

School of the Renaissance Soldier

Abbreviated Drill Manual

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How the Drill will be Conducted

The focus of the School of the Renaissance Soldier drills will be to impart recently discovered drill principles in maneuvering, marching and weapons handling. Some of the commands used will be unfamiliar, even to experienced reenactors. Novices and veterans will be training together. For some, the new material may be more challenging, but it will be taught in a way that all can master it. For others, this material may seem very familiar, but that's why they call it "drill". Practice makes perfect.

We accept the fact that some participants in the ALC will have a different understanding of how these drills should be conducted. We can make no absolute claim that the methods and commands presented in this event are the best or only ones acceptable. During the drills, however, it is expected that all participants will conduct themselves as private soldiers receiving instruction. It would be out of order, therefore, for anyone to challenge the officers conducting the training, or to question the validity of their methods (*except, of course, in cases where harm to soldiers or equipment is eminent*).

This being said, it is our goal to train in the most period appropriate manner. Any participant who wishes to discuss the drill procedures with the officers at the end of the day, or can produce documentation from primary period sources which improves our understanding and definition of these drills, is encouraged to do so.

Those soldiers who will be training in pike only, remain a pikeman for the duration of the event. You may use your own pike, or one will be provided for you. Unless special exception has been granted, only 16 foot pikes may be used in group drill and training. Pikemen may have the opportunity to learn to fire a matchlock during one of the optional workshops. This is encouraged, but new shooters must receive the approval of the Lieutenant before joining the regular shot drills.

For some of the pike training sessions, soldiers who own a firearm, may prefer instead, to train as pike. Although we encourage cross training, only those soldiers already familiar with the pike postures should attempt to do so if they have not attended the morning pike posture training.

Infantry Drill

Foundation

The Company will be divided between Pike and Shot. Each weapon type is divided into files. Each file consists of six soldiers. The front man is the file leader, the last, the bringer up. The first man of the second half of the file is the half file leader, the last man in the first half of the file, the half file bringer up. The file leader should be the most experienced member of his file, followed by the bringer up, half file leader and half file bringer up, in that order. As files join together, ranks are formed by all file leaders and each follower in turn. The soldier to your left or right is your sidemen, the man in front of you; your leader.

The original orientation of the company as defined by the captain is called the front, its opposite, the rear. From the soldier's perspective, the right side of the company is the right flank, the left side, the left flank. Divisions can be formed by ranks, with the file leader to the half file bringer up designated the front division, the half file leader to the bringer up, the rear division. Files may be divided into division from the center of the company, or by the captain's command.

Companies are commanded by a Captain, with a Lieutenant as second-in-command, an Ensign to display the Colours, at least one Sergeant, and several Corporals.

How Commands are Given

All facing and motions commands have three parts: *WHO*, *how*, and

WHAT:

WHO... Indicates to whom the command is directed. This may designate the entire company or some subset of it (i.e. "*FILES*", "*RANKS*" or even "*FIRST RANK*"). This portion of the command is intended to get the full attention of the soldiers expected to perform it.

how... Describes in what manner or direction the upcoming command should be performed. (i.e. "*to the right hand*"). This portion of the command gives the optional details of how the command is to be executed.

WHAT... The actual command (i.e. "**FACE**"), or action to be taken. This portion is shouted with greater emphasis. The soldiers take no action until they hear the final part of the command, but then they react promptly.

The order in which these components are delivered is crucial.

First, the soldiers pay particular attention when they hear that the command is intended for them; second, they listen intently to the direction or manner in which they are to react; and finally, when they have heard the command, they know exactly who will execute it, and how. All that remains is to execute the command. If, however, the order were reversed, the soldiers might automatically begin to take action, without knowing in what manner and for whom the command was intended.

Distances

There are four defined distances that can be used to separate files or ranks. Measures are from the center of one man to the center of the next:

Files	}	Close Order.....	When the soldiers set their left arms
		(1 ½ feet)	akimbo (hand on hip and elbow extending outward), their elbows touch their sideman
		Order.....	When the soldiers setting their arms
		(3 feet)	akimbo, their elbows touch
Files	}	Open Order.....	When the soldiers stretching out their
		(6 feet)	arms, their hands touch each other
		Double Distance...	Directed by the sergeants (seldom used)
		(12 feet)	
Ranks	}	Order.....	When they come to their leader's sword
		(3 feet)	point
		Open Order.....	When the butt-end of the shouldered pikes
		(6 feet)	almost reach to the leader's heels
		Double Distance...	Directed by the sergeants
		(12 feet)	

Common distances observed in different situations are:

	<i>Files</i>	<i>Ranks</i>
Forming up	Order	Order
Marching	Order	Open Order
Long march	Order	Double Distance
Maneuver on the field	Order	Order
To close to the enemy – Pike	Close Order	Order
To close to the enemy – Shot	Order	Order

Distance Commands:

FILES	{ to the right hand { to the left hand	{	OPEN TO YOUR ORDER
			OPEN TO YOUR OPEN ORDER
FILES	{ from the middle	{	OPEN TO YOUR DOUBLE DISTANCE
			CLOSE TO YOUR OPEN ORDER
FILES	{ to the middle	{	CLOSE TO YOUR ORDER
			CLOSE TO YOUR CLOSE ORDER
RANKS	{ to the fore { to the rear	{	OPEN TO YOUR OPEN ORDER
			OPEN TO YOUR DOUBLE DISTANCE
RANKS	{ from the middle	{	CLOSE TO YOUR OPEN ORDER
			CLOSE TO YOUR ORDER
RANKS	{ to the middle	{	OPEN TO YOUR OPEN ORDER
			OPEN TO YOUR DOUBLE DISTANCE
RANKS	{ to the middle	{	CLOSE TO YOUR OPEN ORDER
			CLOSE TO YOUR ORDER

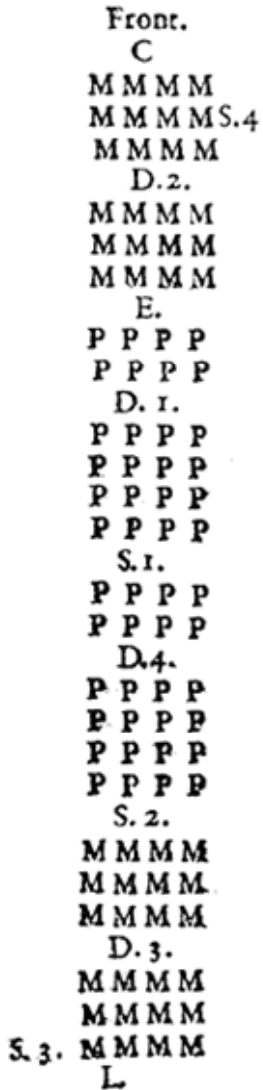
There are certain command combinations that cannot exist. Ranks and files cannot “close to your double distance” since they are never farther apart than double distance, and hence cannot close to it.

Ranks cannot “close to your close order” since they can never be closer than “to the sword point” or order, and since they are never at close order, they can never “open to your order”.

Formations and Repositioning

The usual formation for a company is as follows: The pikes in a square formation with the shot forming “Sleeves” on either flank. The officers, sergeants, colors, and music all march outside of the formation.

Marching



Colonel Barriffe calls this formation the "Deep March." Spacing from one file to the adjacent file must be at Order and spacing from one rank to another is to be at Open Order.

Note the divisions within the column. Musketeers are formed into two groups, one at the front and one at the rear, with pike in the middle. In this configuration, the marching column can quickly and readily be converted into a battle formation.

Study the placement of the officers, sergeants, drummers and ensign. Although the commander leads and the lieutenant is at the rear, as in the battle formation, the sergeants and drummers are in particular places in the march based on their ranking or "Dignitie." The number-one sergeant is in the center, whereas the number-four sergeant is at the front right, near the commander. Likewise, the number-one drummer is near the center, in front of some pikemen who precede the number-one sergeant.

The ensign is NOT at the front end with the commander. Instead, he is about a third the way back, behind the first division of musketeers. Musketeers and pikemen march between the ensign and the nearest drummers. It is in battle formation the ensign comes to the side of the commander.

The captain is to be at the front of the column to lead it, to be the body's head. The ensign, however, bearing the essence of the company's spirit, is within the body of the company where the "spirit thrives"

Aware that companies come in assorted sizes, Colonel Barriffe offers: "If the Company be but small, then it is best to make but two Divisions, one of the Muskettiers, another of the Pike... If you have but three Drums, let the Drum in the second Division of Pikes be wanting: If only two, then upon a march the first between the third and fourth Rank of the Front Division of Muskettiers. The second between the third and fourth Rank of the second Division of Pikes."

And on a final note: "...that between each Division in march there ought to be a twelve-foot distance, six foot before the Officer and six foot behind him."

A lexicon of symbols used in the above diagram:

C - captain	M - musketeer
D - drummer	P - pikeman
E - ensign	S - sergeant
L - lieutenant	

The company being formed in order, with pikes ordered;

RANKS, to the rear, OPEN TO YOUR OPEN ORDER

ADVANCE YOUR PIKE

The pikemen advance their pikes, shot shoulder their pieces.

To have the company move forward;

PREPARE TO MARCH

(Drum; four beats)

MARCH

(Drum, take up a marching cadence)

The company starts to march, each man starting out with his left foot and following the beat of the drum. The left foot should come down on the down (heavy) beat of the drum.

Being in motion, if the company is to cover a considerable distance:

SHOULDER YOUR PIKE

(Drum beat left foot fall only)

The pikes are shouldered and sloped; guns may be carried on either shoulder. The soldiers need not keep in step, but must maintain their ranks, and stay in time with the drum.

To bring the company back in step:

ADVANCE YOUR PIKES

The pikes come back to advance, the shot return their pieces to their left shoulder. All pick up the step from the drum, which beats as for starting (see above).

To March by Divisions

If it is necessary to march through a narrow way, the following procedure can be used.

The company being ready to march:

FILES, to the right hand, DOUBLE

The pikes double the number of men in each file. After which the ranks should be returned to open order:

FILES, to the rear, OPEN TO YOUR OPEN ORDER

The lieutenant takes command of the shot on the right, and orders them to march. As the last rank of shot passes the front of the pikes, the captain orders the main body to march. They are followed by the shot of the left sleeve, under command of the sergeant.

Another Way to Pass a Straight

If the way is too narrow to march by the previous method, then you may march by files.

The company being ready to march;

MAKE READY TO MARCH BY FILES (or by double, treble, etc, files)

MARCH

Starting from the right, and lead by the lieutenant, the files march forward in their turn.

The company would reform as above.

To Halt

When it is desired to halt the company:

PREPARE TO STAND

To have the company stop;

STAND

All stop, and await the next command.

Marching Column to a Battlefield Formation

Not surprising, the usual method for moving a unit of soldiers to where the battle may take place is by the march. Once there, the unit must then be arrayed for battle, which means transforming the unit from narrow and long to wide and short, all in an orderly fashion so as not to present a moment's opportunity for the enemy to strike. The procedure is essentially the reverse of a battle-arrayed unit forming up for the march.

Divisions within the unit are predetermined by the commanding officer and every soldier has been told to which division he belongs. At the place that officer selects, the column is told to "Stand!" The commander directs the divisions into battle formation, which are then guided to their places by sergeants and one of their commands being "To this ground!"

1. The column for the march was formed in anticipation of the unit arraying itself properly for battle later. For this, the officer wished to have the musketeers be the sleeves (a.k.a. wings) of the battlefield formation. Therefore, he formed the column with the sleeves-to-be at each end, dividing musketeers into the two groups (divisions), with the division of pikemen in the column's middle to become the core of the battlefield formation. Upon the officer's command, the marching column will array itself into battlefield formation according to its divisions.
2. The lead division, which is the first group of musketeers, takes the place of highest Dignitie, which is the right side of the battlefield formation. Each division in its turn takes its position to the left of that first division; in this case the division of pikemen moves into place immediately to the left of the leftmost file of the first division of musketeers, and then the second division of musketeers moves into its place to the left of the leftmost file of pikemen.

Note that no division crosses in front of any other division (to do so would be inviting the enemy to: "Attack

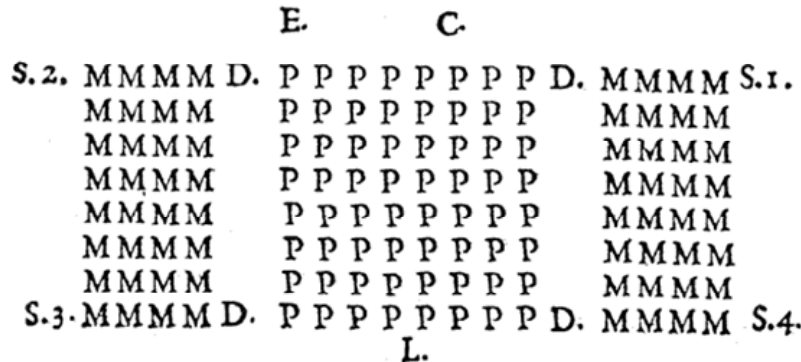
now and throw us into disarray."). Once in battlefield formation, the direction the entire unit faces is its Front Proper with all File Leaders at the heads of their respective files.

Colonel Barriffe places sergeants at each corner of the battle formation and the commander foremost.

Note that with the pikemen in the center of the column, they can readily assume the center of the battle formation.

After the divisions have taken their respective positions for battle, an officer should decrease the depth of the unit (an appropriate command for which is "Ranks, to the fore, close to your order!").

Battle Formation



This illustration shows how all members of a unit should be arrayed in preparation for battle. Not only are pikemen and musketeers represented here but so are others: captain or commander, lieutenant, drummers, sergeants and ensign. The commander and ensign are at the front to lead, to orient and to inspire the soldiers. Sergeants are at each corner to coordinate and to be sure all soldiers within shouting distance obey the commander's orders. Drummers are at the front and rearmost ranks, here between the musketeers and the pike. Drummers, with their drumbeats, repeat and emphasize the commands. At the rear is the lieutenant, placed there primarily to keep him protected so that he would be available to step forward to take command should the commander fall. The lieutenant can also provide guidance from his position and be sure no soldier shirks his duty.

Battlefield Formation to a Marching Column

The width of a battlefield formation will not fit the width of the usual road; therefore, a narrowed column is required for the march.

The ranks of the battlefield formation could be divided into divisions clearly delineated and everyone made to understand. Division by division, one behind the other, the entire unit could proceed with the march, as illustrated before.

Since the right-most division has the greatest "Dignitie," it is the first to move. It is followed by the division with the next highest "Dignitie," thence by the last division. All three divisions will make a single column of four long files.

1. As with moving a wide unit of soldiers through a narrow passage file by file, the same method can apply to converting a battlefield formation into a marching formation. In this type of situation, several files may

march together, the width of the rank determined by the width of the space - and confirmed by the officer before proceeding.

2. However the officer elects to divide the ranks, the right hand division always takes the lead and the division to its immediate left follows - and so on. The battlefield formation may be reformed by undoing this procedure similar to marching by divisions, mentioned below.

In addition, be aware of the position of musketeers in relation to pikemen in the battlefield formation and thence on the march. The pike form the center of the formation in both situations. With pike in the middle of the marching column, the entire force may then readily assume a battlefield formation without any division having to cross the path of another.

Prior to giving the command for the march, the officer should widen the distance between ranks to Open Order. Since the battlefield formation is the *raison d'etre* of an assembly of soldiers, good sense would have this also be the form-up formation. Each soldier can then become familiar with his placement and everyone else's before confronting pike, shot, horse and artillery.

Countermarches

To “set the strongest part of your Armie against the enemy” a commander may call a countermarch to “turne the front of his battaile against the enemy that sheweth himself in the Reare”.

Files, prepare for a Lacedemonian Countermarch

FILES	{	<i>by the right hand, every man</i>	}	COUNTERMARCH
		<i>turning after his leader</i>		
		~		
		<i>by the left hand, every man</i>		
		<i>turning after his leader</i>		

Files, prepare for a Chorean Countermarch

FILES	{	<i>by the right hand, to maintain</i>	}	COUNTERMARCH
		<i>ground</i>		
		~		
		<i>by the left hand, to maintain</i>		
		<i>ground</i>		

Ground gained or lost in a *countermarch*, refers to that ground gained or lost relative to the *march*, not ground gained or lost relative to the *enemy*. This is important to remember.

Wheeling

By 'Wheeling,' an entire unit changes its direction, not simply each soldier. Every soldier could, in the end, be facing 90 degrees to their former orientation, even 180 degrees, but there would be no "Accidental" Front, only the "Proper" Front.

COMPANY	{	<i>to the right hand,</i>	}	WHEEL
		<i>from the right file leader</i>		
		~		
		<i>to the left hand,</i>		DOUBLE WHEEL
		<i>from the left file leader</i>		

For a wheel, the right (or left) most man of the front rank starts to march in a very small circle, almost marching in place, until the rank has made a quarter turn, or is ordered to stand. All others in the rank maintain contact with the elbow of the man on either side, while looking to the right to keep the line straight. The men towards the outside of the “spoke” lengthen their stride to maintain alignment. Each of the other ranks will be doing this simultaneously, so that they resemble the spokes of a wheel.

Disbanding

The Company being in formation:

OFFICERS, COME FORWARD

The Commissioned Officers (down to Sergeant) stand in order of precedence in front of the ranks, facing the men. Senior Officers usually have just finished addressing the troops:

COMPANY, SALUTE YOUR OFFICERS

(Drum: Roll)

Each man salutes the officers, shot by doffing hats, pike by inclining weapons forward. The Officers salute the troops and withdraw, usually in order of precedence:

DRUMS AND COLOURS, COME FORWARD

The Ensign and Drummers stand in order of precedence in front of the ranks, facing the men:
COMPANY, SALUTE YOUR DRUMS AND COLOURS

Each man salutes the drums and colours, shot by doffing hats, pike by inclining weapons forward. The Ensign and Drummers salute the troops and withdraw, usually in order of precedence.

So far we have yet to locate an actual period command for disbanding. Rather than use common modern day versions such as "*fall out*", we have found good documentation for more casual directives, and have converted them to useable commands:

REPAIRE TO YOUR QUARTERS

or, if the Captain is feeling especially compassionate:

REPAIRE TO YOUR QUARTERS, REST YOUR LIMBS, REFRESH YOUR SPIRITS, AND REPLENISH YOUR BANDOLIERS

Drill Material Sources

For the inaugural School of the Renaissance Soldier event in 2005 we collected the best drill research available to us at the time. These came from several secondary sources and a long standing oral tradition as practiced by the Renaissance Military Society.

Since last year, however, we have had the good fortune to have access to a broad selection of digital facsimiles of original works published in the 16th and 17th centuries. After a year of research, we are beginning to realize that not all of our original assumptions and interpretations were correct or accurate. After a systematic examination of ten different primary source documents from the years 1597 through 1638, a pattern of similar topics and concepts is beginning to immerge.

It was interesting to note that over the 64 year period covered in our review, there was a high degree of similarity. This is less surprising when you understand that Renaissance military studies, largely begun by Niccolo Machiavelli, spawned a renewed interest in classic Greek and Roman military techniques. Late 16th century military theorists such as Sir Clement Edmondes and John Bingham undertook translations of original Greek and Roman texts, and the basic elements of Greek and Roman drill techniques are quite evident in 16-17th century manuals.

It is also noteworthy that prior to 1597, we can find no evidence of concise commands as represented in this manual. Many military treatises were written during the 16th century describing a variety of aspects of contemporary warfare, but apparently the idea to set down actual commands into a training manual did not occur to them. The credit for this idea must go to Johann II van Nassau. Suffice it to say that his hand written list of actual commands is the earliest that we can document, and gives us a slim, but solid, toehold in the Elizabethan period.

These concepts, and resulting command structure have been tested during drill by RMS members at the Heart of the Forest Renaissance Faire last summer, and this is the first time that they have been organized and collected in print.

Parallel to this effort, Barry Siler has prepared a thorough review of the writing of one of the authors included in the general survey, Colonel William Barriffe. Barry has prepared a very exciting and informative set of animated web pages which graphically demonstrate Barriffe's principle treatises. You are highly encouraged to study Barry's site (www.syler.com).

Although there is generally good accord between Barry's results and this manual (some portions, in fact, being copied wholesale) several small differences will be noted. Barry is using just one source, and making his work representative of Barriffe only. We have chosen not to use this approach for this manual because we have found that, although there is much in common among all the reviewed texts, there is a high degree of irregularity within the work of any single author. For this reason the commands referenced in this manual are actually a composite of several different sources, and sometimes have been modified or "corrected" to comply with rules which an author himself has set down, but failed to follow. In many ways the commands listed here are more internally consistent and predictable than any one of the primary sources which inspired them.