

Whenever the number in a section exceeds fifteen men, the telling-off will be by sub-sections. The company will then be formed into half-companies, and finally as an entire company in line, and the men will be numbered from right to left of sections or sub-sections. The left-hand man of the right half-company is the centre of the company.

An interval of two paces will always be preserved between sections (or sub-sections) when the company is in line, but in no other formation will section (or sub-section) intervals be kept. Except when directions are given to the contrary, an interval of six paces will always be preserved between companies. . . .

Officers, &c., of a company.—The company will be commanded by the captain, and each half-company by a subaltern.

Each section and sub-section will be commanded by the senior non-commissioned officer belonging to it.

In the absence of the captain, his place will be taken by the next in rank; a similar rule will be followed within the half-company, section or sub-section.

The captain.—The duties of the captain require that he be allowed great independence as regards his position.

As a general rule, he will be six paces in front of the centre of his company in line, three paces in front of any column formation, and when the company is extended in a firing-line, in the best position for command. . . .

The subalterns.—When the company is in line, the subalterns will be three paces in rear of the centre of their half-company, if there be one subaltern only, then three paces in rear of the centre of the company. In an extended firing line, at such a distance in rear as will best enable them to superintend their men.

When the company is in section or sub-section column, the subalterns will be two paces from the centre of the outer flank of their half-companies: if there be only one subaltern, two paces from the centre of the outer flank of the company.

Guides, markers, section and sub-section commanders.—Section and sub-section commanders will be formed in a third or supernumerary rank two paces distant from the rear rank; the drummer in rear of the second section; the pioneer in rear of the third section. With the exceptions hereinafter mentioned, the guides and supernumeraries will conform to all orders given to the company as regards the carrying of their arms.

The four section commanders will act as guides and markers when required to do so. As a rule, the commander of a flank section of a company will act as a guide, the commander of an inner as marker, but the latter will rarely be used at manoeuvre.

In each section or sub-section a selected private soldier will be trained as leader and will take command in the absence of non-commissioned officers.

No change in the command of sections or sub-sections will take place except by the direct order of the captain. Corporals and lance-corporals not required to command their sections or sub-sections will be in the ranks.

In *line* in the absence of the colour party the left guide of the right centre company will direct on the left of the front rank, the remaining companies will march by their respective centres.

The captain will occasionally glance towards the inner flank of his company to see that the correct company interval is preserved. He should give as few commands as possible. By raising his right or left arm when advancing, the men of the company should be instructed to bring up their left or right shoulder to correct, if necessary, the interval; but all corrections should be made gradually.

In *company or half-company column* the commanders of the inner sections will act as guides on the right (or left) of the front rank.

In *section or sub-section column* commanders will lead their respective sections on the right (or left) of the front rank.

In *fours* the commander of the leading section will be on the directing flank of the leading four.

Markers giving joints.—Markers are never to go out unless specially ordered, and then they will always turn towards the flank of formation.

Officers' swords, when to be drawn and returned.—Officers will draw swords only when the men fix bayonets, when compliments have to be paid, and on occasions of ceremony.

It will be seen from the above that when battalions are on a peace footing the "section" will practically be the same as the "fire unit." The fire units, whether they be sections or sub-sections, are to be kept intact, and when the company is in line even separated from each other. We are told that the men of the company are to be "numbered from right to left of sections or sub-sections." Is there to be a second numbering of the whole company so that the men may know their places in "fours"? It might be said that such fire unit might be left to form fours by itself, but the regulations do not seem to contemplate there being more than one incomplete four in a company, which there certainly might be if each section or sub-section were kept together.

The company, "except for purposes of ceremony," falls in on parade in two ranks in section or sub-section column—*i.e.*, in column of fire "units." Bayonets are then fixed, and open order taken, and the company inspected, and the arms are examined in the ordinary way. "The company will then be formed into line." So the first section of Part II. But the General Rules quoted above say that it is first "to be formed into half companies, and finally as an entire company in line." Of course, it would be easy to *deploy* by

files from section column, first into half company column, and afterwards into line, but there are no directions given anywhere that we can see for this particular movement, except in the 42nd section of Part I., which seems to apply only to troops on the move. And the obvious method of "forming" into line to the right or left from the section column would not fulfil the prescribed condition of previously forming half companies. However, when the company has been formed in line it is to be numbered "from the right of sections or sub-sections," and proved as follows: "Right (or left) half company slope arms—order arms; right (or left) section slope arms—order arms; form fours—front; form fours—right (left or about)—front." It will then be formed with changed ranks, after which the original front will be resumed. Nothing is said about "Rifle battalions." Are they in future, we wonder, to be ordered to fix "bayonets" and to slope arms like "red soldiers"?

It will have been noticed that one of the principles of the new drill is that when a battalion is in line there will, as a rule, be an interval of six paces between its companies, and that each company, except the right centre company, which will direct, will move by its centre. When, therefore, a company is drilling alone, the instructor will state the supposed order of the battalion—*i.e.*, whether the company is a right centre company directing or a company marching by its centre. If the former, the left guide on the left of the front rank, if the latter, the centre man—*i.e.*, the left hand man of the right half company—will select points to march on when the order is given to advance. If the company is to advance by its centre, a non-commissioned officer should be posted at six paces interval from its right or left to represent the flank of the next inner company. When a company is supposed to form part of a company column, the guide on the directing flank will always move up to lead the company. The rules for retiring, either as a company in line or in column, are virtually the same as those for advancing, except, of course, that the directing guide moves to the original rear rank. In the diagonal march of a company forming part either of a line or of a column, its guide will lead in the front rank on the flank to which the movement is made. A company forming part of a company column will form into line to the left or right in the same way as formerly, except that no points will be given, and that the sections or sub-sections will open out to two paces interval as they form. If the company is supposed to be the directing company in line, and the formation is to the left, the left guide, after completing the dressing, will fall in on the left of the front rank. If the formation is to the right, the right guide, after dressing the company, will fall in on the left of the front rank. If the company is