

Instructions to the Serjeants and Corporals

“Good Serjeants and Corporals being so very essential, for the support of discipline and order in a Regiment, their merit must be well considered, and their qualifications 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 of understanding, above the common run of Soldiers, should only recommend them: and 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

“It being on the non-commissioned officers that the discipline and order of a company in a great measure depend, they cannot be too circumspect in the behavior towards the men, by treating them with mildness, and at the same time obliging every one to do his duty. By avoiding too great familiarity with the men, they will not only gain their love and confidence, but be treated with a proper respect; whereas by a contrary conduct they forfeit all regard and their authority becomes despised.” – Von Steuben

Company Order

An Example to Others

As Von Steuben states, the good order and discipline of any companies rests on the abilities of the non-commissioned officers. As such, it is essential that first and foremost, each non-commissioned officer be very experienced with the duties of the private soldier.

The most prominent of these is the manual of arms. Each non-commissioned officer should be an expert in this to the point of being able to instruct any soldier in the complete manual of arms. In addition, the non-commissioned officer must consider himself a flugelman at all times while the company is assembled.

Each non-commissioned officer must take particular care with his dress and appearance. He should be also expert in the cleaning and care of his musket.

The Squad

Each company consists of several squads. A non-commissioned officer is put in charge of each squad for the better discipline and organization of the company. Each squad officer is particularly charged with the betterment of those privates assigned to his squad.

Manual of Arms

In addition to company drills, the NCO in charge of each squad is to insure that the privates assigned to his squad are properly trained in the manual of arms. When teaching the new recruits he must show leniency in the first few lessons, but not advance the recruit too quickly without him having mastered each step.

Appearance and Accoutrements

The NCO in charge of each squad shall take particular care that the individuals in his squad dresses appropriately, wears his accoutrements in the correct manner, and is taught to properly care for and clean his musket. The NCO should insure that he always has a turnscrew, and other appropriate musket cleaning tools.

Camp Policing

The NCO must pay particular care to the policing of the individuals in his charge. He should inspect his squads personal appearance as well as the appearance of their camp each day. He should insure authenticity in the camp and on good days order that those items which can authentically be displayed are aired out.

Guard, Fatigue, and other Duties

Whenever a squad NCO is warned that individuals from his squad will be needed for a duty, he is to inspect each individual warned for such duty before that individual reports to the parade.

Camp Duties

Throughout a weekend there will be a number of duties necessary to the successful running of the camp. Some of these duties will be outside the company with the company providing individuals for those assignments. There will also be a number of duties to perform within the company (such as commissary cleanup, wood & water for the commissary, camp setup, etc). The NCO shall play a particularly prominent role in these duties, working with the First Serjeant/Captain to insure the duties are scheduled throughout a weekend.

Roll Calls

The NCO is to insure that all the individuals in his squad attend each Roll Call (unless excused by the Company Officer).

Guard Duty

The NCO should be particularly familiar with the Guard Duty as this is one the assignments he find himself on most often. He should teach the Sentinels in his charge to challenge briskly, and everything else they are to do in their different situations ; and when he relieves them., must make them deliver the orders distinctly. When an NCO relieves a Guard, he should take orders from the Guard that he is relieving.

Patrols

When on patrol, the NCO must make his patrol with the greatest silence and attention, and where necessary, send a faithful soldier a-head to look out. If they meet a detachment of the enemy stringer their own, they must retreat in order to their own post. In the night they must stop all stringers that approach. They must not suffer their men to make the least noise with their arms or accoutrements, and every now and then stop and listen. ON Their return from patrolling, they must report to the officer what they have seen of heard.

On the March and Parade

On a march the non-commissioned officers must preserve order and regularity, and suffer no man to leave the ranks without permission of the officer commanding the platoon.

When acting as a file-closer, he must take care to keep the ranks and files properly closed, and when too much crowded, make them incline from the center. When the files of his platoon are disordered by the loss of men, he must exert himself to dress and complete them afresh, with the utmost expedition. He must keep the greatest silence in the ranks, see that men load well and quick, and take good aim. He will do all in his power to encourage the soldiers, and use the most vigorous means to prevent any from leaving the ranks, unless wounded. The NCO must do all of this in as quiet a tone as possible so that his voice is not heard beyond those whom he is addressing. While his tone must be quiet, he should be firm and soldierly as well so that no soldier may mistake his command.

The Signals

The NCO should be particularly familiar with the various signals used in and about the camp. Should he hear a signal directed at the soldiers in his command, he must warn them to the proper action.

Adjutant's Call – *first part of the troop*

First Serjeant's call – *one roll and three flams*

All non-commissioned officers call – *two rolls and five flams*

To go for wood – *poing stroke and ten-stroke roll.*

Water – *two strokes and a flam*

Provisions – *roast beef*

Front to halt – *two flams from right to left, and a full drag with the right, a left hand flam and a right hand full drag*

For the front to advance quicker – *the long march*

To march slower – *the taps*

For the drummers call – *the drummers call*

For a fatigue duty – *the pioneers march*

For the church call – *the parley*