

Chapter 7

FUNERALS

The regulations with regard to Funeral Honours are contained in QRRN 1239, 1391 to 1396, and 1651, which give the honours that may be paid, dependent upon whether the deceased had retired from the service before death, or died when in receipt of full pay; the following instructions are applicable only in the latter case.

For further details on funeral drill reference should be made to Chapter 2 (rifle movements) and Chapter 3 (sword movements).

701 COMPOSITION OF CORTÈGE

The composition of the cortège will be:

Firing Party	—	see Section 702
Band		
Gun Carriage	—	see <i>Fig. 7-1</i>
Insignia Bearer	—	(if any)
Personal Mourners		
Queen's Representative (if any)	—	unless a desire is expressed to precede the Family mourners
Lord Lieutenant	—	(if any)
Service Mourners	—	see Section 702
Attending Party	—	see Section 702
Mourners other than from the Services.		

- NOTES:
1. At Army, RAF and some large funerals an Armed Escort marches ahead of the Firing Party. This party, which used to be the Guard to RN Funerals, is not now provided in Naval Funerals.
 2. Service Mourners are representatives from the deceased's own ship. Attending Party are representatives from other ships or services who may be required to attend.
 3. Bearers. In Naval Funerals these will either be taken from the Rear Drag Ropes numbers or may be a separate party who need not march in the cortège. At other Services' funerals the Bearers march alongside the coffin outside the pall bearers, if any.
 4. Pall Bearers. These are usually provided only at the funerals of very distinguished persons and should if practicable be of the same or equivalent rank as the deceased. Eight pall bearers is the usual number but if some are provided from other Services or countries the number may be increased. Pall Bearers never carry the coffin but act as its personal escort. They march on either side of the gun carriage in reverse order of seniority, the senior being the starboard after, next senior port after and so on. (The Pall used to be the cloth roof of the Funeral Carriage and the Pall Bearers hold up its edges. Today the Union Flag covering the Coffin most nearly represents the Pall of past days.)

CEREMONIAL AND DRILL

702 STRENGTH OF FUNERAL PARTIES

RANK	MINUTE GUNS	IN CHARGE OF FUNERAL	ATTENDING PARTY		FIRING PARTY		IN COMMAND OF GUN CARRIAGE CREWS
			STRENGTH OFFICERS AND MEN	COMMAND	STRENGTH	IN COMMAND	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Admirals of the Fleet Admiral Other Flag Officers Captains in Command Other Captains and Commanders in Command	In accordance with Q.R.R.N. 1394 for Flag Officers, Commandores, Captains, Commanders in Command	Senior Captain Captain Captains Commander Commander	500 400 300 200 150	Cdr. Cdr. Cdr. Cdr. Cdr.	24 24 24 24 24	Commander Commander Commander Commander Lt. Cdr. or Lt.	An officer junior to officer-in-charge of the attending party.
Other Commanders and Lieu- tenant Commanders	Nil	Lt. Cdr.	100	Lt. Cdr. or Lt.	12	Lt. Cdr. or Lt.	
Lieutenants	Nil	Lieutenant	50	Lt.	12	Lt.	P.O.
Sub. Lieutenants	Nil	Lieutenant	25	—	6	Officer of Equal Rank	P.O.
Subordinate Officers	Nil	Lieutenant	20	—	6	"	P.O.
Chief Petty Officers and Petty Officers	Nil	Lieutenant	15	—	6	C.P.O. or P.O.	P.O.
All other Ratings	Nil	Lieutenant	10	—	6	C.P.O. or P.O.	P.O.

NOTES: (a) The numbers shown in Column 4 are subject to the means at the disposal of the senior officer present.

(b) The numbers shown in Column 6 should be adhered to whenever possible.

(c) This table does not include Mourners, on whose numbers there is no restriction, subject to the means at the disposal of the senior officer for transport, etc.

(d) At small funerals, the officer-in-charge of the funeral may also be in command of the attending party.

703 DUTIES AND DRESS

- Officer-in-charge — At large funerals should have no other duty. Orders the dress for the funeral, and which officers are to wear swords; normally all officers wear swords.
- Firing Party — Fallen-in in two ranks, bayonets unfixed. Officer-in-charge, sword drawn. If a petty officer is in charge he is armed with a rifle (bayonet unfixed). The magazines are charged with three rounds of blanks; white anklets and belt ~~are worn.~~ *bayonet and frog are worn.*
- Gun Carriage — If there is an officer in charge of the gun carriage he draws his sword (petty officer i/c unarmed). In funeral procession in London, or if ordered by the Senior Officer, reverse drag ropes are to be provided and manned by 12 men additional to the gun carriage crew. Two men additional to the gun carriage crew are also to be provided as double slat numbers, when reverse drag ropes are manned.
 The position of reverse drag ropes and double slat numbers is shown in Fig. 7-1.
 Pall bearers march either side of coffin.
 White belts and anklets are worn; chinstays down.
- Personal Mourners — Officers' swords sheathed, no webbing equipment is worn by ratings.

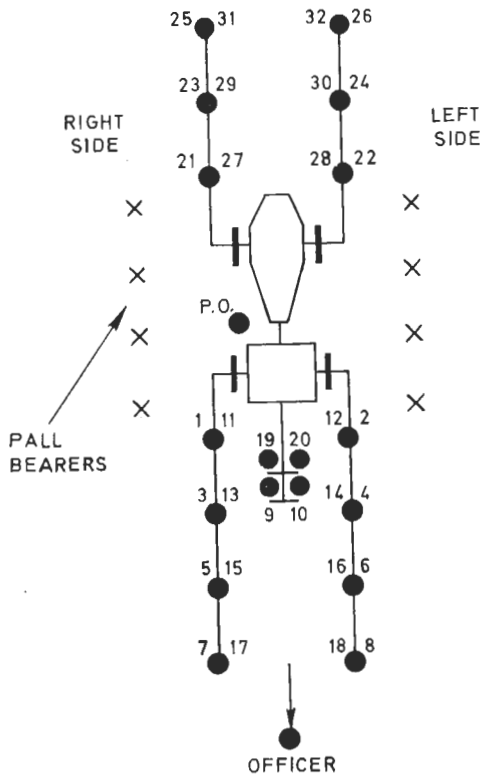


Fig. 7-1 Positions of the gun carriage crew

CEREMONIAL AND DRILL

- Attending Party — Carry wreaths to the graveside. Officers' sword sheathed, ratings unarmed. No webbing equipment is worn.
- Bearers — To eliminate wobble and slanting of the coffin, bearers should be of the same size and on stepping off, are to step off, left file with the left foot and right file with the right foot. The inner arms of the bearers are to be interlaced by placing the hand on the outer shoulder of the opposite bearer, this allows the coffin to be partially supported by the inner arm as well as the shoulders. The disengaged hand is placed just in front of the right/left shoulder grasping the bottom ridge of the coffin, thumbs underneath, fingers on top.
Pall bearers do not carry the coffin. (see section 713 Drill for Coffin Bearers)
- Insignia Bearers — If present, march in rear of the reverse drag rope numbers of the gun carriage crew.
- Band — Drums are to be muffled.

704 GENERAL RULES

- (a) The coffin of any Naval Officer or rating is to be draped with a Union Flag.
- (b) Three volleys of musketry are to be fired over the grave of all officers and ratings.
- (c) In addition to the three volleys of musketry at the grave, a salute of guns (see QRRN 1394 and 1395) is to be fired for a member of the Admiralty Board, all Flag Officers, Commodores who are entitled to fly a broad pennant, Captains and Commanders in Command.
- (d) The officer-in-charge of the funeral is responsible for the conduct of the funeral as a whole, and he places himself where he can best supervise the procedure when the party has halted. When on the march, the officer-in-charge of the funeral is immediately in front of the gun carriage except in small funerals when he may also be in command of the attending party.
- (e) The senior officers in the attending party march in the front, the junior ranks or ratings bringing up the rear. The same applies to the officers and men included in the mourners.
- (f) At a senior officer's funeral the medals of the deceased are carried on a dark blue cushion by an officer who was a personal friend of the deceased. Medals are to be carried in rear of the coffin.
- (g) At an officer's funeral, his cap and sword are placed on top of the coffin as shown (see Fig. 7-2).

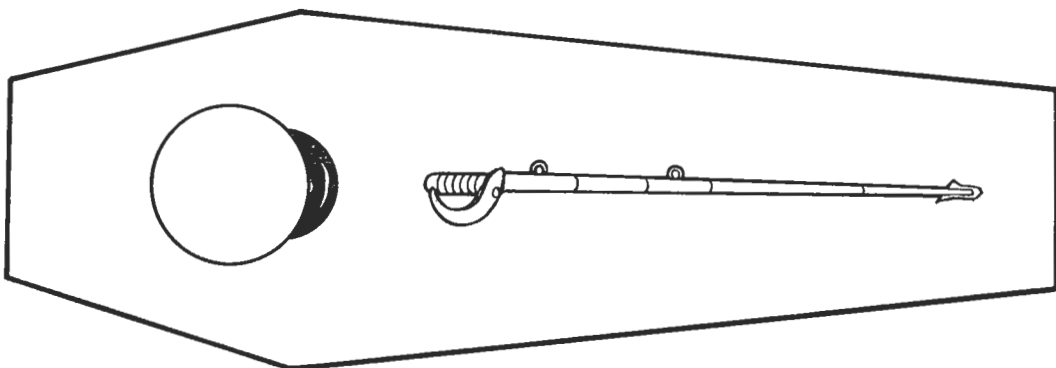


Fig. 7-2 Arrangement of officers cap and sword on the coffin

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- (h) Officers in command of the firing party and Gun Carriage draw swords when the funeral assembles. All other officers keep their swords sheathed.
- (j) Officers are to wear mourning bands on the left arm midway between elbow and shoulder.
- (k) Officers stand to attention and salute while the coffin is being placed on, or removed from, the gun carriage.
- (l) Officers with swords sheathed remove headdress at the commencement of the service at the graveside, and replace it at the end of the service before volleys are fired.
- (m) At important Naval funerals in London, the MOD (Navy) Memorandum on funerals is to be followed. This memorandum amplifies the procedure and differs in a few details from the foregoing instructions. Copies are held by the Commanders-in-Chief of Home Ports.
- (n) At funeral processions attended in uniform by officers of other Services, special positions are to be allotted to:—
 - (1) Officers representing the Army, Royal Air Force and other services.
 - (2) Officers of Flag rank and officers of corresponding rank in the Army and Royal Air Force.
- (o) Officers of each service form separate groups in the cortège.
- (p) If civil officials are present in their official capacity, the Senior Naval officer is to allocate to them a position in the cortège appropriate to the circumstances of the funeral.
- (q) If armed units from the Army or Royal Air Force are present, orders are to be given in the sequence Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force, waiting until the motions of the previous unit are completed.
- (r) Members of the Women's Royal Naval Service and Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service who die on service may receive such funeral honours as are accorded to corresponding ranks and ratings of the Royal Navy.

705 RELATIVE RANKS AND RATINGS OF THE RN AND WOMEN'S NAVAL SERVICE

RN	WRNS	QARNNS
Commodore	Director	Matron-in-Chief
Captain	Superintendent	
Commander	Chief Officer	Principal Matron
Lieutenant Commander	First Officer	Superintending Sister
Lieutenant	Second Officer	Senior Nursing Sister
Sub-Lieutenant	Third Officer	Nursing Sister
Fleet Chief Petty Officer	FCPO Wren	No equivalent
Chief Petty Officer	CPO Wren	Head Naval Nurse
Petty Officer	P.O. Wren	Assistant Head Naval Nurse
Leading Rate	Leading Wren	Senior Naval Nurse
Able or Ordinary Rate	Wren or Probationary Wren	Naval Nurse or Probationary Naval Nurse

706 FORMING THE PROCESSION

The various parties are drawn up outside the building from which the procession is to start (as shown in *Fig. 7-3*). The numbers indicate the sequence in which the various parties move

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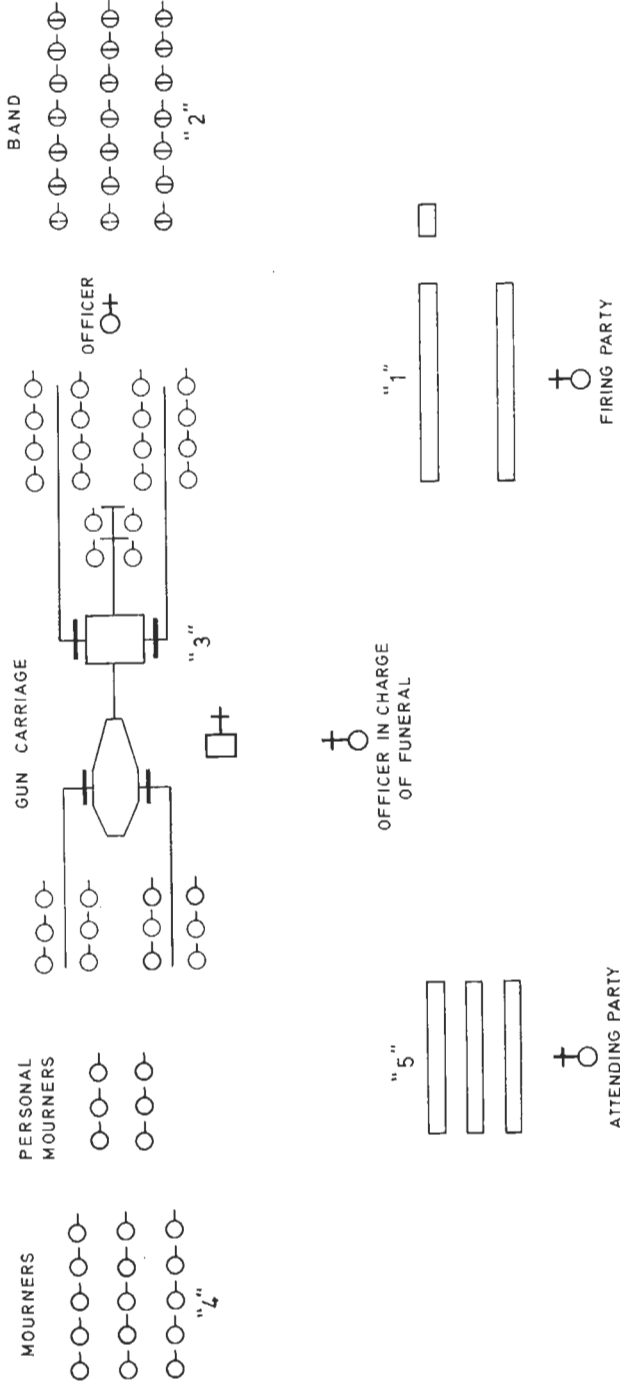


Fig. 7-3 Funeral party moving off to the right

off. The figure shows the formation of the procession when it is to move off to the right. If to the left, the bugler would be on the left of the firing party, the gun carriage would be reversed, facing left, the mourners would be in rear of the gun carriage, and all other parties would have their positions reversed, left for right, so as to move off in the sequence shown.

The band and the mourners fall in on either side of the gun carriage, the band facing the centre of the road, the mourners in threes facing the gun carriage.

The attending party and firing party form up on the opposite side of the road, facing the centre of the road. The attending party is in three ranks; the firing party is in two ranks.

The actual arrangement of parties must be altered to suit the particular circumstances of the funeral.

The officer-in-charge of the firing party should draw his sword as soon as the party has formed up. The firing party should be brought to the shoulder before the coffin is brought out of the building.

As the coffin is being brought out of the building, feet first, officers and petty officers in charge of unarmed parties call their parties to *Attention*. The officer or petty officer in charge of the gun carriage orders:—

“Gun carriage crew, about – turn”.

“Reverse drag rope numbers, open order – march”

“Off – caps”

Caps are removed with the hand not holding a drag rope.

Officers or petty Officers in command of other unarmed parties order **“Off – caps”**.

Officers do not remove their caps but come to the *Salute* as the firing party carries out the last movement of the *Present*, returning to the position of *Attention* as the firing party comes to the *Reverse* (see below).

The officer-in-command of the firing party orders:—

“General salute, present – arms”

Firing party acts as in Rifle Drill (see Section 209), the officer-in-command saluting with the sword (see Section 322).

When the coffin has been placed on the gun carriage, the officer-in-command of the firing party orders:—

“Reverse – arms”

Firing party act as in Funeral Drill (see Section 242), the officer-in-command as in sword drill (see Section 325).

707 PROCESSION TO CEMETERY

The officer-in-charge of gun carriage orders:—

“On caps, about turn”

As in squad drill.

“Reverse drag-rope numbers, close order – march”

Reverse drag-rope numbers turn to their front, take three side paces inwards.

The officer-in-charge of mourners orders:—

“On – caps”

As in squad drill.

The officer-in-charge of attending party orders:—

“On – caps”

As in squad drill.

The officer-in-command of the firing party orders:—

“Firing party will move to the right (or left). Right (or left) – Turn”

The firing party act as in squad drill.

“Slow – march”

The firing party steps off, leading the procession.

The band wheels and forms in its proper formation in rear of the firing party.

The officer-in-charge of gun carriage orders:—

“Slow – march”

Gun carriage follows immediately in rear of band, pall bearers either side of it.

Personal mourners travel in rear of gun carriage.

The officer-in-charge of Service mourners orders:—

“Slow – march”

Mourners follow behind personal mourners.

The officer-in-charge of attending party orders:—

“Slow – march”

The attending party follows behind service mourners.

- NOTES: 1. The band plays the Dead March as previously ordered by the officer-in-charge of the funeral.
2. If the procession starts from a hospital the band must not play until it is three hundred yards clear of the hospital.

When the band ceases to play, the order **“Quick – march”** (see Section 327) is given by officers in charge of parties in sequence:

Firing Party
Band
Gun Carriage
Service Mourners
Attending Party

When at the perimeter of the cemetery the officer-in-charge of the firing party orders:—

“Slow – march”. The firing party act as in Funeral Drill (see Section 328). The band again plays the Dead March and officers of parties order **“Slow – march”** in sequence from front to rear.

When the head of the procession is a few paces from the cemetery gates the officer-in-command of the firing party orders:—

“Form – Lane”

The ranks incline outwards, take three paces, and then incline in the original direction. The bugler conforms to the movements of the front rank.

The officer of the firing party then orders:—

“Halt”

Firing party act as in squad drill.

“Inwards – turn”

Firing party act as ordered. The officer of the firing party aligns himself with the rear rank, facing the bugler.

“Rest on your arms – reversed”

Firing party act as in Funeral Drill (see Section 329).

If the officer-in-charge of the funeral so orders, the band wheels and disengages outside the cemetery, continuing to play until the last of the attending party has entered the cemetery. If the band is required at the grave-side it proceeds into the cemetery after the firing party.

The gun carriage crew, mourners and attending party lead on through the firing party into the cemetery, being led by the chaplain conducting the service.

708 PROCEDURE AT CEMETERY/CREMATORIUM

The gun carriage crew, mourners and attending party proceed to the cemetery. The bearers, mourners and attending party attend the service in the chapel.

NOTE: In certain cemeteries the gun carriage is not allowed to enter, in which case it is necessary for the bearers to carry the coffin from the cemetery gates. In this case the procession should halt.

After the attending party has passed through the ranks of the firing party, the officer of the firing party orders:—

“Atten - tion”

The firing party acts as in Funeral Drill.

“Reverse - arms”

The firing party acts as in Funeral Drill (see Section 330).

“Ranks, right and left, in - cline”

The firing party turns towards the cemetery.

“Slow - march”

Firing party steps off as ordered and again inclines towards the cemetery after taking three paces. Bugler and officer resume their marching positions. The firing party is then marched to the graveside, halted and turned towards the grave.

NOTE: If the coffin is carried to the grave, the firing party follows the attending party.

“Rest on your arms - reversed”

The firing party act as in Funeral Drill (see Section 329).

Before the commencement of the service, officers or petty officers in charge of gun carriage, mourners and attending party order **“Off - caps”**. All officers and men act as ordered.

The bearers carry the coffin to the graveside feet first and lower the coffin into the grave in accordance with the procedure in Section 713 and as advised by the sexton.

The funeral service is read by the padre, on completion of the service.

Officer-in-charge of the firing party orders:—

“Attention”

The firing party act as in Funeral Drill.

Officers-in-charge of parties now order **“on - caps”** in sequence:—

- Gun carriage
- Service mourners
- Attending Party

Officer-in-charge of firing party orders:—

“Shoulder - Arms”

The firing party act as in Funeral Drill (see Section 331).

The officer-in-command of the firing party orders:—

“Volleys with blank cartridge - load”

The firing party act as in Ceremonial Firing (see Section 238).

“Pre - sent”

The firing party act as in Ceremonial Firing.

“Fire”

The firing party act as in Ceremonial Firing.

“Re – load”

The firing party act as in Ceremonial Firing.
Two more volleys are similarly fired.

“Un – load”

Firing party act as in Ceremonial Firing.

“Order – arms”

The firing party act as in Ceremonial Firing.
The officer-in-command of the firing party orders :—

“Fix – bayonets”

The firing party act as in Rifle Drill (see Section 215).

“Shoulder – arms”

The firing party act as in Rifle Drill.

“General salute – present – arms”

The firing party act as in Rifle Drill.
All officers salute with the hand taking time from the firing party.
After a short pause the bugler sounds the Last Post.

“Shoulder – arms”

The firing party act as in Rifle Drill. All officers return to the position of attention.
After another short pause the bugler sounds the Reveille.

“Move to the right (or left) in file, right (or left) – turn. Quick – march”

Firing party act as in squad drill. As necessary for marching out of cemetery.

When all the funeral parties are outside the cemetery, the officer-in-charge of the funeral organises them for marching back, with the band leading, followed by the firing party, mourners and attending party. Bayonets may be unfixed.

- NOTES:
1. Orders are generally issued to the gun carriage crew to return as convenient. The band does not commence to play until clear of the perimeter of the cemetery.
 2. In cases where the number of officer mourners is considerable, special orders should be issued as to the time and place of their dispersal.
 3. If the service is conducted at a crematorium the firing party and bugler may be paraded outside and follow the same procedure as for the graveside, on completion of the service. However, if this is done, further honours should not be paid if the ashes are interred, scattered or buried at sea.

709 DRILL FOR A FUNERAL GUN CARRIAGE

- (a) The equipment consists of a field gun carriage and limber. A platform to support the coffin is built up on the gun carriage. The ordinary limber drag-ropes are used and a pair of reverse drag-ropes should be stowed in the limber boxes.

The gun crew consists of a petty officer missileman and 18 men, No. 9 should be a leading seaman.

(b) PRELIMINARY DRILL

The gun carriage crew is fallen in, in four ranks, sized tallest flanks, shortest in the centre. When reverse drag-ropes are in use the tallest men should be in the front and rear, shortest men nearest the limber and gun carriage.

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(c) FORMING ORDER OF MARCH

Form order of march. **“Gun carriage crew right (or left) Turn”**. **“Quick – March”**. At this order outboard ranks march outboard of the drag-ropes, inboard ranks inboard of the drag-ropes to positions previously detailed. On arrival at their loops or slats mark time automatically.

“Gun Carriage Crew–Halt”

Act as ordered.

“Gun Carriage Crew about–turn”

Act as ordered—(Reverse drag-rope numbers do not conform).

“Take up Drag-Ropes”

Front drag-rope numbers take a pace forward with the left foot. Bend the knees and grasp the loops, carry the right foot forward in line with the left at the same time straighten the knees. 17 and 18 entwine disengaged fingers, fore-arms parallel with the ground. A pause of two marching paces is taken between each movement.

Reverse drag-rope numbers take a pace to the rear with the left foot, bend the knees and grasp the loops. Carry the right foot to the rear in line with the left, at the same time straighten the knees. A pause of two marching paces is carried out between each movement. Slat numbers reach up and grasp the slats, pulling them down to a position when the top of the limber boxes are parallel to the ground.

(d) **GROUNDING DRAG-ROPES**

Front drag-rope numbers take a pace to the rear with the left foot (17 and 18 untwine their fingers), bend the knees and place the loop on the ground, carry the right foot to the rear, at the same time straighten the knees. A pause of two marching paces is taken between each movement. Reverse drag-rope numbers, take a pace forward with the left foot, bend the knees, place the loop on the ground, carry the right foot forward, at the same time straighten the knees. A pause of two marching paces is taken between each movement.

Slat numbers raise the slats so that the trail rests gently on the ground, release the slats and come to the position of attention.

(e) **FALLING-OUT**

“Reverse Drag-Rope Numbers About–Turn”

Act as ordered.

“Gun Carriage Crew Quick–March”

Act as ordered. When clear, gun carriage crew “Halt”.

“About–Turn”

Act as in Squad Drill changing hands on the drag-ropes during the turn, at the same time rear drag-rope numbers take two paces forward/rear.

“Open Order March”

Reverse drag-rope numbers take three side closing paces outwards and then turn inwards.

“Close Order March”

Rear drag-rope numbers turn towards the direction of march and take three side closing paces inwards.

“Off–caps”

Place the thumb of the disengaged hand under the chinstay below the chin.

“Two”

Pull the chinstay clear of the chin at the same time raising the hand to grasp the front of the cap, fingers on top, thumb underneath the rim.

“Three”

Remove the cap and resume the position of attention retaining the grip of the chinstay with the thumb.

“On-Caps”

Place the cap on the head retaining the grip of the chinstay with the thumb and with the same movement, pull the chinstay down under the chin.

“Two”

Cut the disengaged hand smartly to the side. In Quick time the movement is carried out dwelling a pause of five marching paces between each movement in **“Up two, three, four, five, down”**.

“Slow-March”

Act as in Squad Drill.

“Quick - March”

Act as in Squad Drill. Outboard drag-rope numbers swing their disengaged arm.

710 FUNERALS AT SEA

(1) *The procedure upon whether Naval Funeral Honours may or may not be paid.* (See QRRN 1391).

(2) *When Honours are Paid.* The procedure and size of the funeral parties should conform as far as possible to those laid down for a funeral ashore (see QRRN 1393). A typical procedure for a burial at sea (Fig. 7-4) is as follows:—

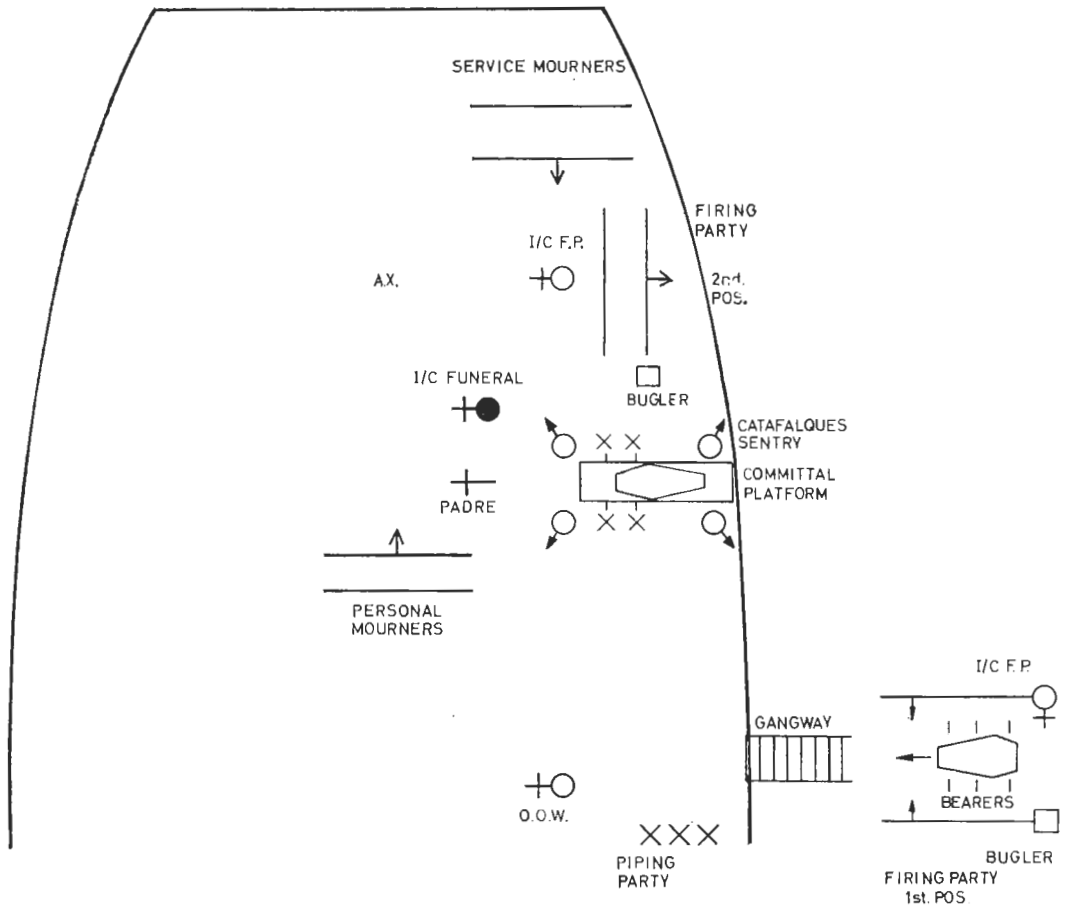


Fig. 7-4 Typical layout for burial at sea and embarkation of body

Assuming that the body is being conveyed by hearse to the ship, the funeral party is to be fallen in, if space permits. Bearers and firing party is to be fallen in on the jetty awaiting the arrival of the body. When the cortège arrives the officer-in-charge of the Firing Party orders:—

“Firing Party – Attention ” (bearers conform).

“Rest on Your Arms – Reversed”

Bearers move to the rear of the hearse at the *slow march* and lift the coffin, then, moving at the slow march, carry the coffin up the gangway where it is piped on board. Ship’s company on the upper deck **“Off Caps”** whilst the body is being carried on board, officers salute. Caps are replaced when the body has been placed on the committal platform, sentries should be posted at this stage on the four corners of the coffin facing away from each corner, resting on their arms reversed. Bearers disperse and stand by to commit the body to the deep during the service. After the coffin has been taken on board the officer-in-charge of the Firing Party orders:—

“Firing Party – Attention”.

“Shoulder – Arms” (This leaves one hand free for going up the gangway).

The firing party are then marched on board and into position for leaving harbour, resting on their arms reversed while leaving harbour.

Mourners are now conducted between decks, the ship proceeds to sea. When clear of the harbour, funeral parties stand fast, sentries may be dismissed and reformed prior to reaching the burial position. Sentries may be brought to the *stand at ease* position should conditions warrant.

On reaching the burial position funeral parties form up as in *Fig. 7-4*. Firing Parties and sentries at the rest on their arms reverse. Bearers negative caps facing platform. With the parties at attention the personal mourners are brought on deck and the officer-in-charge orders:—

“Off – Caps” (The service is then commenced and the procedure thereon, is as for funeral honours ashore).

- NOTES:
1. Bearers are required to commit the body to the sea.
 2. Firing Party is to face outboard for the firing of volleys.
 3. Cremated remains are accorded full funeral honours if they have not been afforded at the crematorium service. Ashes are not scattered. The urn containing the ashes is committed to the deep and it must be arranged that it will sink.
 4. When wreathes have been provided they should be dropped after the coffin has been committed by the appropriate mourners, and after the volleys, Last Post and Reveille.

(3) *When Honours are not Paid*

Provision of parties. Four men are mounted as sentries, one at each corner of the coffin. The necessary bearers should be provided. An attending party and a firing party are not paraded.

Procedure. The sentries rest on their arms reversed during the service and while the corpse is being committed to the sea by the bearers they shoulder arms and present arms after which the Last Post is sounded.

After the Last Post, sentries shoulder arms and Reveille is sounded. Bayonets are not fixed.

Officers and ship’s company without arms remove caps during the funeral service.

Officers salute with the hand, taking the time from the sentries or guard.

When no guard is provided, the sentries act as ordered for the guard.

General

Burials at sea may either be of those who have died or have been killed at sea and are subsequently buried, or of those who have died ashore and are subsequently buried at sea.

The paramount requirement for a burial at sea is that, on committal, the body shall instantly sink. The bodies of those that die at sea are heavily shrouded and then sewn up in strong canvas. This task is traditionally that of the Boatswain assisted by the Sailmaker. Heavy weights must be included to ensure the corpse sinks.

A man who has died ashore will be encoffined by an undertaker. Few undertakers are aware of the problems involved in burial at sea and they require considerable advice. In order to withstand hitting the sea from the deck without disintegrating, the coffin must be more stoutly constructed than usual. This together with its overall dimensions gives it much more buoyancy than the canvas shrouded corpse. It therefore requires much more weighting. This must be only slightly biased towards the feet or the task of the bearers is made difficult. The extra weight will also require extra bearers. It is usual to drill holes in the feet end and lid of the coffin to ensure quick flooding and sinking. This can only be done if the state of the corpse will permit. Its effect is often nullified by the padding and lining of the coffin expanding into the holes as soon as any water enters unless care is taken to prevent this. The coffin is covered by the Union Flag. In burials ashore this is removed before the coffin is lowered into the grave. For burials at sea the Union Flag can either be removed (with the cap and sword of an officer) immediately before committal, or arrangements can be made for the Union Flag to be secured to the committal platform so that the coffin slides into the sea from under the Union Flag. (The latter procedure is recommended when the corpse is not in a coffin but shrouded in canvas).

Extra wide brows are needed if the coffin is brought onboard while the ship is alongside and it is advisable to ensure that the angle is not steep or the bearers may lose control. If other than calm weather is expected, the coffin will need to be secured to the committal platform and subsequently tended by the bearers.

711 STATE FUNERALS

State Funerals generally fall into one of three main categories:—

- (i) Funeral of the Sovereign;
- (ii) Funeral of a Member of the Royal Family;
- (iii) Funeral of some other personage deserving the highest honours.

The arrangements and procedures for each funeral may differ as they must be appropriate to the personage being honoured.

In this Century those in Category II have usually entailed a Funeral procession in London with Armed Forces in the procession and lining the streets and the Gun Carriage drawn by the King's Troop R.H.A. The interment has usually been private.

The arrangements for Category III have varied widely from the great military procession for the Duke of Wellington in 1852 (which took several months to prepare) to the almost exclusively civil procession and service for W. E. Gladstone. The State Funeral of Sir Winston Churchill was a mixture of both and here it was thought appropriate, because of his position as First Lord of the Admiralty in two world wars, that the Gun Carriage should be drawn by Naval ratings. But it should not be expected that this will happen at all State funerals in Category III in the future.

Funeral of the Sovereign

Because the funerals of the last four Sovereigns have comprised a military procession in London, conveyance by train to Windsor, a military procession there and a Funeral Service in St. George's Chapel, it may be expected that this pattern will be followed in the future.

It is thought that the privilege of the Navy to draw the Gun Carriage is not recorded but it is a well established privilege in Windsor and good reasons exist to claim this privilege in London.

The story behind this privilege is thought to be as given below. It cannot be wholly authenticated because the *London Gazette* reporting the events restricted itself to the bare facts.

At the Funeral of Queen Victoria the coffin arrived at Windsor Station and was then placed on a Gun Carriage by the Royal Horse Artillery under the Command of a Subaltern. A Guard of Honour of 5 officers and 106 seamen from H.M.S. *Excellent* was paraded outside the Railway Station. When the procession started off the horses "became restive and had to be replaced". It is thought that one of the distinguished mourners, possibly Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany, suggested that "the sailors" should take over. Accordingly, the seamen of H.M.S. *Excellent* piled arms and improvised drag-ropes from lengths of rope commandeered from the Railway Station. No doubt using the experience recently gained by the Naval Brigade in South Africa was useful. The seamen were then formed into a Gun Carriage Crew and pulled the gun carriage to St. George's Chapel.

Because of the resource of the Captain, Officers and Seamen of H.M.S. *Excellent*, it is believed that King Edward VII expressed the wish that the Royal Navy should have the privilege of drawing the gun carriage at Royal Funerals. This was done in Windsor at Edward VII's funeral, though in London the Gun Carriage was drawn by horses. At King George V's and King George VI's Funerals the Gun Carriage was drawn by the Royal Navy both in London and at Windsor, two separate crews being provided. The London crew came from the Chatham Command and the Windsor crew was provided by H.M.S. *Excellent*.

The Gun Carriage

The following is believed to be the reason for using the particular Gun Carriage used at these four Royal Funerals and kept at H.M.S. *Excellent*.

At the funerals of some of Queen Victoria's children and relatives, the Queen expressed disapproval at the noise of the steel rimmed wheels of the Gun Carriages on the gravel roads of those days. She requested that a rubber tyred gun carriage and limber be provided in future and to avoid using a gun carriage currently in service, the Royal Arsenal modified an obsolete gun and limber that was no longer fit for active service.

At Queen Victoria's funeral (at Windsor) when the Royal Artillery subaltern in charge gave the order "Walk, March" the initial jerk tore out the ring bolt which secured the traces to the limber on one side and the horse team was thrown into confusion. It was thought at the time that inefficient drill had caused excessive strain on the equipment and the subaltern was placed under arrest. It was subsequently discovered that the trouble was due to the parsimony of the Royal Arsenal in using an old gun carriage whose fittings had, by 1901, become rotten.

Whether this story is true or not the subaltern was vindicated, released from arrest and later awarded the M.V.O.

A similar Gun Carriage to that held by H.M.S. *Excellent* is kept in the Rotunda Museum at Woolwich. It was used at funerals of members of the Royal Family and drawn by the Royal Horse Artillery (King's Troop). It was also the Gun Carriage used by the crews from the Chatham Command at the funerals of King George V and King George VI. Its fittings are not precisely the same as those on the Gun Carriage in H.M.S. *Excellent*.

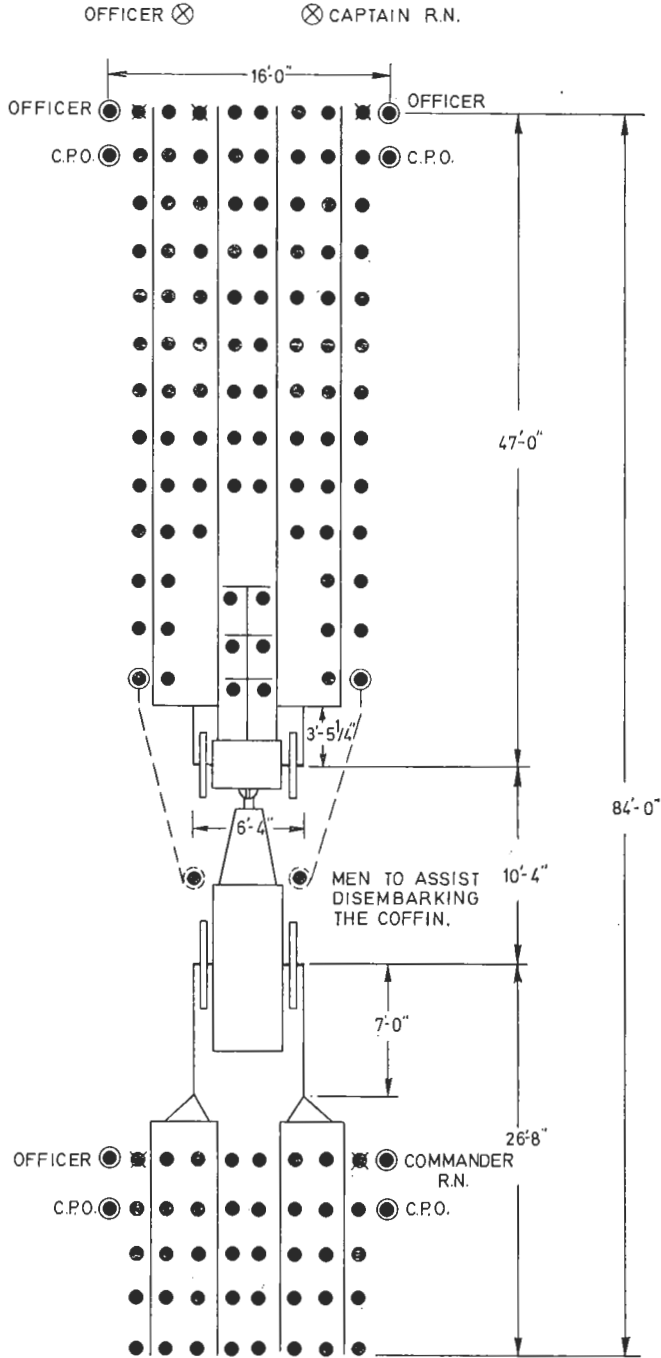
Reports on the Funerals of Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, King George V, King George VI and of the State Funeral of Sir Winston Churchill are kept in either the Public Record Office or O.S.I.O. (Navy Department Record Office). Head of Naval Personnel Division 2 (Navy Department) should be approached if it is desired to obtain these reports.

712 DRILL FOR STATE GUN CARRIAGE CREW (Fig. 7-5)

The State Gun Carriage Crew consists of 1 Captain, 1 Commander, 3 Lieutenant Commanders, 1 Lieutenant, 4 Chief Petty Officers and 138 men dressed as Seamen (98 on the leading drag-ropes, 40 on the reverse drag-ropes).

When the gun carriage crew are in position and officers have taken station, all orders are given by the Captain-in-Charge (in a subdued voice) and executed at the dropping of a black

CEREMONIAL AND DRILL



DISTANCE FROM LEADING MAN TO LIMBER AXLE - 47'-0"
 DISTANCE FROM REAR MAN TO GUN CARRIAGE AXLE - 26'-8"
 DISTANCE BETWEEN LEADING MAN AND REAR MAN - 84'-0" } APPROX.

Fig. 7-5 Order of march

walking stick carried by the C.P.O. (G.I.) positioned behind the right leading officer, except:—

- (a) When crew face in different directions;
- (b) Orders for rear drag-rope numbers only.

The orders are given by the Commander, who being centrally placed, is audible to the whole gun's crew without raising his voice.

2. *Sizing*

The crew are sized with the tallest men at the front and rear and the shortest men near the gun and limbers.

3. *Falling In*

The crew fall in as in *Fig. 7-5*.

4. *Marching on to the Gun Carriage*

The crew are marched on to the gun carriage, each man marking time as he arrives at his respective loop until ordered to halt.

Fig. 7-6 shows positions with officers posted.

5. *Taking up Pole and Drag-Ropes*

This is done in three movements (timing as in rifle drill).

- (a) Leading drag-rope numbers take one pace forward with the left foot and rear drag-rope numbers one pace to rear with left foot, then dwell a pause of two marching paces.
- (b) All bend knees and take pole and drag-ropes in hand, then dwell a pause of two marching paces.
- (c) Assume position of attention, bringing right foot up to left.

- NOTES: 1. Timing is as follows. Take a pace with left foot to front or rear, dwell a pause of two marching paces; bend knees to take up pole and drag-ropes, dwell a pause of two marching paces; assume position of attention, bringing right foot in line with left.
2. CPOs conform to all movements. Officers do not take post until movements are completed.

6. *Ground Pole and Drag-Ropes*

This is also done in three movements.

- (a) Leading drag-rope numbers one pace to rear with left foot and rear drag-rope numbers one pace forward with left foot, then dwell a pause of two marching paces.
- (b) All bend knees and place pole and drag-ropes on ground, then dwell a pause of two marching paces.
- (c) Assume position of attention, bringing right foot up to left.

7. *Position of Drag-Ropes*

Hands grip the fore part of the loop, palms up, wrists resting on rear part of the loop. (Wrists must be rather higher than the elbow, so that the drag-ropes are held well up).

At the halt, disengaged hands are kept to the side. On the march, disengaged hands of men on inner loops are clasped palm to palm, fingers and forearms interlocked.

Men on outer loops swing disengaged arms at the “**quick**” and hold them steady at the side at the “**slow**”.

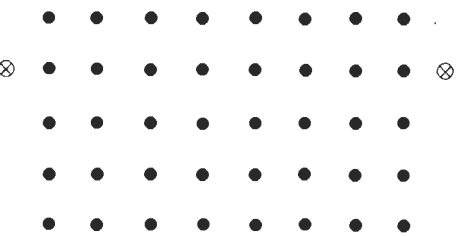
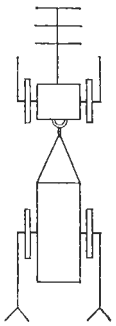
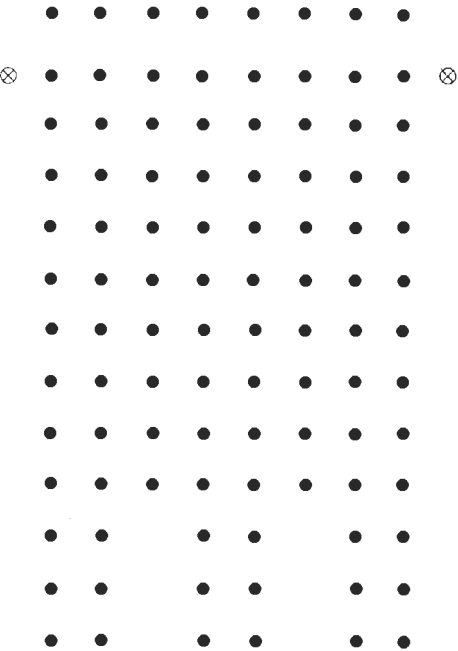
8. *Halt*

As the rear drag-ropes are kept taut, no order “**March**” to tauten drag-ropes is required.

9. *Drill for Embarking Coffin*

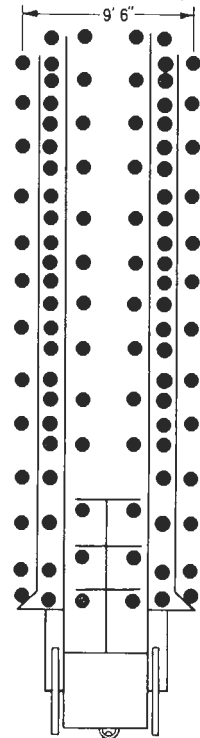
The gun carriage is marched into position at the quick and the order “**Halt**” is given.

CEREMONIAL AND DRILL



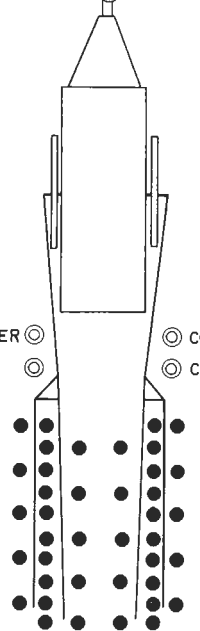
OFFICER ⊙
 OFFICER ⊙
 C.P.O. ⊙

⊗ CAPTAIN R.N.
 ⊙ OFFICER
 ⊙ C.P.O.



OFFICER ⊙
 C.P.O. ⊙

⊙ COMMANDER R.N.
 ⊙ C.P.O.



DISTANCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND LEFT HAND MAN
 OF LEADING SECTION OF 6 = 9' = 6" (APPROX)

Fig. 7-6 Positions prior to forming order of march

Fig. 7-7 Positions of closing ranks

At the order "**Gun's crew about turn**", leading drag-rope numbers and pole numbers act as ordered. Rear drag-rope numbers take two paces forward. Officers *then* take one pace outwards to enable them to salute with the sword.

NOTE: When turning about, men holding the loops with the right hand support them during the turn; all men change hands in the loops as soon as possible during the turn.
The Officer-in-Charge of the rear drag-ropes orders "**Open-Order March**". Rear drag-rope numbers take six paces outwards and turn inwards, retaining their grasp on the loops of the drag-ropes.

10. "**Off – caps**"

All men remove their caps in three motions:—

- (a) Grasp cap over centre of forehead with disengaged hand, then dwell a pause of two marching paces.
- (b) Dwell a pause of three marching paces whilst chinstay is being freed.
- (c) Remove cap from head and cut to side.

Officers salute with sword in time with the above.

NOTES: 1. Selected ratings on leading and rear drag-ropes call the time.
2. Immediately the caps are at the side, dwell a pause of two marching paces then heads are lowered slowly so the chin rests on the chest (time taken to be approx. 3 seconds). Selected ratings as in (1) call "**Down**" softly. The coffin is placed on the gun carriage. As soon as bearers are clear the two inner men of the rear drag-ropes advance at the slow and replace the tail batten of the coffin board. The two outer men of the leading drag-ropes at the same time move out at the slow and screw up the securing arrangements of the coffin. On completion all men, at a signal from one detailed, return to their places at the drag-ropes.

11. Commander orders "**Gun's Crew**"—men slowly raise their heads—"**On – caps**". Caps are replaced in three motions while Officers return to the Carry.

- (a) Place cap on head, then dwell a pause of two marching paces.
- (b) Square off cap (taking time of three marching paces).
- (c) Cut hand smartly to side.

NOTE: Timing as cap is brought up; chin must be placed in chinstay first then cap squared off, i.e. up-two-three-nothing-two-three-down.

12. Officer-in-charge of rear drag-ropes orders "**Close Order – March**". Rear drag-rope numbers turn to the front and take six paces inwards. The two officers conform to the movements.

"Gun's Crew, About – Turn" Leading drag-rope numbers turn about, rear drag-rope numbers take two paces to rear".

The gun carriage is then moved off at the slow march.

13. *Drill for Narrowing the Front of the Gun's Crew*

The cautionary order is given "**Gun's Crew will close the ranks**". Order is repeated by the right leading C.P.O. raising his stick vertically above his head as a signal to the crew. This is repeated softly by the Officer-in-charge of the rear drag-ropes.

At the order "**Close the ranks – March**", the C.P.O. cuts the stick to his side.

Inner drag-rope numbers lead on; leading outer drag-rope numbers mark time one pace, then take a pace inwards; rear outer drag-rope numbers take a long pace forward, then a pace inwards. The whole crew then close in as much as possible. Officers and C.P.O.s move with a step-out pace to the position shown in *Fig. 7-7*.

The arrangement of the swingle traces enables all drag-ropes to be kept taut during this movement.

14. *Drill for Resuming Normal Frontage*

The cautionary order is given “**Gun’s Crew will re-form ranks**” and repeated as in paragraph 13.

At the order “**Re-form Ranks – March**” and the cutting of the stick to the side, inner drag-rope numbers lead on; leading outer drag-rope numbers take a pace outwards and step out to resume position; rear outer drag-rope numbers take a pace outwards, and mark time one pace.

Officers and C.P.O.s regain their position by inclining outwards and marking time.

15. *Drill for Disembarking the Coffin*

The order “**Halt**” is given as the gun wheels come opposite the point of disembarkation.

NOTE: Captain-in-Charge should align himself with front rank to judge distance. Officer-in-charge of rear drag-ropes orders:

“**Open Order – March**”. Rear drag-rope numbers take two paces forward and six paces outwards.

While the bearers are removing their headdress the four men detailed in paragraph 10 remove tail batten and unscrew securing arrangements. All four regain their position in the ranks before the bearers start to remove the coffin.

When the coffin is on the shoulders of the bearers, the order “**Slow – March**” is given. When rear men are clear of coffin (approx. 15 paces) the order “**Halt**” is given.

The order “**About – turn**” is given and the whole of the gun’s crew act as ordered (rear drag-rope numbers do not take two paces forward in this case).

“**Off – caps**”. As before, officers saluting with the sword.

When the coffin has been embarked, the order “**Gun’s Crew**” is given and the whole of the crew raise their heads.

“**On – Caps**”. The drill as before is carried out.

“**About – turn**”. The whole crew turn about.

Officer-in-charge of rear drag-ropes orders “**Close Order – March**”. Rear drag-rope numbers take six paces inwards.

The gun is then marched off at the slow.

16. *Drill for Retiring the Gun Carriage (if required)*

Order is given “**Gun will retire – about – turn**”.

The whole crew act as ordered. The gun’s crew may then be stepped off, halted and advanced as required.

713 DRILL FOR COFFIN BEARERS

(a) PERSONNEL REQUIRED

The number of officers and ratings required is as follows:—

- (1) Officers — One. In charge of the Bearers and in normal circumstances should march at the rear of the bearers.
- (2) Senior Ratings — One. The senior rating in charge of bearers should normally be in front of the bearers and will give the majority of the orders. As the coffin approaches the Hearse/Gun Carriage, etc the senior rating in charge is to move clear to one side. Attention is drawn to Notes 1 and 2 below.
- (3) Junior Ratings — Six or Eight. The number of junior rates will depend on the weight of the coffin. When necessary the number of bearers required will normally be specified in the orders for the funeral.

(b) DRESS

The dress for coffin bearers will be:—

- (1) Officer in Charge — No 4s with Black Arm Band
 - (2) Ratings — No 1s with Medals
- } Caps/Berets are
} not to be worn

(c) COFFIN COVERING

The coffin will be draped with a Union Flag or the Personal Standard of the deceased. Attention is drawn to Note 3 below.

(d) ORDERS

Orders are to be given as quietly as possible but they must be sufficiently loud and clear for all bearers to hear. The orders to be given when **Removing a Coffin from a Hearse**, etc. **Placing a Coffin onto a Catafalque**, **Moving a Coffin to a Graveside** and **Lowering a Coffin into a Grave** are dealt with separately in this Section.

REMOVING COFFIN FROM GUN CARRIAGE OR HEARSE

EVENT	ORDER	ACTION
Hearse/Gun Carriage at position for coffin to be removed	Slow March	Coffin Bearers march towards the rear of the Hearse/Gun Carriage
Leading Bearers are close to Hearse/Gun Carriage	Halt	Bearers Halt
	Inwards Turn	Bearers turn and face each other
	Stand by – Launch	The two men nearest the Hearse/Gun Carriage take hold of the coffin and slide it to the rear. When the weight of the head of the coffin is taken by the next two bearers they shift their grip further towards the foot of the coffin and continue to slide the coffin to the rear. This process is repeated until the coffin is clear of the Hearse/Gun Carriage and is supported by the bearers
Coffin is supported by bearers using both hands. Coffin is level	Stand by – Lift	Bearers lift coffin to shoulder height and then turn to face to foot of the coffin. As they turn bearers are to place their in-board arm under the coffin and around the shoulder of the man on the opposite side of the coffin. The disengaged hand is placed on the coffin with fingers curled on the base ridge
Bearers ready to move off	Right/Left wheel – Slow March	Bearers step-off with the <i>inner</i> foot

713 DRILL FOR COFFIN BEARERS

(a) PERSONNEL REQUIRED

The number of officers and ratings required is as follows:—

- (1) Officers — One. In charge of the Bearers and in normal circumstances should march at the rear of the bearers.
- (2) Senior Ratings — One. The senior rating in charge of bearers should normally be in front of the bearers and will give the majority of the orders. As the coffin approaches the Hearse/Gun Carriage, etc the senior rating in charge is to move clear to one side. Attention is drawn to Notes 1 and 2 below.
- (3) Junior Ratings — Six or Eight. The number of junior rates will depend on the weight of the coffin. When necessary the number of bearers required will normally be specified in the orders for the funeral.

(b) DRESS

The dress for coffin bearers will be:—

- (1) Officer in Charge — No 4s with Black Arm Band
 - (2) Ratings — No 1s with Medals
- } Caps/Berets are
} not to be worn

(c) COFFIN COVERING

The coffin will be draped with a Union Flag or the Personal Standard of the deceased. Attention is drawn to Note 3 below.

(d) ORDERS

Orders are to be given as quietly as possible but they must be sufficiently loud and clear for all bearers to hear. The orders to be given when **Removing a Coffin from a Hearse**, etc. **Placing a Coffin onto a Catafalque**, **Moving a Coffin to a Graveside** and **Lowering a Coffin into a Grave** are dealt with separately in this Section.

PLACING A COFFIN ONTO A CATAFALQUE

EVENT	ORDER	ACTION
Coffin at position where it is to be placed	Halt	Bearers <i>Halt</i> . Senior rating in charge <i>turns - about</i>
	Stand by - Turn	Bearers turn to face the coffin at the same time remove their hand from the shoulder of the man opposite. The coffin is held at shoulder height using both hands
Coffin ready to be lowered	Stand by - Lower	The coffin is lowered to a position which will enable it to be launched onto the Catafalque
Coffin at correct height	Stand by - Launch	Bearers pass the coffin hand-over-hand until it is on the Catafalque
Coffin on Catafalque		Bearers remain at attention with heads bowed. If necessary, the Coffin Drape is to be squared-off by the senior rating or rating detailed for this task
Bearers ready to move-off	Right/Left turn - Slow March	Bearers turn as ordered and move-off at the <i>slow</i>

MOVING A COFFIN TO A GRAVESIDE

The coffin may be taken to the cemetery by the Hearse/Gun Carriage depending on the circumstances. The coffin will normally be carried from the Church or Chapel of Rest to the graveside if the distance is not too great. The coffin is to be removed from the Hearse/Gun Carriage as already detailed.

EVENT	ORDER	ACTION
Approaching the grave	Halt	Bearers will be halted just before reaching the grave
Bearers halted at head of grave	Inwards - Turn	Bearers turn towards coffin and support it with both hands at shoulder height
	Lower	Coffin is lowered level to waist height
Ready to position coffin over the grave	Sideways - Slow March	Bearers move side-ways along their respective side of the grave until the coffin is in the required position
Coffin over grave	Stand by - Lower	Coffin is lowered on to the slats which span the width of the grave. Bearers stand to attention with heads bowed

LOWERING THE COFFIN INTO THE GRAVE

EVENT	ORDER	ACTION
Time to lift coffin off slats	Stand by – Lift	The left and right hand bearer on each side of the grave will take the weight of the coffin on the lowering tapes. The other bearers will remove the slats and slide them between their feet to the rear
Coffin to be lowered in to the grave	Stand by – Lower	Bearers lower the coffin to the bottom of the grave
Coffin settled in grave		Lowering tapes are placed to the right and rear. Bearers remain at the graveside until after the completion of the service
Service completed and mourners have left	Right/Left turn – Slow March	Bearers are turned towards the cemetery gates and march off at the <i>Slow</i>
Bearers clear of graveside	Quick March	Bearers are marched to a suitable position halted and dispersed

- NOTES:
1. If the coffin is to be carried up steep steps/incline the senior rating will follow the bearers at the Head of the Coffin and will assist the bearers if necessary.
 2. If the coffin is to be carried down steep steps/incline the senior rating will remain at the Foot of the Coffin and he will turn about and assist the bearers if necessary.
 3. The officer or senior rating in charge of the bearers is to ensure that the coffin is draped with the Union Flag or Personal Standard as appropriate and must also ensure that it is removed before the coffin is lowered into the grave or passed through the shutter of the Catafalque at the crematorium.
 4. If the funeral is to be held at a military cemetery the officer or senior rating should liaise with the warden of the cemetery and establish the position of the grave, etc. If the deceased is at a naval hospital the wardmaster responsible for funeral arrangements should be contacted.
 5. If the funeral is to be at a non-military cemetery or crematorium the undertaker should be contacted and he should be provided with the appropriate drape (Union Flag or Personal Standard) and if applicable, Sword and Cap.
 6. The officer or senior rating in charge *must* visit the cemetery or crematorium *before* the funeral and familiarise himself with the 'lie of the land' and to ensure that the necessary action is taken before the funeral to remove possible hazards and solve any problems which may exist.