

E • LIEV TENENT.

LE • PR



Henry de Saint Didier

Peek inside

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[Introductory Essay]

Here follows the secrets of the sword alone and of all the other arms which depend upon it, which to understand, and above all to better execute, six points are required.

The first is how many stances there are in all the art of arms and to select the best and give the explanation for it.

The second, how many guards and positions there are with the weapons and how to select the best and for what reason.

The third, with how many strikes can the enemy aggressor attack the defender and give the explanations for them.

The fourth, to how many targets¹ on the person can the strikes be applied, both in attack and defence.

The fifth, for all those who make or will make hereafter a living of demonstrating swordplay, to know how to defend oneself or to attack in a single tempo whatever strike or strikes one can throw. Thus, if they do not know, how they can show it to their pupils?

In the sixth point, which is the last, one will see a great secret, which is to determine the strikes that the attacker may make on the defender and explain the reason for it.

Regarding the first point about knowing how many stances there are, I answer that there are only two because we have only two feet.

Some people hold themselves on the right foot, others on the left foot. However, to give a very brief explanation, either one stands on one foot or on the other. But in order to be assured when one needs to draw a sword,² it is necessary to know which of the two feet is the best and the most certain and superlative and on which of them, as stated, it is necessary to stand to execute the art.

According to me, I support with experience and evidence that the stance which is done standing on the left foot at first in drawing the sword is the most certain

1. lit: appropriate places

2. lit: put the sword in the fist

Here follows the first strike of this sword alone for the attacking Lieutenant against the defending Provost.

[Images 15.16]

And in order to do this, the following Lieutenant, having made the step back and one of the three drawing (of the sword), should be stood on the left foot as in the illustration above marked number 13. And in order to do and execute this first strike of the sword alone, the Lieutenant will advance the right foot, being in the guard marked 13, and will throw a low *maindroit* to the Provost's left knee, raising the guard of the sword nearly as high as the left shoulder, lowering well the point of the sword downwards in order to do more perfectly this *maindroit* to the knee, holding the left hand as is shown above in the illustration of the Lieutenant marked number 15.

Thus the end of the first strike of this sword alone for the attacking Lieutenant against the defending Provost.

Hereafter is explained how the Provost has defended his knee and has thrown a maindroit across the Lieutenant's arm.

And in order to do this, the Provost, being on the left foot and having made one of the three draws (unsheathings), guards and positions, is stood in the guard marked number 14 above. The Provost, in order to execute correctly, to defend and to attack at the same time this low *maindroit*, throws his left foot backwards and throws a *maindroit* across the Lieutenant's sword arm and not as ignorant instructors do who cross sword against sword when a cut comes low. That is good because one defends oneself by it but this strike is better because, by this, one defends oneself and also one attacks, and for two good reasons, I counsel you to take the better option as this Provost does in executing this strike, holding his left hand as is shown in the illustration marked number 16.

Thus the defence of the low maindroit to the knee defended by the Provost against the Lieutenant.

Here follows the first opposition and follow-up of the first strike which is for the attacking Lieutenant and for the defending Provost.

[Images 17.18]

And in order to do this, the Lieutenant is still on the right foot, having thrown the low *maindroit* at the knee and the Provost has thrown at him at the same time a *maindroit* to the sword arm as is noted above for the Lieutenant number 15 and for the Provost 16. This Lieutenant, being still on the right foot and seeing himself hit with a *maindroit* on the sword arm, has immediately raised and carried his sword upwards and thrown a backhand on the side of the Provost's right shoulder, holding the fingernails of the Lieutenant's right hand looking to the left side and holding his left hand directly before his face as is shown here above in the illustration marked number 17 behind his throat.

The end of the first opposition of the first strike of this sword alone for the Lieutenant.

Hereafter will be explained the defence of the first opposition and follow-up for the Provost against the Lieutenant.

And in order to evade and guard himself from this first follow-up, which is a backhand from above, having thrown a *maindroit* on the Lieutenant's arm, as is shown above in his illustration noted with the Lieutenant's number 15 and with the Provost who executes the *maindroit* noted with number 16. The Provost, being on the right foot in order to guard himself and defend against this first opposition, will cross the Lieutenant's sword, strong on weak, threatening a thrust to the Lieutenant's face and will hold the Provost's left hand near his breast as is shown above in his illustration noted with number 18.

The end of the first opposition and follow-up for the Provost, being himself well defended against this, opposing the Lieutenant.

Here follows the second opposition and follow-up for the Lieutenant and Provost from the first strike of this sword alone, which is a maindroit.

[Images 19.20]

And in order to correctly do and complete this second follow-up by the Lieutenant, he should be still on the right foot. Having done the second¹¹ opposition and follow-up and having seen that the Provost has defended himself, the Lieutenant again for this second follow-up has stolen his sword under the guard of the Provost's sword and has thrown a high *maindroit* at the Provost, holding the top of the sword hand downwards and the fingers upwards and the left hand

11. ed: first?



Images 13 and 14, 15 and 16



Images 17 and 18, 19 and 20

[Jeu de Paulme and Swordsmanship]

Here follows a treatise on the practice of and certain points required to know about the game of tennis for all those who love it, composed by the author, considering that it requires the same stance and understanding, the same strikes as swordsmanship,¹ as will be shown here in this treatise, written² by the author because of the affinity and sympathy they have together, both for counselling and instructing³ the unlearned and those who do not understand the terms of this exercise and not for the learned and skilful.

The author considers that tennis and swordsmanship are very close first cousins, as was said above, and whoever well knows how to play tennis easily can learn to throw sword strikes and their oppositions. But one, which is swordsmanship, merits more than the other because it preserves the health and honour of those who fear to lose them. Someone could ask why swordsmanship and tennis are first cousins. The author responds to this and says that the same strikes that one throws in swordplay in order to vanquish his enemy in times of peace or of war are the same strikes one can use to vanquish his competitor⁴ when he wants to compete⁵ for winning himself money or glory,⁶ which are:

- *Maindroit*
- *Renvers*
- Thrust

Well is it true that one of these strikes should be removed, which is the thrust, and only two will remain, which are:

- *Maindroit*
- *Renvers*

The reason why I remove the thrust is, considering the racket has no point, thus one cannot know how to thrust.

It is true that sometimes one makes a strike and beat-away⁷ with the racket

1. *armes*

2. lit: made

3. *bailler advisement & instruction*

4. *sa partie adverse*

5. lit: make some match

6. *quelque banquet* - lit: a seat at the table