COMMON TRAINING

GOLD STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 5

EO C408.01 – DISCUSS THE HISTORY OF DRILL

Total Time: 30 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-704/PG-001, *Gold Star Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Photocopy the Summary of Significant Drill Events handout located at Attachment A for each cadet.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for this lesson to orient the cadets to the history of drill and generate interest.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

Nil.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall have discussed the history of drill.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to discuss the history of drill as it represents a part of military history. Being able to understand the purpose and evolution of drill will help cadets understand why drill movements are performed by the military today.

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Teaching point 1 **Discuss the origins of drill.**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



This TP is intended to introduce the origin of drill throughout ancient history and how vital drill used was on the battlefield.

Distribute the Summary of Significant Drill Events located at Attachment A to each cadet.

In ancient history, the most powerful, efficient and developed empires developed ways of moving soldiers from one place to another on the battlefield, without individuals getting confused and mixed up with other units. Empires realized that well-drilled soldiers were more efficient in battle.



The earliest known drill movement, during the rise of kingship in Mesopotamia, about 3000 BC, was close-order drill, defined as shoulder to shoulder marching.

At one time, drill and tactics were the same, as drill was needed on the battlefield. Battle drill has existed since ancient times. Separate drill for infantry, armoured, cavalry and others were replaced by all arms drill early in the 20th century, as the changing conditions of war gradually separated tactics from barrack routine.



Infantry. Infantry drill was practiced regularly around 1000 BC and was necessary to ensure that each soldier's movements matched those of the rest.

Armoured. Soldiers, known as armoured spearmen, fought in close-order drill and marched in step to maintain an unbroken shield wall against the enemy. Regular practice was needed to keep the ranks together during battle.

Cavalry. In 875 BC, about a century after the infantry and armoured were developed, a new battlefield tactic (the bow and arrow) was introduced and a new style of warfare drill developed, which resulted in the establishment of the Cavalry. The Cavalry could attack from a distance, with the use of horses. They learned to do drill on the horses, control the horses and aim and shoot their bow and arrow.

Imitation of battle taught the proper use of weapons and strengthened endurance on the battlefield. Armies found that by teaching the soldiers drill and battle procedures, their chances of victory significantly improved.

Drill is still used routinely to move soldiers in an orderly and efficient manner. It also forms the basis of the precise manoeuvres used in military displays and ceremonies.

Romans

Around 2400 BC, Romans realized the way to learn the required skills when deploying for battle was by training Roman soldiers to execute drill in formation. At the beginning of training, recruits were taught the military pace by marching quickly, in time and in formation, up to 32 km (20 miles) a day. Three times a month, garrison soldiers marched 16.1 km (10 miles), built a fortified camp and returned to base, all in the same day. Individual skills with weapons were also developed with daily practice.

Romans spent most of their time practicing ceremonial guard duty and drill, in order to become well-drilled soldiers. The emotional significance of daily and prolonged close-order drill created a lively esprit de corps among the poverty-stricken peasant recruits and the urban outcasts.

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The Romans are presumed to have used cadence while marching for tactical formations. Romans regarded military music quite seriously, as they had several warlike instruments. Each soldier had a trumpet, a horn, or both. These were employed for signals, or what is now referred to as “calls”. Instruments were used for marching music and to direct the movement of soldiers.



As Roman soldiers clashed with other armies, they would learn and employ the same sort of successful drill that the other armies had developed.

Greeks and Spartans

Greek citizens did not willingly accept the rigors of military drill, but the emotional effects of keeping together did not disappear when citizen soldiers ceased to dominate military affairs. Drill became more elaborate in the fourth century BC, as those who participated in drill were professional soldiers whose loyalties were to their commanders.

Spartans engaged in drill and marching exercises on a regular basis and learned how to advance evenly into battle by keeping in step to the sound of music, all without breaking their order or ranks. Spartans also learned how to execute flanking movements and open and close order march, allowing their armies to alter the length of their front.



A Spartan is a citizen of Sparta (city in the South Peloponnese) in ancient Greece.



Spartans developed rigorous styles of military training as they required youth to live apart from family, according to their age class in order to participate in physical exercises and military drill.

Chinese

Chinese armies used drummers to beat the drums while soldiers were marching. The drummers would beat the drums once to signify the left foot moving forward and then beat it again to signify the right foot moving forward.

When drill and combat methods were taught, they were taught to 100 men at a time. After instruction to 100 men was complete, they were united with other companies which were comprised of 1 000 men. When the instruction to the 1 000 men was complete, they were combined with other regiments.

Large infantry armies were taught to handle their weapons in unison and maintain formation by keeping in step on the battlefield, all by responding to signals. Most of China's drill movements between 400 and 300 BC were derived from the Romans and the Greeks.



If a drummer missed a beat, he was executed. Those that moved by themselves or did not obey the drums or signals were also executed.

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CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS:

Q1. In ancient history, why did empires develop ways of moving organized soldiers from one place to another?

Q2. At the beginning of training, how were Roman recruits taught military pace?

Q3. Why did Chinese armies use drums?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. In ancient history, the most powerful, efficient and developed empires developed ways of moving soldiers from one place to another on the battlefield, without individuals getting confused and mixed up with other units.

A2. At the beginning of training, Roman recruits were taught military pace by marching quickly, in time and in formation, up to 32 km (20 miles) a day.

A3. Chinese armies used drummers to beat the drums when soldiers were marching. The drummers would beat the drum once to signify the left foot moving forward and then beat it again to signify the right foot moving forward.

Teaching point 2 **Discuss the evolution of drill movements.**

Time: 15 min Method: Interactive Lecture



This TP is intended to describe the evolution of drill and how drill movements and instruction developed throughout the years.

Infantry supremacy and precise drills were eclipsed after the fall of the Roman Empire. During the feudal era, mounted knights ruled combat. Infantry drills were resurrected in the 14th century and slowly developed and improved thereafter.

Swiss

Disciplined soldiers marched in cadence to the sound of musical instruments in admirable order beneath their banners. It is believed that the Swiss, in the late 1300s, were the first modern soldiers to march to music.

Dutch

Words of command were starting to be used for drill shortly after it was introduced to the Dutch in the late 1500s. It became possible to get soldiers to move in unison while performing the actions needed to load, aim and fire their weapons. The soldiers practiced until the necessary motions were almost automatic. This made them less likely to be disrupted by the stress of battle, an advantage when meeting untrained soldiers.

Words of command permitted companies, platoons and squads to respond to their designated leader as different movements and commands were established for units of every size. Soldiers had to practice these movements whenever possible. It was determined that when an entire army was trained this way, control of battle became possible.

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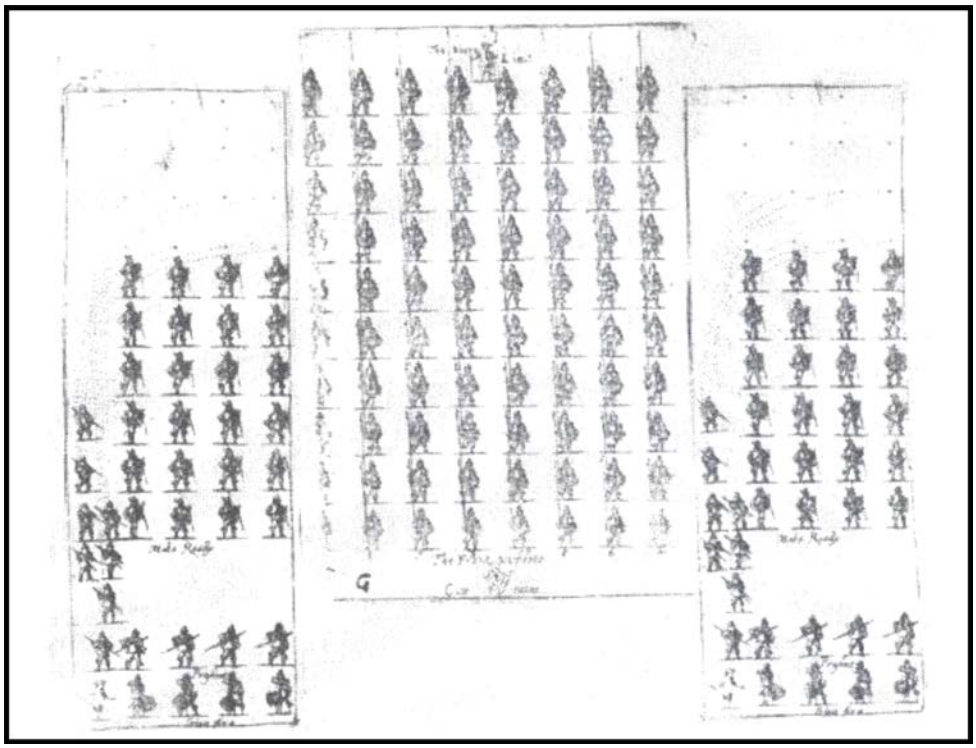
In the early 1600s, an artist was used to make engravings of each posture required for each drill movement, with the corresponding words of command below each picture. This material was then gathered and published into a book.



Note. From Keeping Together in Time: Dance and Drill in Human History (p. 86), W. H. McNeill, 1997, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Copyright 1995 by William H. McNeill.

Figure 1 Diagram of a Drill Movement in the 1600s

Over the next half century, the Germans, Russians, Spaniards and French translated the book, causing these drill movements to spread across Europe.

Germans

In the mid 1800s, the Germans (and the Swiss) had the idea of having soldiers become instructors. This provided the opportunity to break down the drill movement(s), demonstrating for all soldiers to see and by allowing the leaders to call out the movements, "by the numbers".

In the late 1800s, the British, Japanese and Chinese followed the Germans and the Swiss by having soldiers teach drill movements.

British

In the British Army, the balance step was a feature of the ordinary march step, experienced today as the slow march. The balance step was introduced as soldiers were required to manoeuvre shoulder to shoulder over rough and uneven ground in disciplined ranks, while giving effective volley fire. Each recruit was trained as a member of a squad until perfect in all points of duty. Each soldier was allowed to join the battalion after being fully trained. Every soldier, after returning from a long absence, had to be re-drilled before being permitted to act in the ranks of his company.

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It was imperative that commanders were able to estimate the time required for soldiers to march from point A to point B on foot. With that in mind, the following marches were introduced to the British Army in 1824:

- **March (75 steps per minute, each step 30 inches [76 cm]).** The slowest step (otherwise known as slow time) at which soldiers moved. This march was most commonly used for parades or moving very large formations.
- **Quick march (108 steps per minute, each step 30 inches [76 cm]).** This ordinary pace was applied to most movements by large bodies of soldiers.
- **Wheeling step (120 steps per minute, each step 30 inches [76 cm]).** Wheeling (forming) from line into column or vice versa, ensured there was no delay in achieving the required formation to face a new enemy.
- **Double march (150 steps per minute, each step 36 inches [91 cm]).** This march was applied to the movements within the divisions within a battalion without exhausting soldiers in heavy marching order (eg, load carrying equipment). In rank movements, the double march, when safely applied, may be used in rapid formations, or for quickly moving ranks.

Canadian

- **Royal Canadian Navy.** The Royal Canadian Navy used army drill and ceremonial procedures when on solid ground, by parading as platoons, companies and battalions. While on a ship, the navy conducted ship board drill. The navy still uses the same drill movements while on solid ground; however, they parade by divisions.
- **Canadian Army.** With few exceptions, Canada's Armed Forces used British drill manuals (sometimes with just a Canadian cover and covering page) up until the end of World War II (WW II). It was only with the introduction of a new family of small arms weapons (1989 Draft Drill Manual), and similar developments in other Commonwealth countries, that some of the old drill movements diverged. There were still many similarities in drill, allowing Canadian regiments to execute drill alongside British Army personnel.

One strong influence on the Canadian Forces is the evolution to independent statehood within the British Commonwealth of Nations. This can be seen in customs and routine, uniforms and drill, organization and many other matters (eg, trooping the colours, gun salutes).

- **Royal Canadian Air Force.** Technical requirements of the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1941 called for speeding up the process of drill instruction and, at the same time, reducing the periods of practical training. Both of these objectives were attained by properly combining classroom instruction and parade ground training. The daily program of training was arranged to allow all personnel on strength to receive one hour of classroom instruction and parade ground training per week.
  In 1955, the classroom explanation was absent from the *Manual of Drill for the Royal Canadian Air Force*. When conducting drill training, the Royal Canadian Air Force used army drill and ceremonial procedures.



Instructional and practical drill training periods for the Royal Canadian Air Force were as follows:

- classroom instruction–45 percent (demonstration and explanation by instructor);
- practical training–25 percent (on the parade ground);
- mutual instruction–15 percent; and
- voice training–15 percent.

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The foot and arms drill of the Royal Canadian Navy, Canadian Army and Royal Canadian Air Force were generally similar, being derived from the same tactical practices. When the three services were unified in 1968, evolution continued by blending the drill detail back into one standard of drill.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What did the Dutch create in the early 1600s?

Q2. What were the marches introduced by the British in 1824?

Q3. Whose drill manuals did the Canadian Armed Forces use before World War II?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. In the early 1600s, the Dutch created a book of drill. An artist was used to make engravings of each posture required of each drill movement, with the corresponding words of command below each picture. This material was then gathered and published into a book.

A2. The following marches were introduced by the British Army in 1824:

- march,
- quick march,
- wheeling step, and
- double march.

A3. With few exceptions Canada's Armed Forces used British Manuals (sometimes just with a Canadian cover and covering page) up until the end of WW II.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

QUESTIONS:

Q1. How did the Chinese teach drill to large numbers of soldiers?

Q2. When did the Dutch start using words of command for drill?

Q3. Why did the British introduce the balance step?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. When drill and combat methods were taught, they were taught to 100 men at a time. After instruction to 100 men was complete, they were united with other companies which were comprised of 1 000 men. When the instruction to the 1 000 men was complete, they were combined with other regiments.

A2. The Dutch started using words of command for drill in the late 1500s.

A3. The British introduced the balance step because the soldiers were required to manoeuvre shoulder to shoulder over rough and uneven ground in disciplined ranks, while giving effective volley fire.

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CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK / READING / PRACTICE

Nil.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Nil.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Drill procedures and movements are a large component of today's military. Learning about the purpose and evolution of drill will help you understand why so many drill movements are performed within the military today.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES / REMARKS

Nil.

REFERENCES

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C2-249 ISBN 978-0674-5023-07 McNeill, W. (1997). *Keeping together in time: Dance and drill in human history*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

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SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT DRILL EVENTS

Date	People	Event
3000 BC	Mesopotamians	The earliest known drill movement was close-order drill (defined as shoulder to shoulder marching).
2400 BC	Romans	Realized the way to learn the required skills when deploying for battle was by training soldiers drill in formation.
1000 BC	Greeks / Romans	Infantry drill was practiced regularly and was very necessary to ensure that each soldier's movements matched those of the rest. Armoured soldiers, also known as spearmen, fought in close-order drill and marched in step to maintain an unbroken shield wall.
875 BC	Greeks / Romans	A new battlefield tactic (the bow and arrow) was introduced and a new style of warfare drill developed, which resulted in the establishment of the Cavalry. The Cavalry could attack from a distance, with the use of horses. They learned to do drill on the horses, control the horses and to aim and shoot their bow and arrow.
400 and 300 BC	Chinese	Most of China's drill movements were derived from the Romans and Greeks.
1300s	Swiss	Were the first modern soldiers to march to music.
1500s	Dutch	The first to use words of command for drill.
1600s	Dutch	An artist made engravings of each posture required for each drill movement, with the corresponding words of command below each picture. This material was gathered and published into a book.
mid 1800s	Germans (and Swiss)	Had the idea of having soldiers become instructors. This provided the opportunity to break down the drill movement(s), demonstrating for all soldiers to see and by allowing the leaders to call out the movements, "by the numbers".
late 1800s	British, Japanese and Chinese	Followed the Germans and the Swiss by having soldiers teach drill movements.
1824	British	The balance step (the slow march) was introduced as soldiers were required to manoeuvre shoulder to shoulder over rough and uneven ground in disciplined ranks, while giving effective volley fire.
early 1900s	Canadians	Canada's Armed Forces used British drill manuals (sometimes with just a Canadian cover and covering page).
1941	Canadians	Technical requirements of the Royal Canadian Air Force called for speeding up the process of drill instruction and, at the same time, reducing the periods of practical training.
1955	Canadians	The classroom explanation was absent from the *Manual of Drill for the Royal Canadian Air Force*.
1968	Canadians	The foot and arms drill of the Royal Canadian Navy, Canadian Army and Royal Canadian Air Force were generally similar, being derived from the same tactical practices. When the three services were unified in 1968, drill evolution continued by blending the drill detail back into one.

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