

# **THE SAVAGE STEEL COMPANY MANUAL OF** **ARMS**

Herein lies such advice and instruction as will allow for success upon the field of battle. It is by the discretion of the officers of the company that any of the orders and punishments contained within may be altered at need.

## **Captain Walter Savage**

of The Savage Steel Company

# ARMY ORGANISATION AT ARRAY AND FOR BATTLE

## THE ORDINANCES OF BATTLES

### TYPES OF SOLDIERS

To aid the Captains in their conceits tis wise to give each soldier a place within the army.

**Discoverers** seek out the enemy upon first reaching the field. They must give reports and avoid battle. They must be skilled in moving unseen and able to give news of their observances. They must be very few in number, no more than one for each company.

**Assaulters** be thy rapid moving men that do attack skirmishers and exploit opportunities, they will give way before defenders. They must be further marked as an archer if so equipped.

**Defenders** are well armed and harnessed men that will stand firm against any attack. They must be further marked as a billmen if so armed.

**Other** soldiers are poorly organised and trained.

**Special** soldiers are picked warriors who are trained for a task.

All soldiers should be assigned to a lance of the same weapon type or fighting style and to be led by a Constable . Soldiers may choose their own lance but would do well to take advice from their Captains so that their skills are best placed.

# **THE COMMAND OF THE COMPANY**

A Captain will lead The Company.

The Company shall be divided into watches. Arranged such that each watch shall contain no less than two and no more than 4 lances

A vintener, will lead each watch.

A sergeant will lead each lance, of 8 soldiers. The sergeant will appoint a corporal to aid his duties.

Petty Captains will be appointed to command a vexillation with a given task whether that be to control a flank, attack a position or command all the archers.

## **ON THE MANNER OF ARRANGING THE COMMANDERS**

The Captain will need to decide which Lances will form with which watches and to organise the appointment of the company officers. A master at arms will be responsible for the training of the soldiers in the correct use of their weapons. The provost must post a guard and maintain order at all times. The paymaster will keep a good accounting of all monies received and paid. The ancient shall arrange the flags and signs for the company and ensure the soldiers are in good humour.

The Paymaster will hold the warchest for the army and pay such accounts that are due. They must keep a record of payments and receipts and ensure the army is supplied with all that it needs. The paymaster must give an accounting to the wardens whenever so requested.

The Master Surgeon must make all arrangements for the care of the wounded and make such arrangements with the Captain and the other officers as will keep the surgeons and leeches supplied and protected on the field and elsewhere. They must keep a reckoning of all who are wounded or slain. The barber surgeon will keep the soldiers free of lice and fit for duties

The Master at Arms must arrange such musters and training as will allow for the good health of the soldiers. They must attend to the weapons and habiliments of the soldiers and see that they are instructed in their duties. They must assist the Captain and act in their Lieu if so required by the events of battle. They must speak with other Captains of other companies and learn their numbers and manner of fighting. They must arrange the training of the army and issue all passwords if such is required. They must arrange for any signals that are to be used in battle.

The Herald of the Company must have knowledge of the language and customs of all nations and provide such advice as will allow for good conduct between all present upon the battlefield. They must make themselves known to all other commanders and generals and in turn know all their business and deeds. They must know the business of the palaces and of the taverns. In the absence of a herald some other officer must uphold this office as best as they can.

## **LANCES, WATCHES AND COMPANIES.**

Each lance is to be made up of 5 to 10 soldiers who are all armed alike or are able to fight in a similar fashion. The first task of the lance must be to elect their constable by whatever method best suits them. If they fall to blows amongst themselves then the Captain may choose their leader.

Each watch is to be made up of two lances. The first task of the watch is to elect their Vintener from the constables of the lances.

The watches must be placed into such formation by the Captain so that the company will give good account of itself in battle.

The Captain will lead the company, assisted by such Petty Captains as need allows.

The ancient should be appointed by the Captains and he is trusted to hold the flag and keep it safe. In the same way he is trusted to look after the wellbeing of the soldiers who follow his flag and must remind them to regularly drink of thin potations or water in battle and to exhort them to great deeds when necessary.

Whistlers may be appointed by the Captains or petty Captain to order the rays and to keep the distances. This may be required for fierce engagements when officers are lost or wounded.

## **AS TO THE MANNER OF CONDUCTING BATTLE**

Each lance and watch must be able to conduct itself on the field of battle and must be given a task to achieve that will require little direction from other than a constable or Vintemar once the press of battle comes hot. The Captains of each company must assign each lance and watch to such a duty as is given hereafter.

### **BILLMEN OF THE BLOCK**

The mainstay of the defending soldiers, it is on these warriors that the heaviest blows will fall and they must be of strong stomach. They should form in blocks of two to three lancees so that they number no fewer than 15. One Vintemar, or Sergeant, or a petty captain should be placed in charge. The commander of the bills should maintain good order amongst the billmen, always give their face to the enemy and give thought to his flanks. He needs must speak with his flankers at all times. The billmen must kill the enemy and advance past any wounded. When forming for battle then two or three rays in normal order, with 6' for each billman, will allow for most choices once the enemy forms. The billmen must be arranged in a staggered formation with the man in the ray behind to stand behind the midpoint between the billmen in the front rank. This to be so that if an enemy advances into the gap between two men, then they will encounter a billman, if they continue straight. The bills must be ready to move with haste from one formation to the next, to best defeat those arrayed against them. If a billman in the front ray is pressed close they must retire to allow for buffets from all rays to strike home. By retiring a pace, or two, the billmen in the second ray will have free play with their bills. As soon as the enemy relents in his advance he must be pressed back at once and the line reformed. In such a manner must all billmen move so that they appear to the enemy as a constantly fluttering flag buffeted by the wind of Mars. They must consider that the harshest blow is delivered unseen and so must allow for their fellows to either side to strike hard when chance allows. Indeed this must be their constant intention.

If the enemy does press close with hot-livered and well harnessed fellows then the two foremost rays will act as one in a close formation. They must ward well, with 3' for each man, and the third ray must act as a bulwark where needed.

The first ray must hold those who are well appointed with harness. These men must be prepared to retreat or advance at speed.

The second ray is to hold such men as will hold their place till time of need. They must ward the gaps and the men of the first ray when they retire.

The third ray is to be the reserve. This should contain such hot-livered fellows as must be held close by the officers. They must be sent where needed.

A billman must be armed with a bill of stout construction. They must wear such furniture as would halt the fiercest blow and yet allow for good movement. In addition they should carry personal arms for close work and if their bill be lost or shattered.

A billman must fight in accordance with the actions of his fellows to left and right and with thought to billmen or archers to his rear. He must move his feet rapidly at need and look forward at all times

The bill can be used to cut and thrust, and trap weapons, and pull open shields. When faced with spears it is wise to bind then with circular wards and to thrust. The points can be moved at will, by one used to such fighting, and make an opening for his fellows to either side. Some billmen prefer the rowers grip and others the axeman's grip. Both have their place. Alternating between them is good practice as one is better for low attacks and the other for high. When pressed close and the enemy rushes in then the bill head should be dropped low and the shaft used for warding and binding the enemy's weapon.

The Billmen in the front ray work bravely in pairs when one pulls the enemies' shield, or binds their weapons, the other strikes through the opening. Tis always desired to strike at an unprepared foe who cannot see the blow.

If a billman is wounded or his bill is shattered then he must be exchanged with a billman from the second ray. Then such aid as is needed can be supplied and he can then form in the rays once more.

When fighting as companies in open ground tis desirable to have large gaps between well furnished units. This will allow for archers and assaulters to move in front of and behind the main line to attack weaknesses and betimes seek protection. This is a heavy business as the soldiers will perforce move to ward the gaps in the line. This is false accounting as any sally in through these gaps will in normal times leave the enemy suffering attack from all sides. Tis vital that these gaps remain. Failure to keep these roads clear will trap archers and flankers when they must needs attack or retire. Strong officers must drive interlopers from these killing grounds and highways.

## ARCHERS

The archer should consider themselves first and foremost an archer. They should have no aspirations to engage in hand to hand fighting unless at the utmost extremity. To this end they should equip themselves accordingly. A good serviceable bow, supplied with a spare bowstring and a weather cover; a good supply of arrows in good condition, at least a dozen. If they can be afforded: a steel cap or light sallet that will not obstruct shooting and a stout maille vest under their jack or a steel corselet to preserve them from enemy arrows; also tis wise to carry a sword and buckler and a bodkin for defence at need.

A Bowman should shoot at any foe that pays him not sufficiency as would allow movement in his defence. This practice will create great fear in the enemy and force him to look all ways at once. This will be of great aid to any soldier that doeth wish to strike him. When fighting in close formation the archer should remain close mouthed and leave such cheers and shouts as are opportune to the billmen and flankers or any such officers as may be still quick. And further, the prudent Bowman doth conserve his store of arrows and shoot them not vainly but only when they do the greatest harm to the foeman. Loosing not until his mark be certain or when the throng of foemen is thick and so if by chance he doth miss his mark another shall fall in his stead.

Most archery in battle should be at no more than 15 paces. At this remove most all arrows will hit their mark. When the foe advances then most archers will get two shots, or one against a charging foe, as he moves through this range. When charged, the archers must retire with haste unless warded by barrier or courageous guards. If the enemy doth quail and hold still, they should be shot. Unless it forms part of a stratagem, to shoot and retire is not desired, as the archers best service is to shoot without any halt once the enemy stands still.

A shield wall can confound the best of archers but always a standing shield wall should be shot to prevent injury to billmen or other soldiers. Archers should endeavour to attack the flanks or rear of shield walls. If compelled to shoot at a shieldwall then most success is achieved by shooting from the left across to the right. Enemy archers should be shot before all else. Bills will deal most effectively with shield walls so the archers must keep the wall locked and sweep it clear of enemy archers and so preserve their comrades who shall wreak devastation it at close quarters. The archers must look to see when billmen pull away shields.

When opposed by enemies who are not well supplied with shields it is best to concentrate your archers and submit the enemy to a vigorous and continuous hail of arrows. Take care, as always, to preserve your archers from a charge or counter attack. Each archer should endeavour to empty their quiver into them as rapidly as they are able.

Unless it forms part of a stratagem, volley shooting is seldom of value and must be used cautiously. It may sometimes occur at the command of the great captain or the captain of archers. It doth cause both the quick and the slow to shoot ill and it is common that no man doth take proper aim at his mark, as he would when shooting at hys owne just pace. Let instead each man shoot as swiftly as he may, regarding each mark to the great discomfort of the foe.

Long range shooting is often wasted. Archers will need to be constrained until every arrow can score a hit. On rare occasion a talented marksman can be set to shoot at range but it is

important that this does not encourage havoc. Commanders should be mindful not to release the full puissance of the archery until the range be meet.

Archers are usually best deployed behind defences, or closely supported by billmen, where they are out of reach of the enemy and still have the opportunity to cause hits. Against a charging or belligerent foe where there are no defences to stay them the archers may be preserved by two rows of kneeling billmen in close order to their front. The billmen shall remain kneeling and ply their bills even as the enemy strike home, and all the while the archers shall do great execution over their heads with their bows at less than two yards range. At need a single line of billmen may perform the same service but it is less sure to withstand a determined assault. This screen of billmen can also be used to conceal an archery unit inside a bill block.

When archers are used in a skirmishing position tis advisable to have them supported by assaulters, in this way they have some defence against light soldiers and an advantage against enemy archers.

Archers should always endeavour to place their arrows among the enemy where they are gathered thickly together, and aim so that if they were to miss their mark they would be certain to strike another.

The chief tasks of archery officers should be to judge when their Watch or lance needs to press forward or retire; to ensure they will be providing support and protection to their bill block and to judge when they need to remain close to it and, above all, to perceive threats before they arrive. Also they should judge when best to unleash their arrow storm and restrain those under their charge from premature shooting. They should also choose marksmen for specific tasks as required.

An impasse often occurs when two units of archers oppose each other. Among ordinary archers neither side will have the stomach to advance to the range that will allow them to unfailingly hit their marks as they themselves will be struck as they move forwards, this then becomes an archery duel at long range with many wasted arrows and our archers lost to the greater battle. I would prefer to quickly overcome the enemy archer force and then use our own archers to tip the balance of the main fight. There are two methods that may win the contest: a force of assaulters supported by archers, should rush the enemy archers' position to break the impasse. The assaulters will draw the immediate attention of the enemy archers and yet have a good chance of overrunning the enemy. Your archers may then advance with haste into the best range without sustaining heavy casualties. The second way is to, by practices, have your archers used to moving forward, even into close range of the enemy archers, this will un-man the enemy and in most cases give you the victory, for fortune favours the bold in this instance. Your own archers being much used to the danger shall not balk and their arrows shall fly the truer whilst the foe shall be divided twixt those that would give ground and those that would remain. Those that remain shall be shot the quicker as their fellows may not succour them.

It must be said that both the bills and bow are vulnerable without each the others' support so officers, of each, should be aware of the requirements, strengths and weaknesses of the other, and a good companionship should be made between the respective officers and soldiers for, when together, there is none that can stand against them.

### **FLANKERS**

Flankers must be prepared to skirmish as well as form a battle line. They may be required to charge the enemy line and protect the fallen. In short they must be prepared for all things.

These warriors will be well armed and armoured and yet fight in a normal order or open order in close attendance to the bills. Their task is to prevent the enemy from assaulting the flank of the bill block. They must be sure they do not interfere with the movement of the archers. They must be prepared to move behind the bills or in advance as required by the captain. Their role is vital and demands much skill. They must judge when to advance and when to retire and yet do so together and at speed. They must spread their numbers so that no enemy can pass them without an exchange of blows that will allow for such swift despatch that the Fellow can cause no harm. One lance of flankers should attend the healers and surgeons that are assigned to each company. If required to skirmish their task is to mask the advance of the bills and then to once more guard their flanks.

### **OUTFLANKERS**

These warriors must strike and then retire. These warriors must be wise in war and most skilled in avoiding the intentions of the enemy. They can be variously armed and armoured but above all must be swift of foot. They must be armoured well enough to withstand the strongest of the enemy for a brief while. Their task is to move past the enemy lines and then to strike at the rear of the enemy formations. They should do this only when the enemy forces are engaged to their front, else they will die a swift death. An they strike with consummate timing they can win the battle at one stroke. When done poorly they will die an ignominious death. Tis of great import that these warriors do not waste their energies on small excursions. They can perform good service by attacking a enemy flank if the moment arises.

### **ASSUALTERS**

These warriors must be the fleetest of foot in all the army and have a stomach for danger. When commanded they must run towards the enemy and strike down their intended foe. They must ignore all their fellows no matter what befalls them. Any who fall will be attended to by those who follow. Until they are given the command they must remain amongst the flankers or the outflankers. When these warriors fall, for surely they will, their numbers must be made up from whomsoever can be gathered to the task. Those that succeed should be given great reward. This post is not for those who hesitate.

### **HEALERS and SURGEONS**

Whilst dog leeches should be whipped from the camp there is great need for learned healers. A Captain needs must attend to the health of the wounded for tis often the fallen who are more rested midst a long battle and if warriors see their bleeding friends return to the fray they then fight the harder to spare them more grief. Surgeons should therefore attend upon each company. These should form with each company at the rear and to the left of the bills unless the company captain decides otherwise

# Training

Soldiers must be trained in the rays and evolutions that are to be used in battle. To explain your array in the heat of battle is certain sure to hand victory to the enemy. Your men will grow disordered and start to offer their opinions. Once a soldier believes he can conduct the battle better than his officer he must be at once promoted or broken. To seek news of the enemy, and to listen to stratagems before battle is joined, is another matter entire.

The men must be given such use as will improve their wind and stomach. Running, walking and vaulting can all be applied. Each array must be attended to and every man shall know his place. The officers should comfort stiffly those men who continue laggardly in their execution. It is important that the men do know their left and right. They must know their own battle flag and the sounds of command. They must have the stomach to face all manner of weapons and should not blench when commanded to advance. A Captain must never give an order that is not going to be followed upon the instant.

The Armsmaster must be on hand to advise those who are unsure of where to stand and to assist the Captains.

## ORDERS

Herein be the orders that have proven to be of use in battle. When training, all commands should be announced with the words 'pretend to' and then the command should be stated. Then the officers should relay the commands of the captain. Hereby the captain commands 'Pretend to advance'. The vintenars command 'Pretend to advance'. The captain commands 'Advance' and the company advances. When a captain commands a company he or his proxy may preface with Company or single out one or several Watchs or lancees as required. Each man should know his officers and disregard any order from him who be not his officer. This should be drilled so they are not easily caught out or misled.

<i>REFORM</i>	All troops regain their positions of formation <u>at the double</u>
<i>FORM A RAY</i>	To line up in front of your officer in one line. Close with the person on thy right.
<i>FORM A LINE ON ME</i>	To line up to the left of and facing the same way as the order giver
<i>FORM A LINE ON THE ANCIENT or MASTER FINCH etc.</i>	To line up to the left of and facing the same way as the person so named
<i>FORM RAYS</i>	2 lines are formed, in the case of uneven numbers the front ray hath the extra. If all know their place then they can proceed with haste.
<i>FORM COLUMN</i>	3 lines are formed, in the case of uneven numbers the front ray hath the extra. If all know their place then they can proceed with haste.
<i>LEFT/RIGHT TURN</i>	Turn thee upon the spot
<i>ABOUT TURN</i>	Turn thee to thy right fully round to end facing behind.
<i>MARCH or ADVANCE</i>	Start walking
<i>DOUBLE</i>	A steady and goodly light run
<i>CHARGE</i>	Advance with speed. This should be the last five or ten paces to engagement
<i>HALT</i>	Stop, cease and desist from movement
<i>TIGHT ORDER</i>	Close as lovers
<i>CLOSE ORDER</i>	3 feet apart
<i>NORMAL ORDER</i>	6 feet apart
<i>OPEN ORDER</i>	12 feet apart
<i>BOWS TO THE FORE</i>	
<i>BILLS TO THE FORE</i>	
<i>ON GUARD!</i>	Bill-men point their weapons forward

<i>RETIRE</i>	Walk backwards in good order with thy weapons fixed upon the enemy – archers should nock if they need to.
<i>TAKE THY EASE</i>	Each soldier sits him down or makes him comfortable but stays nearby ready to form array when called upon
<i>DISARRAY</i>	permission to disperse
<i>PREPARE TO HACK</i>	Bills are raised high
<i>HACK</i>	Step forward and hack with bills
<i>THRUST</i> Usually from <i>ON GUARD</i> .	Step and thrust forward with bill
<i>EXCHANGE</i>	The soldier in the second ray steps forward and then the other in the first ray steps back after a brief pause.
<i>NOCK</i>	Archers fit and nock an arrow
<i>SHOOT</i>	Archers shoot at their foe and continue shooting until there be no more foemen or the command <i>FASTE</i> is issued
<i>SHOOT ON MY MARK</i>	All archers to fire at the same target shot at by the officer.
<i>FASTE</i>	Archers stop, cease and desist their shooting
<i>SIDEARMS</i>	All put aside their staves and draw forth their sidearms
<i>BOWSTAVES – SIDEARMS</i>	Archers put aside their staves and draw forth their sidearms
<i>COUCH</i>	The billmen drop to one knee and fix their staves toward the foe. This could be applied ‘front ray couch!’ by way of example.
<i>HAVOC</i>	All soldiers have permission to leave any formation and fight as they see fit, even unto claiming such treasure as may be untended and taking of captives for ransom.

## **Commands for The Field**

When on the field and in the midst of the fray, then such commands as will be heard and are necessary must be given. Such officers that attend upon the captain must repeat commands that do not carry. On the field then the command can be given

'PRETEND FOR ORDERS'

then the command is given 'CHARGE' , or whichever order is needed, if haste and surprise are required.

## **EQUIPMENT**

All members of the company must attend both musters and the field of battles with a full complement of arms. A stave and a helm are the least that is needed as well as the company colours upon their person. Each soldier will have a stave, be it bow with a dozen arrows or halberd, a sword and buckler, a poignard for close work and furniture to the best of their ability to clothe themselves. A secret and jack at least, and the officers well harnessed if the fighting is to be long or fierce. For skirmish then a helm alone will suffice. All shall carry a full costral and a well provided gadyvian unless defending a camp.

## **THE CAMP**

The camp should be kept in good order with an officer of the watch responsible at all times for the safety of the camp. He shall choose the password and response and should be of good character. He should give the password to all officers who are then responsible for their men. All strangers who approach must be challenged if they are friend or foe. Then asked for what reason he attends the camp. If a foe then they must be disarmed and walked before an officer to deliver their terms. If friend of high standing, then they must be led to the senior officer to deliver their terms. The officer of the watch must needs attend any stranger and judge them friend or foe according to their words and deeds. He must also ward against spies, troublemakers and thieves and not vainly take the word of any without proofs or just assurances.

## **GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT.**

Soldiers will find such means to fill their pockets and so employ father time as would make a valiant trencherman and ale knight faint with fear for the afterlife. All officers must announce such tasks as will maintain good discipline and order. Forming such rays and evolutions must be attempted as will contain their zeal. Alarums must be enacted at irregular times. Guardsmen should be taken to task at all times.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The Provost Captain will enforce the good conduct of all the soldiers within the company and imprison, judge and dispense justice as they see fit. Any member of the company may request the Captains judgement on any declared punishment if they wish. If the Captain then agrees with the punishment then all will be doubled in their disadvantage to the accused.

All soldiers should obey the orders of their officers whilst either is on company business.

All officers are responsible for the good conduct of the soldiers in their command and will pay a levy for every fine issued against a soldier in their command.

Furthermore the officer will be removed from command if over many of their command are unfit for duty through illness, drunkenness or injuries gained through brawling

If anyone shall be found to have in any manner begun the clamour called Havoc without the especial licence of The Captain, they will be punished with death and their followers to be arrested and held until fines have been paid in restitution.

If any sentry is found asleep whilst on guard duty then they will be punished with death.

Soldiers will be punished for excessive drunkenness with fines and duties.

Soldiers will be fined for gambling with their weapons or habiliments or with excessive silver or gold.

### **STOMACH**

When a soldier be well served with beef and ale he shall fight as a lion day and night. When deprived of both he doth become troublesome and does resort to fighting his fellow soldiers and scouring the land for his own betterment, or else fall prey to the bad vapours that follow armies at war. Officers should lead the men in song to rouse their spirits and to maintain their fire in the face of the enemy onslaught. Above all other matters a captain must keep his men well supplied of beer.

# ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE

## **THE ROLE OF A CAPTAIN**

A captain must attend to such matters as will secure victory. He needs must have news of the field obtained by keen and trusty eyes. He needs must attend to his own health and place himself according. Before the battle he should stand before the rays and show no fear. This is the time for speeches, which must be short and clear. When the enemy is near he must move to the flank and when battle is joined he must move to the rear. The captain must issue such orders that will advance his cause.

## **FORMATIONS**

Tight, close, normal and open are all useful. A captain must choose with care. Tight is only to be used to attack or defend a gateway or to push through a surrounding shield wall. It is for desperate situations alone and yet must still be practised. The men must stand as close as lovers and alternate in thrusting high and low, slashing at all wards and using hooks and buffets to remove the enemy defence. The second ray will be able to deflect blows and strike the unwary. If set to receive a charge then the first ray must kneel. Once the charge has been received or the men seem steady then they must be standing thereafter.

Close order may be necessary to attack through a fortification or in the press of battle when manoeuvre is limited. The men should stand three feet apart from each the other. The second ray must make sure to give room to the first ray. The first ray must step back when they are pressed and step forwards when chance allows. If the soldiers in the front ray are wounded or their wind is broken then an exchange should take place to allow the first rank to rest. Knowing there will be a chance for rest later the warriors in the front ray can fight till exhaustion.

Normal order, when all soldiers are six feet apart is for most situations and will give you victory against all but the most valiant and skilled of captains. There should be Bills to the fore if within 15 paces of the enemy. Bowmen must be fleet of foot and sure of their ground if they stay in advance of the bills when the enemy is close. The second and third rays must be ready.

Open order when there is twelve feet between files and twelve feet between rays, is desired for guarding a flank, when facing archers, or when planning a strategy. Be warned it invites an attack by the frivolous and excited. In the event of a sudden charge then the first ray should fall back upon the second and then together make a counter charge.

It is important to have a measure of depth in thy formations. Two or three rays separated by at least six feet is to be desired in most circumstances. Also the soldier must be trained to give over his safety to the officers and to stand at least 3 feet away from all other soldiers even in the hottest press of battle. This will allow few men to protect a wide frontage. A single line will fall back once attacked with vigour but when there is a depth of two or three lines each a stave length apart then the line will bend and spring back like a well carved yew stick. Any enemy that

advances too far will be open from all sides. Strict ranks and distances are not required. This formation is loose and flexible.

### **THE WALL**

Many weak captains favour the wall as it is very stable in defence and makes it easy for untrained soldiers to stand in the face of the enemy. When its flanks are secure then it is indeed a useful tactic. With unsecured flanks against a mobile enemy then it can become a trap. Its flanks and rear can be attacked with ease. The confusion of warriors given by alarms in the rear should not be dismissed. Many a strong ward has collapsed as the warrior looks around in fear or curiosity. Once a wall has been formed then the intentions of the commander become clear and fixed. He will stand his ground or advance at a slow cadence. The active captain should endeavour to keep the wall looking to its front with feints and excursions. He should endeavour to place his attacks at the corners of the wall and then to assault it from the rear. There should be a delay of several heartbeats before the attacks follow each other. There is much debate as to which attack should fall first. The size of the wall is the deciding factor. If small then attack the flanks first. If very large then it must be pinned at once from the front. If pinned this way then billmen should take this role. If the whole of the enemy line is formed then an attack to the rear must be achieved at any cost. A shieldwall with secure flanks must be discomfited by a stratagem that weakens their position before any attack is made.

### **THE BOAR**

If thou hast a large number of well-furnished men, in white harness, with a variety of short and long weapons then a Boars snout can be attempted. This formation should thrust through the enemy front rays with the intention of turning on the enemy flanks from the centre. This must only be attempted if the enemy front ray is being held in place by other soldiers and the boar contains enough men to fight to the left and right and maintain their front against any reserve force. Any attack which doth break through the enemy lines must be readily followed. This will not work against a stout defence of well armoured and trained men and should only be attempted at weak points in the enemy front line.

### **THE SICKLE**

Once a battle line has formed all the reserves should be so placed as to be on one side and to the rear of the battle. Their numbers should be divided into 4 parts. When contact is made they should advance and engage in turn until the last lance can outflank the enemy line.

### **THE SACK**

A weak centre is employed to entice the enemy to advance between two bill blocks. They will then be buffeted from all sides. Archers should play their part well.

### **THE FISHING NET**

Each lance in normal order stands 18' from each other arranged in two or three lines as in a gaming board. This will confound all attacks and still allow for advances.

## **THE OX**

With two horns a head and the pizzle this form is of great use when your forces outnumber the enemy. The head engages the front line. The two horns move to each flank and the pizzle strikes where there is need.

## **THE CASTLE**

When faced with a charging horde then adopt the castle. Bills are formed in blocks with three rays. Between each block are archers in line or advance of the first ray. The space behind the archers must be kept clear. Other soldiers are placed at the rear of each bill block though some prefer to place these soldiers behind and between the blocks. There must be a clear path for the archers to retire at speed should it become necessary. If the enemy enters the gaps they will be struck from all sides. Archers that are pushed back must move to the flanks or another gap.

## **THE HEDGEPIG**

If all is in disarray in the midst of battle and the press is hot then all nearby units should rally on their standards forming a defensive ring with billmen or defenders on the outside kneeling and archers on the inside ready to shoot over their heads. The Hedgepig is foolhardy to adopt, as to remain long in this formation invites encirclement and destruction. Even yet there are times when it will serve to weather a storm in battle or enact some stratagem.

## **Army Formations**

All members of the company will have knowledge of these formations and their role in the event of their use.

Their use can be ordered by number or by name.

**Number 1 The Wise Owl** - A column with archers or skirmishers at the front, the most heavily armed in the centre and all other troops behind. This is in main a preparatory position allowing swift movement on the battlefield though it can be used as a swift assault in need. .

**Number 2. The Bear** – In most times how an army or unit will form. A flat formation with skirmishers at both flanks of the main battle. To be preferred if the enemy uses a simple flat line themselves and our force is greater. or more quick.

**Number 3. The Hawk** – As some say Echelon right. A line that is extended forwards on the right and held back on the left. This will best serve if the enemy is headstrong. Strong 3, **The Eagle** - would be an attack with extra troops moved to the attacking flank. To be used to destroy a strong but slow or dilatory formation.

**Number 4 The Snake** – As some say Echelon left. This would be used at need if the enemy is unprepared and confused in their command Strong 3, **The Dragon** would see a strong force attacking on our left flank. To be used when the occasion requires the enemy to abandon a

strong position or when the movement of the left flank can be concealed. Both the Dragon and the Snake can poison the army if not used wisely.

**Number 5. The Stag** Whatever the standing of the army the formation splits right and left to advance with much haste to attack both flanks of the enemy. Screened 5, ***The Leopard***, The army to move as before in addition leaving a skirmisher unit in the centre to hide the movement of troops behind them. Strong 5, ***The Tiger*** – as before and yet also leaving a strong force in the centre that is revealed by the movement in front. All these to be used to confound an enemy stratagem that holds a seeming strong centre or has a strong reserve.

**Number 6. The Wolves** – Troops will form in small groups and arrange themselves in a chessboard manner. To be formed for a withdrawal or when outnumbered by the enemy or surrounded on all sides.

**7. Havoc** – All formations are abandoned and soldiers fight as they think best to achieve victory. To be used when victory is assured and no other stratagem is of value.

### **SPEECHES**

A captain must lead his men by their hearts and spirit as well as their purse strings. Long orders are for the training field. Upon the field a captain should inspire zeal and give either no instructions or at most one. Soldiers are too filled with ardour to remember new instruction. Do thou tell them who they are to fight, why they are to fight and who fights alongside them. Finally tell them what they need to hear.

## **WHAT IS A CAPTAIN'S DUTY**

It behoves a captain to lead his men to victory in battle. He needs must lead them in their training and must know their strengths and whereof be their shortcomings. He needs must keep his men hale and hearty and must keep them well furnished of coin, but above all he needs must have them well victualed and sufficiently supplied with beer, lest they become sullen and unruly. And further, he should inspire his men to fight vigorously, and to so continue even when all may seem lost. A captain, of necessity, must remain apart from his men in some matters for if they do cleave too close it doth become a hard and bitter pass to send them unto peril or death. A captain needs must always follow a course that will guide him through the darkness that comes when the battle is done. A captain must never command his men into such peril or danger that he would not endure himself nor give such issue lightly, moreover, an he be wise, only give such commands as will be followed. And when speaking with others his oathsworn promise must be more valuable to him than gold and be hoarded like unto a miser. Once given, his word must be kept, even to the cost of all those within the company.

### **TO THE RECRUITMENT OF SOLDIERS.**

There is much to be said for enlistment of unproven soldiers. They will be the readier to instruction and the more lively to execution. Soldiers of long standing will be brave in their mystery, and much used to old habits. They will complain that all would be better if done their old way. It will be hard on some to undo their habits and several will die, or leave thy company, before the tall fellows that remain will follow your direction without delay. You must begin your training by appointing trusty officers that do set forth your orders to the watches and companies, and do ensure good discipline. Such Musicians and leeches to be appointed as would maintain their welfare. An thee convince a man that his fellows will aid him when he falls then he will be the more willing to front danger. When inspired to valour by martial airs and musics even soldiers of weak stomach shall advance to battle with vigour. However, in time, all can be made well, whatever base material is at hand. A forgetive and apprehensive Captain will bend any tool to his grasp and wring hard won victory from wretched beginnings.

# STRATEGY

It must be thy aim to defeat the enemy without the loss of thine own men. Their equipment and training will be hard to replace and the men will follow thee more readily, an they be convinced that thou shalt try thy best to keep them alive. Even more, they will follow if they have the chance to become rich. Some looting should be expected on the battlefield but remind thy men that most soldiers do become rich from the ransom of wealthy prisoners.

Always attack a flank or a rear of thine enemy. Sweep their archers from the field. Kill their leaders and their bravest first.

Though many captains concern themselves with complex arrangements and mistress luck they would be better served by hiring a good quarter master. It is enough to say that if thou dost attend to all other matters then the correct course will present itself in the heat of battle. That is to say that it is not possible to say which formation will serve best until the battle is joined. A well armed company of men in white harness, well provisioned and serviced by good officers will need no strategy beyond that which brings them together.

A good captain will stand back from the fray and watch the enemy captains. Once their intentions are clear then victory is assured. Your own intention must remain close.

For those unsure of how to set their soldiers thou shouldst choose four battles and arrange those of like with like. The van to the right, the main in the centre, the guard to the left and the rere behind.

Allow foreign soldiers to fight as they see fit. They will have strange ways and will not lend themselves to your orders. Give them a clear challenge and speak only with their captains.

If there is no time to set plans before battle is joined, then in each company of true soldiers thou shouldst use three rays of men with space between. Assaulting soldiers should be at the fore and yet retire when the enemy approaches close. The second ray should be of defenders prepared to stand and fight. The third ray should be the reserve. These should be the finest of the soldiers being well-armed and fleet of foot. Theirs is the task of thrusting back any sally through the rays before them and also to make their own sally upon the flank of the enemy. In the best quality soldiers then all rays can perform all duties at the command of the Captain. Surgeons and leeches are to be protected and held close.

## **FEINTS AND STRATAGEMS**

When faced with a general who has well trained and committed warriors then the use of stratagems becomes worthy of study. Whilst there be many variations, the essence is to strike with surprise and with strength enough to win in haste. Your intention must be hidden. Draw the enemy into sending his reserve. Strike at his flanks. Move you at a steady pace 'til the time for action and then do you hasten when the enemy general thinks he has thy measure. Thy soldiers

should remain close before revealing themselves, unless by their presence they will confound the enemy. Discoverers must be employed at all times with reports direct to the Great captain.

Keep thy advantage by forcing the foe to respond to your motives. Do thou make his line stand still so thou canst move thy reserves to a flank or weak portion of his array. Place seeming weak and scattered men in front of his most zealous warriors and draw them to charge at thy fleeing soldiers. Then both counter charge them and do thou send soldiers through the gap they create. Form in echelon and wait for his flank to turn and then attack. With a seeming strong force attack that which he holds dear then either attack where he doth weaken his own force or reinforce thy first attack. Place archers unto his rear. It may be that the enemy hath knowledge of these strategies in which case the master of the feint will win. The enemy will charge. Counter charge with the second ray when he be yet ten feet from the front ray. Each soldier to pass to the left of the soldier in front.

## Farewell

If you have read this far, then you are armed as well as any captain in the land. There remain many paths untrod in my missive and yet still there is enough guidance that a good captain may make his name great, if he follow my truths.

May all the saints and gods guide us and preserve us and if, in the press of battle, we should forget them then pray that they do not forget us.

## Walter Savage