

CHAPTER 8

FORMATIONS OF BATTALION AND REGIMENT

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SECTION II

BATTALION

■ **214. FORMATIONS.**—Formations for the battalion are shown in figures 59 to 62, inclusive.

a. The band, when attached to the battalion, is posted by the adjutant as indicated in figures 60 and 61.

b. Attached units take position as directed by the battalion commander and conform to the formation and movements of the units of the battalion.

c. In whatever direction the battalion faces, the companies are designated numerically from right to left in line and from head to rear in column; that is, first company, second company, third company.

d. The terms "right" and "left" apply to actual right and left as the troops face.

e. The designation "center company" indicates the right center or the actual center company, according to whether the number of companies is even or odd.

f. (Rescinded)

g. The battalion commander supervises the formation from such positions as will best enable him to correct alinements, intervals, and distances. With his staff (less the adjutant) he takes post in time to receive the report.

h. Officers armed with a saber in the interior of a mass formation remain at CARRY SABER at all times except when the battalion is at rest or at ease.

i. Any formation or combination of formations may be employed to meet existing conditions of space or purpose.

■ **215. FORM IN LINE WITH COMPANIES IN LINE (FOR CEREMONIES).**—a. The adjutant indicates the line on which the battalion is to form with two flags, one on each flank. The adjutant takes post on the right of the line and facing down the line.

b. When the band is present, the adjutant causes *Adjutant's Call* to be sounded.

c. Companies are marched from the left flank in column of threes (or fours) to their positions in line, the line of march being sufficiently off the line on which the battalion is to form to permit the expeditious alinement of guides of the right company by the adjutant. As each company arrives at its position, it is halted (taking care to halt in rear of the position it is to occupy), faced to the front, and the company commander orders, **GUIDES ON THE LINE**. At this command, the guide of each platoon moves

Extract from FM 22-5, 1940; with changes 1-3 (Sep 43).

This describes how a battalion forms. Para. 215 deals with a formation for ceremonies (review or parade).

Some assumptions:

A battalion has two or more companies (we would realistically have three – the 29th plus A 5th Rangers; the main body of 5th Rangers; and the 1st ID and others).

A battalion is commanded by a lieutenant colonel. He has an executive officer (second in command) and a principal staff (described later).

Each company has a commander (a captain) accompanied at ceremonies by a guidon bearer; he had an executive officer (lieutenant) and a first sergeant.

Each company has two or more platoons. A platoon is led by a lieutenant. He is assisted by a platoon sergeant (usually a T/Sgt) and a platoon guide (S/Sgt).

Our strength at Conneaut suggests a three company battalion. There would be three captains and three guidon bearers on line.

I have extracted para. 215, which describes formation for ceremonies with companies in line. Doing it in mass formation (para. 216) is too much for us to handle, but the battalion with companies in line is probably do-able.

Disadvantage: a lot of normally free agents would have to agree to consolidate; a lot of unrealistic rank would have to be shed.

Advantages: It looks better, it's more efficient, it's correct and reenactors would have an opportunity to learn how to do it right, and the vets will recognize we have made an effort.

(at the trail) to his position on the line indicated by the flags and faces the adjutant. The adjutant will align the guides of the right company accurately; the guides of other companies will cover accurately the guides already on the line, the guides indicating the right of their respective platoons. As soon as the guides have established themselves on the line, the company is alined as prescribed in paragraph 153. The right man of the front rank places himself so that his chest touches the guide.

d. When all units have reached their positions on the line, the band stops playing and the adjutant moves by the most direct route to a position midway between the battalion and the battalion commander and faces the battalion.

e. When all units are dressed, the adjutant commands: 1. GUIDES, 2. POST. At this command, the guides move to their normal position in ranks.

This process can fairly be called "so you think you can be a guide." The purpose of this dance is to allow the adjutant to align the companies precisely on the front. Much of this process has disappeared (or been subsumed by the slightly different procedure for a review or parade in company mass formation, which is now much more common).

This series of dance steps is conducted to get the companies and platoons alined.

Since the guide is an idea virtually unknown in WWII reenacting, this will require some coaching on site.

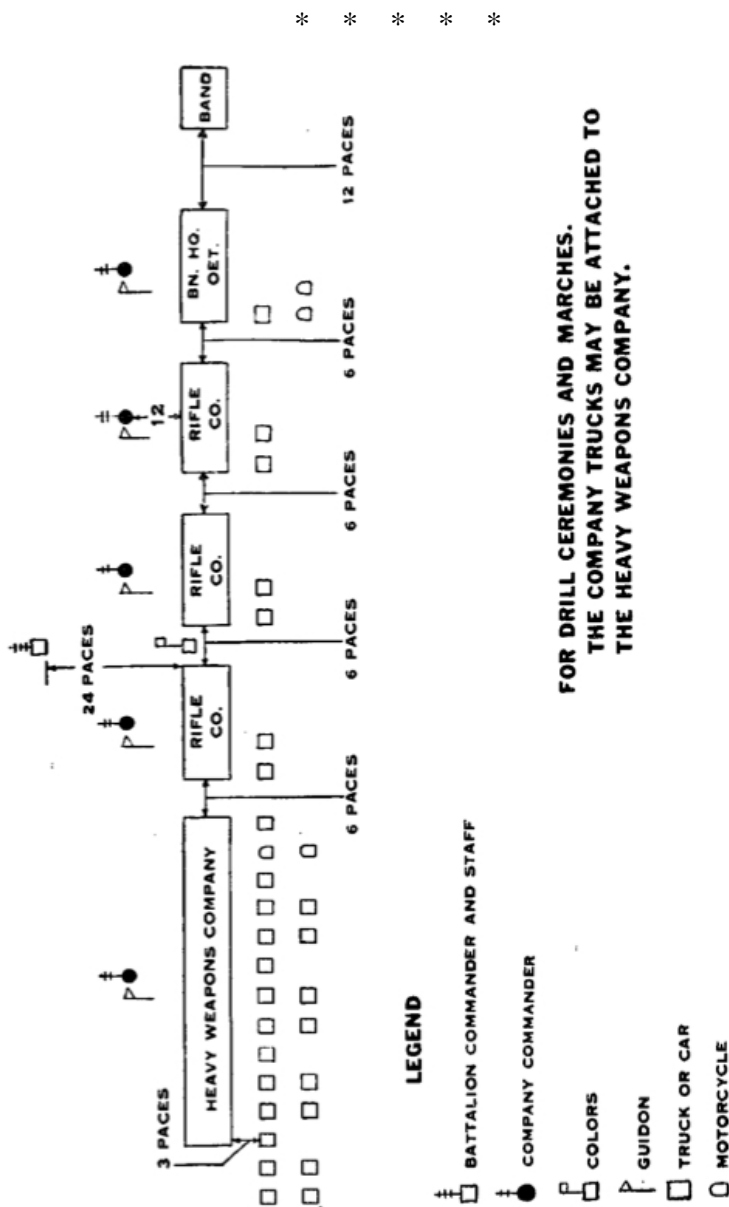


FIGURE 60.—Battalion in line with companies in line.

APPENDIX
SPECIAL CEREMONIAL PARADE

	Paragraph
General.....	1
Battalion.....	2
Regiment.....	3

■ **1. GENERAL.**—The special parade ceremonies described herein are for use at the option of local commanders in lieu of the regular ceremony prescribed in chapter 9. Training in these special ceremonies is not mandatory.

■ **2. BATTALION.**—*a.* At *Adjutant's Call* the troops without transportation are formed in line with companies in line or in line with companies in mass (or extended mass) formation as for a review but not presented. The battalion commander takes post at a convenient distance in front of the center of, and facing the troops.

b. The adjutant takes post between, the battalion commander and the center of the troops and commands: 1. **PARADE**, 2. **REST**. After the troops have executed **PARADE REST**, he commands: **SOUND OFF**. The adjutant and the battalion commander with his staff stand at attention during the *Sound Off*, the marching by of the band, and during the sounding of retreat.

c. The band, in place, plays the *Sound Off* of three chords, and at the conclusion of the third chord moves forward, playing a march in quick time. It executes column left so as to march across the front of the troops midway between the adjutant and the line troops. When the band has passed the left of the line, it countermarches and returns over the same ground to the right of the line. After it passes beyond the right of the troops, it executes column right. When the entire band has passed beyond the front rank of the troops, it again countermarches and halts in its original position. When the band ceases playing the march, the *Sound Off* is again played. At evening parade, *Retreat* is then sounded by the field music. Following the last note and while the flag is being lowered, the band plays the *National Anthem*. The evening cannon salute is fired on the last note of *Retreat*.

d. Immediately after the last note of *Retreat*, the adjutant commands: 1. **BATTALION**, 2. **ATTENTION**, 3. **PRESENT**, 4. **ARMS**. The adjutant facing the troops then salutes. The troops remain at present arms during the playing of the *National Anthem*. The adjutant then turns about facing the battalion commander, salutes, and reports, "Sir, the parade is formed." The battalion commander directs the adjutant, "Take your post, Sir," and draws saber. The adjutant passes by the battalion commander's right and takes post 1½ paces to the rear and 1 pace to the right of the battalion commander.

e. The battalion commander then commands: 1. **ORDER**, 2. **ARMS**, and gives such movements in the manual of arms as he may desire. Officers, noncommissioned officers commanding platoons, the color guard, and guidon bearers having once

Despite the qualifiers "special" and "ceremonial", from the publication of this manual (revision 1943) this became the description of a parade. Sixty-plus years later, this is what "parade" means, with minor adjustments for weapons and organization.

Para 2 refers to the procedure described above in Para 216.

Absent a band, "sound off" must be omitted.

Note that a parade, in Army terms, has little to do with what we usually think of as a "parade." Technically it requires a band and a color guard. We can make do.

Can we acquire a loudspeaker system?

We may consider

executed the order remain in that position during the movements of the manual.

f. The battalion commander then directs the adjutant, "Receive the reports, sir." The adjutant, passing by the battalion commander's right, advances toward the center of the battalion, halts midway between it and the battalion commander, and commands: **REPORT**.

(1) At the command **REPORT**, the company commanders in succession from the right salute and report, "A (or other) company, present or accounted for"; or, "A (or other) company, (so many) officers or men absent." The adjutant returns each company commander's salute after the report is made and understood. He returns to the carry after acknowledging each salute.

(2) The reports received, the adjutant turns about, salutes, and reports, "Sir, all present or accounted for"; or "Sir, (so many) officers or men absent," including among the absentees those from the band and field music reported to him by the band leader prior to the parade.

g. The battalion commander then directs, "Publish the orders, Sir." The adjutant turns about and commands: **ATTENTION TO ORDERS**. He publishes the orders and then commands: 1. **OFFICERS**, 2. **CENTER**, 3. **MARCH**. After giving the command **MARCH**, the adjutant turns about and takes his post with the battalion commander.

h. At the command **OFFICERS**, all company officers execute **CARRY SABER**, guidon bearers execute **CARRY GUIDON**. When companies are in line, at the command **CENTER**, all company commanders, officers commanding platoons, and guidon bearers face to the center. When companies are in mass formation at the command **CENTER**, all company commanders and guidon bearers face to the center. Officers commanding platoons step 1 pace forward and face to the center. Officers second in command move around the flank nearest to the center and take post in the column formed by the platoon leaders. At the command **MARCH**, the band plays, officers and guidon bearers close to the center, halt, and individually face to the front; company commanders when moving to the center, oblique to the front and close on a line 4 paces in advance of the line of guidon bearers; guidon bearers close on their own line, each taking post in rear of his own company commander; all other officers close on the line of platoon leaders.

i. The officers and guidon bearers having closed and faced to the front, the senior commands: 1. **FORWARD**, 2. **MARCH**. The officers and guidon bearers advance, the center officer of the leading rank being the guide, and march on the battalion commander. The officers and guidon bearers are halted by the senior with the leading rank 6 paces from the battalion commander. They halt and salute the battalion commander, who returns the salute. The battalion commander then commands: 1. **CARRY**, 2. **SABER**. At the first command, the guidon bearers grasp the lance with the left hand, executing the first position of **CARRY GUIDON**, and officers execute **ORDER SABER**. At the second

command, the officers execute **CARRY SABER**, the guidon bearers completing the carry guidon. The battalion commander then gives such instructions as he deems necessary, and commands: 1. **OFFICERS**, 2. **POSTS**, 3. **MARCH**.

j. At the command **POSTS**, all officers and guidon bearers face about.

k. At the command **MARCH**, they step off with the guide as before, the center officer of the leading rank being the guide. The senior commands: 1. **OFFICERS**, 2. **HALT**, so as to halt the leading rank 6 paces from the line of companies when companies are in line and 3 paces when companies are in mass formation. He then commands: 1. **POSTS**, 2. **MARCH**.

l. At the command **POSTS**, officers and guidon bearers face outward, and at the command **MARCH**, officers step off in succession at 4 paces distance, resume their posts, and execute **ORDER SABER**; guidon bearers step off with their company commanders, resume their posts, and execute **ORDER GUIDON**. The music ceases to play when the last officer has resumed his post. During the execution of **OFFICERS**, **CENTER**, and **OFFICERS**, **POST**, all officers and guidon bearers remain at carry saber and carry guidon except when saluting the battalion commander.

m. The battalion commander then gives the commands for the battalion to pass in review and returns saber.

n. The battalion passes in review according to the commands and fundamentals given for a review. When the last company has passed, the ceremony is concluded.

o. The band continues to play while the companies are in march upon the parade ground. After passing in review, companies are marched to their respective parades and dismissed.

Saber drills by 1943 were limited to the US Military Academy and the Old Guard at Fort Myer.

The march in review is described in Para. 234. This is not an appropriate maneuver for reenactors, who cannot be expected to acquire the requisite marching skills in the available time.

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