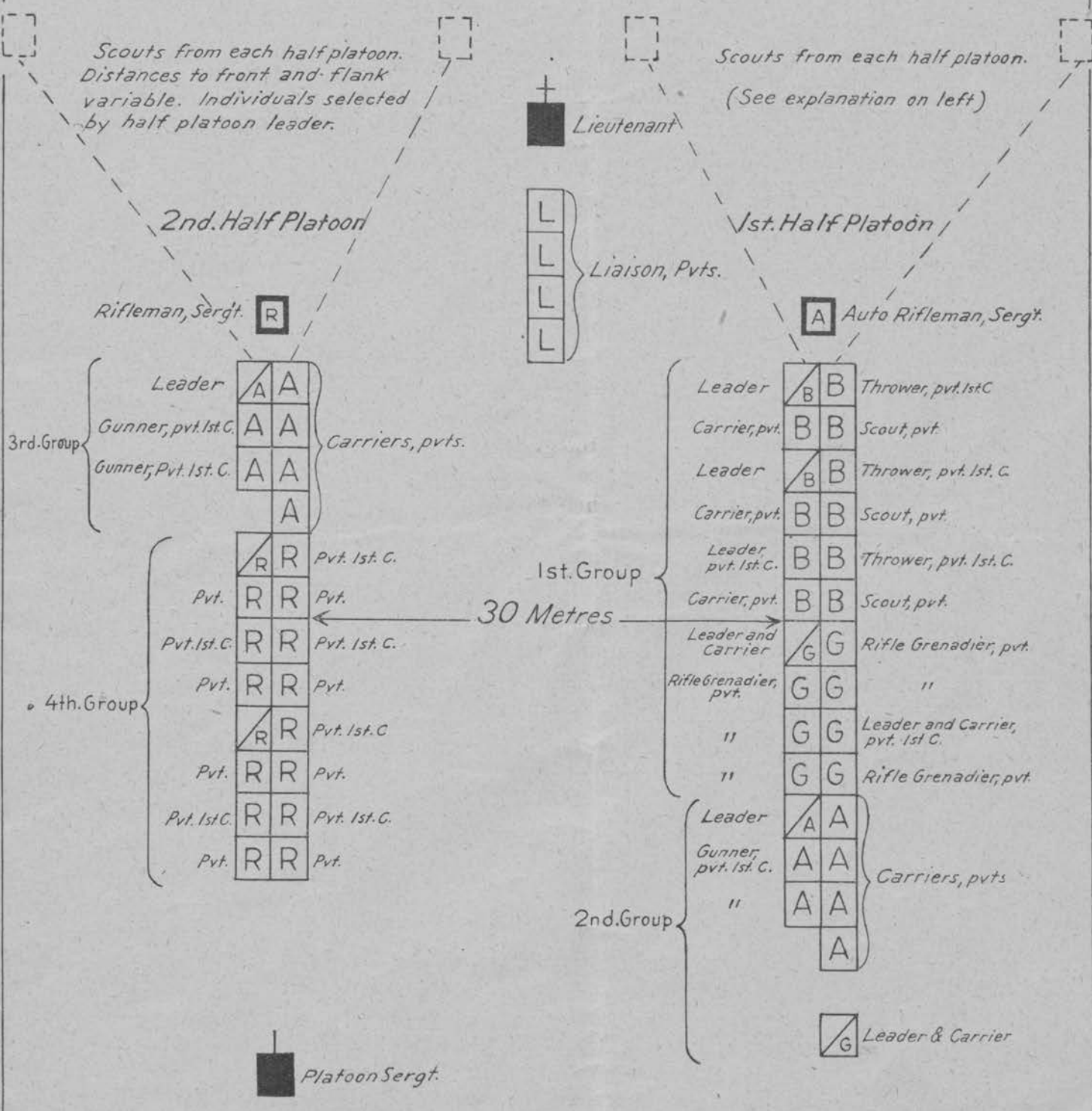
The above is the usual method of forming line of half-platoons. However, should it be desired to retain the half-platoon in column of squads or to form directly in column of files, the command "in column of squads" or "in column of files", as the case may be, is added to the preparatory command. These formations are unusual.

THE SECTION.

The section consists of riflemen, hand bombers, rifle grenadiers, or automatic riflemen. It is commanded by the appropriate non-commissioned officer prescribed in Tables of Organization, who is responsible, under the platoon commander, for its training as a section and for the training of the individual soldier in the use of his particular weapon. The training of each section as such is prescribed in the appropriate manual.

LINE OF HALF-PLATOONS

AN APPROACH FORMATION



THE COMBAT GROUP.

The platoon is formed in line of combat groups for the following purposes :
To minimize losses during an advance under artillery fire ; to facilitate control ; for ready deployment into the assault formation with any desired arrangement of weapons.

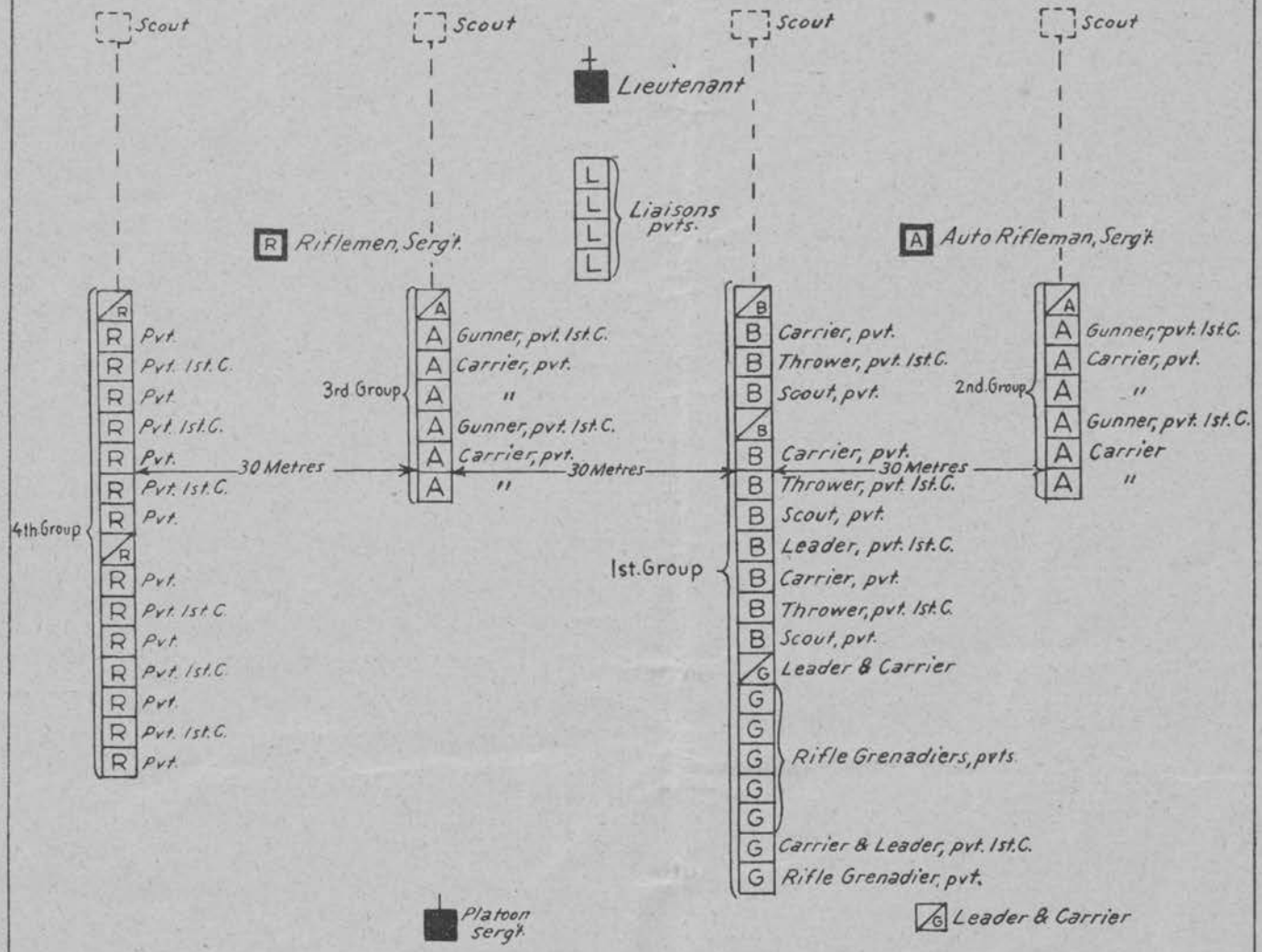
Being in line of half-platoons, to form line of combat groups :

(a) The commands are : 1. *Line of groups, automatics (right, left, center, flanks)*, 2. MARCH. At the command of execution each combat group, under the supervision of the leader of the half-platoon, executes left by file, and is conducted by the leading man of the group by the shortest line to its position (See Plate 4 for "Automatics right"). Each group must always maintain the arrangement of individuals shown in Plate 4, whatever the position of the particular group in the line of groups. The base unit for the movement is that group of the first half-platoon which marches straight to the front. The leader of the half-platoon halts the base unit when it has gained a convenient distance to the front.

(b) Signals : Signal "Squad", followed by "A" of the Morse code, made with the arm extended (indicating "Automatics"). Finish the signal by pointing towards the right for "Automatics right", towards the left for "Automatics left", by extending both arms laterally for "Automatics flanks", and by sweeping both arms forward and across the body for "Automatics center". This signal will be preceded by pointing successively to the platoons or half-platoons to execute the movement, the base element being indicated first.

LINE OF COMBAT GROUPS

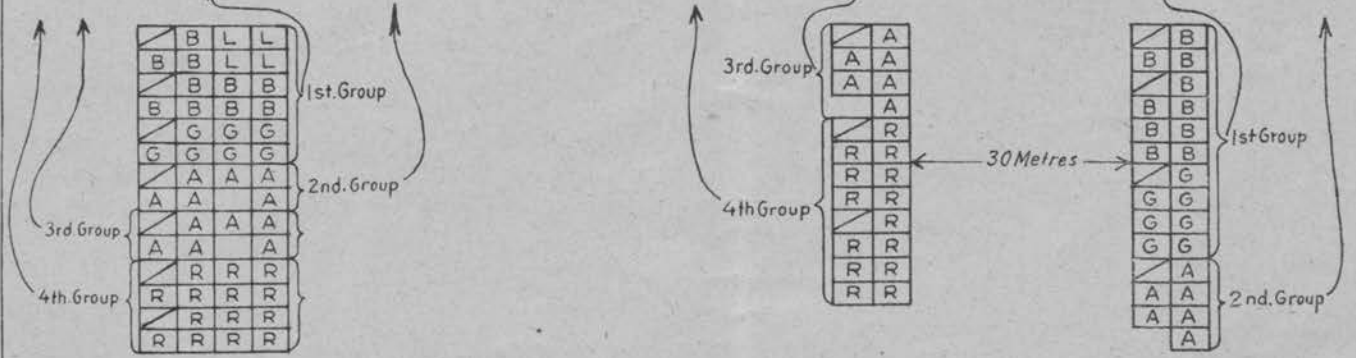
Automatics on right



TO PASS TO THE ABOVE FORMATION FROM

Column of Squads

Line of Half-Platoons



PLATOON AS ASSAULT ECHELON.

In arriving at the assault formations shown in Plates 5-7, the usual sequence of movements is as follows : The platoon being in column of squads (right in front), forms line of half-platoons, then line of combat groups in the particular formation desired as shown in the above mentioned plates, then deploys in the assault formation.

Being in line of Combat Groups, to form for assault :

(a) The commands are : 1. *As skirmishers, in two waves (one wave)*, 2. MARCH. The details of execution are shown on the opposite plate.

(b) Signals : Signal "As skirmishers". The deployment will ordinarily be made in two waves. If desired in one wave, follow the signal "As skirmishers" by raising either arm, extended vertically, and immediately repeat the signal "As skirmishers". The signal will be preceded by pointing successively to the half-platoons to execute the movement, the base half-platoons being indicated first.

It is to be noted that the deployment of rifle squads and rifle grenadiers is made as prescribed for deploying the squad in par. 124, I. D. R. The rifle grenadier corporal as file closer takes his proper place during the deployment. Hand bombers and automatic riflemen deploy on the leading man of the particular group and always to his right as shown on the plate. Note that rifle grenadiers work in groups of three, with the carrier between two rifle grenadiers; hand bombers in groups of four, with the leader on the left; automatic riflemen in groups of three with the gunner on the left, except when deploying from "Automatics left", one carrier (scout) should be on the left of the gunner, in order to give protection on the left flank. (See note opposite Plate 7).

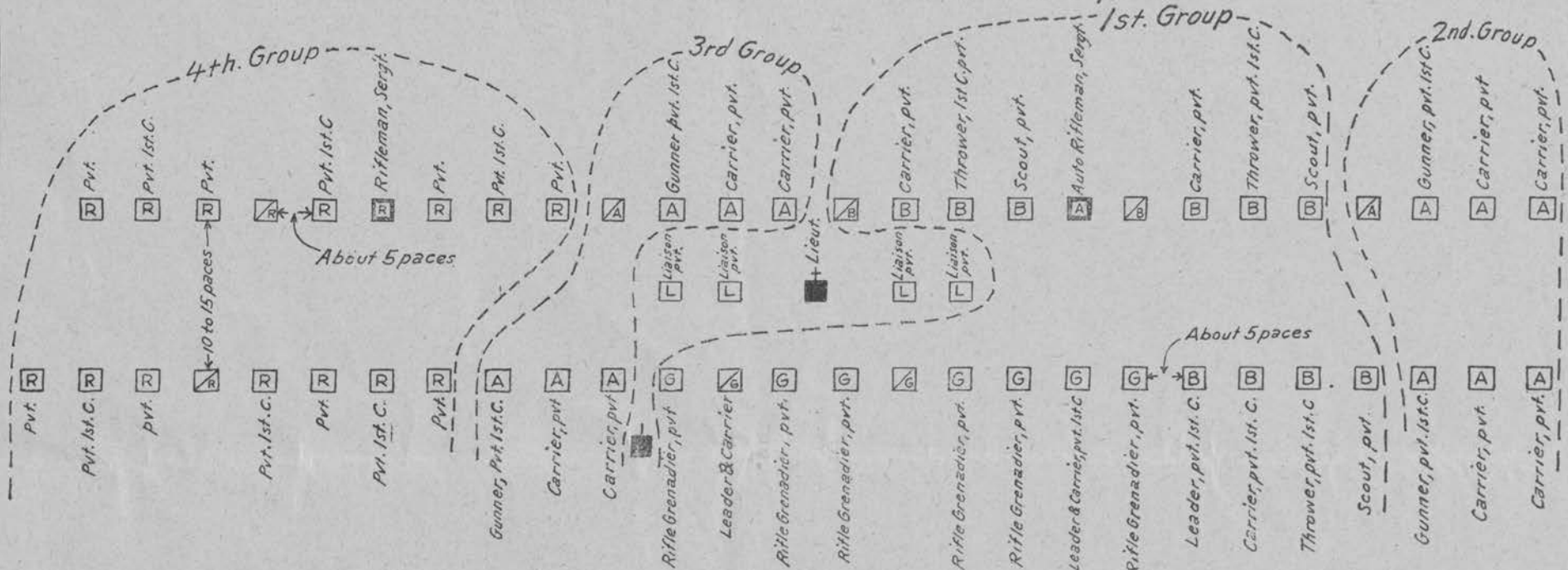
Rifle grenadiers are always in the second wave. Hand bombers can be used as riflemen.

PLATOON AS ASSAULT ECHELON

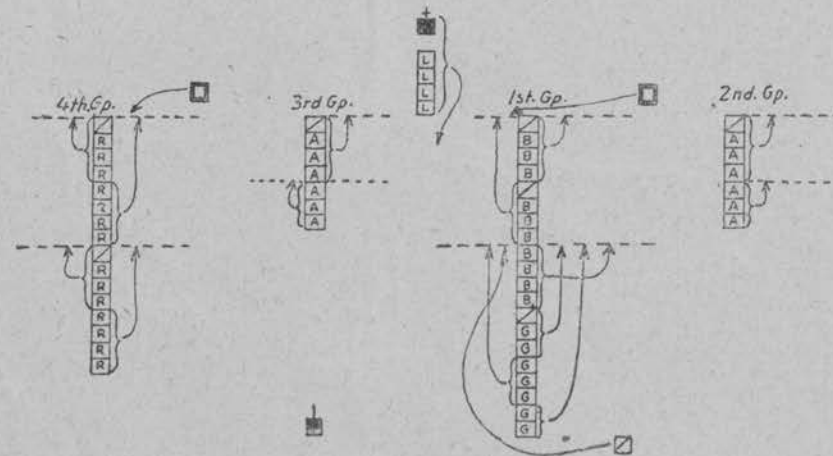
Two Assaulting Waves

Front of each wave about 125 metres

Intervals between skirmishers about 5 paces.



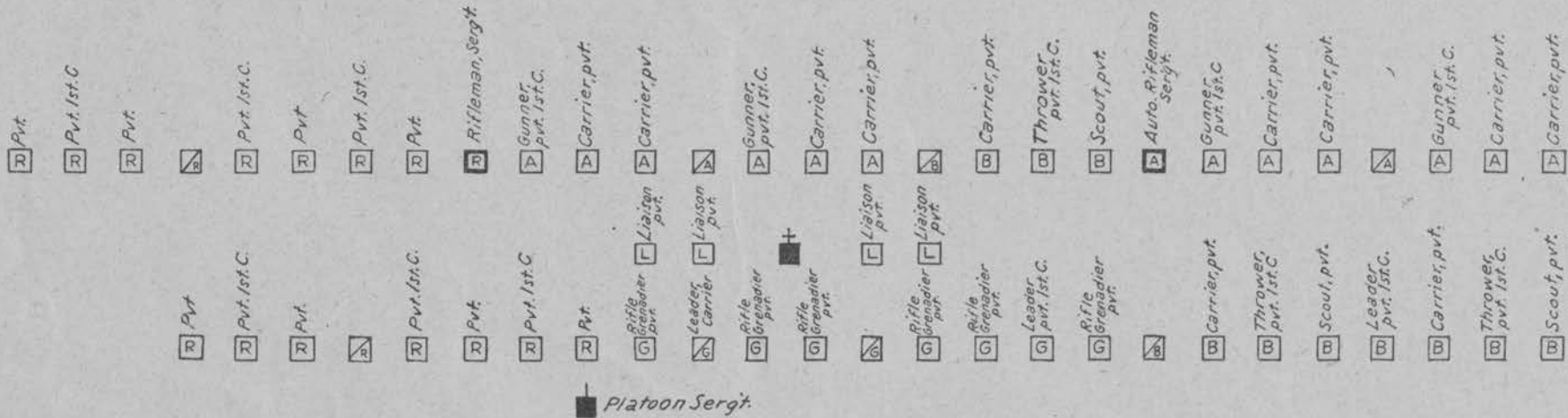
TO PASS TO THE ABOVE FORMATION FROM
Line of Combat Groups



The formation on opposite page can be employed when great fire power is needed; as, for example, to hold in front an enemy occupying a point of resistance while riflemen and hand bombers envelop or encircle the hostile flanks.

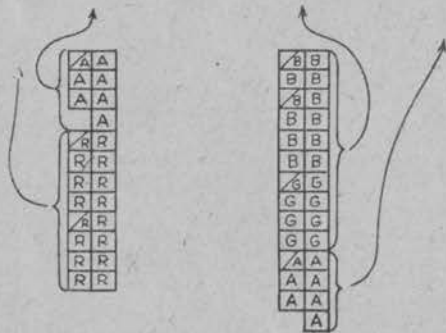
PLATOON IN ASSAULT ECHELON

All 4 Automatics in 1st Wave

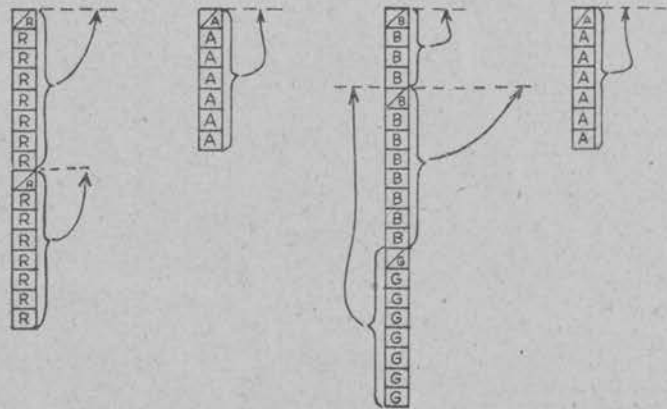


TO PASS TO THE ABOVE FORMATION

1st. Formation
Line of Half Platoons



2nd. Formation
Line of Combat Groups
Automatics on right



The formation on the opposite page can be employed where a sudden burst of rifle fire may be needed, followed immediately by the bayonet; as, for example, in a rush against a hostile trench. The automatic rifles can deliver crossfire or protect the flanks. The formation is also suitable for protection against hostile counter-attack launched after the occupation of an objective. An enemy advancing without cover can be stopped at distances where grenades would be valueless.

In situations requiring the utmost development of the fire power of the platoon, the second wave would, with the exception of the rifle grenadiers, reinforce the first.

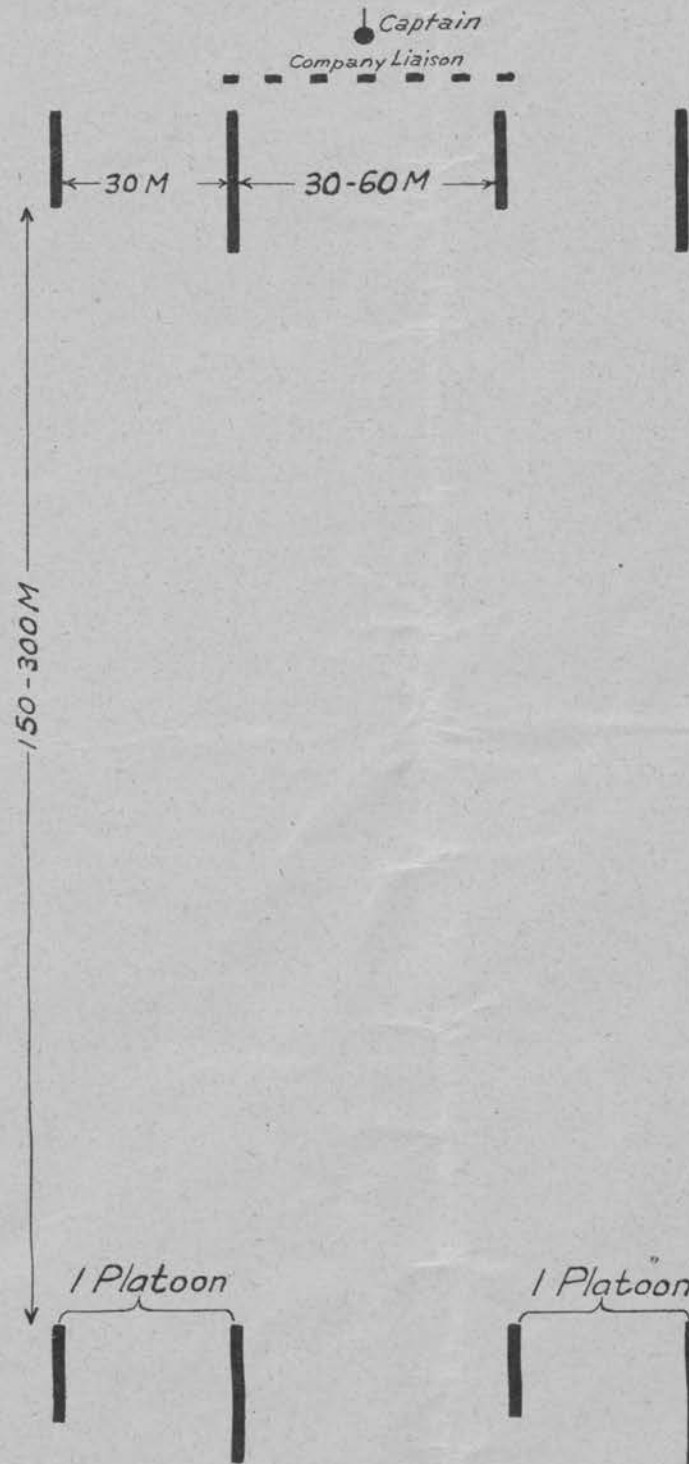
NOTE. — Plates 6 and 7 are examples only. To meet other special conditions, suitable assault formations can be obtained by forming line of groups with the automatic rifles on the left or the flanks, and the desired deployment made therefrom.

This formation is suitable for a company advancing under artillery fire. The intervals and distances between fractions are such as to prevent two from being included in the burst of one shell or shrapnel.

APPROACH FORMATION

COMPANY IN DOUBLE COLUMN

Each platoon in line of half-platoons
Each half-platoon in column of two's

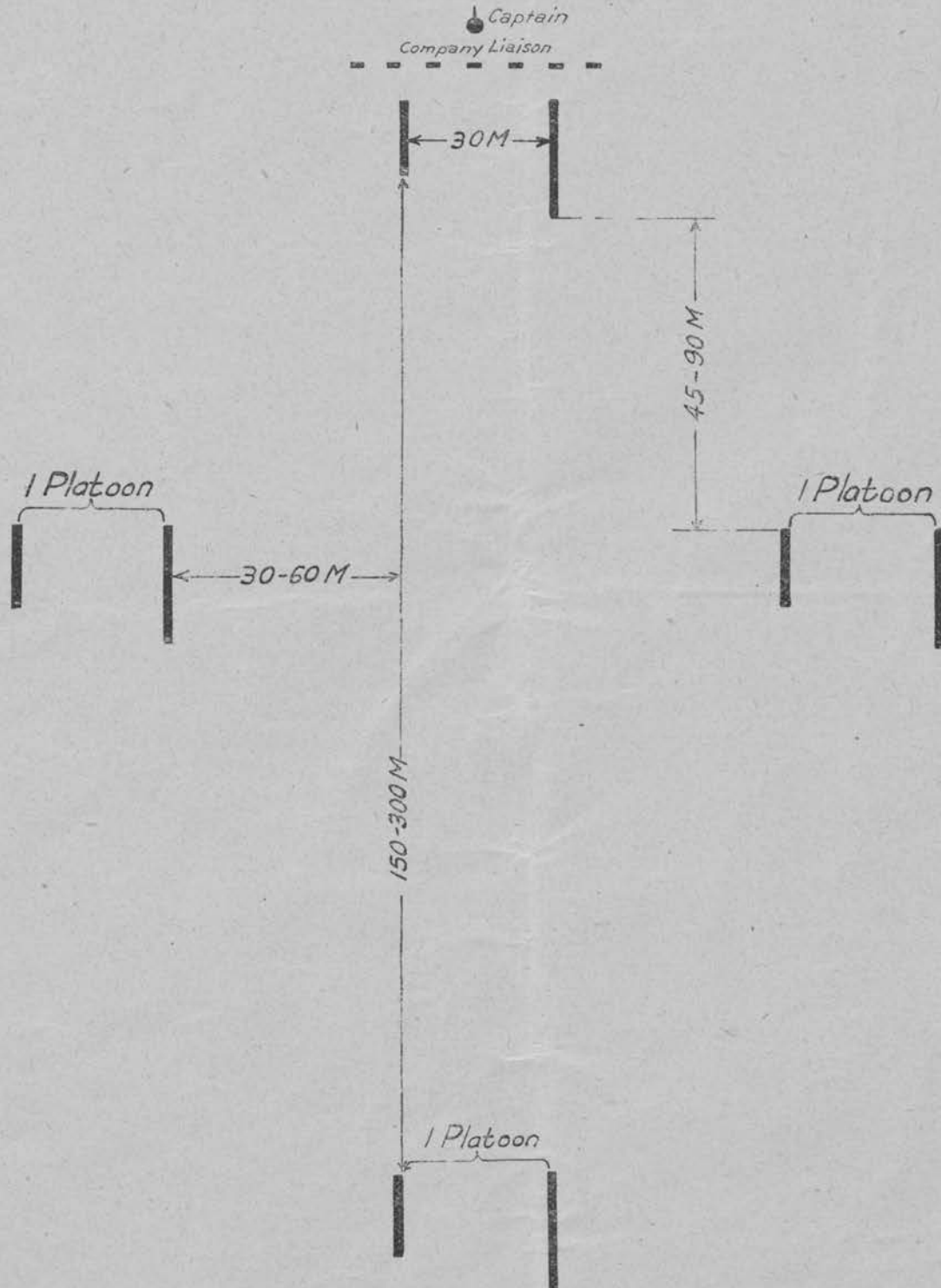


The lozenge, like the double column, offers a poor target to hostile artillery. It is easily maneuvered in any direction.

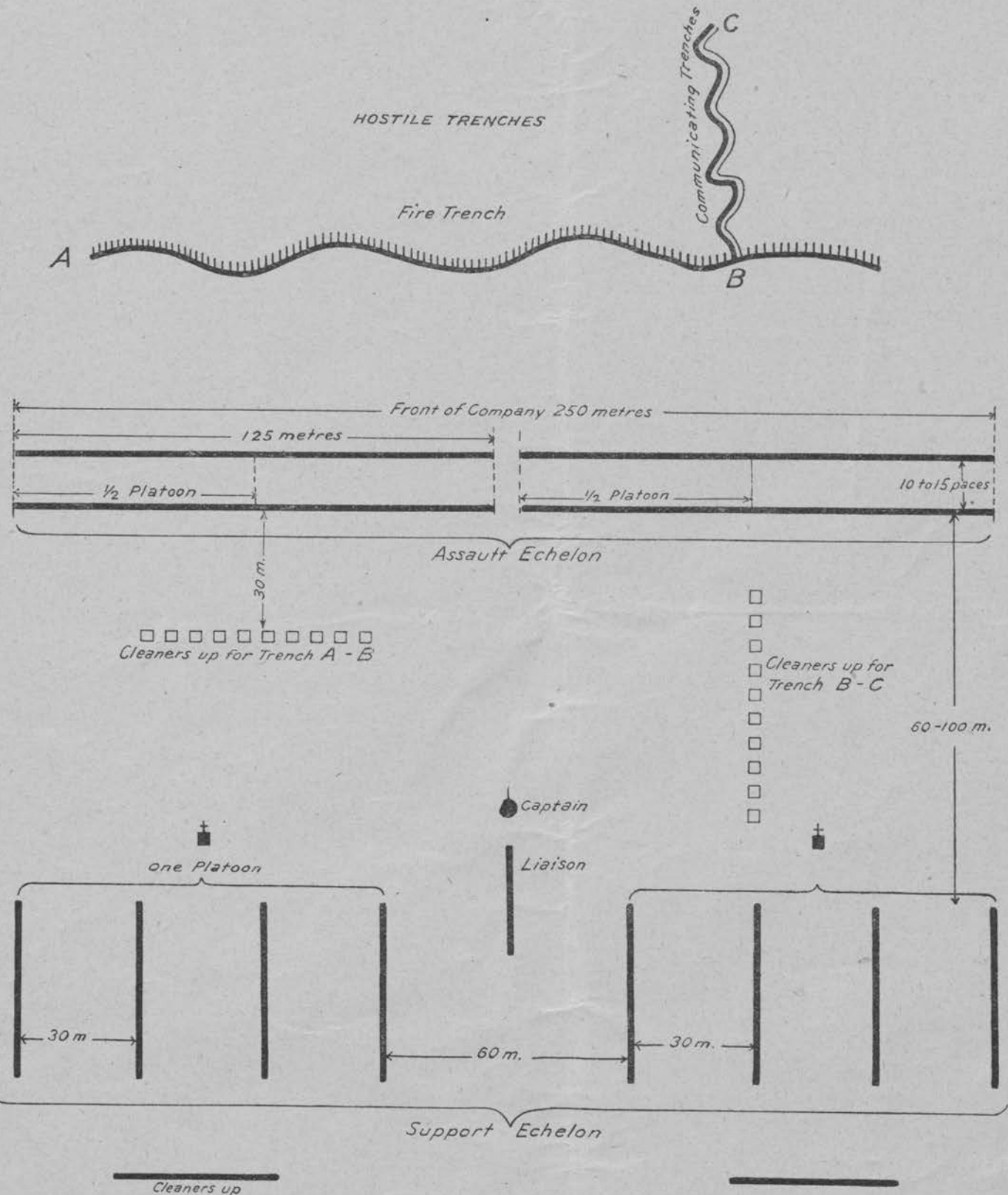
APPROACH FORMATION

COMPANY IN LOZENGE

Each platoon in line of half-platoons
 Each half-platoon in column of two's.



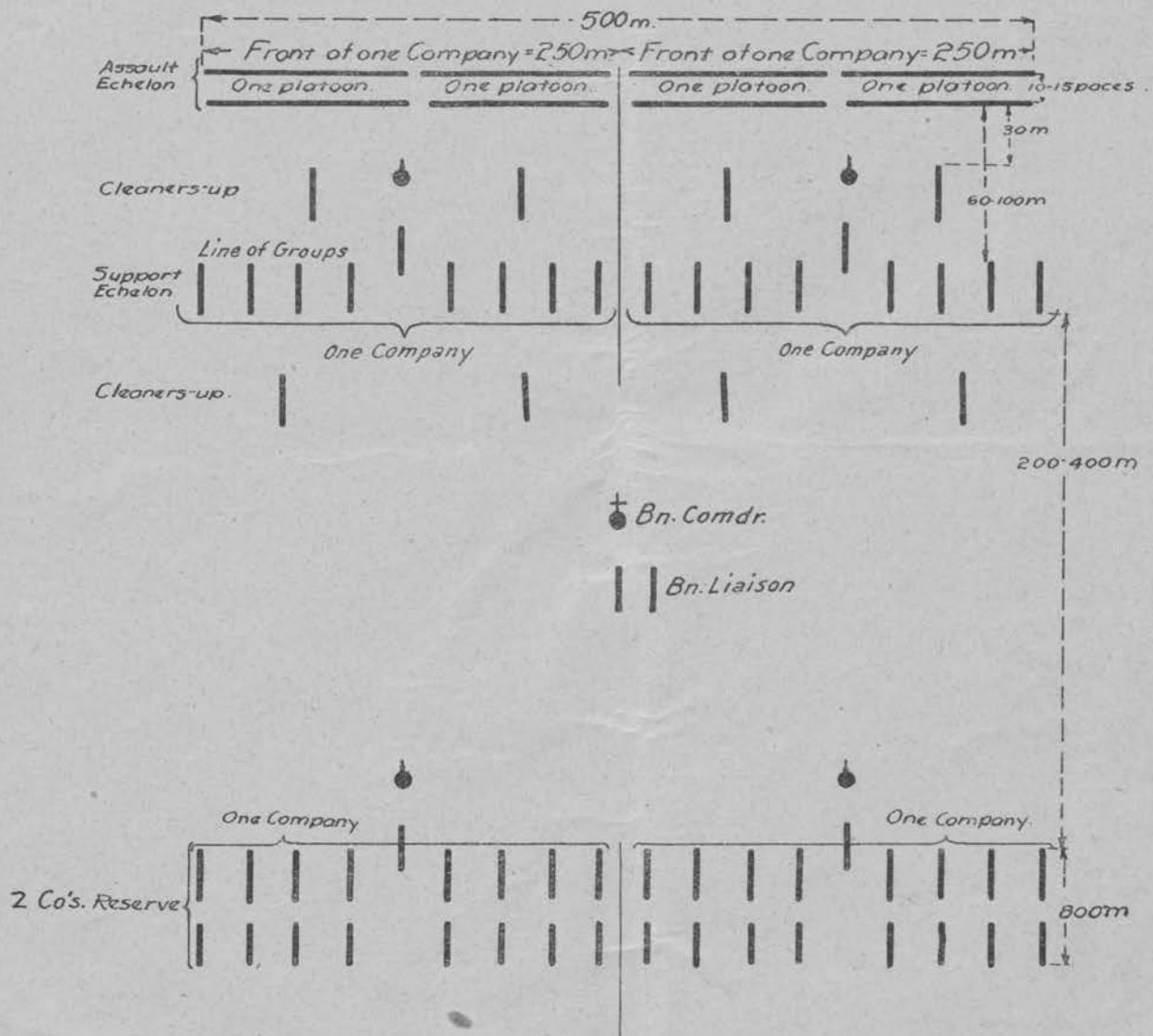
Two platoons in Assault echelon and two platoons in Support echelon, with "cleaners up"



Note

Formation varied to meet requirements of situation

BATTALION IN AN ASSAULT FORMATION
Two Companies in Reserve



Note:
Formation may be varied to suit the situation
by placing three or even all four companies
in the first line.

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