

## Howe's Light Infantry Exercise, 1774

### Discipline Established by Major General Howe for Light Infantry in Battalion Sarum, Sept<sup>r</sup> 1774

Words of Command for Light Infantry Companys in Battalion, Sarum September '74.

WORDS OF COMMAND	EXPLANATION
Batt <sup>n</sup> form at order	The files to be at two feet Interval
..... at open order	..... at four feet Interval
.....at extended order	.....at ten feet Interval
To the R <sup>t</sup> or to the L <sup>t</sup> form the line of "March," "March, March," or "Advance"	The whole faces as directed and the Men of the Rear ranks step to the Rear of their File leaders upon the word "March & c." and then the Column follows their leading officer as directed.  NB: the Command "March" signifies slow time, "March, March" quick time, and "Advance" run.
To the Front To the Right Form To the Left	If to the front when marching to the Right, the leading Company forms to the left of the leading file; the other Companys when the ground will admit (Advance) in File obliquely to the Left and form in their proper order as soon as the leading files halt in their places in Batt <sup>n</sup> .  If to the Right when marching to the Right the Files run up and face to the Right, the order of Files and Company will then be reversed, what was before the left Company will become the Right.  If to the left when marching by the Right the Files run up and Face to the Left.
Or Forward to the Right Form.	When marching by the Right; the leading File turns to the Right; the other Files form upon the Left of the first file, and so in successive order, until the whole is formed.
Or Forward to the Left Form.	When marching by the Right, the leading file turns to the Left, the other files form upon the Right, in this order the Front and Com <sup>ys</sup> will be reversed as before.

<p><b>Or (when marching by the R<sup>t</sup>) oblique to the Right, and to the Front form.</b></p>	<p><b>The first or leading file halts, the other files move in the shortest line and forms upon its Right, the other Companys march in file obliquely to the Right and form in the same order, which reverses the order of files and Comp<sup>ys</sup>.</b></p> <p><b>The same directions Vice Versa, marching from the Left.</b></p>
<p><b>From the R<sup>t</sup> or L<sup>t</sup> of Companys, Divis<sup>ns</sup>, or Platoons, March &amp;c.</b></p>	<p><b>The Companys face and lead to the front in file, as directed, in parallel directions the leading file does not face.</b></p>
<p><b>To the <i>Front, Right, or Left</i> Form</b></p>	<p><b>If to the Right when marching by the Right, the Captain of the Right Company orders his Company to form to the Right, the other Comp<sup>ys</sup> take the shortest line, and form on the Right of the Company as before mentioned.</b></p> <p><b>The same directions Vice Versa, if ordered to form to the Left, when marching by the Left, and the order of Files and Companys will be reversed.</b></p>
<p><b>Or Forward to the Right, or to the Left Form.</b></p>	<p><b>When marching by the Right, if ordered forward to the Right form, the Companys then form in their proper order, and so Vice Versa if marching by the Left.</b></p>
<p><b>From the Right or Left of Comp<sup>ys</sup> to the Center form the line of March.</b></p>	<p><b>The Center Company leads, followed by the other Companys alternately, the Left Company closing the Line.</b></p>
<p><b>Of Batt<sup>n</sup> to the Center form the line of March.</b></p>	<p><b>The Center files of the B<sup>n</sup> stands fast, the Companys upon the Right face to the Left, and those upon the L<sup>t</sup> to the R<sup>t</sup>, the rear rank men stepping into their places.</b></p>
<p><b>March, &amp;c.</b></p>	<p><b>The Column proceeds.</b></p>
<p><b>To the R<sup>t</sup> &amp; L<sup>t</sup> form</b></p>	<p><b>The files move briskly up and face outwards.</b></p>
<p><b>Resume the Line of March.</b></p>	<p><b>The Wings Face and move as before.</b></p>
<p><b>To the Rear Form.</b></p>	<p><b>The two rear Companys wheel to the Right and Left and form to the Rear, the Companys of the Right Wing march in file from their Right flanks, taking the nearest line to form to the Left of the Rear Companys of that Wing, the Companys of the Left Wing march from their Left Flanks and form to the Right of the Rear Companys of that Wing; the Front Rank men in the Front.</b></p>
<p><b>Resume of the Line of March.</b></p>	<p><b>The Companys of the Right Wing (when faced to the rear) turn to their Right from their Right Flanks, and those of the Left Wing turn to the Left, from their Left Flanks, the two Flank Companys meeting in the Rear of the Center, the other Companys taking the nearest line to form the order of march as directed the Front Rank</b></p>

	men lead.
<b>Or to the Rear form the Line of March.</b>	<b>The Wings face and the Front Rank men lead at the word “March &amp;c.”</b>
<b>To the <i>Front, Right or Left</i> Form.</b>	<b>If to the Right, the Right Wing forms as before, the Companys of the left taking the shortest line in File to form in their proper order - The Right Wing doing the same if ordered to form to the Left, and the whole follows the same direction, when ordered to form to the Front.</b>
<b>From the Center of Companies to the Center form the line of March, March, March</b>	<b>At the word “March, March” the Companies face to their own Centers, the two Center files of each Company excepted, the Rear Rank men stepping to the Rear of their File leaders, the Center Company leads the line followed by the other Companys alternately from the Right to Left, the Left Company of the Batt<sup>n</sup> closing the line of March.</b>
<b>To the Rear form.</b>	<b>The Rear Company wheels by Files to the left about and forms to the Rear, the Companys of the Left Wing wheel by files to the Left about, and form to the Right of the first formed Company - The Companys of the Right Wing wheel by files to the Right about, and form to the Left of the first formed Company.</b>
<b>Resume the Line of March.</b>	<b>The Companies form into Columns, from their Centers, the Left Company which is the leading Company, wheels to the Right about, the other Companys of the Left Wing doing the same, and those of the Right Wing wheel to the Left about and take up the order of March.</b>
<b>To the front or to the Front Company; and to the Right or to the Left form.</b>	<b>If to the Front, the leading Company forms; the next obliquing and dressing to it in Battalion; if to the Right the front Company forms as ordered, the Right Wing then forms to it, on its Right, the Left Wing forms on its Left- If to the Left, the Wings form on its Right and Left as before.</b>
<b>Or Form two Fronts.</b>	<b>The Companies of the Right Wing form to the Right, dressing to the Right of the Front or leading Company - The Companies of the Left Wing form to the Left, the most advanced Company covering the Rear of that which was the leading Company in Line of March, the other Companys of the Left Wing, dress to the Left of the first formed Company of that Wing.</b>
<b>Resume the line of March.</b>	<b>As before explained.</b>
<b>To the R<sup>t</sup> or to the L<sup>t</sup> and to the Front form.</b>	<b>If to the Right and to the Front, the Right Wing form to the Right, and the Left to the Front. Vice Versa if to the Left and to the Front form.</b>

<b>Resume the Line of March.</b>	<b>As before explained.</b>
<b>Or Form Battalion.</b>	<b>The Flank Wing dresses by the Front Wing, already formed.</b>
<b>From the Center of Comp<sup>ys</sup> to the R<sup>t</sup> of to the L<sup>t</sup> form the Line of March.</b>	<b>The Companies (the two Center Files excepted) face to their own Centers, the Right of Left Company leads as directed followed in line by the other Companies.</b>
<b>To the <i>Front, Right</i> or <i>Left</i> Form.</b>	<b>As before explained.</b>
<b>Or Forward to the R<sup>t</sup> or to the L<sup>t</sup> form.</b>	<b>Do. [ditto]</b>
<b>Or Oblique to the Right and to the Front Form.</b>	<b>As before explained if marching to the R<sup>t</sup>.</b>
<b>Or Oblique to the Left and to the Front form.</b>	<b>If Marching by the Left</b>
<b>From the Center of Companies March &amp;c.</b>	<b>The Companies leads out from their Centers to the Front, and March in parallel directions.</b>
<b>To the <i>Front, Right</i> or <i>Left</i> Form.</b>	<b>As before explained.</b>
<b>Or Forward to the R<sup>t</sup> or to the L<sup>t</sup> Form.</b>	<b>Do.</b>
<b>Batt<sup>n</sup> upon the Center to the Right or to the Left change the Front.</b>	<b>The Wings as directed goes to the Right about at the word "March," and the other Wing wheels by Files, and the Wing that faced about does the same to the Rear, these Files turning to their proper Front, as soon as they get to their ground.</b>
<b>Batt<sup>n</sup> to the advanced Comp<sup>y</sup> or Companies Form, or to the advanced File Form.</b>	<b>The Companies that are to fall back go to the Right about, and the Files front as soon as they are in their places, the Companies receive the necessary words of Command from their respective Commanding Officers.</b>
<b>Batt<sup>n</sup> to the R<sup>t</sup> about Change the Front</b>	<b>The front Rank men goes to the R<sup>t</sup> about, the Rear Rank men moving round to cover their File Leaders - The Companies are then reversed - Repeated brings the Batt<sup>n</sup> to the former Front.</b>
<b>From the Center of Comp<sup>ys</sup> to the R<sup>t</sup> or to the L<sup>t</sup> oblique.</b>	<b>Each Company marches from its Center, in an oblique direction as ordered.</b>
<b>Forward to the Front Form.</b>	<b>They march straight to the Front as before explained.</b>
<b>By Companies to the Center, form a Column - Or by Div<sup>ns</sup>, or by</b>	<b>The two Center Companies, Divisions or Platoons march forward, those of the Right Wing wheels half to the Left, and those of the Left Wing, a half wheel to the Right, and</b>

<b>Platoons to the Center, form a Column.</b>	<p><b>Cover to the Rear of the two in Front.</b></p> <p><b>To form Battalion the Divisions March obliquely to the Right and Left.</b></p> <p><b>NB: the leading Company, File or Files of a Column of March is the Front; and when the Column is ordered to form to the Front, the whole dresses to the leading point in whatever direction it may be, at the time it halts.</b></p>
<b>To the Center of Comp<sup>ys</sup> form Column.</b>	<b>The Companies form into Columns to the Rear of their two Center files.</b>
<b>To the Right or to the Left “March, “March”</b>	<b>The Companies move as hereafter directed.</b>
<b>Advance</b>	<b>To turn the Enemys Flank.</b>
<b>Or from the Center of Companys to the R<sup>t</sup> and L<sup>t</sup> form Columns, Advance.</b>	<b>To turn both Flanks, the Companys advance from their Center. If to the Right, the Right Company marches obliquely to the right, the next Company marching with its front in a parallel Line, about four paces to the Right of the Rear of the leading Company; the other Comp<sup>ys</sup> following in a similar and parallel direction.</b>
<b>To the Left Form.</b>	<p><b>The leading Company turns its Front to the Left and forms, the other Companys do the same, and form on the Left of the leading Comp<sup>y</sup>.</b></p> <p><b>Similar directions Vice Versa in advancing by the Left.</b></p>
<b>Advancing to the Right and Left.</b>	<p><b>The Companies upon the Right of the Center, move to the Right as abovementioned and those of the Left, march to the Left.</b></p> <p><b>When marching from the Center of Battalion, to form two fronts at Right Angles.</b></p>
<b>To the Right and to the front Form, to the Left and to the Front Form.</b>	<b>If to the Right and to the Front form, the Right Wing forms to the Right and the Left to the Front. - If to the Left and to the Front, the Left Wing forms to the Left, and the Right to the Front.</b>
<b>Batt<sup>n</sup> Resume the Line of March</b>	<b>The Wings face and the Battalion proceed from the Center by Files.</b>

## **Retreating Movements**

<b>From the Right or from the Left of Comp<sup>ys</sup> Retreat, March &amp;c.</b>	<b>At the word “March &amp;c.” the Companies face as directed, the Front Rank men stepping immediately behind their respective Rear Rank Men and March to the Rear.</b>
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<b>Front</b>  ..... <b>Form.</b>	<b>The whole comes to the Right about.</b>  ..... <b>As before explained.</b>
<b>To the Center of Companies form Columns.</b>	<b>The Companies form into Columns, to the Rear of the two Center Files.</b>
<b>To the Right about Face, March, March</b>	<b>The whole faces to the Rear.</b>
<b>Front</b>  .... <b>Form.</b>	<b>As before explained.</b>