



## The Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard

14 MAR 2023

From: VASSAR Color Guard Commander and Committee Chairman

To: VASSAR Color Guard Vice-Commander and Adjutant  
VASSAR Regional Color Guard Commanders  
VASSAR Color Guard Training Officer  
VASSAR Color Guard Safety Officer  
VASSAR Color Guard Quartermaster

Info: VASSAR Color Guard Insurance Advisor

Subj: **Promulgation of VASSAR Firelock Qualification Standards**

Ref: (a) VASSAR CG CDR Letter of 14 MAR 2023 (Designation of VASSAR Firelock  
Instructors)  
(b) VASSAR Color Guard Handbook (draft), Version 9.0 of MAR 2023

Encl: (1) Musketman/Rifleman Qualification Standards  
(2) Firelock Safety Observer Qualification Standards  
(3) Musket Squad Commander Qualification Standards

1. VASSAR Color Guardsmen designated as Firelock Instructors per reference (a) are to use enclosures (1) through (3) in their course of instruction.
2. They are required to become familiar with the safety provisions outlined in Annexes A through C of reference (b).

Yours in Patriotism,

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Christopher A. Melhuish  
VASSAR Color Guard Commander and Committee Chair

## Qualification Level – Musket/Rifle Man

To be certified to fire a black powder musket or rifle at a Virginia SAR sanctioned event, the Musket Man must be able to satisfactorily demonstrate the following:

Item	Skill
M.1	Describe physical safety features and purpose of (a) hammer stall, (b) flash guard, (c) half-cock check, and (d) basic firelock material condition – such as the ability to extract ramrod; flint is secured with lead or leather; no missing pins or screws.).
M.2	Demonstrate SECURE FIRELOCK, OPEN PAN, SEARCH FIRELOCK, and POISE FIRELOCK drill movements performed during safety check.
M.3	Demonstrate SHOULDER ARMS, PRESENT ARMS, ADVANCE ARMS and SUPPORT ARMS drill movements.
M.4	Describe the maximum powder load for your firelock’s caliber (not to exceed 125 gr. for muskets and 90 gr. for rifles).
M.5	Demonstrate the proper rolling of a black powder paper cartridge.
M.6	Demonstrate PRIME AND LOAD, MAKE READY, TAKE AIM, FIRE, and RECOVER drill movements.
M.7	Demonstrate misfire procedures: (a) Flash in the Pan, (b) Failure to Spark. Explain the purpose of keeping firelocks in the AIM position for ten seconds after fire/misfire.

## Qualification Level – Safety Observer

To be certified to be a Safety Observer of a musket squad at a Virginia SAR-sanctioned event, the Safety Observer must be able to satisfactorily demonstrate the following:

Item	Skill
O.1	Demonstrate competencies M.1-M.3 and M.6-M.7.
O.2	Describe, with examples, how to conduct a site safety inspection, noting potential trip and overhead hazards; availability of portable fire extinguisher and first aid kit; presence of combustibles in the area; adherence to the safe firing arc noted in Annex B of the <b>Virginia SAR Color Guard Handbook</b> ; and planned location of spectators.
O.3	Describe the roles of Color Guard Commander and Musket Squad Commander related to firelock firing.
O.4	Demonstrate familiarity with VASSAR's Accident-Incident procedures noted in Annex D of the <b>Virginia SAR Color Guard Handbook</b> , to include reporting and points of contact. Be able to produce the VASSAR Wallet Card when asked by the instructor.
O.4	Explain the CEASE FIRE procedure.
O.5	Demonstrate knowledge of Annexes A, B, C and D of the <i>Virginia SAR Color Guard Handbook</i> .

## Qualification Level – Musket Squad Commander

To be certified to command a musket squad at a Virginia SAR sanctioned event, the Musket Squad Commander must be able to satisfactorily demonstrate the following:

Item	Skill
C.1	Demonstrate competencies M.1 – M.7
C.2	Demonstrate knowledge of period commands and maneuvers related to PRIME AND LOAD, MAKE READY, TAKE AIM, FIRE, and RECOVER, in accordance with Annex C of the <i>Virginia SAR Color Guard Handbook</i> .
C.3	Demonstrate familiarity with VASSAR's Accident-Incident procedures noted in Annex XX of the <i>Virginia SAR Color Guard Handbook</i> , to include reporting and points of contact. Be able to produce the VASSAR Wallet Card when asked by the instructor.
C.4	Explain the CEASE FIRE procedure.
C.5	Demonstrate knowledge of Annexes A, B, C, and D of the <i>Virginia SAR Color Guard Handbook</i> .