

◆ THE MESSENGER ◆

The Newsletter of the Fifth Missouri Infantry (CSA), Inc.

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AUTHENTICITY?

Submitted By 2nd Sgt Larry Dietzel

I belong to an Civil War E-mailing list and the topic of discussion came up about what we are wearing as reenactors. I am not a Ph.d. on the subject and I don't know every thing there is on the dress of the 1860's. I think we all need to stand back and take a good look at what we are wearing as representation of what was worn then. As reenactors we need to represent our unit and the men who fought over 130 years ago to the best of our ability. Remember that old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words?" Well, what is real life worth? We are doing all this to educate the public and we want to give the right information.

The use of photos when putting our impression together could be misleading. I'm sure every one has seen the photo of the Texas Cavalry trooper wearing the leopard skin pants and matching holster. Can you imagine a company called the 5th Texas cav. all wearing the leopard pants? It's damn silly, right? Well, how about a 10 man company of Confederate Infantry with the jean wool shell jackets all with the sky blue federal pants? The number of impressions we would need would be in the 100's if we were to be 100% authentic for every reenactment. One uniform for early war, one for late, one for fresh issued, one for after the long march, one for east of the river, one for west. The amount of uniforms would fill up a semi truck and who wants to deal with all that. So we need to pick our impressions carefully to avoid paying \$75.00 and finding out the pants or what ever are incorrect as a lot of us have done. To avoid this problem you need to do research, pick your impression, ask alot of questions,

look at photo's, drawings, and read alot of books and records. When you think you are ready to go spend the money, take another look at your information and what you have decided to purchase to be sure. If you are new to the hobby take a veteran reenactor with you to help and avoid going to the wrong sutler. Not all sutlers are selling correct items, and never order over the phone, I am speaking from experience on this.

After you have purchased your impression how do you take care of it? Do you wash it or dry clean it after every event? If you are doing a parade or a camp impression, polish your brass, and you could wash your uniform. If you're doing an "in the field" impression you might get the uniform dirty. Use some charcoal from your grill at home, add a little dirt, remove a couple of buttons from your jacket, add a patch and you've been in the field for weeks. All of these are very easy things to do and give that extra tweak to your look. The look of the whole unit needs to be consistent to give the over all impression and make it work. Is this something the 5th Missouri wants to do? If so what type of look do we want and how do we implement it?

As the hobby progresses new information is discovered and we need to adapt to it. We can all argue "well, it was in that photo" or "it's close enough" or "they captured it from the yanks". Be sure of what they had available at that time. The question from the spectator at the reenactment would be "Did they really have that?" How would you answer that question? This is the question we all need to ask ourselves and be able to answer with 101 % accuracy.

THE FIFTH ON LINE.

The computer can be a reenactors friend. There are 100's of sites on the internet related to the American Civil War. You can converse with other reenactors, research units and get any information you might think of on any subject. You don't have to purchase a \$4000 computer to go on line. I set my mother up with a \$80. dollar computer and a \$100 dollar modem and now she has access to the internet. I spent \$1200 on my computer, which is very plain but gets me by. The on line service like America on line costs about \$20.00 a month but there are cheaper services if you look. I have a listing of a lot of addresses of web sites, and an e-mailing list. If any one is looking to get on line let me know if you have any questions.

I am also getting involved with another E-mail Civil War game. I know the Organizer. If any one is interested send me a note and Ill get you the web site address. This time I'm going to be playing the Governor of Washington DC "gasp" a Yank "gasp" from the capital!

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Pvt. Bill Wayne, cedarbnb@2sprint.net

If you have an Email address let me know and I'll add it to the roster.



Berdan's sharpshooters at Malvern Hill

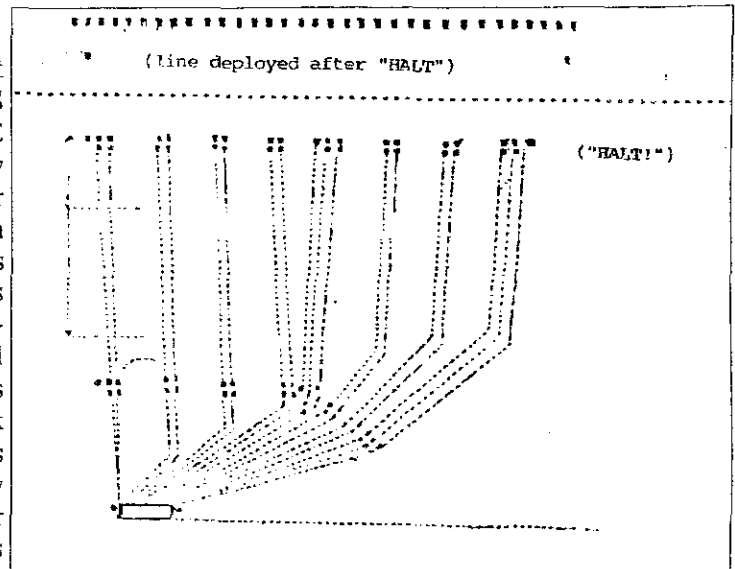
DRILL FACTS

By the 1st Sergeant Skirmish Drill, Pt 2

Now that we've covered the basic principles involved in deploying as skirmishers, let's look specifically at how we get there.

Deployment

To deploy FORWARD, with the company either at a halt or on the march, the Captain commands "COMPANY---AS SKIRMISHERS ON THE (LEFT) FILE---TAKE INTERVALS MARCH." The left group of four, conducted by the 2nd Sergeant, moves straight forward. Each of the other groups of four advances AT THE DOUBLE QUICK to gain a distance of 20 paces from the group immediately to its left. As each group comes up abreast of the first group (with 20 paces between groups) they begin to march straight forward -- maintaining their intervals and their groups of four -- until commanded to 'HALT'. At this command, each man takes his five-pace interval. The front rank "2" stands fast. The rear rank "2" moves five paces to his left. The front rank "1" goes ten paces to the right, and the rear rank "1" five paces to the right. Simply put, rear rank men always place themselves to the LEFT of their front rank partner. Now, we have one long line of men, five paces apart, with alternating front and rear rank men.



Deploying Forward ON THE LEFT FILE

To deploy BY THE FLANK, with the company at a halt, the Captain commands "COMPANY---AS SKIRMISHERS BY THE (RIGHT) FLANK---TAKE INTERVALS (double quick) MARCH." The left group of four stands fast, with its men taking their five pace intervals as outlined above. The rest of the company faces right and moves off, with each group of four halting at twenty-pace intervals and deploying as outlined above. Using the same method, the company can be deployed BY THE LEFT FLANK (the right group stands fast) or BY THE RIGHT AND LEFT FLANKS (the center group stands fast). Again, we end up with one long line, five paces apart, with alternating front & rear rank men.

To advance the deployed skirmish line, the Captain commands "FORWARD....MARCH". The sergeants move up onto the flanks of the line. Guide is in the direction commanded. The line halts at the command 'HALT'. To march in retreat, the Captain commands 'IN RETREAT....MARCH'. Each man faces to the rear and marches in that direction, maintaining alignment and five-pace intervals. At the command 'HALT', face immediately toward the enemy.

The line can also wheel in either direction. Commands are the same as in line of battle. Men to the pivot side of the wheel should take small steps and look toward the swinging side to maintain alignment and spacing, just as in line of battle.

To march by the flank, the Captain commands "BY THE RIGHT (LEFT) FLANK....MARCH", and the line moves off single file in the direction commanded. No "doubling".

Firing

Skirmishers can fire either at a halt or while marching. In both cases, the Captain commands "COMMENCE FIRING". At this command, the men in the front rank take deliberate aim, fire, and reload quickly. They should not all fire at once. The rear rank men will come to the ready, and as soon as their front rank file partner is nearly loaded, will take aim and fire. This continues until the Captain commands "CEASE FIRE".

If the command to Commence Firing comes while the line is advancing, the front rank men will halt, fire & reload. His rear rank file partner will then advance ten paces beyond him, and halt at the ready until the front rank man is nearly loaded. He will then aim & fire. The front rank man then advances ten paces beyond his rear rank partner, etc & etc. Follow the same procedure when commencing fire while marching in retreat. The front rank men stop, turn & fire first, then load while marching to the rear.

If a command to "FORWARD....MARCH" comes after firing has begun, the men who are loaded will advance first, halt & fire, while their partner finishes loading. If the command "IN RETREAT....MARCH" comes while you are firing, the loaded man fires first, then retires ten paces to the rear while loading. The unloaded man stays put & fires when his partner is nearly ready. In both cases the "leap frogging" then continues as above.

We can also fire while marching by either flank. After firing, you move behind and to the other side of your file mate while loading. (To his right if BY THE RIGHT FLANK .. to his left if BY THE LEFT FLANK).

At the command to HALT while advancing & firing, the line reforms on the skirmishers who are in front. To HALT while retreating & firing, reform on the skirmishers to the rear. To HALT while moving by the flank & firing, the rear rank guys return to their normal spots in the line (on the left of their front rank file mates.)

The Rally

At the command "RALLY BY FOURS", you run to the front rank "2" of your group of four. The four of you form a circle, placing your right feet together in the center, and face outward with muskets 'at the ready'. If the command is "RALLY BY PLATOONS", or "RALLY BY COMPANY", you run to the center group of the platoon or company (or another group if so commanded), again forming a square (more like a circle, actually) as outlined in "rally by fours." Officers and senior NCOs are protected in the center of these squares. If commanded to "RALLY ON THE BATTALION", the skirmish line runs, (collecting in groups of four along the way) toward the nearest flank of the battalion, and reforms into a line of battle in the rear of it.

The Assembly

When there is no longer a danger to a skirmish line, the Captain will command it to "ASSEMBLE ON THE _____". This can be on a specific FILE (right, left, center), or on the BATTALION. In any case, groups of four reform and march together (not run) to the specified point, reforming the double-rank line of battle.

When written down, it all seems rather complicated -- even when somewhat simplified as I've tried to do here. But in practice you'll find that fighting in skirmish order isn't that tough if you just think small. All movements & actions take place primarily within your group of four ("comrads in battle") and in tandem with your file partner. Learn how to work on that level, and you'll have it mastered.

EVENT REPORT: Davisville

Friday evening's steady light rain did not bode well for the weekend, however sunshine arrived on Saturday, and the weather was marred only by persistent brisk winds, and a threat of rain that did not materialize on Sunday morning.

Company A, fielding 17 men over the course of the weekend, was assigned to the position of first company in the battalion, which was rounded out by the 9th Missouri and the 3rd Missouri. Our support would include three pieces of artillery and a large number of mounted and dismounted cavalry. Our opponents would be a consolidated company of Federals including, among others, the 3rd and 13th Missouri, and numbering no more than 20 infantry. Their support was about a dozen cavalry and one mountain howitzer.

The first action of the weekend was a Saturday morning tactical, which was a "tactical" in name only, since all actions were scripted. After marching the column to a distance from camp, Captain Weaver (commanding) posted the infantry in the woods and deployed the dismounted cavalry as skirmishers to await the advance of the enemy. When contact was made, he unmasked the battalion and charged the federal infantry, who did not give ground, (nor take hits). Federal cavalry swarmed the field, with our horsemen nowhere to be found. They had been sent to the other side of the site. After regrouping, we pressed another bayonet charge -- this time at the double-quick with real bayonets fixed. (?!). Again the federals failed to give ground. Action was halted as they limbered their howitzer. After they were allowed to withdraw and reform in the hills, we were again ordered to advance and clear them from their positions. After a short running scrap, the action

was concluded with no clear victor.

The two public battles provided little more in the way of interest. Saturday's scenerio called for a confederate force of vastly superior numbers to overwhelm, capture, and massacre the federals. This was done, much to the partisan crowd's satisfaction. Sunday's scenerio called for the reverse, so the dismounted cavalry "galvanized" as ragtag federal militia to give them some strength of numbers. Rather than risk unsafe behaviour of close-quarters execution by the disfunctional cav, all of Company A resolved to die early or skedaddle. Yours truly fell on first contact with the enemy, and have nothing further to report on this action.

The probable high point of the event was a well-organized candlelight tour. However, the Captain might consider questioning Lt. Hafley about allowing his tent to be used for some disreputable entertainment transactions. It seems a saloon was allowed to set up adjacent to camp, and the Lieutenant's tent provided the only nearby "privacy". I am pleased to report that, with the exception of one Private Hafley, all soldiers of the company avoided contact with such scandalous individuals. We instead occupied our time teaching the newer recruits about the evils of gambling, and how to recognize such unsavory diversions when seen.

The tour was marred near its end, however, by the appearance of some idiot in what appeared to be Klan garb. Not only is such a display anachronistic, (the original KKK was not formed until after the war), it implies a connection between reenacting groups and hate groups. This is not a connection we want to foster.

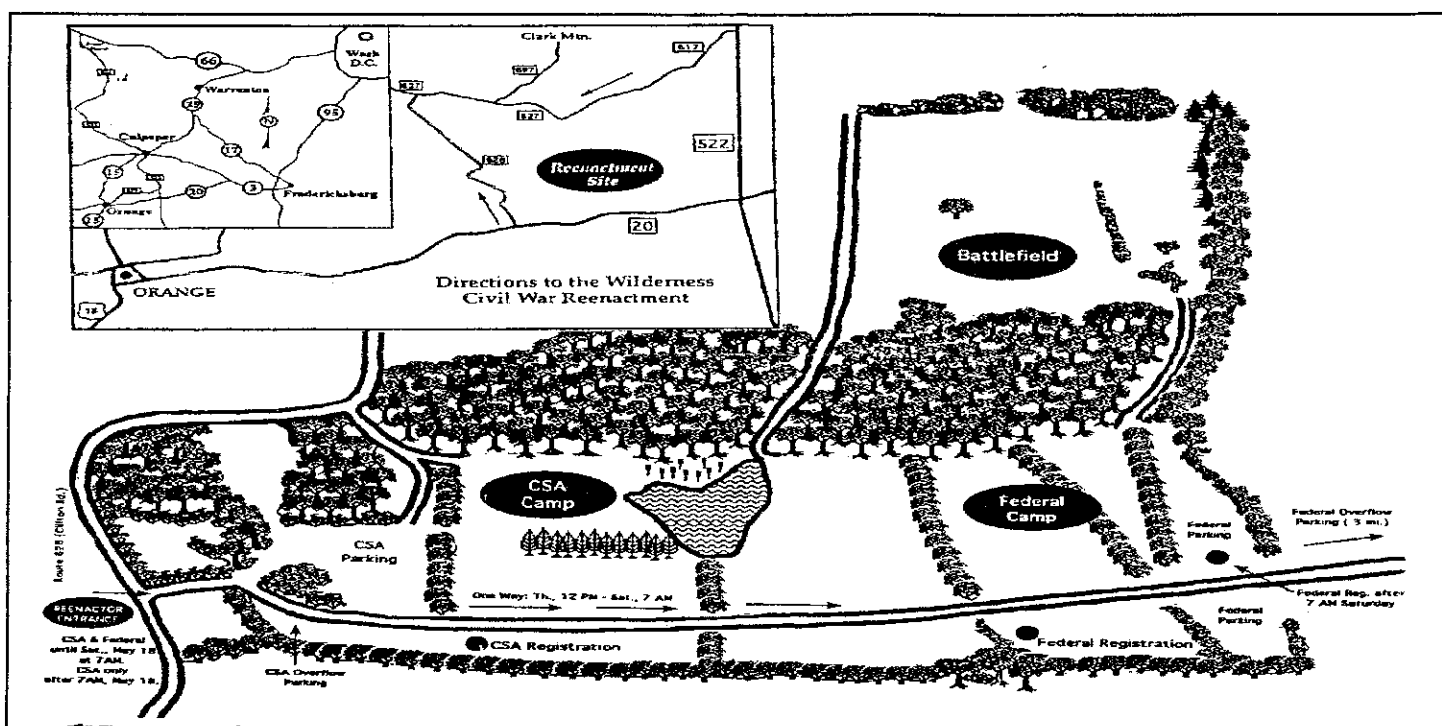
Report submitted for your approval, this 20th day of April, by 1st Serg't Dennis Faught

NEXT EVENT

May 4 **CLIMAX SPRINGS, MO.** Living history and parade. Activities scheduled from 8 - 6. Parade begins at 10 a.m. Be on site by 8 a.m. Recruiting Opportunity. Located midway between Warsaw and Camdenton on MO 7.

DETAILS OF 5TH MO UPCOMING EVENTS

May 17-19 THE WILDERNESS. Orange, Virginia. National Event. Scenerios include a Wilderness Tactical in the woods Saturday morning, Saunders Field Saturday afternoon, and Widow Tapp Farm Sunday afternoon. No events Friday except Regimental Drill and school children touring camps. You WILL want to be there for drill. Impression is FEDERAL Army of the Potomac (Iron Brigade) See detailed article in March issue. US Registration is separate and located at the edge of the US camp. There will be a separate US civilian camp for all 1st Confederate Division dependents. Separate "campaign-style" camp available for those who want to rough it. All 4th Battalion troops attending will be consolidated into one or two Companies, as part of a 500-600 man authentically-sized & structured Regiment (the 7th Wisconsin). Therefore, we'll all go prepared to fall in as musket-toting Yankee privates. Site is about 20 miles from the original battlefield, near Orange, VA. Entrance is on Clifton Road (Rt. 628) off of Highway 20. (See Map)



May 25-26 CRESTON, IOWA. Battle of Jonesboro, Georgia scenerios on rolling 10-acre field adjacent to period town. Impression is Missouri Brigade. First Person contest, sick call, mail call (bring letters if you'd like), pay call, period baseball, ladies high tea, dance, Saturday night moonlight tour (modeled after Lexington), basket social, ice cream social and more. Pig Roast provided Saturday night. 5th Missouri has been selected to perform a drill demonstration for the crowd following the Saturday battle. Creston is in southwest Iowa, 32 miles west of I-35 on US 34. Site is in McKinley Park in southwest part of town.

Jun 8-9 COLUMBIA. Parks & Recreation's annual living history & skirmish on grounds of Maplewood mansion in Nifong Park. Take AC exit on US 63 in southeast part of town. Turn west then immediately left on Nifong. Drill & firing demonstrations. Pay Call. Mail Call. Skirmish each day. Period crafts. Recruiting Opportunity. **DO NOT** send in the individual registration form you may have received. Make your commitments by **MAY 20** through the 1st Sgt., who'll register the company as a unit.

Jul 13-14 COLE CAMP. 5TH MO MAXIMUM EFFORT re-creating events of June 19, 1861. Historic action Saturday morning (for which Civilian impression is mandatory), plus Generic actions Saturday and Sunday afternoons. **BE PREPARED TO GALVANIZE.** Mail call, pay call, fashion show, and period entertainment. Located on MO Hwy 52, about 2 1/2 miles east of downtown Cole Camp. (Same site as Spring Drill). Make commitments to 1st Sgt. no later than **JUNE 9.**

Jul 20-21 HONEY SPRINGS, OK. Reenactment of July 1863 Battle of Honey Springs in Indian Territories. Two battles, ladies tea, evening social/dance. Friday night ice cream social & watermelon provided to early arrivals. Near Checotah, just off US 69.

Upcoming Events

- May 9-12 **LOWERY CITY, MO** (Listed FYI only)
May 17-19 **THE WILDERNESS- Orange, VA.**
May 25-26 **CRESTON, IOWA**
Jun 8-9 **COLUMBIA MO- Living history (5th MO supported Living History)**
Jun 15-16 **JEFFERSON BARRACKS- Small Living history**
Jun 22-23 **GRAND ISLAND- NE.** (Listed FYI, Company not supporting ,Battalion Max)
Jul 13-14 **COLE CAMP- (5TH MO MAXIMUM EFFORT, 5th MO Sponsoring)**
Jul 20-21 **HONEY SPRINGS, OK**
Jul 27-28 **Lenexa, KS-** (Listed FYI only)
Aug 3-4 **ATHENS, MO**
Sep 7-8 **FREDERICKTOWN - (5TH MO MAXIMUM EFFORT) (Battalion Max Effort)**
Sep 14-15 **St. Charles-** (Listed FYI only)
Sep 21-22 **Granbury, TX-** (Listed FYI only)
Sep 28-29 **Pilot Knob Living History.-** (Listed FYI only)
Oct 12-13 **Shelbina, MO.**
Oct 18-20 **WESTERN TACTICAL -Bowling Green, KY**
Oct 19-20 **WARSAW HERITAGE DAYS**
Dec 7-8 **PRAIRIE GROVE, ARK. (Battalion Max Effort)**

THE MESSENGER

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