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Guard Mount

Guard Mount Parade was held after morning roll call and breakfast each day. The purpose was to assemble, inspect and post the camp guards for the next 24 hours. The prime source for this monograph is the Revised Regulations of 1861 unless otherwise noted.

The camp guard is under the command of the Officer of the Guard (OG) who in turn reported to the Officer of the Day (OD). A sergeant of the guard and three corporals of the guard assisted the OG. An additional sergeant of the guard may be detailed if the guard was large enough. Each corporal commanded a relief of sentinels. A relief was composed of as many men as was required to man the sentry posts around the camp simultaneously. In addition to the three reliefs, a quarter guard could be designated to stand guard at a number of posts throughout the daylight hours.

During daylight hours there were typically a small number of posts manned by sentries. After sundown, the number of sentry posts would be increased. The regulations specify ten sentry posts for a regimental encampment. With the exception of the commander's tent and the guard tent, there is little detail as to where the sentry posts were set up. The color line and the perimeter of the camp are noted, but other posts are not specifically mentioned. It can be assumed the size and location of the camp and the need for sentinels determined the posting of sentries. The three reliefs would take turns mounting the sentry posts around the camp. Each relief would man the sentry posts for two hours and be relieved by the next relief of sentinels.

The sergeant of the guard supervised the guard during the daylight hours. At night each corporal supervised his relief.

The assignments as officer of the day and officer of the guard are made by the adjutant and announced at the Retreat Parade the day before. **(2, p.28)**

The guard mount parade was intended to assemble all the men detailed for guard for the day. The Adjutant and Sergeant Major, representing the colonel, would be on hand to ensure that all men were properly equipped and instructed for guard duty. The adjutant would oversee the transfer of authority from the old guard detail to the new guard detail. The formal guard mount is a miniature version of a dress parade and pass in review.

Guard Mount Procedure

The most common method of detailing men for guard was to draft a small number of men from each company. A less common method was to take all the guard detail from a single company. This instruction will assume the former method is used.

The details of men for guard duty are selected from each company by the company first sergeant. The first sergeant announces their assignment at the roll call conducted just prior to Retreat Parade the day before they are to go on duty. **(2, p. 237)**

At the first call for guard mount, the details are assembled on the company streets for inspection by the respective first sergeants.

1. At the second call for guard mount, the details are marched to the regimental parade ground by their respective first sergeants.
2. As each detail arrives on the parade ground is directed by the Adjutant to form on the left of the detail that preceded it. The Sergeant Major marks the right flank position of the guard. He would act in a similar capacity as the Adjutant at a dress parade. The first detail will be positioned two paces to the left of the regimental band. They will open ranks, fix bayonets and stand at shoulder arms. Any supernumeraries will form a third rank behind the two ranks. The first sergeants will stand in the rank of file closers. First sergeants will remain throughout the guard mount in the line of file closers. If there is a problem with the suitability of any men in a detail, the first sergeant must answer to the Adjutant for the problem.
3. The Officer of the Guard will take a position in the line of file closers directly behind the right most file.
4. The Sergeant Major will dress the ranks, count the files and verify that all details are correct. Although it isn't specified in the Regulations, the men should be grouped by reliefs with the corporal of the guard in the front rank, right most file of his relief. The sergeant of the guard will be positioned as a first sergeant of a company. When satisfied, the Sergeant Major commands:
 - o Shoulder ---- ARMS
 - o Prepare to Open Ranks
 - o To the rear in open order --- MARCH; and the Guard will open ranks as a company of infantry.
5. The Sergeant Major will march directly to a position in front of the Adjutant and report. The Sergeant Major will then take a post in line with the front rank and two paces to the left of the left most file.
6. The Adjutant commands: FRONT! At this command the OG moves to a position 12 paces in front of the center of the guard and draws his sword. (2, p.28) The sergeant of the guard marches to a position 8 paces in the center of the guard; and the corporals form a line 4 paces in front of the center of the guard. When walking to their positions in front of the guard, the officer and NCOs should march directly to their appointed positions without cutting "square corners".
7. The Adjutant assigns their duties. He does this by walking to the OG and appointing him to his duty. Then he walks around the OG to the sergeant of the guard and assigns him to his post. The Adjutant then walks to the line of corporals and assigns them to their reliefs. He will walk around the back of the line of corporals and return to his position 14 paces in front of the guard.
8. The Adjutant then commands:
 - o Officers and non-commissioned officers ABOUT ---- FACE! ***The OG and NCOs execute the movement of about-face.***
 - o Inspect your guards-----MARCH! ***The non-commissioned officers return to their positions.***
9. The OG commands
 - o Order----ARMS
 - o Inspection---ARMS
10. The OG inspects the guard. During this inspection, the band will play music, typically this is light dancing music, and never martial music. If required to save time because of a large guard detail, the Adjutant may assist in inspecting the guard.
11. At the completion of the inspection, the OG will take his position as if he was a company commander on a battalion parade (two paces in front of the center of the guard), and draw his sword.
12. The Officers of the Day will now take their position. The new OD will be positioned 20 paces in front of the center of the guard. The old OD will be

positioned one pace to his rear and three paces to his right. They will be the reviewing officers and will not draw their swords. At the Adjutant's command they will assume the officer's position for parade rest (with undrawn sword) by moving the right foot one foot length to the rear, and folding their arms across their chests.

13. The Adjutant commands:
 - o Parade-----REST!
 - o Troop-----Beat Off! ***The band will march from its position on the right of the line across the front of the guard and return to its original position at which time it will cease playing.***

14. The Adjutant will command:
 - o Attention----GUARD!
 - o Shoulder----ARMS!
 - o Close Order----MARCH! ***At the command "Close Order" the OG will face about. At the command "March"; he will move to his position at the right of the line in the same position as a company commander on battalion parade.***

15. The Adjutant then commands, Present----Arms! He faces the new Officer of the Day, renders a sword salute and reports: "Sir, the guard is formed." The new Officer of the Day acknowledges the salute and orders the Adjutant to march the guard in review.

16. The Adjutant faces the guard and commands:
 - o Shoulder----ARMS!
 - o By Guard -- Right Wheel
 - o Quick----MARCH!
 - o Pass in Review! ***The Adjutant will move to a position on the left of the first relief or first division. The Sergeant Major will march to a position on the left of the second relief or the second division.***
 - o Guard, forward. Guide right. MARCH!
 - If the guard is large enough, the reliefs will wheel as platoons with the corporal of the guard of each relief acting as a first sergeant. If the guard is the size of a small company, it will wheel as a single company with the sergeant of the guard acting as the directing sergeant.
 - The guard will follow the music and pass in review for the new officer of the day. The first sergeants will not march past, but will remain in their positions until the guard has marched past the ODs.
 - During the pass in review, the Adjutant will march on the left of the first relief or first division; the Sergeant Major will march on the left of the second division. In the event the guard is marched past as a single unit, the Sergeant Major's position will be behind the leftmost file of the guard.

17. When the guard has passed the Officer of the Day, the Officer of the Guard will assume command and march the guard to the guardhouse. The Adjutant and Sergeant Major will retire and the music will cease. The supernumeraries will be marched by their first sergeants to their company parades to be dismissed.

18. The old Officer of the Guard will assemble the old guard at the approach of the new guard. He will command: Present----ARMS! As the new guard marches past at shouldered arms.

19. The new guard will take position to the right of the old guard and aligned with it. The new OG will command: Present----ARMS! The two officers will approach each other and salute. They will return to their respective commands and command:
 - o Shoulder----ARMS!

Order----ARMS!

20. The new Officer of the Guard will direct the first detail to be formed and marched to its posts by the new corporal of the guard. The old corporal of the guard will accompany this new relief to assist in retrieving his sentinels.
21. The new OG and the old OG will exchange standing orders, passwords and countersigns. The new OG will "take possession of the guard house or guard tent and the articles and prisoners in charge of the guard." (1, p.60) The new and old sergeant of the guard will exchange any information and instructions necessary for their duties.
22. The guard stacks arms and remains at the guardhouse or tent for the 24-hour tour of duty. The guard is "turned out and paraded and inspected at Reveille, Retreat and Tattoo." (2, p. 33). When not on guard posts, the off-duty guard remains in the guardhouse or tent. They will take their meals at the guardhouse and sleep in the guardhouse. The guard must wear its accoutrements the entire time it is on duty.

In the event of bad weather or after a long march, the pass in review will be omitted. However, the inspection and salutes will be adhered to. (1, p. 59) The guard detail is not to be considered a fatigue detail or a source of manpower for performing officer's chores. The OG and sergeant of the guard will not allow the guard to be used for any other duties.

Sources

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