

Summary of Instructions For Guards  
Compiled from Text of Same Name  
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Co. A Third Reg't. Maine Vols.

*Articles of War:*

- *Art. 45. Any commissioned officer who shall be found drunk on his guard, party, or other duty, shall be cashiered. Any non-commissioned officer or soldier so offending shall suffer such corporeal punishment as shall be inflicted by the sentence of a court-martial.*
- *Art. 46. Any sentinel who shall be found sleeping upon his post, or shall leave it before being regularly relieved, shall suffer death, or such other punishment as may be inflicted by sentence of a court-martial.*
- *Art. 50. Any officer or soldier who shall, without urgent necessity, or without the leave of his superior officer, quit his guard, platoon or division, shall be punished, according to the nature of his offense, by the sentence of a court-martial.*

Definitions of Terms:

1. **Police, Camp, Garrison, Post** or **Quarters Guards** keep order and discipline within the camp, prevent desertions, protect stores, and give the alarm.
2. **Pickets** or **Detachments** are posted in front of, and on the flanks of, a command to give the first warning of the enemy's approach.
3. The term **Guard** properly refers to the body of soldiers assigned to that duty. When on post, individual soldiers are referred to as **Sentinels** or **Sentries**; Sentinels are members of the Guard. (Note: The Guard is made up of a few men from each company of the regiment. The companies contribute to the Guard based on their relative strength in numbers)
4. The Guard of a Regiment in camp is generally composed of a lieutenant and a sergeant (or two) of the Guard, three corporals, two musicians, and enough privates to cover all the sentry posts three times over. The Guard is divided into three reliefs, the senior corporal responsible for the first relief, etc. (Note: When we are portraying the Guard in a living history scenario, Co. A (or a portion of it) will be operated as if it is a Guard drawn from the various companies of the Third Maine Regiment). In living history, each relief will rotate at least hourly.
5. The **countersign** is issued daily from the head-quarters of the local command, whether that be the Post, Battalion, Brigade, Division, etc.
6. The **countersign**, usually the name of a battle, is the "password" given only to those who are permitted to visit and pass the line of sentries at night (e.g. officers and NCOs on duty), and to the members of the Guard. Soldiers who need to pass the line of sentinels must generally have a pass to do so.

A *roster* is to be kept by the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Example attached. A *Form of Guard report* should be completed by the Sergeant of the Guard at all living history events. Example attached.

### Guard Mount

Guard Mount is essentially a miniature Parade and Review. The Guard is mounted once per day, at the time appointed by the Battalion Commander, usually between the hours of 8 to 10 A.M.

In reality, Guard Mount draws each company's compliment of men and their 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant from their respective streets to the parade grounds, where the Adjutant, Sgt. Major and the Officer of the Day perform the inspection and review. Since we are only operating as a Company, some of the formalities of forming the Guard Mount will have to be abridged, in effect taking a short cut whereby the public will see the Company (or that portion coming out for Guard) already formed on the parade ground (just beyond the color line). From there the inspection, music and orders will be portrayed. The formal review will be dispensed with (as it often was in practice) and the Guard will be marched to the Guard tent (see below) for the start of the living history day. The Sergeant of the Guard will, in consultation with the either the Captain or Lt., set up his relief rotations such that the maximum number of men are available for company drill at the scheduled hour. Men who are excused from drill may serve as sentinels during drill times.

### Sequence For Guard Mount (as adopted by Co. A, Third Maine Regiment)

- *Fifteen minutes* prior to guard mount, *drummers' call* is beaten at the guard tent.
- Upon the next call, *assembly of the guard*, men fall in on the company street. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. forms the company as follows: 1) privates who will serve in the guard form in two ranks; 2) the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sgt., corporals and supernumeraries (the "reserve"; that is, men not detailed for posting with the guard) post in the line of file closers. Bayonets are fixed.
- *Adjutant's call* is played by the field music, which is assembled on the color line. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. marches the detail to the color line. As soon as the guard detail has posted, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. will open the ranks. The captain will be posted opposite the center of the detail, facing it, in the Adjutant's position. The lieutenant (officer of the guard) will be posted off to the right of the field music. The field music is on the right flank of the detail.
- Once the ranks are opened and dressed, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. states "**All present or accounted for, sir.**" While saluting the adjutant (captain), the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. then moves to the rear of the line of file closers (the corporals and reserve).
- The adjutant draws his sword and commands "**Front**". At this command, the officer of the guard (Lt.) marches, with sword drawn, to the front of the guard detail's center, facing it (with the adjutant behind him). The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sgt marches around the right of the detail and posts 4 paces in front of the officer of the guard, facing him. The corporals march around the right of the detail and post 4 paces behind the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sgt., facing the officer of the guard. The reserve and the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt.

- remain behind the detail. At this time, the Adjutant notes the tasks specifically assigned to the guard, including the post assignments.
- Once done, the adjutant orders: **“Officer and non-commissioned officers. About face. Inspect your guards, march.”** At this time, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sgt posts in the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt.’s usual position in company formation, and the corporals post as file closers. The officer of the guard is now acting as if the detail were a company, and formed as such.
  - The officer of the guard commands: **“Order arms. Inspection arms”** He then proceeds to inspect the detail, replacing any man not fit for duty with a member of the reserve.
  - After the inspection, the officer of the guard posts four paces in front of his position (facing the adjutant) as if he were a company commander (on the right).
  - The adjutant orders: **“Parade rest. Troop, beat off.”** The field music then troops the line as if on dress parade.
  - Once the field music returns to its position on the right, the adjutant orders: **“Attention, guard. Shoulder Arms. Close order. March.”** At “close order”, the officer of the guard faces about, and at “march” moves into line, the ranks closing.
  - In the absence of an officer of the day, the adjutant orders: **“March the guard to its post, sir.”** The officer of the guard marches the guard off the color line to the guard tent. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. marches the reserve back to the company street. The field music marches back to the company street, except those drummers on duty with the guard, who march to the guard tent with the detail.

Guard Mount is completed.

### Relieving and Posting Sentinels

The areas to be guarded are called *posts*. Posts are numbered in relation to Post #1, which is always the guard tent.

- Each relief is composed of enough sentinels to cover the number of posts in the camp. For instance, if there are four posts, each time a corporal takes out his relief (every hour) he will have four privates with him.
- The privates are numbered according to their post. The rightmost front rank man is #1, rightmost rear rank man #2, the next front rank man #3, etc.
- Each relief (not including the first relief dispatched to its posts) is inspected by the officer of the guard before mounting.
- The relief marches in two ranks (not doubled), at support arms, with the corporal at the left side of the leading front rank man.
- When the relief approaches, the sentinel (who is being relieved) halts, faces the relief and comes to shoulder arms. The relief’s corporal commands: **“Relief, Halt”** The relief halts and comes to the shoulder. The corporal then commands: **“No. (post number), arms-port”** The old sentinel and the relief sentinel then approach each other at arms port, the old sentinel whispers any instructions to the new sentinel, then they swap places at the shoulder. The old sentinel falls in at the rear of the relief.

- The corporal commands “**Support Arms, Forward March**” and the relief continues to the next posts, until all have been relieved. He then marches the relieved sentinels back to the guard tent.

### Duties of Sentinels

- Under no circumstances may a sentinel leave his post unless relieved or ordered to leave by his an NCO or officer (of his command). A sentinel who requires a temporary leave must call the corporal of the guard, who will either replace the sentinel or summon another man to watch the post.
- Sentinels must remain alert at all times and report on irregular activities occurring on his watch.
- Sentinels carry their weapons at support, or on either shoulder, with bayonets fixed. (Note: during living history, the weapons will never be loaded). Weapons will never touch the ground.
- Sentinels present arms to all officers at the rank of major or above. For captains and lieutenants, the come to the shoulder at attention.
- Sentinels repeat all calls from posts more distant from the guard tent. All posts should be in communication.

### Challenging

This is done during evening hours, generally after Retreat and before sunrise. The sequence is:

- **Halt, Who comes there? (sentinel comes to arms port)**
- If the reply is “friend” then **Advance, friend, with the countersign.**
- The friend will then whisper the countersign. If correct, he passes. If incorrect or if not given: **Corporal of the guard! Post No. \_\_\_!**
- If response is “relief” or “rounds”: **Halt, relief (rounds). Advance corporal with the countersign.**

### Duties of Corporals

- Besides the duties listed above, corporals should remember that guard duty is the most important duty that falls upon a corporal.
- Generally, there is a corporal for every relief. (Note: For living history, we may only have one or two corporals on duty at the guard tent, so they may be responsible for more than one relief).
- Corporals are expected to “make the rounds”, visiting his sentinels at least every half hour. (Note: for living history this is not only historically accurate, but necessary for health and safety reasons).
- Corporals should warn sentinels of any mistakes they make while on duty. Serious or repeated mistakes should be reported to the sergeant of the guard or the officer of the guard.

### Duties of Sergeant of the Guard

- General supervision of the corporals. He may also respond to calls from the sentinels and help post the reliefs.
- Receives all prisoners at the guard tent, recording their names, units, who ordered the confinement and when, and charges and sentences.
- Prepares the **Guard Report** (sample attached)

### Musicians

- One or two musicians are detailed to the guard tent by the principal musician.

### Duties of Officer of the Guard

- Responsible for the overall supervision of the guard under his care.
- Should make the rounds to ensure that the sentinels know, and are performing, their duties.
- He remains on duty at the guard tent during his watch.
- Responsible for relaying the countersign to the corporal of the guard.

### Placement of Guard Tent

We should arrange to have a tent available to serve as a guard tent during living history events. Our portrayals will generally be of **police or garrison guard**. According to my source document, the guard tent, in practice was usually moved from the center of the regimental camp to the advanced post, which is beyond the color line.

In a typical setup, we will have the following posts:

1. Guard tent
2. Color Line/Arms Stack
3. Captain's Tent
4. Right flank of the company street
5. Left flank of the company street

During drill demonstrations, the sentinels will be brought back to the guard tent so that they can fall in for drill. I expect to leave at least one sentinel in camp, however, to watch over it in our absence. If we don't have enough men to cover every post, we will fill them in order, from #1 to #5.

***End***