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The Yeomanry Cavalry Considered as an Auxiliary and as a Reserve Force

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Wednesday, March 14, 1833.

LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR C. P. BEAUCHAMP WALKER, K.C.B.
(Colonel Queen's Bays), Chairman of the Council, in the Chair.

THE YEOMANRY CAVALRY CONSIDERED AS AN AUXILIARY AND AS A RESERVE FORCE.

By Major C. G. EDWARDS, 2nd W.Y.Y. Cavalry.

I do not propose to trouble you with more than a very brief outline of the history of the Yeomanry, but, as I hope to demonstrate the possible value of the force in the future, it is necessary to show that it has been of some service to the country in the past.

The Yeomanry is undoubtedly a force of very respectable antiquity; up to the middle of the last century it stood upon a footing analogous to that of the Militia, and indeed the terms "Yeomanry" and "Horse Militia," were synonymous. In 1793 it was reorganized upon the system of the Volunteers of that period, and the oldest regiments of Yeomanry now in existence were formed at that time. In 1796 a very large force was raised in Ireland, the conduct of which it is interesting to glance at, in view of the existing condition of affairs in that country. In the autumn of that year the Government proposed to all loyal subjects in Ireland to embody themselves as Yeomen, in corps similar to those existing in England, and subject to the control of Government. The proposal, though vehemently opposed by the Roman Catholics throughout the country, and even the Presbyterians of Belfast, was embraced with alacrity; the first estimate laid before Parliament for 20,000 men was filled up immediately; in the course of six months it rose to 37,000, and during the Rebellion the Yeomanry force exceeded 50,000, "all of whom," says the Report of the Secret Committee of 1798, p. 5, "were to be depended upon."

This was doubtless a hazardous experiment, after the experience the Government had had with the Volunteers, and some valuable lessons may be deduced from the behaviour of the two forces, recruited, as they necessarily were, from different classes of the community. The Volunteers had become a most dangerous political power, and, says Sir Richard Musgrave, in his *Memoirs of the Rebellion*, "popularity among this order became a certain step to preferment." This was because the Government, involved in war with France, Spain, and America, and compelled to denude Ireland of regular troops, allowed themselves to be completely intimidated by the Volunteers. Delegates from the force actually assembled at Dublin and propounded reforms of Parliament and other political measures, whilst a grand convention of Volunteers discussed the reform of the Constitution.

The confidence, however, which the authorities reposed in the Yeomanry was not misplaced; the writer I have already quoted goes so far as to say that "they saved the kingdom from impending destruction." During the Rebellion the force was on duty throughout the country; portions of it took part in the so-called battles of Antrim, Saintfield, and other engagements, and in the important affair of Vinegar Hill, when General Lake defeated the French and rebel forces with a loss of 13 guns. Under General Knox, who marched to Tyrone with some 1,500 Yeomanry, they prevented the rebels of county Derry from rising.

In 1807 the Yeomanry were on duty for some months, and it was not until June of that year that the Duke of Wellington was able, writing to Sir Edward Littledale, to say, "I think you may now venture to discontinue the permanent duty of the Yeomanry in Sligo." The remarks of that great leader upon the force are interesting. In May, 1807, he writes to Lord Hawkesbury:

"I have a very good opinion of the Yeomanry of Ireland. They are disciplined as well as corps of this description can be expected to be, and I doubt very much the policy of attempting to make any improvement in their discipline. I think that both in England and Ireland we have attempted too much in the way of teaching 'parade discipline' to the Yeomanry. . . . The parade discipline which they receive in large bodies would be entirely useless—nay, would embarrass them—when they are called upon to act as light troops."

Possibly the Duke would, under the altered conditions of to-day, modify his views upon the subject of discipline.

Upon the restoration of order in Ireland, the Yeomanry were disbanded, but in England their services were in constant requisition. Until the railway system had reached some degree of perfection, communications in this country were difficult, military stations were few and far between, the police force was an institution of the future, great dissatisfaction existed amongst the lower orders, and riots were of frequent occurrence. Many of these disturbances were of a most serious character, such, for example, as the agricultural, mining, and manufacturing riots, the "Corn Law," the "Plug," the "Chartists," the "Bristol," "Nailers," "Blanketers," and similar outbreaks. The Yeomanry were, in consequence, constantly called out, one regiment, the Staffordshire, being on permanent duty six months in one year. Without entering into details, it will be sufficient to say that the force received the thanks of Parliament on more than one occasion, that it was the object of a congratulatory General Order by the Duke of Wellington, and was frequently thanked by the local authorities. The last occasion upon which any portion of it was called out in aid of the civil power was in 1865.

At one period the establishment of the English branch of the force was over 40,000 men, but, in the interests of economy, it was for many years persistently reduced; of late years, depression in agriculture and trade has saved the authorities the trouble of making such reductions, and the present establishment is only 14,458.

I trust that this sketch will have shown that the antecedents of the Yeomanry would justify any determined efforts to increase their efficiency as a military institution.

It was rumoured not long ago that a fresh attempt to reorganize the force was in contemplation. It is to be hoped that the labours of any Committee which may be assembled for the purpose may be less barren of results than those of their predecessors. Their efforts were abortive, chiefly from the pre-announced determination of the authorities to sanction no suggestions which would involve any addition to the Yeomanry vote, but in no slight degree from a failure to recognize the true character of the force with which they were dealing.

I would ask permission to point out what is the true rôle of the Yeomanry, to suggest the advisability of developing and turning to greater advantage the valuable military qualities which undoubtedly exist in the force, and to show that such a development would amply justify a slight temporary addition to the Yeomanry estimates.

It will, in the first place, be logical to indicate the nature of these qualities, always premising that the components of a force, which is essentially territorial, must have characteristics peculiar to different localities. Regiments, for instance, which are raised in manufacturing or mining districts will not possess qualities which are to be found in purely agricultural regiments, and *vice versa*. Thus the former may be more intelligent in drill, and better mounted than the latter, but will not, as a body, be distinguished by those sporting instincts which render their more bucolic comrades so valuable; at the same time, in some regiments an equal proportion of both classes may be found.

With these reservations, it may be said that the men of the force are hardy and active, the age of privates varying from nineteen to thirty, of non-commissioned officers from twenty-five to forty. Taken as a whole they are good riders, and in every regiment there are splendid horsemen, capable of riding anything anywhere. Accustomed to an out-of-door life they are thoroughly inured to the vicissitudes of our English climate, whilst their daily pursuits give them the power, and frequently the habit, of noticing and forming deductions from natural and physical signs, an accomplishment which no amount of drill or military training can inculcate, which only natural sportsmen and men accustomed to a country life can attain, and which is simply invaluable to the light cavalry soldier. They are fair rifle shots, though, as a rule, their opportunities of ball practice are infrequent; their proficiency, where it exists, is perhaps due to the fact that they are accustomed to use and carry a gun, a habit which recent legislation will not tend to discourage. With proper encouragement a good deal might be done in this direction.

In addition to being fairly good shots and riders, a most desirable combination, the men possess a valuable knowledge of country. Every regiment may be depended upon to furnish guides for any part of its district—men acquainted with every short cut, whether by fence, gap, or gateway, and able to give information obtainable from neither map nor survey, but without which movements in the enclosed parts of England would be attended with extreme difficulty.

The discipline of the Yeomanry is very good; it is maintained by the self-respect of the men, by *esprit de corps* and affection for the Officers. In most cases the men now serving are sons or nephews of a former generation of Yeomen, who have ridden together in corresponding ranks in the same regiment. In many instances the families of Officers and men have been united for generations in the relationship of landlord and tenant, and hence a feeling exists between the different ranks which has no exact parallel in any other branch of our national forces, and which on active service would develop to such an extent as to become a valuable factor in the utility of the Yeomanry.

The men are, as a whole, well educated: all can read and write, a matter of no small importance for reconnoiters; a fair proportion can read and understand a map.

A word as to the horses of the force. Most regiments are well mounted, some admirably so, but they all possess this characteristic in common—the horses, like the men, are essentially local. The advantage of this for the discharge of such duties as the Yeomanry ought to perform is obvious; the horses of regular cavalry cannot be too level: they should be like a pack of hounds; but the physical features of this country are so diversified that, if the Yeomanry are to be able to get across it, their horses must come from the districts they represent. If any one questions this, let him take a Leicestershire horse amongst the banks and coombes of Devonshire, or a Devonshire horse into the pastures and oxers of the Midlands, or let him try to ride either of them over the moorlands and stone walls of Yorkshire or Wales.

To summarize, then, the good qualities of the Yeomanry, it may be said that they are, as a whole, active men in the prime of life, well educated, good riders and fair shots; that they are intimately acquainted with their own districts, and naturally possessed of certain instincts most valuable to light cavalry and most difficult to teach; that they are sufficiently well mounted to ride over their own country, and that an excellent feeling pervades all ranks.

It will not be denied that these are valuable military qualities, furnishing admirable material upon which to work; but if we are asked whether they are turned to the utmost advantage, the reply cannot but be in the negative. The fault, however, lies not with the men, but with the system under which they are trained and equipped; they have been made, though it must cause a pang to say so, too much like regular cavalry: the authorities have aimed at a standard which, save under exceptional circumstances, cannot be attained, and which is really not desirable.

It is this which has subjected the Yeomanry to so many criticisms; for men have asked, and not without reason, how cavalry can be produced by an annual training of a few days. It will be well to ascertain, in the first place, what amount of time is available for training; we shall then be in a better position to decide how it may be best employed. Taking three regiments haphazard, one from the North, one from the Midlands, and a third from the extreme South of England, the drills performed in 1882 were as follows. In the first case, the average number attended by each man were 12·3 dismounted,

5·1 mounted. Three of these mounted drills were complete days, the men forming a royal escort, and being on duty twelve hours each day; in addition to the above every man was out for ten days' permanent duty.

The Midland regiment had an average per man of $3\frac{1}{4}$ mounted, $6\frac{1}{2}$ dismounted drills, exclusive of eight days' permanent duty. The third regiment had, per man, 3 mounted and 13 dismounted drills, exclusive of eight days' permanent duty.

It should be observed that most of these drills represent, not, as in the case of the Volunteers, an hour or two at the end of a day's work, but a complete day spared from the duties or business of life; a greater sacrifice of time cannot therefore be expected from the Yeomanry, but is this sufficient to train them as cavalry?

What are the functions of cavalry? They may be broadly classed under two heads—the execution of the charge or shock in battle, and the performance of detached duties. For the first regular cavalry alone can be relied upon, and it is only repeating a truism to say that for such duty any but the best cavalry are worthless: for this reason, if for no other, that a charge, to be satisfactory, against cavalry at any rate, must be executed simultaneously by every unit of the attacking force. To effect this the horses must be so perfectly level in speed, weight, endurance, and training, that even after, if necessary, a long gallop, the actual shock may be delivered with the precision of a machine.

Now under the existing system, it is obviously impossible that Yeomanry can ever be mounted in this way, nor, for the reasons already given, would it be desirable. But the remaining functions of cavalry, including scouting, dismounted service, &c., are, in their proper place, equally important, and for the discharge of these the Yeomanry are specially qualified. Let, then, the notion be discarded that, save under exceptional circumstances, to which allusion shall be made, the Yeomanry can ever be required to charge. Let them discard with it portions of the existing dress and equipment, which are of doubtful value, even for regular cavalry, and let them be supplied with a uniform, weapons, and equipment which, whilst interfering in no way with the discharge of light cavalry detached duties, would render them twice as valuable a force as they are at present.

The change would amount to this, that instead of being trained, dressed, and equipped purely as regular cavalry, they should be trained and armed, &c., as Mounted Rifles, or, if the term is repugnant to the traditions of the force, as Dragoons, in the original sense of the word.

And here let it be understood that conversion into Mounted Infantry is not advocated. The latter should be perfectly trained infantry soldiers, temporarily mounted for strategical or tactical purposes, and when once dismounted able to hold their own against any other infantry. But the time at the disposal of Yeomanry or Volunteers is far too limited to produce either good cavalry or infantry, and it would therefore be as useless as it would be undesirable to attempt to convert the Yeoman into a foot soldier. On the other hand, the natural

qualities of the Yeomanry recruit present him to the drill sergeant already half trained as a mounted rifleman. He can ride, he has an idea of shooting, and if only the notion is dismissed of making him into a trained trooper or a well-drilled foot soldier, it will be found that the time he so cheerfully sacrifices is sufficient to make him into a most valuable auxiliary.

The Yeomanry might take consolation for their conversion from the thought that, from no other class, from no other branch of our regular army, and from neither Militia nor Volunteers, could the material be found from which such a force could be raised.

Tactics.—The Yeomanry, when not detailed for special duties in connection with other troops, would be well adapted for "partisan warfare." Indeed, they are, in "constitution," &c., not unlike the horsemen who, under Jackson, Morgan, Stuart, Pleasanton, Mosby, and others, performed such signal service in the American War of Secession. Sir Lumley Graham, after reciting the numerous campaigns which, in the history of war, have been influenced by this kind of warfare, says:—

"Partisan warfare is likely to be more largely practised, and to produce greater results than ever in the next great European conflict. . . . The only way of stopping the reconnaissance of a strong force of cavalry, unsupported by infantry, is to meet it with little parties of infantry too mobile to be caught."

Or, which would amount to the same thing, Mounted Rifles.

The tactics of the Yeomanry should, therefore, be influenced by their suitability for this purpose. They should be, when in action, of the simplest character, based upon one all-absorbing idea—an unremitting endeavour to harass and annoy the enemy. Their leader must be ceaselessly on the watch for opportunities of effecting this object. Whether his opponent is marching or manœuvring, advancing or retiring, a position must be taken up from which fire may be opened, at once unexpected, galling, and effective. This fire must be maintained until an attempt is made to dislodge him, when he must mount his men and gallop off to a fresh position, only to renew similar tactics. In the absence of definite orders he will always endeavour to enfilade the enemy. In changing position he may move at full speed, for his horses will not at the end of their gallop be called upon for a greater effort, as in the case of a charge by regular cavalry, but will have an opportunity of getting their wind. The support to the dismounted men must follow at a more steady space for obvious reasons.

In the enclosed portions of England a force able to ride across country, armed with a good rifle, and employing such tactics, would be as unassailable by regular cavalry as by infantry. Being, moreover, always under cover from view, when halted, and being constantly on the move, it would be a waste of time for guns to attack them.

Drill.—The existing system of drill, with one or two exceptions, should not be interfered with. For Mounted Rifles as for regular cavalry, simplicity is the point to be aimed at, and for this quality the so-called non-pivot system is as near perfection as possible. Perhaps

changes of front from the halt would not be often required, but changes of position, formation of line and column from one or the other, and indeed most of the field movements laid down in the regulations, would be useful for Dragoons or Mounted Rifles. It has been stated that all movements in close formation should be avoided by Yeomanry; but whilst it is essential that Mounted Rifles should be as mobile as possible, the necessity of obtaining shelter for led horses, or of the whole force on frequent occasions, renders all movements of value which enable a concentration of units to be effected.

It seems very necessary that mounted troops should always work in two lines, the rear line, or any unit of it, being always regarded as the support of the line in front. This might easily be done in the Yeomanry by working in single rank, which would not meet with the difficulties which it would encounter in the regular cavalry, there being at present no great dearth of Officers in the force.

The day will doubtless arrive when by all cavalry double rank will be considered as antiquated a formation as the triple rank of the old Dragoons, or the four and six ranks of their predecessors. It is contrary to the spirit of modern tactics, it is an active service generally abandoned by us in consequence of the weakness of our squadrons, and it has been condemned as false in principle by such leaders as the "Iron Duke," Sir Harry Vivian, General Bacon, and many others.

For Yeomanry, as for all partially trained horsemen, the advantages of the rank entire formation are very great. For purposes of parade appearances might be saved by closing up the lines to a certain distance; but if the Yeomanry are to be a valuable force, considerations of this kind must not be allowed to stand in the way of really practical innovations.

As a matter of fact, movements by squadron columns, so favoured by the Germans, and destined apparently to be the groundwork of our future field days, would, if practised in rank entire, give all the advantages of the second line with the appearance of double rank.

The ultimate object of any formation of line, or advance in line, should not be, as at present, the attack, but dismounted service. I know how repugnant this idea will be to many of my brother Officers, but if ever the Yeomanry have to form line in the presence of an enemy it will be not to charge but to fire. To all dismounted parties there must of course be some mounted support, and this should at drill be occasionally gratified with a gallop; but the Yeomanry, if intended to be Dragoons or Mounted Rifles, and not cavalry *pur et simple*, should understand that, as a rule, the object of their Commanding Officer, in changing position, suddenly forming line or advancing, will be to gain cover, under which to dismount and pour a hot fire into the enemy. All those movements, then, which hitherto have been succeeded by a wild charge, should be followed by an order to dismount. Some ammunition will be blazed away, but it will not be wasted, the horses will not be fatigued, the men will get handy with their weapons and quick in jumping on and off their horses, and some practical results will be attained. A good deal of interest might be raised in regiments in such drill by giving prizes to the troop that could most rapidly come into action and "limber up" again.

In addition to ordinary field movements, the men should be drilled to advance from a flank or flanks of large or small bodies and extend rapidly. Such a drill would be essential in any attempt to get across country, for no troops in the world could ride in line at ordinary intervals over any natural fence.

The main question, with regard to dismounted service, which has exercised the minds of cavalry leaders is, How many rifles can be brought into action? Under the system laid down by our cavalry regulations, a squadron which has to furnish its own support can only dismount one-fourth of its men. Thus, out of 48 file, 24 being retained as support, only 12 could fire, or 24 men out of 96, a very small proportion.

Assuming that the whole squadron was available to dismount, 48 rifles might be brought into action. In some armies one horseholder is allowed to every three horses on each side of him. The plan of holding four horses has also been tried, the holder remaining mounted. But in the case of Mounted Rifles, whose fire would be delivered from a comparatively unassailable position, behind the fences of an enclosed country, an effort should be made to place more rifles in line. To link horses would at once simplify matters, but when a number of horses are linked it is a very risky, besides being a comparatively slow process; there seems, however, no reason why a modification of this method should not be adopted.

I would suggest that whenever it is proposed to dismount any body of men, it should first be formed into column, either of fours or half troops, the support of course remaining in line. The horses of the dismounted men being immediately under cover would not be likely to be required to advance straight to their front. The whole, not merely the odd or even numbers, would then dismount, the units of the column (fours or half troops) passaging sufficiently. The different units would then link horses in the manner described below, two men being left with each four, i.e., one to every four horses, four with each half troop, or one man to every six horses, whether front or rear rank, the remainder forming to the front or flank of the column as required.

This would give, in the case of a squadron of 48 file, in column of fours, 72; in columns of half troops, 80 rifles, instead of as at present 48.

To render this feasible, I would suggest that the horses should be linked upon the following principle. Upon each side of the bridles there should be a short check strap attached at one end to the top ring of the bridoon, and at the other by an ordinary swivel to a ring or loop just below the headband. On dismounting, every man, except the outer flank troopers, unhooks the off strap of his own horse's bridle, and the near strap of his neighbour's, and connects them by the two swivels. The length of each of these straps with swivels is 12 inches, the weight slightly less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. The horses, when linked, stand, as if on pillar reins, at about the usual interval. The plan has the advantage of simplicity, and, so long as no more than the four or six horses watched by one man are connected, does not present the numerous difficulties and dangers of linking in the ordinary way. It

can, moreover, be done far more rapidly, for the action of connecting the horses is momentary. It is an advantage to dismount all the men, and not to leave the horseholders stuck up as marks to show where the led horses are. If it becomes absolutely necessary to move them, horses will always cling together, and by mounting the central horse of his squad, and seizing the reins of the outer horses, a man can keep them together. It should, however, rarely be necessary to hurry up the led horses. The commander of Mounted Rifles should never allow the enemy to get so near him as to jeopardize his dismounted men.

To render this dismounted service more simple, there should be in Yeomanry no such thing as "fours," in the existing sense of eight men abreast. The term should be employed to mean four men only. The word section might then be reserved for the fourth part of a squadron, or half troop, just as in the infantry it represent a fourth of a company. Such a distribution is employed in the Austrian, German, French, and Italian cavalries, and indeed existed with us, under the form of division, but a few years ago. It would represent the "peloton" and "Zug" of our continental neighbours, and one has only to study the daily proceedings of squadrons on active service in the campaigns of 1866 or 1870-71, to recognize the hourly demand which exists for such an organization.

Each of these sections should be led, as in the Austrian cavalry, by an Officer; it is far better to have a permanent commander of a half troop, than to extemporize one when occasion arises. If working in double rank, the junior section leaders of each troop would ride in rear, as a *serrefile*. If in single rank, whether in one or two lines, in front. This arrangement would not increase the existing establishment of Officers, but would distribute them more effectively.

I would propose a further innovation. The misfortunes of the Austrian army, in 1866, have rendered us too oblivious of the brilliant services performed by their cavalry at that period; but we may imitate them with advantage in many respects. To them we owe, in reality, our emancipation from the cumbrous drill of ten years ago, and the Yeomanry might take yet one other lesson from them. In all field movements, at any rate, let them ride like the Austrian cavalry with both hands, and, if they are armed with that weapon, with undrawn swords. In riding a partially trained horse it is, as every one knows, a great advantage to have the full use of both hands, and if the horse is to be ridden across country it is often essential. The mouth of the animal will, moreover, be improved by the introduction of such a system, and Yeomen will find it more easy to drill correctly. As to riding with swords, the Yeomanry, as Mounted Rifles or Dragoons, should seldom have to use them, and, save when supporting dismounted men or performing parade movements, they should never be drawn. De Brack lays great stress on the importance of not drawing swords until the moment of charging. He says: "If a line draw swords before moving, it betrays their object prematurely to the enemy." Again:—

"The soldier who has been carrying his sword drawn for a long time loses the freshness of his respect and enthusiasm for his

weapon; but if this same man lays hold of his weapon at a spirited order from his chief at the very moment when he is to make use of it, he grasps it with more force, more eagerness, and strikes with it more energetically."

This opinion was corroborated by the experience of Mosby, Gilmor, and other leaders in the American Civil War.

Before leaving this branch of my subject I must strongly dissent from the opinion occasionally expressed, that the training of the Yeomanry should be confined to reconnoitring and outpost work. It doubtless seems an anomaly that a body of troops whose special rôle is supposed to be detached duty should in their training almost entirely neglect it; but the fact is, that before we can utilize any natural aptitude which men may possess for reconnaissance, &c., we must be able to move them with facility in regular formations. But this can only just be obtained in the Yeomanry by working hard at field and parade movements during the training, and that period is so short that the time required for any practical instruction in detached duty cannot be spared. If, then, any attempt is made to substitute a course of reconnaissance or outpost duty for the usual drill, it will be found that the men will gain little information that they did not already possess, and will deteriorate greatly in value as a military body.

But whilst permanent duty should be mainly devoted to drill, every opportunity should be taken during the winter and spring of getting small parties of men together for theoretical and practical instruction in reconnoitring, &c., and in order that troop Officers may possess the necessary qualifications, they should be required to go through a course at Aldershot or elsewhere.

Equipment.—The Yeoman of the future must not look upon his sword, but his rifle, as his chief weapon. Whether this should be the long or short rifle is a moot point. Advocates of the latter say that the long rifle is, under any circumstances, a clumsy weapon to carry mounted, awkward both for man and horse; and if the Yeomanry can be armed with carbines, shooting accurately up to 800 or 900 yards, there does not seem to be much necessity for anything better. It may be said, in support of this theory, that in an enclosed country it is seldom that troops are visible at a greater range, and any weapon would be of little use at long distances, except in the hands of picked shots.

On the other hand, the long rifle has stood the severest tests on active service. The mounted infantry commanded so ably by Major Barrow in South Africa carried it, and, he informs me, experienced no difficulty, or even awkwardness, from the length of the weapon in mounting and dismounting. It was carried in the Namaqua buckets, so that the men were not injured as they are apt to be by a rifle slung over the shoulder. The bucket did not gall the horses' sides or produce sore backs.

In Egypt the long rifle was used with equally satisfactory results.

With reference to the way in which the rifle was carried in this and in the recent campaign in Afghanistan, Lord Melgund, who served with distinction in both, has given me some very interesting

information. In Egypt, he says, both the long and short Martini-Henry were carried without bucket or sling. The mounted infantry always carried them in the hand. I cannot conceive how in bad weather, or in a protracted campaign, such a system could be possible, and hope it will never be adopted for Yeomanry; the circumstances which rendered it practicable in Egypt must have been exceptional, and possibly the mounted infantry did not carry buckets because there were no buckets for them. In Afghanistan, the same Officer tells me, the carbine was carried as by our regular cavalry, in a bucket, but a great many carbines were lost from horses falling upon them before they could be disengaged. It was suggested that the men should, the moment they came under fire, draw their carbines; this would be awkward for regular cavalry, who may be called upon to charge at any moment, but for such troops as I am endeavouring to describe would seem to meet the difficulty.

But if the force is to have a new rifle, and this is the first step that must be taken if their efficiency is to be materially increased, let them have at once a repeating or magazine rifle. These must be the weapons of the future, and the army that is first supplied with them will have a tremendous advantage over its adversary. They are already used in the Swedish, French, and other navies, and, experimentally, in our own, and are being gradually introduced into continental armies. The theory that such weapons caused waste of ammunition has been disproved by practice; they proved of startling efficacy in the American War, and the Circassian cavalry, armed with the Winchester or Winchester-Henry carbine, performed some remarkable service in the Russo-Turkish campaign. If, however, the authorities will not entertain the question, perhaps the principle of the new point-blank rifle might be applied to the Martini-Henry carbine, or rifle, and issued to the Yeomanry.

The sword, if worn at all, should not be carried as at present. The Dragoon ought to be as active on foot as any rifleman, but no man can run with a sword, 40 inches long, and broad in proportion, now sticking in front, now catching behind, and lastly getting between his legs. Even when hooked up, the long slings are in the way and the sabretache is simply a nuisance; the fastest runner in the country would be heavily handicapped if he had to run with a bunch of slings in one hand, a rifle in the other, and a sabretache dangling against his legs. If Yeomanry are to fight effectively on foot, the sabretache must be abolished; it is not wanted for any papers, as they can be carried with equal safety in the wallets. The sword ought to be attached to the saddle; if it is awkward to reach in the usual place let it be fixed on the near side, *in front of* the saddle, like a horn. This will doubtless look hideous, but it will be practical; and after all such things are merely matters of fashion: twenty years ago the tunic was considered an abomination.

The sword, however, is really of little use for Yeomanry; like the lance, it is a feeble weapon unless wielded with the utmost skill; the casualties caused by it in the Franco-German War were absurdly small; from a Return issued, in 1876, by the German medical staff it

appeared that of 65,160 killed and wounded on their side, only *six* were killed by the sword, 212 wounded, though something like 40,000 cavalry were engaged, and had some heavy fighting. The circumstances in which the sword was recently used in Egypt were quite exceptional.

A mounted man, however, must have some other weapon than his carbine; on service the Yeomanry should undoubtedly be armed with a rifle and revolver; the value of such equipment for such troops was proved in a thousand instances during the War of Secession, but unless the authorities can supply the whole force, the sword must be retained.

I would urge very strongly that in every troop of Yeomanry, four, or at least two men should be told off as pioneers; they should be equipped with Major Wallace's spade, which could hang on the near side behind the saddle. On service, in crossing the country, for making and filling up gaps, creating obstacles, &c., these men would be invaluable. The cost of the spade is about 6s., the bucket about 7s.: this could be defrayed from regimental contingent funds.

Lastly, a couple or more of Morris's aiming tubes should be issued to the headquarters of every troop, and the men encouraged to purchase them for private practice.

Dress.—The question of dress must now be approached. There are no more handsome uniforms in the British army than in the Yeomanry Cavalry, and it is with a pang of regret that I suggest that many of them should be consigned to the limbo to which brass epaulettes, high stocks, monstrous headgears, and other relics of past tailordom have departed. The undress for foot parade, stable duty, &c., is, as a rule, neat and practical, and might well be retained by regiments—and, as a link with old times, Officers might retain their present mess dress—but, as a rule, the field day or review order of Yeomanry is quite inappropriate for mounted riflemen. I should like to see one uniform adopted for the whole force: the advantage of this would be very great if only for purposes of concentration. Some months ago, when it was proposed to assemble a representative regiment at Aldershot, an insuperable difficulty arose in the diversity of uniform which existed in the Yeomanry. For mounted duties they should have a low helmet, or short busby; a dark blue uniform, sufficiently loose at the arms and waist; dark breeches and "Field" boots; pouch and waist-belts of white leather—dark leather does not help to conceal a man, and always gives a dirty appearance. There should be no sword-belt; the ammunition should be carried as at present; the cartridge-belt worn by the irregulars in South Africa is not suitable for this variable climate. The pouch at present worn by Officers in both regular and auxiliary cavalry is useless: it will not even carry cigars satisfactorily; it should be replaced by a case for binoculars similar to those worn by the Staff, and should be carried not only by Officers, but by serjeant-majors and sergeants.

Whatever alteration may be made in the uniform of the force, care should be taken to render it attractive. Men cannot be expected to take any pride in themselves if they are clad in an ugly dress. The

Hussar tunic, or Horse Artillery jacket, already worn by some regiments, might be adopted.

The horse equipment must be as light, and yet as serviceable, as possible; for a combination of these qualities the present kit of the regular cavalry seems best.

I would point out that although it has always been said that unless you firmly exclude any cavalry element from mounted infantry, they will gradually affect cavalry ways and equipments, and insensibly relapse into inferior cavalry, the Yeomanry must not be subjected to this rule. From the days of the Commonwealth the Yeoman has served as a horse soldier, he joins the service now-a-days to be a horse soldier, he is fond of his horse and fond of riding; if he had wanted to be a foot soldier he might have joined the Volunteers he will tell you, and if any attempt is made to convert the force into foot soldiers it will evaporate. No, the Yeomanry must still remain in the category of horse soldiers, and if the term Mounted Rifles is considered synonymous with Mounted Infantry, let them, as already suggested, have the good old name, Dragoons. Still, some change must be made, and if the Yeoman is dressed, trained, and equipped less like the regular cavalry, and more upon the lines so feebly sketched out in this paper, he will become as valuable a unit of our military forces as the most enthusiastic among us can desire.

It only remains to be considered how these changes may be effected. The slight alterations in drill, the establishment of sections, &c., might be introduced by a stroke of the pen. The rifles should be issued by Government. The Wallace equipment and Morris aiming tubes should also be issued by Government, but paid for, where possible, by regimental contingent funds; and to ensure their being kept in a condition of efficiency, Inspecting Officers should be directed to report upon them annually. Regiments should be ordered to supply themselves from local sources with linking straps if approved.

The only change really necessary in uniform would be in the head-dress, belts, and tunic of certain regiments. As a rule, regiments wear dark blue breeches and boots, and also white belts; but taking into consideration the necessary alterations, and cost of rifles, a uniform sum of 5*l.* a man would probably be required. Taking the force at a minimum of 10,000, this would amount to 50,000*l.*, which might be distributed over a period of five years by an annual addition to the Yeomanry estimates of 10,000*l.* Considering that for many years not a shilling has been added to the usual rate, and that the estimates for the Volunteers have year by year been increased by many thousands, the authorities ought not to grudge an expenditure which, though trifling in amount, would increase the value of the Yeomanry to a very considerable extent.

I trust I have shown that the Yeomanry may become an auxiliary force of very great value. It remains to be seen whether the authorities will make any attempt to produce this result; it will be urged, doubtless, that auxiliaries are never to be depended upon. I contend that the Yeomanry will form an exception to this rule, for even if acting against an enemy, they would never be subjected to the

heavy fire which auxiliary infantry, such as Militia or Volunteers, must be prepared to face, if they are to be relied on. I would add that, if ever this country were invaded, the weak establishment of our regular cavalry would render every man of the Yeomanry indispensable, even if the force were disarmed, for the performance of orderly and similar duties.

It would be a matter of regret should such a body of men be lost to the country, but if they are to be retained, the Government must at once show them some substantial encouragement. Depression in agriculture and trade has produced its natural effect in the ranks, and last year only some 9,000 men presented themselves for training. It is difficult to say in what form encouragement can be extended to Officers, for these are evil days for landlords, and in some districts a difficulty is felt in obtaining suitable men for the commissioned ranks. It was unreasonable to deprive the Yeomanry of their trumpeters, and to compel Officers to provide and to mount these most necessary men. It is equally unreasonable to expect Captains of troops to mount their permanent sergeants. Such expenses as these should be defrayed by Government, and where it can be shown that Commanding Officers are put to serious expense, in consequence of the insufficiency of the annual grant of 2*l.* per man, it should be increased to the original allowance of 3*l.* Commissions in the regular cavalry should be given, not as at present to Militia, but to Yeomanry subalterns.

The men of the force were formerly exempt from horse tax for one horse: strange to say, this exemption retained many men in the service who would otherwise have left it. In lieu of this, let Yeomen be exempt from serving upon juries. This would be a remarkably inexpensive method of attracting recruits, but would doubtless have a considerable effect in filling the ranks.

In considering the organization of such a body as the Yeomanry, it must first be determined whether it is to be regarded as an auxiliary force, a reserve, or as a force combining the nature of both. In the preceding remarks, I have treated the Yeomanry as a purely auxiliary body, being convinced that the existing constitution of the force debars it from being anything like a reserve to our regular army. The men come from a class that is never likely to furnish recruits, and the horses are their own property.

It is, however, indisputable that our regular cavalry are at present absolutely without reserves, and it is very desirable that the Yeomanry should, in some way or other, supply the deficiency. This, though, can never come to pass unless some radical changes are effected: such changes must cost money, and any proposition involving expenditure, even though aiming at the establishment of a cavalry reserve, will probably be dismissed without a thought.

In order to invest the Yeomanry with the nature of a reserve, a modification of the infantry *dépôt* system might be adopted. The regular regiments, without in any way altering their existing numbers or designations, should be localized in districts, a certain proportion of Yeomanry regiments being told off to each. The cavalry reserve men should

be attached to the Yeomanry regiment of their native district. They should be clothed and equipped by the regiment with the aid of a special grant or allowance; they should be called out annually at the permanent duty, and, if necessary, for a certain period previous to the training, when they should be under the command of the Adjutant. As the Yeomanry are now subject to military law whenever under arms, there would be no difficulty in dealing with the men of the Reserve; but any special provisions for their discipline could easily be made.

A limited number of men should be allowed to join the Yeomanry without horses, but they should for a certain period be liable to be called upon to serve in the regular cavalry. In order that this should not be distasteful to the class ordinarily serving in the Yeomanry, no men should be attested unless bearing exceptionally good characters.

These men should be mounted by requisition. A certain number of horses should be selected annually and registered, their owners guaranteeing, for a certain consideration, to produce them for duty whenever required; these horses should be annually inspected and reported upon by the Inspecting Officer at permanent duty.

To induce farmers to fall in with this idea of requisitions, some *quid pro quo* must be offered by the Government. To make any suggestion on the subject seems a waste of words, but I should like to see a well-bred entire horse, with plenty of bone and substance, kept at each of the miniature depôts I am about to describe; these horses should be occasionally transferred to different counties, and should serve gratis a certain number of mares likely to breed cavalry horses. The owners of these mares would of course own the produce, but would be liable to have one or two colts registered as described already, or even purchased at a reasonable price by Government. This would be a very different thing to the risk and expense of keeping a number of mares, and would entail no additional staff. It would, to some extent, mitigate the serious falling off in the quantity and quality of horses at present in the country, which is beginning to constitute an obstacle to the maintenance of the Yeomanry, and the effects of which must ere long be felt by our regular cavalry.

Small barracks, containing Adjutant's quarters, stabling for about twenty horses, a riding-school, quarters for thirty or forty men, orderly-room, &c., should be built at the headquarters of Yeomanry regiments. The staff should consist of the Adjutant, relieved when necessary by a qualified Yeomanry Officer, and assisted by a regimental serjeant-major and assistant riding-master, as well as recruit regular or Yeomanry Officers. At these barracks all recruits and remounts for the regular regiment of the district should be trained, the Yeomanry and Reserve horses coming up for training as required, remounts being purchased as far as possible in the district, and by the depôt staff, the Yeomanry veterinary surgeons being employed when necessary.

The advantages of such a system would be an immense saving of time to the staff of regular regiments in training recruit men and horses; a great saving of expense when the preliminary cost of

barracks, &c., was absorbed; an extension of the territorial system to the cavalry, without all the drawbacks and heartburnings which that system has evoked in the infantry; the organization of a regimental reserve, and the formation of a bond of union between the regular and auxiliary cavalry which would prove an advantage to both.

The consideration, however, of such changes as the above would entail, should not interfere with the suggestions which have been made as to the Yeomanry proper; if converted from merely an auxiliary force into an auxiliary and reserve, it must not be forgotten that their qualities and energies will be wasted unless they are trained and equipped as Dragoons or Mounted Rifles. Such drill will not make the Reserve men who may be distributed amongst them one whit the less fit to take their places in their old regiments; it will rather sharpen their wits, and help to counteract the evils of a relapse into civilian existence.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to see so small an audience to listen to such a very interesting lecture. I hope that, though the number here is but few, there are some Officers present who will enter into the discussion which should always follow the lectures in this Institution, and will give us the advantage of their views on the subject.

Colonel MUSSENDEEN, Inspecting Officer for Auxiliary Cavalry, Aldershot: I am sure we all endorse what the Chairman has said as to the very great interest of the paper which Major Edwards has read to us. I may say from my knowledge of Major Edwards that he is one of the most zealous Yeomen that we possess in the force, and he has also, not only in the North of England but in my district, had very great experience, from personal observation, of the merits of the Yeomanry, and is therefore very well qualified to give us this lecture. There has been a good deal in the paper that he has read to us in which I entirely agree, though some points which he has raised may be open to discussion. He has very properly told us that cavalry duties are to be divided into two parts: the actual attack, and the detached duties of cavalry. Now, as regards the actual attack, he tells us that Yeomanry are unfit for such duties, that they are unfit to take part in the shock of cavalry. I must say that I think he is rather hard upon his branch of the Service in saying this. I have been told that when the Yeomanry have been called out in aid of the civil power, along with the regular cavalry, on many occasions the mob seemed to care little for the regular cavalry, but they bolted as soon as the Yeomanry were let loose: the reason being that there was very great difficulty in stopping the Yeomanry when they were once set in motion. They rode over everything, and were really most effective. I do not know how far that would hold water in the case of European warfare, but from what I know of the Yeomanry I think that they can make a very effective attack in line. I quite agree that more attention should be paid to detached duties, outpost duties, reconnoitring, scouting, and so on, and I think the Yeomanry are admirably adapted for these particular duties. They are an intelligent race of men, they ride well, and know the country. The main question, however, comes to this: is the Yeomanry of the future to be composed of auxiliary cavalry, or is it to be composed of mounted infantry? I think there is no medium between cavalry and mounted infantry. If you give the Yeomanry the long rifle you ought also to give them the Elcho bayonet, or some weapon with which they can fight their enemy on foot when their ammunition is exhausted. If you give them the long rifle, it is essential that the sword should be removed altogether, and that the Yeoman should no longer depend upon his sword. Being armed with the long rifle and the Elcho bayonet, he would still be available for many of the detached duties of cavalry, scouting and so on; but no body of mounted infantry should ever be detached without having a strong cavalry support at hand. No doubt the mounted infantry in Egypt did admirable service, but they

were not opposed by very formidable cavalry. Had they been, I do not think they could have gone quite as far ahead, and have left their horses as they did. I consider the rôle of the mounted infantry is rapid transport from place to place, seizing and holding positions, bridges, defiles, &c., but on all occasions trusting solely to the rifle and the bayonet. As at present constituted the Yeomanry has attained a certain degree of efficiency as auxiliary cavalry, and it must be remembered that the 14,000 Yeomanry that we have at present represent the whole of the volunteer cavalry for a force of volunteer infantry amounting to some 200,000 men; and surely this is not too large a proportion of cavalry. The Yeomen proper—the farmers of England—are good horsemen from their childhood, able not only to ride across country but to train their own young horses in a very short time. If it were not for that, they would be able to do very little in the few days' training allowed them in the year. I think it would astonish many cavalry Officers to know what a very large proportion of three-year-olds are brought out for training—horses that really have not been backed half-a-dozen times before they are put into the ranks; but the men are able, from their good horsemanship, very speedily to get these animals into shape. I would not believe that such was the case until I had looked at some of the horses' mouths, and found that many of the horses were three-year-olds, while some were only rising three. I am afraid the shooting of the Yeomanry is not good—my experience being that good shots are the exception, not the rule. Much attention is now being paid to the subject, and I hope the shooting may improve, but at present I am afraid it cannot even be called indifferent,—the shooting of the Yeomanry, I should say, is bad. Some regiments pay more attention to it than others, and shoot fairly well; but the shooting of the Yeomanry, generally, is, no doubt, its weak point. I consider, for that reason if for no other, that the Yeoman proper is better adapted to fight on horseback than he is on foot. Of course Yeomen who are not tenant farmers, and who live in the neighbourhood of large towns, have advantages with regard to shooting which may render them as good shots as the Volunteers; but those men have not the cavalry qualities of the Yeomen proper—I mean the agricultural portion of the force. One troop of the Middlesex Yeomanry is about to be armed with the long rifle and the mounted infantry equipment, as an experiment. We shall all watch this experiment with great interest, and if it succeeds I have no doubt that other Yeomanry corps will ask for a portion, at least, of their regiments to be armed with the long rifle. I have already had one or two applications for long rifles from regiments in my district; but I have told them it would be better to wait to see the result of the experiment in the Middlesex Yeomanry. Now about the Cavalry Reserve. I regret that there should be any need to enter into the question of how the Cavalry Reserve and the auxiliary cavalry might be brought together for mutual benefit. The cavalry service is now limited to seven years, and at about the age of twenty-five a soldier is relegated to civil life—surely very much to the loss of his regiment; and what is the gain as regards the formation of an effective Cavalry Reserve? Have we any reserve cavalry horses, or how can we form a reserve of cavalry horses? Cavalrymen, as a rule, are not enlisted, as are the Yeomanry, from the riding class, and when they go back to civil life most of them are entirely separated from horses and from stable duties. In two or three years they become as helpless as a recruit, with the addition of the stiffness which so surely follows advancing years; and it is much more difficult to make an efficient cavalry soldier of the reserve man who has been two or three years away from his regiment than it would be to make an effective cavalry soldier of (say) a London sharp boy that you pick up at the age of eighteen. It is very different to the case of the Infantry Reserve man, who goes away from his regiment, but does not of course lose the power of walking about and marching when he goes into civil life; he comes back, soon picks up his drill, and becomes the backbone of his regiment. I cannot say how it would work in the Cavalry, but supposing we were to try to amalgamate the Cavalry Reserve and the Yeomanry, I am afraid there would be a great many difficulties in the way. In the first place, I can only see one way of doing it, and that is by providing horses from the nearest cavalry regiment for the use of the reserve men. Now, if Yeomanry were scattered all over the country with the Cavalry pretty equally, something of that sort might be done; but take the Southern District, for instance: that district contains three Yeomanry

regiments, but it has not a single Cavalry regiment quartered in the command. The Western District is still worse, for there are eight Yeomanry regiments, and not even a cavalry barrack in the command. It would be very difficult, I think, to provide horses for the reserve men in those two districts. It could only be done by sending them from Aldershot, and, probably, Commanding Officers would very strongly object to lending their horses to unknown riders. But even the reserve men themselves would be very unevenly distributed. In some counties the reserve men might be counted on the fingers of both hands, but the Cavalry Reserve in London alone would amount to some couple of hundred men, more or less, and increasing every year. If those men were called up for a week's training with the Middlesex Yeomanry, it would become a question how they were to be mounted. I should doubt very much if the Commanding Officers of the Household Cavalry would not very strongly protest against sending a couple of hundred of their black horses to mount the reserve men; and even supposing you could get the horses for them, I am very much afraid the two classes would not amalgamate very well during the training. In the first place, the reserve men are not as well off as the Yeomanry, and especially as the Middlesex Yeomanry, and if they were called out, billets would have to be drawn for them, and, in whatever town they were called out, the fact of drawing billets would make the Yeomanry very unpopular. I do not think publicans like putting up soldiers on the march, even for a single night: in the North of England they very strongly object to it; but they would certainly not like to have to put the reserve men up for a whole week. Many Yeomanry Officers have told me that the ordinary expense that a Yeoman is put to for his training amounts to as much as 5*l.*, in addition to the 7*s.* a-day which he gets as his pay. I have no doubt whatever that a very great hole is made in a 5*l.* note by the week's training. The lecturer made several suggestions. One was about dismounted service—the advisability of dismounting a larger number of men. I think we may fairly divide the dismounted service into two heads: temporary duty—when you would merely dismount one-half of the men, as laid down in the Cavalry Regulations; and the more permanent dismounted duty, when you would dismount your whole troop or squadron, and link the horses in the ordinary way. I am afraid the system of linking the horses by the mouth would not be found to answer; the horse's mouth is very sensitive, and I would prefer Major Bower's plan of fastening the thong to the collar-ring. As regards working in single rank, I think there is no objection at all to regiments working in that way,—in fact, all the weak regiments do work in single rank. I am glad to say we have got some strong regiments still left in the Yeomanry, and I think, if they worked in single rank, one man's voice would hardly be of sufficient power to reach the whole of the squadron. As a matter of fact, a great many regiments do work very well in single rank. As regards uniformity of equipment, I should rather deprecate any general alteration of the uniform, and for this reason, that any change of uniform would fall not upon the public but upon the funds of the regiment, and some of the regiments are not so flourishing in their funds that they could afford a new equipment. If we were forming a new regiment I should strongly advise some sort of uniform like that now worn by the East Kent Yeomanry (Mounted Rifles), which is a most workmanlike and soldierlike dress. It is very much like the uniform of the 60th Rifles, or what used to be called the 60th Rifles. I am afraid I have trespassed too much upon your time. I will only say, in conclusion, that I am a great believer in the Yeomanry; I think they have gallantly struggled to keep their heads above water during four or five years of very great agricultural depression, and if anything could be done to encourage them, or to make the public believe that the Yeomanry of England is a valuable addition to Her Majesty's Forces, it would afford me, personally, the very greatest satisfaction.

Major ACLAND, M.P.: I perhaps ought to apologize for addressing this meeting, seeing, as I do, before me so many men of much more knowledge and experience than myself. But on this particular subject I hope I may claim, as both a Volunteer and Yeoman, to have had some slight experience in a purely amateur way. I have been in a Yeomanry regiment for fifteen years, and before joining the regiment I had command of a Mounted Rifle Volunteer corps, raised by my father, of which I retained the command for fifteen years, holding the double command under a special

provision—which I daresay the Inspector is aware of—that used to be in the Regulations for the purpose. That Volunteer Rifle Corps was equipped almost precisely in the manner in which Major Edwards proposed that the Yeomanry should be equipped for the future. We carried long rifles, for ten years, in Namaqua buckets. The men used to go over fences at a smart pace; they came up to Wimbledon, and were never lower than third in the competition for the Loyd-Lindsay prize for four or five years. They were second two or three times, and third once or twice; being, several of them, very good shots indeed. The principle of their training was different from that of the Yeomanry. The Yeomanry go out for eight days' permanent duty. The Mounted Rifle Volunteer Corps of Devonshire, of which there were five at one time, used to go out about a dozen or fifteen times a year, for two or three hours' drill in the afternoon. It was perfectly easy for them to ride away after their dinners, and get home again to their teas without any one missing them. And we were able in that way to keep together thirty or forty men as a Volunteer Corps. When the Yeomen who had learned their drill in the Yeomanry got too old, or were married, or perhaps lost their father or brother,—whoever was helping them on the farm during the time that they were out for their eight days' duty,—when they lost that helper they used to leave the troops, and come into the Mounted Volunteer Corps, because, although they could not afford to be away from their farms for eight days at a time, they could easily ride away from their farms for two or three hours in the afternoon, and get their two or three hours' drill, a dozen or twenty times a year. Colonel Oakes inspected us on many occasions, and if he were living now, I think he would willingly testify that that corps was just as smart as any Yeomanry troop that he would wish to see; in fact, he said so over and over again. I believe he used to say the same of Colonel Bower's corps which was enrolled a week before the corps I had the honour to command, and was disbanded about six weeks before mine, so that I believe the one I had was the last Volunteer Corps in England of that description. I have said this in order to show that it will not be the first experiment in carrying long rifles that is about to be made by the Middlesex troop of Yeomanry. We carried them successfully for ten or fifteen years, and found it perfectly easy to cross country with them, or to do anything else. There is this advantage about the Namaqua bucket—that a man may gallop up, and during the last 3 or 4 yards of his gallop he undoes the loop, and as he dismounts he pulls the rifle over the near side with him without the slightest difficulty—even more easily than with the ordinary cavalry bucket.

Colonel MUSSENDEN: Had you the sword?

Major ACLAND: We used to carry swords; we had the bayonet at first. The sword in one of the Volunteer Corps was carried with a flat hook, which was hooked on to the belt. Below the hook, as part of the same piece of iron, there was a ring, and when the thing was unhooked, as it could be by a single motion, it enabled the sword to be hung on to the front of the saddle, and there it was perfectly safe, and the man could run about free without his sword. That was the great difficulty we had to solve—how to get the sword attached to the saddle. That was tried for a certain time, but we did not carry it very much into effect. As a rule we kept the swords on the men, because we found it, on the whole, easier to adapt the drill which Colonel Bower's volunteer rifle drill embodied, of extending to considerable distances in sections of four and dismounting half of each section, never taking them more than 10 or 15 yards from their horses, and closing again mounted. It was more easy in that way to cover a large extent of country. You could cover two or three sides of a field, or get through a wood, more quickly in twos or fours than in larger bodies of men. But we also used to have a drill very much analogous to the present double rank cavalry drill—but which we always practised in single rank only. We found it perfectly easy to work two or three corps together. The Inspector made one or two remarks which I hardly like to criticize, but at the same time, as I have an opinion upon them, derived from fifteen years' experience in the two particular branches, I venture to suggest one or two points in which we do not agree. I cannot sanction the statement that the Yeomanry men, in the regiments that I know, spend anything like 5*l.* when they come up for their eight days' training. I do not think that they do in most regiments, although I know some are much more expensive than others. It depends to a large extent on the habits of the men.

Colonel MUSSENDE: I only judge by what I have been told.

Major ACLAND: If I could not tell my friends among the farmers that their sons would not have to spend any more than a pound or so beyond their pay, I am afraid very often I should not get them; and as I do get them, and, what is more, keep them, I gather from that that they do not cost their fathers more than a couple of pounds at the outside. The exemption from the horse-tax, which used to save a man only 10s., was, I always found, quite enough to get a farmer to send his son into the Yeomanry. There is one other point about the sword. I quite agree in the difficulty of teaching Yeomen to use their swords; I believe it would be almost impossible to teach Yeomen to use their swords efficiently; but at the same time, if we are to have any large section of the body dismounted, and if they are to have a support, would the support be of any use without swords?

Colonel MUSSENDE: No; I said a cavalry support.

Major ACLAND: A cavalry support would have to be a regular cavalry support, or it would entail teaching the auxiliary men the use of the sword: that is all that I mean. Some part of the regiment would require to have swords. With regard to the outpost duty, I have found it of the greatest possible interest to the men; and our constant practice has been to get squadrons together, even sometimes for a couple of days' drill, at 20 miles' distance, and to get them to reconnoitre against one another; and I think, on one or two occasions, those who were first discovered had to pay for the luncheon of the other men: at any rate, it made them exceedingly keen in their work. I want to make two practical suggestions, because I hope that Major Edwards will take care that this most valuable paper of his comes before the authorities. One is this: one of our great difficulties is to get the men who have been in the regiment for four or five years to come up to the extra drills. They are men of business, and the Yeoman gets no pay whatever for his extra drills. He gets his 7s. a day for the eight days' permanent duty, and he is expected to come to a certain number of drills besides. The Government seem to have forgotten that the Volunteers come for their drills almost as an amusement, and at no expense to themselves, beyond shoe-leather; but the Yeoman cannot come up to mounted drill without taking both himself and his horse away from his business. The horse is worth at least 7s. a day to him on his farm, besides the superintendence that almost all men who compose Yeomanry regiments have to give to the practical work of their farms. They have to ride away 10 or 15 miles, and to give the whole day to their drill. Practically they are put to an expense which, at the minimum, is 7s. a man. Now I should be glad if we could persuade the Government that it would be a great inducement, and worth doing if they wish the Yeomanry to be of any service, if they would give us, instead of eight days' pay for permanent duty, of which in several regiments one day is taken up in marching in, and another in marching out,—if they would give us half-a-day's pay for each of those days, and give the whole day's pay thus saved to the extra drills, *i.e.*, give 2s. 6d. for each extra drill; for you require three extra drills from every Yeoman. But of course I should very much prefer if you would give us an *extra* day's pay in that way.

Colonel MUSSENDE: Ten days' pay?

Major ACLAND: I do not think it would quite answer to give ten days' pay—for this reason: there are very few men who can afford to be away from their business for ten days; eight days is the outside, and many of them want a day's leave out of that; but there is this that can be done—and I think it has been done in one regiment—that when a man has been in the regiment for three years, and has been passed by the Adjutant as an efficient man, he should be allowed not to come into quarters until the third or fourth day of permanent duty. Because the result of the present system is, that you have on the first day of permanent duty, say twenty per cent. of your troop's recruits; whereas, if you had the recruits out by themselves for two or three days, you could teach them all the elements of squadron drill—to move about, increase and diminish front, and to know what wheeling is, and riding, and so forth. And then by the time the old soldiers were coming into quarters you would be able to get the regiment together in an hour instead of taking a couple of days about it, as at present.

Colonel MUSSENDE: Then they would have only four days' pay.

Major ACLAND: I should like them to have the other day's pay for extra drills,

because they are most valuable at separate troop drills, in helping the young soldiers to get into their places. There is another suggestion which Major Edwards has made in his paper. I do not know whether he ever heard Colonel Oakes speak about it, but I remember Colonel Oakes saying to me, many times, that if ever I had the honour of getting into Parliament, he hoped I would keep it continually before the authorities. The suggestion that I refer to is in the last paragraph but two or three. I may say, I have made the suggestion to Lord Hartington, and he listened with considerable interest, and begged that I would remind him of it when the proper time came; so that the additional authority given to it by Major Edwards's spontaneous suggestion will, I hope, not be lost—that is, as to the establishment of breeding *dépôts* all over the country. There is only one other thing I wish to mention, and that is to express my sense of the great importance that I think all Yeomanry Officers, who have experience, attach to the instruction at Aldershot. Nothing has been more valuable to the Yeomanry service than the establishment of that Aldershot school. I do trust that the authorities will maintain strictly the obligation of all Officers to go through that school, if it is only for a fortnight or three weeks. The elementary and skilled instruction given there gives the Officers confidence in themselves, which afterwards gives their men confidence in them; and if the authorities would carefully peruse the suggestions of Major Edwards, and would take the Yeomanry in hand, and make them feel that they want them to be of some use, I am quite certain that they would answer to the call.

Lieutenant-General Sir EDWARD HAMLET, K.C.B.: Before having the slightest idea as to what course the lecturer would take, I devoted a short time to-day to the consideration of this subject, and—I say it with all diffidence and modesty, because I am not a cavalry Officer—the line of argument that he has followed has, to my great gratification, been such as had suggested itself to myself. We have in the Yeomanry a large body of men who, with intelligence, spirit, and zeal, are only asking how these qualities can best be turned to the service of the country. Major Edwards has told us that, I think, in the most effectual way. I do not propose to enter into the details which he has so copiously given us, and which have been so completely discussed by other Officers; I will only say that I quite concur with Colonel Mussenden in thinking that there is no medium between cavalry and mounted infantry, and that any attempt to produce a force between the two would only be to muddle and spoil both. On the other hand, I quite concur with Major Edwards in thinking that the best use you can possibly make with the Yeomanry is probably to form them into mounted infantry. I will not go any further into details, but only express my general concurrence in Major Edwards's views. I think it is very fortunate that the idea that he has given us should have come from within the force rather than without. I think it is a matter of great promise for the Yeomanry that an Officer who has evidently given so much attention to the subject as Major Edwards, and with such excellent results, and who is capable of expressing his ideas in so clear a manner, should give us the benefit of his views. It is a step in the right direction, for in case of invasion a large force of Yeomanry would be at the disposal of the Government, and it is most important to consider how it could be turned to the best account.

Major HEYAR, 3rd Hussars, Adjutant West Somersetshire Yeomanry: I wish to say a word with regard to the shooting of the Yeomanry. At present we have thirty rounds given us per man, and I think that if the authorities would only increase that to forty or fifty it would be a very great advantage. In my own regiment last year we bought 10,000 rounds more than the amount actually supplied by the authorities, and this year we have already bought in 5,000 rounds. I think an increased allowance of ammunition would assist in making the men better shots. I would also suggest that Yeomanry non-commissioned officers should be permitted to go to the school at Aldershot; if this encouragement were given them, and if they went under some system whereby they had a certain amount of the expenses paid them while they were there, you would find a great many of them would go. I should like also to see the permanent staff go to Aldershot, or to some other cavalry centre, either every year or every two years: for then I am sure the Adjutant would have a much easier task in

keeping them up to their work and preventing them getting into slovenly habits. I go further than Major Acland, and say not only would I pay them two shillings and sixpence for each troop drill, but I would ask the Government to give each man who turned up at troop drill his day's pay just the same as if he were on permanent duty. I should also like to see the permanent drill lengthened by two or three days if we could have it. I do not think the suggestion with regard to the men being let off the first two or three days would work very well. I should also like to see the Yeomanry supplied with equitation articles, such as single-sticks, masks, and tent-pegging spears, so as to help them becoming good horsemen and cavalymen. I should also like to see troops of Yeomanry regiments encouraged to go to the drills at Aldershot; I am sure we could get up a certain number of men from every regiment if we only had a certain amount of assistance given us. With regard to what has been said as to the Yeomanry not learning sword exercise, I think if Officers could go to North Somerset they would see a regiment that will go through its sword exercise almost as well as any cavalry regiment they have ever seen.

Captain BICKERSTETH, Middlesex Yeomanry: I wish to say a few words on one or two points. I thoroughly agree with a great deal of what has been said about the importance of teaching the Yeomanry shooting, but I am rather afraid of the term "Mounted Infantry." I much prefer the word "Dragoons." From the little experience I have had in connection with a regiment in the midland counties for some years, I am quite sure the Yeomanry so thoroughly look upon themselves as cavalry that I doubt whether you would find the same class join the ranks if they thought they were joining as mounted infantry; they are a class particularly open to the influence of sentiment: even the removal of the exemption from the horse-tax had a very great and damaging effect upon our recruiting, and I think any proposal which made people believe that the Yeomanry were going to be turned into mounted infantry might be equally injurious. Out of a nominal force of 14,000 Yeomen it appears that last year there were only 9,000 actually out for training. It has been exceedingly difficult for the last few years to keep troops up to their proper strength, and we should be very careful how we introduce any change which would frighten our troopers, or make them think that they are not going to be regarded as cavalry. There is another point which struck me as I listened to Major Edwards's interesting lecture. The mounted infantry in Egypt were picked shots, and perhaps it would not be possible in a regiment of Yeomanry to get the figure of merit anything like as high as it ought to be if they are to be relied upon as mounted infantry. The idea of having a troop formed of the best marksmen or the best shots of each regiment as mounted infantry, or having a certain number of men in each troop told off as marksmen and equipped with the long rifle and Namaqua bucket, might, I think, be worthy of consideration; but if you were to turn whole regiments of Yeomanry into mounted infantry, and to rest in the belief that the country was well provided with that branch of the Service, I think that you might find in time of need that you were leaning on a broken reed. With reference to a longer period of training I used to find that the men in my troop came from very long distances; they were nearly all farmers, and they would not in the least have objected to a longer training, say for even fifteen days, if they could be sure of getting two days' leave in the course of the training. What they felt was that when they were more than a whole week away from their farms they could not know how things were going on. During the eight days the men were continually coming to ask for leave for one day to go back and see how their farms were faring; but if they could pay two unexpected visits to their homes during the training, they would not mind being out for a fortnight. Again, I was frequently told that if the Government would give them some little encouragement it would be a great inducement for men to join. They often mentioned exemptions from service on juries as a privilege which they said would almost be the same thing as the exemption from the horse-tax. It is not so much the actual value of an exemption, because to a great many of the Yeomanry the pay is really a small matter, but they like being recognized by the Government. As I have already said, Yeomanry are a sentimental class, and if we could get some little privilege of this sort, I think the Government would find it quite worth their while to grant it. There is one other point with regard to the Yeomanry upon which I feel strongly, and it is a matter that I think the Officers of Yeomanry regi-

ments have very much in their own hands. Constantly, when trying to get recruits, it has been thrown in my teeth—"Yes, but it is such an enormous expense." It is not only so in the regiments in the South of England, but in my former regiment I know that the Yeomen were put to very great expense beyond their pay, much more than 1*l.* or 2*l.*—I should say nearer 5*l.* for the week. Men do not like to join a regiment unless they can live as their comrades live, and I think the majority of Yeomen would be glad if, without loss of credit amongst their comrades, they could live more cheaply during the training.

Colonel MARSLAND, late 5th Dragoon Guards: It has afforded me great pleasure to hear this admirable lecture. I have always taken very great interest in the Yeomanry, and have thought that, if they were only properly instructed and looked after, they would be one of the most useful forces in England. Major Edwards says: "Every regiment may be depended upon to furnish guides for any part of its district." I am very glad to hear it, as I have always thought that was one of the chief uses that the Yeomanry might be put to,—that if a force were marching through England, the General would call upon the Yeomanry Officers to supply guides for the different districts. Major Edwards also said that every man could write and read, a matter of no small importance for reconnoitring—"a fair proportion can read and understand a map." I quite agree that the non-commissioned officers should be instructed how to reconnoitre: they should attend the classes, and in addition to that, after they have been instructed, they should collect their men together during the winter months and explain about the reconnoitring—not only how to reconnoitre but how to report. A great number of men are very fond of saying, "We have seen the enemy," but they cannot enter into details, and so the information they bring back is simply useless. A great number of them will ride several miles without being able to tell the General that they have crossed a bridge, or that there was a river, or that the country was enclosed. I think men, during the winter months, should be instructed in this important duty. With regard to carrying the rifle, I think myself every dragoon should be armed with a rifle with a sling attached to it. The rifle and sling should be carried on all ordinary occasions in a bucket as at present, and previous to the Dragoons coming into action the word of command should be "Sling arms! draw swords!" If a man's horse is shot, the carbine or rifle and any ammunition is not then separated. With regard to Major Edwards's plan for the linking of horses for dismounted service, I think too much importance cannot be attached to dismounted service with cavalry, and as to the fastening not being strong enough, we all know from experience that cavalry horses, after a few days' service, require very little to hold them. I think it is a most admirable suggestion, and should like to see it carried out.

Sir THOMAS ACLAND, Bart., M.P.: May I be allowed to say one word only on a main point of principle? I have listened with the greatest interest to this debate, and feel very proud to see my friend Major Edwards placed in so honourable a position as that of having given a lecture to-day, and having received so many compliments from military men for the quality of that lecture. But I confess I feel a little discouraged by what I have heard. We are told plainly, by high military authorities, that you must either have cavalry or mounted infantry. I have heard a little of what happened in Egypt from one of the noble soldiers who commanded there, and I am afraid that is true. Well now, if that is true, much as we admire the ability and skill and tact of the Major's lecture, what can we do in the direction he points out? He is asking the country to convert the Yeomanry into a Mounted Rifle force. He is told on high authority that it must either be infantry, or it must remain as cavalry. Now the principle which seems to me to stand in the way (and I venture to lay it before you as military men, who understand these things far better than we civilians can) is that these old-established auxiliary forces (the Mounted Rifle Volunteers were an exception under special influences) will not bear to be put upon any special ground, and they will only endeavour to follow and imitate the army. If you have in the regular army a body of mounted riflemen, not merely in name but in fact, either dragoons or carbineers, no doubt you can get the Yeomanry to follow them: you can tell the Yeomanry, "There is your pivot, you must form upon those men;" but I do not think you will get the present Yeomanry Cavalry regiments to consent to be

converted into anything which is not in the army. I was recently talking to a very experienced old civilian country gentleman, a Colonel of Volunteers and field Officer of Yeomanry, and he said, "There is another fact involved in this question, that if you do not follow the lines of the cavalry, all your drill instructors and your sergeants will be up against you directly; they will try to follow the routine they have been used to, and it is extremely difficult to get them out of it." That is the main principle which I venture to submit to this meeting. I feel very grateful to you for having taken up our subject. I do hope some day military men will be able to induce the War Office to give us something like a training school for educating drill instructors, and teaching them how to teach.

The CHAIRMAN: You must work that in the House of Commons.

Sir THOMAS AGLAND: I have worked it there; but I am getting too old now. As you are so kind, I will say one word more about Mounted Rifle Volunteers. You have heard the experience of a younger member of my family. For fifteen years we kept our Mounted Rifle Corps; we had five or six of these corps in Devonshire, and kept them together in spite of discouragement from headquarters. I am bound to say General McMurdo took great interest in them, but he made us carry swords. These men found their own clothes and saddlery; the whole thing was worked most economically, even to the extent of our little arrangements for feeding when we went out. The Government, however, would not give us more than the exact sum given for ordinary infantry volunteers, and this is what broke us down at last. We could have managed to pay our way no doubt: it was not the money that stopped us; but there was so much discouragement implied in the refusal to recognize the expenses of mounted men and horses. At last, Colonel Oakes, who devoted himself to the improvement of the Yeomanry, said, "I cannot come down here to be bothered to inspect twenty or thirty men." In short, the whole thing was snuffed out from headquarters. We showed, however, for fifteen years that it was possible to get a number of farmers together, dressed in plain grey jackets, corduroys, and boots, who could ride and shoot well. That could be done yet, with proper encouragement; but I do not think you will get the Yeomanry to consent to being turned into mounted infantry.

Captain PHILLIPS, Pembroke Yeomanry: I belong to a regiment in South Wales where our men are widely separated, and I think, inasmuch as troop drills seem to be considered a very essential and important part of our duty, every encouragement should be given to enable us to carry them out efficiently. We had a meeting of Officers the other day, and considered the matter very carefully and anxiously, and the only practical plan we could suggest was (if possible) to get our men together for two days running; but in order to do that we should have to stop at the rendezvous for the night, and it seems to me that if the Government would allow some 3s. or 4s. a man for the drill it would be a great assistance when urging attendance. The men do not care so much for the actual money they receive as for not being put to expense; and I always find a Yeoman does not object to giving his time, but does not see why he should pay for his horse as well. As to the shooting, we have tried our best to improve it by giving prizes. We find this has made it very popular, and the men are very happy and willing (when they can get even a sweep-stake prize amongst themselves) to spend two or three days from morning to evening at shooting practice. I think if the Government were not stingy in these little matters, such as giving us one day's pay for our troop drills and as much ammunition as we can properly use, it would be a very great help in keeping our force together. Above all what we want is some recognition. It has been a very great blow to us to have the horse duty done away with. There was a sort of "swagger" in a man's feeling that he was in a better position than his neighbour, and I really

¹ I think it was a fatal mistake when the Mounted Rifles were detached from the administrative battalions of Rifle Volunteers. As long as I commanded Rifle Volunteers, whether as a Brigadier or regimental Colonel, the companies of Mounted Rifles attached were of the greatest value on all occasions of assembly, both as to transport and in combining and communicating with different bodies. As soon as they were placed under cavalry inspectors, I felt that their doom was sealed.—T. D. A.

think if some such recognition in some other form could be given it would tend very much to increase the popularity of the force. For instance, if every man who was efficient were allowed to keep a pair-wheeled trap free of duty it would be asking the Government for very little more than the horse duty; *but* it would be giving the men a very great "swagger" over their friends and neighbours. I think if a man could drive about in a pair-wheeled trap, and say, "I pay no duty for this," a great many would join the corps. I have studied the Yeomanry considerably, and the few remarks I have made have been based upon the result of that study.

Lieutenant-Colonel HARFIELD, Middlesex Yeomanry: I wish to make one remark with regard to the course I have adopted, namely, that of having applied to the War Office for permission to arm a portion of my regiment with the long rifle. It seemed to me that there was no more practical difficulty in carrying the long rifle when mounted than the carbine, and on *that* ground I made my application—not for the purpose of converting the regiment into "mounted infantry" (which I think is a term which, at present at any rate, would be very unpopular amongst Yeomen), but rather to increase the efficiency of our "dismounted service." Whether the change will be popular in the regiments or not will be seen after our next training; but at present it is only an experiment. I think also it would be unpopular amongst the men if the sword was given up for the bayonet; but on this point I shall be glad to know what Major Edwards proposes. For my own part I am inclined to think that for the Yeomanry, when at close quarters, the revolver is the best weapon.

The CHAIRMAN: I have had rather a shock to-day. I have heard something about sword exercise in the Yeomanry, who have yearly three or four days' troop training, and eight days' permanent duty. Is it a positive fact that you go through that antiquated farce at your inspections?

Lieutenant-Colonel HARFIELD: I am afraid we do.

The CHAIRMAN: I served for twelve years in connection with the Prussian army, and saw it through two campaigns, and I think I saw every cavalry regiment in the service inspected more or less, but I never saw any sword exercise performed. I was surprised to hear that such a thing existed. I have not seen much of our cavalry since I came home, and therefore I may be supposed to be in ignorance of that fact. I shall not make any remarks upon the lecture, because I think our time has been stretched to the utmost period for which a small audience could be expected to remain. I will only, therefore, express my personal opinion that it is one of the best lectures that we have heard in this theatre. It has been admirably put together, and, whether we agree with all Major Edwards's proposals or not, it has embodied a very large amount of excellent suggestion. As I do not intend to say more myself, I am going to put myself into the place of a better man. I had a letter, half-an-hour before I came down here, from an old and esteemed friend—Colonel Bower¹—the mention of whose name is quite enough to justify me in reading his letter to the meeting. He says,—

"Dear Sir Beauchamp,—I have this morning received a copy of the lecture on Yeomanry, which Major Edwards is to give to-morrow. I have read the paper with great interest, and much regret that I shall not be able to attend as a listener, and perhaps have been permitted to offer the lecturer my congratulations on the clear and practical views he holds on a subject which you and I know have long been regarded as of very great importance. I see that Major Edwards and I quite agree as to the necessity of Mounted Riflemen being a cavalry and not an infantry force; and I do most cordially hope that he may succeed in his endeavour to convert the Yeomanry from imitation troopers into useful dragoons, or whatever it may please the powers to call them. The lecturer's remarks on tactics, equipments, drill, &c., are so completely in accordance with the system which was introduced by me three and twenty years ago, as to re-kindle my hopes of yet seeing the desired conversion of the Yeomanry become a reality. I do not agree with Major Edwards's proposal to attach the sword to the saddle. I can quite imagine the inconvenience of a sword dangling between a man's legs in running, with a bunch of slings in

¹ 1st Hants Mounted Rifle Volunteers.

one hand and a rifle in the other, to say nothing of the *sabreclache* tripping up the runner; but all these troubles are easily avoided by carrying the sword in a frog, as we used to do in my late corps. With that equipment my men could skirmish on foot without being in the least impeded by their side-arm. The plan of attaching the sword to the saddle has drawbacks. Troops such as my late corps, and what the Yeomanry may yet, I hope, some day become, should have no fixed tackle about them such as may catch in branches in brushing through woods, or jumping fences. A sword fixed is liable to this drawback, and the plan of slinging the sword to *dees* in the saddle behind, if too low, comes in contact with the horse's hind legs in fast movement; and in jumping, unless the rider sticks very close, the hilt is apt to bound up and get under his fork, thereby incurring very great risk of personal damage. I see Major Edwards advocates repeating rifles and revolvers. My views on that subject are, and always have been, that one firelock is as much as any man ought to have, and that it ought for obvious reasons to be of the same sort, and carry the same ammunition, as that of the line. I must apologize to you for obtruding my views on you; but I am not able to attend the lecture, and consequently am precluded from taking any part in acknowledging the good work Major Edwards is engaged in, and therefore, through you, I take the liberty of tendering my best wishes for the success of the cause.—Believe me, yours very sincerely, J. BOWER."

I do not think I should have done my duty to the gentleman who favoured us with the lecture if I had not read this excellent letter of Colonel Bower's. I have nothing more to add, except to ask Major Edwards if he will favour us with any remarks in reply.

Major EDWARDS: I think there has been some misunderstanding as to my views. I do not at all advocate that the Yeomanry force should be converted into mounted infantry; indeed, I thought that I expressed myself very strongly to the contrary. I am sure we are all extremely obliged to General Hamley and Colonel Mussenden for the kind manner in which they have spoken of the force; but I must say I regret to hear from such distinguished authorities that there is, in their opinion, no room for an intermediate force, as it were, between cavalry and infantry. I was in hopes that the Yeomanry might have been converted into a force which, while retaining a great many of the attributes of cavalry, might gain some of those of infantry, and that this might be brought about merely by introducing a good rifle, and making some changes in dress and equipment. Sir Thomas Acland places us in somewhat of a dilemma by saying that if there are only two arms open to us we must give up the idea of making any change at all. I suggest that we should get out of that dilemma by improving our present position. Getting a really good weapon, and altering our drill to a certain extent, would not in any way deteriorate from our present cavalry qualifications. I can corroborate everything Colonel Mussenden has said as to the horses. I have often seen horses under three years old ridden on a 35-mile march, and at a field day the next and following days; it is wonderful how steady they become even during dismounted service. As to the shooting, I am very glad indeed to be able to corroborate what Major Helyar said. My experience of several regiments has shown me that the men are very keen indeed about shooting. In my own regiment the same difficulty occurred as to the quantity of ammunition. We wrote, as Major Helyar did, to the authorities, objecting that only thirty rounds were allowed per man, and to our astonishment we were informed that sixty rounds were allowed; but we never got them, and we have always had to pay for extra ammunition. Captain McGeorge, of the Carbineers, who is Adjutant of the Westmoreland Yeomanry, has just informed me that the figure of merit of that regiment was higher last year than that of any regular cavalry regiment in the Service. So that I think we may look forward with some confidence to the future of the shooting of the Yeomanry. I know in my own regiment men who, living many miles from a range, go and shoot every week regularly. Then, as to tent-pegging, and so on, the men are very keen about it; but we have to buy tent-pegging apparatus, heads and posts, &c., out of our own funds.

Colonel MUSSENDEN: I may state that I applied for this equipment from the Ordnance Storekeeper in the military district, and I was told—what in fact I knew before—that these articles were issued, on authority, to cavalry regiments for the

use of riding schools, but there was no authority to issue them to Yeomanry regiments, unless by special orders from headquarters.

Major EDWARDS: I think if the authorities would supply us with more ammunition, and with the necessary things for tent-pegging, &c., it would be much better for the Yeomanry. A suggestion was made by Major Acland as to the length of time during which men should be called out for permanent duty,—that it should be increased from eight to ten days. I know in one or two regiments that has been done; instead of having eight days' permanent duty and one or two days' preliminary drills, they have now ten days' permanent duty. That is the case in the Leicestershire regiment, and it has been carried out for a great many years in the regiment to which I belong, but we have the preliminary drills in addition. I am very glad to hear Colonel Marsland's remarks upon the value of dismounted service. It is a great encouragement to the auxiliary forces when Officers who have commanded such distinguished regiments as he has done will come forward on occasions of this kind to give us the advantage of their experience. It seems very uphill work to make any suggestion the carrying out of which will cost money; and, therefore, I have not the slightest hopes that my remarks, with reference to the Yeomanry considered as a reserve, will receive any attention whatever. But, with regard to the value of the force as an auxiliary, I think something ought to be done; and if the authorities would entertain these views of mine, which merely amount to this—that the force shall receive a good rifle, that some slight alteration should be made in drill and in dress, and that the sword should be attached in a different way—the result would be that the Yeomanry would become a very valuable force indeed. On the other hand, if they do not, the responsibility must rest with the Government if the force withers away, and ceases to exist.¹

The CHAIRMAN: I think no Officer here will disagree with me for proposing a very warm vote of thanks to Major Edwards for his most excellent lecture. The Yeomanry is a force for which every Englishman has a considerable affection, and I am very sorry to hear that it has withered down. I think it might be made a most valuable force, and though there is little hope of making much impression through the medium of lectures upon people in office, yet perhaps some remarks which have fallen to-day may lead to good hereafter, in which case I think the Yeomanry will owe a very great debt of gratitude to Major Edwards.

¹ NOTE.—With regard to the question of dress, I quite agree with Colonel Mussenden that any change involving expense to Officers, or destruction of *esprit de corps*, would be most objectionable. At the same time the value of the Yeomanry would be so largely increased by the adoption of a general uniform that some steps ought to be directed to secure such a result. If my original suggestion be undesirable I would offer another. Let the present full-dress of regiments be retained for review order, and let an undress uniform, similar to that proposed for the regular army, be worn throughout the force for drill and field day order. The dress might be a light helmet and serge Khakee jacket, over which the present belts would be worn. Officers would be distinguished by badges and belts. The cost of this would be very trifling, and the first issue ought to be made by Government, regiments replacing worn clothing from contingent funds. Boots and breeches, the latter with, if possible, the same coloured stripe throughout the force, ought to be universally adopted. The Winchester-Henry Company would, I believe, supply the necessary number of rifles or carbines for about three pounds apiece. The expense, therefore, of giving the Yeomanry a uniform dress, and an accurate repeating rifle, would be within my estimate of 5*l.* a man.