



The rifle is growing bulkier as its uses increase

Indirect Fire from Springfields

A periscope attachment and a twenty-five-shot magazine are two of the important improvements

By Edward C. Crossman

PERISCOPE attachments for the rifle are an old story from the days of 1915 when Tommy Atkins put a rude contrivance of sticks and pocket mirrors on his Lee-Enfield and went to potting at the Germans across the way. Periscope, in case you've forgotten, means in this connection merely an arrangement of two mirrors,

one up in the line of sight on the barrel of the rifle, the other down at the level of the eye, well below the trench parapet, enabling the soldier to aim and fire the rifle while remaining far below the line of the barrel.

The new combination developed by our Army Ordnance Bureau is put on without permanent alteration of the rifle. Our Ordnance Officers look with jaundiced eye on anything for the rifle that entails machining or alteration of the gun.

The periscope is so mounted that the shooter can stand below the lip of the trench parapet, protected from the overhead fire of shrapnel, which is not true of all periscopes. Also it is so hung that the recoil of the rifle swings the lens away from the eye, instead of pushing the shooting optic all over the face as is the case with some periscopes. An extension enables the trigger to be pulled from the level of the shooter.

The second point is that the rifle is fitted with a twenty-five-shot magazine instead of the customary five shots of the service rifle. The change is made by merely sliding the present floor-plate out and sliding the top of the frame of the new magazine into its place. This enables a great number of shots to be fired without

taking the rifle down to reload. The Germans are said to have fitted up a number of their Mausers with these large capacity magazines some time ago. There is without doubt, much need for greater capacity than the present five-shot, clip-loading magazine.

The third novel point about the converted rifle is the use of translucent rear sight, colored red or green. The front sight is colored the one or the other of the contrasting colors—green when the rear sight is red, and vice-versa. The inventor, trying out his rifle in actual trench fighting, found that with the ordinary metallic sights, showing, of course, merely black in silhouette against a mark and hard to distinguish, the rifleman could not always define the objective, as the greenish uniform of the German soldiers did not throw them up in sharp relief. Often mist confused the issue still more. So he evolved the contrasting front sight, a vivid green or a violent red.

The advantage of the translucent slide is that it does not cover up the mark, and enables the rifleman to pick it up much more quickly than is possible when using the steel slide with the small aperture of the service rifle. This should prove very valuable in trench fighting.



The trigger is pulled from the level of the shooter by means of an extension mechanism