

IN THE MANUAL EXERCISE OF 1764 (All commands from Shoulder.)

RECOVER

(Ed. Note: Not a specific command - but a necessary movement)

Come smartly to the Recover, by briskly bringing the Firelock straight up with the left hand, turning the barrel to the right 180⁰, to the proper height of the Recover (with the lock about level with the left ear); at the same time that the left hand springs the firelock, the right hand is raised briskly from the right side, to seize the firelock across the breast. As it rises below the cock the left hand comes with a quick motion from the musket butt, and seizes the firelock strongly above the lock, with the little finger of the left hand at the spring of the lock. The left hand should be at an equal height with the eyes, the butt close to the left breast, but not pressed, the firelock perpendicular (straight up and down) near the left side of the face.

(Ed. Note: When completed, the firelock should be resting with the cock screw just above the left shoulder. It is important to hold it steady and straight. KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF OF THE TRIGGER!)

During a command of "Charge - Bayonets" with more than one rank, the front rank only charges the bayonet while the others remain at the Recover position (to step in and Charge if the front rank man is lost or requires assistance.)

It should be noted that the musket is turned around completely in the first movement of the Recover so that the barrel is next to the body, and the musket is lifted up to its final position in this movement by the left hand at the same time.

RAPID FIRE - PRIME and LOAD (without rammers)

Firing blank rounds without the use of the rammer is the required method to be employed by the Regiment at all re-enactments and most displays of firing exercise. It is quite an authentic method as this type of firing was employed when volume of fire rather than accuracy was paramount. Dropping in the loose ball on top of the poured in powder, stamping the butt of the musket on the ground, and then coming up directly for firing, a soldier could fire up to five rounds a minute a feat not possible by the use of a rammer in the regular sequence.

DON'T EVER EVER TRY THIS w1TH LIVE BALL!

A ball not properly seated on the powder charge can burst the barrel. Always ram live rounds.

At the command: PRIME AND LOAD! (Ed. Note: See the original Manual Exercise Qf 1764 in the Appendices for an excellent contemporary "Explanation of Prinüng and Loading. ")

1. If at the SHOULDER, come smartly to the RECOVER. If having just fired, and the command is given to Prime and Load! for reloading, the musket will already be in the Prime position.

2. Bring the firelock down with a brisk motion to the priming position. (See position #4, FIRE'. of the "35 Count")

3. Open the pan.

4. Handle the cartridge.

5. Prime

6. Shut the pan. (This prevents sparks and/or wind from getting to the priming.)

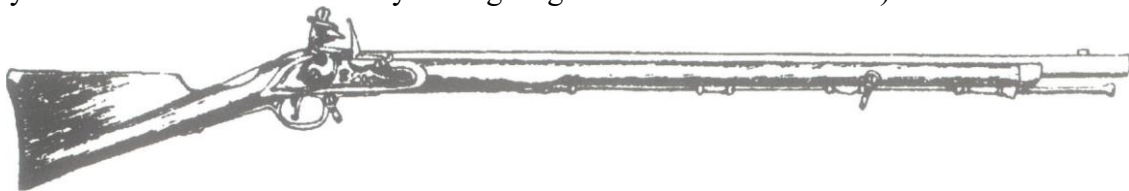
When the Officer/NCO sees that all the pans are shut, he then commands "BOUT!" at which all cast about together. (Ed. Note: During demonstrations, the commander should try to be aware of the drum beat and give the command after the completion of a sequence of beats. In battle speed counts!)(Note 2: The use of "Bout" or any other word of command at this point is purely conjectural. No documentary evidence exists for its use.)(Note 3: The Light Infantry Coy completes all movements as rapidly as possible, with no intervening commands, and returns to the shoulder.)

7. Cast about. (To the position assumed for Charge with - Cartridge) (See position #7 of the "35 Count")

8. Load by pouring the powder from the cartridge down the barrel, and immediately throw aside the empty cartridge paper. Bring the firelock up to the RECOVER to show you are ready to fire. If loading with live ball, insert the ball and paper; draw rammer and ram the ball home. Return rammer and THEN bring the firelock to the RECOVER.

(Ed Note: In the real Manual Exercise of 1764, the soldier brings his firelock to the SHOULDER.. Coming to RECOVER is a matter of practice and convenience. It is not documented.)

(Ed Note: Sometimes we will be given the command to "Dry Fire" or "Without Cartridge...Load" for drill purposes. DO NOT cock and fire when unloaded unless you have replaced your flint with a wooden block prepared for that purpose. Also, this is a RAPID FIRE drill and should be performed quickly - but SAFELY! NEVER let your fingers get in front of the muzzle.)



At the command: MAKE - READY! (From the Recover)

Bring the firelock to the Cock position and immediately cock the firelock. Keep your finger OFF of the trigger!

FRONT RANK - Bring the firelock across to the right side while dropping down to the right knee, cocking the fire-lock when the butt strikes the ground (the left foot does not move). The firelock should be held straight up and down throughout this movement.

SECOND RANK - (or single rank) - without moving feet. Raise the right elbow so as to bring the arm square across the chest; firmly place the right thumb upon the cock top jaw screw with the other fingers remaining under the guard.

Cock your firelock by bringing down the cock while drawing your elbow down, leaving the thumb upon the cock for safety.

THIRD RANK - same as second rank.

MAKE - READY (FROM THE SHOULDER)

1. Come smartly to the Recover, by quickly bringing the fire lock straight up with the left hand, turning the barrel inwards, towards the shoulder, to the proper height of the Recover; at the same time that the left hand lifts and turns the firelock, the right hand is raised briskly from the side and seizes the firelock below the cock. The left hand is raised with a quick motion from the butt, and seizes the firelock strongly above the lock, the little finger of the left hand at the lock spring, the spring at an equal height with the eyes, the butt close to the left breast, the firelock next to the left side of the face, the left elbow pointing directly forward. Perform the remaining movements as described above.

At command: PRE-SENT,

FRONT RANK - remain kneeling with the body erect or leaning slightly BACK! (FOR SAFETY! Do not lean forward! The rear rank(s) may not have their muzzles far enough in front). Bring the firelock to the right shoulder from the ground, and raise the muzzle to a safe angle. Level if the position of the opposing force allows.

SECOND RANK - step to the right and slightly forward so as to lean forward between the files of the front rank, while the firelock is raised to the shoulder, as in Single Rank.

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THIRD RANK - while stepping forward with the left foot between the files of the second rank; the right foot remains in its position, lean forward slightly - taking care not to place your lock beside the head of the second rank as the firelock is raised to the shoulder, as in Single Rank.

(Ed. Note: This movement is based on an interpretation of several original manuals' which each have a different description. This is a safe, simple and effective way to do it.)

SINGLE RANK - Step back about six inches with the right foot, the toe of the right foot pointing to the right. Bring the body ¹/₄ around; keep the left toe to the front; at the same time the butt end of the firelock must be brought tightly against the meat of the shoulder (ball), placing the left hand on the swell, and the fore-finger of the right hand on the trigger. Raise the muzzle to a safe position.

(Ed Note: Do NOT lean your head forward to aim. Keep the head ERECT! The pan flash will singe your bear! In all positions, hold the firelock firmly against the shoulder. This will reduce the effects of recoil.)

At the Command: FIRE!

FIRST RANK - immediately upon firing bring the right foot up to the left by standing.

SECOND RANK - immediately upon firing bring the right foot back to the left and stand up straight.

THIRD RANK - immediately upon firing step back with the left foot to its original position.

(Ed. Note: Second and Third Ranks IAIMEDIA TELY raise muskets after firing to avoid the rising heads of the front rank.)

SINGLE RANK - Pull the trigger briskly, and immediately after bring the right foot up to the left, then come to the priming position, with the lock by the breast bone, the muzzle even with the top of the cap plate, keeping it firm and steady, and at the same time seize the cock (screw) with the fore-finger and thumb of the right hand, the back of the hand turned up.

For repeated fire, the command PRIME AND - LOAD! will be given from the Prime position.

(Ed. Note: Make certain that your musket FIRED! If not, follow misfire procedures.)

Some additional commands that are not found in most manuals but were used and often are necessary in tactical demonstrations follow.

INCLINE TO THE RIGHT (or LEFT) - FIRE

(Ed. Note: "To the Right [Left] Oblique " is interchangeable with the above.)

Often, the enemy is not to the direct front, or some spectators are, and it is necessary to fire at an angle. The command sequence will be:

MAKE - READY

INCLINE TO THE RIGHT (LEFT) - PRE-SENT

FIRE !

At the command INCLINE TO THE RIGHT (LEFT), turn the upper body in the direction ordered. The front rank men will need to shift their positions by slightly adjusting the positions of their legs. All muskets should be pointed in the direction ordered.

(Ed Note: When firing inclined to the right, extreme care must be taken to insure that the flash in the pan does not spray the next man in line. Even with flashguards, this can be a big problem.)

RECOVER! (from the position of PRE - SENT)

Another thing that sometimes happens is that the line is ordered to PRESENT and someone, usually an omcer, horseman, or some clod with a camera, moves directly in front of the ranks of loaded and leveled muskets. This can cause a dangerous situation and all troops need to be alert to orders and not fire until ordered to do so. The command RECOVER! should be given. At this command, the troops should immediately return to the MAKE - READY position - rear ranks at the RECOVER and front rank remaining kneeling but returning the musket to the proper position with the butt resting on the ground. The muskets are at full-cock so careful handling is immensely important. This will be a rarely used command - but it is a necessary one.

(Ed. Note: "AS YOU WERE!" and "CEASE FIRE!" mean the same thing in this situation.)

