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KIT-BAGGING

A Weekly Newspaper, sanctioned by the Officer Commanding, and published by and for the Men of the E. T. D., St. Johns, Quebec, Canada.

Vol. 1. No. 30. SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1918 5 Cents The Copy

The Use of Models in Military Training.

By Lt. E. T. Adney, C.E.

(Continued from last week)

Models in Actual Warfare.

The United States makes extensive use of model relief maps, in their regular infantry training in map reading. The student takes a standard contoured military map, and with this as a guide, builds up a relief map out of sheets of wax. By this means he comes, visually, to read understandingly the contour lines of maps. He realizes then as not before, that contour lines, drawn closely together, indicate steep grades, and when far apart, more level surfaces. These same models are then used in studying minor tactics, defense schemes being traced upon the surface. For the latter purpose, so called sand boxes, (wide shallow boxes of sand or earth), are used, and these may be combined at will, to represent hills and valleys. Trenches may also be indicated by the use of these. There is at Quebec a sand box model, by Capt. Dion, showing a narrow deep section of the modern trench, worked out with certain engineering details. Very instructive and interesting it is said to be. At the Plattsburg camp, New York State, the engineers built, out in the open, models of trenches, some being on a scale of quarter natural size. I have not seen them. But certainly the fullest recognition of the military value of models in modern warfare, has been made by the British both in France and in England.

Models of Vimy Ridge.

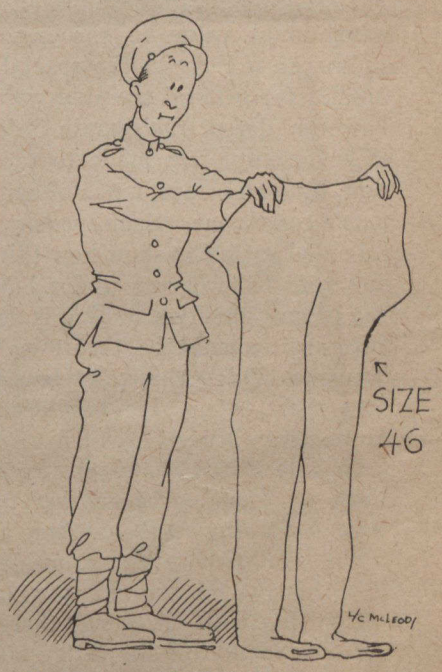
Some miles back of the Vimy front, and out of the shell zone, there was constructed, out of doors, a large model of Vimy Ridge, showing the German positions and trenches. Here the whole position could be studied. There were also prepared of plasticine, small scale models showing each divisional front, as well as the German positions, for a distance of one or two miles in rear. On these models, trench lines, roads, ruins of buildings, and any other important landmarks were indicated. In the case of the machine gunners, for example, small ordinance maps were given to each member of the sections, the maps being studied in conjunction with the plasticine model which was about seven feet by ten feet in size. In this manner, objectives were pointed out, and each man learned to trace his way to his objective. A little behind the lines, areas were laid off and trenches indicated on a correct scale by means of flags. In this way, the men in training were enabled not only to study a model which was similar in contour to the actual German ground, but, by means of the model, became so completely familiar with the ground, that individual members of the machine gun sections, were able, when the attack was launched, to reach their objectives without directions from officers. In some cases, indeed, they were on the ground with their guns in action by the time officers got there. In this instance, so completely successful was the employment of models in training, that construction of models is now a recognized part of the work of the Royal Engineers. The models I speak of were, of course, constructed on the Canadian front. It is interesting to note further, that a good sized model of the Ypres salient, has also been built in Hyde Park, London, for use of the Flying Squadron while in training. None of these models, however, showed engineering details.

Military Engineering Models.

At the Royal Engineer School at Chatham, there is a notable collection of engineer models of all descriptions. They are said to cover a wide range of engineering activities, including fortifications. Indeed, in the neighborhood of any place where engineering is taught, one finds collections of models, illustrating bridging and the applications of knots and lashings which enter so largely into field engineering work.

Papier Maché Models.

The great difficulty in representing the terrain and up turned earth by models of field fortifications, consists in finding a suitable material. Models built of plaster suitably colored, or of clay, or of wax, have the disadvantage of being very heavy if they are of considerable size, and do not any too well represent the texture of earth. Last year the writer began the use of papier maché for the purpose of representing earth. The papier maché is finely ground



Trying on "Spring Modes" at the Q.M. Stores.