

**DRILL MANUAL FOR
NON-COMMISSIONED
OFFICERS**

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Drill Manual for Non-commissioned Officers by John Bordman

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JOHN BORDMAN

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OFFICERS**

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Introduction.

The criticism most generally made by an army officer after watching the work of the National Guard is directed at the non-commissioned officers. They are supposed to be the backbone of a military organization. It is on them that the discipline, the appearance, the perfection of drill in the company should depend. Yet the situation in our service is generally far from meeting this supposition. Our non-commissioned officers are usually appointed because they are the best drilled soldiers, but there the fulfillment of the spirit of the Regulations ceases.

A non-commissioned officer should be more than a well drilled man. He must, in the first place, have a thorough knowledge of the School of the Soldier, with a ready ability to impart it to recruits. Here we come upon one of the weaknesses of our system. This instruction of recruits should be only and entirely by the non-commissioned officers, and the recruit should be kept under this instruction until he is thoroughly grounded in the first principles. It is a too prevalent feeling among company commanders that the time spent by the recruit in the squad is time lost—that he learns nothing and makes no real progress until he comes under the Captain's instruction in the ranks of the company. But could we have the recruits kept longer in the squad we would have far more efficient soldiers and a much stronger set of non-commissioned officers. The policy of enlisting men with but one or

two drills before a tour of duty is the cause of much of our ragged work ; it can, and should be done away with. Again, it is the duty of the sergeants and squad leaders to observe the condition, appearance, and drill of their squads. It is they and not the company commander who should correct mistakes and insure military exactness in dress and equipment. The company commander should hold the non-commissioned officer in whose squad the delinquent is enrolled strictly to account for all these matters, and thus, at the same time, teach the men to look to their squad leaders as their natural instructors, and to give to the chevron the respect to which it is entitled.

The non-commissioned officer should also be grounded in the movements which his company is called upon to execute when acting alone or in battallon.

Knowing from experience the difficulty of retaining in memory this matter in the form in which it is found in the authorized books, I have thought to simplify it by the following compilation of questions and answers which I have found more easy to remember.

The present edition has been revised to meet the changes in the Manual of Arms, authorized by Circular No. 16, A. G. O. July 28, 1897, as amended by Special Order No. 26, A. G. O. November 17, 1897, from the office of the Adjutant-General at Washington. I have also deemed it advisable to omit the section on Guard Duty, as that subject was formerly treated only as far as concerned the duties of non-commissioned officers, and the whole subject is now covered in my Guard Manual.

The section on Military Courtesy has been revised and enlarged, and some minor changes made in other parts of the work.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the many friends who have shown by their suggestions and kindly wishes such an interest in this little book, and especially to acknowledge my indebtedness to Captain T. D. Landon, of the Bordentown Military Institute, of Bordentown, N. J.

It has given me great pleasure to receive so many complimentary notes from those who have used the Manual in the past, as it has led me to think that work done originally for my own use, has proved helpful to others.

It is my hope that the present edition may be found trustworthy, and helpful in preparing for that supreme test for which we are, possibly, at some time to be called.

J. B., JR.

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