

THE MANUAL OF THE MACE

OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, you will learn the positions and signals of the mace required for a drum major to lead a marching band.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

OBJECTIVE: After completing this lesson, you will be able to identify the positions and signals of the mace necessary to lead the marching band.

CONDITIONS: Given the information in this lesson.

ACTIONS: You will identify the positions and signals of the mace.

STANDARDS: IAW the information contained in this lesson.

INTRODUCTION

As drum major you are responsible for the drill and discipline of the band. Your ability to function as the drum major requires the knowledge of mace signals. You must know the signals necessary to lead the band in any ceremony. This lesson includes all the mace signals that you will use while performing in a ceremony.

1. The mace.
 - a. The mace is used by the drum major to convey commands or signals to the marching band.
 - b. The parts of the mace are the ball, staff, chain, and ferrule ([Figure 2-1](#)).

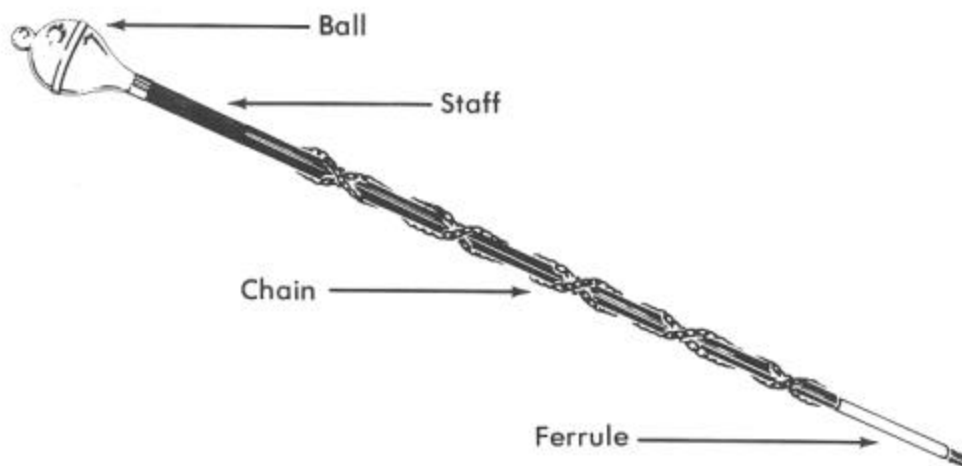


Figure 2-1. Parts Of The Mace.

- c. The balance point of the mace is the point at which the mace is balanced when held vertically by two fingers. This point is usually at a position approximately one third of the between the ball and the ferrule.
2. Performance of Mace Signals. Mace signals and movements are normally performed in cadence at a tempo between 116 and 120 beats per minute. For signals executed while marching, odd numbered counts occur as the left foot strikes the ground. Mace signals are described and illustrated in [Paragraphs 3 through 25](#), [Figures 2-2 through 2-23](#).

NOTE: Words in UPPER CASE with quotation marks (") indicate the verbal command used to execute the movement.

3. ATTENTION



Stand at **ATTENTION** by grasping the mace with your right hand just below the ball. Point your thumb toward the ball. Hold your right elbow approximately 3 inches away from your side to match your left elbow. Your forearm should be at a 30 degree angle towards the right. Place the ferrule on line with and touching the toe of your right shoe.

Figure 2-2 ATTENTION

4. PARADE REST



COUNT 1

(PARADE)

No physical movement.

COUNT 2

(Silent Count)

COUNT 3

"REST"

Move your left foot ten inches to the left of your right foot. At the same time, place the mace ferrule between your feet in line with your toes. Place your left hand on the mace so that it covers your right hand. Your thumbs should overlap in a folded position. Do not move the ball away from your body.

Figure 2-3 PARADE REST

5. LEFT CARRY

The **LEFT CARRY** is the primary position used to carry the mace while marching. Assume this position from **ATTENTION**.



COUNT 1

Move the ball in an arc across your chest with your right hand. The ball of the mace should touch your left shoulder. The ferrule should point slightly outward. Grasp the balance point of the mace with your left thumb and your index and middle fingers.

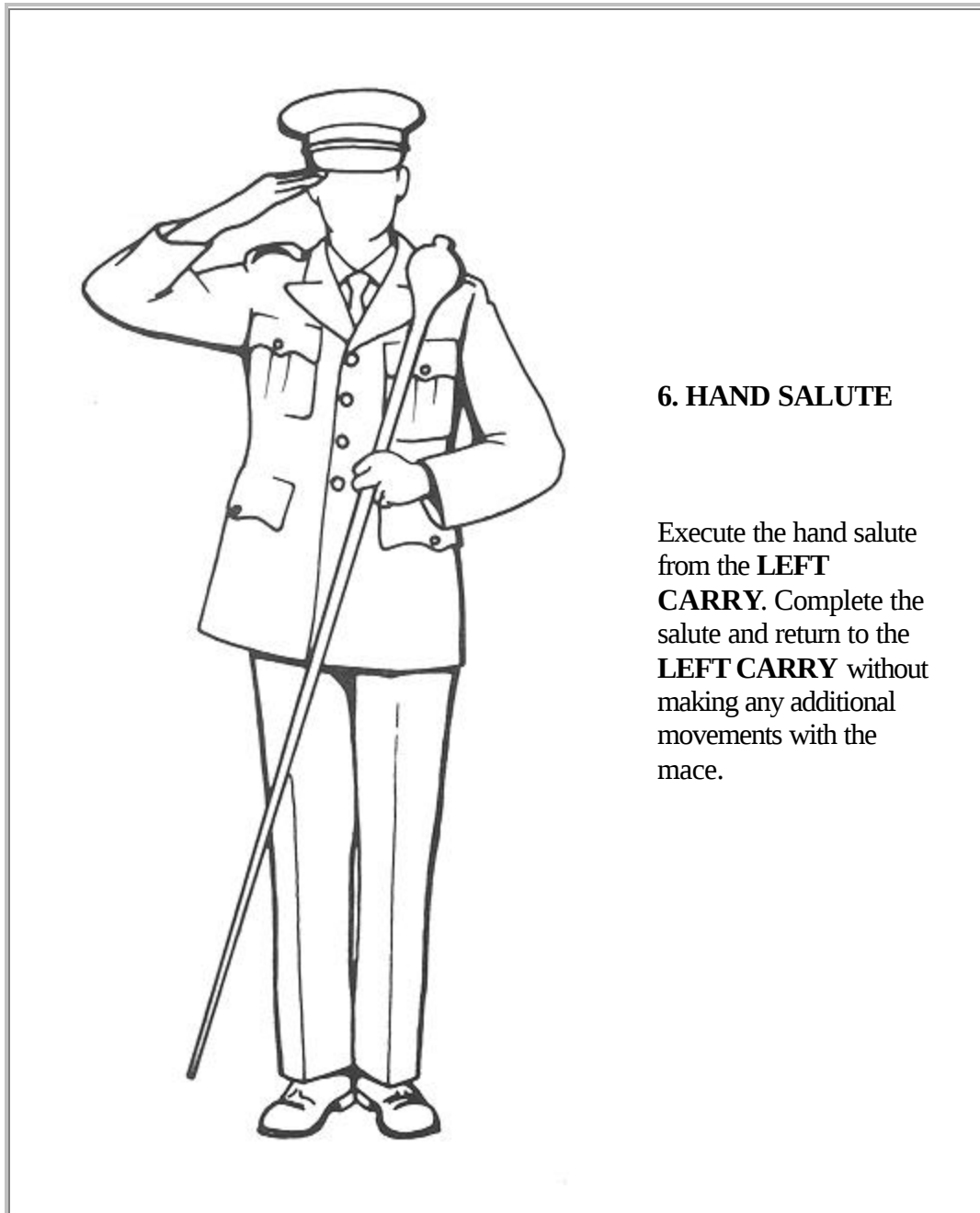


COUNT 2

(Silent Count)



Figure 2-4 LEFT CARRY



6. HAND SALUTE

Execute the hand salute from the **LEFT CARRY**. Complete the salute and return to the **LEFT CARRY** without making any additional movements with the mace.

Figure 2-5 HAND SALUTE

7. RIGHT CARRY

Use the **RIGHT CARRY** as an alternate to the **LEFT CARRY**. Use it to do **LEFT TURNS** and **LEFT GUIDE SIGNALS**. Also use it to rest your left arm.

COUNT 1

Release the grip of your left hand. Allow the mace to slide through your hand. Catch the mace just below the ball, with all four fingers and your thumb wrapped around the staff.



Figure 2-6 RIGHT CARRY

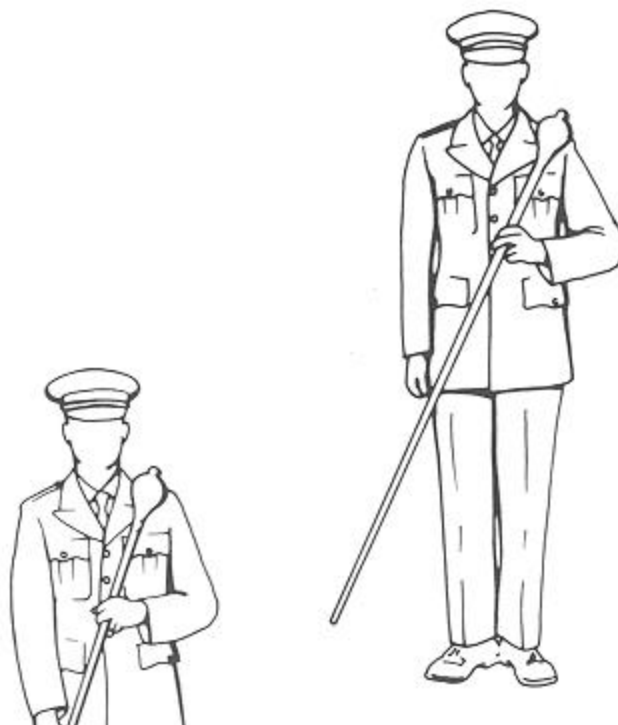
8. BAND ALIGNMENT

Hold the mace
in the **LEFT
CARRY**.

Move to a
position four
steps in front
of the left flank
file. Face the
file.

COUNT 1

Grasp the staff
with your right
hand
approximately
20 to 24 inches
above the
bottom of the
staff. Your
palm should
face your body.
Your right arm
should be
straight.



COUNT 2

Rotate the
mace to a
vertical

Figure 2-7 BAND ALIGNMENT

9. INSTRUMENTS UP

Signal **INSTRUMENTS UP** (the **PREPARE TO PLAY** position) by doing the following sequence from the **LEFT CARRY**.



COUNT 1

Grasp the staff with your right hand approximately 20 to 24 inches above the bottom of the staff. Your palm should face your body. Your right arm should be straight.



COUNT 2

(Silent Count)

COUNT 3

Move the mace in an arc across your chest toward your right shoulder. Stop the mace in a vertical position along the right side of your body. Your right arm should be fully extended. Maintain the grip of your left hand. The left palm should face your right shoulder. This signals the bandmembers to **READY INSTRUMENTS**.



COUNT 4

(Silent Count)



Figure 2-8 INSTRUMENTS UP

**10.
INSTRUMENTS
UP
(ALTERNATE)**

COUNT 1

Grasp the staff just below the ball with your right hand. Face your palm toward your chest. Point your thumb towards the ball.



COUNT 2

(Silent Count)



COUNT 3

Open your left hand. Return it momentarily to your side as you move your right hand to the front of your right thigh. This brings the mace to a horizontal position.



Figure 2-9 INSTRUMENTS UP (ALTERNATE)

11. FORWARD MARCH

Use the
**FORWARD
MARCH** signal to
move the band
from the **HALT**,
HALF STEP, or
MARK TIME.
Begin this
sequence from the
LEFT CARRY.

PREPARATORY SIGNAL

COUNT 1

Grasp the staff
with your right
hand
approximately 20
to 24 inches above
the bottom of the
staff. Your palm
should face your
body. Your right
arm should be
straight.

COUNT 2

(Silent Count)



Figure 2-10 FORWARD MARCH

12. FORWARD MARCH (ALTERNATE)

Begin this
sequence from
the **LEFT
CARRY.**

READY POSITION

COUNT 1

Move your right
hand across your
chest. Grasp the
mace just below
the ball. Your
palm should face
forward.



COUNT 2

(Silent Count)



COUNT 3

Retain control of
the mace with
your left hand as
you move the

Figure 2-11 FORWARD MARCH (ALTERNATE)

13. DRUM MAJOR REVERSE

The drum
major reverse
is used when
you must face
the band
while the
band is
marching
forward.

COUNT 1

Left foot
strikes the
ground.



COUNT 2

Pivot to the
left as your
right foot
strikes the
ground.



Figure 2-12 DRUM MAJOR REVERSE

14. MARK TIME

Signal **MARK TIME** from the **LEFT CARRY**. Give it facing the band if the signal precedes a **HALT**. Face the direction of march if the next signal is a **FORWARD MARCH**.

READY POSITION

Grasp the mace approximately two feet above the bottom of the staff with your right hand.

NOTE: *This position can be held for an indefinite period of time.*



Figure 2-13 MARK TIME

15. HALT

If you want to **HALT** the band after the **MARK TIME**, go to the **READY POSITION**. (See [paragraph 14](#))

PREPARATORY SIGNAL

Raise the mace to a horizontal position over your head with your right hand. Extend your left arm upward. Grasp the staff near the ball. Your palms should face forward.

NOTE: *You may hold this position for more than one count.*



SIGNAL OF EXECUTION

Figure 2-14 HALT

16. CUT OFF

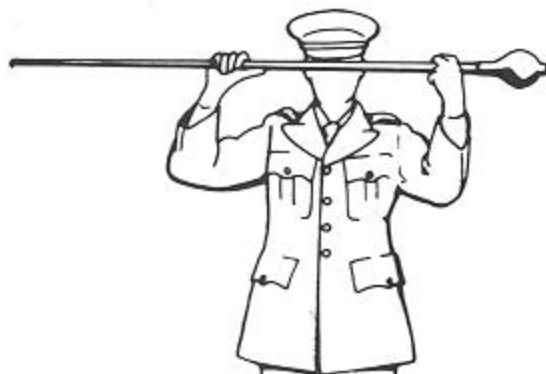
Signal the **CUT OFF** from the **LEFT CARRY**. Use the **CUT OFF** signal to stop the band from playing or to stop a drum cadence. The drums will normally continue playing a cadence after a musical selection until separately cut off.



COUNT 1

Grasp the staff just above the ferrule with your right hand. Your thumb should point toward the ball.

COUNT 2 (Silent Count)



COUNT 3

Raise the mace to a horizontal position just above your eyes. Slide your left hand out toward the ball.

Figure 2-15 CUT OFF

17. LEFT TURN

Signal the **LEFT TURN** with the left hand while holding the mace in the **RIGHT CARRY**.

READY POSITION

From the **RIGHT CARRY**, arc your left arm slightly to the left and then right and upward in front of your body. Continue the arc until your arm is extended upward and to the left at a 45-degree angle from your shoulder. Your palm should face forward. Turn your head to the left.



PREPARATORY SIGNAL

Raise your left forearm slightly by bending your elbow as your right foot strikes

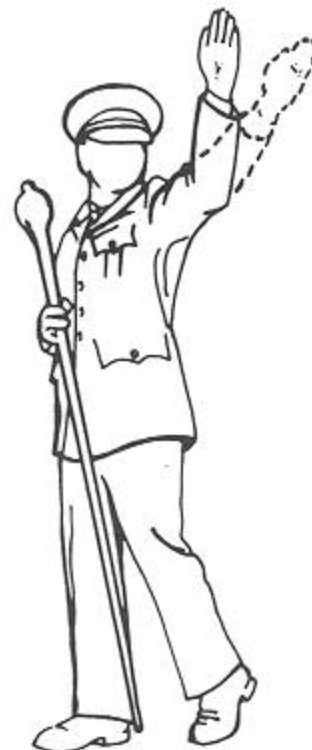


Figure 2-16 LEFT TURN

18. RIGHT TURN

Signal the **RIGHT TURN** with the right hand while holding the mace in the **LEFT CARRY**.



READY POSITION

Arc your right arm slightly to the right and then left and upward in front of your body.

Continue the arc until your arm is extended upward and to the right at a 45-degree angle from your shoulder. Your fingers are extended and joined. Your palm should face forward. Turn your head to the right.

PREPARATORY SIGNAL

Raise your right

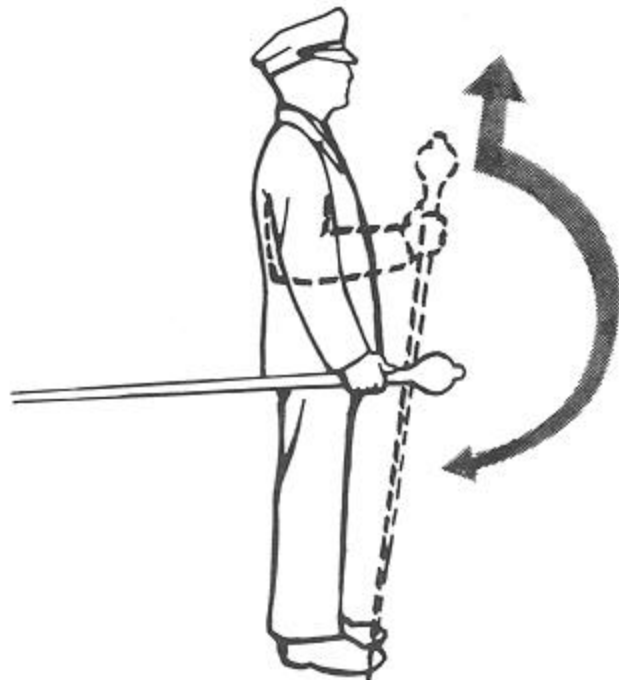
Figure 2-17 RIGHT TURN

19. THE TRAIL

Use the **TRAIL** at the **HALT** or on the march. It is the **READY POSITION** for the **COUNTERMARCH**.

FROM ATTENTION

Raise the mace slightly so the ferrule clears the ground. Bring the ball forward and downward to your side in a circular motion until the staff is horizontal. The ferrule should point to the rear. Normally this is used in situations requiring an immediate **COUNTERMARCH** following a verbal **FORWARD MARCH**.



FROM THE LEFT CARRY

COUNT 1

Move your right hand



Figure 2-18 THE TRAIL

20. COUNTERMARCH

Give the signal for a
COUNTERMARCH
from the **TRAIL**

PREPARATORY SIGNAL

COUNT 1

Twirl the mace 1-3/4 revolutions. Arc the ferrule down and forward. Raise your right hand to allow the ferrule to clear the ground. This count starts as the left foot strikes the ground.



COUNT 2

This occurs during the
process of the twirl.

Figure 2-19 COUNTERMARCH

21. ROLL OFF

The **ROLL OFF** is a four bar introductory figure played by the percussion section to signal the band to play a march. Signal the **ROLL OFF** from the **LEFT CARRY**.

READY POSITION

Grasp the staff with your right hand approximately 20 to 24 inches above the bottom of the staff. Your palm should face your body. Your right arm should be straight. Move the ball of the mace in an arc across the front of your body until the mace is in a vertical position along the right side of your body.



Figure 2-20 ROLL OFF

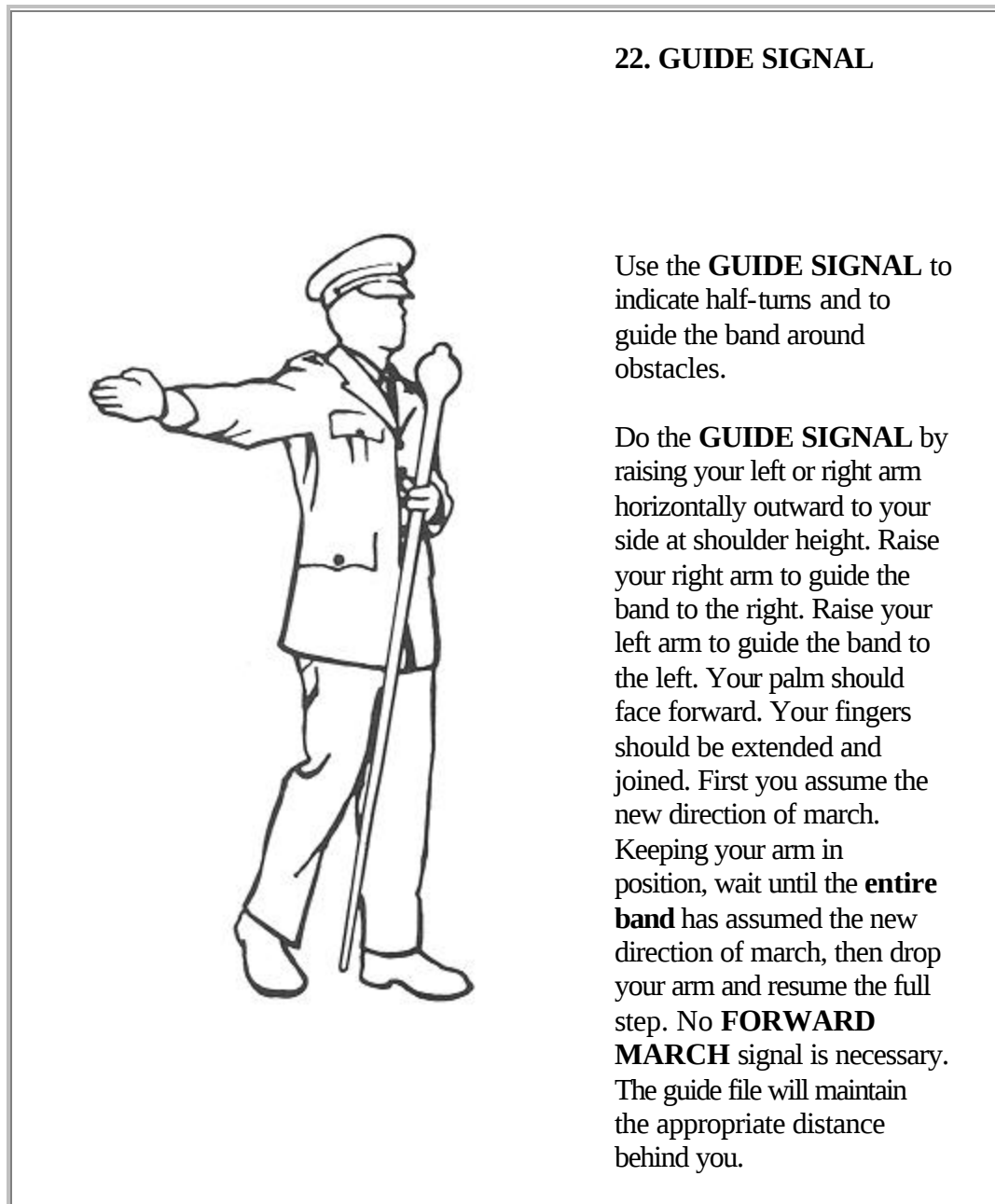


Figure 2-21 GUIDE SIGNAL

23. RIM CADENCE

Signal for a **RIM CADENCE (TAP)** by executing a **CUT OFF** (See [paragraph 16, Figure 2-15](#)) on the last three beats of a drum cadence. A previously appointed drummer will take up the **RIM CADENCE**.

If you wish the drum section to resume playing on the head, execute a **CUT OFF** on the last three beats of a **RIM CADENCE**. The drum section will then begin playing a drum cadence.

24. THE CEREMONIAL MACE SWING

Use the **CEREMONIAL MACE SWING** on the march as an embellishment to the **CARRY**. Do the **CEREMONIAL MACE SWING** from either the **LEFT** or **RIGHT CARRY**. Use a smooth motion. Balance the action of the swinging arm with that of the free arm.

The **CEREMONIAL MACE SWING** is best achieved by supporting the weight of the mace with your forearm rather than with your upper arm. Emphasize your wrist movement to keep the ball constantly rotating. Before giving signals to the band you must resume the **CARRY**.

Swing your free



Figure 2-22 THE CEREMONIAL MACE SWING

25. SOUND OFF SEQUENCE

Signal
INSTRUMENTS UP

COUNT 1

Command **SOUND
OFF**

Signal the downbeat
of the first chord by
moving your right
hand to a position in
front of your chin.



COUNT 2

(Silent Count)

COUNT 3

Execute an about face
on the downbeat of
the second chord.

Figure 2-23 SOUND OFF SEQUENCE