

# The Appearance of an Officer

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## Extract from General Orders, 1 August 1778

To Parole Tuscany from Head-Quarters White Plains  
C. Signs Truro—Tartary

...As there is something extremely awkward and unmilitary in Officers saluting at different times and in different manners the following general Direction is to be observed; The saluting Officer is to look full in the Face of the Officer saluted, his body upright and his step firm and to begin at such a distance as to finish the salute when opposite the Person for whom it is intended—The Motions of the Sword or Fusil & the Feet ought to be exactly in Concert; in order to which and for the graceful Performance of salutes it is expected Officers will spare no Trouble or Pains to perfect themselves and arrive at Dexterity and Uniformity as it is a matter which forms no unessential Part of their duty and will be highly ornamental to their military Appearance and Character.

When the guards are ordered to march off the Brigade Major is to see that they all step off at the same instant with their left feet and the Officers of Platoons will be particularly attentive that the step is afterwards preserved: As the Platoons pass in Review before the Major General or Officer Commanding the Parade the men are to hold up their heads and look full in their Face.

No Officer who has Regimentals is to mount guard in any other dress, and when men are warned for guard they are to be directed to come on with clean hands and faces hairs combed and powdered, and are to appear in all respects as decent and soldierlike as circumstances will permit.

Brigade Majors and Adjutants will recollect that it is an indispensable part of their duty to attend to this and see that the mens Arms Ammunition and Accoutrements are continually in the best order.

The Major General of the day thro' the Field Officers will have a careful Inspection made into these several matters and where there appears to be any deficiency will call the Brigade-Majors and Adjutants to account on the spot, and either reprimand arrest or acquit as circumstances shall warrant; These are to be considered as standing orders which it is expected all officers and soldiers will be made acquainted with & punctually observe...

See the original document here