

## 4 Field Service Regulations - Haig's doctrinal development

This paper has been updated in the light of further research and peer review (Feb 2022).

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**Haig's personal and official writings can be followed between 1900 and 1914.**

**There is a general assumption that he conformed with *Field Service Regulations, Part I, Operations*, and *Part II, Administration, 1909 (FSR, Parts I and II)* in 1914 and before, since they were published when he was Director of Staff Duties at the War Office. Many historians assert that he supported the concepts they described as they were prepared. However, he attended none of the Army Manoeuvres, conferences and staff rides between 1902 and 1907 which led to consensus in the drafting of *Part I, Operations*. Nor is there any evidence that he had any interest in the detailed structure of staffing arrangements for an expeditionary force between 1902 and 1907, when *Part II, Administration* was being drafted. Even as Director of Staff Duties from 1907 to 1910, he had little or no responsibility for either part. None of his tactical reports supply any evidence of support for the detail of *FSR, Part I*. There is considerable evidence that he failed to implement *Part I*, as a unified concept, in his own commands between 1909 and 1914.**

## To 1899

There are many biographies which detail Douglas Haig's early years from his birth in 1861, and there is little of controversy in the detail.<sup>1</sup> In 1884, at the age of 22, he enrolled in the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, and in 1885, he entered the cavalry, joining the 7th Hussars, going to India with them in 1886. He became Adjutant in 1889, his first staff job. He was promoted Captain in 1891, when he took up the post of Brigade Major to General Sir George Luck, Inspector General of Cavalry. He moved on in 1892, being attached to the Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, where he was given command of a Cavalry Squadron. He was, by this time, an effective and well-regarded cavalry officer. He resolved to demonstrate his undoubted dedication to a military career, and improve his chances of career progression, by passing through the two-year Staff Course at Camberley.

So, in late 1894, he returned to England to take the exam which would qualify him for entry. This is a significant moment in Haig's life. For the next four years, he was an academic soldier. He first studied French cavalry tactics, writing a brief thesis on the subject, while Aide-de-Camp to Sir Keith Fraser, Inspector General of Cavalry at the War Office in London; and, in 1895, he visited Germany for two months to study the cavalry of the Imperial German Army, writing another report. During this period, he also worked on the draft of a 'new *Cavalry Drill Book*, which Colonel John French

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Duff Cooper, *Haig*, (London, Faber and Faber, 1935); Gary Sheffield, *The Chief, Douglas Haig and the British Army*, (Aurum Press, London, 2011); J. P. Harris, *Douglas Haig and the First World War*, (Cambridge University Press, 2008); Gary Mead, *The Good Soldier, the Biography of Douglas Haig*, (Atlantic Books, London, 2014); G. J. De Groot, "The Pre-War Life and Military Career of Douglas Haig", (PhD, University of Edinburgh, 1983).

had begun, but left unfinished on his promotion to the position of Assistant Adjutant General.’<sup>2</sup> It was published as *Cavalry Drill* in 1898.

In addition, he would have closely studied Edward Hamley’s *Operations of War*, which was required reading for entry to Staff College.<sup>3</sup> In fact, he would have studied it twice, since he was unsuccessful in his first application. This book was regarded as being in the forefront of military thinking. Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hamley had served, on the staff of the artillery, in the Crimean War between 1853 and 1856, but was mainly an academic or political soldier thereafter.<sup>4</sup> Strachan describes his book as being both ‘mired in the tactical past and limited in conception’, which is fair comment; and as ‘the most obvious British precursor of Field Service Regulations Part I,’ which is distinctly arguable. The two assertions do not sit easily together. He goes on to say that ‘Hamley believed that ...operations were a matter of planning and logistics, of choosing one's own line of operations, and mastering those of the enemy.’<sup>5</sup> Dighton more recently, says that the book is derivative, and presents ‘strategy as essentially unchanging as campaigns fought decades apart [are] invoked to illustrate the same strategic principle.’ He also says that the book avoids ‘reference to changing technology or psychological factors.’<sup>6</sup> And that elegantly sums up why the book is deeply flawed. In the 1886 edition, Hamley grapples manfully with the impact

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<sup>2</sup> Cooper, *Haig*, p.46.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Shand, *The Life of Sir Edward Bruce Hamley*, (Blackwood & Sons, London, 1895), p.120.

<sup>4</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1911, Volume 12, p.896. His career is described in full.

<sup>5</sup> Hew Strachan, “Operational Art and Britain, 1909–2009”, in John Andreas Olsen and Martin van Creveld, *The Evolution of Operational Art: From Napoleon to the Present*, ([2010] Oxford Scholarship on line, 2011), pp.100-101.

<sup>6</sup> Adam Dighton, “Jomini versus Clausewitz: Hamley’s *Operations of War* and Military Thought in the British Army, 1866–1933”, *War in History*, 2020, Vol. 27(2) pp.184-185.

of railways, but it is hardly useful to examine historic campaigns to illustrate this revolution in rapid transport.<sup>7</sup> The most striking feature of this turgid tome is how similar in presentation it is to Haig's own literary efforts between 1907 and 1912.

At Staff College, Haig would have been taught by G.F.R. Henderson, a formidable military intellect, who in 1901, wrote a first draft of *Combined Training (Provisional) 1902*, which evolved into *FSR, Part I 1909*; and by Colonel Richard Lawrence, who was the cavalry representative on the 1902 committee which edited it for publication. This was his Haig's first opportunity to consider continental and all arms strategy in an academic setting. Many biographers have emphasised the importance of the next two years on his military thinking thereafter, but primary sources are almost non-existent. Duff Cooper does not even discuss Haig at the Staff College on those grounds. It is hard not to agree with Sheffield when he says that 'too much has been made of its influence on Haig', and he wisely resists the temptation to interpret what little is known in a way that supports later theses.<sup>8</sup> Terraine suggests, unconvincingly, that he acquired there a 'sympathy' with 'the problems of the citizen army', that he would command in the First War.<sup>9</sup> Travers suggests that he developed a life-long adherence to Napoleonic concepts of battle and a Clausewitzian view of the necessary moral qualities he should have as a commander.<sup>10</sup> De Groot's thought provoking analysis of the ethos and curriculum of the Staff College in the 1890's concludes that 'Haig is an

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<sup>7</sup> Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, *The Operations of War, Explained and Illustrated, Fourth Edition*, (Blackwood & Sons, Oxford, 1886), pp.8-51.

<sup>8</sup> Sheffield, *The Chief*, p.27.

<sup>9</sup> John Terraine, *Douglas Haig, the Educated Soldier*, ([1963] Leo Cooper, 1990), p.11.

<sup>10</sup> Tim Travers, *The Killing Ground, The British Army, the Western Front and the Emergence of Modern Warfare, 1900-1918*, ([1987] Barnsley, Pen and Sword, 2009), pp.85-91.

excellent example of the college's failure.'<sup>11</sup> Any of these ideas may be true. Charteris, more prosaically, probably reflects Haig's rose-tinted recollections of his time there, but even he quotes Edmonds, whose anecdotes shed only unreliable light.<sup>12</sup> In any event, it is difficult to believe that Haig's ideas were shaped more by this short academic course than by later military experiences. But what can be said is that there is no evidence that he came close to any of those who were responsible for defining, or otherwise influencing, army doctrine as it evolved between 1902 to 1909.

On successfully completing the two-year course, Haig was rewarded with a posting to join Kitchener's army in the Sudan, necessarily taking a temporary posting in the Anglo-Egyptian army. So, from early 1898 till 1902, he was almost continuously at war, first in the Sudan, and then in South Africa.

### **The South African War**

Haig kept a detailed diary during this war. In his first significant contact with the enemy at Elands Laagt on 21-22 October 1899, with French in command, it is instructive to analyse the skirmish, as described in his diary, with reference to *FSR, Part I*. The initial cavalry 'reconnaissance is not pushed home,' which is compliant. The next day, the main attack was an artillery one, the advance of the guns being 'covered by one squadron of the Natal Light Horse', but the Boers had better guns and were in strong positions, so the guns were withdrawn while reinforcements were summoned. The next day a coordinated, all arms, attack was undertaken, initial

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<sup>11</sup> Gerard De Groot, *Douglas Haig 1861-1928*, (London, Unwin Hyman, 1988), p.52; Harris, *Douglas Haig*, pp.16-19 is more generous to the Staff College in his assessment of its education.

<sup>12</sup> Brigadier-General John Charteris, *Field-Marshal Earl Haig*, (Cassel & Co Ltd, London, 1929) pp.11-14.

resistance on the Boer left flank being successfully countered by four squadrons of the Imperial Light Horse, ‘acting dismounted’, before a strong infantry attack, closely supported by artillery, pushed the centre of the Boers line back, allowing an opportunity for a cavalry charge against the Boer right flank. So, French allowed no independence to his cavalry and required mounted elements of his force to fight dismounted. Similarly, at Intintanyoni, on 24 October, the 5th Lancers, ‘by holding a Kopje’ [small hill], prevented a Boer flank movement with rifle fire. On 29 October, Haig, as Chief of Staff to French, helped the artillery take up suitable positions before an all arms attack; and on 31 October, he is asking why two infantry battalions, who surrendered, at Cainguba, did not have cavalry to support them.<sup>13</sup>

Both French and Haig appear to have demonstrated, from the moment of their arrival in South Africa, pragmatic good sense in the handling of the all-arms forces at their disposal. Haig was not just following French’s lead. It was he who principally liaised with the artillery in the above account, and ‘he wrote in his ‘Tactical Notes’ in November 1899 : ‘The use made by the Boers of their ponies to carry them to a position or positions from which to deliver a flanking fire upon attacking troops should not go unnoticed by us, and might sometimes be imitated by our Cavalry with good results in suitable country.’<sup>14</sup> The author of this diary had a mind-set entirely compatible with that of *FSR, Part I*, which was published ten years later.

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<sup>13</sup> Douglas Scott, *The Preparatory Prologue, Douglas Haig Diaries and Letters, 1861 to 1914*, (Pen and Sword, Barnsley, 2006), 20-31 October, 1899, pp.123-138. The veracity of the account of battle given in these diary entries has not been checked by the author against other contemporary accounts.

<sup>14</sup> The Marquess of Anglesey, *A History of the British Cavalry 1816-1919, Volume 4, 1899-1913*, (London, Leo Cooper, 1986), p.390.

But this was early in the war, when the Boers still had a credible army. By the last year of the war, they did not, and the British army faced guerrilla tactics. Their opponents not only resorted to ‘explosive bullets’, which inflicted hideous wounds, but also dressed up in ‘khakee’ British uniforms, to escape detection, and snipe from close range. Any captured, so dressed, were ‘promptly shot’.<sup>15</sup> Like most guerrilla warfare, it was vicious and inglorious. French and Haig both remained resolute, but they cannot have enjoyed this new type of warfare. They were implementing a policy which caused desperate hardship to civilians. Both must have been scarred by their experiences. But Kitchener showed his appreciation of the job that Haig had done, by facilitating his appointment as Colonel of the 17th Lancers. It is in this context that he returned to England after the war, to find himself feted as a hero.

### **In Britain 1902 to 1903**

There were not many officers who emerged with credit from the South African War, but Haig and French were amongst that number. In 1902, Haig was initially posted to Edinburgh, confirmed in command of the 17th Lancers, and appointed Aide-de-Camp (ADC) to King Edward VII, a position he held from 1902 to 1904. If one is to argue that Haig had any influence on the second edition of *Field Service Regulations, Part I*, entitled *Combined Training*, (1905), this is a crucial eighteen months, since he was posted to India in late 1903, and did not return until 1906.

It should have been a triumphant time for Haig, but Duff Cooper, and others, describes his initial dissatisfaction with barracks, parade ground, and it seems, life in

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<sup>15</sup> Scott, *Haig Diaries*, 22 August & 3 September, 1901, pp.196-197.

general.<sup>16</sup> He worked hard, and worked his men hard, careless of the muted complaints from his subordinates. ‘Although he was near relations and among friends, he did not go much into society,’ says Terraine.<sup>17</sup> Apart from his sister Henrietta, what little social support he had, seems to have been provided by the hierarchy of Court life, as A.D.C. to the King. He became fiercely competitive on the polo field, and gradually mellowed, at least in Scotland, requiring selected junior officers in his regiment to accompany him on his weekly rounds of golf.<sup>18</sup> One hesitates to use the phrase, traumatic stress, but this sequence of behaviour seems to suggest that not all was well. The introverted Haig would certainly not have been immune to his past experiences.

Both he and French were almost immediately called upon to give evidence to the Royal Commission, chaired by Lord Elgin. This was a Committee of Enquiry, simply establishing facts (and opinions). They probably conferred beforehand, since there are similarities in their written presentations. The Commission seems impressed with the clarity of Haig’s detailed evidence, less so perhaps with his overview. ‘Cavalry will have a larger sphere of action in future wars; in fact, as now armed, it is a new element in tactics. Besides being used before, during, and after a battle, as hitherto, we must expect to see it employed strategically on a much larger scale than formerly, when it was without an effective firearm.’ The Commission quickly established that Haig had never commanded infantry. On cross-examination, he said that infantry needed little specialist training, but that a cavalryman needed three years to become completely

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<sup>16</sup> Cooper, *Haig*, p.95.

<sup>17</sup> Terraine, *The Educated Soldier*, p.33.

<sup>18</sup> Sheffield, *The Chief*, pp.53-54.



competent. He supported the principle of artillery fire in support of other arms.<sup>19</sup> French agreed this concept but said that the field artillery in South Africa was ‘inferior’ to the modern Boer pieces, and that the horse artillery had been ‘of very little value.’ When asked about a clash of cavalry of equal competence, he said that the cavalry ‘leader who gets down off his horses and begins firing (except with one or two squadrons which may be used on the same principle as Horse Artillery is used) is lost.’<sup>20</sup> This qualification is often left out, and it is important. Both French and Haig supported the concept of all arms cooperation. But both also called for the re-introduction of the sword or lance which was no longer standard issue, on the orders of Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief of the Forces. Using bayonets, both said, was simply not practical. Both Haig and French feared that this removal of swords and lances would emasculate the cavalry, turning them into mounted infantry. It did not take long for this debate to polarise opinion and distract those involved from the very real job in hand. But neither French nor Haig were out of line with others who gave evidence to the Commission. De Groot says that while Haig ‘and his co-religionists argued the merits of antique weapons and tactics, their minds were diverted from studying the implications of technological developments upon military science.’<sup>21</sup> But *Combined Training 1902* clearly states that the cavalry was an important offensive force, with a charge by small units of it being an entirely legitimate tactic. For that

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<sup>19</sup> “Royal Commission on the War in South Africa; Minutes of Evidence (Volume II),” (London, HMSO, 1903), Haig’s evidence, pp.401-413.

<sup>20</sup> “Royal Commission; Minutes of Evidence (Vol II),” French’s evidence, p.306.

<sup>21</sup> Gerard De Groot, “Ambition, Duty and Doctrine: Douglas Haig’s rise to High Command”, Brian Bond & Nigel Cave (ed), *Haig, a Re-Appraisal 80 Years On*, ([1999] Pen & Sword, Barnsley, 2017), p.47.

they needed to be appropriately armed. After giving this evidence, Haig became involved in a re-drafting of *Cavalry Drill 1898*, which was to be re-issued as *Cavalry Training*. In the heat of the above debate, Haig did not allow the manual to reflect the tactics that he and French had used in South Africa. ‘There is not one word about Artillery or Dismounted Fire,’ complained Roberts, justifiably, in 1903.<sup>22</sup> Even in the 1907 edition of *Cavalry Training*, which does deal with dismounted fire, there is no mention of other arms in the introduction to ‘Principles of Manoeuvre,’ nor in the ‘general principles in the employment of cavalry.’<sup>23</sup> The cavalry, ‘in order to carry out its role, ... must have complete liberty of action, and must not be tied to the army.’ The cavalry should reconnoitre in force, and ‘the cavalry fight will usually be the climax of some detached operation.’ Their duty is to ‘break through the line of hostile covering troops.’<sup>24</sup> This can be contrasted with *Combined Training 1902*. ‘Every force which takes the field against an organised enemy should be composed of the three arms’; and ‘cavalry to a very great extent make use of fire to bring about the enemy’s overthrow.’ The ‘independent cavalry’, ahead of the all-arms ‘advanced guard,’ should not ‘reconnoitre in force’ and should advance only until ‘checked by hostile outposts.’<sup>25</sup> The two documents are badly out of step.

Haig’s views, though widely supported, were not accepted by more progressive thinkers in the cavalry ranks. In 1902, Lawrence was the cavalry representative on the

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<sup>22</sup> Roberts to Kitchener, 24 September 1903, Roberts Papers, 7101/23/122/6, as quoted by De Groot, *The Military Career of Douglas Haig*, p.241.

<sup>23</sup> *Cavalry Training 1907*, (London, War Office, 1907), pp.172-173,185-188. I have been unable to track down the 1904 edition.

<sup>24</sup> *Cavalry Training 1907*, pp.192-195.

<sup>25</sup> *Combined Training, (Provisional) 1902*, (London, War Office, 1902), pp.13-22.

Hildyard Committee, which produced the first draft of *Combined Training* in 1902.<sup>26</sup> Sir Evelyn Wood started his army life in the cavalry, but, in 1903, commanding II Corps in England, he used *Combined Training* during the 1903 training season, and at the Manoeuvres.<sup>27</sup> French, commanding in both the 1903 and 1904 Manoeuvres, also allowed it use, as is clear from the chief umpire's assessment of his force's compliance with it.<sup>28</sup> And by 1905, Brigadier-General M. Rimington was asserting that the role of cavalry "consists in union, combined exertion and concerted movements" of all arms,' embracing the philosophy of *Combined*, rather than *Cavalry, Training*.<sup>29</sup>

But Haig was outside this circle of generals who were being forced to confront how battles should be managed, post South Africa. His main social life in 1902 and 1903 was in an officers' mess with his young regimental cavalry officers in the first flush of enthusiasm for their new careers; and mixing with landed aristocrats and royalty at Court. In that context, it seems that he decided to assert the glory and beauty of independent massed cavalry. On 25 September 1903, Haig noted in his diary that he attended a 'meeting of Officers under Presidency of Lord Roberts at War Office re Cavalry Questions. I strongly maintain that the chief method of action is the mounted role. He hotly opposes me.'<sup>30</sup> This was the last chance he had to vent his views.

In October 1903, he was posted from Scotland to India.

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<sup>26</sup> National Army Museum (NAM) 8704-35-37, Kelly-Kenny Adjutant-General to GOC Aldershot, 31 Oct 1901; Anglesey, *British Cavalry 1816-1919, Vol 4*, p.284.

<sup>27</sup> TNA WO 279/516 "Report of the Preliminary Training for the IInd Army-Corps and its Implementation in the Army Manoeuvres 1903" pp.12-15.

<sup>28</sup> TNA WO 279/8, "Report on Army Manoeuvres, 1904", pp.11,76-83. Lord Methuen's report.

<sup>29</sup> TNA WO 279/9, "Report of a Conference and Staff Ride as carried out at the Staff College by Senior Officers of the General Staff, January 1906", p.31.

<sup>30</sup> National Library of Scotland (NLS), Haig papers, diary, 25 September 1903, as quoted by De Groot, *The Military Career of Douglas Haig*, p.242.

## India, 1903 to 1906

Haig was appointed Inspector General of Cavalry in India in October 1903, and in that capacity, he organised a number of Staff Rides. The reports from these outings were collated into a book, *Cavalry Studies, Strategical and Tactical*, issued in his name and published in 1907.<sup>31</sup> It summarises his tactical and strategic philosophy at that time. The book is very similar in style to Hamley's *Operations of War*, which Haig had studied between 1894 and 1896. Like Hamley, Haig bases his *Studies* on previous military campaigns, all of which occurred in nineteenth century conflicts, well before the introduction of quick firing artillery, or the regular use of machine guns. Haig saw army strategy as developing in a linear way through Napoleonic, and then Prussian military theorists, such as Clausewitz and Moltke, to the time the book was written. 'Large armies entail large numbers of cavalry,' he concludes; and 'cavalry ...plays [note the present tense] a role in grand tactics whose importance can hardly be overestimated,' echoing his evidence to Elgin's Royal Commission. 'There can be no question as to how' the commander of the independent cavalry division should act if he saw any opportunity. He should concentrate and attack.<sup>32</sup>

*'Let us sum up in a rapid résumé the services which this arm [the cavalry] ought to and can render. During the period of concentration, it conceals and protects the strategic front of the Armies; it indicates to the Commander-in-Chief the point where he ought to strike, and points out to him the objective. During the*

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<sup>31</sup> Major-General Douglas Haig, *Cavalry Studies, Strategical and Tactical*, (London, Hugh Rees Ltd, 1907).

<sup>32</sup> Haig, *Cavalry Studies*, pp.4-5,61.

*march to approach towards the enemy, it surrounds the columns with a vigilant network: it clears their path, raises and tears away the veil spread before them. On the field of battle, it surprises the hostile Artillery and reduces it to silence: it protects the head and flank of its own Army, covers its deployment, disturbs or retards that of the enemy. A little later it prepares the événement and takes part in the assault; in a few seconds it gathers the fruits of a long contest. Lastly, it completes the victory, or averts disaster: it undertakes the pursuit or covers retreat. In short, it intervenes in the prologue, in the principal act, and in the dénouement. It both introduces and consecrates success.*<sup>33</sup>

The aim of the book seems to be to inspire the next generation of cavalry subalterns. But, by the time it was published, *Combined Training 1902* had been updated. The 1905 edition states that even the ‘independent’ cavalry must abide by the strategy determined by the commander-in-chief of the whole army.<sup>34</sup> Even before the book came out, Brigadier-General M. F. Rimington launched a pre-emptive attack on it. In his presentation at the 1906 Staff College Conference, he presented a paper on ‘Cavalry, its Role in War, and its Training in Peace’. ‘I take it for granted that my audience... [agree that the way forward] ... “consists in union, combined exertion and concerted movements” of all arms, and that enthusiasm for their own arm does not prevent them from appreciating the value and use of other arms,’ he begins. Historical precedents are almost useless in defining the role of cavalry in 1906, he goes on, attacking Haig’s traditional method of teaching. He emphasises, as does *Combined*

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<sup>33</sup> Haig, *Cavalry Studies*, p.18.

<sup>34</sup> *Combined Training, 1905*, p.107.

*Training*, the value of intelligent intelligence, before launching an attack on past concepts. ‘The old system of a cavalry screen, or what General Douglas Haig described as “pepper box” system, is out of date.’ Citing Haig in a description of an antiquated tactic was a bold move for a mere brigadier. And it was not redacted. He goes on to plea that the cavalry be allowed to train intelligently, in partnership with its horse artillery and machine gun support, so that it could develop into an integrated force, with the capacity to follow the tactical advice laid down in *Combined Training*. The summary of the discussion that followed implies general agreement.<sup>35</sup>

### **Haig as Director of Military Training, June 1906 to November 1907**

Haig’s return to England in 1906 was the defining moment of his early military career. In January 1906, Richard Haldane, on becoming Secretary of State for War, was determined to impose reform on the army, and particularly to create ‘a highly organised and well-equipped striking force which can be transported, with the least possible delay, to any part of the world. ...Behind it, there must be a sufficient supply of troops to maintain it’ and to provide for ‘home defence.’<sup>36</sup> During the course of 1906, he pressed, almost simultaneously for reform on a number of fronts. He forced the Army Council to agree the structure of a professional and efficient General Staff with clear lines of responsibility in peace. He embarked on a long series of political battles to reform or abolish the militia, in favour of a proposed new Territorial Force, for home defence. And finally, he saw the over-whelming logic of adopting *Field*

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<sup>35</sup> TNA WO 279/9, “Report of a Conference and Staff Ride as carried out at the Staff College by Senior Officers of the General Staff, January 1906”, pp.31-50.

<sup>36</sup> TNA WO 33/3369, “A preliminary memorandum on the present situation, being a rough note for consideration by the Members of the Army Council”, Haldane 1 Jan 1906.

*Service Regulations*, along the lines recommended in the Esher Report of 1904, as both a carrot and a stick, to ensure that the army was fit for deployment in war. He understood the principle of ‘division of labour’ implicit in the documents.<sup>37</sup> By the end of the year, he was more explicit. ‘In war, two distinct types of men are needed for widely different purposes.’ There is ‘the fighting soldier, pure and simple’ and there is ‘the man charged with administrative duties of a civilian nature.’ ‘If no distinction between these functions is admitted,’ he continues, ‘no amount of training will lead to the creation of an efficient army in the field.’<sup>38</sup>

It is in this context that Haldane had need of a senior officer, supportive of his schemes to reform the War Office and create a viable home defence capability; preferably a talented staff officer, willing to implement the plans of his ‘general’. At Esher’s suggestion, he chose Haig, identifying a senior directorate for him, that of Military Training, which became vacant on the retirement of Major General Frederick Stopford. ‘Mr Haldane was very anxious for me to come home and assist in schemes of reorganisation,’ writes Haig in March 1906.<sup>39</sup> Dunlop relates that when Haig arrived in London, Haldane, having failed to persuade the Militia to reform and accept the concept of a new Territorial Force voluntarily, was just beginning to confront them with the threat to enforce reform. There was considerable anger and resistance to Haldane’s stance. In addition to proposing a new Territorial Force, Haldane wanted it

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<sup>37</sup> John Gooch, *The Plans of War, the General Staff and British Military Strategy c. 1900-1916*, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p.99, referenced to Wilkinson Papers, Haldane to Wilkinson, 6 Jan 1906.

<sup>38</sup> TNA WO 33/3379, “Further Note on the Military System, Administrative System in War”, Haldane, Dec 1906.

<sup>39</sup> Scott, *Douglas Haig Diaries*, letter to Henrietta, 28 March, 1906, p.249

to be an army of all arms, with artillery, a suggestion opposed, vociferously, and significantly, in terms of personal relationships, although surprisingly, given the content of *Combined Training*, by Roberts and Henry Wilson, who doubted that such units could be adequately trained. ‘Haig made up his mind that the Territorial Force had to be of all arms, and regard for his technical ability convinced many waverers.’<sup>40</sup>

As Director of Military Training (DMT), Haig had no responsibility for either *FSR, Part I*, or *FSR, Part II*. These were vested with Major-General H. D. Hutchinson, the Director of Staff Duties (DSD) and had been since 1904.<sup>41</sup> Dealing with the organisation and handling of an Expeditionary Force at war, they were irrelevant to his main brief, which was to introduce reforms applicable to the peace-time army. He had, from the moment of his arrival to deal with the fallout from Haldane’s proposals to abolish the Militia and introduce the new Territorial Force.<sup>42</sup> This was difficult work, and he sent long detailed notes to Lieutenant Colonel G. Ellison, Haldane’s secretary, sketching out provisional plans on how to organise the Territorial Force; and asking him for his comments and advice. These reports demonstrate Haig’s talent for the meticulous consideration of administrative detail; but there is no reference to either part of *FSR* in this correspondence.<sup>43</sup> The arrangements to be made for the administrative organisation of an Expeditionary Force, *FSR, Part II*, in draft, could not be finalised until the structure of the peace-time War Office was agreed; and were

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<sup>40</sup> John Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army 1899-1914*, (Methuen London, 1938), pp.269-272.

<sup>41</sup> G. K. King, *The War Office List and Administrative Directory for the British Army, 1905*, (London, H.M.S.O., 1905) p.68.

<sup>42</sup> Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, pp.269-272.

<sup>43</sup> NAM, 8704-35-475, *Ellison papers*, Haig to Ellison, summary of letters dated 1906, pp.2-3 and subsequently, full drafts of those letters.



irrelevant to the organisation of the Territorial Force. *The Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill* was formally moved on 4 March 1907, and, after a bumpy passage through Parliament, received Royal Assent in July. Even after this, Haig still had much work to do, setting up the structure of the new force for its formal introduction on 1 April 1908, supported by the ‘whole-hearted and practical’ help of King Edward VII.<sup>44</sup> Well before that, in December 1906, Haig had also taken on the job of setting up a ‘School of Economics’ within the army, following a war stores scandal, featuring gross accounting incompetence, which broke just after he arrived in post in the August.<sup>45</sup> He also had court duties and family responsibilities, his wife bearing him two daughters in quick succession. According to Charteris, Haig was required, during his three years in London, to oversee ‘the reorganisation of the second line of defence in the voluntary army’, which he undoubtedly did; ‘the perfecting of the General Staff at home,’ which he certainly had influential views on; and also ‘the organisation of an Expeditionary Force for service overseas’, presumably *FSR, Part II*, and the ‘introduction into the Army of a definitive school of thought and authoritative teaching in the science of war,’ *FSR, Part I*.<sup>46</sup> However Charteris offers no supporting evidence to support his assertions.

Addressing just the latter two tasks, the content of *Part I* had already been decided by consensus, and ‘routine update’, following annual manoeuvres, conferences and staff rides since 1903, none of which Haig had attended.<sup>47</sup> Haig did, however, as DMT

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<sup>44</sup> Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, pp.266-290.

<sup>45</sup> John Gooch, *Plans of War*, pp.108-109.

<sup>46</sup> Charteris, *Field-Marshal Earl Haig*, p.37.

<sup>47</sup> Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, p.292; see lists of participants at manoeuvres and rides.

and Assistant to Lieutenant-General Sir Neville Lyttleton, Chief of the General Staff, have an opportunity to organise a major Staff Ride in England in October 1907. The scenario set was the tactical deployment achieved at the conclusion of a successful Ride, earlier in the year.<sup>48</sup> Seldom, if ever, do reports on military manoeuvres imply general dissatisfaction. But inadequate preparation time and new participants are the reasons given for the strategic and tactical confusion, which plagued this event. Both Haig and Lyttleton struggled to identify learning points. Divisional commanders complained that ‘the work done ... [was not] ...very instructive.’ *Combined Training 1905* gives precise directions on how manoeuvres should be organised, and these had not been followed. ‘Only ¼ inch maps’ were supplied, where at least one-inch maps were required; and ‘assistant directors’ had inadequate ‘clerical’ support.<sup>49</sup> Even the inconclusive tactical discussion does not reveal familiarity with *Combined Training*, though it is conventionally, and briefly, referred to.<sup>50</sup> It was a very public fiasco.

### **Haig as Director of Staff Duties, November 1907 to October 1909**

It is generally asserted that because Haig became DSD in November 1907, following the retirement of Hutchinson, he took on responsibility for *FSR, Parts I and II*.<sup>51</sup> However, reviewing his new responsibilities, Haig immediately proposed that responsibility for cadet training be passed to the Brigadier-General Archibald Murray, the new DMT, and that other changes be implemented. Haldane agreed, and the

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<sup>48</sup> TNA WO 279/17, “Report of a Staff Ride held by Director of Staff Duties under Instructions from the Chief of the General Staff, 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 1907”.

<sup>49</sup> *Combined Training, 1905*, Ch VII, and p.162.

<sup>50</sup> TNA WO 279/17, “Report of a Staff Ride held by The Chief of the General Staff, 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> October 1907”, pp.3, 5,42,45,50.

<sup>51</sup> Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, p.291, states that Haig became Director of Staff Duties in November 1906, an obvious misprint.

changes were actioned immediately.<sup>52</sup> The brief of S.D. 2(A), under Colonel Adye, was expanded, and he became nominally responsible, under Haig, for all War Office publications, including the ‘writing and revision of works dealing with the education of cadets and officers’.<sup>53</sup> Simultaneously, Colonel John Du Cane, was promoted from the Staff College to head M.T.2, under Murray, becoming responsible for ‘training and instruction of all arms,’ and for ‘action on all manoeuvre reports,’ overlapping Adye’s brief.<sup>54</sup> Given that Adye was working almost full time on *FSR, Part II*, it is no surprise that, at Haig’s first Staff Duties Conference at the Staff College, in January 1908, it was stated, in the course of the proceedings, that Murray, as DMT, had already taken over responsibility for any ‘revise of “Combined Training.”’<sup>55</sup>

Haig, therefore, had no oversight over the detail of *Part I* during 1907 and 1908 and it is possible to follow Murray and Du Cane as they arranged revision of the draft and then supported its implementation in the army over the next two years. At the January 1909 Staff Conference, Murray and Du Cane presented a series of key *Part I* concepts, one after another. The conference was attended by the heads of all the British army commands in England, and chaired by Nicholson, Chief of the General Staff. Wilson and Rawlinson both made significant contributions, as did senior officers from Aldershot, and from the Directorate of Military Operations. Haig and Adye were present but did not speak. Nicholson, and Murray, were coordinating a final consensus edit of *FSR, Part I, Operations*, and of *Training and Manoeuvre Regulations*, which

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<sup>52</sup> NLS, Haig papers, 8 November 1907, De Groot, *The Military Career of Douglas Haig*, p.306.

<sup>53</sup> H. Moggridge, *The War Office List and Administrative Directory for the British Army 1908*, (London, War Office, 1908) p.48.

<sup>54</sup> Moggridge, *The War Office List 1908*, p.49.

<sup>55</sup> TNA WO 279/18, “Conference of General Staff Officers, January 1908,” p.43.

had been an appendix to *Combined Training 1905*.<sup>56</sup> These were implemented in Army Orders in March and May 1909 respectively.<sup>57</sup> In January 1909, a *Memorandum on Army Training* was issued, having been collated in M.T.2 (i.e., by Du Cane) and endorsed by the Army council. This constituted an order that *FSR*, in its entirety, should be implemented within the British Army, immediately on publication. This memorandum is not signed; nor are the individual contributors, identifiable by differing writing styles within it, named. One, and only one, contributor expresses reservations. Citing Clausewitz, he says that ‘there is scope for hesitation and uncertainty in the interpretation’ of some of the [*Part I*] regulations relating to an advanced guard, which must be overcome by ‘a moral and offensive spirit.’ Despite this reservation, the contributor goes on to say that the regulations ‘definitely lay down the system of organization and training of the army.’<sup>58</sup>

By the Army Manoeuvres of September 1909, *FSR* was being established as army doctrine. General Sir John French, as Inspector-General of the Forces, was Director, with Murray as his assistant, and Du Cane in charge of operations. Haig was not involved. French’s long report assesses compliance with the new doctrine by the two forces involved.<sup>59</sup> A second training memorandum, again prepared in M.T.2, enlarged on the lessons learnt from these manoeuvres, with respect to *FSR, Part I*.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> TNA WO 279/25, “Report of a Conference of General Staff Officers at the Staff College, 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> January 1909, held under the direction of The Chief of the General Staff”, pp.2-20,41.

<sup>57</sup> TNA WO 123/51, *Army Orders 1909*, March, AO86, p.29 and May, AO136, p.12.

<sup>58</sup> TNA WO 231/403, “Memorandum on Army Training, 1908”, title page, text and p.3 of 13.

<sup>59</sup> TNA WO 279/31, “Report on Army Manoeuvres 1909”, pp.38-74.

<sup>60</sup> TNA WO 231/404, “Memorandum on Army Training, 1909”, front and text. Further memoranda were produced in 1912 and 1913, all emphasising the necessity of close compliance with *FSR*.

As for *FSR, Part II*, it is not entirely clear whether Haig inherited any responsibility for its content. It appears not, because in June 1907, Major-General F. E. Mulcahy, Director of Ordnance Stores in the Quartermaster-General's Department, was formally requested by the Army Council to form a senior committee under its auspices to revise *FSR, Part II*, in line with a memorandum from Haldane. This 'Mulcahy committee' immediately deputed a 'Field Service Regulation, amendment of' sub-committee, which included both Adye and Ellison, to incorporate all the key points of Haldane's memoranda into Chapters I to V of the existing draft of *FSR, Part II*, leaving the remainder to be edited in line with these changes if they were approved. The full Committee, with Hutchison as a member, met again to approve their work, and formally submitted proof copies of these five chapters on 30 September 1907. On 16 October, a meeting of Directors, agreed to make no comment, authorising Adye and his sub-committee to continue to deal with any minor amendments under Mulcahy's auspices. The draft chapters were formally circulated to Army Council members on 21 November and approved. By this time, Hutchinson had retired, and Haig had succeeded him. But Haig did not replace Hutchison on the Mulcahy Committee. And although Adye was nominally in his directorate, the many amendments to *Part II* which emanated from the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General over the next six months, were channelled through Mulcahy to this sub-committee.<sup>61</sup>

The proceedings of the January 1908 Staff Conference illuminates Haig's grip on *FSR*. Gooch says that Haig 'read a paper emphasizing the need for a uniform approach

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<sup>61</sup> TNA WO 32/4735, "Field Service regulations, Pt II" 30 Sep 1907, Chapters I-V and narrative; TNA WO 032/4736, Army Organisation, Draft Field Service regulations, 1908-1909.

on questions of strategy, tactics, organization and training,’ and it is possible to find quotes which support this interpretation.<sup>62</sup> But his paper was actually on ‘the organization of Manoeuvres,’ and in it, he failed to make any significant reference to *Combined Training*, which laid out the subject in minute detail. Taken together with the fiasco of his Staff Ride only three months before, it seems he had little familiarity with the document. Adye, who was in his Directorate, then gave a talk addressing the detail of *FSR, Part II*. Both Lyttleton and Haig are recorded as being confused by the detail, and Haig concludes the session by saying that he thought any system better than none. If the proposals ‘were found not to work, they could be modified as experience dictated.’ During the whole of this conference, Haig fails to contribute to any debate which addressed either part of *FSR* in detail. He did, however, display a mastery of detail when discussing both the Territorial Army and the General Staff.<sup>63</sup>

In October 1908, after Haig had been off sick for several months, the new Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant-General Sir William Nicholson, personally directed a Staff Tour designed to stress test the administrative pathways laid down in *FSR, Part II*. He was supported by a staff of eleven, including Major-General C. Heath, from the Quartermaster’s Department, Haig, and Adye. Major-General J. Ewart, Director of Military Operations, was Commander of the Army, with Murray, as his Chief-of-Staff. Ellison played the Adjutant-General, and Wilson was Inspector-General of Communications and Railways.<sup>64</sup> As Gooch describes, the test scenario was

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<sup>62</sup> Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.115.

<sup>63</sup> TNA WO 279/18, “Conference of General Staff Officers, Jan 1908”, pp.20-23,25-27,29-32,39-48.

<sup>64</sup> TNA WO 279/22, “Report on a Staff Tour held by the Chief of the General Staff, 26-30 October 1908”, list of participants. The Tour organisation is not credited to the DSD.

demanding. ‘Questions which arose touched on the relative positions and powers in the field of the Quartermaster-General and Inspector-General of Communications and Railways and the degree of communication of intentions and information in orders. Lack of coordination was revealed as a major problem and resulted in the congestion of the army for several days.’<sup>65</sup> At the general conference on the last day it was Nicholson, who summed up. Where problems had arisen, Nicholson decreed in most instances that the fault was non-adherence to the regulations rather than any defect in their drafting. He acknowledged a few omissions in defining responsibilities succinctly and instructed on amendments for clarification.<sup>66</sup> Certainly Haig played a role in this event, but he is not credited with organising it. It was Nicholson who took control in imposing final amendments, leaving Adye, who continued to chair a small, seemingly independent, ‘Committee on Staff Duties in the Field’, as it was now known, with the job of producing the final draft of *FSR, Part II*.<sup>67</sup> In December 1908, the Army Council ratified Adye’s amended draft of *FSR, Part II*, for publication, and the next month issued, as has been described, its *Memorandum on Army Training*, ordering that *FSR*, in its entirety, be implemented by the British Army. It was published in 1909, being announced in Army Orders in the April.<sup>68</sup>

This is not to say that Haig had nothing to do with the late editing of *FSR, Part II*, but he had no impact on its ethos. That was already agreed. He did express support, on numerous occasions, for the concept of laying down definitive staff responsibilities for

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<sup>65</sup> Gooch, *The Plans of War*, pp.113-114.

<sup>66</sup> TNA WO 279/22, “Staff Tour October 1908”, pp.5-11.

<sup>67</sup> TNA WO 32/4736, “Army Organisation, Draft Field Service regulations, 1908-1909”.

<sup>68</sup> TNA WO 123/51, *Army Orders 1909*, AO107, April, p.21.

an expeditionary force. And once the document was agreed, he was in the forefront of developing a War Office that was able to deliver on its detail. He chaired committees on artillery and cavalry mobilisation which complied with its basic provisions.<sup>69</sup> It may seem pedantic to distinguish between the preparation and publication of *Part II, 1909*, and involvement in its subsequent implementation, but allocating, as many do, the credit for its bureaucratic command structure to Haig, is to detract from its true originators, Ellison, Haldane and Adye.

One can be much more certain on Haig's take on operational command structure, as defined in *FSR, Part I*. During the course of 1909, Haig turned his attention to cavalry tactics, publishing reports on two 'Staff Rides' in 1909. *FSR* is not referenced in either of them. *Cavalry Training* is. In 1911, Childers said that differences between *FSR* and *Cavalry Training* were 'a public scandal.'<sup>70</sup> There is no evidence of Haig trying to merge their message as he emphasises the importance of 'coming to rapid decisions' and 'the demoralising effect of the charge and the terror of cold steel.' In the first, it is possible to detect slight echoes of *FSR*, in an acknowledgement that small patrols, and communicating with the Commander-in-Chief, might have value, but his conclusion that cavalry should enjoy 'the greatest independence of other arms in every kind of duty' is the prevailing message.<sup>71</sup> The maps provided were not of a scale recommended for Staff Rides in the Regulations.

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<sup>69</sup> TNA WO 32/6776 "Royal Field Artillery Mobilisation Arrangements at home 1909"; TNA WO 32/6785 "Report of Committee on Cavalry Peace Organisation and Mobilization Arrangements 1909."

<sup>70</sup> Anglesey, *British Cavalry 1816-1919, Vol 4*, p.417, quoting Robert Erskine Childers, "German influences on British Cavalry".

<sup>71</sup> TNA WO 279/27, *Cavalry Staff Ride of Director of Staff Duties, March 1909*, p.31 and text.



This defect, at least, was corrected in the second, three months later. His advice that the commander of a cavalry division should be ‘well out in front of his command,’ and ‘should be able to manoeuvre with 1 brigade major, 1 orderly officer and 1 galloper’ sets the scene. There is a section on cooperation with other arms, though how this is to be effected with no staff is not addressed. On detailed reading, he is actually talking about coordination with other arms, a quite different concept. A section on the transmission of information collected by the cavalry suggests that the staff of the Commander-in-Chief should come and get it! He uses Salamanca in 1805 and Austerlitz in 1812 to illustrate his points. Problem XI required cavalry ‘to attack the enemy’s artillery in order to allow the infantry to push their attack home’ in a manner reminiscent of the Crimea.<sup>72</sup> Gooch comments that the reports on these Rides ‘reveal an ominous faith in the effectiveness of cavalry attack on the part of the participating and directing staff’, but he does not sound convincing when he says that Haig’s teaching in them is, at least in part, consistent with *Part I*.<sup>73</sup>

At almost the same time, French was directing the 1909 Army Manoeuvres already referred to. French’s long report concentrates on assessing tactical compliance with *FSR, Part I*. He points out where *FSR* was not being observed, giving references, and he praises actions which are clearly in compliance; for example, when senior generals allowed delegated responsibility or when smaller units established reserves, both in line with the doctrine.<sup>74</sup> Despite the fact *FSR* had only been published half way through that training season, French, and his two opposing generals, Lieutenant-

<sup>72</sup> TNA WO 279/29, *Cavalry Staff Ride of Director of Staff Duties, June 1909*, pp.8,23,33,34,43-44.

<sup>73</sup> Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.117.

<sup>74</sup> TNA WO 279/31, “Report on Army Manoeuvres 1909”, pp.38-74.

General H. Smith Dorrien and Lieutenant-General J. Grierson were robustly imposing the doctrine laid down on the army. That the regulations ‘should be so thoroughly impressed on the mind of every commander that, whenever he has to come to a decision in the field, he instinctively gives them their full weight’ was not only unambiguous but it was also a big cultural shift.<sup>75</sup> It left no room for historical references, and French’s report does not contain them; they were irrelevant to *FSR*. And it left no room in the army for officers unwilling to accept the new doctrine. They were likely to find themselves in India.

### **Haig in India 1910 to 1912**

In 1910, Haig left England, somewhat unwillingly, to take up a new post as Chief-of-Staff to General Sir O’Moore Creagh, Commander-in-Chief, India. In modern biographies of Haig, it is asserted that he embraced *FSR* at this time. Few make the important distinction between *Part I* and *Part II*. Haig arranged two major staff tours while he was in India, and once again he had accounts of them published. Certainly by 1911, if not by 1910, one would expect that any British army manoeuvres would be assessed by compliance with *FSR, Part I*, abiding by the *Training and Manoeuvre Regulations, Part III*. Particular attention might be devoted to ensuring that orders had been brief and clear, allowing flexibility in the detail of their interpretation; that efficiency in the speedy dissemination of orders had been proven; and that those orders had been formulated only after consideration of up-to-date intelligence by a collegiate staff team. Charteris, Haig’s biographer, was with him in India on both these

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<sup>75</sup> *Field Service Regulations, Part I*, p.13.

tours.<sup>76</sup> He says that Haig ‘strove to teach that no stereotyped system of strategy could be accepted as invariably the best, or indeed the only, solution of the ever-varying problems which would be presented in the course of modern warfare.’<sup>77</sup> If *FSR* can be regarded as a ‘stereotyped system,’ albeit a very flexible one, this is not encouraging. There is a progression in tone between the tours of 1910 and 1911, with particular reference to *FSR, Part I*. The introduction to the 1910 report, written by a staff officer, conventionally states that ‘the tactical situations that the Director [Haig] arranged’ were formulated ‘with a view to drawing attention to some of the main principles laid down in our regulations for the leading of troops in war.’

Haig, in the introduction to his own commentary, emphasises the good sense of a universal ‘system of war organisation.’ Organisation, drill, training, and staff procedures should all conform with that in England, he says. And, in fairness, the document does refer throughout to individual *Part I* regulations, though they are somewhat selectively quoted. His instructions to his advanced guard are not entirely orthodox, especially once he has qualified his advice by saying that the advance guard should be handled ‘in accordance with Napoleonic principles.’ And his decision, at the climax of the battle, to abandon his headquarters to observe one section of his force in action, is surprising, even in an exercise. He justifies this by saying that ‘the Commander-in-Chief alone can decide to what extent each of the different portions of the force must commit themselves to the action.’ *FSR* required the Commander-in-Chief to delegate such decisions, but perhaps this is acceptable in a training exercise.

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<sup>76</sup> TNA WO 279/526 & TNA WO 279/532, “Reports on Staff Tours, held by the Chief of the General Staff, India, 1910 and 1911”, list of participants.

<sup>77</sup> Charteris, *Field-Marshal Earl Haig*, p.53.

But when he quotes Clausewitz on ‘boldness’ and Langlois on the value of genius in a general, he seems to be musing on his own generalship rather than instructing his subordinates. ‘We must all agree with Clausewitz, Langlois and Bannal, ...that the spirit is essential, ...with it any plan has a very fair chance of success.’ Does he really believe that? And he finishes by saying that ‘Field Service Regulations and Manuals are in themselves of little value unless their teaching is connected by a general common doctrine inculcating initiative and cooperation.’<sup>78</sup> It is difficult to imagine any of his peers in England saying this, and hard to know what he means by it. But taking his report as a whole, it is possible to argue that he is at least trying to adhere to *FSR Part I* in 1910.

One year later, the report from the 1911 tour is structured differently. Again, it explores the practicality of mobilising troops within India, but it also covers a series of war scenarios which he presented to his staff. The first part of the book sets out the tasks Haig has asked his assembled staff and senior commanders to address, followed by a summary of their conclusions. Chapter 4 of the book is the commentary, written by himself.<sup>79</sup> It reads as a history lesson in Napoleonic and Prussian military tactics. The first reference to *FSR* comes after 14 pages of dense prose, and this is just two referenced reminders to put orders in writing, and to make reconnaissance reports in a standard way. He is well into the fourth task when he writes this.

*Certain critics of the British General Staff and of our regulations have recently argued that a doctrine is lacking. ...The reasoning appears to be that, unless*

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<sup>78</sup> TNA WO 279/526, “Report on Staff Tour 1910”, pp.6,10,15,26,31,34,65.

<sup>79</sup> TNA WO 279/532, “Report on Staff Tour 1911”, pp.27-55.

*some such definitive doctrine is decided and inculcated in peace, action in war will be hesitating and mistakes will be made. The critics seem to lose sight of the true nature of war, and of the varied conditions under which the British army may have to take the field. It is neither necessary, nor desirable that we should go further than what is so clearly laid down in our regulations. If we go further, we run the risk of tying ourselves to a doctrine that may not always be applicable, and we gain nothing in return. An army trained to march long distances, to manoeuvre quickly, and to fight with the utmost determination will be a suitable instrument in the hands of a competent commander.*<sup>80</sup>

This needs to be taken in context. In April 1911, a review of *FSR 1909* was published in the influential *Edinburgh Review*. The article sought to judge whether *FSR* mandated a specific ‘doctrine of war’. This is not ‘doctrine’ in the modern sense of the word, meaning ‘military doctrine’, or as Haig had termed it the previous year, ‘general common doctrine.’ A ‘doctrine of war’ defined how an army intended to prevail in battle. The German army had decided on encirclement plans, directing the main weight of their attacks on the flanks of their opponents. The French, in contrast, believed in a holding battle by a strong all-arms advanced guard, probing the enemy to identify its dispositions, and then launching the bulk of the army into an overwhelming attack on one pivotal point. The article sought to determine what ‘doctrine of war’ the British General Staff was advocating in *FSR*.

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<sup>80</sup> TNA WO 279/532, “Report on Staff Tour 1911”, p.44.

*'In the Chapter entitled 'The Battle' we find ...[an]... adequate summary of the enveloping attack, its advantages and drawbacks which we have already described at some length as the German method. It is followed by the following paragraph: 'A commander may also decide to obtain the decision by manoeuvre of the battlefield with a large general reserve... This method will usually be most suited to circumstances in our army. ... The sections on 'The Attack' which follow the above still further develop this idea, and make clear the fact that our General Staff intends a British battle, like a French battle, to culminate in decisive attack on that portion of the hostile army the destruction of which will produce the most decisive result.' The conclusion we arrive at ...is that while the General Staff has selected for the Army a 'method of action' it has failed to give it a 'doctrine of war'.<sup>81</sup>*

Haig is using his report to defend the General Staff by saying that *FSR* should not define a 'doctrine of war.' But he goes much further than that. In the last sentence, he says that a 'competent commander' will tell his army when, where and how to fight. *FSR* requires the commander-in-chief to put the army where it needs to be, and then let it fight. It is a subtle, but fundamental, difference. And as if to reinforce the fact that he is unwilling to accept *FSR* in its advice on how a general should fight a battle, Haig turns back to Clausewitz, the French Imperial Guard in 1870, the Russian army in 1814, the Austrian army in 1858, and Napoleon in 1808, 1809 and 1813.<sup>82</sup> There is almost no further reference to *FSR*. It is worth quoting again the order that introduces

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<sup>81</sup> [L. H. R. Pope-Hennessy], "The British Army and Modern Conceptions of War", *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 213, no. 436 (April 1911), pp.328–332,336,346. Published anonymously.

<sup>82</sup> TNA WO 279/532, "Report on Staff Tour 1911", pp.45-55.

it. They ‘should be so thoroughly impressed on the mind of every commander that, whenever he has to come to a decision in the field, he instinctively gives them their full weight.’<sup>83</sup> At this point, it is hard to argue that he was even supportive of, let alone, as one biographer of his has alleged, ‘evangelical’ in, his dissemination of, *FSR*.

One quality of a commanding officer that Haig emphasises in both tours is ‘rapidity of decision’. Charteris records that Haig considered it a primary virtue and indeed, he said as much in his first cavalry ride in England in 1909.<sup>84</sup> Rapid decision making, without formally taking advice from intelligence staff, as is mandated in *FSR, Part I*, is arguably a necessity for command of an independent cavalry brigade, when outlying units are constantly reporting back their reconnaissance findings.<sup>85</sup> But it is potentially disastrous for a large all-arms force faced with a changing strategic situation and incomplete knowledge of enemy movements. Assessment of intelligence, and up to date planning of manoeuvre, are vital requirements if an all-arms force is to retain cohesion. There is no sense of these qualities being even considered in either tour. During 1911, General Creagh issued a general order, signed by Haig as Chief-of-Staff, to the effect that all officers should be ‘conversant with’ the regulations. Sheffield cites this as evidence that Haig supported the Regulations.<sup>86</sup> In the light of the above, it seems more likely that this was an order from Creagh, aimed at those senior officers who had responsibility for ensuring that junior officers were appropriately instructed.

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<sup>83</sup> *Field Service Regulations, Part I, 1912*, p.13.

<sup>84</sup> Charteris, *Field-Marshal Earl Haig*, p.54; TNA WO 279/27, “Cavalry Staff Ride, Mar 1909”, p.31.

<sup>85</sup> *Field Service Regulations, Part I, 1912*, p.112.

<sup>86</sup> Gary Sheffield, “The Makings of a Corps Commander: Lieutenant-General Sir Douglas Haig”, Jones (ed.), *Stemming the Tide*, p.115.

De Groot says that, in 1911, Haig ‘took attacks on the FSR very seriously.’ This assertion is only half true. *FSR, Part II, Organisation and Administration*, was, by now, uncontroversial. De Groot quotes Haig’s correspondence to Kiggell, his replacement as Director of Staff Duties at the War Office.<sup>87</sup> The first letter records Haig’s reaction to a general criticism, by the Adjutant General, of an administrative regulation in *Part II*. Haig quite reasonably writes that if the Adjutant General does not like any part of the document, he should suggest specific amendments. But the second letter quoted pertains to tactics in case of war, as determined by *Part I*. Haig writes, somewhat defensively, that ‘I have tried to preach ‘the doctrine’ [sic] as laid down in *FSR*. ...and have quoted chapter and verse so that the General Staff here may interpret the regulations in the way in which I believe is intended.’<sup>88</sup> Kiggell can only have bought the subject up in response to rumours that Haig was not totally engaging with the organisational and tactical implications of *Part I* regulations.<sup>89</sup>

There is a further hint, in Charteris, that the upper echelons of the British command, this time in India, had some doubts about the orthodoxy of Haig’s thinking. ‘The Viceroy went so far as to inform the Commander-in-Chief that in his opinion the study of foreign army organizations was unnecessary and dangerous.’ Haig, Charteris says, had done just that, initiating ‘a close study of the German Army. He compared the differences between the organization adopted by the Germans and that prevailing in

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<sup>87</sup> De Groot, *The Military Career of Douglas Haig*, pp.329-330.

<sup>88</sup> Haig to Kiggell, 27 April & 15 June 1911, (I/11 & I/15) quoted in De Groot, *The Military Career of Douglas Haig*, pp.329.

<sup>89</sup> There are a number of assessments of Haig’s opinion on *FSR* in India in the literature. Those that fail to distinguish between *Parts I* and *II*, are virtually valueless.



Great Britain and in India.’<sup>90</sup> Duff Cooper also draws attention to the ‘formidable list’ of books Haig recorded in his diary of 1910. On this list are two books on German staff arrangements, Lieutenant-Colonel Baron von der Goltz, *The Nation in Arms, Military art and science*, (1887); and Spenser Wilkinson, *The Brain of an Army, A Popular Account of the German General Staff*, (1895). Also, on the list, are Moltke's *Projects for the Campaign of 1866 against Austria*, and Clausewitz, *On War*.<sup>91</sup> There is no evidence that he studied *Drill Regulations for the Infantry*, the German equivalent of *Field Service Regulations*, but it would have been surprising if he had not. It was published in English in 1907.<sup>92</sup>

Because, by 1911, he was not confining his thinking entirely to cavalry. ‘An army trained to march long distances, to manoeuvre quickly, and to fight with the utmost determination will be a suitable instrument in the hands of a competent commander.’ This resonates with the German *Drill Regulations, 1906*. Haig implies that a ‘competent commander’ would have no need to delegate, if he is wielding a well-trained and physically fit army, and if that army obeys the orders of their commander ‘quickly’. This is exactly the message of the German Regulations, with their insistence that the army commander, who has strategic discretion, be on the battlefield, directing the leading divisions, and that his orders should be obeyed precisely. It seems, at this juncture, that Haig is rejecting the philosophy of *FSR* as a blueprint for military action

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<sup>90</sup> Charteris, *Field-Marshal Earl Haig*, pp.53&56.

<sup>91</sup> Cooper, *Haig*, p.119; NLS Acc.3155/2, Douglas Haig Papers, Diary 1910, final pages. The list is written in one sitting, not book by book. It cannot be guaranteed that it was written contemporaneously.

<sup>92</sup> *Drill Regulations for the Infantry, German Army, 1906*, translated for US War Department by Francis Behr, (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1907).

in a continental war, on the grounds that it is too directive in its description of battle scenarios; and, also, crucially, on the grounds that it allocates too much responsibility to an ultimate commander-in-chief, who is not on the battlefield; too little to the senior general who is; and then allows for too much leeway in the interpretation of orders by front-line middle ranking officers further down the command chain. He is instead embracing the general philosophy, if not the detail, of the German *Infantry Drill Regulations*, which allocates total responsibility to the general up with the fighting troops and demands the unquestioning obedience of his subordinates.

### **England 1912 to 1914**

Haig returned to England in 1912, being promoted Lieutenant-General in order to take over as General Officer Commanding, Aldershot, which housed the only 'Home Corps' based in England. This was an appointment requiring both military and political approval. It seems inconceivable that it was generally known that he was opposed to enforcing the tactical precepts of *FSR Part I* in his own commands. In fact, he was generally regarded as a modernist. This reputation, in England, was based on his work between 1906 and 1909 in pushing through the army reforms. Two fairly specific pieces of work at that time are also significant. As part of the detail of the creation of the Territorial Army, a significant area of debate was the quality of artillery training, which was widely perceived as inadequate. Haig inspected both regular and Militia batteries during 1907; and subsequently chaired committees into the organisation for mobilisation of both the Royal Field Artillery and the Cavalry in

1909.<sup>93</sup> He had also, as Director of Staff Duties, advocated a greater role for the Staff College. ‘Haig's administrative achievements in the formation of a British General Staff’ were ‘considerable’, says De Groot. He enlarged the intake of the Staff College at Camberley and broadened the employment prospects of graduates.<sup>94</sup> This would have had a considerable impact on the upper echelons of the army, being closely in tune with *FSR* in their emphasis on professionalism and good staffing arrangements.

On becoming GOC, Aldershot in 1912, he would have been expected to build on these principles. He now had the opportunity, and the duty, to organise his own staff, along the lines suggested by *FSR, Parts I and II*, and to build an efficient command structure. But he did not start well. He transferred some of his own staff, including Charteris, who were not staff-trained, from India and installed them at Aldershot, a practice he himself had banned in 1909. And then his ideas on officer training do not inspire confidence. He chose ‘Napoleon’s 1805 campaign’ ‘for special study by officers in the winter of 1912-13’ and ‘instructed divisional commanders to select officers to deliver lectures on’ ‘the chosen campaign.’<sup>95</sup> This is a strange choice if he was attempting to foster debate on tactics or operational staff organisation with reference to the training document that was *FSR*. But the real test came when he participated in the army manoeuvres of 1912. Since 1903, it had been understood that training of all units ‘is imparted to the troops during the training season [the summer]

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<sup>93</sup> TNA WO 32/6776 “Royal Field Artillery Mobilisation Arrangements at home 1909”; WO 32/6785 “Report of Committee on Cavalry Peace Organisation and Mobilization Arrangements 1909.”

<sup>94</sup> De Groot, *The Military Career of Douglas Haig*, pp.307-311.

<sup>95</sup> Andrew George Duncan, “The Military Education of Junior Officers in the Edwardian Era”, (Ph.D. University of Birmingham, 2016), p.108, referencing NLS Papers of Field-Marshal Earl Haig, ACC 3155 No 91a. Aldershot Command, Instructions Regarding Individual Training, 1912-1913.

and forms the basis of criticism which follows on the manoeuvres [in the autumn] in which the year's training culminates.<sup>96</sup> After 1909, that meant assessment of compliance with *FSR Part I*, especially in 1912, when it had just been amended and re-issued. Both umpires and directors wrote reports in this process of criticism, assessing all ranks.

French, as Director, wrote the definitive report, eschewing historical references and mainly concentrating on the more senior officers. He starts off by assuming that Haig, Grierson and both their forces will be adhering closely to *FSR*. Within a page, he is criticising Haig for not supporting his forward cavalry with infantry and artillery, and then drawing attention to the failure of those cavalry to perform small group reconnaissance, both elementary *FSR* requirements.<sup>97</sup> He discusses Grierson's decision to take a calculated risk in not concentrating his force as *FSR* advises, quoting the relevant regulation, and then goes on to analyse the manoeuvring of the two sides 'in conjunction with *Field Service Regulations*'.<sup>98</sup> He repeatedly criticises Haig's poor intelligence arrangements, slow transmission of orders, and the poor communications between elements of his army – *FSR* states, as a priority, that arrangements must be made for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence from all sources; and that orders should be issued swiftly after consideration of it. Grierson is praised for facilitating all-arms cooperation in his cavalry manoeuvres and for allowing his subordinates to use initiative, in compliance with *FSR*. Haig is criticised for failing to allow his divisional commanders any latitude to react to events, and also for

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<sup>96</sup> [Pope-Hennessy], "The British Army", *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 213, no. 436 (Apr 1911), p.333.

<sup>97</sup> TNA WO/279/47 *Army Manoeuvres, 1912*, Section III, pp.49-62; pp.50&52.

<sup>98</sup> TNA WO/279/47 *Army Manoeuvres, 1912*, Section III, p.53.

micromanaging his infantry brigades in a way that sapped initiative from them, causing confusion to the divisional staff.<sup>99</sup> French finishes off his devastating critique by saying that ‘possibly if the Commander-in-Chief [Haig] had not become involved in the local situation he would have been able to obtain a wider grasp of the battle.’<sup>100</sup> After the exercise finished, the Army Council issued an Army Training Memorandum incorporating lessons to be learnt, with reference to *FSR*. ‘Commanders sometimes fail by attempting both to command troops and at the same time to direct operations,’ it says.<sup>101</sup> Haig had not covered himself in glory.

In 1913, Haig and his Corps, this time directed by French, also came off second best.<sup>102</sup> Again, slow transmission of orders and poor communications between formations were put forward as explanations for their lack-lustre performance.<sup>103</sup> Haig ‘indirectly admitted that staff work in his corps had been a problem, stating that it was “fifty per cent more effective” as a result of the exercise.’<sup>104</sup> Or, in other words, his operational staff structure had not yet been compliant with *FSR, Part I*. Unusually, the Director of Military Training issued two Memoranda on Army Training in 1913, expressing concern at the degree to which some units were not sufficiently trained in *FSR*. The first in November referred to training inspections and new guidance to be

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<sup>99</sup> TNA WO/279/47 *Army Manoeuvres, 1912*, Section III, pp.54-59.

<sup>100</sup> TNA WO/279/47 *Army Manoeuvres, 1912*, Section III, p.60.

<sup>101</sup> TNA WO/279/552 “Army Training Memorandum 1912”, p.5. This, and subsequent memoranda, were issued to all officers as required reading. See; Simon Batten, “A School for the Leaders”: What did the British Army learn from the 1912 Army Manoeuvres?” *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Vol. 93, No. 373 (Spring 2015), for an alternative viewpoint.

<sup>102</sup> TNA WO/279/52 *Army Exercise, 1913*.

<sup>103</sup> Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.121.

<sup>104</sup> Sheffield, *The Chief*, p.116, citing *The Times*, 30 Sept. 1913, p.4, and 20 Sept. 1913, p.10.

issued.<sup>105</sup> The second additionally addressed the 1913 Exercise. ‘Although the necessity for consistent adherence to the principles laid down in Field Service Regulations is now generally recognised by all officers, it has been observed that some commanders do not give their subordinates that amount of help and guidance in the application of these principles which they ought to give.’ This is criticism that goes right to the top. Senior officers were responsible for ensuring that *FSR* was taught throughout their commands. Almost the last sentence of this memorandum bemoans that ‘the standard was higher a few years ago.’ Admittedly this refers to a specific activity, but it is a sentiment that endures. The letter accompanying this memorandum, which was ‘prepared under the instructions of [French,] the Chief of the Imperial General Staff,’ and endorsed by the Army Council, is addressed to ‘General Officers Commanding-in-Chief of all Commands at Home,’ of whom Haig was the most prominent.<sup>106</sup>

## Summary

There is no evidence to support repeated assertions, by both senior and junior historians, that Haig was ‘responsible’ for *FSR* between 1906 and 1914. So many have made this assertion that it is pointless to pick out any for particular criticism. Dunlop, generally regarded as the authority, says that *Part I*, ‘was accepted, and ratified, without much discussion, as a routine update’ from 1905, and that *Part II*, ‘required the powerful backing of the Secretary of State [Richard Haldane] which carried along

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<sup>105</sup> TNA WO/279/553 “Army Training Memorandum during the Individual Training Period 1912-13”.

<sup>106</sup> TNA WO/279/554 “Army Training Memorandum 1913”, pp.3,5&14.

[its] preparation and final issue.’<sup>107</sup> This is an elegant, if somewhat truncated, summary of the truth.

The reason why Haig is assumed to have been involved with *FSR* is that he was first Director of Military Training (DMT) and then Director of Staff Duties (DSD) at the War Office from 1906 to 1910. But while he was the former, all responsibility for *FSR* was vested in the latter. This changed in June 1907, when responsibility for *Part II* was, at Haldane’s instigation, transferred from the DSD to a committee set up by the Army Council, which delegated the detail to a sub-committee, led by Adye and Ellison, who was Haldane’s secretary. Mulcahy, who chaired the higher committee, channelled any amendments required to Adye and Ellison; and Nicholson and the Army Council, through Mulcahy, endorsed them. It is true that Adye was still employed within the DSD when Haig was Director, but there is no evidence that Haig had any role in the final amendments to *Part II*. Responsibility for amendments to *Part I* was vested with the DSD until Haig took over in November 1907. It was then transferred to Murray, at DMT, along with other responsibilities. Murray delegated the detail to Du Cane in M.T.2. Haig had no identifiable impact on its content. Again, the final draft was endorsed and published by order of Nicholson and the Army Council.

There is perhaps some confusion between the basic *FSR* training documents, and the further handbooks, specific to the infantry, cavalry and staff, which were developed, from late 1909, in compliance with it. Haig had a long association with the *Cavalry Training* document as it evolved from 1898, and he undoubtedly contributed

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<sup>107</sup> John Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army*, p.292.

ideas, if not text, to higher staff manuals after 1909. He enjoyed supervising adherence to *Part II*, as he contributed to the development of the War Office and Staff College.

But this important work was all done after the basic philosophy, and the dual command structures, described in *FSR* had been written and approved by others. There is no evidence he ever accepted the concepts laid down in *Part I*. As an infantry general, compliance with *Part I* was of great importance. Nothing in Haig's writing, or in military reports prior to August 1914, suggests that he accepted *Part I* as French and others did; or indeed that he accepted the definition of the role of a Commander-in-Chief at the beginning of *Part II*, as a guide to his own behaviour.

The choice of French to lead the British Expeditionary Force on the outbreak of War in late July 1914, with Haig as one of his corps commanders, was uncontroversial, given their relevant experience, current appointments, and the political trust they had earned. But the question, in August 1914, was whether Haig had accepted *FSR* as his command philosophy. It was to be hoped that, after the 1913 Manoeuvres, he had modified the structure of his operational staff to enable good decision-making, based on properly sifted intelligence and slick communications, as required by *FSR*. It was impossible to be a good infantry general in the British army unless this staff structure was in place. And if he had not set up this staff structure, then appointing him to direct an infantry corps in battle was a ghastly mistake.

### **Postscript**

Haig's poor performance in August 1914 nearly caused disaster. He appears to have learnt nothing from his time at Aldershot. He did not comply with *FSR, Part I*, and his



staff was not fit for purpose. In order to say this with certainty, it is merely necessary to analyse the performance of I Corps and its subordinate units, as recorded in their war diaries, with reference to *FSR*. The experiences of all units, as recorded, can be cross-referenced with relative ease.<sup>108</sup> Indeed, the analysis re-writes the story. French has been generally castigated for being ineffective and out of touch during the Battle of Mons. But he was simply following *FSR*. His job was to give ‘brief’ orders to his corps commanders, which he did. Smith-Dorrien’s interpretation of these instructions is crystal clear.<sup>109</sup> Having done this, French was required to consider strategic threats to his army, including the obvious one of encirclement from the west. *FSR* demands that ‘a commander even of a large army should rarely omit to reconnoitre personally.’<sup>110</sup> So he went to Valenciennes, on the morning of the battle, to review the readiness of both French and British units in that sector. He returned to his Headquarters, and monitored strategic developments. Terraine says that French ‘issued no written orders between 11.55 pm on August 21st and 8.25 pm on August 24th’.<sup>111</sup> In fact, GHQ issued more than 30 orders (numbered OA62 to OA 95) between these times. French fulfilled his role as strategist to the battle, and the campaign, in full compliance with *FSR*. Smith-Dorrien, commanding I Corps, fought a masterly battle, in total compliance with *FSR* and GHQ instructions. The men under his command were so confident under his handling, that they fought two gruelling battles in four days, achieving their tactical objectives in both. Wilson, as Assistant Chief-of-Staff at

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<sup>108</sup> David Hutchison, *Mons, an Artillery Battle*, (Warwick, Helion Press, 2018)

<sup>109</sup> TNA WO 95/630, “II Corps Staff, a plan of battle agreed with GHQ, 23 August 1914”, p.75.

<sup>110</sup> *Field Service Regulations, Part I, 1912*, p.117.

<sup>111</sup> Terraine, *Mons, the Retreat to Victory*, p.88.

GHQ, in his direction of the 4th Division, under Major-General Thomas Snow, used *FSR* with equal effectiveness.

Pure operational analysis of Haig's handling of I Corps reveals his general disregard of *FSR*. This was not all negative. Haig, alone amongst British senior generals, decreed that 'artillery forms the skeleton of battle. .... the commander must reserve for himself the choice of the artillery position and indicate to the artillery commander what cooperation he expects from him.'<sup>112</sup> He instructed his brilliant artillery commander, Brigadier-General Henry Horne, a staunch supporter of *FSR*, to use his charm to persuade his less experienced divisional artillery commanders to coordinate the field of fire of their combined forces.<sup>113</sup> This was *FSR* plus, *FSR* borrowing from German military ideas. It was in a small way revolutionary. Problems arose at the interface of divisions in II Corps, where there was no such cooperation. But Haig's non-compliance with *FSR* in other respects was near disastrous. He tried to wrest strategic control of the battle from French, liaising directly with General de Mas-Latrie, commanding the French 18th Army Corps, to decide on his own strategy.<sup>114</sup> As a consequence, he ignored almost all GHQ orders.<sup>115</sup> This is an absolutely fundamental breach of *FSR*, and, as such, one where 'violation, in the past, has often

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<sup>112</sup> *Drill Regulations for the Infantry, German Army*, p.72.

<sup>113</sup> Hutchison, *Mons, an Artillery Battle*, pp.62-63.

<sup>114</sup> NLS, Acc. 3155/98, Douglas Haig Papers, p.82. For another example, compare Operation Order 7; as in TNA WO 95/1/2 General Staff, 25 Aug 1914; with I Corps action order for it: G122; as in TNA WO 95/588/1, I Corps Staff, 24 Aug 1914. See also TNA WO 95/588/4, I Corps Staff, 1914, First Army Corps Report through to 29 August.

<sup>115</sup> See GHQ orders, OA57 & OA62 and I Corps response; Hutchison, *Mons, an Artillery Battle*, pp.55-61, and associated references to unit diaries. Also, Operation Order 7, as above.

been followed by mishap, if not by disaster.’<sup>116</sup> ‘Unity of control is essential to unity of effort. This condition can be ensured only by vesting the supreme authority in one man, the C.-in-C. of the forces in the field.’ ‘A subordinate commander issues orders [only] on all matters connected with the efficiency and maintenance of his command for the execution of the duties allotted to him.’<sup>117</sup> Haig decided that French did not have authority over him; that I Corps should not fight the Germans at Mons; nor should it join up with II Corps at Le Cateau. No wonder Murray had a breakdown.

Haig also tried to fight his battle without any reliance on a properly constituted staff, and therefore without accurate intelligence information.<sup>118</sup> He ignored command pathways, issuing ill-thought-out orders to individual infantry brigades, with such frequency, that he almost lost control of his whole corps.<sup>119</sup> And by the evening of 26 August, he had lost the confidence of his senior officers.<sup>120</sup> He was not commanding with reference to the doctrine by which they had been trained.

The historiographical implications of this finding are considerable. Many books, theses and papers ignore the impact of *FSR* on the British army altogether, even when discussing tactics or command pathways. Others allege that Haig followed *FSR, Part I*, in 1914 and thereafter, and that his corps and the army suffered as a consequence of

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<sup>116</sup> *Field Service Regulations, Part I*, p.13.

<sup>117</sup> *FSR, Part II*, pp.23,25,29. Note that these clauses are in Part II, not Part I.

<sup>118</sup> Compare TNA WO 95/588, I Corps Staff; TNA WO 95/629/4 II Corps Intelligence; WO 95/1227/1 1 Division; TNA WO 95/1283, 2 Division. All for August 1914.

<sup>119</sup> TNA WO 95/588/4, I Corps Staff, 1914, pp.6-9 of First Army Corps Report; TNA WO 95/1227, 1 Division; TNA WO 95/1283, 2 Division; TNA WO 95/1274, 3 Infantry Brigade; TNA WO 95/1343, 5 Infantry Brigade; TNA WO 95/1352, 6 Infantry Brigade; and lesser units.

<sup>120</sup> Royal Artillery Museum, MD/931, Captain, later Major, J L Mowbray, transcribed diary, Aug 1914, pp.5-9; this is a good place to start. His account is supported by reference to all relevant war diaries.

its deficiencies. The very reverse is true. Haig did not follow *FSR, Part I*, in August 1914 and thereafter; and his corps and the army, when they tried to do so, suffered as a consequence.

David Hutchison, Updated February 2022

I am aware that many will disagree with this assessment of Haig's doctrinal journey. One of the advantages of presenting my work on a website is that errors can be easily rectified. I would be delighted to hear, through this website, from any who have found this of interest, or have points to make, either for or against.

A full bibliography is appended to this set of chapters. Whilst all these chapters can be considered to be in the public domain, reference to them should acknowledge the contribution of the author.