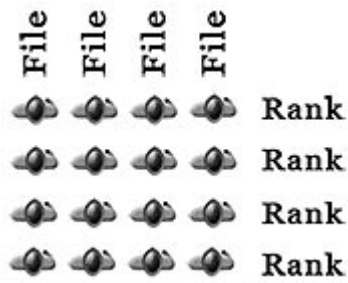


## What Ranks and Files Are

Soldiers in a formation (say, a pike block) are arrayed by **rank** and by **file**. Commands involve rank and/or file, and a soldier's orientation to others in the group is by rank and file.



Notes WITHIN the Flash animation:

1. Think of rank and file being 90° to one other.
2. Of the two, File is fundamental - the foundation. Rank is made by putting files alongside each other.
3. Think of rank as going across.
4. Think of file as going front to back.

Chapt. 4, The Young Artilleryman...

## Positions in a File



The order of soldiers in a file remains constant for any set of actions. The order must remain constant because four of the positions in the file make the focal points for any movement. Historically, these four soldiers had the most seniority and experience, designated with the highest "Dignitie."

Notes WITHIN the Flash animation:

1. There are several positions in each FILE.
2. This soldier is designated the File Leader because most maneuvers depend on the file to respond to his lead. He is at the front --- the Front PROPER. If this file of soldiers was ordered to face to the right, thereby creating the Front Accidental, that File Leader will remain the File Leader.
3. Halfway down the file is the Half File Leader. This position is midway in the file. It is called upon when files and ranks are doubled or reduced.
4. This last soldier in the file is the Bringer-Up. This is the second most important position in the file , of greater "Dignitie" than the Half-File Leader.
5. Fourth in importance ("Dignitie") is the Front Half-File Bringer-Up. This position may be used in doubling. Those in front of the Bringers-Up and behind the File and Half-File Leaders may be referred to as the Middle Men.
6. These designations apply across all files.

Chapts 4 & 5, The Young Artilleryman...

## Following in the File & An Introduction to Dressings

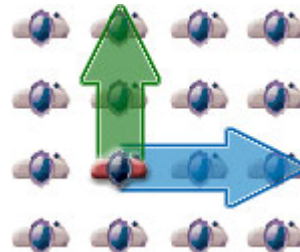


Unless you are a File Leader, this is the soldier you follow while in your file. That's right! You follow the soldier directly in front of you. That soldier follows the one in front of him - and so on up to the File Leader who is flawlessly taking direction from the officer or sergeant.

You also stay in line with this soldier, not to the right nor left of an imaginary line drawn from the File Leader back through him to the Bringer Up. To orient yourself in this line is to dress the file (to use a modern military term).

In addition, keep an eye on the soldier to your **right** (referred to in period texts as the 'sideman'). It is to him you even yourself with the **rank**, that is, you must be no farther back nor farther forward than the soldier to your right.

Nevertheless, the adept soldier always keeps his ears trained on the officer or sergeant. Their words are your commands. The movement of the soldier in front of you as well as the soldier to your right should harmonize with what you hear. If perchance they don't, (not as if any File Leader would screw up) well, the officer or sergeant is the FINAL authority.



Align yourself to those to your front and to your right.

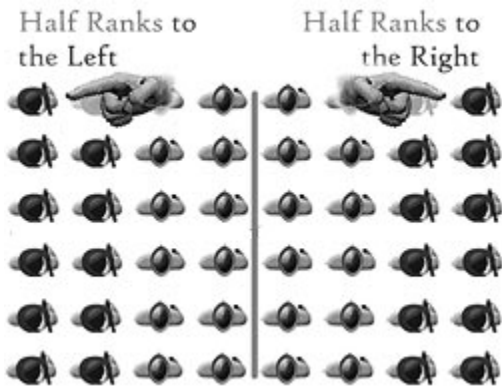
Sgt. Subtlelus says:

Consider soldiers in properly dressed files and ranks to be positioned as though they were points at the intersections of lines on a grid. When the unit moves, a single grid consisting of all its points moves.

Chapt. 4, The Young Artilleryman...

### Half Ranks: Dividing Ranks in Two

There will be occasions for which the formation must narrow itself by half. For such, think of the Ranks that make the group, and divide the unit in two by splitting in half each Rank.



Notes WITHIN the Flash animation:

1. As well as dividing a body of soldiers in two by File, the same is done also by Rank, and the two parts are denoted as Half Ranks.
2. For maneuvering Half Ranks, the File Leader at the outside corner of each half is in control.
3. Half Rank to the Right has priority. Hence, the File Leader for the Right Half Rank is senior to the File Leader for the Left Half Rank - has the greater "Dignitie."
4. By the way, this arrangement of pikemen and musketeers was commonly used. The pikemen were the core of the formation with the musketeers at the 'wings' (sometimes referred to as 'sleeves').

Chapt. 5, The Young Artilleryman...

## Orders: Give and Take

Reference here is to orders from a commander to a unit of soldiers, and that unit can be from a single file to a regiment. The keystone word here is 'unit,' which the person issuing the command wishes to have operate as a single, cohesive entity. Got that? Cohesive!

To obtain the desired reaction of all members of the unit, commands must be given in a standard manner with fixed and universally understood words. Although a civilian trying to cope with an office meeting will wish to know six aspects of a request: who, how, what, where, when and why, the soldier in a file needs to know ONLY three of those (and best in this sequence):

Who	Designates either the entire unit or that portion of the unit the officer or sergeant selects. That portion may be as small as a single soldier. If a portion of a unit is specified, then the rest of the unit is tacitly assured the command is not for them. For example: "First file by the right hand..."
How	Does not mean to instruct; all soldiers must know the moves. Instead this is to indicate a manner of proceeding or direction, as in "To your right hand..." On occasion, even the 'How' for an order may be unnecessary.
What	This is THE statement of what is required. Coming after 'Who' and 'How,' with all soldiers knowing by then which of them is to do in what manner, 'What' completes the command by telling the soldiers to do at that point the necessary action, as in "March On!"

For military purposes, the other three are unnecessary, superfluous, and an invitation to spontaneous discussion among soldiers:

Where	Where else but here? And to where is whenever the soldiers are given a subsequent command, like "Halt!"
When	NOW! Not later!
Why	Not open for discussion on the field. PERIOD! This may be debated and bandied about only afterwards, like during supper or in the beer tent or while leisurely stretched out under the stars with a refreshing beverage in hand.

Sergeant Subtleus says:

Direction provided in any command is by the unit's orientation. In particular, "By the left hand" and "By the right hand" refer to the left and right sides of the unit. For an officer or sergeant facing the unit, "By the left" is to his right and "By the right" is to his left. Even in the heat of engagement, the officer must always keep in mind his reference point to his unit. That these persons do not become confused and disoriented by such seeming contradictions is why they are officers and sergeants.