



School Of The Soldier

ALIGNMENT

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Alignment lesson – why so soon?

- In Casey's, the lesson on Alignments is not taught until the first lesson of the third part of School of the Soldier.
 - S.S. 78. Each movement should be understood before passing to another. After they have been properly executed in the order laid down in each lesson the instructor no longer confines himself to that order; on the contrary, he should change it, that he may judge of the intelligence of the men.
 - S.S. 319. When the recruits are well established in the principles and mechanism of the step, the position of the body, and the manual of arms, the instructor will unite eight men, at least, and twelve men at most, in order to teach them the principles of alignment, the principles of the touch of elbows in marching to the front, the principles of the march by the flank, wheeling from a halt, wheeling in marching, and the change of direction to the side of the guide. He will place the squad in one rank, elbow to elbow, and number the men from right to left.
- Some challenges faced as reenactors:
 - We don't have (make?) enough time to drill fundamentals before taking the field.
 - We don't have consistent attendance at the few drill sessions we do have.
- A Solution = Combine complimentary sets of instruction
 - E.g., Position of the Soldier + Alignment + Facings + Mechanism of the Step
 - Provide group instruction to “experienced” soldiers arranged in a single rank
 - Provide individual instruction to fresh fish and any “veterans” that need a refresher or “reprogramming”.

Eyes RIGHT (LEFT)

- Key to proper alignment is proper movement of the head and eyes.
- Teaching the recruit how to turn the head and the eyes:
 - Eyes-RIGHT. 2. FRONT.
 - **S.S. 88.** At the word right, the recruit will turn the head gently, so as to bring the inner corner of the left eye in a line with the buttons of the coat, the eyes fixed on the line of the eyes of the men in, or supposed to be in, the same rank.
 - **S.S. 89.** At the second command, the head will resume the direct or habitual position.
- This is a subtle movement.
 - It is not sudden, it is not big.
 - Peripheral vision is used to make the alignment, not direct vision.
 - The head turns only slightly in order to “bring the inner corner of the left eye in a line with the buttons of the coat”.
 - The reference point is the “inner corner of the left eye”, not the outer corner of the left eye, and certainly not the left ear.
 - Note that the recruit is to “turn the head gently” and the instructor is to make sure that the movement is not “too sudden.”
 - It is the head, and only the head that moves, don’t twist the shoulders to get a better view.

Alignments

- According to the last sentence of instruction S.S. 319, the instructor will “place the squad in one rank, elbow to elbow, and number the men from right to left.”
- Start one man at a time, using the eye and head movement taught in instruction S.S. 88 (referenced in S.S. 321 “as prescribed in the first lesson of the first part”)
 - S.S. 321. Each recruit, as designated by his number will turn the head and eyes to the right, as prescribed in the first lesson of the first part, and will march in quick time two paces forward, shortening the last, so as to find himself about six inches behind the new alignment, which he ought never to pass: he will next move up steadily by steps of two or three inches, the hams extended, to the side of the man next to him on the alignment, so that, without deranging the head, the line of the eyes, or that of the shoulders, he may find himself in the exact line of his neighbor, whose elbow he will lightly touch without opening his own.