

## **Norfolk Drill**

*Taken from a Plan of Discipline for the Use of the Norfolk Militia (1759)*

### **I. Manual of Arms**

- A. Shoulder your firelock!
- B. Poise your firelock!
- C. Rest your firelock!
- D. Order your firelock!
- E. Ground your firelock!
- F. Take up your firelock!
- G. Club your firelock!
- H. Secure your firelock!
- I. Present your arms!
- J. Carry your firelock on your right arm!
- K. Carry your firelock in your right hand!
- L. Support arms!
- M. Wipe your arms!

### **II. Facings**

- A. To the right face!
- B. To the right about face!
- C. To the left face!
- D. To the left about face!

### **III. Firings**

- A. Rapid firings
  - 1. Prime and Load!
  - 2. 'Bout!
  - 3. Shoulder!
  - 4. Company! Make Ready!
  - 5. Present!
  - 6. Fire!
- B. Alternate firings
  - 1. Company! Take care to fire the alternate firings by platoons! Charge!
  - 2. 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Make Ready!
  - 3. Present!
  - 4. Fire!
  - 5. 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon! Make Ready!
  - 6. Present!
  - 7. Fire!

#### **C. Firing on the Advance: Alternate Firings**

NOTE: Page 118, section XII of the Norfolk Drill suggests the whole company or battalion should advance or retreat together, rather than in sections “leap frogging each other”. As a result, the commands for firing on the advance are:

- 1. Company! Take care to fire the alternate firings by platoons! Charge!
- 2. 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Make Ready!
- 3. Present!
- 4. Fire!
- 5. 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon! Make Ready!

6. Present!
7. Fire!
8. Cease Fire!
9. Shoulder Firelocks!
10. Company! To the Front, March!
11. Halt!
12. Company! Take care to fire the alternate firings by platoons! Charge!

D. Firing on the Advance: Battalion Volleys

1. Prime and Load!
2. 'Bout!
3. Shoulder!
4. Company! Make Ready!
5. Present!
6. Fire!
7. Shoulder Firelocks!
8. Company! To the Front, March!
9. Halt!

E. Firing on the Retreat: Alternate Firings

NOTE: Page 118, section XII of the Norfolk Drill suggests the whole company or battalion should advance or retreat together, rather than in sections “leap frogging each other”. As a result, the commands for firing on the retreat are:

1. Company! Take care to fire the alternate firings by platoons! Charge!
2. 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Make Ready!
3. Present!
4. Fire!
5. 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon! Make Ready!
6. Present!
7. Fire!
8. Cease Fire!
9. Shoulder Firelocks!
10. To the right about face!
11. Company! To the Front, March!
12. Halt!
13. To the right about face!
14. Company! Take care to fire the alternate firings by platoons! Charge!

F. Firing on the Retreat: Battalion Volleys

1. Prime and Load!
2. 'Bout!
3. Shoulder!
4. Company! Make Ready!
5. Present!
6. Fire!
7. Shoulder Firelocks!
8. To the right about face!
8. Company! To the Front, March!
9. Halt!
10. To the right about face!

#### **IV. Bayonet Drill**

- A. Fix your bayonets!
- B. Shoulder your firelocks!
- C. Charge your bayonets!
- D. Shoulder your firelocks!
- E. Return your bayonets!
- F. Shoulder your firelocks!

#### **V. Platoon Maneuvers**

- A. Wheeling (on the march)
  - 1. To the right wheel!
  - 2. To the left wheel!
  - 3. To the right about wheel!
  - 4. To the left about wheel!
- B. Wheeling (from a stationary position)
  - 1. To the right wheel, march!
  - 2. To the left wheel, march!
  - 3. To the right about wheel, march!
  - 4. To the left about wheel, march!
- C. Turns
  - 1. To the left turn, turn!
  - 2. To the right turn, turn!
- D. Oblique March
  - 1. Incline to the left, march!
  - 2. Incline to the right, march!
- E. Countermarch
  - 1. Company! Countermarch by files to the right!
  - 2. To the right face!
  - 3. March!
  - 4. Halt!
  - 5. Front!
- F. Opening ranks: Rear Rank
  - 1. Rear rank to open order!
  - 2. Rear rank to the right about face!
  - 3. March!
  - 4. Halt! (after 4 paces)
  - 5. Front!
- G. Closing ranks: Rear Rank
  - 1. Rear rank, close to the front!
  - 2. March!
  - 3. Halt!
- H. Opening ranks: Front Rank
  - 1. Front rank advance to open order!
  - 2. March!
  - 3. Halt!

- I. Closing Ranks: Front Rank
  - 1. Front rank to the right about face!
  - 2. March!
  - 3. Halt!
  - 4. Front!

## **VI. Forming the Column and Line via Wheels, Breaks and Doublings**

*NOTE: Unless instructed by the commanding officer, a company should ALWAYS move from a line into a column when stepping off to march. Likewise, when halting, unless the commanding officer instructs otherwise, the company should form the company front when halting.*

- A. Line into column by incline march
  - 1. **1st Platoon:** To the front, march!
  - 2. **2d Platoon:** Incline to the right, march!
- B. Column into line by incline march
  - 1. Form front!
  - 2. **1st Platoon:** Halt! or 1/2 step, march!
  - 3. **2d Platoon:** Incline to the left, march!
- C. Line into column by wheeling
  - 1. To the right wheel, by platoons, march!
- D. Column into line by wheeling
  - 1. To the left wheel, by platoons, march!
- E. Line into column by “doubling”
  - 1. **2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon!** Double the Right!
  - 2. Right about face!
  - 3. March! (3 paces to the rear)
  - 4. Halt!
  - 5. Right face!
  - 6. March!
  - 7. Halt! (once covering the 1<sup>st</sup> platoon)
  - 8. Front!
- F. Column into line by “doubling”
  - 1. **2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon!** As you were!
  - 2. Left Face!
  - 3. March!
  - 4. Halt! (once back to original position)
  - 5. Front!

## **LIGHT INFANTRY TACTICS AND SKIRMISHING**

*Taken from Howe's Light Infantry Exercise (1774) and Townsend's Rules and Orders for the Discipline of the Light Infantry Companies in His Majesty's Army in Ireland (1772)*

### **I. Open, Extended and Closed Order**

- A. Open Order/Forming of Skirmish Line
  - 1. Company will form at open order!

2. Form front (left or right)!

**B. Extended Order**

1. Company will form at extended order!
2. Trail Fireocks!
3. Left face!
4. March!
  - a. *All soldiers but the right most files should face to left. At the command of "march!" the files should start to march. The second right most files should count out loud five paces and state "halt!" Once halted, the file should face to the front.*
  - b. *The next set of files, upon hearing "halt!" should count out loud five pace and state "halt!" Once halted, the file should face to the front.*
  - c. *This should continue until the left most file counts out five paces, halts and faces to the front.*

**C. Close Order**

1. Company will close to the right!
2. Form front (left or right)!

## **II. Advancing and Retiring by File and Indian File**

**A. Advancing by files**

1. Company, from the right, will advance by files!
2. To the right, face!
3. To the front, march!

**B. Forming company (from files)**

1. Form front!
2. Form right!!
3. Form left!!
4. At open order, form front (left, right)!

**C. Advancing by Indian file**

1. Company, from the right, advance by Indian file!
2. To the right, face!
3. To the front, march!

**D. Forming company (from Indian file)**

1. Form front!
2. Form right!
3. Form left!!
4. At open order! Form front (left, right)!

**E. Advancing from the Center**

1. Company, from the center will advance by files!
2. To the right and left face!
3. To the front, march!

**F. Advance by Indian files from the flanks**

1. Company , from the flanks, advance by Indian file!
2. To the right and left face!
  - a. *NOTE: The 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon will face to the right, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon will face to the left.*
3. To the front, march!

- G. Forming company (from Indian file)
  - 1. Form front!
  
- H. Advance by files from the flanks
  - 1. Company, from the flanks, advance by files!
  - 2. To the right and left face!
    - a. *NOTE: The 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon will face to the right, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon will face to the left.*
  - 3. To the front, march!
  
- I. Forming company (from files)
  - 1. Form Front!

### **III. Counter March (Rapid deployment)**

- A. Company, to the right about, change the front!

### **IV. Forming a Single Rank Skirmish Line from the Right**

- A. Company, from the right, will form one rank deep!
- B. Form front (right, left)!

### **V. Irregular Formations**

- A. Kneel
  - 1. Company, kneel!
  
- B. Stand up
  - 1. Company, up!
  
- C. Lie Down
  - 1. Company, lie down!

### **VI. Use of Natural Cover**

- A. Company, to tree! (or brush, wall, ditch, etc.)

### **VII. Independent Firings**

- A. Firing at Will
  - 1. Fire at your mark!

### **VIII. The Manual of Arms**

- A. Porte firelocks

### **THE PIQUET GUARD**

*Taken from Pickering's An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia (1775)*

#### **I. Introduction**

The role of the piquet guard is to protect the flank or flanks of the Lexington Training Band during engagements. The number of piqets shall be in direct correlation to the number of training soldiers on the

field. Piquets are charged with the responsibility of screening the Training Band's advance and stopping or delaying any flanking movement directed against the company.

#### A. Selection

- A. Prior to entering into an engagement, the 1st Sergeant shall meet with the 2d Platoon corporal;
- B. He will instruct the corporal to select a piquet guard;
- C. The 1st sergeant will also instruct the corporal how many piquets may be chosen;
- D. Piquets will be chosen based upon their mobility, ability to sustain rapid fire and experience;
- E. Piquets will be placed in the 2d platoon, preferably near the corporal.

#### B. Posting

- A. Prior to the Training Band entering the field as a flank company, the 1st Sergeant should immediately dispatch the piquets to cover the exposed flank.<sup>1</sup> Piquets should be under the command of the 2d Platoon corporal, form along the flank at extended order and carrying their arms at a trail or porte. The piquets should remain approximately twenty (50) yards from and/or on line with the Training Band.
- B. If the Training Band is entering the field alone and unsupported, piquets should be immediately dispatched to both flanks or to the front as a screen. The corporal should command the piquets protecting the right flank; a senior training soldier should command the piquets protecting the left flank.

### II. Engagement: General Rules

- A. Piquets should utilize any cover or terrain that will provide an advantage, including, but not limited to tree lines, brush, walls, streams and ditches. If cover is unavailable at the time of engagement, piquets should always kneel.
- B. Piquets should always fire at their marks.
- C. The corporal shall direct the piquets in a manner that will ensure the Training Band is adequately protected.
- D. Speed and mobility, not precision controls.
- E. Unless otherwise directed, the piquet guard must serve as the Training Band's rear guard during any and all retreats and passing across any defiles, bridges and/or obstacles.<sup>2</sup>

### III. Commands

- A. Form skirmish line/screening the company: Piquet guard! To the front form squad!
- B. Covering the retreat: Piquet guard! Cover the retreat!
- C. Protecting the flanks: Piquet guard! To the left (right) form squad!
- D. Crossing defiles on the advance: Piquet guard! To the front form squad and secure the defile!
- E. Crossing defiles on the retreat: Piquet guard! Cover the retreat!
- F.

---

<sup>1</sup> For a historical perspective on the "Picket Guard", see Timothy Pickering's *An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia* (Salem, 1775), pages 94-99. "If the battalion attacks another of equal extent, whose flanks are not covered, the . . . picquet may be ordered to detach themselves and surround the enemy by attacking their flank and rear." *Ibid* at 168.

<sup>2</sup> "If a battalion upon either flank gives way, and is defeated, the picquet . . . company wherever it . . . happens to be, is to fall back immediately, without any confusion, and protect that flank of the regiment." *Ibid* at 166.

## **FIRINGS BEHIND DEFENSIVE WORKS AND ON THE STREET**

*Taken from Pickering's An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia*

### **I. Parapet Firings**

#### A. Prepare to Perform the Parapet Firings!

1. Charge!
2. *The rightmost files break away from battalion formation and advances up to the defensive work.*
3. *The files fire at their marks, return to the ranks, prime and load and come to shoulder.*
4. *After firing, the next file advance to the defensive works, takes aim and fire at their mark. This will continue until the cease fire is given.*

### **II. Street Firings**

#### A. Take Care to charge by street firing! Charge!

1. First Platoon, Make Ready!
2. Present!
3. Fire!
4. Shoulder firelocks!
5. Left and right face!
  - a. *The right side of the platoon (squad, file) faces to the right and the left side faces to the left. The two sections then march to the outside and down each side of the column. When the sections have cleared the column, they halt, right about and wheel into line to reform the platoon (squad, file)*
  - b. *The next platoon either advances five paces to fire (street firing on the advance) or holds fast and fires (street firing on the retreat). After firing, the next platoon also will break off and reform behind the company.*

## **WHISTLE COMMANDS**

*Taken from Townsend's Rules and Orders for the Discipline of the Light Infantry Companies in His Majesty's Army in Ireland (1772)*

### **I. Fire by Whistle**

#### A. "Prepare to Fire By Whistle!"

1. Four Blasts: Prime and Load
2. One Blast: 'Bout
3. One Blast: Shoulder
4. Three Blasts: Make Ready
5. Two Blasts: Present
6. One Blast: Fire!

### **II. On the March**

#### A. One Short Blast: Stop

#### B. Two Blasts: Go

#### C. Three Blasts: Rally on me/ Break