Introduction
The document presented here is a partial translation of a military treatise on the use of bladed weapons. It contains only Chapter II, which deals with fencing with the combination of klewang and carbine. The original treatise was published in the Dutch East Indies in 1937, and describes the instruction of troops mainly to fight against uprisings in the former Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). As such, it deals with defending against attackers armed with any weapons, varying from spears and knives to rifles and guns. Generally, the advise given is to defend the initial, wild attacks, and then to counter attack at the opportune moment.

The Dutch klewang (or marechaussée* sabre)
The klewang is a cutlass that was introduced to the Dutch troops in the Aceh War (1873 – 1913) via local troops. In 1898 it was officially added to the armament of the marechaussée (the Dutch Royal Marshals, a gendarmerie force performing military police and civil police duties.) units fighting in counter-insurgency warfare, which included a lot of man-to-man fighting. In this form of warfare, mobile troops armed with a klewang and a shorter carbine with bayonet were found to be more effective than traditional troops armed with a heavy rifle with bayonet.
In 1911, the klewang reached its (near-)final form, with a sabre-like hilt made of spring steel, and a short, curved, single-edged blade with clipped point. Though the Dutch klewang was named after the indigenous Indonesian klewang, it did not have much in common with these weapons. The klewang was used in its final form by the Dutch military until the 1950s, and is still part of the ceremonial armament of some units today.
Interestingly, the Dutch M1911 klewang is very similar to the American M1917 Naval Cutlass, which appears to have been derived from it.

Acknowledgements
Clasijn Witvliet provided the photographs of an original copy of this treatise in the collection of the Dutch Legermuseum (Army Museum) that are presented at the end of this translation. This translation was published with the kind permission of the Dutch Army Museum (www.legermuseum.nl).

References

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CHAPTER II.
FIGHTING WITH CARBINE AND MARECHAUSSEE SABRE.

A. Preparatory exercises without weapon.

The stance.

9. (1) During the initial instruction the stance is assumed from the attention.
(2) Co.: Stance == ONE (TWO).
Exec. Initially in two motions.
1st. Turn the left foot by rotating on the left heel to the left so that it comes to stand perpendicular to the original front direction and at the same time place the right foot approximately two foot lengths forward in the original front direction; the hands on the hips, the head remains in the original direction.
2nd. Keeping the body weight distributed over both legs, bend at both knees until the right knee comes over the hollow of the foot, while the left knee is brought a little forward; the body upright; the left shoulder back as much as possible; the right shoulder unforced; the head remains in the original direction (figures 1 and 2).
(3) Co.: front == ONE.
(4) Exec. Rotate to the front on the left heel and retake the attention.
(5) Remark: as soon as assuming the stance from the attention is well-known, the man is taught to quickly come into stance to an indicated front from arbitrary positions (sitting, lying, standing) and during the march.

The passes.

10. (1) Co.: step forwards (backwards, left, right) == ONE.
(2) Exec. Place the front (back, left, right) foot approximately a foot length in the ordered direction closely along the ground, and swiftly let the other foot follow the movement.
(3) With the pas forwards (backwards) the movement is initiated by a small though powerful stretching of the back (front) leg.

The jump backwards.

11. (1) Co.: jump backwards == ONE.
(2) Push off with both feet in backward direction, jump a few foot lengths backwards, and with that land in stance.
(3)

The turns.

12. (1) Co.: turn right (left) == ONE.
(2) Exec. On the ball of the front foot turn to the right (left), and let the back foot follow the movement at stance distance.
(3) The turns are practised to angles of various magnitudes up to the straight angle. The instructor will indicate the direction in which the pupils must arrive after the turn.
The lunge.

13. (1) Co.: lunge == ONE.
(2) Exec. Without elevating the body powerfully stretch the back leg and at the same time place the front foot forwards closely along the ground so far that the knee and the point of the foot arrive approximately perpendicularly above each other; the body, which follows the movement, arrives well-nigh in a straight line with the stretched leg; the head upright, the back foot flat on the ground.
(3) Co.: attention == ONE.
(4) Exec. While simultaneously bending the back leg and pushing off with the ball of the front foot, withdraw this to stance distance, at the same time bring the body upright.
(5) As soon as sufficient practice has been had, the lunge and the retaking of the stance are executed immediately after one another on the co.: lunge and back == MARCH.

14. (1) The passes, the jump backwards, the turns, and the lunge will be taught in the following way. After the man has learned to execute a pass, the jump backwards, a turn and the lunge, gradually proceed to combining these movements.
(2) The execution is done as follows:
1st. initially on the warning-co., followed by the execution-co.;
2nd. with greater proficiency only on the warning-co.;
3rd. finally the instructor, standing in front of the class, will execute a certain movement\(^1\), whereupon the personnel must make the opposite movement. Afterwards, the instructor takes apart those who reacted in an insufficient manner and lets the other students practice two by two opposite each other, whereby in turns one of the two has the lead.

\(^1\) Turns are not eligible for this.

B. Preparatory exercises with weapon.

The stance.

15. (1) During the initial instruction the stance is assumed from a starting position, which is taken from the attention with the carbine at the foot and raised marechaussée sabre.
Co.: starting position == assume.
(2) Exec.
1st. Lift the carbine as during the first motion of the presentation, though with the barrel to the right.
2nd. Release the left hand from the carbine and stick this forward between the carbine strap and the carbine, the palm of the hand down, the fingers extended forward, let the carbine strap rest on the wrist join, move the hand to the left until the carbine strap is stretched, with a screw motion going down to the left, loop the carbine strap around the wrist (figures 3 and 4).
3rd. Take hold of the carbine with the full left hand between visor and magazine (figure 5), bring the weapon to horizontal with the muzzle forward and the barrel turned on top, push the grip into the left hip with the left arm (figure 6).
4th. Draw the marechaussée sabre, after the wrist strap with tightened slider has been fastened around the right wrist; with drawn marechaussée sabre take the attention as after the com.: draw == out and SABRE. During this motion the left hand provides assistance if needed (figures 7 and 8).
(3) Co.: stance == ONE.
(4) Exec. Assume the stance as without weapon, bend the right arm such that the lower arm comes horizontal and the elbow is located ± one and a half hand width in front of the right side of the body; with the full right hand grasp the grip of the marechaussée sabre, adjoined against the guard, the blade with the edge forward diagonally to the right, the point at the height of and in front of the upper left side of the head. The wrist follows the movements of the lower arm in a natural way. While the left hand well-nigh stays in its place, lower the butt until the carbine comes straight up. During this raising turn the carbine around it’s long axis with a throwing motion until the barrel has come diagonally to the left, the butt such that the left thigh is protected in front. The left arm well-nigh bent right-angled with the hand behind and against the (left) cartridge pouch (figures 9 and 10).¹)

(5) Co.: front == ONE.

(6) Exec. Turn in front on the left heel and return to the starting position as indicated in section (1) 4th (figure 8).

16. (1) As soon as possible, though not before the stance is well-known, proceed to practicing:
1st. swiftly assuming the stance from different positions (shooting, sitting, resting, etc.) and from the marching a direction indicated by the instructor;
2nd. from the stance immediately obeying com. such as “with standing visor”, “forwards” and similar, without first reassuming the starting position.
(2) This instruction will initially take place in open class, and then in the terrain and adapted to circumstances that can occur in combat (see V.P.T.L.).
(3) Especially assuming the stance from the shooting positions, which find application on the field of battle, must be practised.
Remark: During this continued instruction it must be instilled to the troops, that the starting position specified in point 15 is the position in which man is ready the fastest to proceed to hand-to-hand fighting or to repel an attack with the bladed weapon. Therefore, when hand-to-hand fighting can be expected, marching must be done in that position as much as possible. However, in many instances meant in this point during the assuming of the stance it will be impossible to first loop the carbine rifle around the wrist. In those instances, the stance must be assumed with the carbine strap hanging loose.

The passes, the jump backwards, and the turns.

17. Com. and exec. as without weapon.

C. Defensive and offensive movements.

The parries.

18. (1) The purpose of the parries is to intercept the weapon of the opponent at a cut or to beat it out of direction at a thrust or stab, in order to deal a strike or stab (after-strike or after-stab) of oneself after one or more parries. To achieve this purpose a parry must be powerful and the cuts must be received on, the thrusts and stabs beaten away with the edge of that half of the sabre that is joined to the guard.
(2) In order to obtain this strong and correct receiving, the direction of the right lower arm with the wrist held stiff, as indicated in the specification of the stance, with all parries must be the same as that of the edge of the weapon.
(3) The parries must not take place too close to the body, as the counterpart may have striking weapons that whip around.
(4) For repelling lances and spears a small displacement of the sabre is already enough to bring these weapons out of direction; the parry must immediately be followed by shortening the distance to the opponent, and be accompanied by an after-cut (or after-stab).

Against an opponent armed with rifle (carbine) and bayonet is acted similarly, though the parry will have to be more powerful.

(5) The carbine is not actually used to parry with, as this can result in injuries to the left arm, which would offer the opponent opportunity to tear away the carbine. The carbine, held as is specified at the stance, only protects the left side of the body.

19. (1) Com.: 1st. parry low — left == ONE;
2nd. parry low— right == ONE;
3rd. parry right == ONE;
4th. parry left == ONE;
5th. parry high — right == ONE;
6th. parry high — left == ONE;
(2) Exec. 1st. The right arm bent with the forearm approximately horizontal at the height of the breast, the fist in front of the left side of the body, the edge of the downward pointing blade diagonally left to the front, the point a little more to the left than the hand and as low as possible. The movement takes place from the shoulder joint (figure 11).
2nd. The right arm lightly bent and well-nigh horizontal in front of the right side of the body, then hand a little lower than the elbow, the edge of the downward pointing blade diagonally right to the front, so that the forearm is covered behind the hilt, the point at the height of the knee and a little outside of the perimeter of the body (figure 12).
3rd. The right arm bent as in the stance, though moved to the right from the shoulder joint, so that the right part of the body above the hip and the right side of the head are covered against a cut (figure 13).
4th. The right arm bent as in the stance, though moved so much to the left from the shoulder joint, that the left side of the body above the hip, as well as the left side of the head are covered against a cut; the edge diagonally left to the front (figure 14).
5th. The right arm raised up from the shoulder joint and the arm well-nigh bent at a right angle, the elbow at the height of the shoulder; seen from the front the hand forms one vertical line with the lower arm, the edge diagonally forwards and up, the point of the weapon a little higher than the hand and so far to the left, that the upper side of the body is covered against a cut or strike (figure 15).
6th. The right are raised up diagonally to the left from the shoulder joint; the arm bent at a right angle; the hand a little outside of the left edge of the body and at the height of the top of the head; the point outside of the body to the right and higher than the hand, so that the upper side of the body is covered against a cut (figure 16).
(3) To return to the stance is the co.: stance == ONE.

Explanations
a. The described parries must be considered as standards. Depending on the direction of the cuts, the right hand must always be placed so that the cuts, stabs or thrusts are intercepted on with the edge of that half of the sabre that is joined to the guard;
b. As it can be expected that an opponent, especially if armed with a striking weapon, will make several consecutive attacks without thinking of his own defence, the instruction must be aimed at teaching to quickly execute several parries one after another, followed at the right time by an after-cut (after-stab);
c. The practice is first done against the instructor, for which he arms himself in turns with fencing rifle, fencing carbine no. 1 or fencing klewang, initially deals light and after obtained proficiency powerful thrusts, stabs or cuts and the pupils who are not on turn watch; afterwards the pupils practice in a corresponding manner against one another and to the directions of the instructor;
d. When practicing the parries one must especially watch that the wrist if kept stiff.
20. As soon as the parries are executed well, they are practised while at the same time making passes, a jump backwards, turns, and while returning to the stance from the lunge.

The avoiding.

21. (1) Avoiding is understood to mean the moving of one’s own body, such that the weapon of the opponent cannot hit this.
(2) Often, the avoiding is done by a jump or a pass backwards. Against thrusts or stabs a pass to the side can also find application.
(3) Because the weapon of the opponent will shoot past in the direction it has once been given, an opening will arise. A void can therefore be used to apply a cut.

The evasion.

22. (1) Evading is understood to mean the withdrawing of one’s own weapon from a beat aimed at it by the opponent.
(2) By evading the beat, the weapon of the opponent will shoot past, and a cut can be dealt (to his right arm).
(3) One must be wary, that the passing striking weapon of the opponent does not hit one’s own leg; if needed this will be withdrawn.

The cuts.

23. (1) Com.: 1st. cut right == ONE;
2nd. „, high right == ONE;
3rd. „, on top == ONE;
4th. „, high left == ONE;
5th. „, left == ONE;
(2) Ad. 1st. is dealt from left to right and aimed against the right side of the body of the opponent.
Ad. 2nd. is dealt from high left and aimed against the head, the neck or the right arm of the opponent.
Ad. 3rd. is dealt from above to below and aimed against the head or the shoulders of the opponent (figures 17 and 18).
Ad. 4th. is dealt from high right and aimed against the head, the neck, or the left arm of the opponent.
Ad. 5th. is dealt from right to left and aimed against the left side of the body of the opponent.
(3) Exec. Initially in 3 motions.
1st. The edge of the blade is turned in the direction of the cut by bringing the right arm to the body over a short distance from the shoulder joint, with which if needed the elbow is bent more than in the “stance”.
2nd. Make a powerful striking motion from the shoulder joint with the weapon arm in the direction of the edge of the blade, with which the arm is almost extended.
3rd. Pull back the weapon with a cutting motion, and reassume the stance.
(4) As soon as the motions are executed without errors, they will immediately follow upon one another.
(5) As the proficiency increases, the cuts will be combined with the lunge and with passes, the jump backwards or turns on the co.: lunge (pass forwards etc.) with cut right (high right, etc.) == march.
With this, the arrival of the cut has to coincide with the last part of the leg motion.
The stab.

24. (1) The stab is performed by powerfully extending the right arm, while the weapon is aimed with its point to the place that one wants to hit, and the edge is turned to the right.
(2) Because the direction of the stab is mainly determined by the position of the hand and of the arm, the thrust can either be dealt in a horizontal direction, or more upwards or more downwards, depending on the place that one wants to hit.
(3) Dealing a thrust will be exceptional, and will only be applied if one is so close to his opponent that the thrust can be dealt without a lunge.

The beat.

25. (1) The beat is a powerful sudden motion with one’s own blade against the weapon of the opponent, executed by a powerful movement of the forearm from the elbow- and shoulder joint, by which motion the weapon of the enemy is struck away.
(2) The beat is immediately followed by a cut, when the weapon of the opponent has been struck out of direction so that the opportunity to deal a cut without being hit oneself if open.
(3) The beat can be dealt with both the edge and the back of the weapon.

Leads for the instructor.

26. (1) During the instruction, the purpose must always be to capacitate the man for hand-to-hand fighting. Therefore, not too much time must be spent on a precise execution of the different movements such as passes, turns, etc. The main issue is, that the man learns to move quickly, and to react quickly. A precise execution of the stance, the parries and the cuts, however, should be demanded, so that the man learns to execute these motions correctly also under difficult circumstances.
(2) The motions to be practised are initially taught to the class, and divided into parts as much as possible. The instructor first shows the motions slowly, and afterwards they are slowly imitated by the pupil, with which attention must mainly be paid to the correctness of the execution. After this, the subsequent parts are combined, until the entire movement is practised in the correct way, after which the instructor will let two or more movements be practised one after the other.
(3) If sufficient skill has been attained in the execution of the different movements, the speed of execution is gradually increased, and finally as fast as possible execution is proceeded to. Further instruction occurs exclusively individually; while the pupils not practicing against the instructor practice the movements indicated by him on their own under the direction of an assistant instructor, who will let the movements that are already well-known be practised by the class and on command.
(4) The instructor will show a exposed place and make the pupil execute a cut indicated beforehand, which must be dealt quickly and powerfully. Once all existing cuts are properly and quickly dealt by the pupil, then the instructor will deal them to the pupil, by which he is taught to correctly perform the parries.
(5) After enough skill has been attained in these exercises, the pupil is dealt a number of cuts one after the other, which he must parry, and finally decide at the right moment to deal an after-cut.
(6) During these exercises, the com. are omitted; from the start the man must be taught to execute the required parries and to let these be followed immediately by a powerful after-cut, or the dealing of one or several cuts.
(7) In this manner, the fight, of man against man, as it will take place in reality, is imitated.
(8) As the armament of the opponent can be completely different, and amongst other things can exist of klewang, rifle with bayonet, lance (spear) with and without klewang, klewang with dagger (rentjong, kris,
badik), during the individual instruction the instructor will also act as opponent of the pupil with fencing gear corresponding with those.
(9) Then, both daring and trust in the own weapons will be instilled in the man, and he will not fear to enter combat with any opponent, regardless of what armament he carries.
(10) If the fight with the instructor is well executed, then the pupils will be posed against one another, with which must be watched with care that wrong movements are not adopted. Hereby, one of the troops is armed with fencing gear corresponding to the assumed armament of the opponent.
(11) From the start the troops are instilled not to look at the eyes but at the weapon (the weapons) of the opponent.

D. Exercises in hand-to-hand fighting.

27. (1) The exercises in hand-to-hand fighting are held in different terrains. In view of the surprise care must be taken that the place where the hand-to-hand fighting will take place is not known to the participants in advance.
(2) The distance, over which the attack will be executed, will be different in each exercise, so that the troops become used to repelling the attack with gunfire as much as possible and will only proceed to hand-to-hand fighting immediately during attacks at close range.

28. (1) The man must be taught to deal the cut to the most vulnerable place of the opponent, so that he can be disabled with one single cut.
(2) The most vulnerable places are: the neck, the face, the chest, the front hand and arm, the belly, the flank, the thighs.
However, the opponent armed with a rifle will generally be less vulnerable in the belly area due to all the leather gear.

29. (1) The armament of the opponent will always be varied.
(2) Of the opponent armed with a rifle with bayonet the front hand is the easiest to hit. If a dealt thrust can be avoided, then the distance to the opponent is immediately after that shortened such that it is not possible for him to use his rifle as a thrusting weapon. Otherwise it is attempted to strike the bayonet away directed diagonally downward and immediately after that shorten the distance and deal a cut.
(3) It is necessary, that much attention is especially given to fighting against an opponent armed with rifle and bayonet.
(4) If the opponent is armed with a lance, then during hand-to-hand fighting the tip of the lance is avoided or struck diagonally downward or upward, by which the opponent is prevented from immediately using the lance.

30. (1) It is to be recommended that after having practised the fight of man against man, two or more troops are posed against an equal number, afterwards to make one man fight against two troops and finally groups of unequal strength against each other.
(2) During the exercise in hand-to-hand fighting with groups the troops are taught, to, in addition to their own opponent, also pay attention to what happens to the right and to the left of them, both to be prepared to be attacked by other opponents from those sides, and if possible to be able to speed to the aid of their comrades.

Leads for the instructor.

31. (1) The instruction must be aimed at teaching the man to disable his opponent as quickly as possible. But he must also be taught, that he must prevent being hit himself. Especially when he himself is not the
attacker, but is awaiting the onrushing opponent, he must be aware, that the firearm must be used for as long as possible, to only afterwards parry the attack with the marechaussée sabre and seize the first opportunity which he is offered to disable the opponent with an after-cut.

In this way he will have to be taught emphatically, that the first series of fast cuts and stabs of the indigenous enemy must first be parried, after which a powerful after-cut (after-stab) must always be dealt as soon as possible and at the right moment. Trying to strike at the same time with the enemy will almost certainly result in injury of oneself, even if the enemy is struck lethally.

(2) Hand-to-hand fighting is initially practised in the gymnasium or on the parade ground. In order to familiarise the troops with the fact that combat does not always take place on level terrain, to imitate that, benches can be placed, over which must be jumped before the hand-to-hand fighting can be proceeded to. The trenches in the encampment and slumps in the terrain are perfect for indicating that one party stands lower than the other.

The ditch, the earthwork and the low palisade of the obstacle course can also be employed for said purpose.

Fighting should not always be practised on dry terrain; for a change it should also be practised on marshy terrain. In the latter terrains one has to take into account that as a result of the slipperiness of the ground after a powerful parry the after-cut is not dealt correctly repeatedly and that the softness of the ground greatly impedes the moving of the feet.

(3) During the execution of the cuts the instructor will pay attention in particular to the accuracy, speed and power; increases of the speed must not be allowed to come at the expense of accuracy and force. As soon as errors are noticed they must be corrected.

The exercises must gradually be increased in hardness.

32. Hand-to-hand fighting is practised on targets (husked coconuts, banana branches, sacks, dolls, and similar), between two or more opponents and between two groups.

Examples.

On targets.

1. Strike through a banana branch of ± 15 cm thickness with one cut indicated by the instructor. The place where the cut must be dealt is indicated by two sticks stuck into the branch at 10 cm from each other. Initially the cut is made from the stance, later combined with a lunge, passes, a jump backwards, turns, parries, invading the enemy’s position, overcoming obstacles, etc. The exercise can be made harder by placing a man behind the banana branch, provided with a thin bamboo which sticks out 1.5 m in front of the branch, by which the pupil is obliged to strike away the bamboo before dealing the cut. With this the instructor can provoke a certain parry or beat with cut.

2. From the stance deal a cut indicated by the instructor on coconuts in their husk, which are hung at different heights for this purpose. The exercise can be made harder, by bringing the coconuts to a swinging motion and otherwise as indicate in the first example.

3. Dummies or sacks, filled with straw, are set up in different positions, or hung at different heights. To be able to judge the accuracy of the cut the place where the cut must be dealt is indicated on the sacks while on the dummies the supposed most vulnerable places are indicated. By placing several dummies or sacks behind or next to each other or pell-mell, and by making them be cut as fast as possible, by means of a time meter the speed with which the cuts are dealt can be measured.

4. It is to be recommended, that exercises such as meant under 3 are held following an exercise in invading the enemy’s position, for which a worked out example follows.

Uniform: battle dress fully packed with carbine and fencing klewang.
Target: 4 sacks filled with straw and hung with space between of 2 to 3 m zakken. Bands are applied onto the sacks at different heights with a spacing of 15 cm, between which the cuts must be dealt. Behind each sack a man is set up, with the front to the pupil and provided with a bamboo, which sticks out 1.5 m in front of the sack (for example no. 1 right, no. 2 left, no. 3 high left, no. 4 low left of the sack).

Terrain: level terrain with obstacles or embankments of 80 cm high or ditches of 2 m wide.

Exercise: as fast as possible pass through a distance of 100 m, whereby obstacles must be overcome, after that deal a cut to each sack, after having first struck the bamboo from the direction by a parry or beat.

Time: 30 seconds.

Allotment of points: for each well dealt cut 2 points, for each poorly dealt cut, each obstacle not overcome easily and for each second above 30, one point is subtracted.

Remark: the targets can also be set up with a spacing of 25 m, the first target must be reached after 25 m of running.

### Between two opponents.

On the ground a rectangle is drawn with sides of 5 and 10 m, the space within the rectangle represents the terrain where the hand-to-hand fighting must take place.

Positioned at 10 m outside the short sides of the rectangle, the opponents will move toward the delimited terrain at a run on the co. of the instructor. After the first hit or 10 seconds after one of the opponents has entered the terrain for the fight, if a hit has not been obtained before that time, the fighting is ceased at the co. of the instructor.

### Between two groups.

Uniform: battle dress without leather gear, with fencing equipment.

Assistant leaders: for every 2 troops that participate in the exercise, one assistant leader is assigned.

1st exercise: a patrol of 4 men searches a given strip of terrain and is waylaid by a group of 4 opponents lying in ambush, armed with fencing klewang.

Course of the exercise: everyone who is hit by a cut (stab), ceases fighting on his own initiative or at the behest of a referee, while 10 seconds after the start of the hand-to-hand fight, the exercise is concluded on the co. of the instructor.

2nd exercise: a patrol of 4 men stalks an enemy patrol observed in the terrain armed with fencing rifles. At a certain moment, it turns out that both patrols have approached each other so closely that shooting is no longer possible, and the patrols have to proceed to hand-to-hand fighting.

Course of the exercise: everyone who is hit by a cut or thrust (stab), ceases fighting on his own initiative or at the behest of an assistant leader, while 10 seconds after the start of the hand-to-hand fight, the exercise is concluded on the co. of the instructor.

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1) In an earlier section of the treatise the following is stated: “7. Of those armed with the marechaussée sabre and those with marechaussée sabre and pistol, the left hand, either unarmed or provided with the pistol, is kept behind the body.”

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