

## **Infantry Safety Rules**

### **Infantry Rules of Engagement**

*These rules are mandatory for all combatants armed with shoulder fired weapons and serving on foot at MCWRA-sponsored events.*

#### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

The unit commander is responsible for the training, safety and the actions of his unit during an event. If he is not at the event the next person in the chain of command bears responsibility for the unit.

#### **TRAINING:**

New recruits should be suitably drilled and given safety instruction to the satisfaction of the unit commander and senior non commissioned officer before being allowed on the battlefield. All recruits should have read a copy of these safety rules and understand them before participating in a battle.

#### **GENERAL:**

1. No one may be enlisted as a soldier, to fight on the field under arms, unless he is 16 years old.
2. With just 65 grains standard load and no paper or wadding, YOUR MUSKET CAN KILL! Flame shoots out 6 to 8 feet, and burned powder residue can spray 20 feet in front of your musket.
3. The standard load for the musket is 65 grains FFg or FFFg black powder only.
4. Learn the Manual of Arms! We load and fire in nine times. The Civil War soldier did so for safety and so shall we. In this manner no fingers will be lost.
5. Never load your weapons unless commanded to do so by your commanding officer or NCO.
6. When firing, always watch the end of the barrel. In this manner you can see and know that the weapon has discharged.
7. Always let an officer or NCO know if your weapon did not discharge. Then and only then do you step out of the ranks and to the rear to clear your weapon.
8. When clearing a weapon, prelude this action in a clear voice, "Fire in the Hole."
9. Never discharge weapons in camp unless commanded to do so by your commanding officer or NCO.
10. Never is the public to handle or fire your weapon. Only reenactors are to handle weapons. Civilians are not authorized to handle weapons.
11. Always check weapons before going into battle or drill. This shall include springing of ramrods to ensure the breach is clear, also priming with a cap and clearing the nipple and to ensure the weapon is discharged and the nipple is clean. This safety inspection will occur no later than 9:00 a.m. every morning of an event. In addition there will be a safety inspection after every period of firing before returning to camp. A detailed safety inspection will occur before every battle, and at any time at the Company Commander's discretion.
12. The standard of the hobby is the three-band military musket. This standard is for a number of reasons; the most important is that of safety. This is only a standard, not a law, even though some of the infantry units only permit the three band weapon in their ranks, this decision shall be the individual Company Commander's choice. Bearing in mind that shotguns, CVA muskets etc., are not the standard and are not as safe as the three band .58 cal. muskets.
13. All short barreled muskets will be placed on the front ranks. There will be no exceptions to this rule!
14. No post-1865 weapons, including modern conversions will be allowed.
15. The rank and file is discouraged from carrying knives while on the battlefield.
16. Privates in the ranks will not carry pistols. Officers and NCO's may carry pistols, but will not fire them in the ranks. Standard load for the pistol is NO MORE THAN 30 grains of FFFg black powder.
17. Ramrods are to be used only once at the beginning of a battle. This will be just prior to entering the field and only by command. Ramrods will not be removed from under the barrel after that time.
18. Bayonets are not to be fixed unless by order from the Company Commander. Fixed bayonets are not authorized unless scripted and coordinated with the opposing forces.
19. No walk-ons are allowed to fall in with the companies without permission of the Company Commander. This shall include relatives, friends, or other reenactors that are not members of that company. All requests of this nature must be cleared with the Battalion Commander by the Company Commander.
20. The last word of authority on the field of battle regarding safety" violations, is the Company Commander. If you are cautioned on the field of battle for safety, don't question your Company Commander. Questions can be answered later off the field of battle.

21. Questions of safety between companies shall be between Company Commanders and Battalion Commander. No commander shall discipline any person not under his direct command. All questions can be answered off the field of battle.

22. Men under the influence of drugs or alcohol have no place on the field.

23. Officers and file closers will at all times be watchful for any potentially unsafe act. This includes, but is not limited to, unsafe weapons, firing of weapons, maintaining safe distances from artillery, cavalry, opposing infantry, and pyrotechnics.

24. The company commander is at all times responsible for the safety of his men. The company commander will take whatever action he believes necessary, during battle, in order to protect his men from serious injury.

25. Soldiers of the company are responsible for knowing and understanding the safety rules and in showing good judgment concerning safety. It is each man's duty and responsibility to act in a safe manner and to look out for his comrades' safety.

#### **ENGAGEMENT VERSUS CAVALRY:**

1. Infantry should never engage cavalry in hand to hand combat unless it has been pre-planned and practiced.

2. If no hand to hand or closed work has been practiced, infantry should be no closer than 25 feet of a horseman.

3. Never fire directly at any horseman. If you are within 25 feet of cavalry, fire in the air and NOT at the ground. Make sure you won't hit anyone. This is called a safe shot.

4. Never fire at a horse's legs!

5. Do not press an attack on someone unable to defend themselves.

6. Never grab a man or horse during a fight or otherwise try to dismount someone.

7. Attempting to capture a flag or guidon is prohibited by the MCWRA. Never grab a flag or' guidon unless it has been arranged before the battle.

8. Guidons, flag poles, muskets, etc., shouldn't be used to attack or beat anyone.

9. Attacks should look tactically sound and reasonable.

10. If there is a riderless horse on the field ALL fighting stops until the field is clear.

#### **VERSUS ARTILLERY:**

1. Never fire within 25 feet of an artillery piece or a limber.

2. Do not ever charge between a limber and an artillery piece.

3. The signal for a loaded artillery piece is implements crossed on the barrel. If you see this signal or the crew is waving you off-- stay away.

4. Never capture an artillery piece, or charge an artillery piece unless it is part of the scenario.

5. Only Company Commanders or Battalion Commanders will order an attack on an artillery piece.

6. Make sure the artillery piece had fired before attacking. Sometimes only the primer goes off and not the powder charge. In this case the gun could go off at any time because it is "hot."

7. Do not fire at an artilleryman or their pouches, some of them are carrying charges or primers for the cannon.

#### **VERSUS INFANTRY:**

1. Infantry should never engage in hand-to-hand combat unless it has been pre-planned and practiced.

2. If no hand-to-hand or closed work has been practiced, infantry will be no closer than 25 feet of infantry.

3. No hand-to-hand will take place with fixed bayonets.

4. Attempting to capture a flag or guidon is prohibited by the MCWRA. Never grab a flag or guidon unless it has been arranged before the battle.

5. Never fire directly at any infantry. If you are within 25 feet of infantry, fire in the air or at the ground. Make sure you won't hit anyone. This is called a safe shot.

6. Never fire or advance on the field of battle unless ordered to by your Company Commander or Battalion Commander.

7. Never lose sight of Company or Battalion Commanders. They are the ones with the scenario and will look out for your safety.

8. Maintain control while in line of battle. Always look around you to see what is happening. It is your responsibility to look out for your comrades in arms.

9. Guidons, flag poles, muskets, etc., shouldn't be used to attack or beat anyone.

10. Do not press an attack on someone unable to defend themselves.