
The Conception and Implementation of *Field Service Regulations* in the British Army, 1900–1915¹



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Abstract

In 1914, the British Army was organized and trained in compliance with *Field Service Regulations* (*FSR*). Douglas Haig stated that “a steady adherence” to their “principles,” had enabled success on the Western Front. Despite its impact on the British Army from 1902, however, *FSR* has been widely disregarded or misrepresented, partly due to a misconceived belief that Haig embodied these principles. Haig played no part in establishing *FSR* and did not, from 1909, reform his command and tactical principles in line with it. If Haig had adhered to the principles he extolled in 1918, the British Army of 1916 would have been in better shape.

In 1914, the British Army was organized and trained in compliance with *Field Service Regulations* (*FSR*). On achieving victory in 1918, Douglas Haig stated that “a steady adherence” to their “principles,” had enabled success on the Western Front. The adoption of *FSR* in 1909 resulted in the professionalization of the small British Army, providing it with a modern ethos, effective command structures, and practical tactical guidelines, making it the best in the world by 1914. Given *FSR*’s

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impact on the British Army from 1902, and its contribution to victory in 1918, one might expect discussion of its principles to feature in any commentary dealing with the period. As a set of principles, however, *FSR* has been widely disregarded or misrepresented, partly due to a misconceived belief that Haig embodied these principles in his preparations for war and his conduct of it.

This claim requires detailed rebuttal, given the historic neglect in establishing the origins of *FSR* and defining its principles. Haig, despite his later statements, played no part in establishing *FSR* and did not, from 1909, reform his command and tactical principles in line with it. Its preparation did have a profound impact on British military thinking, and its implementation had a profound impact on the army. By 1912 though, Haig was seriously out of step with both, despite the assertions of his biographers and most other commentators. As a consequence, he was out-generaled in prewar maneuvers and suffered military setbacks in 1914 and 1915. If, like most of his peers and subordinates, Haig had adhered to the principles he extolled in 1918, the British Army of 1916 might have been in better shape to bring the war to a successful conclusion more quickly.

The Principles Outlined in *FSR*²

The *FSR* handbooks direct officers on how they should conduct themselves and relate to other officers as professionals at war. Compliance with its personal and training advice was mandatory, and promotion, from 1909, reliant on demonstrating it. *Part I* additionally defines many, near-mandatory, operational concepts for military operations, including all-arms combination, intelligence collation, and defense-in-depth. Detailed tactical regulations within concepts evolved and were less binding.

Part II lays down two different command structures, one suitable for operations in the field, the other administrative. The former, the detail of which is developed in *Part I*, directs that a senior officer issue brief operational orders only to immediate subordinates; his orders must comply with conditions laid down in the regulations, be applicable to all arms, and be based on collated intelligence. All subordinates obey orders, additionally observing any standing orders pertaining to precautions against attack, reconnaissance, and intelligence dissemination. They observe the spirit of the operation order as they develop it in light of enemy dispositions or terrain as it descends the command hierarchy. They liaise and report back, enabling reaction to events. In well-defined circumstances, they are required to exercise initiative, but this must not challenge the spirit of the original order. *Part II*'s administrative command structure lays out a mandatory bureaucratic hierarchy for all those supplying and supporting the army in the field.

Both *Part I* and *Part II* are basic, applicable to all arms. The term *FSR*, as used in this paper, does not refer to those further documents specific to sub-

2. *Field Service Regulations, Part I, Operations, 1909* (London: General Staff War Office, 1909); *Field Service Regulations, Part II, Organisation and Administration, 1909, Reprinted with Amendments 1913* (London: General Staff War Office, 1913)

divisions of the army that develop its principles, theoretically, in compliance. The basic *FSR* texts could be amended by consensus at an annual staff conference, followed by ratification in army orders, though this mechanism broke down on the outbreak of war. *FSR* constituted a general doctrine for the British Army of 1909 and thereafter. It defines a command doctrine; but as an anonymous author (thought to be Major Richard Pope-Hennessy) explained in the *Edinburgh Review* in April 1911, it incorporates neither a military doctrine (since this requires a commitment to a particular tactical shape when deploying for battle) nor a tactical doctrine, due to its deliberate operational flexibility.³

Historiography of *FSR* and Its Principles

The importance of *FSR* to those fighting the First World War is amply documented. Major Stuart Rawlins, a Royal Artillery officer writing in 1918, described the evolution of British artillery tactics and command structures from 1914, referencing *FSR* at every development.⁴ Analysis of personal diaries, pertaining to regulars, reveals the learnt ethos of *FSR*.⁵ From unit diaries, intelligent soldiering demonstrating compliance can be distinguished from inexperience or rigidity in military thinking.⁶ Central Distribution Service's (CDS) *Notes from the Front* describes the interpretation of concepts within *FSR* into 1915.⁷ After the war, the noted war theorist J. F. C. Fuller and others accepted the importance of a revised *FSR* to guide army process and updated it amidst much debate.⁸ Colonel Alexander Kearsley, a former regular army staff officer, recorded in 1929 how the tactics of Haig's First Army had departed from *FSR*.⁹ The principles of *FSR* can be inferred from these sources but are not defined in them.

The first reference in secondary sources to the origins of *FSR* comes in a 1929 biography of Haig by John Charteris, one of his staff juniors, noting that Haig

3. Anonymous [L.H.R. Pope-Hennessy], "The British Army and Modern Conceptions of War," *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 213, no. 436 (April 1911).

4. S.W.H. Rawlins, *History of the Development of the British Artillery in France 1914–1918, from records in the Office of the Major-General Royal Artillery at General Headquarters* ([privately published, 1918] www.theogilbymuster.com AMOT039_WW1_MD.1162).

5. David Hutchison, *The Young Gunner: The Royal Field Artillery in the Great War* (Leicestershire: Matador Press, 2016); Journal of Lt. E. Schreiber, 1914, MD/425, Royal Artillery Museum (hereafter RAM); Journal of Lieutenant (later Colonel) Roderick McLeod, 1913–1914, MD/1150, RAM.

6. The war diaries of British Army units, 1914–1918, are housed in The National Archives (TNA), London.

7. *Notes from the Front, Parts I–IV*, Collated by the General Staff (London: War Office, 1914 and 1915).

8. See J. F. C. Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War* (London: Hutchinson, 1926).

9. Alexander H. C. Kearsley, *1915 Campaign in France, The Battles of Aubers Ridge, Festubert and Loos, considered in relation to the Field Service Regulations* (Sussex, U.K.: Naval & Military Press, 2007 [reprint: Gale & Polden, 1929])

oversaw the “introduction [of *FSR*] into the Army.”¹⁰ Haig was then at the height of his fame, and Charteris was not averse to allocating him undeserved credit. In 1935 Haig’s more-official biographer, Sir Alfred Duff Cooper, later Secretary of State for War and then First Lord of the Admiralty, wrote that Haig delegated the task.¹¹ Brigadier John Dunlop, the former Assistant Adjutant General of the Territorial Army writing in 1938, says only that *FSR, Part I, Operations* was approved as a consensus document, and *Part II, Administration* was ratified as a political necessity, both in 1909, while Haig was Director of Staff Duties.¹² In 1961, the military historian Alan Clark published *The Donkeys*, which castigated Haig and his fellow generals of 1915 for unimaginative tactics that resulted in huge loss of life, thereby igniting a wave of anti-Haig sentiment. In 1963 another military historian, John Terraine, published *Douglas Haig, the Educated Soldier*, which credited Haig with developing *FSR* in an attempt to re-establish his intellectual reputation.¹³ This assertion was picked up by academic biographers such as J.P. Harris and Gary Sheffield, and repeated by scholars such as Tim Travers.¹⁴ Military historian John Gooch wrote in *Plans of War, 1900–1916* that three staff officers, Colonels Henry Wilson, Sir Henry Rawlinson, and Gerald Ellison co-wrote an early draft of *FSR*, but he credits Haig with editing *Part II* for publication.¹⁵ Haig and *FSR* were now closely associated in the literature. Paradoxically, *FSR* became a side issue and the distinction between its two parts sometimes disregarded. If Haig prepared *FSR* and did not follow it, then it was just a set of ideas in 1909, a military fashion. If he prepared it and followed *FSR* exactly, there was no need to address it, except as individual principles or specific regulations.

Thus two doctoral students, Andy Simpson in 2001 and Tony Vines in 2015, researched *FSR* as it relates to command structures and described how these concepts evolved from 1914. Both assert that *FSR* reflected Douglas Haig’s views on warfare.¹⁶ Both Travers and Simon Robbins, a research fellow at the Imperial

10. Brigadier-General John Charteris, *Field-Marshal Earl Haig* (London: Cassel, 1929), 37.

11. Alfred Duff Cooper, *Haig* (London: Faber & Faber, 1935), 116.

12. John K. Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army, 1899–1914* (London: Methuen, 1938), 292.

13. John Terraine, *Douglas Haig, the Educated Soldier* (London: Leo Cooper, 1990 [reprint: Cassel, 1963]), 42–43.

14. J.P. Harris, *Douglas Haig and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 45; Gary Sheffield, *The Chief, Douglas Haig and the British Army* (London: Aurum 2011), 60; Tim Travers, *The Killing Ground, The British Army, the Western Front & Emergence of Modern War, 1900–1918* (Barnsley, U.K.: Pen & Sword Military Classics, 2009 [reprint: New York: HarperCollins, 1987]), 92.

15. John Gooch, *The Plans of War, the General Staff and British Military Strategy c. 1900–1916* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 113–17.

16. Andrew Simpson, “The Operational Role of British Corps Command on the Western Front, 1914–18” (Ph.D. thesis, University College, London, 2001), 23; Anthony Vines, “The Heroic Manager: An Assessment of Sir Douglas Haig’s Role as Military Manager on the Western Front” (Ph.D. thesis, King’s College London, 2015), 10.

War Museum, ignore *FSR*'s impact on conduct and relationships, the ethos of prewar regular officers in their work.¹⁷ Brian Bond ignores the role of the Staff College in the evolution of *FSR* principles, and *FSR*'s influence on cadets is glossed over by Andrew Duncan, another doctoral student.¹⁸ Many narratives, such as Albert Palazzo's *Seeking Victory on the Western Front*, assert Haig's authorship of *FSR* but engage only with individual regulations rather than broad concepts.¹⁹

Other important works downplay the significance of *FSR*. Timothy Bowman and Mark Connelly, co-authors of *The Edwardian Army*, confine their discussion of *FSR* to tactical concepts; they assert that *Part I* "was largely written by Haig" and conclude that *FSR* was not "a rigorous system" that defined the army in 1914.²⁰ Aimée Fox, an academic historian writing on learning in the British Army of 1914, says that Haig was a "key architect" [of *FSR*] and, after presenting social data and debate at conferences, concludes that *FSR* was merely an "ethos" and "legacy of the past," not a wider conceptual framework on which learning was based thereafter.²¹ The 1999 edition of Bond and Nigel Cave's *Haig, a Re-appraisal*, with multiple contributors, mentions *FSR* only once.²²

On the other side, Niall Barr, who has taught at both King's and Sandhurst, writes that "the regular officers of 1914 had had many years of experience of command and took [*FSR*] for granted;" he further describes its general impact on ethos, tactics, and command.²³ Spencer Jones, Senior Lecturer in Armed Forces and War Studies at the University of Wolverhampton, likewise avoids citing Haig in *Tactical Development of the Regular British Army, 1902–1914* and subsequent works, though he addresses in detail concepts which, after debate, were accepted into *FSR* and other training handbooks.²⁴ Gerard De Groot's biographies of

17. Simon Robbins, *British Generalship on the Western Front, 1914–18: Defeat into Victory* (Taylor & Francis e-library, 2005), 1–17; Tim Travers, "The Hidden Army: Structural Problems in the British Officer Corps, 1900–1918," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (July 1982): 523–44.

18. Brian Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College, 1854–1914* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), 232–52; Andrew George Duncan "The Military Education of Junior Officers in the Edwardian Era" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2016).

19. Albert Palazzo, *Seeking Victory on the Western Front, The British Army and Chemical Warfare in World War I* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 17–19, 127.

20. Timothy Bowman and Mark Connelly, *The Edwardian Army: Recruiting, Training and Deploying the British Army, 1902–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 66, 74, 77, 87, 95, and 105.

21. Aimée Fox, *Learning to Fight, Military Innovation and Change in the British Army, 1914–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 20 and 31–43.

22. Brian Bond and Nigel Cave, eds., *Haig, a Re-Appraisal 80 Years On* (Barnsley, U.K.: Pen & Sword, 2009 [reprint, 1999]).

23. Niall Barr, "Command in the Transition from Mobile to Static Warfare, August 1914 to March 1915," in *Command and Control on the Western Front, The British Army's Experience 1914–18*, ed. Gary Sheffield and Dan Todman (Staplehurst, U.K.: Spellmount, 2004), 14–15.

24. Spencer Jones, "The Influence of the Boer War (1899–1902) on the Tactical Development of the Regular British Army, 1902–1914" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Wolverhampton, 2009).

Haig, moreover, repeatedly assert that Haig has “been given too much credit for *FSR*” and did not create it.²⁵ If, as Gooch says, Wilson and Rawlinson wrote *Part I* and, as Dunlop says, it was revised and followed by consensus, many officers must have contributed to it, and others, more junior, must have had their thinking shaped by its training and educational advice from 1909. Yet *FSR* is ignored in the biographical assessments of every senior general of 1914 except Haig.²⁶

Linked to this is a general failure to recognize *FSR* in narratives of battle. There are numerous examples. In his 1960 book *Mons*, Terraine criticizes Sir John French, commander in chief of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), for issuing brief orders and then departing to reconnoiter a vulnerable flank, without recognizing that these were *FSR* requirements.²⁷ In *Haig's Generals*, Steve Corvi does not acknowledge Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's assertive adherence to *FSR* as a factor in his sacking in 1915.²⁸ Historians Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, in their biography of Rawlinson, find it “odd” that he consulted his divisions before coordinating an attack on Neuve Chappelle in 1915, although to do so would have been in compliance with *FSR*.²⁹

Some works do show more awareness. In *Courage without Glory*, edited by Spencer Jones, the importance of *FSR* command concepts in planning small attacks in 1915 is recognized by two contributors.³⁰ Jonathan Boff at the University of Birmingham and others writing on 1918 implicitly refer to the re-implementation of *FSR*'s operational principles.³¹ No work has yet attempted the huge task of tracing adherence, or otherwise, to the major tactical and command principles defined in *FSR* from 1914 to 1918. Before that can be attempted though, *FSR* must be defined and the political and military reasoning behind the adoption of its principles understood. Haig's stance on *FSR* is important, but his prewar doctrinal development is irrelevant unless he had an impact on *FSR*.³²

25. Gerard J. De Groot, *Douglas Haig, 1861–1928* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 128.

26. Keith Jeffery, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, a Political Soldier* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 63; Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, *Command on the Western Front: The Military Career of Sir Henry Rawlinson 1914–1918* (Barnsley, U.K.: Pen & Sword, 2004), 9; See also Spencer Jones, ed., *Stemming the Tide, Officers and Leadership in the British Expeditionary Force 1914* (Solihull, U.K.: Helion, 2013); and Ian Beckett and Steven Corvi, ed., *Haig's Generals* (Barnsley, U.K.: Pen & Sword Military, 2020 [reprint: 2006]).

27. John Terraine, *Mons, the Retreat to Victory* (London: BT Batsford, 1960), 89.

28. Beckett and Corvi, *Haig's Generals*, 201–4.

29. Prior and Wilson, *Sir Henry Rawlinson*, 79.

30. Michael LoCicero, “A Coda to the Second Battle of Ypres: International Trench 6–10 July 1915” and Michael Woods, “Gas, Grenades and Grievances: The Attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt 13 October 1915,” in *Courage without Glory, The British Army on the Western Front 1915*, ed. Spencer Jones (Warwick, U.K.: Helion, 2015), 313 and 414.

31. Jonathan Boff, *Winning and Losing on the Western Front: The British Third Army and the Defeat of Germany in 1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 123–59.

32. Douglas Scott, *The Preparatory Prologue. Douglas Haig Diaries and Letters, 1861 to 1914* (Barnsley, U.K.: Pen & Sword, 2006), 123–38; “Royal Commission on the War in South Africa;

The Origins of FSR

The ideas behind *FSR* first emerged in 1900; their origins lay in the lack of preparedness of the British Army for an expeditionary concentration in South Africa at the turn of the century. Field Marshal Lord Roberts of Kandahar became commander in chief there in 1899, arriving in Cape Town on 10 January 1900. The first few weeks of the war had been humiliating for the British Army, with three serious defeats during “Black Week” in the previous month. *Infantry Drill 1896*, the principal training manual followed by British infantry, concentrates on smartness on the parade ground. It hardly mentions musketry training. It encourages instruction by rote and firm direction by senior officers.³³ Its advice proved a disaster in the early engagements in South Africa. Additionally, there was no uniformity in administration and supply arrangements. In the absence of any formal guidance, local arrangements had to be made at every depot. As Haig later observed, “three entirely different systems were adopted concurrently by three different headquarters.”³⁴

As doctoral student Nick Evans points out in his paper on British Army tactics from 1897, Roberts had challenged current training methods when organizing a tactical exercise that incorporated lessons learned in the Tirah Campaign of 1897.³⁵ In line with this, Roberts issued his *Circular Memorandum, Number 5* ten days after he arrived in the country. This army directive kick-started the doctrinal reform of the British Army in the early twentieth century. It forbade frontal attack in rigid formations and authorized junior officers to use initiative in the pursuit of victory, contradicting the ethos of *Infantry Drill*. It also asserted the importance of cooperation between infantry and artillery, and between infantry and cavalry.³⁶ These were not new concepts, having been learned and adopted by all competent officers engaged in the many small wars of the Victorian Era, but in the 1890s they had been promoted as prerequisites for successful warfare by an influential lecturer at the Staff College, Colonel G. F. R. Henderson.

Born in 1854, Henderson was educated at Leeds Grammar School and won a scholarship to Oxford. He entered the army at the age of 24, served in India, and then joined the Egyptian Campaign of 1882, participating in four battles. When posted to the West Indies in 1884, he used his leisure time to study the American Civil War and published *The Campaign of Fredericksburg, A Tactical Study for*

Minutes of Evidence (Volume II),” (London: HMSO, 1903), 401–13; Major-General Douglas Haig, *Cavalry Studies, Strategic and Tactical* (London: Hugh Rees, 1907); “Report on Staff Tours, held by the Chief of the General Staff, India, 1910,” WO 279/526, TNA; “Report on Staff Tours held by the Chief of the General Staff, India, 1911,” WO 279/532, TNA.

33. *Infantry Drill 1896* (London: War Office, 1896).

34. “Conference of General Staff Officers, January 1908,” 26–27, WO 279/18, TNA.

35. Nick Evans, “From Drill to Doctrine: Forging the British Army’s Tactics, 1897–1909” (Ph.D. thesis, King’s College, London, 2007), 61–65.

36. Lord Roberts, “South Africa, 1900, Proclamations, Army Orders and Circular Memoranda,” WO 105/40, TNA.



Colonel George Francis Robert Henderson
[Courtesy of the author]

Officers in 1886. “He [then] became Instructor in Tactics, Military Law and Administration at Sandhurst. From this post he proceeded as Professor of Military Art and History to the Staff College (1892–1899)” at Camberley, publishing works on both the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and the American Civil War, including his well-regarded *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (1898). *The Science of War*, a posthumous compendium of essays and lectures, summarizes his views.³⁷ A prominent American military historian, Jay Luvaas, in *Military Legacy of the Civil War*, elucidates the impact Henderson had on military thinking on both sides of the Atlantic.³⁸

In December 1899, Roberts recruited Henderson as his director of intelligence, and they sailed together to Cape Town. Henderson was never robust, and he was invalided home, dangerously ill, in February 1900.³⁹ When he recovered, Roberts took him back onto his personal staff in London and instructed him to update *Infantry Drill 1896*, incorporating the philosophy of his 1900 *Circular Memorandum*. This was high-handed, since it was Lieutenant General Sir Evelyn Wood, the adjutant general, who had responsibility for commissioning and updating training manuals.⁴⁰ Henderson’s views on skirmishing tactics and the role of cavalry in war meant his drafts contained “a great deal of military doctrine which was common to all arms.”⁴¹

Roberts returned to London at the end of December 1900 and was eager to publish Henderson’s work; but it was still in draft form and had divided naturally into two parts: a drill component that pertained only to the infantry,

37. Captain Neil Malcolm, ed., *The Science of War: A Collection of Essays and Lectures 1891–1903 by the late Colonel G. F. R. Henderson* (Dehli: Alpha Editions, 2019 [reprint: Longmans Green, 1912]).

38. Jay Luvaas, *The Military Legacy of the Civil War, The European Inheritance* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988 [reprint: 1959]), 170–202.

39. Lord Roberts, “Memoir,” in *Science of War*, ed. G. F. R. Henderson, xxxv.

40. Lieutenant General H. G. Hart, *Hart’s Annual Army List, Militia List, and Yeomanry Cavalry List, 1902* (London: John Murray, 1902), 3 and 50; J. S. Ross, *The War Office List and Administrative Directory for the British Army* (London: War Office, 1903), 3.

41. Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, 225.

and a supplement of wider application. Even the former was rewritten radically, incorporating a new section on musketry that demanded recruits adapt their firing positions to terrain and not fire, even if ordered to do so, unless they had a target. It introduced throughout an emphasis on the need for junior officers to take responsibility for the training and tactics of their units.⁴² In the light of experience in South Africa, it was not controversial. But Henderson needed help with further editing, and it could not be published without the authorization of the adjutant general. Roberts therefore recruited Major Gerald F. Ellison, who worked in the adjutant general's directorate and had editorial experience.

Ellison joined the infantry in 1882 and immediately showed an aptitude for staff work. He graduated from the Staff College in 1889 and served as staff captain at army headquarters from 1894 to 1897. He visited Germany in 1889, 1890, and 1895, and he was impressed by the efficiency of the German Imperial Staff at their maneuvers.⁴³ He was at the War Office when the British Army mobilized in 1899 and subsequently served as a deputy assistant adjutant general with the 2nd Division in South Africa. Unimpressed by the structure of British staff arrangements on campaign, in 1899 he wrote a basic manual, which was printed locally, for staff officers of the South Natal Field Force.⁴⁴ He earned promotion to lieutenant colonel but was invalided home, seriously ill, in early 1901.⁴⁵

In August 1901, Roberts arranged for Ellison to meet Henderson, who was just about to depart for South Africa, having accepted a lucrative contract to write an official history of the South African War.⁴⁶ Ellison, in his *Reminiscences*, writes that Henderson needed help with two projects. The first was to guide to publication his revision, in two volumes, of *Infantry Drill 1896*. The second was to help him draft “a ‘simple little manual’ dealing with staff organization and staff work in the field.” Roberts found a suitable niche for Ellison at the War Office as assistant adjutant general, where he assumed responsibility for the “draft proofs” on Henderson's departure and started work on the “little manual.” With Wood's approval, he arranged for the drill component of the revised infantry manual to be appraised at Chelsea Barracks, which housed guards' regiments on ceremonial duties in London.⁴⁷

42. *Infantry Training, (Provisional), 1902* (London: War Office, 1902), 81–158.

43. Lieutenant General Sir Gerald Ellison, “From Here and There, Reminiscences,” *The Lancashire Lad; Journal of the Loyal Regiment*, July 1933, VIII, 7–8, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/19, National Army Museum (hereafter NAM).

44. [Lieutenant General Sir Gerald Ellison], “South Natal Field Force—Standing Orders with notes on Supply, Transport, etc.,” November 1899, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/15, NAM.

45. Hart, *Annual Army List, 1902*, 53 and 211.

46. Peter Donaldson, *Remembering the South African War: Britain and the Memory of the Anglo-Boer War, from 1899 to the Present* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 144–45.

47. Draft letters, Ellison to Kelly-Kenny, August and October 1901, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/34 and 8704/35/35, respectively, NAM; *The Lancashire Lad*, February 1937, XXI, 12–13, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/56–57, NAM.



*Infantry Drill 1896,
Combined Training 1902,
and Infantry Training
1902 manuals [Courtesy
of the author]*

The next problem Ellison and Roberts faced was how to progress the second volume of Henderson's work. This was problematic, since it pertained to all arms of the army and nothing quite like it had ever been produced for the British Army. On 1 October 1901, Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny replaced Wood as adjutant general, and on his desk was a letter from Ellison dated 29 September 1901 explicitly proposing two "general service manuals," one dealing with combined tactics and the other with war administration.⁴⁸ Kelly-Kenny asked for details, and Ellison supplied them. It appears "that the C-C [Roberts] wishes both administration [i.e., his little manual] and tactical subjects to be dealt with in the new F.S. manual." Ellison argued that such an approach would delay the project unreasonably. Far better, he said, to keep the two parts separate, preparing the administration manual from scratch and expanding the "general tactical manual" for all arms. The advantage was that future manuals specific to infantry, cavalry, or artillery could be slimmed down.⁴⁹ This approach was approved.

On 31 October, Kelly-Kenny wrote, without enthusiasm, to the new Aldershot commander, Major General Sir Henry Hildyard, to say he had been "directed" by Roberts to request that a committee be convened there with Major General Charles Douglas, commander of the 1st Infantry Brigade at Aldershot, as president. This committee was to "test, revise if necessary and edit Volume I" of Henderson's work.

48. *The Lancashire Lad*, February 1937, XXI, 12–13, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/56–57, NAM. See also: draft letter, Ellison to Kelly-Kenny, August 1901, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/34, NAM.

49. Draft letter, Ellison to Kelly-Kenny, October 1901, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/35, NAM. There were three main draft documents in Ellison's possession, and the inconsistent nomenclature used in correspondence to describe them has been clarified in this account.

In addition, Hildyard, as a former commandant of the Staff College, was to consider setting up a second committee with all arms representation to consider volume II of Henderson's work, and evaluate whether it could, "with some alterations and additions, be made applicable to the army as a whole."⁵⁰ By 3 December, the Douglas Committee had made progress, and was on to proof three. On 2 January 1902, Kelly-Kenny wrote again to Hildyard, noting that the second committee, now constituted and chaired by Hildyard, should expand its brief and "consider and report on a Field Service Manual which is being drafted by Lieutenant Colonel Ellison, the Secretary of your Committee." This document should describe, "briefly and clearly, for the information of the army as a whole, and of Staff Officers in particular, what our system and accepted staff arrangements are in war."⁵¹

On this Hildyard Committee, the cavalry was represented by Colonel Richard Lawrence, who had been a professor at the Staff College under Hildyard.⁵² The infantry was represented by Douglas, who would become chief of the general staff in 1914, and the artillery by Colonel Neil Findlay, who would command the 1st Division artillery in 1914. The committee concentrated first on Henderson's work. Although Henderson returned to England in early 1902, he was too unwell to join either committee and died a year later in March 1903.⁵³ Both of his rewrites were ready for publication well before that. *Infantry Training (Provisional) 1902* came out in April, and *Combined Training (Provisional) 1902* appeared in May 1902.⁵⁴

These handbooks articulate a revolutionary training philosophy that influenced the British Army for years to come. Both are pocketbooks, and all the key features of *FSR 1909* are there, albeit advice on the duties of officers is less directive, the redefinition of the relationship between senior and junior officers less clear-cut, the difficulty of requiring all arms cooperation whilst allowing the cavalry operational independence not so firmly addressed, and the command structure of units on active service less clearly defined. This last was a particular problem, since the relevant paragraphs addressed initiative. Evans documents the strength of feeling amongst those demanding training reform and a new army doctrine incorporating initiative.⁵⁵ Limited operational independence is not easy to accept when it is not constrained by a formally defined command structure, an issue not settled till 1908. Roberts directed that both manuals be adopted as additional guidance for army training.⁵⁶

50. Kelly-Kenny to O/C Aldershot, 31 October 1901, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/37, NAM.

51. Hart, *Annual Army List, 1902*, 97; Kelly-Kenny to O/C Aldershot, 2 January 1902, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/37, NAM.

52. George Paget, *A History of the British Cavalry 1816–1919, Volume 4, 1899–1913* (London: Leo Cooper, 1986), 284.

53. Henderson to Roberts, 30 December 1902, Roberts Papers, 7101/23/46/68, NAM.

54. *Combined Training, (Provisional) 1902* (London: War Office, 1902); *Infantry Training (Provisional) 1902* (London: HMSO, 1902).

55. Evans, "From Drill to Doctrine," 206–20.

56. *Military Manoeuvres and Field Training 1903–1905, Volume 2: "Preliminary Training of the IInd Army Corps and the Preparations for the Army Manoeuvres 1903,"* 12, WO 279/516, TNA.

Ellison also continued work on what he now called his “staff manual.” It was proving a huge task, as he noted:

I have, in conjunction with the branches of the War Office concerned, been drafting chapters on various administrative subjects, e.g. the supply of an Army in the field; medical arrangements; bivouac cantonments and camps; office work, returns and diaries in war; the function of Staff and Departments; transport; railway, telegraph, postal and signaling arrangements; prisoners of war and prizes, etc. Naturally these matters will require a great deal of discussion in the War Office before they can be referred to General Hildyard’s Committee.⁵⁷

An additional problem was that he was writing regulations pertaining to an expeditionary force at war and framing them depended on the responsibilities of the War Office departments in peacetime.⁵⁸ With almost continuous reorganizations, it was hard enough for him to find a niche from which to continue his work, let alone produce an authoritative draft. He was partially employed in the Mobilization Division of the adjutant general’s department from June 1902.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, the army had to respond to the Akers-Douglas Report of 1902 on the education and training of army officers. This recommended an immediate, independent review of current training establishments and suggested that “the supervision and control of Military Education throughout the Army should be entrusted to a General Officer.”⁶⁰ On 15 January 1903, a new Department of Military Education and Planning was created with Hildyard as its director. This department assumed control of those parts of the Adjutant General’s Directorate that covered drill and military instruction (A.G.4), and army schools (A.G.5). Hildyard was given two assistants, graded as assistant adjutant generals, Colonel Sir Henry Rawlinson and Lieutenant Colonel Henry Wilson, both appointed on 1 April 1903.⁶¹ The head of A.G.4 was Major Walter Adye, who had been at the War Office since 1900 and was destined to guide both *Combined Training* and Ellison’s fledgling *Field Manual* to publication as *FSR*.

Gooch says, wrongly, that Hildyard, Rawlinson, Wilson, and Ellison formed a small committee that “duly produced a *Manual of Combined Training* and a *Staff Manual*.”⁶² A first draft of *Combined Training* had been published already, and “all manuals contained contributions from a widening array of sources.”⁶³ In early 1902,

57. Draft letter, Ellison to Kelly-Kenny, late 1902, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/38, NAM.

58. *The Lancashire Lad*, May 1937, XXII, 56, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/59, NAM.

59. G. K. King, *The War Office List and Administrative Directory for the British Army, 1905* (London: HMSO, 1905), 99 and 237.

60. The Right Honourable A. Akers-Douglas (Chairman), “The Report of the Committee approved to consider the Education and Training of the Officers of the Army” (London: HMSO, 1902), 38.

61. Ross, *War Office List, 1903*, 43, 49, and 51.

62. Gooch, *Plans of War*, 28.

63. Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, 66.

for instance, Ellison amended a chapter in *Combined Training* after conversation with Lieutenant Colonel Balck, a past professor of tactics at the German Imperial Staff College.⁶⁴ The Hildyard Committee had dispersed by October 1902, although Ellison considered *Combined Training* still a work in progress. The “Manual will occupy one officer’s whole attention for some months to come,” he told Kelly-Kenny. Ellison refused to take on the work himself, being fully occupied with his “staff manual.”⁶⁵ He was not posted into Hildyard’s new directorate in 1903.

Thus, the main workload of revising *Combined Training* fell on Rawlinson, who would command a corps in 1914, and Wilson, who would be on the staff at Mons. Roberts directed the combined



Colonel Sir Henry Rawlinson
[© National Portrait Gallery, London]

maneuvers of 1903 with Rawlinson as an assistant. Training development, and those involved, can be followed right up to 1913 through the annual maneuvers, which were used to test training manuals. Douglas and Herbert Plumer, an army commander by mid-1915, were brigade commanders in 1903; James Grierson and Archibald Murray, respectively corps commander and chief of staff in 1914, had lesser commands. “Combined Training, 1902,’ has been applied to the training of the troops,” Wood reported. “I was impressed by the advance in tactical efficiency made by all Arms.” Roberts found a few deficiencies, but congratulated both Wood and French, his opposing commander, who would command the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in 1914.⁶⁶ Haig was not involved, having been posted to India.

During 1903, Ellison was still answerable to Kelly-Kenny as adjutant general. Despite this, by Ellison’s account, he had not briefed his superior fully on the reforms he had in mind. So when Kelly-Kenny asked him in mid-1903 to prepare an explanatory memorandum, Ellison had to reveal that he “proposed a system on Wellingtonian lines, whereby the Quartermaster General was head of an operation staff and the adjutant general the ‘organizer’ of the army.”⁶⁷ This created

64. *The Lancashire Lad*, February 1937, XXI, 13, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/57, NAM.

65. Draft letter, Ellison to Kelly-Kenny, 3 October 1902, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/35, NAM; *The Lancashire Lad*, May 1937, XXII, 56, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/59, NAM.

66. “Report on Combined Manoeuvres 1903,” 1–5, 21, 25, and 30–31, WO 279/7, TNA; *Military Manoeuvres*, vol. 2, “Preparations for the Army Manoeuvres 1903,” 12, WO279/516, TNA.

67. Gooch, *Plans of War*, 28; *The Lancashire Lad*, May 1937, XXII, 58, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/61 NAM.

a huge row in the upper echelons of the War Office, as Kelly-Kenny realized the extent to which his department's influence would be trimmed. Roberts endorsed the memorandum though and instructed Kelly-Kenny to allow Ellison to carry on with his work.⁶⁸

In November 1903, Ellison was invited to serve as secretary to Lord Esher's War Office Reconstitution Committee, a position of enormous influence. Kelly-Kenny vigorously opposed his appointment, and it took the intervention of Secretary of State for War H. O. Arnold-Foster to secure it.⁶⁹ The committee reported in early 1904, recommending sweeping reforms of the army. Amongst many more significant recommendations, it formally proposed "a general work setting forth the accepted principles as regards the training of the Forces for, and their administration in, war." This work, to be known as "Field Service Regulations," should be in two parts. *Combined Training* should be further developed, and "the portion dealing with 'War Administration,' at present in proof form," completed. All other training and administrative manuals applicable only to subsections of the army should be conceptually compliant with these two documents. To protect the project, the committee further recommended that a new Directorate of Staff Duties be created with responsibility for *FSR*.⁷⁰

The first action of the Esher Committee was to recommend that the king and prime minister set up a new Army Council. Once this was done, it implemented almost all further recommendations at breathtaking speed. In March 1904, the council took oversight of the development of the "staff manual" away from Douglas, the new adjutant general, and gave it to Major General H. D. Hutchinson, the new Director of Staff Duties. Hildyard's directorate was abolished, and all responsibility for officer training and the Staff College was passed to Staff Duties. A new Directorate of Military Training under Major General Frederick Stopford took on the training of other ranks.⁷¹

The Development of *FSR*, Part I in the Staff Duties Directorate

Colonel Wilson and Major Adye became Hutchinson's assistants at Staff Duties and continued their work on *Combined Training*.⁷² Troops in England were required to use the 1902 edition in training during 1904; and Hutchinson,

68. *The Lancashire Lad*, August 1937, XXIII, 113, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/62, NAM.

69. War Office to Ellison, 18 November 1903, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/52, NAM; Gooch, *Plans of War*, 42; see also *The Lancashire Lad*, August 1937, XXIII, 114, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/63, NAM.

70. Viscount Esher, J. A. Fisher, and G. S. Clarke, "Report of the War Office (Reconstitution Committee) 1904, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of His Majesty" (London: HMSO, 1904), part II, section IV, paragraphs 20/21, 23–24.

71. Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, 225–26. Dunlop is wrong, however, in suggesting that "General Stopford" became chairman of the Hildyard Committee.

72. Hart, *Annual Army List, 1905*, 3 and 120; "Recommendations of Committees on Army Matters, 1900–1920," No. 569, 136, WO 237/13, TNA.

Wilson, and Adye were on the staff of that year's autumn maneuvers directed by Lieutenant General Sir Neville Lyttelton, the new chief of the General Staff.⁷³ Hutchinson upset Sir John French, one of the participants, by pointing out that his operation orders did not comply with the manual.⁷⁴ Lyttelton was pleased with his army's performance. Colonel Rawlinson, previously Hildyard's other assistant working on *Combined Training*, had taken command of the Staff College, and in January 1905, he and Hutchinson jointly hosted a week-long tactical conference that addressed key sections, with lectures on "Principles of Strategy and Tactics," "Movement of Troops," and "Operation Orders in the Field," followed by a staff ride. An important participant was Grierson, now Director of Military Operations, and there were at least six attendees who went on to command brigades or divisions in 1914. Murray was also present.⁷⁵

As a Sandhurst occasional paper notes, "lessons from field training and annual manoeuvres were incorporated into written doctrine."⁷⁶ *Combined Training, Field Service Regulations, Part I* was published in 1905. Roberts, who was commander in chief of the forces until February 1904, wrote the foreword. "This manual is to be regarded as authoritative on every subject with which it deals," he said. To truly "be regarded as authoritative," however, it needed to be endorsed by the new Army Council, and that endorsement was limited: "This Manual is issued by order of the Army Council for the guidance of all concerned."⁷⁷ *Combined Training 1905* was just another training manual, equal in status to older manuals specific to individual arms.

Nevertheless, since the ideas in *Combined Training* were based on consensus achieved at conferences and staff rides, progressive officers regarded it as best practice. The Staff College Conference of January 1906 arranged by Hutchinson and Rawlinson was oversubscribed; every officer attending received a copy of *Combined Training* in advance. Julian Byng and Edmund Allenby, both cavalry division commanders in 1914, were at the conference. Colonel A. Thomas lectured on "Supplies and Transport," and Colonel Charles Monro, a corps commander by 1914, spoke on "Tactics in Relation to Rifle Fire." Brigadier General M. Rimington presented a paper on "Cavalry, its Role in War, and its Training in Peace," its influence can be traced in amendments to *Combined Training*.⁷⁸

Hutchinson went on to direct a supplementary staff ride in May 1906 that explored cavalry deployment. Wilson and William Robertson, quartermaster general in 1914, were on the staff. In his report on the exercise, Hutchinson expressed

73. "Report on Army Manoeuvres, 1904," 8–9 and 76–83, WO 279/8, TNA.

74. Gooch, *Plans of War*, 67.

75. "Report of a Conference and Staff Ride as carried out at the Staff College by Senior Officers of the General Staff, January 1905," 3–7, WO 33/2747, TNA.

76. Christopher Pugsley, "We have been here before: the Evolution of the Doctrine of Decentralised Command in the British Army 1905–1989," Occasional Paper No. 9 (Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, 2011), 8.

77. *Combined Training, Field Service Regulations, Part I, 1905* (London: War Office, 1905), 2.

78. "Conference and Staff Ride, January 1906," WO 279/9, TNA.

irritation that *Combined Training* was not being followed with respect to operation orders.⁷⁹ As Bowman and Connelly put it: “the General Staff, as created in 1906, did not take a lead in the creation of doctrine, as might have been expected.”⁸⁰

Wilson remained as assistant to Hutchinson until the end of 1906, when he succeeded Rawlinson at the Staff College. He continued to use the intellectual resources of the college to suggest amendments to *Combined Training* and *FSR, Part II*.⁸¹ The annual *Field Service* handbooks issued from 1906 to 1908 were “handy and concise book[s] of reference” for “all ranks,” précising a number of manuals, including *Combined Training*. They were not updates, as Dunlop asserts, although updating based on staff conferences and army maneuvers was constant.⁸² *Amendments to Combined Training, 1905*, for instance, was published in 1907.⁸³

Not all maneuvers resulted in updates to *Combined Training* though. In October 1907, Haig, now director of military training, organized a staff ride with Lyttelton as overall director. It was a fiasco. The onset scenario was the disposition of opposing forces taken up at the conclusion of Hutchinson’s ride, also under Lyttelton, of May 1907.⁸⁴ With inadequate preparation time and new participants, not even Haig or Lyttelton could divine the tactical options open to either force. The infantry commanders had to work “with only ¼ inch maps,” and assistant directors had difficulty getting “the clerical work through.” Both reported that “the work done . . . [was not] instructive.” *Combined Training* lays down guidelines on both these issues. No points of general interest were raised in the discussion in the published report.⁸⁵

It had been Adye’s responsibility since 1904 to collate any amendments to *Combined Training*. Adye headed S.D.2 and was responsible for “writing, revising, and publishing all works and regulations, relating to the Education of Officers.”⁸⁶ When Hutchinson retired as Director of Staff Duties in November 1907, Haig succeeded him.⁸⁷ Adye was promoted colonel and his brief expanded. He became responsible for “strategical and tactical principles of the employment of all arms

79. “Report on a Staff Ride held in Scotland under the direction of the Director of Staff Duties in May 1906,” 14, WO 279/512, TNA.

80. I. Beckett, T. Bowman, and M. Connelly, *The British Army and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 40.

81. Bond, *Victorian Army*, 251–54; TNA WO 33/2982, “Naval and Military Tour, carried out in April–May 1907, Joint Report of the Commandant, Staff College, Camberley, and the Captain, Royal Naval War College, Portsmouth,” 12, WO 33/2982, TNA.

82. Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, 292.

83. *Army Orders 1907* (May), 22, WO 123/49, TNA.

84. “Report of a Staff Ride held by Director of Staff Duties under Instructions from the Chief of the General Staff, 27th to 31st May 1907,” WO 279/14, TNA.

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

86. King, *War Office List, 1905*, 68.

87. Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, 291, states that Haig became Director of Staff Duties in November 1906, an obvious misprint.

and services; ... revision of training books and manuals ... works dealing with the education of cadets and officers; [and] co-ordination of all peace and war publications,” along with overseeing the “war organisation of the Empire” and “comparison with other military powers.”⁸⁸ Recognizing this huge workload, Haig arranged that responsibility for cadet training was transferred to the Directorate of Military Training with Murray (now a brigadier general) as its new director. Colonel John Du Cane, who had been at the Staff College and was artillery adviser to French in 1914, was appointed to head M.T.2, responsible for “training and instruction of all arms, arranging manoeuvres,” and for “action on all manoeuvre reports,” i.e. drafting amendments to specific *Combined Training* regulations.⁸⁹

At the Conference of General Staff Officers in January 1908 organized by Haig, Ayle's senior administrative assistant confirmed in the course of the proceedings that Murray was now responsible for the “present revise of *Combined Training*.”⁹⁰ Haig, in Staff Duties, never had direct responsibility for its content. Murray and Du Cane's role in overseeing the final revision of *FSR, Part I* is confirmed by the proceedings of the January 1909 Staff Conference. On the first day of this conference, Murray and Du Cane presented a series of key *Part I* regulations or sections for debate. All of the army commands in England were represented at the conference, and Sir William Nicholson, chief of the General Staff, chaired the proceedings. Wilson and Rawlinson made significant contributions, as did Robertson (by proxy) and section heads of the Directorate of Military Operations. Haig did not participate.

Nicholson and Murray thus coordinated a final consensus edit of *FSR, Part I, Operations* and *FSR, Part III, Training and Manoeuvre Regulations*, which had been split off from *Combined Training*.⁹¹ Notice of the formal acceptance and implementation of *Parts I and III* appeared in *Army Orders* in March and May respectively.⁹² M.T.2, headed by Du Cane, collated a *Memorandum on Army Training* that was issued to all officers by the Army Council in January 1909. *FSR, Part I* and the attached *Training and Manoeuvre Regulations* “definitely lay down the system of organization and training for the army, in order to fit it for the task it will be called upon to perform in war.”⁹³

Compliance with the regulations was now mandatory, and at the army maneuvers of September 1909, French, now Inspector General of the Forces,

88. H. Moggridge, *The War Office List and Administrative Directory for the British Army 1908* (London: War Office, 1908), 48; Evans, “From Drill to Doctrine,” 403–5.

89. Moggridge, *The War Office List, 1908*, 49.

90. “Conference of General Staff Officers, January 1908,” 43, WO 279/18, TNA.

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

92. *Army Orders 1909* (March), AO86, 29, WO 123/51, TNA; *Army Orders 1909* (May), AO136, 12, WO 123/51, TNA.

93. “Memorandum on Army Training 1908,” January 1909, WO 231/403, TNA.

assessed the forces of Grierson and Smith-Dorrien (also a corps commander in 1914) for compliance with current training methods. Murray and Du Cane were on his staff. French's long report points out where *FSR* had not been adequately observed, but he also commends actions when *FSR* was followed.⁹⁴ M.T.2 issued a further *Memorandum on Army Training* three months later, suggesting training improvements in light of French's comments.⁹⁵ Nicholson, French, Murray, and Du Cane took the lead in ensuring that the army in England was implementing *FSR, Part I*. Haig had no discernible impact on either its genesis or its implementation. He conducted two cavalry rides in 1909, neither of which complied with *Part I* as they failed to emphasize all-arms combination and other important concepts.⁹⁶

In summary, *FSR, Part I* was conceived by Roberts and Henderson. Among generals who came to prominence in 1914, Douglas, French, Murray, Robertson, Rawlinson, and Wilson were closely involved in its development. Administrative responsibility for it, after November 1907, lay with Murray and Du Cane, not Haig. But its content was arrived at by consensus, based on vigorous debate at the Staff College, and stern testing in army maneuvers and staff rides. No one individual can be given credit for its final acceptance as the basic training handbook for the British Army in 1909.

The Development of *FSR, Part II*, in the Staff Duties Directorate

In 1904 the Army Council gave Hutchinson the task of overseeing the development of Ellison's "staff manual" into *FSR, Part II*. Adye coordinated amendments within his directorate, although Ellison continued to play a major role in updating the document. From July 1904, Ellison headed a department of "man-power organization," he also chaired a "mobilisation committee" until December 1905.⁹⁷ He contributed clauses to what was now being called *Field Service Regulations, Part II*, but the task of publishing an agreed draft of the full document as required by the Esher Report fell to Hutchinson.

Hutchinson presented *FSR, Part II, a Staff Manual* at his staff conference in January 1905, but he did not enthuse his audience.⁹⁸ The document required a radical change in thinking; it borrowed ideas from Germany, although this was never explicit.⁹⁹ Instead of allocating logistical and administrative responsibilities on campaign on an ad hoc basis, *Part II* suggested responsibilities should be pre-ordained and follow the same basic structure wherever the location.

94. "Report on Army Manoeuvres 1909," 38–74, WO 279/31, TNA.

95. "Memorandum on Army Training 1909," December 1909, WO 231/404, TNA.

96. "Cavalry Staff Ride of Director of Staff Studies, March 1909," WO 279/27, TNA; "Cavalry Staff Ride of Director of Staff Studies, June 1909," WO 279/29, TNA; Gooch partly dissents, *Plans of War*, 117.

97. *The Lancashire Lad*; February 1938, XXV, 190, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/818/70, NAM.

98. "Report of a Conference and Staff Ride" (1905), 8–9, WO 033/2747, TNA.

99. Gooch, *Plans of War*, 100.

It was not a good time to be making such a suggestion. A new Army Council had been established headed by a new chief of general staff. This radical innovation had somewhat destabilized the upper echelons of the army, and specific responsibilities were yet to be agreed. *Part II* defined the duties of staff officers on campaign based on their responsibilities in peacetime. These had always been somewhat fluid in the small British Army, but even more so on campaign, given the shortage of adequately trained staff officers. As Dunlop puts it, “the branches of the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General could not see the necessity for a detailed organisation of this nature.”¹⁰⁰ According to Anglesley, moreover, “Lyttelton, Chief of the General Staff from 1904 to 1908, gave the project only tepid support.”¹⁰¹ Hugh Arnold Forster, Secretary of State for War until late 1905, presided over an indecisive period during which the definitive responsibilities of senior members of the General Staff were not finalized.

When Richard Haldane became Secretary of State for War in December 1905, however, he appointed Ellison as his secretary and started issuing monthly memoranda to the Army Council that brought clarity and enabled progress. What was “obviously required,” he wrote, was “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.”¹⁰² Over the next few months, Haldane developed his thoughts on the composition of the general staff that would organize this force and on his proposed new Territorial Force. In March 1906, Haldane directed the Army Council to consider a paper on allocating responsibility for army spending on campaign prepared by its secretary, Sir Edward Ward, and based on recommendations of the Esher Committee.¹⁰³ *FSR* was not initially a priority but, advised by Ellison, Haldane soon realized that *Part II* could be used to achieve political objectives.

For *Part II* to progress, the reluctance of the Army Council to define the responsibilities of the general staff had to be overcome. Their concentration on minor issues delayed matters but, chivvied by Haldane, they agreed on its general composition in October.¹⁰⁴ Haldane then asked which specific responsibilities in the field would be held by the adjutant general, which by the quartermaster general, and which by the commander in chief or others. He received this information in November and attached it to his December memorandum.¹⁰⁵

100. Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, 293.

101. Anglesley, *British Cavalry, Vol 4*, 386.

102. Richard Haldane, “A preliminary memorandum on the present situation, being a rough note for consideration by the Members of the Army Council,” 1 January 1906, WO 33/3369, TNA.

103. Sir Edward Ward, “The Division of Financial Responsibility for Army Expenditure,” 31 March 1906, 2, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/130, NAM.

104. *Army Orders 1906*, Organisation of General Staff, AO233, October 1906, 17–21, WO 123/48, TNA.

105. Richard Haldane, “Further Note on the Military System, Administrative System in War,” December 1906, 5, WO 33/3379, TNA.

Simultaneously, Haldane issued a memorandum entitled “The Incidence of Administrative Responsibility in the Field.” Drafted by Ellison, it briefly defines the role of commander in chief of an expeditionary army from a political perspective and suggests, following Ward’s paper, how to impose financial accountability. Haldane asked the Army Council to allow Hutchinson to incorporate these principles into *FSR, Part II*.¹⁰⁶ He also articulated with crystal clarity in his December memorandum a concept implicit in the combined *FSRs*: that the mindsets required for operational and administrative command were quite different.¹⁰⁷ The Army Council rejected this concept and were therefore unwilling to address the detail of its content. All senior generals enjoyed operational roles, where risk-taking and success resulted in wider responsibility. They wanted similar rewards when undertaking senior administrative roles.

Ellison and Ward were party to these developments. Haig, who became Director of Military Training in August, discussed army finance in September 1906, but his correspondence with Ellison that year deals almost exclusively with the composition of the territorial force.¹⁰⁸ Haig, like most officers, had views on the general staff but he was not on the Army Council. As a confidant of Haldane and Ellison, he probably was briefed on *FSR, Part II*, which dealt with expeditionary staff responsibilities, even though he had no remit over it, and its draft was in limbo during 1906. He certainly had no knowledge of the detail of *Part II* in January 1908.¹⁰⁹ There is no evidence that he did more than appreciate the political importance Ellison and Haldane attached to it. In 1906, Haig was battling the conservative wing of army opinion in his efforts to reform the militia. He had nothing to gain by allying himself with Hutchinson, and there is no evidence that he did so.

In April 1907, Haldane lost patience with the Army Council’s prevarication. He prepared a detailed memorandum for their April meeting and instructed Hutchinson to set up a committee to “consider the amendment of the draft *Field Services Regulations, Part II (War Administration)*, in accordance with the principles in the memorandum [on administrative responsibility].”¹¹⁰

Hutchinson forwarded this to the council, which finally capitulated. They insisted on a few minor amendments to the memorandum but authorized a subcommittee with the terms of reference Haldane demanded. Its first meeting would be 4 June.¹¹¹ Major General F. E. Mulcahy, Director of Ordnance Stores,

106. Richard Haldane, “The Incidence of Administrative Responsibility in the Field,” November 1906, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/136, NAM.

107. Richard Haldane, “Further Note,” December 1906, 1–2, WO 33/3379, TNA.

108. Haig to Ellison, 11 September 1906, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/460, NAM; Haig to Ellison 20 September 1906, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/461, NAM; Cooper, *Haig*, 109.

109. “Conference of General Staff Officers, January 1908,” 27, WO 279/18, TNA.

110. Haldane to Hutchinson, 27 April 1907, WO 32/4735, TNA.

111. Henry Ward, “Revised Précis no. 334 of Decision Reached at the 90th Army Council Meeting,” May 1907, 20/2711, WO 32/4735, TNA; Francis Mulcahy to Ward, entry in committee notes, 20/2711, 6, WO 32/4735, TNA.

chaired the subcommittee, which included Hutchinson and other senior staff officers. It immediately appointed a working group that included both Adye and Ellison to incorporate Haldane's proposals on command and finance into the first five chapters of the existing draft. The remainder would be edited in line with these changes, if they were approved.¹¹²

The full committee approved the revised chapters on 30 September 1907. On 16 October, a meeting of directors, with Haig present, reviewed the documentation. Since the new draft "had been drawn up under the direction of the Army Council," however, they agreed not to debate it.¹¹³ Staff Duties was no longer responsible. Hutchinson retired as Director of Staff Duties on 9 November; Haig succeeded him. The draft of the five chapters of *Part II* was circulated to Army Council members on 21 November 1907. They approved these and authorized work to begin on the rest of the document.¹¹⁴ Adye and Ellison's subcommittee remained under Mulcahy and the Army Council as they edited the remainder of *Part II*. There is no reference to Haig in the relevant documentation.¹¹⁵ Neither Haig's diaries nor Ellison's correspondence with him makes any reference to the subcommittee's deliberations.¹¹⁶

At the staff conference in January 1908, Haig read a paper on maneuvers that barely referenced *Combined Training*, which defines how they should be conducted. The combination of his recent staff ride debacle and this presentation suggests he was not familiar with it.¹¹⁷ Adye's presentation on the latest draft of *Part II* followed. It was not a success, as he failed to elucidate the concepts. Haig was unable to help, and Lyttelton regretted that Ellison was not present to clarify matters. Haig concluded 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."¹¹⁸ Dunlop, writing in 1938, says that Haig was "convinced of the [political] necessity" for *Part II*.¹¹⁹ Haig had great respect for both Ellison

112. Field Service Regulations, Amendment of, Committee, as at April 1908, 20/2711, WO 32/4735, TNA. In September 1907, Mulcahy expected Hutchinson to supervise this working group, until it became a subcommittee. Mulcahy to Ward, entry in committee note, 8, 10 September 1907, WO 32/4735, TNA.

113. *Directors' Meetings 1907* (London: War Office, London, 1908), entry for 16 October 1907, 20/2711, WO 242/2, TNA.

114. *Field Service Regulations, Part II*, 30 September 1907, chapters I–V and *passim*, WO 32/4735, TNA.

115. Henry Ward, "Memorandum for Members of Army Council" 3 February 1908, WO 32/4735, TNA.

116. Notes on Letters, Haig to Ellison, from 1906 on, Ellison Papers, 8704/35/475, NAM.

117. *Combined Training, 1905*, 156–88; Gooch (*Plans of War*, 115) cites this lecture as evidence as Haig's support for *FSR*.

118. "Conference of General Staff Officers, January 1908," 20–21, and 25–27, WO 279/18, TNA.

119. Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, 292.

and Haldane, but the fact that he was Director of Staff Duties in 1908 did not (as Gooch implied in 1974) make him responsible for *FSR*.¹²⁰

Adye continued to update *Part II* for the Army Council. Both the current adjutant general, Douglas, and the current quartermaster general, Nicholson, studied the developing draft in detail, and suggested a great number of “minor” amendments in correspondence with Mulcahy.¹²¹ Meanwhile, Haig devoted most of his energy to the territorial force, which launched 1 April 1908. He was then off sick for several months. Nicholson became chief of the General Staff, replacing Lyttelton, in April 1908. Haldane agreed to fund that autumn not, as usual, a major army exercise testing tactical skills but one aimed at assessing the effectiveness of War Office command pathways as defined by the latest draft of *Part II* on mobilization. Nicholson, who had been studying the draft all year, was director in chief of this exercise, aided by Haig and ten other staff officers, including Adye. Murray was chief of staff to the army; Ellison was adjutant general, and Wilson served as the inspector general of communications and railways. Gooch says that “a wide range of problems confronted the players including disembarkation, entraining, accommodation, detraining and concentration. . . . Lack of coordination . . . resulted in the congestion of the army for several days.”¹²²

At the assessment conference, Nicholson largely blamed non-adherence to the regulations rather than any defect in their drafting, which suggests the players had been poorly briefed by his staff, which was headed by Haig. Nicholson did acknowledge a few omissions in defining responsibilities and instructed on amendments for clarification. In only one major area, “requisitioning in the field,” did he find the regulations inadequate.¹²³

Gooch credits Haig with the “success” of this exercise.¹²⁴ It was Nicholson, however, who imposed consensus, leaving Adye to refine the final draft of *Part II*. In the last months of 1908, Adye was still redrafting it in line with some further, mainly financial amendments proposed by Mulcahy and others.¹²⁵ The military members of the Army Council committed to publication of *Part II* on 23 December 1908. Although Adye worked out of Staff Duties, there is no evidence that Haig had any impact on the final draft. It was published in 1909, having been announced in Army Orders that April.¹²⁶ As Dunlop says, it had

120. Gooch, *Plans of War*, 113–17.

121. “Coordination of Expenditure in the Field, 1908–1911,” WO 32/4736, TNA; “Remarks by the Adjutant general and Quartermaster-General on the Draft Field Service Regulations,” 28 January 1908, WO 32/4735, TNA.

122. Gooch, *Plans of War*, 113–14.

123. “Report on a Staff Tour held by the Chief of the General Staff, 26–30 October 1908,” list of participants and 5–11, WO 279/22, TNA.

124. See Spiers, *Haldane*, 151–52; and Gooch, *Plans of War*, 113–14.

125. “Coordination of Expenditure in the Field 1908–1911” Correspondence November 1908 to March 1909, WO 32/4736 TNA. Haig’s signature is on just one of the many submissions.

126. *Army Orders 1909* (April), AO107, 21, WO 123/51, TNA.

“required the powerful backing of the Secretary of State which carried along [its] preparation and final issue.”¹²⁷

The publication of *FSR, Part II* was a landmark in the evolution of the British Army. It defined the role of a commander in chief at war and sketched out the two command structures he should head, one operational and the other administrative. This dichotomy is fundamental, having considerable influence on how *Part I* should be interpreted. *Part II* also imposed financial accountability on his army.¹²⁸ More mundanely, it formalized the allocation of expeditionary responsibilities within all administrative branches of the army. Before 1909, borderline responsibilities depended on interdepartmental negotiation. After 1909, a formal document described exactly how an expeditionary force should arrange its administration in war.

Memorandum on Army Training 1908 instructed that all staff officers “should make a careful study of” *FSR, Part II*, as soon as it is published.”¹²⁹ Just as infantry and other handbooks had to be rewritten to conform with *Part I*, staff manuals had to be rewritten to conform with *Part I* and *Part II*. The General Staff had to fit comfortably on top of the foundations laid out in *FSR*. This was not easy. The reforms took several years to bed in. The adjutant general was still writing to Launcelot Kiggell, Haig’s successor at the Directorate of Staff Duties, in June 1911 to complain about the wording of regulations pertaining to his department.¹³⁰ Haldane nonetheless realized his vision of the British Army simultaneously adopting two different command structures, one for military operations that demanded delegation and intelligent reaction to events, the other administrative and characterized by bureaucratic exactitude.

Training Reform in 1909

The introduction of *FSR, Part I, 1909* was not, however, a seminal moment in tactical evolution. This, as Jones describes, was ongoing and constantly refined.¹³¹ *Part I* still galvanized education and training in a way *Combined Training, 1905* had not. The latter was merely a training manual, one of many. *FSR* imposed a de facto doctrine: “This Manual is issued by command of the Army Council. ... The training manuals of the various arms are based on these regulations, which, in case of any doubt arising, are the ruling authority.”¹³² The army order that accompanied the publication of *FSR* was unambiguous. “General Officers commanding will arrange, with the assistance of their General Staff Officers, to instruct senior

127. Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, 292.

128. *Field Service Regulations, Part II, 1913*, 23 and 61–88.

129. “Memorandum on Army Training 1908” issued January 1909, WO 231/403, TNA.

130. Gerard De Groot “Life and Military Career of Douglas Haig,” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1983), 329–30.

131. Jones, *Influence of the Boer War*, 56, 94, and 136.

132. *Field Service Regulations, 1909, Part I*, introduction.

regimental officers in methods [described in *Parts I and III*] suitable for the instruction of the junior officers under their command.”¹³³

At the Staff College Conference of January 1908, before the implementation of *FSR*, there had been a morning set aside to discuss arrangements for training. The responsible officers within British commands were remarkably candid. No specific training document is mentioned at any stage. Robertson, representing GHQ at Aldershot, the only corps command, said that “commanders of units were left free to employ their own methods, so long as training manuals were followed.” Colonel David Henderson, also from Aldershot, said that “annual Training is left very much to the units,” and that “lack of time prevented ... the instruction of individual officers.” Only Colonel Richard Haking, representing the 3rd Division in Southern Command, presented a training regime fit for the purpose. In Northern Command, [regimental] “officers had not always a clear idea of what they wanted to teach.”¹³⁴ The training that any officer received depended entirely on his immediate commander and the time and financial resources that might be available. There were additional problems. “Training in the British Army was complicated by the fact that recruits could be accepted at any time of year”, and the constant “need to find drafts to reinforce unit overseas also eroded training efficiency.”¹³⁵

Nevertheless, *FSR* and *Army Memorandum* of 1908 directed that training was not a responsibility that could now be devolved or neglected. All officers, however senior, had to ensure that *FSR* was both taught and followed within their commands. Before 1909, devolved responsibility, or benign neglect, had also pertained to the governance of the Staff College, the Royal Military Academy Woolwich (RMA) and the Royal Military College Sandhurst (RMC).

This freedom ended with the introduction of *FSR*. Robertson, the new Staff College commandant, instructed “students to act in accordance with circumstances and the spirit of *Field Service Regulations*,”¹³⁶ *FSR* should be “thoroughly impressed on the mind of every commander.”¹³⁷ Commandants now were required to ensure that their graduates were instructed in the basic tactical concepts and administrative strictures, set out in *FSR*. The curricula at both the RMA and the RMC were immediately reformed. Questions in final examinations on tactics dated before 1909 are vague and generic. From December 1909, they ask for definitions of concepts within *FSR*, quote from it, and are explicit in testing knowledge of it.¹³⁸

133. “Army Training,” January 1909, WO 231/403, TNA.

134. “Conference of General Staff Officers, January 1908,” 5–10, WO 279/18, TNA.

135. Beckett, Bowman, and Connelly, *The British Army*, 41.

136. Gary Sheffield, “The Makings of a Corps Commander: Lieutenant-General Sir Douglas Haig,” in *Stemming the Tide: Officers and Leadership in the British Expeditionary Force 1914*, ed. Spencer Jones (Solihull, U.K.: Helion, 2013), 111.

137. *Field Service Regulations, 1912, Part I*, 13.

138. Examination papers, Royal Military Academy, 1907–1911, Royal Military College, 1905–1908, 1910–1911, Sandhurst Collection Archives, Camberley, England.

“Matters seemed to improve,” say Bowman and Connelly of 1909, as a similar training revolution occurred across the army. Smith-Dorrien, commanding at Aldershot in 1910, recruited Colonel Henry Horne, later Haig’s artillery commander at Mons, to reform his artillery in accordance with its principles.¹³⁹ In India in 1910, a staff officer noted in his introduction to a maneuvers’ report that they should comply with *Field Service Regulations*.¹⁴⁰ Promotion exams tested adherence to its new training methods.¹⁴¹ Douglas “urged its assimilation by the entire army in his Inspector-General’s report of 1912.”¹⁴² By that time, a new edition of *Part I* had been issued with tactical training advice updated in the light of maneuver reports and staff conference recommendations since 1909.

In 1910, Haig was posted as chief of staff to General Sir O’Moore Creagh, commanding in India. Haig arranged two major staff tours, the proceedings of which were published. The second, in 1911, is notable for analyzing maneuvers, not by compliance or otherwise with *FSR*, but by comparisons with historic battles.¹⁴³ But it is on his return to England in 1912 that Haig’s engagement with *FSR* can best be assessed. He commanded one side in the military exercises of both 1912 and 1913.

These continued the tradition of testing new training guidance. French, as chief of the Imperial General Staff, used the 1912 maneuvers to assess Haig and Grierson “in conjunction with *Field Service Regulations*.”¹⁴⁴ He noted Haig’s failure to support his forward cavalry with infantry and artillery, and the failure of those cavalry to perform small group reconnaissance as required by *FSR*. He discussed Grierson’s decision to take a calculated risk in not concentrating his force as *FSR* advises. He criticized Haig’s poor intelligence arrangements and inadequate communications between elements of his army—essential *FSR* requirements—and congratulated Grierson for facilitating all-arms cooperation in his cavalry maneuvers and for delegating responsibility to his subordinates, including territorial levies, both in compliance with *FSR*. He criticized Haig for preventing his divisional commanders from reacting to events by issuing detailed orders and by micromanaging their infantry brigades. French finished his critique of Haig’s performance 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.”¹⁴⁵

139. Don Farr, *The Silent General, Horne of the First Army* (Solihull, U.K.: Helion, 2007), 38.

140. “Staff Tour, India, 1910,” 6, WO 279/526, TNA.

141. Duncan, “Military Education,” 156.

142. Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, 77.

143. “Report of a Staff Tour, held by the Chief of the General Staff, India, 1911,” WO 279/532, TNA.

144. “Army Manoeuvres, 1912,” III, 53, WO 279/47, TNA.

145. “Army Manoeuvres, 1912,” 52 and 54–60, WO 279/47, TNA; see also 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): 44 and 46.

*General Sir John French, commander in chief of the BEF (right); General Joseph Joffre, commander in chief of the French forces (center); and Field Marshal Douglas Haig (left) at the Front, 1915 [in *The Great War: The Standard History of the All Europe Conflict, Volume 4* (1915)]*



In the 1913 exercise intended to test the new *Staff Manual (War) 1912*, Haig and his corps again came off second best, despite French's attempt to direct him.¹⁴⁶ "The same failings of poor intelligence processing, slow transmission of orders and poor communications" explained their "lack-lustre performance," says Gooch.¹⁴⁷ Sheffield notes that Haig "admitted that staff work in his corps had been a problem."¹⁴⁸ Under *FSR*, an operational staff was collaborative, collating intelligence to enable rapid decision-making. Haig's was not. It was hierarchical and dysfunctional.

The Mons Campaign of 1914 thus was directed and fought in full compliance with *FSR* by every senior infantry commander but one. As Barr says, "the regular officers of 1914 ... took the information contained in Field Service Regulations for granted. They carried out procedures almost instinctively."¹⁴⁹ French, Murray, Wilson, Smith-Dorrien, and all five divisional commanders had observed it in detail before the war, and they followed it in detail in August 1914. Haig did not. His staff and intelligence arrangements still did not comply with *FSR*, but this was the least of the problems.¹⁵⁰ In direct breach of a fundamental tenet of *FSR*, he repeatedly elected to disobey binding orders from his commander in chief. Unbridled initiative is not a feature of *FSR*; unity of intent is. Haig decided to take strategic advice from the French on the evening of 24 August, for example, and did not even try to align his

146. "Army Exercise, 1913," WO 279/52, TNA.

147. Gooch, *Plans of War*, 121.

148. Sheffield, *The Chief*, 116.

149. Barr, "Command in the Transition," 14–15.

150. See War Diary, I Corps Staff, August 1914, WO 95/588/1, TNA, and War Diary, I Corps, August 1914, WO 95/588/4, TNA, as against War Diary, II Corps Intelligence, August 1914, WO 95/629/4, TNA, and War Diary, II Corps Staff, August 1914, WO 95/630/1, TNA.



Royal Field Artillery gunners drag an 18-pounder through Passchendaele's mud in 1917. [Imperial War Museum, photograph Q6236]

corps with II Corps at Le Cateau.¹⁵¹ Haig also micro-managed his infantry brigades, again in defiance of *FSR*, leading to command confusion in both his divisions and unnecessary casualties in the 1st Royal Berkshire Regiment and the 2nd Connaught Rangers. Orders issued by Haig on 25–26 August and documented by I Corps' staff, for instance, are incompatible with orders issued to the same infantry brigades, at the same time, by the commander of the 2nd Division.¹⁵² Both Rawlinson and Du Cane complained immediately after Neuve Chappelle in March 1915 that Haig's First Army had not followed *FSR* principles.¹⁵³ Their protests went unheeded, and Haig's army failed to comply with *FSR* in the later battles of 1915, sustaining terrible losses.¹⁵⁴

Haig's views did change, but not till after Passchendaele in 1917 where, unlike at the Somme in 1916, *FSR* principles were largely ignored. As commander in chief, Haig's laudably complied with the administrative principles of *FSR* but that is beyond the scope of this article.¹⁵⁵ In September 1918 though, Haig wrote to

151. Compare General Staff, Operation Order No. 7, 25 August 1914, WO 95/1/2, TNA, with I Corps Staff, G122, 24 August 1914, WO 95/588/1, TNA, which purports to execute the operation order.

152. War Diary, I Corps staff, 23–25 August 1914, WO 95/588/4, TNA; War Diary, 2 Division, WO 95/1283, TNA; a close reading of other unit war diaries provides many other examples.

153. Rodney Atwood, *General Lord Rawlinson: from Tragedy to Triumph* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 117–118; Paul Harris and Sanders Marble, "The 'Step-by-Step' Approach: British Military Thought and Operational Method on the Western Front, 1915–1917," *War in History* 2008 15 (1), 23.

154. Kearsay, *1915 Campaign in France*.

155. See Vines, "The Heroic Manager."

Wilson, an architect of *Part I*, to say that the British Army's adherence to *FSR* from 1914 had enabled victory.¹⁵⁶ In his valedictory address, he praised the Staff College's foresight in laying down the binding principles of *Part II*.

Conclusions

FSR had a long gestation before the British Army adopted it in 1909. It describes a complex, evolving, interlinked set of principles covering the personal conduct and education of officers for war: their duties in the handling of units; broad, near-inviolable tactical concepts to guide the deployment of those units, and the definition of two different command structures, both headed by the commander in chief, to direct operations and administration respectively. *Part I* is much more than a tactical handbook and requires interpretation in the light of *Part II*, which is much more than an administrative directory. Its adoption by the British Army in 1909 was a watershed moment, imposing by 1914 professionalism, and a formal change in the relationship between senior and junior officers. The tactics and command structures in the British Army at war as it adapted from mobile to static warfare and from a small professional army to a huge volunteer army into 1915, evolved under *FSR*. The regular officer corps adhered closely to *FSR* principles in 1914 and thereafter. Haig, however, played no role in constructing *FSR*, and he did not follow its principles from 1909 to 1915. Because he refused to do so, he underachieved in prewar maneuvers and in early Western Front battles.

Most of his fellow generals, particularly those associated with the Staff College, did contribute to and follow *FSR*. Their contributions are generally unrecognized, and their adherence to it is sometimes misunderstood. Haig may have been right to ignore some of its principles as commander in chief in 1916. Unless the principles he ignored are identified, however, and the extent to which he allowed them to be ignored by his subordinate generals thereafter is defined, questions of whether later battles were also flawed by archaic tactics and therefore unnecessarily prolonged and attritional cannot be addressed in any meaningful fashion.

156. See Stephen Badsey, *Doctrine and Reform in the British Cavalry 1880–1918* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2008), 216.

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