

MID-WEST CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTORS
ASSOCIATION

SAFETY MANUAL



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ASSOCIATION

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ETIQUETTE AND CAMP SAFETY GUIDELINES

Alcohol Policy

Since most MWCWRA events are often family activities, with outside guests, dignitaries and spectators present, it is in the best interest of the organization to present to the general public at large the best possible representation of the hobby. While alcohol use was rampant during the Civil War, so were many other vices which are not necessarily in the best interest of being presented to the public. The Association does not ban the use of alcohol by any individual member or unit, however, unless specifically prohibited by the event host or site, the following policy is in place:

1. Alcohol, if consumed on site, must be done in such a way as to not tarnish the general image of the Civil War re-enacting community. Drinking should be limited to times when the general public is not present, and done in a discrete manner. Modern containers and bottles should be disguised in period containers or otherwise concealed. All trash should be deposited in the appropriate containers and not left lying about the campsites.

2. Drinking should be done in moderation. Excessive drunkenness or public intoxication is not tolerated, and grounds for removal from an event. Alcohol must never be offered to children or minors.

3. Firearms and alcohol don't mix. Any re-enactor that consumes alcohol in quantity must not handle any firearms or crew a cannon without a sufficient recovery time. A recommended period of at least six hours of sleep or rest is preferred before that person may participate.

4. How one conducts oneself with their consumption of alcohol, along with the general behaviors associated with such things as loud boisterous talking, swearing and other unseemly behaviors does not mesh with the Victorian Etiquette of the period we are trying to portray. All re-enactors are encouraged to act in a kind and considerate manner to all fellow participants and guests, in order to give our chosen hobby the best possible representation.

Camp Safety

Because most foodstuffs are cooked over open fires, all campfires must have some form of water nearby in the event of accidental spread. Fires should also be grated or secured in such a way as to prevent or limit anyone from accidentally stumbling into them. Fire pits must be kept at a safe distance from all tentage. Individual unit commanders, cooks or quartermasters are urged to have a small portable fire extinguisher on hand in the event of a fire spreading.

Any participant, who has any form of potentially life threatening medical condition, must let their unit commander or the host event know at time of registration. Individuals on

any heart medication, with beestings reactions, or peanut allergies should have with them any appropriate meds and make known to unit commanders or medical staff their locations in the event of an emergency.

Because most events have some form of powder issue, often in great quantities, safe handling and protection of such must be maintained. Federal regulations state that any amount of black powder over 5-pounds must be securely stored in a separate area, at least 25 yards from all other tents or occupants.

Host units should therefore make available a separate powder storage tent. This tent should display on it a banner or flag, preferably red with a yellow ordinance bomb, at least one foot square. Any unit at that event and all artillery who wish to store excess powder, any powder issue and unissued rounds here may do so. A guard should be made present, preferably drawn from all units present at frequent intervals, so as to keep any civilians, spectators or individuals with any form of lit cigarette or tobacco product from approaching the tent.

The keeping of a fire extinguisher and a medical grade first aid kit in this tent is also a readily apparent location in the event of need elsewhere. All powder kept at this community ordinance tent should be properly contained in sealed containers, and marked or labeled by the individual unit as desired.

Free form unscripted skirmishing and tacticals should be done only with prior event or commander approval. Any form of skirmishing at night should be restricted to a pre-defined area, preferably one safe from as many obstructions and obstacles as possible. Individuals skirmishing at night must use extreme caution in all firing, as limited vision may endanger concealed and targets which are closer than is normally safe to fire on.

Artillery should never be used in a night tactical unless all participants are kept well away from the muzzle of the gun. Mounted cavalry must never be used in a nighttime tactical.

Individuals firing during a tactical or battle re-enactment must never do "pop out" shots from behind cover. Careful identification of all targets and ranges appropriate for the firearm in question must always be maintained.

Skirmishing within camps and around tents is not recommended. The presence of campfires, fly ropes, non-combatants and guests and other hazards make this an unsafe environment. At no time is skirmishing around any form of limber or powder chest allowable.

ARTILLERY SAFETY GUIDELINES

For purposes of the MWCWRA, artillery is classed as all cannons, both full scale and subscale; all mortars; any Gatling gun, battery or volley gun; rocket launchers; and wall guns or any shoulder arm with a caliber over 1". Separate subsections for each follow.

Whenever possible, all MWCWRA events should designate an Artillery Safety Officer. This person is responsible for inspection of all artillery on site. Review of all crews drill and misfire procedures must be assessed before any battle. All guns must be inspected for soundness of carriage and wheels, barrel and bore soundness and security and integrity of rounds carried. Artillery Safety Officers must work with the event sponsor, host unit, and all infantry and cavalry officers to ensure safe usage and placement of all artillery on the field of battle so as to minimize the risk of injury.

Cannon Safety

1. The MWCWRA prefers all artillery be full scale. Sub-scale guns are allowed via request to the event sponsor or host unit.

All carriages and wheels must be of sound construction, with no major cracking/checking or rot of the wood.

It is preferred that cannon barrels be bored and machined out of solid steel or cast solid brass billet. Original or sand cast guns should be sleeved if possible. Guns which have a welded breech must undergo inspection to ensure no leakage of smoke or air from the breech end.

Gun tubes must be inspected via flashlight or mirror for any bore obstructions, divots or irregularities which might trap sparks.

Gun implements and leather gear must be of sound construction.

Limbers or ammunition chests must be able to close securely. They should be free of loose powder and extra portage. A padlock must be available to secure the chest when unattended. A metal covered lid is preferred.

2. All crews are required to demonstrate safe loading and firing of their piece to the event Artillery Safety Officer. Outside certification by a recognized artillery training and safety school is also acceptable; however, presentation of course completion credentials is required.

All crews must also be able to demonstrate procedures for the handling of both primer failures and charge misfires. All cannons must have available some sort of misfire kit, which must have at a minimum:

- A. Needle Nose Pliers;
- B. Vent pick;
- C. Brush or gimlet;
- D. Syringe or irrigation bulb for flooding the vent;
- E. Bucket or hose for flooding the bore;
- F. Stopwatch or timepiece to access three minute rule;
- G. A fire extinguisher or CO2 gas extinguisher is also recommended.

3. The minimum safe crew to serve a cannon is three. Full six to eight man crews are preferred. Guns may not be operated without minimum crew.

4. At no time is anyone to crew another person's cannon without their express permission. Scenarios where a gun is captured and turned on its former companions must be established prior to any battle at officers meeting. The gun chief, owner, or senior NCO of that gun must be present when this gun is being fired. Any new crew working this gun must be drilled on that cannon prior to any captured gun scenario.

5. All cannons are urged to follow the 'Three Minute Rule' of firing. Cannons should not fire faster than three minutes apart, starting from time of discharge to time of introducing a new charge into the muzzle. Excessively fast rate of fire or skipping of sponging steps is not allowed.

6. All cannon, during firing, must follow these established procedures at a minimum:

The vent or touch hole must be securely stopped via a leather thumbstall or glove. No leakage of smoke must be observed. No exchange of air must be heard during servicing of the bore. A loud call of "Thumbstall" or "Vented" by the crewman serving the vent must be clearly heard by those serving the front of the cannon.

The bore must be wormed for obstructions. Crewman must wear or use leather or welders gloves. Thumbs out worming procedure should be demonstrated. The wearing of a wool coat on any crew serving the front of a cannon is also required, even in warm weather. Frequent rotation and hydration of crews is encouraged. No implement may be inserted into a bore unless the vent is stopped.

The bore, once free of all debris, must be wet sponged. The bore must be thoroughly swabbed, with extra attention to the bottom of the breech. Thumbs out technique must be utilized. The wet sponge must fill the bore of the gun tightly so as to create a suction effect. It should not be excessively wet, and spun out prior to insertion into the bore.

It is recommended that after wet sponging, the bore be dry sponged. This removes excess water and helps delay or slow the rate of fire.

The vent should be brushed or scraped frequently. It is recommended to do this after each shot. This insures no primer or debris blew down the touch hole in the previous firing, as well as extinguishes any lingering sparks.

Charges must be introduced to the gun via a leather gunner's haversack. Great care must be taken to insure the charge is not exposed to any possible stray sparks prior to seating into the barrel.

All charges must be firmly seated into the back of the breech. Excessive tamping or ramming of a charge is not recommended.

Charges must be pricked with a brass or non-sparking priming wire.

The preferred method of discharge of a piece is a commercial friction primer with a lanyard. Guns equipped with gunlocks may use a shotgun primer and lanyard firing. Use of cannon fuse or loose powder from a horn and slowmatch or linstock is not recommended during battlefield situations. Discharging a piece via pistol shot, matches or lighter is not allowed.

7. Charges must be black powder only. They should be of Cannon grade or Fg powder. They must be foil wrapped in at least two layers of foil; premade before an event and secured in the ammo chest or other safe container. The making of charges at an event should be avoided. Sentries and fire watch must be in place before any charges may be rolled in camp or on site.

8. Charges should not be excessive. A ratio of three (3) ounces of powder per inch of bore size is the recommended maximum charge. The stacking or double loading of a cannon is not allowed. If you wish to make a bigger noise, use more powder in a pre-measured charge.

9. The use of the following materials in the bore of a cannon or in a charge are prohibited: flour, grass, sawdust, grain dust, steel wool, bread, paper, wooden sabot, lead, steel shot, stones, hard candy or any combustible material which does not readily burn or is an accelerant. The only acceptable wadding for cannon is potting vermiculite as it does not retain moisture and burns up freely, and hard cell Styrofoam. Soft foam which does not fully consume in the barrel and leaves as a flaming discharge is not allowed.

Fireworks or commercial grade explosives are not allowed to be fired from a cannon barrel.

10. Misfires and hot gun procedures must be demonstrated by all crew. A three minute lag between a misfire/failure to prime must be observed. The following signals are to be recognized in the MWCWRA:

A sponge inserted down the bore of the gun and left in place signifies that a gun is out of service for the rest of the battle. The gun must be empty, swabbed and safe to approach now.

Rammer or sponges held aloft and in a crossed or X pattern by the front crewman of a cannon signifies that a misfire or primer failure has occurred. The gun is HOT! and must not be approached until the risk of accidental discharge has been remedied by the crew.

Rammers held vertical aloft on the hubs or bands of the wheel signify the cannon is Loaded and on Hold. The charge may or may not be already pricked and primed, but the gun is loaded and must not be approached as it is in a ready state. Crew must withdraw to the safe firing position prior to gun discharge.

The elevated arm of the man on the lanyard is a signal to all that the gun is ready to fire. The gun must not be approached.

11. The overrunning of a cannon or crew by cavalry or infantry is not allowed unless prior notification at officer meeting. In the event of an overrun, the gun must be empty and safely rendered prior to any close assault. Crew with sidearms must discharge them around the cannon carriage. Discharging of firearms over or near any limber or powder box is not allowed.

Crewman engaging in hand-to-hand combat may only use the sponge end of a rammer or a handspike. Use of the worm as a weapon is not allowed. All hand-to-hand combat should be prior rehearsed. All attacks must have eye contact with the opponent and must be telegraphed and half speed.

In the event of a cavalry overrun, crewmen are encouraged to crouch down inside of the carriage wheels for safety. Overhead bracing of the implements to prevent saber contact is encouraged. Firearms should not be discharged in close proximity at a hunkered down crew, nor at approaching cavalry.

Limber boxes must be approached by cavalry with care. Mounted limbers must also be approached with care. The attacking of a mounted limber driver must be done with saber only. No firearms may be discharged near any ammunition box. Individually artillery horse should not be attacked or have their harness grasped.

12. Cannons must not be discharged at any infantry closer than 50 yards. They must not be discharged at closing or moving cavalry at under 80 yards. Cannons should not be discharged if any casualties are lying in their minimum safe zone of fire. The targeting of any other cannon's limber or ammunition box at any range is discouraged.

Mortars

Mortars follow all the above rules for cannon safety. Because of the angle of the vent, extra care must be taken when using friction primers as they tend to blow back a great distance. Limber boxes must not be directly behind a mortar vent. Adequate sponging and service of a mortar is required. Use of a long welders sleeve for any bore wiping and sponging is recommended. Bores should be serviced with the same care as any full sized cannon.

Due to the high angle of fire, the same safety ranges for safe distance for firing are still recommend. Lobbing of projectiles during a battle is not allowed.

Gatling Guns

All period machine guns must meet all federal destructive device laws and regulations. Guns firing commercial blanks must have those blanks inspected to insure no live rounds are present. Gatling guns and volley guns should follow the established minimum ranges for safe discharge as if they were a full scale field piece.

Rockets

Rockets may be used for demonstration purposes as long as they have an inert warhead and are non-incendiary and of limited range. The use of a projected rocket on the field is not allowed.

Wall Guns

Large bore rifles or guns requiring a prop or rests are to be treated as cannon for safe minimum firing distance. Their use on the field is up to an event sponsor or unit host.

Sub-Scale Cannon, Mountain Howitzers

Follow all the safe firing distance rules and guidelines for full size guns.

Cavalry Safety Guidelines

The presence of mounted cavalry and horse drawn units on the field or at an event creates a whole new level of possible safety issues. Not only are you dealing with the individual rider or driver, but also with a creature that even on its best of days can be flighty and unpredictable. Even the tamest of mounts can at any given moment be easily frightened by all the new sights and noises of a Civil War re-enacting battlefield. Couple that with unfamiliar horses from different teams and herds and the sometimes unfamiliar riders and your potential for accident or serious injury increases dramatically.

All re-enactors must use extra care where mounted units are on the field. Horses are unpredictable. They are also larger and stronger than most people, and coupled with their speed and size can easily cause serious injury. Most modern re-enactors are also unfamiliar with domesticated farm animals and their handling. Great care must be taken to avoid spooking or frightening horses at all times.

General Rules

1. In the event of a loose mount during an event, all combat and activity must stop. Just as during a medical emergency, all action must stop until that horse is contained. Any fallen riders must be checked on for possible serious injury. Rampant horses must be herded back towards other mounts or picket areas and away from crowds and encampments. Care should be taken not to grasp loose reins so that a person might be dragged by a horse. In the event that a fallen rider has their boot or foot caught in a stirrup while being dragged, all effort must be made to slow or stop the runaway horse.

2. The owner of a horse is the legally responsible party unless verbal agreements, rental or lease agreements have been signed or made previous. The use of rented horses on the field is discouraged unless the current rider has had previous experience with said mount.

All riders and owners of horses assume some level of risk and realize the increased potential of injury therein.

3. Stallions should not be used for re-enacting purposes. The use of a pregnant mare is at the owner's own risk in the event of miscarriage.

4. Just as for artillery, any event in which cavalry or horse drawn units are present should designate a Mounted Services Safety Officer. This person should be the most knowledgeable individual on the care, training and handling of horses.

Not only is this person responsible for all safety issues, but also should coordinate proper use of cavalry in the field so as to minimize the risk of accidents.

5. All horses at an event must be treated in a safe and humane manner. The excessive striking or abuse of any mount is not tolerated. Individuals showing a disregard

for this may be asked to leave an event. Any mount that requires excessive force to control or displays a lack of adequate training should not be used at a Civil War re-enacting event.

6. Horses must never be left unattended in camp. Even when tied to a picket line or picket pinned, a horse guard should always be available whenever civilian guests are possible. Since most modern guests treat cavalry mounts as a sort of petting zoo, horse guards are there to not only protect and remind guests of approach basics (being alert to known biter or kicking horses), but also to soothe any agitated mounts. Horse guards should be made aware of which horses are the most gentle and may be approached by small children and guests.

Horses in the evening or not under guard must be securely tied off to a picket line, or corralled or trailered. An evening guard or person on duty in the event of a loose mount is encouraged.

7. The riding of cavalry mounts by civilians or guests at an event is to be discouraged. Such usage is up to the permission of the Mounted Services Safety Officer. The riding of a horse through camps and company streets is not allowed. Fly ropes, campfires, loose gear and color stands are all hazards when riding around or near company encampments.

8. Horses must be properly fed, watered and groomed at an event. Deliberate ignoring of a mount's physical needs is not tolerated. Events requiring Cogins tests and any form of out-of-state permits should also have the Mounted Services Safety Officer review them prior to any horse leaving the trailer.

Saddlery and Tack Guidelines

1. All tack and leather goods used in the field must be of sound construction. Care should be taken to ensure good fit so as to prevent undue discomfort for the horse and reduce sores. Saddles and blankets upon removal should be given proper care, storage and cleaning before future use.

2. Horses should never be tied by the reins only. Use of a proper halter and lead strap is required. Horses should whenever possible, be led by a halter and lead strap.

3. Picket lines must be kept taut. Horses tied to the line must be tied via a secure knot, preferably a quick release knot tied to the halter. Horses should always be linked only at the halter, never bit-to-bit.

4. Always check all saddles and leather for tightness after saddling. Check curb straps/chains for tightness. Surcingles should always be used when appropriate.

5. A horse's hooves and shoes should frequently be checked for loose stones or shoes. If a loose shoe is in danger of injuring a horse, and field repairs cannot be made, that mount should not be used.

Firearms and Combat Guidelines

1. The Mounted Services Safety Officer, along with unit commanders is responsible for the inspection of all mounted troops prior to entering the field. This inspection not only covers all arms carried, but fitness of mounts and all tack used.

2. Firearms carried must undergo inspection prior to use. Carbines and long arms carried must meet all criteria as established listed under the infantry guidelines. Pistols must be of sound working condition, with adequate half cock and cylinder rotation. Bores and chambers must be free of rust or debris. As stated in the infantry guidelines, a weapon that arrives at an event that has not been recently cleaned and oiled or in a loaded state does not pass initial inspection.

3. All pistols must be carried in a secure holster or pommel holster. The carrying of pistols in a boot or tucked in a belt is not allowed. Pistols may not be allowed to dangle free via a strap or string.

4. Pistols must be loaded in the previously described manner. Excessive charging of cylinders and the use of wonder wadding is not allowed. Pistols should be kept loaded on an empty cylinder or uncapped. The carrying of powder horns or loose powder in saddle bags is not allowed.

5. Pistols, when fired, must never be aimed directly over a horse's head. They may be fired off to the sides or pointed slightly off or elevated. Care must be maintained never to fire directly at another person's mount, especially that mount's head or face. Proper range and firing distances of at least a minimum of 15 yards must be maintained at all times.

Pistols should also never be fired at anyone's head or face, not at downed or inattentive targets.

6. Never mount a horse with a loaded pistol or long arm in hand. When carrying a loaded firearm, the muzzle must remain held upright at all times prior to firing. Never let a loaded firearm dangle loose in a sling or on a saddle.

7. Cavalry should always maintain safe distance from all infantry and artillery. Increased distance for all firings should also be observed via infantry and artillery when firing back at mounted troops.

8. Cavalry must try and avoid areas where casualties are lying. When entering such areas, this must be done at a walk.

9. Horses on the field must never be ridden at full gallop. Speed and gait should be appropriate for the space and manner of the ground in use. “Charges are never to be at a full gallop, but at best a steady trot.”

10. Guidons and flags must never be grasped or captured without prior permission. Spear tipped guidons and lances must never be leveled and used in a charge mode.

11. “Cowboying” is not allowed. Excessive fanning of pistols, stunt riding, reckless riding, overly aggressive saber dueling, point blank firing and overrunning of foot or artillery is not allowed. Cavalry must never interfere with or impede the safety of infantry and artillery units in the field. Units that have gone to square, guard versus cavalry or are within the wheels of a cannon must be respected. Limbers and ammunition chests must never be fired on or engaged in hand-to-hand combat. Horse drawn limbers are to be avoided and never fired on.

12. When taking hits, mounted cavalry must secure or otherwise account for the now loose mount. A buddy system or leading off of the mount is preferred. Riders are never encouraged to fall off a mount at full speed for risk of injury. A slumping in the saddle and roll off or “walking wounded” is preferred.

Sabers and Hand-to-Hand Combat

1. Hand-to-hand combat between mounted units will only take place if previously rehearsed and agreed upon by unit commanders. Use of hand-to-hand combat in a battle scenario must be prior scripted.

Hand-to-hand combat with foot troops or artillery is never allowed.

2. All sabers used must be dulled, have no sharp edges or points. Use of a wrist strap and leather gauntlets is highly encouraged.

3. The tip of a saber must always be pointed up, and not dipped below 45 degrees when dueling. Excessive force is not to be used. Care must be used with any thrust motion. The preferred method is blade on blade contact, flat to flat, using the middle part of the blade. Pommel or hilt smashes are not allowed.

4. Do not strike at the head of an opponent or their mount. Avoid striking hands, the legs of mounts and the unprotected backs of riders.

5. Riders must remain firmly seated during all dueling. Leaning over or standing up in the saddle is not encouraged.

6. The call of “Break” is the signal to end a particular duel. Dueling should also cease upon any safety or loss of control issue with your or an opponent’s mount.

7. Saber duels should never be initiated at faster than a trot, and all mounts should slow prior to contact. Dueling should be done with mounts moving at slow speed if possible.

8. Verbal abuse, threats, grabbing of clothes or reins is never allowed. The use of firearms loaded or otherwise, in a melee is never allowed. Knives are never to be drawn or used in a melee duel.

9. Sabers should hang loose when mounted. The strapping of a saber to a saddle is to be done at your own risk. If possible, when a trooper dismounts for skirmish firing, if the saber can be detached from the belt or otherwise secured that is desirable.

10. Cavalry, when dismounted, must have adequate horse holders on hand to secure all mounts. A ratio of no more than one holder to three horses is preferred.

Infantry Safety Guidelines

1. Individual unit commanders and NCO's are responsible for the general conduct of all troops under their command. Frequent drill as to safe usage of all firearms carried on the field is essential. File closers must be attentive to any safety or gun malfunction problems on the field and be ready to assist in correcting those problems. Commanders are responsible for the conduct of their troops on the battlefield at all times. Hot-dogging or individual glory hound actions are discouraged.

2. All units are required prior to any drill or battle at an event to conduct safety inspection of all arms carried onto the field. Weapons which do not pass inspection due to mechanical defects must be barred from the field unless prompt repairs can be made. A weapon that arrives at an event in a state of fouling in the barrel due to not being cleaned recently does not pass inspection.

3. Inspection of arms must include the springing or ramrods and capping off. Ramrods must slide down the barrel freely and land with a metallic sounding bounce. Dull thuds which are a result of fouling or rust in the bottom of the barrel do not pass inspection.

Capped off weapons must be aimed at a blade of grass, leaf or other object. Free exchange of air from nipple to barrel must be apparent on discharge of the weapon.

4. Lock and trigger mechanisms must be inspected to ensure weapon does not misfire on half cock. Excessive trigger pull on full cock should also be accessed.

5. Non-muzzle loading firearms must have the breech of the gun opened and the bore of the gun inspected visually for fouling and rust. Capping off should be done where appropriate. Otherwise, trigger, firing pin action, lock and breech sealing mechanism must be thoroughly inspected for proper function.

6. Charges carried by the troops must also be examined. Only paper charges of the appropriate grain and size weight are allowed. At no time is the carrying of live rounds on the field of battle acceptable.

Charging of muzzle loading weapons from a powder horn or flask is not encouraged. All paper charges should be pre-made before arriving at an event. This reduces the need to have sentries posted when individuals must make rounds on site.

7. Paper charges must be black powder only. Smokeless powder, pyrodex or fireworks grade powder is not acceptable. Powder should be FFg or FFFg. Charge weight should be no more than 70 grains for a .58 caliber firearm, and no more than 100 grains for a .68 or larger bore gun. Excessive charging of a gun to produce a louder report on the battlefield is not allowed.

8. Non-muzzle loading firearms must also have any blanks inspected. Commercial plastic or brass blanks are preferred. Home reloaded blanks must be black powder only, and again not excessively overcharged, based on the caliber of the weapon.

9. The preferred firearm for infantry service is a reproduction 3-banded military rifle or musket. Original firearms may be carried, but must endure even more rigorous inspection to ensure safe construction and function.

Flintlock or civilian style arms are acceptable only if the event specifies. Flintlock arms must have a flash guard on the lock if they are to be used other than in the front rank end position.

Two-band or short barreled muskets or carbines may be carried at the discretion of unit commanders or event hosts. Units or individuals carrying a short barrel length weapon must be able to demonstrate safe usage of the weapon in rear rank firing. Otherwise, whenever possible, short length weapons must be confined to the front rank.

10. Non-muzzle loading firearms are traditionally issued to flank companies. Lever action or breech loading firearms should be placed on the ends of the firing line whenever possible.

11. All bayonets carried on the field must be dulled/unsharpened and carried in the appropriate scabbard with a metal or brass tip. Bayonets may only be pulled or affixed in the following situations:

- A. Inspection arms;
- B. Stacking of arms;
- C. Formal parade or pass in review;
- D. Formal bayonet drill.

Bayonets are never to be fixed on the field for any form of bayonet charge or in any hand-to-hand combat situation

12. Ramrods are not to be drawn on the field or used for loading purposes, except for the clearing of a malfunctioning weapon by an NCO or File Closer. Ramrods may be used only for demonstration purposes or during the initial loading of paper during drill/fire by numbers.

13. Pistols may be carried only by officers. It is not appropriate for infantry privates to carry sidearms. All pistols carried on the field must also undergo a safety inspection prior to use. Pistols must be checked for bore obstructions and fouling, proper cylinder rotation, trigger pull and half cock.

Pistols must be loaded with FFg or FFFg black powder only. Individual cylinders must not be overcharged or packed. Use of a commercial bore butter or Cream of Wheat over the end of a blank load is required. Tissue paper, if used as a spacer

between the powder and sealant, must be dry and not excessively thick so as to cause a projectile.

Cardboard wadding are not allowed. Styrofoam wadding must be easily combustible and not leave the muzzle as a projectile.

Pistols should not be capped unless weapon has a safe slot for the hammer to rest in. Use of an open or uncharged cylinder is also recommended

14. Pistol's must be carried in a secure military style holster. They may not be carried loose in a belt or haversack. Carrying of pistols in a boot is also discouraged.

15. It is appropriate for any pistol carried by an officer to be inspected at the same time as the general troops are also inspected. This inspection may be done by fellow officers or the senior NCO. Even pistols which will not be loaded must be inspected. If it is to be carried on the field, it must pass inspection.

16. Sabers and swords carried by officers and senior NCO's should be dulled. They must be carried in the appropriate scabbard when not in use. They should not be used in hand-to-hand combat unless prior rehearsal.

17. Camp knives/bowie knives may be carried at unit commander's discretion. They must be in a secure scabbard. A leather thong or tie is encouraged to hold the hilt in.

Knives may be drawn on a battlefield only for the clearing of a weapon malfunction or to cut paper cartridge pack string ties. Knives are never to be drawn on the field in any form of simulated hand-to-hand combat.

18. Hand-to-hand combat is not allowed unless prior rehearsal between units and individuals. Unscripted hand-to-hand combat is not recommended.

In an instance where an individual does initiate a hand-to-hand combat, the following guidelines are required:

- A. The attacking individual must come at his opponent only if eye contact is established.
- B. The receiving defender must signal acceptance of the attacker by either going to a port arms position or other defense stance.
- C. An individual not wishing to receive a hand-to-hand combat attack is encouraged to either retire or take an immediate hit.

All hand-to-hand attacks must be done only with the muzzle of a firearm or the butt. All moves must be telegraphed via a short pause/jerk motion prior to the full attack. This alerts the receiver as to the nature of the attack that follows.

All hand-to-hand attacks must be at half speed. Attacks must not be overly aggressive and aimed at body parts with the intent to cause real injury.

Pistols and the firing of weapons are not allowed in hand-to-hand situations. Loaded pistols must never be used in a clubbing motion for fear of accidental discharge.

Swords used in hand-to-hand combat must be half speed attacks. Slashes are preferred as even an accidental slow speed thrust can cause real injuries.

Bayonets and knives are never to be used in hand-to-hand combat.

Hand-to-hand combat must never be initiated with a loaded weapon. If possible, it should also only be received in an unloaded state.

19. Firing of long arms must be done at appropriate ranges. Generally speaking, targets should not be aimed at directly if closer than at a minimum 30 yards or 50 feet. Targets at closer range must be aimed with elevated muzzle or off to the side.

20. Pistols must not be fired directly at targets closer than 15 yards. Firing of any weapon at an opponent's head is also always discouraged.

21. Extra care should always be taken when firing at artillery crewman or mounted cavalry. Artillery pouches or haversacks must never be targeted. Firing in close proximity to any limber is prohibited.

The heads of horses should never be fired at directly. Extra range must also be observed when targeting cavalry as to the sometimes unpredictable nature of animals.

22. Weapons must be cleared prior to leaving a battlefield. This is done by capping off. Pistols should also be emptied prior to leaving a field. Breech loading or lever action magazine firearms need not be emptied in a waste of ammunition, but must be rendered secure.

23. Weapons should be cleaned and secured back at camp as soon as practical. Weapons should be inspected prior to storing away for the night.

24. Weapons may only be loaded and fired in battlefield, drill situations. The firing of weapons in camp is discouraged. Demonstration firings should be done in a prescribed area and not in company streets.

The firing of weapons by the lay public is done at the issuer's own risk.

Weapon stacks should always have a guard or supervision. No one should ever handle another person's weapon without permission.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES SAFETY GUIDELINES

This section will attempt to define some of the less common impressions on the Civil War re-enacting battlefield. Some confusion and safety concerns frequently occur when individuals operate in an independent fashion outside the normal command of established units. Also, the presence of period civilians on the field, either a combat or non-combat role can sometimes lead to safety and confusion issues. This section will attempt to define the expectations for the non-traditional impressions and some authenticity standards of conduct for such.

This section's key term is to define if an individual on the field is to be considered a Combatant or a Non-Combatant. Non-Combatants are not expected to be armed and be participants in shooting or melee actions. Confusion often exists when you have individuals on the field who are armed and not readily identifiable as a combatant

For purposes of the MWCWRA, any soldier on the field in a regulation style uniform, in the infantry, artillery or cavalry and under arms is to be considered a Combatant. Others, as defined below, may or may not be considered as combatants, and thereby targeted by fire or close combat attacks.

Individual soldiers on the field must be at least 12 years of age and in period uniform to participate. All minors at any event must have a parent or guardian present, either on the field, or on site for that minor to participate. A signed parental consent form and waiver may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis.

Traditionally, the firing on civilians and persons of the female gender was discouraged during the Civil War. Non-uniformed women and children should thus never be the target of hostile fire unless a specific event calls for it. The targeting of, or firing on, modern guests and spectators is never allowed.

Below are the expectations of service for the various common Civil War impressions normally seen on the field:

Medical

A medical impression, being either a nurse, doctor, surgeon or hospital steward is to be considered at all times a Non-Combatant position. Medical impressions are generally to be unarmed except for a ceremonial sword of rank or hospital steward's knife. Medical impressions are never to be engaged in hand-to-hand combat or fired on.

To do an acceptable medical impression on the field, the person in question should be in some form of distinctive uniform or armband to identify the person as such. They must also be prepared with the following:

1. They must have with them a canteen, full of water to assist in the prevention of dehydration and heat related illness during a battle. Buckets of water, cool rags and ice are also encouraged where necessary.

2. Medical impression should carry on them some form of medical bag or haversack. Contents of said bag must contain bandages, both for simulated wounds, and clean sterile ones for any real burns or cuts. A modern first aid kit with bandages and antiseptic creams is also encouraged.

3. Medical personnel should have on them some form of a green cloth or flag. In the event of injury or medical emergency on the field, this is the signal to all units that a cease fire must go into effect and that a real medical situation is in progress. They should approach where the emergency is and wave the flag as a signal as to where the situation is occurring so that any help needed may find the emergency quickly.

On the field, the call of STEWARD is a call for a simulated injury. The call of MEDIC is for a real emergency. The call of CORPMEN is not recognized as an appropriate call but may be understood as MEDIC.

Upon the call of MEDIC or the sighting of a green flag, all units must come to an immediate cease fire on the field. This can be called by a CEASE FIRE call, or a CHECK FIRE call as needed. Specific combat arms should then behave as follows:

1. Infantry units must cease all loading and firing. They should go to a shoulder arms, order arms position, or kneel to signify that they are now on hold and out of action.

2. Artillery pieces must cease the loading procedure. Crews may swab and service a gun tube to extinguish any hot material in the barrel, and should then go into a position of gunners post. In the event that a charge is already seated in the barrel, the HOT GUN position must be observed. Whenever possible, primers should be pulled and lanyards loosened or slackened.

3. Calvary units must either reform and withdraw a safe distance, or dismount. In any case, a firm hold of all mounts must be observed, as the sudden arrival of emergency vehicle sirens and lights may startle horses.

All persons on the field trained in CPR or first aid should be willing to offer any assistance needed to the injured party. Prompt medical care and evacuation is required before any combat action may resume.

Because the medical impression is expected to be the first responder in an emergency situation, they are authorized to be the only person on the field with a cell phone in their haversack. They are the person who should be expected, in the event of the need for fire, rescue or police services to make that call. Or at least have a phone available in the event of such need.

Chaplain

Religious impressions on the field are to be considered as staff officer positions. Chaplains may be armed with sword and pistol, but the carrying of long arms is generally not appropriate unless said individual is in the line of battle. Chaplains are to operate otherwise as file closers.

Chaplains are to be considered Non-Combatants. They may administer any last rites to wounded or dying men. The administering of a Coup De grace via the firing of a pistol to or at the head is discouraged.

Provost Guard or Marshall, Civilian Law Enforcement

These positions must be readily identifiable via some form of badge or sash over the shoulder. They are to be armed with as customary with a military long arm, baldric and sword for provost. Civilian impressions may carry a pistol and civilian style long arm. These arms should be inspected prior to entry on the field with the regular troops or units they are assigned to.

Provost positions are a file closer position. They are present to prevent desertion in the ranks. They are to be considered a Combatant position; however, generally their fire is reserved to be directed not commonly at the enemy but at their own fleeing troops. Safe firing distances must be maintained at all times.

Engineer, Pioneer

Pioneers and Engineers traditionally carry some form of entrenching tool. This may be an axe, pick or shovel. These weapons must never be used on the field in any form of simulated hand-to-hand combat. Pioneers are to be a file closer or flank position. They are considered as Non-Combatants, though they may be used as casualties.

Musicians

Fifers, drummers, buglers and band impressions must have a musical instrument with them on the field. They may carry with them a ceremonial sword, but are normally to be unarmed. They are to be considered Non-Combatants. The carrying of pistols by musicians is not encouraged. The carrying of arms by anyone younger than age 14 should also be discouraged. Musicians are never to be engaged in any form of hand-to-hand combat.

Flag Bearers/Colors

Color bearers may have a ceremonial baldric and sword if desired. They should not carry an additional pistol or long arm. While a flag bearer is considered to be a Combatant, colors should never be grabbed or taken away unless prearranged via scenario. Colors

that have a spear tip on them should not be used in a thrusting manner in hand-to-hand situations.

Militia

Civilian militia impressions must have all long arms carried inspected prior to entry onto the field. Extra care must be observed in the use of any flintlocks or shotguns carried. Pitchforks, rakes, shovels, pikes and other implements of agriculture must never be used in hand-to-hand combat situations. Militia impressions are Combatants, however non-firearm carrying individuals are to be used only as casualties. No one should ever pick up and use another person's firearm in the field unless previous permission is obtained. Pistols are not normally carried by militia impressions.

Sharpshooters, Snipers

A Sharpshooter impression to be recognized by the MWCWRA must carry one of the following:

1. A military breech loading Sharps-style rifle;
2. Whitworth rifle;
3. Brass scoped rifle;
4. Bench or target gun.

Hawkins style rifles are not acceptable unless they have a period brass telescope mounted. Other forms of long guns are not appropriate.

Sharpshooters must be uniformed as to common troops.

Traditionally, since they operate at distances much longer than is common on most normal re-enactment battle fields and from cover or hidden positions, their use unless scenario driven is of questionable merit since most individual's targeted by a sharpshooter are often out of range to see or hear that they have been shot at.

Sharpshooter arms must be inspected prior to use as described under the infantry section.

Individuals operating as a sharpshooter may have with them a spotter, who must carry some form of spyglass or binoculars. Sharpshooters and spotters are considered a Combatant.

Sharpshooters and spotters are not encouraged to climb up into trees or old buildings for better vantage points.

Dismounted Cavalry, Dragoons, Mounted Rifles

Dismounted cavalry impressions (as opposed to mounted cavalry who dismount) must be regularly uniformed. They must carry some form of carbine length long arm, subject to normal safety inspections. They may carry pistols, in secure holsters. They should not carry sabers as this hinders normal movement. Dismounted cavalry, or any cavalry on foot, should never use sabers in hand-to-hand combat.

Dismounted cavalry units operate under the direction of the overall infantry commander, as they are commonly employed in an infantry skirmishing role and not as the more mobile horse mounted units.

Dismounted cavalry is a Combatant.

Guerilla, Bushwhacker, Red Legs

Guerilla impressions, when mounted, observe all the rules for normal horse mounted units. They should not carry long arms or sabers. Traditionally the use of multiple pistols or shotguns was common. All pistols and shotguns must be inspected as previously described under the cavalry safety rules section. Pistols must be carried in secure holsters. Knives, if carried, must never be drawn.

Dismounted bushwhacker impressions are not encouraged and must follow all the safety rules as for dismounted cavalry impressions. Guerillas are Combatants.

Scouts, Spies

The presence of Civilian spies and non-uniformed scouts must be made known to unit commanders prior to any scenario. Spies and scouts should be unarmed and non-uniformed. They are Non-Combatants. Any independently operating armed Civilian on the field must have all arms inspected prior to entering the field. If a person of female gender and civilian impression is on the field and armed, they must undergo usual safety inspection and be made known as armed to unit commanders. Otherwise they are to be considered Non-Combatants.

Marines, Naval

Any Marine or Navy impression on the field must have any long arms carried inspected under normal rules. Any carried cutlass, boarding ax, knife or pike must be in a secure scabbard or holster where appropriate and not used for hand-to-hand combat purposes. Marines are Combatants.

Any naval impression using a boat howitzer or portable rail or swivel gun must follow all the rules as prescribed under artillery.