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TRAINING CIRCULAR No. 17

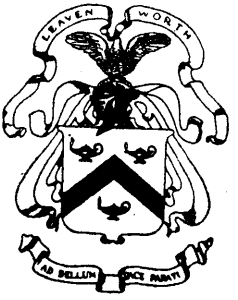
# INFANTRY FORMATION IN CLOSE ORDER

War Plans Division.
August 1918.

42252

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The following pamphlet, entitled "Training Circular No. 17, Infantry Formation in Close Order," is published for the information and guidance of all concerned.

(062.1 A. G. O.)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

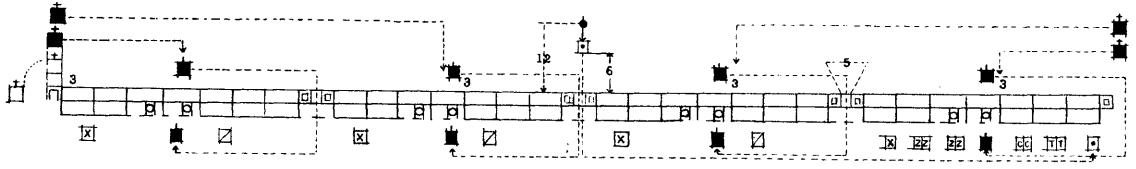
PEYTON C. MARCH,
*General, Chief of Staff.*

OFFICIAL:
H. P. McCAIN,
*The Adjutant General.*

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LINE. SHOWING POSTS AND ROUTES OF OFFICERS AND NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS AT ROLL CALL.



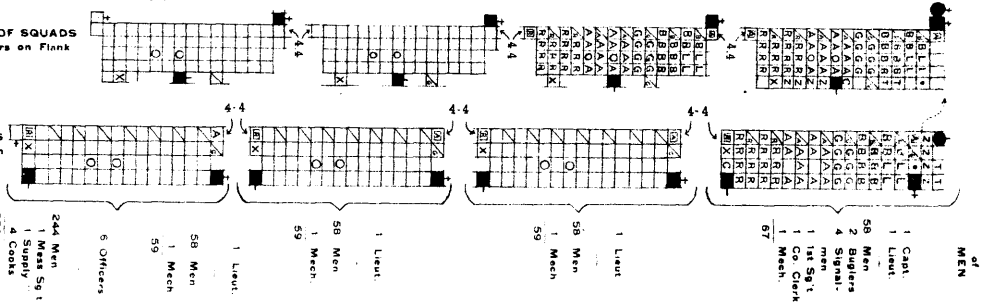
LEGEND.

COMPANY COMMANDER
PLATOON " [LT.]
ASS'T " " [SG'T]
1st SERGEANT
GUIDE
LIEUTENANT 2d IN COMMAND
BLANK FILE
CORPORAL
BUGLERS
SIGNALMEN
COMPANY CLERK
MECHANICS
FIGURES INDICATE PACES

A - AUTO RIFLEMEN
B - HAND BOMBERS
G - RIFLE GRENADES
L - RUNNER
R - RIFLEMEN
Z - SIGNALMEN

COLUMN OF SQUADS
File Closers on Flank

COLUMN OF SQUADS
File Closers in Column



SUMMARY of MEN

250 — 244 Men, 1 Supply, 1 Mess Sg't, 4 Cooks
5 Officers
59 — 58 Men, 1 Mech.
59 — 58 Men, 1 Mech.
1 Lieut.
59 — 58 Men, 1 Mech.
1 Lieut.
67 — 58 Men, 2 Buglers, 4 Signalmen, 1 1st Sg't, 1 Co. Clerk, 1 Mech.
1 Capt.
1 Lieut.

NOTE: LENGTH OF COLUMN IS INCREASED 104 INCHES BY THIS FORMATION AND WIDTH REDUCED 4'2+%. DISTANCES BETWEEN PLATOONS ARE LONGER IN SKETCH

PLATE 1.

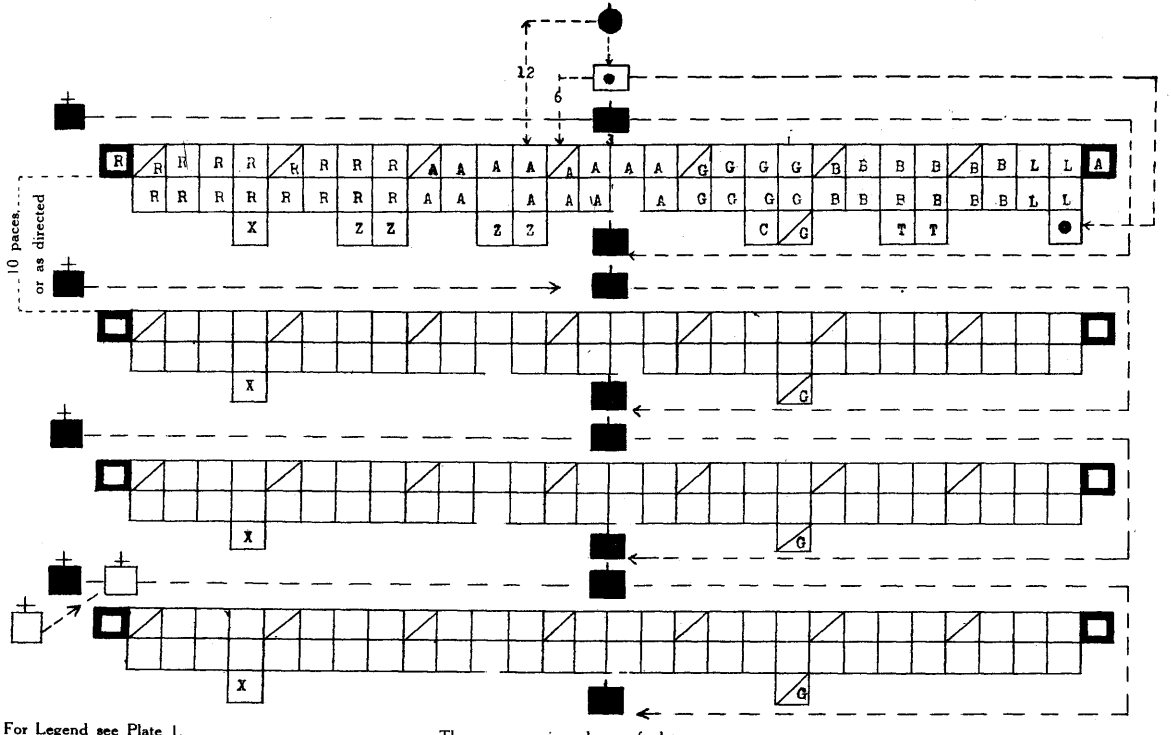



PLATE 2.

For Legend see Plate 1.

The company in column of platoons,
Showing positions and routes of officers and
noncommissioned officers, at formation of company.

PLATE 3.

The Company in Line of Platoons




The Company in Column of Platoons




The Company in Close Column (A Company Mass)

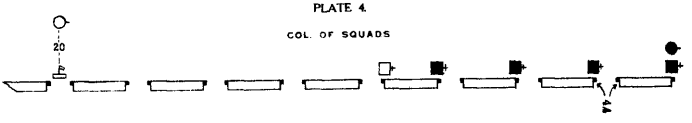






The Company in close Line

PLATE 4.


20
COL. OF SQUADS
44

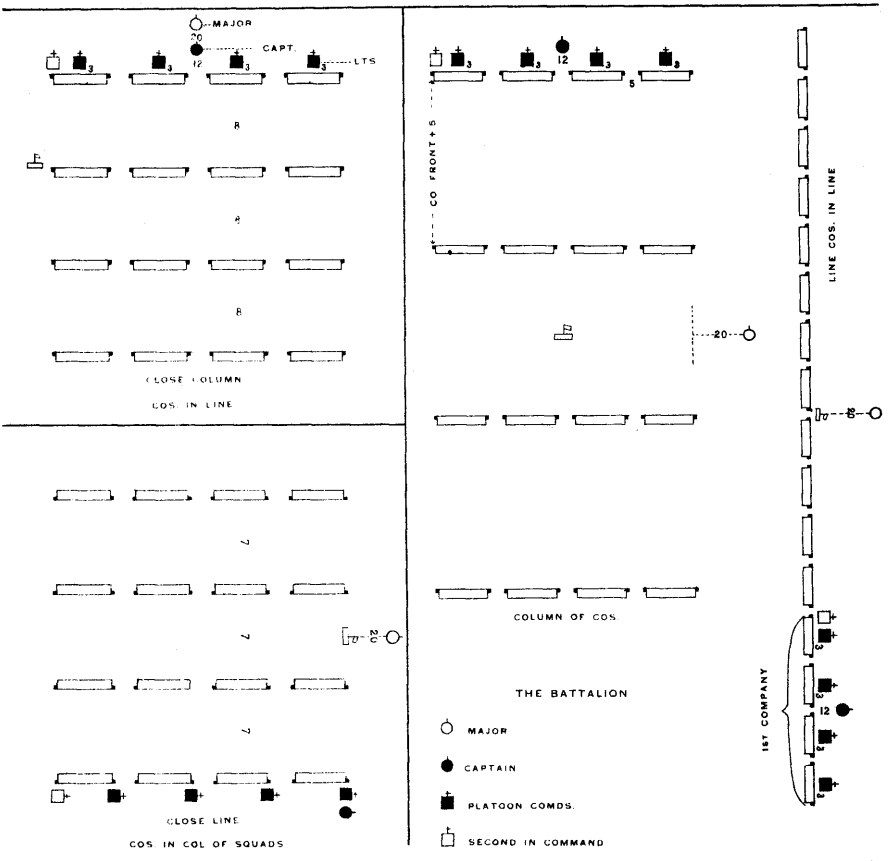
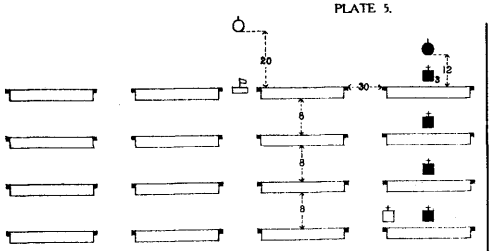
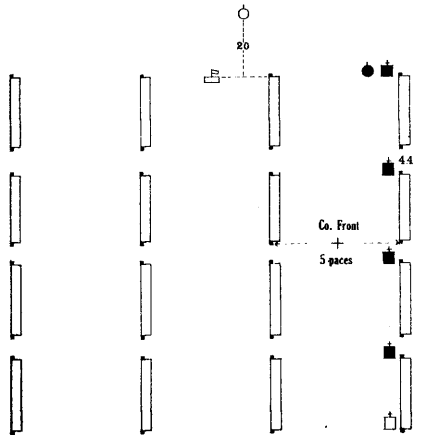

MAJOR
20
CAPT.
12
LTS
3
8
CLOSE COLUMN
COS. IN LINE
CO FRONT + 5
5
20
LINE COS. IN LINE
7
20
CLOSE LINE
COS. IN COL OF SQUADS
COLUMN OF COS.
1ST COMPANY
THE BATTALION
MAJOR
CAPTAIN
PLATOON COMDS.
SECOND IN COMMAND

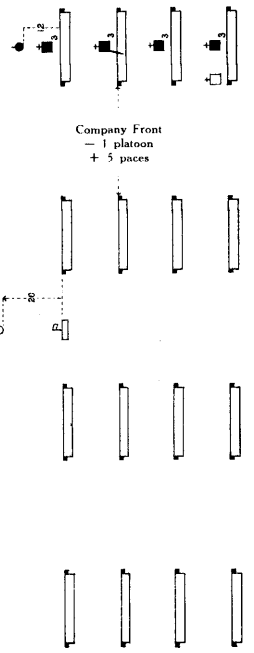
PLATE 5.




THE BATTALION LINE OF CO. MASSES.




THE BATTALION LINE OF COMPANIES.




The Battalion
Line of Companies in Columns of Platoons

# Training Circular No. 17.

1. The organization of the platoon of a rifle company is given in "Instructions for the Offensive Conduct of Small Units," W. D. Document 802, which supersedes Training Circular No. 1.

This circular gives formations for use at roll calls, drills, ceremonies and marches which have not been covered heretofore and which appear necessary in conjunction with the Infantry Drill Regulations, until the latter shall be revised to conform to the present organization of infantry. Combat formations are considered in the publication above mentioned.

The text follows, as closely as possible, the present Infantry Drill Regulations, changes being made only when necessary to agree with the present strength organizations. Numbers in parenthesis refer to paragraphs in Infantry Drill Regulations from which the new paragraph is taken.

## SCHOOL OF THE COMPANY.

1. (159) Instruction of the company. As prescribed in I.D.R.

2. (160-1-2) Forming the company. As prescribed in I.D.R., except that men are arranged as shown in plate 2 and that a platoon consists normally of seven squads.

3. (163-4) Lieutenants are assigned as follows:

Senior first lieutenant, second in command.
Second Senior first lieutenant, commanding first platoon.
Third Senior first lieutenant, commanding fourth platoon.
Senior second lieutenant, commanding second platoon.
Junior second lieutenant, commanding third platoon.

The four senior duty sergeants are assigned as assistants to platoon commanders, one with each platoon, and in text are designated as "Platoon Sergeants." (See plate 1, page 6, for posts of lieutenants and platoon sergeants). Next in rank are assigned as guides, two (2) to each platoon.

The first sergeant, supply sergeant and mess sergeants are not assigned as guides. The post of the first sergeant is shown in plates 1 and 2, pages 6 and 7. The supply sergeant, mess sergeant and cooks, when present, are distributed throughout the company as file closers.

4. (165) Movements by the company. As prescribed in I.D.R.

5. (166) When depleted. As prescribed in I.D.R.

6. (167) The exterior guides of the right and left, or leading and rear, platoons, are the right and left, or leading and rear guides, respectively, of the company when it is in line or in column of squads. Other platoon guides are at the head or rear of their platoons if the platoon is in column and on the flank if in line.

7. (168) Position of Guides. As prescribed in I.D.R.

8. (169) Men in the line of file closers do not execute the loading or firings.

Enlisted men in the line of file closers, armed with the rifle, execute the manual of arms during the drill unless specially excused, when they remain at the order. During ceremonies they execute all movements.

9. (170) To take intervals and distances. As prescribed in I.D.R., omitting words *"right and left"* second line.

10. (263) Repeating commands. As prescribed in I.D.R., substituting captain for major, lieutenant for captain, company for battalion and platoon for company. They do not repeat the captain's commands in executing the manual of arms, nor those commands which are not essential to the execution of a movement by their platoons, as *column of squads, first company, squads right*, etc.

In giving commands or cautions lieutenants may prefix the proper designations of their platoon, as *1st Platoon. Halt; 2nd Platoon, squads right*, etc.

11. (264) At the command *guide center* (right or left), lieutenants command: *Guide right or left*, according to the position of their platoons. Guide center designates the left guide of the center platoon.

12. (265) Alignments. As prescribed in I.D.R., substituting captain for major, lieutenant for captain, company for battalion and platoon for company.

13. (232 and 269) In close order the company executes the firings at the command of the captain, who posts himself in rear of the center of the company. At the first commands for loading, lieutenants take posts in rear of the center of their respective platoons. At the conclusion of the firing they resume their posts.

Usually the firings in close orders consist of saluting volleys only.

On other occasions, when firing in close order is necessary, it is executed by platoons or subdivisions under instructions from the captain.

TO FORM THE COMPANY.

14. (172-173) At the sounding of the assembly the first sergeant takes position 6 paces in front of where the center of the company is to be, faces it and commands: *Fall in.*

The right guide of the company places himself, facing to the front, where the right of the company is to rest and at such point that the center of the company will be 6 paces from and opposite the first sergeant; the platoons form in their proper places as shown in plates 1-2, superintended by the platoon guides and sergeants, who then take their posts; the post of the platoon sergeant at formations being 3 paces in front of and facing the center of his platoon.

The platoon sergeants then command: *Report.* Remaining in position at the order, the squad leaders, in succession from the right, in each platoon, salute and report; *all present;* or *Private(s)* absent. The platoon sergeants do not return the salutes of the squad leaders; they then command. 1. *Inspection.* 2. *Arms.* 3. *Order.* 4. *Arms, face about* and at command *Report,* given by first sergeant, salute the 1st sergeant and beginning on the right, report (1, 2, etc.,) *platoon all present or accounted for,* or, the number of the unauthorized absentees.

All platoons having reported the 1st sergeant commands: *Posts* and the platoon sergeants take post as shown in plate 1, page 6. The 1st sergeant then faces about, salutes the captain and reports: *Sir, all present or accounted for,* or *Sir,.....men are absent, and without command,* takes his post as shown in plate 1, page 6.

The 1st sergeant returns the salute of the platoon sergeants.

If the platoons cannot be formed by squads, the platoon sergeants command: 1. *Inspection.* 2. *Arms.* 3. *Right Shoulder.* 4. *Arms* and calls the roll. Each man, as his name is called, answers *here* and executes order of arms. The sergeant then forms the division into squads and reports the platoon as prescribed above.

The captain places himself 12 paces in front of the center of and facing the company in time to receive the report of the first sergeant, whose salute he returns.

The lieutenants take their posts when the first sergeant has reported. The company, not under arms, is formed in like manner, omitting reference to arms.

The company may also be formed in column of platoons at full or reduced distance according to ground available. The position of captain and 1st sergeant being opposite center of the front occupied.

For the instruction of platoon leaders and guides, the company, when small, may be formed in single rank. In this formation close

order movements only are executed. The single rank executes all movements as explained for the front rank of a company.

TO DISMISS THE COMPANY.

15. (174) As prescribed in I.D.R.

NOTE.—The following movements, unless specifically prescribed otherwise, will be executed as prescribed for the battalion, substituting *company* for *battalion, platoon* for *company, captain* for *major* and *lieutenant* for *captain.* Simultaneous movements may be executed according to paragraph 268, I.D.R.

16. (273) To rectify the alignment. As prescribed in I.D.R.

17. (274) To give the company a new alignment.

18. (176) Being in line, to turn the company on a fixed pivot. As described in paragraph 176, I.D.R.

19. (275) To Rectify the Column. As prescribed in I.D.R.

20. (276) On Right (Left) into line. As prescribed in I.D.R.

21. (277) Front into Line. As prescribed in I.D.R.

22. (278) To Form column of Platoons successively to the Right or Left. As prescribed in I.D.R.

23. (279) To Form Column of Squad successively to the Right or Left.

24. (280, 281, 282) To Change Direction. As prescribed in I.D.R.

25. (282½, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287) Company Mass Formations. As prescribed in I.D.R.

AT EASE AND ROUTE STEP.

26. (190, 191) As prescribed in I.D.R. In route marches the captain marches at the head of the column, and the officers and file closers habitually will march in the column, as shown in plate 1, page 6, the commands being: 1. Officers and File Closers. 2. Into Column. 3. *March.* To again resume posts, 1. Officers and File Closers. 2. Posts. 3. *March.* Platoons may also be directed to march without distance if economy in road space is necessary.

SCHOOL OF BATTALION.

27. (258 to 289, 340 and 341 inclusive) As prescribed in I.D.R. substituting plates 3 and 4 for plate 3 (the battalion) I.D.R., substituting in paragraphs 340 and 341 I.D.R., major for colonel, captain for major, battalion for regiment and company for battalion. At drill, captains may march opposite the center of their companies

six paces from the flank and on the side of the company guide and that when forming for ceremonies the battalion may be formed as directed (271). By "company mass" is meant a company in column of platoons at 8 paces distance. By "close column" is meant a battalion in column of companies at 8 paces distance, the companies being in line.

THE REGIMENT.

28. As prescribed in I.D.R., except that:

(*a*) Special units may be placed as directed by the colonel and plate IV (the regiment) I.D.R., disregarded in so far as it relates to these units.

(*b*) By *masses* is meant battalions in column of *companies* at 8 paces distance.

CEREMONIES AND INSPECTIONS.

29. As prescribed in I.D.R., except as specifically noted herein:

(*a*) When passing in review at parades and reviews, column of squads, column of platoons at full or reduced distances, column of masses or column of company masses may be prescribed, column of platoons at full distance being the normal formation.

(*b*) Except when the company is in line, eyes right (or left) in each platoon and the salute of the platoon commander will be executed as prescribed for the company in I.D.R. 725, the captain saluting as prescribed in I.D.R. for the major.

(*c*) To pass in review in column of company masses from line of company masses, the first company executes column right from its position in line followed by other companies in turn, the major of each battalion giving the commands: 1. Column of company masses, 2. First company, column right, 3. *March.*

BATTALION REVIEW.

(725) The battalion may also be formed in line of company masses.

REGIMENTAL REVIEW.

(728) The regiment may also be formed in line of company masses and the present arms and the ride around the line by the reviewing officer may be omitted.

30. (734) Battalion Parade. As prescribed in I.D.R. except as affected by the following and paragraph 29 above:

(*a*) The battalion may be formed either in line, line of company masses or line of companies in column of platoons at full or reduced intervals and distances according to ground available.

(*b*) To execute—1. Officers. 2. Center. 3. *March.* Being in line. At first command all officers carry saber and the lieutenants step forward three paces, in line with captains. At second command all officers face toward the center and, at third command, close in on center, as prescribed in I.D.R.

(*c*) To execute—1. Officers. 2. Posts. 3. *March.* As prescribed in I.D.R., 734, except that the route taken by officers is the reverse of that prescribed in *officers center.*

31. (735) Regimental Parade. As prescribed in I.D.R., except as effected by following and paragraph 29 above:

(*a*) The regiment may be formed in line, line of masses or line of company masses.

(*b*) Substitute "Lieutenants remain at their posts" for "Lieutenants remain in the line of file closers," line 8, paragraph 735, I.D.R.

32. (736) *Escort of the Colors.* As prescribed in I.D.R.

33. (738) *Escorts of Honor.* As prescribed in I.D.R.

34. (739 to 744 inclusive) *Funeral Escort.* As prescribed in I.D.R.

35. (745 to 748 inclusive) *Company Inspection.* As prescribed in I.D.R., with following exceptions:

(*a*) The company may be either in line or column of platoons at full reduced distances.

(*b*) The captain commands: 1. Open ranks. 2. *March.* The senior lieutenant, if not commanding a platoon, takes post five paces to the front and two paces to the left of the right guide of the company, facing the front. At second command, ranks are opened in each platoon as prescribed for the company (I.D.R. 745), each lieutenant commands: 1. Front when he has aligned his platoon and takes post three paces in front of the right guide of his platoon, facing to the front.

(*c*) Ranks having been opened and the lieutenants having taken their posts, the captain commands: 1. Prepare for inspection, if he desires to make the inspection, or directs the lieutenants to inspect their platoons. In the latter case the lieutenants command: 1. Prepare for inspection and inspect their platoons as prescribed for the company (I.D.R., 745), the captain supervising the inspection of the platoons and making such special inspection as he may deem necessary. Should the captain inspect the company, the platoons are inspected in succession beginning with

the first platoon. Each platoon leader, after being inspected, accompanies the captain through his platoon. Platoons not being inspected may be given "*at ease*" or "*rest.*"

(*d*) In both the methods prescribed in (*c*) the captain first inspects the senior lieutenant (if not commanding a platoon), who then accompanies the captain through the inspection.

(*e*) Upon completion of the inspection the captain resumes his post in front of the center of the company and commands: 1. Close ranks. 2. *March.* At the command *March*, platoon commanders take post in front of the center of their platoons. The company is then dismissed or the inspection continued as prescribed in I.D.R, paragraphs 746-7, except that the captain may direct the platoon commanders to inspect their respective platoons.

(*f*) The senior lieutenant, having joined the captain, remains with him until dismissed.

36. (748) Should the inspector be other than the captain, ranks are opened as described in (*b*) above. The captain then commands: 1. *Rest* and takes post six paces in front of the right guide of the company facing the front. The inspection then proceeds as prescribed in I.D.R., 748. The senior lieutenant joins the captain after being inspected and accompanies him as described before. Platoon commanders accompany the inspector through their platoons. Platoons not being inspected may be given "*at ease*" or "*rest.*"

37. (749) *Battalion Inspection.*—As prescribed in I.D.R., except that the battalion may be formed in column of platoons at full or reduced distances and ranks are opened, at command of captain, as described in (*b*), paragraph 35, above. Lieutenants accompany the inspector through their platoon. Post of captain and senior lieutenant in column of platoons as described in paragraph 36 above.

38. (754) *Regimental Inspection.*—As prescribed in I.D.R., 754, except that the inspector may prescribe any formation desired.

## MUSTER.

39. (755 to 757 inclusive) Regimental, battalion or company muster.—As prescribed in I.D.R., 755 to 757, inclusive, except that the formation may be as the commanding officer directs and that absentees may be verified as prescribed in existing orders.