

MANUAL EXERCISE

"Let us reflect a little to what we ought to reduce the Manual Exercise; that the Battalion should perform nothing but what is essential: The principle object of the Manual Exercise ought to be this, viz.

To inform the Soldier how to load in the most expeditious way;

2dly, To keep up his Fire or make his Discharge as Occasion shall offer;

3dly, To accustom him never to fire without Command, or taking a proper aim, so as not to throw away his Ammunition without doing Execution, which frequently happens to Troops who are not trained in this manner;

4thly, To make him fire at a Mark against a Wall, or Target, that he may know what progress he makes: This expense is very small, yet necessary, and all else of little consequence.

Most Regiments have a peculiar Method of their own, which must necessarily be, when they have no fixed and written Regulations to reform their different Opinions.

Our Exercises ought to have no other View than to render the Troops disciplined, and trained to perform all their Evolutions, to act offensively or defensively in all situations and places:

It is to this they ought only to be attached, and they should omit every thing that is superfluous: It is this Instruction and Ability of performing the different Movements, that distinguishes regular Veteran Troops from Militia."

From: "*Traite de la Guerre*" by Marechal Puysegur, and quoted from The Cadet, A Military Treatise by an Officer, London, 1756



*Ed. Note: Variations in drill existed in the 18th Century. Simes, Bland, Pickering and others wrote many articles, treatises, and books on the subject. More recently, Col. Vincent J.R. Kehoe (lately of H.M. recreated 10th Reg^t) and Steven Eames (recreated 64th, Loyalists, 71st Reg^{ts}) have compiled excellent studies of the drill of the British Army during the Revolution. Many others with much more zeal than scholarship have argued various points. The end conclusion is that variations existed then - and do so now. This manual is in no way an attempt to specify "**THE TRUTH**" but rather to set forth how some have decided to set standards for today's organizational interpretation. Common practice over several years, convenience and, most importantly, safety considerations have caused modifications. I will try to point out deviations from the actual exercise, but must point out that my own opinions are, like those of any other reader of the originals, subject to interpretation.*

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**THE
MANUAL EXERCISE
AS ORDERED BY HIS MAJESTY
IN 1764
TOGETHER WITH
PLANS AND EXPLANATIONS,
Of the Method Generally
Practiced
by
The 4th Company
Brigade of Guards
In America**



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The +r} thing to be done in training of young Soldier<, i< to give them a free and easy carriage; to >ew them well upon their limb<, and totally to expel the clown from their Gait and Air; it mu} be rendered familiar to every man to hold up hi< head; to }and quite upright and motionles<; to ca} hi< eye< to the right, without the lea} appearance of a formal }i@nes<, and to turn out hi< Toe<, to march `rm upon hi< Feet, keeping hi< Knee< Sti@, turning out and pointing hi< Toe< at the same time, to keep hi< body }raight without leaning backward<, or pu>ing out hi< belly; to bring forward hi< che}; and to draw hi< >oulder< back: to face to the right and left, and quite about, both }anding and marching; to wheel in a proper manner, and to march in #ow and quick time: in all of which, Recruit< >ould be perfe{ly in}ru{ed and well trained, before they are allowed

to touch a Firelock.

Cuthbertson's System for the Complete Interior Management and Economy of a BATTALION OF INFANTRY, a New Edition, with Corrections; BRISTOL, 1776. Chapter XXVIII, Article II.



MANUAL EXERCISE

"The 35 Count"

1. POISE YOUR FIRELOCKS
2. COCK YOUR FIRELOCKS
3. PRESENT
4. FIRE
5. HALF COCK YOUR FIRELOCKS
6. HANDLE YOUR CARTRIDGE
7. PRIME
8. SHUT YOUR PANS
9. CHARGE WITH CARTRIDGE
10. DRAW YOUR RAMMERS
11. RAM DOWN YOUR CARTRIDGE
12. RETURN YOUR RAMMERS
13. SHOULDER YOUR FIRELOCKS
14. REST YOUR FIRELOCKS
15. ORDER YOUR FIRELOCKS
16. GROUND YOUR FIRELOCKS
17. TAKE UP YOUR FIRELOCKS
18. REST YOUR FIRELOCKS
19. SHOULDER YOUR FIRELOCKS
20. SECURE YOUR FIRELOCKS
21. SHOULDER YOUR FIRELOCKS
22. FIX YOUR BAYONETS
23. SHOULDER YOUR FIRELOCKS
24. PRESENT YOUR ARMS
25. TO THE RIGHT FACE
26. TO THE RIGHT FACE
27. TO THE RIGHT ABOUT FACE
28. TO THE LEFT FACE
29. TO THE LEFT FACE
30. TO THE LEFT ABOUT FACE
31. SHOULDER YOUR FIRELOCKS
32. CHARGE YOUR BAYONETS
33. SHOULDER YOUR FIRELOCKS
34. ADVANCE YOUR ARMS
35. SHOULDER YOUR FIRELOCKS

Position of a Soldier under Arms,

"To stand straight and firm upon his leg; Head turned to the Right; Heel close; Toe a little turned out; the Belly drawn in a little, but without Constraint; the Breast a little projected; Shoulder square to the front, and kept back; the Right-hand hanging straight down the Side, with the Palm close to the Thigh; the left Elbow not to be turned out from the Body; the Firelock to be carried on the left Shoulder, as low down as can be admitted without Constraint; the three last Finger under the butt; the Fore-finger and Thumb before the Swell; the Flat of the Butt to be supported against the Hip Bone, and to be prepared so that the Firelock may be felt against the left side, and that it may stand before the Hollow of the Shoulder, not leaning toward the Head nor from it; the Barrel almost perpendicular.

To be very exact in counting a Second of Time, or One - Two, between each Motion."

Note: The firelock should be at half-cock with the hammerstall on. Bayonets should **not** be fixed unless a previous order to the contrary has been issued.

THIS IS THE POSITION FROM WHICH THE DRILL BEGINS.

Ed. Note: This is the position of "attention." It is the position the soldier should always assume upon falling into line. There should be no talking or superfluous movement when in ranks while in this posture.

*One of the most important characteristics that sets a soldier apart from a costumed civilian is the intangible called "bearing" or, in the 18th century, "air." You will notice it in real soldiers. It is manifested in the carriage of the body - erect, head high (not looking at the ground or the feet), firm steps, **silence**. Most reenactors fail miserably to exhibit military bearing - and therefore never make convincing soldiers, but as Cuthbertson said, manifest the clown*



TIMING FOR EXERCISE:

Each count should be very exact, allowing a full second of time, or the count "One-and-Two" between each motion of the Exercise.

Positions 1 through 13 deal with the formal firing sequence starting at the **Shoulder** position, musket loaded - ending at the **Shoulder** position, musket loaded.

Positions 24 through 31 deal with formal facings beginning at the **REST**. Facing orders given while troops are at the **Shoulder** are executed the same as without arms. The arms should remain shouldered throughout the facing movements.

(Preparatory Command - Command of Execution {emphasis})

1. POISE your - FIRELOCKS

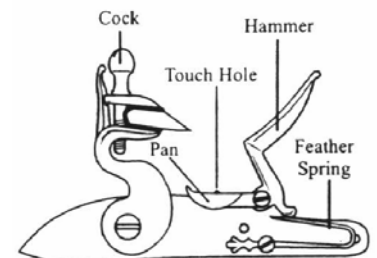
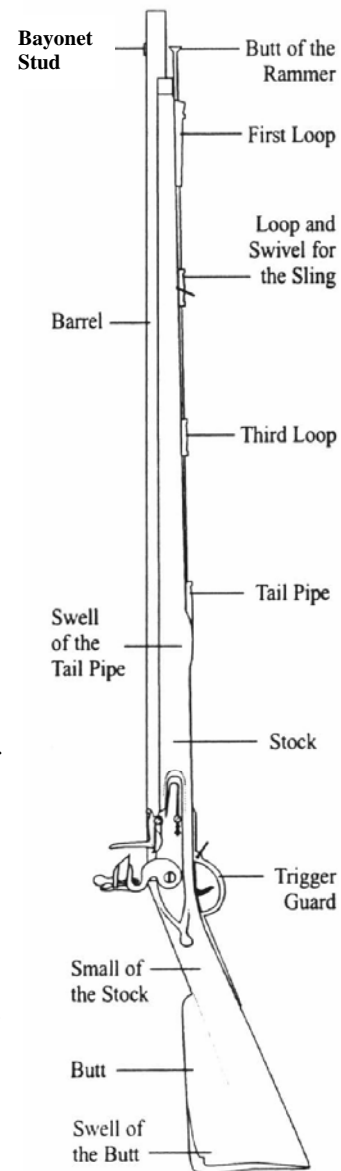
1. Seize the firelock with your right hand at the small (wrist of the stock) as you turn the lock toward the front (the way you are facing), keeping the firelock perpendicular (straight up and down).

2. Bring up the firelock with a quick motion from the shoulder, and seize it with the left hand, just above the lock, so that the fingers grip the stock, elbows down, the left hand little finger resting upon the featherspring (hammer spring), the thumb gripping the stock; the firelock must not be held too far from the body, and the left hand must be of equal height with the eyes. The musket must be directly in front of the face. You should be looking over your left index finger **which is at eye level**. The firelock should be about one "fist" distance from the chest.

2. COCK your - FIRELOCKS

1. Turn the barrel towards your face, and place your right thumb upon the cock (*sometimes mistakenly called the hammer*), raising the elbow square at this motion.

2. Cock your firelock, by drawing your elbow down, leaving your thumb on the cock screw until the following command. As soon as the flashguard is safely pointed upward the thumb may be removed from the cock and you may grip normally.



The above illustration is provided for reference. Note the nomenclature of the various components and parts of the musket

3. PRE - SENT

1. Step back about six inches to the rear with the right foot, the toe pointing to the right, bringing the body around, keeping the left toe to the front; at the same time the butt end of the firelock must be brought tightly against the meat of the shoulder (ball), placing the left hand on the swell, and the fore-finger of the right hand on the trigger, raising the muzzle to a safe position in the air. (*Ed. Note: For safety reasons it is extremely important to hold the weapon **firmly** against the shoulder when firing - even with blanks. Hold it level unless ordered otherwise or you see a safety problem.*)



Drawing by Eric Schnitzer

NOTE: for position of ranks in **Present**, see **RAPID FIRE** instructions.

4. FIRE

1. Pull the trigger briskly (make sure your musket fired!), and immediately after bring the right foot up even with the left, come to the priming position, with the lock in front of the right breast, the muzzle even with the hat brim, keeping firm and steady. At the same time seize the cock (*top jaw screw*) with the fore-finger and thumb of the right hand, the back of the hand turned up.

NOTE: for position of ranks in **Fire**, see **RAPID FIRE** instructions.

5. HALF COCK your - FIRELOCKS

1. Briskly bring the cock back to the first stop (click) with a draw back of the right elbow, bringing the elbow close to the butt of the firelock.
2. Firmly grasp the firelock with the right hand at the small (*wrist of the stock*).

6. HANDLE your - CARTRIDGE

1. Bring your right hand with a short motion round to your cartridge pouch, slapping it hard; open it and seize the cartridge, and bring it with a quick motion to your mouth; bite the top well off and bring the hand even with the chin, with the elbow out. (*Ed. Note: Tap the powder down with your fingers as you bring the cartridge up. Bite as close to the powder as possible without eating any. Squeeze the cartridge a bit to help open the bit end.*)

7. PRIME

1. Shake a little powder into the pan, placing the last three fingers behind the hammer, with the cartridge held by the thumb and fore-finger. Do not overfill the pan (half-full is plenty). Too much powder in the pan can clog the touch hole and cause misfires. It can also prevent the hammer from closing properly over the pan resulting in lost priming as you complete the loading process.

8. SHUT - PANS

1. Shut your pan briskly, by drawing the right elbow to the right, holding the cartridge fast in your hand, as in the former position.

2. With the left hand, turn the piece nimbly round to the loading position with the lock to the outside. The barrel should be down, and the muzzle the height of the chin. Firmly hold with the left hand, at the same time bring the right hand with cartridge to the muzzle. Both feet must be kept in place during this motion.

9. CHARGE with - CARTRIDGE

1. Turn up your hand and put the open end of the cartridge into the muzzle, quickly shaking the powder into the barrel. If loading with live ball, insert the ball and paper into the muzzle. (Ed. Note: Make sure your fingers **never** get in front of the muzzle where an accidental discharge could hurt you. **Do NOT insert the paper cartridge in the muzzle.**)

2. Sharply throw away the empty cartridge paper with a quick motion of the right hand and arm. (Ed. Note: Some sites require you to pocket your empty cartridge to avoid litter and prevent "gleaning" by spectators. It's both a safety and aesthetics issue.)

3. Place your right hand, closed, with a quick and strong motion, upon the rammer, with the rammer between the thumb and fore-finger just below the head. (Ed. Note: The palm of the hand should be forward - away from the face. This "back handed" motion prevents the hand from being placed above the muzzle of a loaded musket. The rammer should be started up from the pipes, but not more than 2".)

10. DRAW your - RAMMERS

1. Draw the rammer with a quick motion; half out, seizing it again at the muzzle back-handed in a two count movement.

2. Draw it out, turn it around, and enter the flared (large) end into the muzzle. If loaded with ball, push it down about 2 to: inch into the muzzle to give a good start. (Ed. Note: The drawing of the rammer is a **two count** movement! Done properly, it looks sharp. Otherwise it is a wretched fumbling. **The head should remain erect** throughout the process.)

11. RAM DOWN your - CARTRIDGE

1. Ram the cartridge well down the barrel, with a quick motion, instantly recovering and seizing it back-handed at the center, turning it about and entering it as far as the lower pipe, placing at the same time the edge of the hand on the butt end of the rammer so as to keep the hand from being over the muzzle, with the fingers extended.

12. RETURN your - RAMMERS

1. Return the rammer with a quick motion of the hand, bringing up the piece with the left hand to the shoulder, seizing it with the right hand behind the cock, keeping the left hand fast at the swell, keeping your body square to the front. The trigger guard should be in your left armpit.

13. SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Release with the left hand and with it grasp the butt of the musket.

2. Release with the right hand and bring it straight down the right side. (*Ed. Note: The position of **SHOULDER your FIRELOCKS** is the normal position for carrying the musket on the march. To rest the troops, this may be varied by marching at the **SUPPORT, ADVANCE, TRAIL, or SLOPE ARMS** position.*)

14. REST your - FIRELOCKS

1. Same as Poise

2. Same as Poise

3. Step briskly back with your right foot, placing it at a slight angle a hand's breath distance from your left heel (*not a big step!*), at the same time bring down the firelock, as quick as possible to your Rest, sinking it down as far in front of the left knee as your right hand will permit without stretching; your left little finger on the feather spring; and your right hand with fingers extended held under the guard, taking care to draw in the muzzle well toward your body, and to dress in a line with the butt end. The firelock should be about a "fist" distance in front of the chest. (*Ed. Note: It is important that the barrel be held as straight up and down as possible - and as still as possible.*)



15. ORDER your – FIRELOCKS

1. Nimble place your firelock against your right shoulder with your left hand.

2. Release the firelock with the right hand, and sinking the firelock at the same time with your left, seize it at the muzzle, while holding it close against your right side.

3. Lift up your right foot, and place it by your left. At the same time throw back your left hand by your left side, and with your right bring down the butt end to the ground, placing it even with

the toe of your right foot; the thumb of your right hand lying upon the bayonet stud, and the muzzle kept at a little distance from the body.

16. GROUND your – FIRELOCKS (from the **Order** position only)

1. Face (turn) 1/2 to the right (about 45 degrees) by turning the right foot upon the heel, and at the same time turn the firelock so that the lock points to the rear, and the flat of the butt-end lies against the inside of your foot, at the same time slipping the right foot behind the butt, the right toe pointing to the right and the left toe to the front.
2. Step directly forward with your left foot, about as far as the swell of the firelock, while sliding the right hand down the barrel, and lay it upon the ground, your left hand supporting your accoutrements, and your right foot kept fast with the butt-end of your firelock against it.
(*Ed. Note: It is important to keep your head erect while doing this.*)
3. Raise yourself up again nimbly, bringing back your left foot to its former position, keeping your body facing to the right.
4. Turn 1/2 again to the left (so as to come to your proper front) keeping both hands against the sides and without motion.

17. TAKE UP your - FIRELOCKS

1. Turn 1/2 to the right upon the heel of the right foot.
2. Sink your body down and come to the position described in motion #2 of **Grounding**, and grasp the firelock about the swell.
3. Raise yourself and the firelock, bringing it close to your right side while sliding the right hand up the barrel to the proper position with the thumb upon the bayonet stud.
4. Come to your proper front, turning the firelock at the same time and coming to the Order.
(*Ed. Note: Movements 16 and 17 should be timed according to the individuals to your right.*)

18. REST your - FIRELOCKS

1. Slip your right hand down the barrel as far as the swell.
2. Raise the firelock high up in a perpendicular line from the ground with your right hand, using the lower part of the arm only (elbow stays in place) and seize the firelock with the left hand above the spring, the cock the height of the waist-belt.
3. Step back with your right foot, placing it behind the left heel, while bringing the firelock across to the rest position and dropping the right hand to below the trigger guard and grasping the small in the proper manner.

19. SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Release with the left hand and place it strongly upon the musket butt while turning the firelock with the right hand, as you sink the piece to the proper position.
2. Release with the right hand, and throw it down to the right side.

20. SECURE your - FIRELOCKS (Only done in single or open ranks.)

1. Bring your right hand up, and place it under the cock; keep the firelock steady.
2. Release the left hand from the butt of the musket, and seize it at the swell, bringing the elbow close down upon the lock; the right hand kept fast in this motion, and the piece upright.
3. Bring the firelock carefully and briskly down to Secure; left hand below the level of waist belt.
4. Release with the right hand, and bring it down to the right side.

21. SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Bring the firelock briskly up to a straight line, seizing it (on 2) with the right hand under the cock.
2. Release the left hand and grip the butt of the firelock strongly.
3. Release the right hand, and bring it smartly down to the right side.

22. FIX your – BAYONETS (A **most** important movement!!)

1. Bring the right hand briskly up, and place it under the cock, keeping the firelock steady.
2. Release the left hand, and seize the firelock with it above the swell, bringing the elbow close upon the lock.
3. Release the right hand, and bring the firelock smartly down to the left side with the left hand, as far as it go comfortably; seize the bayonet at the same time with the right hand.
4. Withdraw the bayonet with some flair. (See note)
5. Fix it quickly upon the barrel.



Drawing by John Wright

*(Ed. Note: We draw the bayonet smartly, extending the right arm fully to the front and elevated to flourish the bayonet. If drawn properly and held with the **blade and shank down**, it may be drawn and fixed in five crisp motions. If not done correctly, as with drawing rammers, this movement can display grotesque fumbling.)*

6. Place the right hand below the bayonet sleeve, with the right fore-finger up to it, bringing the muzzle close to the hollow of the shoulder and the right elbow even with the hand; the palm flat towards the barrel.

23. SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Raise the firelock to the Shoulder position while the right hand grasps the small.
2. Release the left hand and firmly grip the musket butt.
3. Release the right hand and drop it smartly to the right side.

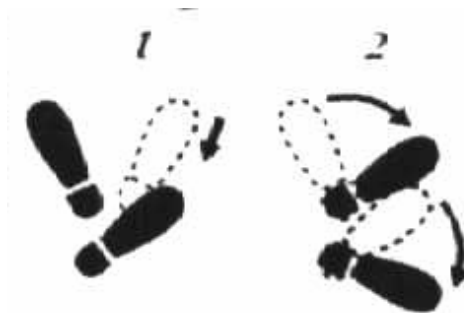
24. PRESENT your - ARMS

Same as **Rest your Firelocks** (Movement #14)

(Ed. Note: On ALL facing movements, the left foot should remain in place. Pivot on the HEELS not the toes. This is different from modern drills. At the end of the exercise, if on grass, you should have dug a neat hole under your left heel.)

25. TO THE RIGHT FACE (from the REST!)

1. Bring up the firelock to the position of **Poise your - FIRELOCK!**
2. Carry back the right foot until the hollow of it is behind the left heel, and close to it (#1 below).
3. Pivoting on the heels, turn to the right and step back with your right foot (#2 below) and come down to your Present.

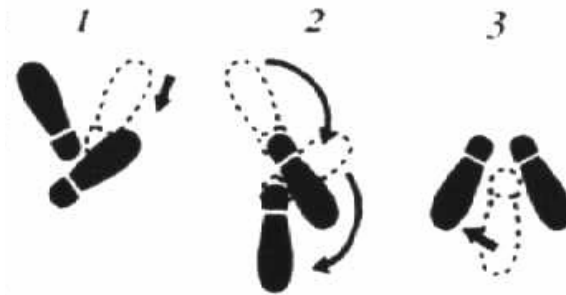


26. TO THE RIGHT FACE

Same as above

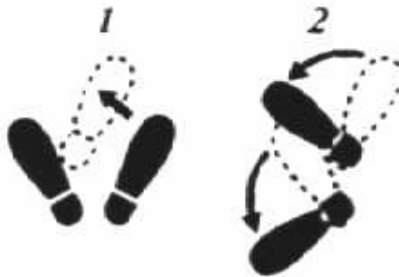
27. TO THE RIGHT ABOUT FACE (from the **REST!**)
(This is a complete 180° turn to the rear.)

1. Place the right foot behind the left heel (#1 below).
2. Turn right on the heels until they face to the rear (#2 below).
3. Bring the right foot up to the proper position, placing the heel close and even to the left heel (#3 below)



28. TO THE LEFT FACE

1. Bring the right foot briskly to the hollow of your left, with the firelock in the same position as in the first motion of facing to the right (#1 below).
2. Face to the left (#2 below)
3. Come down to your Present.

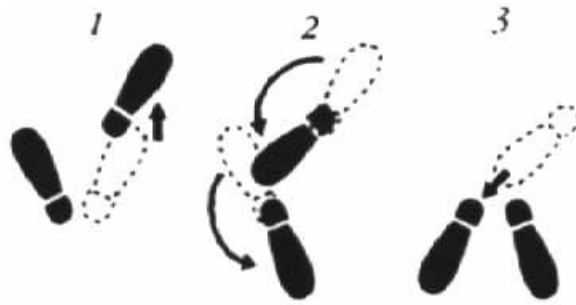


29. TO THE LEFT - FACE

As before

30. TO THE LEFT ABOUT - FACE

This is a three-count movement. Place the right foot forward so that the heel is even with the toes of the left foot (#1 below). Turn around to the left, pivoting on your heels (#2 below). When facing to the rear, reposition the right foot to bring it in line with the left. You should be facing back to the front as you were at the beginning of the exercise.



31. SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Release with the left hand and place it strongly on the musket butt while turning the firelock with the right hand, as you sink the piece to the proper position.
2. Release the right hand, and bring it smartly down to the right side

32. CHARGE your - BAYONETS

1. Same as in the first position of POISE.
2. (Front Rank) Bring the swell of the firelock down upon the palm of the left hand, the right foot at the same time being smartly placed behind the left as in **Rest**, the right hand grasping the piece at the small behind the lock, and as high as and touching the last rib; the firelock held level with the barrel upwards, **LEVEL AND EVEN** with those to your right.



(Rear rank[s]) Bring your firelock briskly to the position of **RECOVER!**

(Ed. Note: There is no documentation for shouting when charging bayonets - - in fact, the documentation argues against it.)

33. SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Smartly bring the firelock up to the shoulder with the right hand as the left releases the piece and grasps the butt, right foot returns forward.
2. Release the firelock with the right hand and drop the hand quickly to the right side as the left arm extends to lower the firelock into position.

34. ADVANCE your - ARMS

1. Same as the first motion of POISE.
2. Same as second motion of POISE.
3. Bring the firelock down the right side, with the right hand as low as possible "without constraint," slipping the left hand up the barrel to the swell, turning the right hand so as to have the trigger guard between the thumb and fore-finger of the right hand with the three last fingers under the cock, with the barrel to the rear.
4. Release with the left hand and let it smartly drop to the left side.



35. SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Reach with the left hand across the body to grip the firelock at the swell.
2. Same as second motion of POISE.
3. Smartly bring the firelock to the shoulder with the right hand as the left releases the piece and grasps the butt of the firelock.
4. Release the firelock with the right hand and drop it quickly to the right side as the left arm extends to lower the firelock into position.

(Ed. Note: This ends the "35 Count Manual Exercise." There are a number of additional necessary movements which follow.)



IN THE MANUAL EXERCISE OF 1764 (All commands from Shoulder)

RECOVER

(Ed. Note: Not a specific command - but a necessary movement)

Come smartly to the **Recover**, by briskly bringing the Firelock straight up with the left hand, turning the barrel to the right 180°, to the proper height of the **Recover** (with the lock about level with the left ear); at the same time that the left hand springs the firelock, the right hand is raised briskly from the right side, to seize the firelock across the breast. As it rises below the cock the left hand comes with a quick motion from the musket butt, and seizes the firelock strongly above the lock, with the little finger of the left hand at the spring of the lock. The left hand should be at an equal height with the eyes, the butt close to the left breast, but not pressed, the firelock perpendicular (straight up and down) near the left side of the face. *(Ed. Note: When completed, the firelock should be resting with the cock screw just above the left shoulder. It is important to hold it steady and very straight. KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF OF THE TRIGGER - - - OUT of the TRIGGER GUARD!)*

During a command of "**Charge - Bayonets**" with more than one rank, the front rank only charges the bayonet while the others remain at the **Recover** position (to step in and **Charge** if the front rank man is lost or requires assistance.)

It should be noted that the musket is turned around completely in the first movement of the Recover so that the barrel is next to the body, and the musket is lifted up to its final position in this movement by the left hand at the same time. It feels awkward at first but can be done.

RAPID FIRE - PRIME and LOAD (without rammers)

Firing blank rounds without the use of the rammer is the required method to be employed by the Company at all re-enactments and most displays of firing exercise. It is quite an authentic method as this type of firing was employed when volume of fire rather than accuracy was paramount. Dropping in the loose ball on top of the poured in powder, stamping the butt of the musket on the ground, and then coming up directly for firing, a soldier could fire up to five rounds a minute -- a feat not possible by the use of a rammer in the regular sequence.

DON'T EVER, EVER TRY THIS WITH LIVE BALL!

A ball not properly seated on the powder charge can burst the barrel. Always ram live rounds. At the command: **PRIME AND LOAD!**

1. If at the **SHOULDER**, come smartly to the **RECOVER**. If having just fired, and the command is given to **Prime and Load!** for reloading, the musket will already be in the **Prime** position.

2. Bring the firelock down with a brisk motion to the priming position.
(See position #4, **FIRE!** of the "35 Count")
3. Open the pan.
4. Handle the cartridge.
5. Prime
6. Shut the pan. (This prevents sparks and/or wind from getting to the priming.)
7. Cast about. (*To the position assumed for **Charge with - Cartridge***)
(See position #7 of the "35 Count")
8. Load by pouring the powder from the cartridge down the barrel, and immediately throw aside the empty cartridge paper. Bring the firelock up to the **SHOULDER** to show you are ready to fire. If loading with live ball, insert the ball and paper; draw rammer and ram the ball home. Return rammer and THEN bring the firelock to the **SHOULDER**.

*(Ed. Note: Sometimes we will be given the command to "**Dry Fire**" or "**Without Cartridge...Load**" for drill purposes. **DO NOT** cock and fire when unloaded unless you have replaced your flint with a wooden striker block prepared for that purpose. Also, this is a **RAPID FIRE** drill and should be performed quickly - but **SAFELY!** NEVER let your fingers get in front of the muzzle.)*

At the command: **MAKE - READY!**

Bring the firelock to the Cock position and immediately cock the firelock. Keep your finger **OFF** of the trigger!

IF IN THREE RANKS - - -

ALL RANKS - Come smartly to the **RECOVER**, by quickly bringing the fire lock straight up with the left hand, turning the barrel inwards, towards the shoulder, to the proper height of the Recover; at the same time that the left hand lifts and turns the firelock, the right hand is raised briskly from the side and seizes the firelock below the cock. The left hand is raised with a quick motion from the butt, and seizes the firelock strongly above the lock, the little finger of the left hand at the lock spring, the spring at an equal height with the eyes, the butt close to the left breast, the firelock next to the left side of the face, the left elbow pointing directly forward.

FRONT RANK – From the **RECOVER** bring the firelock across to the right side while dropping straight down to the right knee, cocking the fire-lock when the butt strikes the ground (the left foot **does not move**). The firelock should be held straight up and down throughout this movement.

SECOND RANK - (or if in a single rank) - without moving feet. From the **RECOVER**, raise the right elbow so as to bring the arm square across the chest; firmly place the right thumb upon the cock top jaw screw with the other fingers remaining under the guard.



Cock your firelock by bringing down the cock while drawing your elbow down, leaving the thumb upon the cock for safety.

THIRD RANK - same as second rank.

At the command: **PRE-SENT**,

FRONT RANK - remain kneeling with the body erect or leaning slightly BACK! (**FOR SAFETY!** Do not lean forward! The rear rank(s) may not have their muzzles far enough in front). Bring the firelock to the right shoulder from the ground, and raise the muzzle to a safe angle. Level if the position of the opposing force allows.

SECOND RANK - step to the right and slightly forward so as to lean forward between the files of the front rank, while the firelock is raised to the shoulder, as in Single Rank.

THIRD RANK - while stepping forward with the left foot between the files of the second rank; the right foot remains in its position, lean forward slightly - taking care not to place your lock beside the head of the second rank as the firelock is raised to the shoulder, as in Single Rank.

(Ed. Note: This movement is based on an interpretation of several original manuals which each have a different description. This is a safe, simple and effective way to do it.)

At the Command: **FIRE!** All ranks return to the **PRIME** position as follows:

FIRST RANK - immediately upon firing bring the right foot up to the left by standing.

SECOND RANK - immediately upon firing bring the right foot back to the left and stand up straight.

THIRD RANK - immediately upon firing step back with the left foot to its original position.

(Ed. Note: Second and Third Ranks IMMEDIATELY raise muskets after firing to avoid the rising heads of the front rank.)

SINGLE RANK - Pull the trigger briskly, and immediately after bring the right foot up to the left, then come to the priming position, with the lock by the breast bone, the muzzle even with the top of the cap plate, keeping it firm and steady, and at the same time seize the cock (screw) with the fore-finger and thumb of the right hand, the back of the hand turned up.

For repeated fire, the command **PRIME AND - LOAD** may be given from the **Prime** position. In the absence of a specific command to **CEASE - FIRE**, automatically reload and return your firelock to the **SHOULDER**.

*(Ed. Note: **Make certain that your musket FIRED!** If not, follow misfire procedures.)*

Some additional commands that are not found in most manuals but were used and often are necessary in tactical demonstrations follow.

IF IN A SINGLE RANK - - -

Step back about six inches with the right foot, the toe of the right foot pointing to the right. Bring the body 3 around; keep the left toe to the front; at the same time the butt end of the firelock must be brought tightly against the meat of the shoulder (ball), placing the left hand on the swell, and the fore-finger of the right hand on the trigger. Raise the muzzle to a safe position.

*(Ed. Note: Do **NOT** lean your head forward to aim. Keep the head **ERECT!** The pan flash will singe your hat brim! In all positions, hold the firelock firmly against the shoulder. This will reduce the effects of recoil.)*

INCLINE TO THE RIGHT (or LEFT) - FIRE

(Ed. Note: "To the Right [Left] Oblique" is interchangeable with the above.)

Often, the enemy is not to the direct front, or some spectators **are**, and it is necessary to fire at an angle. The command sequence will be:

MAKE - READY

INCLINE TO THE RIGHT (LEFT) - PRE-SENT

FIRE !

At the command **INCLINE TO THE RIGHT (LEFT)**, turn the upper body in the direction ordered. The front rank men will need to shift their positions by slightly adjusting the positions of their legs. All muskets should be pointed in the direction ordered. *(Ed. Note: When firing*

*inclined to the **right**, extreme care must be taken to insure that the flash in the pan does not spray the next man in line. Even with flashguards, this can be a big problem.)*

ELEVATE! (from the position of PRE – SENT)

Sometimes we are required to elevate, either by host demand or proximity to the opposing force. When this happens, look at how high the muzzles of the opposing force's muskets are over their heads when shouldered. Aim to that level. This way, the closer they are, the higher we aim.

RECOVER! (from the position of PRE - SENT)

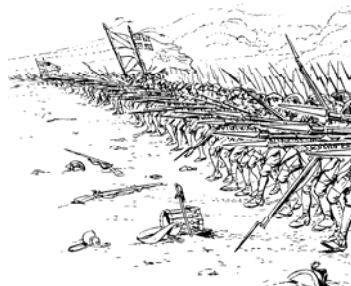
Another thing that sometimes happens is that the line is ordered to **PRESENT** and someone, usually an officer, horseman, or some clod with a camera, moves directly in front of the ranks of loaded and leveled muskets. This can cause a dangerous situation and all troops need to be alert to orders and **not** fire until ordered to do so. The command **RECOVER!** should be given. At this command, the troops should immediately return to the **MAKE - READY** position - rear ranks at the **RECOVER** and front rank remaining kneeling but returning the musket to the proper position with the butt resting on the ground. The muskets are at full-cock so careful handling is immensely important. This will be a rarely used command - but it is a necessary one.

CEASE - FIRE

THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT COMMAND WITH MANY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS! When the order **CEASE - FIRE** is given, all troops should complete loading and come to the **SHOULDER**. If loaded, simply come to the **SHOULDER**. Then **STAND FAST!** (*Ed. Note: "AS YOU WERE!" and "CEASE FIRE!" mean the same thing in this situation.*)

The Officer/NCO may order you to **SECURE** and open pans. (If he does not, be prepared to **discretely** remind him that you are loaded if some order is given that would be unsafe with loaded weapons. Safety comes before propriety!)

ANY MAN, REGARDLESS OF RANK, CAN CALL "CEASE - FIRE" AT ANY TIME IF HE SEES AN UNSAFE SITUATION. IT'S BETTER TO DO IT AND MAYBE TAKE SOME RIBBING LATER RATHER THAN TO LET SOMEONE GET HURT!



SOME ADDITIONAL COMMMANDS

In some versions and printings of the "Manual Exercise of 1764," there are some additional commands and explanations which were certainly practiced by the troops. We have adopted the following:

"Some occasional words of command, with explanations:"

FIELD FACINGS

(Ed. Note: These are not a part of the 1764 Manual Exercise and bear no number in the sequence. They are, however, used quite frequently - much more than the formal facings described above. Other additional commands and movements are included.)



Field facings are performed with the same foot movements as those previously described. There is no movement of the firelock from the **SHOULDER, ADVANCE**, or other carry position. When given the command to **FACE**, if you have your firelock at any position other than **REST** or **PRESENT** your - **ARMS**, the field facing is used.

Facing movements to the right, left, right about and left about should first be taught without arms to familiarize the recruit with the mechanics without being hampered with a musket. In the 1792 *Regulations* there is a simple aid which will help to learn 18th century facing movements which states: "*In going through the facings, the left heel never quits the ground; the body must incline forward, and the knees kept straight.*"

(Ed. Note: This illustration shows a Guardsman of the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards at the position of REST your - FIRELOCK. All facing orders received while in this position must be executed with the full "35 Count" sequence of movements.)

REVERSE Your – FIRELOCKS or REST ON YOUR ARMS - REVERSED

Also given as: "**REST ON YOUR FIRELOCKS**" – "**FIRELOCKS REVERSED**," "**STAND ON YOUR ARMS**" – "**REVERSED** or **MOURN – ARMS.**" (from the **Rest** position – only)

(Ed. Note: This movement is associated with mourning and is used in memorial services. The first reference to its use was at the burial of General Marlborough.)



1. Maintaining your left hand on the swell of the firelock and using it as a pivot, turn the firelock with your right hand at the small of the stock - **SLOWLY** - taking your cadence from the man on your right, so that the firelock reverses itself with the muzzle near to the ground and over the toes of the left foot.

2. **SLOWLY** - lower the muzzle until it rests on your left foot. Then place first your left and next your right hand over the butt of your firelock and lower your head so that your forehead rests upon the back of your right hand.

REST your - FIRELOCKS (from the Reverse Position)

1. **SLOWLY** - raise your head erect and move your right hand to the small of the stock and your left hand to the swell of the firelock.

2. **SLOWLY** - raise the firelock off your left foot,

3. **SLOWLY** - using your left hand as a pivot turn the firelock back to the Rest position - **SLOWLY** - taking your cadence from the man on your right.

(Ed. Note: Always have a well trained soldier on the right of the line!!!)

SUPPORT Your – FIRELOCKS (Already at the SHOULDER)

1. While raising the firelock slightly with the left hand, grasp with the right at the small of the stock.

2. Bring the left hand across the body to strike the right breast; the cock of the musket should be held in the crook of the left arm.

3. Release with the right hand, and let the hand fall sharply to the right side.

While marching the right hand is kept firmly gripping the firelock, the left hand being tucked between the right arm and the body.

If commanded to march while at the Support, the right hand shall grasp the firelock at the small (wrist) as the left foot strikes the ground.

At the Command - **Shoulder!** Grasp the butt of the musket with the left hand; throw your right hand down by your side.

CHARGE your – BAYONETS (From the position of **ADVANCE your FIRELOCKS**. The "Common Advance")

1. Reach across the body with your left hand - moving it slightly forward to catch the firelock.
2. With the right, let the barrel fall forward to drop in the left hand while bringing the feet to the positions described previously.
3. If ordered back to the position of **ADVANCE your FIRELOCKS**, simply reverse the process.

*(Ed. Note: Non-commissioned officers and officers who are at the **Advance** when the other ranks are at the **Shoulder** should wait one count to allow the men to **Recover their Firelocks** before beginning this movement. This will allow all to come to the **Charge** together.)*

UNFIX your - BAYONETS

1. Same as in **Fix Bayonets #1**
2. Same as in **Fix Bayonets #2**
3. Same as in **Fix Bayonets #3**
4. Remove Bayonet from barrel, and return it to its scabbard.
5. Place the right hand across the barrel as in Fix Bayonets, with the right fore-finger under the bayonet stud, with the piece kept close to the hollow of the shoulder and the elbow even with the hand.

SHOULDER your - FIRELOCKS

1. Raise the firelock to the Shoulder position while the right hand grasps the small.
2. Release the left hand and strike it upon the musket butt.
3. Release the right hand and drop it smartly to the right side.

TRAIL your - FIRELOCKS

(Ed. Note: Performed only from the SHOULDER or with ordered arms.)



1. Bringing up the right hand, seize the firelock just below the swell, the little finger touching, or being near the left shoulder, and at about the same height.

2. Release the left hand and bring the firelock with the right hand down by your right side. Hold it in a sloping position, pointing the muzzle upwards.

At the Command - Shoulder! Bring the musket to your left shoulder with your right hand and grasp the butt of the musket with your left hand. Drop your right hand to the right side.

EASE your – ARMS (from ORDER position)

1. Bring down your right hand as low as you can without constraint with the fingers and thumb down the piece, the back of the hand to the front.

CLAP - HANDS

1. Move the left hand across the piece, clasping hands and bending the knees easily.

2. At the same time, bring the right foot about 6" to the rear behind the left - comfortably. Bend the left knee slightly.

3. Take your ease. (Ed. Note: This is a rest position. You may talk and move as long as one foot remains in place. Also, this command does not mean "give applause!")

SLOPE your - FIRELOCKS

(From the **Shoulder**)

1. With the left hand push the firelock upwards; slipping it upon the shoulder; and at the same time raise the butt forward. Let the muzzle drop behind but not so low as to strike the head of the man behind you. In doing this motion you will naturally point the firelock to the right, in



Drawing by Eric Schnitzer

an oblique position; and it may properly be held so far obliquely, that the muzzle shall be behind the right shoulder, in a range from front to rear. In this position you will balance and carry the firelock in the manner you find most easy.

(Ed. Note: Take care not to hit the man behind you. Don't turn around to talk, etc. This should NEVER be done with fixed bayonets. It is a good idea to open ranks slightly before giving this command.)

ERECT your - FIRELOCKS

1. With your left hand pull down the butt of the firelock to the hip-bone. At the same time move up the right hand against the stock below the lock, to balance and keep the piece to the shoulder.
2. Throw your right hand down by your side. *(Ed. Note: This movement also can be dangerous to the man behind you.)*

INSPECTION

Start from **THE POSITION OF A SOLDIER** (if more than one rank is formed, they should "take their proper distance." The following sequence of orders should be followed:

POISE YOUR - FIRELOCKS: as previously described.

The inspecting officer/NCO walks down the line inspecting each man's musket. He observes the presence of hammerstall and flashguard; that the flashguard is tight and not likely to slip down during firing; that the lock is securely fastened and no gap is present between the lock and barrel of the musket; that when the trigger is pulled, the half-cock holds. General cleanliness and mechanical condition are observed. He will also inspect the man's uniform and kit.

SHOULDER YOUR - FIRELOCKS: as before.

SEARCH YOUR - ARMS:

- 1, 2, 3. as in **FIX YOUR - BAYONETS**. With the musket in the left hand held by the left side, grasp the tip of the rammer.
4. Draw the rammer in two crisp motions and insert it in the barrel as in **DRAW - RAMMERS**.

At this time the inspecting officer/NCO again walks down the line. When he steps in front of a man, the soldier strongly flicks the right wrist to throw the ramrod down the barrel. A sharp "ping" will indicate that the barrel is reasonably clean and free of obstruction. As the inspector moves on, the soldier should immediately withdraw the rammer; reverse it and replace the rammer in the pipes, coming to the position preceding **RETURN - RAMMERS**.

RETURN YOUR - RAMMERS: as in the formal loading exercise. See movement #14 of the "35 Count."

SHOULDER YOUR - FIRELOCKS: as before.

WIPE YOUR - ARMS

1, 2. Same as in **PRIME AND - LOAD**.

3. Half-cock your firelock.

4. Take out your cleaning rag. Use the rag and your pick and brush to clean out the touch-hole and wipe the fouling off of the lock and barrel. Return your hammerstall.

5. Cast about - as in the formal loading exercise.

6. Wipe your bayonet (if fixed) and the muzzle of your musket.

7. Return your cleaning rag and come to the position of **RECOVER**.

This is used at the end of firing exercises and battle re-enactments. Usually, there is some kind of pass in review at the end of an event and this helps to restore some "polish" to the appearance. It also helps to remove built-up fouling from the lock and pan - **BEFORE** it has time to set.

DISMISSAL

(Ed. Note: Bayonets should ALWAYS be unfixed before dismissal. If not ordered to do so in formation, immediately remove and return the bayonet to the scabbard as soon as you are dismissed.)

The 4th Company has established two ways to do this.

If the muskets have been fired, the commanding officer should order the troops to take their proper distance and, after unfixing bayonets if necessary, **SECURE - FIRELOCKS**, open pans and return to the **SHOULDER** to ensure that all are unloaded. After any final instructions, speeches, ceremonies, etc. the order should be given to:

TAKE CARE TO DISPERSE - MARCH

1. If at the **SHOULDER**, shout "God Save the King!" and simply walk away.

2. If at **REST YOUR - FIRELOCKS**, execute the formal **TO THE RIGHT ABOUT - FACE**, then **SHOULDER YOUR - FIRELOCKS**, take three steps and shout "God Save the King!"
(Ed. Note: If the field musick is present, all orders are executed to the beat of the drum.)

For formal dismissal, the troops should be formed facing away from the camp so the about face will turn them towards it. **Immediately** upon dismissal, the NCOs should see to necessary musket maintenance. Ensure that all firelocks are **UNLOADED!**. Everyone should clean and oil his firelock before lodging it.

(Ed. Note: Non-commissioned officers should ensure that the pan is opened and the cock is dropped to the fired position to relieve pressure on the mainspring.)

Additional Exercise and Instruction

for

Officer and NCO

Good Serjeant and Corporal, being so very essential for the support of discipline and order in a Regiment, their merit must be well considered, and their qualification impartially examined, before they are preferred to such a trust; honesty, sobriety, and a remarkable attention to every point of duty, with a neatness in their dress, and a quickness in their understanding, above the common run of Soldier, should only recommend them; an expertness in performing every part of the Exercise, and an ability to teach it, are absolutely necessary; nor can that Serjeant or Corporal be called thoroughly qualified, who does not read and write in a

tolerable manner.

Cuthbertson's System for the Complete Interior Management and Economy of a BATTALION OF INFANTRY, a New Edition, with Corrections; BRISTOL, 1776. Chapter III, Article I.



ADDITIONAL EXERCISES for OFFICERS AND NCOs

Officers and NCOs should, naturally, be fully knowledgeable of the entire *Manual Exercise* previously described. They also have certain positions and movements designed exclusively for them. The Officers of the 23d Regiment were ordered to carry fusils in all companies in 1770. The Serjeants were ordered to do so at a later date, and were so armed through most of the American War of Independence. In most regiments at that time, this was the practice only in the flank companies (Grenadier and Light Infantry), and so was another distinction awarded to an elite corps, the Regiments of Fusiliers.

According to Pickering: ***"The Officers, in marching off their companies, may carry their fusees in any of the ways mentioned in the manual and officer's exercise; and the serjeants will carry theirs in the same manner, conforming to their officers."*** This assumes a uniformity of arms carriage throughout the Regiment. On the march this is accomplished by simply having the commander of the lead company in column carry his as he wishes and the others behind simply conform to him. Obviously, the Regimental and/or battalion or brigade commander may order a specific carriage at will. Pickering adds: ***"In whatever manner the officers and serjeants carry their fusees on the march, when they come to the ground on which they are to form, they should carry their fusees ADVANCED."***

The following exercise is adapted in part from the first edition of Vincent J.-R. Kehoe's MILITARY GUIDE and is used with his kind permission. It was developed by him from Hall's ENCYCLOPEDIA.

***Fusil Salute with fusil planted
For Officers ONLY!***



FUSIL DRILL

FUSIL ADVANCED

1. From the position of **FUSIL PLANTED**, the first motion is to slip the right hand down the fusil as far as it can go with ease, at the same instant placing the right foot behind the left heel (similar to the position of the feet in facing to the right or right about).
2. Raise the fusil from the ground with the right hand and gracefully bring it across the body to the left shoulder, turning it so the barrel is to the front (away from your body). Seize it with the left hand about the cock. At the same time face to the right about by rotating on the heels of both feet.
3. Place the right foot on line with the left while bringing the right hand smartly back to the right side, letting the fusil fall against the left shoulder in the left hand. The left hand continues grasping the fusil about the cock.

(**THIS CARRY IS TO BE USED BY OFFICERS ONLY!**)

FUSIL ECOVERED

With the left hand, bring the fusil up to a perpendicular line, turning it so the barrel is facing the rear (as in the "35 Count" position of **RECOVER your - FIRELOCKS**). This movement is very awkward and requires practice. At the same time, bring up the right hand and grasp the fusil at the small of the stock. Keep the fusil in a straight up, erect, perpendicular position. It will look exactly like the "35 Count" musket position.

Return to the **ADVANCE** by reversing the motions.

FUSIL PLANTED (from the position of **Fusil -ADVANCED**)

(**THIS POSITION IS TO BE USED BY OFFICERS ONLY!**)

1. If you are already facing in the correct direction, reach with the right hand across the body seizing the fusil as high up as is comfortable.
2. Bring the fusil gracefully across the body and extend the right arm fully to the right - straight and parallel to the ground.
3. Lower the fusil to the ground. the lock should be facing to the rear. Raise up the right hand to the muzzle so that the thumb is resting just below the bayonet lug.



4. If a salute is required at this point, simply bring the left hand, palm open, to the front of the cap. Hold it until the inspecting officer has passed or you are ordered to drop it. Standing salutes are rendered by Officers with the fusil planted.

If you are facing the company and need to turn to the right about to plant the fusil, simply do a field facing to the right about and follow the above steps.

CHARGE BAYONETS (From the position of Fusil - ADVANCED)

1. When the command is given to **Charge your - BAYONETS**, briskly spring the fusil to the **RECOVER**.

2. Drop the fusil down to the position of **Charge your - BAYONETS** in the same manner as described for the men.

3. When the command is given to the troops to **Shoulder your - FIRELOCKS**, return to the position of **ADVANCE** by simply lifting the fusil with your left hand coming about to eye level while, with the right hand, twisting the fusil to the left so the barrel is facing away from the body. The right hand should be dropping lower as the left hand raises.

4. Release with the left hand and grasp the cock with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand as previously described.

3. Drop the right hand back to the side.

CHARGE your - BAYONETS (From the Common Advance)

Officers and Non-commissioned officers may have occasion to carry their fusils at the position of **Advance your - FIRELOCKS** as described on page 5 - 12 for the other ranks.

Non-commissioned officers and officers who are at the "**Common**" **Advance** when the other ranks are at the **Shoulder** should wait one count to allow the men to **Recover their FIRELOCKS** before beginning this movement. This will allow all to come to the Charge together.

FUSIL TRAILED

1. Bring the right hand across the body and seize the fusil near the balance of the stock.
2. Release with the left hand, and with the right hand bring it over to the right side to the position of trailing. The left hand is simply dropped to the side. This is identical to the musket **TRAIL - ARMS** position.



MARCHING FUSIL SALUTE

1. Bring the fusil to the **TRAIL**. On a step with the right foot, dart the muzzle forward with the right hand, making the fusil almost level to the ground.
2. On the next step with the left foot, turn the fusil around about in such a way as to bring the muzzle sloping upwards towards the rear, the lock up; at the same time seizing it with the left hand on the small of the stock.
3. Salute with the fusil, at the next step of the right foot, by turning it around towards the front, so as to point the bayonet towards the ground in front and slightly to the right; with the lock up.
4. At the next step with the left foot, bring the left hand, palm open to the front of the cap to complete the salute.

Return to the trail by reversing the movements. Bring it back to the position described in "2" and then take it to the trail.

This is normally begun when you are about 10 paces from the person receiving the salute. You should hold it until you have moved 10 paces beyond the person being saluted.

(Ed. Note: There is no description of a position similar to the musket drill for advancing the firelock at the right shoulder, but, as previously stated, any of the previously described movements may be used at the discretion of the Officer. He may use any of the musket carries.)

SWORD DRILL



I have included some movements that are not described in any of the manuals I have seen. Apparently, it was assumed that some rudimentary knowledge of swordsmanship was known to officers upon their commissioning. Other movements have been adapted from a number of sources. These all assume an Officer is not armed with his fusil.

DRAW - SWORDS



1. At the preparatory command **DRAW**, reach with the right hand across the body and grasp the hilt of the sword. Draw it about two inches out of the scabbard, the right hand should be turned palm outward (away from the chest); elbow slightly out. The left hand may grasp the scabbard for stability.

2. On the command of execution **SWORDS**, draw the sword with a flourish, extending the right arm fully to the front and slightly to the right.

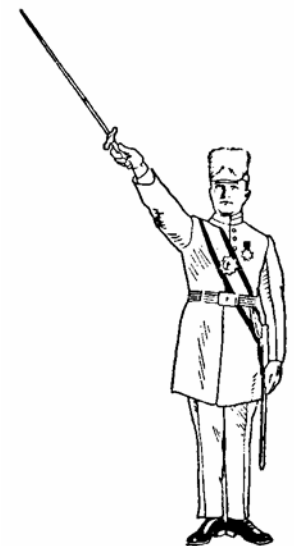
1. Bring the sword to the position of **ADVANCE** by dropping the right hand down to the right side allowing the blade of the sword to rest against the hollow of the right shoulder. The blade should be held as straight up and down as possible.

The officer giving the commands must be sure to wait a few seconds after commanding **DRAW** to allow for the men to begin the process before giving the command of execution - **SWORDS**.

Ed. Note: Illustrations on this page along with some others are from an old manual for the Masonic Order of Knights Templar.)

SWORDS ADVANCED

This is not really a command, but a description of the normal carry position of the sword. As described above, it is holding the grip in the right hand, against the outside of the right thigh, the blade running up the right side and resting against the hollow of the right shoulder.



Draw Swords
Second Motion

As soldiers are to fall in at formations in "**The Position of a Soldier Under Arms**," so should officers fall in with swords **ADVANCED**.

SWORD SUPPORTED

This position is used as a rest position for officers with drawn swords and may be used when the men are at **SUPPORT** or **EASE ARMS**. It may be used at the officer's discretion.

From the position of **SWORDS ADVANCED**, simply bring the tip of the sword across the front of the body diagonally towards the left; the tip should be slightly in front of the left shoulder. The right hand should move only slightly. The right arm should remain extended down the right side as much as possible "*without constraint*." At the same time, bring up the left hand and grip the upper part of the blade with the thumb running along the lower edge towards the point. This is very similar in appearance to the modern position of port arms and is a rest position.

To return to the position of **ADVANCE**, simply release with the left hand, dropping that hand back to the left side while simultaneously bringing the blade back to the proper position of **ADVANCE**.

SWORD RECOVERED

(Also, the first motion of **Present your - ARMS** for the sword)

Raise the sword in front of the right breast, the right hand should be about shoulder high. Turn the right hand palm inward (toward the chest); right elbow tucked against the side. This is the first movement of the **SWORD SALUTE**.

Note that the sword is **NOT** held directly in front of the center of the face, nor is the hand as high as we often see.

SWORD SALUTE

(Second motion of **Present your ARMS**)

Bring the point of the sword, in an easy and graceful manner, as low toward the ground as can be done with ease. **DO NOT SALUTE WITH THE LEFT HAND TO THE CAP**. This is all that is necessary to salute with a sword.

Recover from this position by bringing the sword back to the **ADVANCE**.

Another description of the sword salute is in four motions described thus:

1. "*Bring your sword briskly up in a perpendicular direction, the point upwards, and the flat side of the blade opposite to the right eye; the guard even with the right nipple, and the elbow close*



Present Swords

to the body. The instant the left hand quits the blade (if Supported) it must be briskly dropped to the left thigh; the thumb being kept flat upon the seam to the breeches, and the rest of the hand close to the thigh."

2. *"Drop the blade by briskly stretching your arm, so as to bring your right hand close to the right thigh, and remain steadily in this position until the person you have saluted shall have passed you two paces at least."*

3. *"Bring your sword briskly up, as in the first position: and,"*

4. *"Sink it in a diagonal direction across the chest, as described in open order."*

Saluting with the sword other than on command should be begun when the person to be saluted is about 10 paces away and should be held until he is 10 paces beyond the saluting officer. Likewise, when marching, 10 paces should be the standard for rendering and recovering from the salute.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON COMMAND

Timothy Pickering in his work, An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia gave the most detailed descriptions of the various movements. He had some excellent comments on giving commands:

"Tis of importance that the words of command be given in a proper manner. I have sometimes heard them given with such a confused, inarticulate, mere animal sound, that the men might as well perform the exercise to the braying of an ass; and this proceeded from a foolish opinion that it was more soldier-like." (This could well apply today!)

"Care should be taken not to overstrain the voice, which will render it soon hoarse; nor to get above its pitch, which will give it a disagreeable tone." (Bad for the singing as well!)

"Proper pauses should be made between the different words of command; that the men may have time to think, and keep their minds calm and sedate: if they are greatly hurried, they will be confused, and commit blunders." (How many times have we witnessed **that** in action?!)

Some additional comments on giving commands, based on four years of Military College, more than 25 years of military service (active and reserve) and more than thirty years of reenacting:

1. Always use the inflection of your voice to differentiate preparatory commands from commands of execution: **"POISE yourrrr - FIRELOCKS!"** Drag out the middle part

so the men can really prepare to execute.

2. Always give the commands in the same cadence as you want them carried out. The men will instinctively match the speed with which the syllables are pronounced. If you talk fast, they'll try to move fast and vice-versa. Rushing the command of execution - out of cadence with the preparatory command will result in sloppy execution - not the fault of the troops!
3. When addressing a group of troops, keep your head **STILL!** Do **NOT** move it from side to side. The men's hearing will adjust to your volume better if it is consistent. Moving the head makes your commands harder to hear.
4. When giving orders from in front of troops while facing away from them, as at the head of a column, turn your head to one side, consistently, **before** giving the command so you may be better heard and understood.
5. When giving commands, use your stomach muscles and diaphragm to advantage. Shouting from the throat makes the voice go much more quickly. The sensation is similar to singing low notes on the scale. Proper breathing is very important. If winded from a long march or running, take a couple of deep breaths and compose yourself before giving the command. You'll be a lot less likely to "squeak" if you take these precautions.
6. Perform whatever movement you are preparing to order - **BEFORE** - giving the order. You should not carry out your own orders as the troops do. Charging bayonets being the only exception since uniformity of the dropping muzzles has psychological value.
7. Officers are supposed to be aristocratic and genteel. Only a horrendous boor of an officer would scream and shout at his enlisted men. Let the NCOs do that!