

## **Drill (For the Soldier):**

Taken from Bob Sullivan's Drill Tips, OR: Tips For Better Drill, Learned The Hard Way At Military School (Sullivan 2002).

Take pride in what you are doing. You are representing a soldier. Do it. Listen to your officer [or NCO]. He is responsible for the well being of his men. He will take care of you. If he doesn't, elect another one next year. Or find a new unit.

Never, Never, Never, move your head. From a distance, it is impossible to see fingers moving, it is difficult to see feet move slightly, but you might as well send up a flare when you move your head. Everyone's hat reflects the light, and as soon as you move your head, the light reflection off of the top of your hat is different. You might just as well hold up a big sign that says, "I'm moving!"

Look with your eyes, not your head. God gave you the ability to turn your eyes to see to the side. Use this ability. If you want to check your alignment, turn your eyes, not your head. The worst offenders are those who lean out and look to check their alignment. What are these people thinking about?

You are responsible for maintaining a certain distance between yourself and the man in front of you. Never change that distance. When 20 men are marching in column, if each man is three inches farther from the man in front than he is supposed to be, then the last man is Five Feet out of position.

When your officer says, "**March**", go. If you step on the heel of the man in front of you, it is his fault for not moving. When your officer says, "**Halt**", stop. If you have followed rule 4, you will be in the right place. If you have to close up, it's your fault because you didn't maintain your distance.

When marching in line, stay even with the man next to you. That's all. Not the colors, not the sergeant, not anybody but the man next to you. Never mind what the officer says. If everybody does this, then everybody's in line. Besides, your peripheral vision doesn't allow you to see more than one or two men down the line anyway. And, rule one is Never move your head. If your judgment or alignment is off, the sergeant will tell you to move up or back. He won't just yell "**Dress!**", because he has read...his section.

Work on every motion in the manual of arms. Not command, motion. Make them separate motions, with a slight pause between each. You really do have the time to do this. When placing the rifle on or off your shoulder, Never Move Your Head (Rule 1 again). What's the matter? Don't you trust yourself to move your own musket around without hitting yourself in the head with it?

When you are performing the manual of arms and have finished the last motion of a command, Freeze. If the rifle is in the wrong place, or if your hand is not quite in the right place, or your foot is slightly out of line, Don't Move. The next command will be coming along shortly. If you don't move, people have to look very carefully at all of the men to find your error. If you move after everyone else has stopped, you just pointed out your mistake to anyone who is watching. Again, you might just as well hold up that big sign that says "I'm moving!"