

Vol. 29 NO 12

December 2021

"The Old Guard"
3rd U.S. Regular Infantry
Co. K

The American
Civil War:

1860 - 1865

Corporate Address: 3rd U.S. Infantry Reenactors, 4 Browns Lane, Fredericksburg, VA 22401 <http://www.3rdusreenactors.com>

Newsletter Editor: Mary E. Ritenour, 10012 Cotton Farm Road, Fairfax, VA 22032-1606 Mritenour1@verizon.net

Unit Event Schedule & Basic Facts

December Event Christmas in Camp Fort Ward, Alexandria

Final Registration with the Company NLT [December 8.](#)

Date: Saturday, December 11

Type of event: Living History

Location: Fort Ward:

4301 W Braddock Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304

Registration Fee: Zero.

Schedule:

Saturday: Roll Call 9:00 AM, Living history throughout the day until 5 PM. There may even be a visit from Santa Claus!

Specifics –We will portray the men of the 3rd US, Co. K. We will gather round the campfire, sing Christmas Carols, and generally have a good time. Drill will be kept to a minimum.

Commissary: On your own; Haversack or Handbasket. There will be treats such as candy, chestnuts, mulled cider, and coffee.

Uniform: Forage Cap (Full Hat Brass), Sack Coat (NO Corps Badges), Light Blue Trousers, Brogans, Full Leathers, Springfield Rifled Musket.

You are encouraged, though not required, to wear the early-war uniform: Hardee Hat (with full brass), Frock Coat (with scales), Dark Blue Trousers. We want to show the full range of uniforms the Regulars wore throughout the war. If you're not sure, check with the 1st Sgt.

You are also strongly encouraged to wear your great coats.

Ammunition: We will not have any firing demonstrations.

Ammo will not be sold.

December Auxiliary Event Military Bowl Parade Annapolis, MD

Final Registration with the Company NLT [December 22.](#)

Date: Monday, December 27

Type of event: Parade

Location: We are working on getting details, but the parade is through downtown Annapolis

Registration Fee: Zero.

Schedule:

Monday: Roll Call 8:00 AM.

Specifics –We will portray the men of the 3rd US, Co. K.

Details are still in the works, but for now we are go for this unique opportunity. Stand by for more information.

Commissary: None.

Uniform: Forage Cap (Full Hat Brass), Frock Coat with scales (preferred) or sack coat (NO Corps Badges), Light Blue Trousers, Brogans, Full Leathers, Springfield Rifled Musket.

Ammunition: We will not have any firing demonstrations.

Ammo will not be sold.

January Event Annual Meeting Fairfax, VA

Final Registration with the Company NLT [January 12.](#)

NOTE: In order to vote, your membership registration and payment must be RECEIVED on or before January 5.

<https://www.3rdusreenactors.com/join/application-options/>

Date: Saturday, January 15, 2022

Type of event: Unit Annual Meeting, Corporate and Military Elections, Potluck

Location:

Calvary Hill Baptist Church:

9301 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA 22031

Registration Fee: Zero, **however:**

Please bring a non-perishable food item for Calvary Hill's charity endeavors. (Maximum focus on Individual servings of Mac-n-cheese, Chili, Chef Boyardi pastas, applesauce cups, Tuna salad kits with crackers, 100% juice box drinks, & Fruit cups . These items are used to pack week end meals for children who may not have food for the week end for one of our local school.

Schedule:

11:30 PM: Begin Arriving and setup

1:35 PM: Annual Meeting begins, with Military and Civilian breakout sessions following.

6 PM: Potluck Supper and Silent Auction

Specifics –There are several points of business to cover, among them:

Annual Vote of Confidence for the Military Commander

NCO Elections (*which are held on even numbered years*)

Corporate Board elections: President, Member-at-Large, and Secretary.

Commissary: This is a potluck dinner. We will coordinate through the first call and subsequent updates on who is bringing what.

Uniform: Forage Cap (Full Hat Brass), Frock Coat if available, sack coat otherwise (NO Corps Badges), Light Blue Trousers, Brogans are OPTIONAL. The floor at the church has slick tile, which is dangerous when wearing Brogans. Therefore, modern shoes are authorized and encouraged.

February Event

Drill Day

Fort Washington, Maryland

Final Registration with the Company NLT [February 16.](#)

Date: Saturday, February 19.

Makeup day for inclement weather: Saturday, February 26.

Type of event: Living History and Drill

Location:

Fort Washington Park:

13551 Fort Washington Rd, Fort Washington, MD 20744

Registration Fee: Zero.

Schedule:

Saturday: Roll Call 9:00 AM, Living history and drill throughout the day until 5 PM.

Specifics –We will portray the men of the 3rd US, Co. K. This is our opportunity to knock off the winter rust and prepare for our demonstrations at Military through the Ages in March.

Commissary: On your own; Haversack or Handbasket.

Uniform: Forage Cap (Full Hat Brass), Sack Coat (NO Corps Badges), Light Blue Trousers, Brogans, Full Leathers, Springfield Rifled Musket.

You are also strongly encouraged to wear your great coats.

Ammunition: Currently, we will not have any firing demonstrations. Ammo will not be sold.

March Event

Military through the Ages

Williamsburg, VA

Final Registration with the Company NLT [March 16.](#)

Dates: Friday, March 18 through Sunday, March 20

Type of event: Living History, Demonstration

Location:

Jamestown Settlement:

2110 Jamestown Road, Route 31 S., Williamsburg, 23185

Registration Fee: Zero.

Schedule:

Saturday: Roll Call 8:30 AM, Living history and demonstrations throughout the day until 5 PM.

Specifics –We will portray the men of the 3rd US, Co. K, circa March 1862 as we prepare for the Peninsula Campaign.

Commissary: On your own; Haversack or Handbasket. There is a café on-site that offers a full menu.

Uniform: Forage Cap (Full Hat Brass), Sack Coat (NO Corps Badges), Light Blue Trousers, Brogans, Full Leathers, Springfield Rifled Musket.

You are also strongly encouraged to wear your great coats if necessary.

Ammunition: Approximately 20 rounds. We will have ammunition for sale at the event.

April Event

Terrible Swift Sword

Doswell, VA

Final Registration with the Company NLT [April 15.](#)

Dates: Friday, April 22 through Sunday, April 24

Type of event: Battle Reenactment

Location: 13022 Verdon Rd, Doswell VA

Registration Fee: Currently \$25

The registration link is here:

<https://rearrankproductions.com/tss/registration-rules/>

When you register, make sure to sue the following details:

“Organization Affiliation:” USV

“Unit Name:” 3rd US Infantry, Co K

“Please Select One:” US

Schedule:

Friday: Arrive on-site, begin camp setup.

Roll Call 8:00 PM

Saturday:

Roll Call 6:22 AM

Drill and Battle Reenactments throughout the Day

Sunday:

Roll Call: 6:21 AM

Drill and Battle Reenactments throughout the Day

Specifics – We will reenact a portion of the Battle of First Winchester, Brawner’s Farm and a portion of 2nd Manassas. This a participant-only event. There will be no spectators, and therefore none of the “Football Game” type of “ready, steady, go” reenactments we often see.

This event is being put on by Rear Rank Productions, which has always delivered exceptional events.

If you have an impression that deviates from the standard enlisted soldier, please check with me before registering.

Vice President Report

By: Vice President Peter Vaselopulos

Remaining Events for 2021

To all: Please note the following link on our website that features an event calendar.

<https://www.3rdusreenactors.com/home/organization/event-calendar/>

As I start planning for next year’s schedule, please feel free to submit your suggestions for events that the board and military leadership should consider.

December

Christmas at Fort Ward

Date: December 11, 2021 9am – 5pm

Type of event: Living History

Location: Alexandria, VA

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/FortWard>

Michaeyla Nadeau Living History Scholarship

The 3rd US Reenactors is now accepting applications for the “*Michaeyla Nadeau Living History Scholarship*.” All young adults between the ages of 12 to 19, who are current reenactors, living historians, or who are seeking to become one. Scholarship candidates must submit a 500-word essay to the 3rd US scholarship committee describing their interest in reenacting and living history, and what they would plan to do with the \$500 scholarship money.

Michaeyla Nadeau was the 15-year-old granddaughter of unit member Glenn Deiters. She passed away in 2019 after fighting cancer for five years. Her zest for life, courage, and strength was inspirational. To honor Michaeyla’s life, the board of the 3rd US Reenactors approved the creation of a Living History Memorial Scholarship.

For more information about the scholarship visit:

<https://www.3rdusreenactors.com/home/scholarship/>

President Report

Buffstick Family,

I hope everyone is in good health and spirits as we come to the end of 2021. I think we managed to pull a variety of events that captured our members' motivations and interests this past year. In this issue of our newsletter, you will find several housekeeping items, so please take a moment to review them. The Board has already begun working on our 2022 schedule, which gets our year moving in the right direction right out of the gate.

I encourage everyone to begin to renew their dues for the 2022 season. You have two options and even a third if you plan on attending our Ft Ward Christmas event. You can bring your check and paperwork to pass off to our Secretary, Neil Burke.

*Second is our elections. We have three open positions, **President, Secretary, and Member at Large**. You can find a detailed description of the duties. We typically meet once a month (virtual), and to be honest, our February, March, and April tend to be the longer meetings as we finish up our event schedule. I have tried to keep the summer meetings short, or as has been the case, give everyone a break in July and August, as appropriate, of course. If you have questions, please feel free to contact any one of the board members. All will be willing to discuss the Board. Additionally, all of the Corporal positions are up for election this year.*

December, we look to have two events. Our primary is our Ft Ward Christmas event and the potential for our participation in the Annapolis Military Bowl parade on December 27. I think this will allow us to showcase the 3rd U.S. in a very different way than usual. Look for more details to follow as this appears to be fluid, and we await more information from the organization.

The Board is still moving forward with the idea that our annual meeting will be in person. It will consist of our pot luck dinner and annual silent auction. Our penciled-in plans are the arrival and set up at 11:30 am and lunch from noon to 1:30 pm. The meeting will be called to order at 1:35 pm.

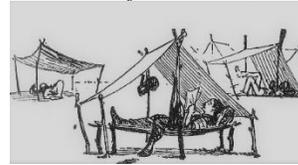
Please be on the lookout for more information. COVID could play havoc on our plans as last year, but we will monitor the situation and keep everyone in the loop. Stay tuned. January 2022 is busy with our Annual Meeting (January 15, 2022), mentioned previously, but the significant change is that the USV is holding its Annual Meeting (January 22, 2022) after ours. I, along with Lt. White, will be representing the unit. I doubt we will have any advance information on the proposed USV schedule, but the Board will balance our obligation with the USV and our unit interests. The 3rd is holding our annual drill at Ft. Washington in February, so we may update the schedule to share with the unit. Ft. Washington will give us time to sharpen our drill and plan for the Military Through the Ages on March 18-20, 2022, at Jamestown. I strongly encourage the big event is the "Terrible Swift Sword," April 22-24, 2022, in Doswell, Va. The link to the registration is under the event schedule for 2022. Rear Rank Productions organizes outstanding events, and I look forward to attending this one in April.

Most importantly, the unit is accepting applications for the Michaeyla Nadeau Living History Scholarship. If you know anyone interested, please direct them to our page web page and look for the Scholarship page.

YOS,

Neil Carmichael

President of the Board, 3rd U.S.



Two Options for Renewing your Membership

**By: Neil Carmichael, President, 3rd U.S.
Board of Directors**

To all members, Annual Membership Renewal for our 2022 Campaign Season.

Please note that you must submit your application and payment at least ten days before the annual meeting to be eligible to vote. Our annual meeting is scheduled for January 15th, 2022. You must have renewed by 5 January 2022 (the last day to do this, as subject to Virginia Corporation rules stating that all memberships must be current ten calendar days before a corporate meeting.) Members have two options to submit your application and pay your membership fee:

Option 1 – Go to

<https://www.3rdusreenactors.com/join/application-options/application-form/> Fill out and submit the application form. Ensure that you fill out a separate membership form for every family member who will be participating with us in the coming year. Then go to the PayPal link and select the appropriate membership fee for all of you.

Mail your forms to:

Neil T. Burke
2934 Piney Grove Ct
Fairfax, VA 22031

Option 2 - Same as above, but mail your check, made out to, "3RD U.S. Regular Infantry," to the following address:

Neil T. Burke
2934 Piney Grove Ct
Fairfax, VA 22031

If you are planning to attend the Ft Ward Christmas you can bring your paperwork and check to pass off to Neil Burke. If you have any questions, please contact Neil Burke.

Upcoming Elections Board Position Duty Descriptions Looking ahead to the Annual Meeting on January 15, 2022, I want to make everyone aware that we will be holding elections for three positions on the Board of Directors. The three positions are:

Officers of the Regiment/Members of the Board – Duties

President

- a. *Presides at meetings of the Regiment.*
- b. *Issues all public statements regarding the views and positions of the Regiment.*
- c. *Represents the Board at military reenactment meetings.*
- d. *Performs all other duties which are ordinarily the function of the office or which are assigned by the Board.*

Secretary

- a. *Maintains records of all Regiment meetings and decisions.*
- b. *Maintains records of all Board meetings and decisions.*
- c. *Coordinates all non-financial business correspondence.*
- d. *Maintains Regiment membership roster and medical history and indemnity forms.*
- e. *Performs all other duties which are ordinarily the function of the office or which are assigned by the Board.*

Member-at-Large

- a. *Represents the views of the membership to the Board.*
- b. *Performs all other duties which are ordinarily the function of the office or which are assigned by the Board.*
- c. *The Member-at-Large has full voting power as a Board member.*

If you have any other questions, please let me know.

Neil Carmichael,
President, 3rd U.S. Board of Directors

Commander's Field Desk

Buffsticks,

I am excited to be addressing you as we finish the 2021 calendar year. First, we have some exciting events coming up.

We have just added a second December event: we will be marching in the Military Bowl Parade in downtown Annapolis on December 27th. The Army of the Potomac under George McClellan in 1861 and leading into 1862 had quite a few grand reviews. This is our opportunity to relive a portion of that by marching in this parade.

In January we have our Annual Meeting. At this meeting, we will cover a lot of unit business such as corporate board elections. We will also have a vote of confidence in the Military Commander (*Geoff White; that's me*). As an aside: if you have any issues with how I have run the military side of the unit this year, please let me know. I can't fix what I don't know about.

We will also have elections for our NCOs at the Annual Meeting. This is your opportunity to step up and be a leader in the unit. All four of our NCOs: Neil Burke, Peter Vaselopoulos, Joseph Gillespie, and TJ Bradley have finished their two-year term as NCO. I would be happy to see all four of them re-elected, but I also know there are some outstanding leaders developing within the ranks. So please, stand up and be counted.

Drill Day at Fort Washington is confirmed. A Day for Drill. Nothing simpler, nothing sweeter.

We are planning on returning to Military through the Ages in March. Our impression will focus on the Peninsula Campaign of 1862.

In April, we have a very special opportunity to participate in another one of Rear Rank Productions' events. This group has put on superlative events such as "Ball's Bluff" in 2011, and "Maryland, My Maryland" in 2012. They usually limit registration, so make sure to register as early as you can. For more details, see the event announcement at the front of the newsletter.

At this time of the year, it is good to take stock of all we have to be grateful for. I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this unit as Military Commander. Thank you all.

YOS,
Geoff White

Event Report: Belair Mansion

On Saturday, November 6, the Buffsticks gathered for a living history at Belair Mansion in Bowie Maryland. The following is the account from some participants.

Buff Sticks,

For those of you who were not able to attend, you missed out on a great event that covered the full spectrum. This means that it was cool enough that you wanted to wear wool, clear blue skies, flat mowed lawns for multiple types of drill, time for an 1860 rules base ball game, other interesting units to interact with, time to tour the historical house/museum, and a great opportunity to catch up with friends both new and old. Hopefully when we meet again on Saturday the 11th of December at Fort Ward, we will have a repeat of the same. As for me I think that everyone appreciated having the portable fire pit to boil coffee and warm-up on Saturday morning. Along with that, having the historical site use a Gator to transport our items to-and-from the parking lot was

greatly appreciated. As for our Fresh Fish, Recruit Caum, M (Sr.) did a great job in leading the company in Loading-by-the-9's, and this being only his second event with us! On the opposite end of the spectrum, it was great to see both Pvt.'s Billingsley and Elkins in the ranks as they remembered more drill than they originally realized.

Civilian Corner Christmas Gift Ideas

Last week, when Lt. White sent out First Call for Fort Ward, he was kind enough to let us know in advance that Santa Claus might drop by and that our jolly visitor might appreciate an advance look at our wish lists. Since it sometimes takes papers a long time to reach soldiers in camp and families visiting during the relatively peaceful "off-season", I want to help you all make your lists by sharing some of the items advertised in Harper's Weekly in the weeks leading up to Christmas, 1862. I've put the modern-day cost of these items in parenthesis, for comparison.

Let's start with an item I actually received one Christmas, roughly 1999, and never properly learned to use: in-line skates! Harper's advertises them as The American Parlor or, Floor Skate with hard rubber rollers and anti-friction axles. "Observe," the copy says, "each Skate is labeled with the trade mark. Also 50,000 pair of Ladies' and Gents' Ice Skates, comprising all the new and most improved patterns made from welded steel and iron hardened..." I expected these to be roller skates, but the picture (below) makes it clear they're in-line skates.

For recipients of a more artistic turn, Harper's also advertises a set of paints, Newton's Prepared Colors for Albumen Pictures, which you can use to color your own cartes de visite. "For the amateur, as well as the artist, they are invaluable: a few moments suffice to produce a most elegant and finished picture..." The paints will run you \$3.00, or \$3.25 (about \$82) if you want to add a bottle of reducing liquid, although the ad doesn't explain what that is. Sadly, there's some fraud out there trying to sell you an inferior paint kit, which you should be careful not to buy. "The remarkable success attending these colors has already induced some dishonest person to offer, in a similar style and shape, a worthless imitation... Fifty Dollars will be paid for the conviction of any person selling this worthless imitation for 'NEWTON'S ALBUMEN COLORS.'" That's about \$1,370 in 2021, which seems excessive.

As any of my relatives will tell you, some people just want books for Christmas and Harper's Weekly is able to help you buy gifts for people like me this holiday season. *Les Miserables* has just been released for a 10,000-copy run by Pooley & Co.'s, who (like their friends at Newton's) warn you to make sure you're buying and reading the officially authorized translation. You can have the complete volume, including portraits and biographical sketches, for \$1.00 (\$27)



As we finish out 2021, I am looking forward to learning more about what we will be doing as company in 2022 and beyond.
YOS - Pvt. Stier

It was a fine day weather wise and awesome to see everyone.
-Pvt for Life Bob Elkins

if you're all right with the paper cover or \$1.50 (\$41) if you'd prefer a muslin cover.

However, if you'd like some entertainment that's a little more manageable in length (presumably), you're also invited to subscribe to Arthur's Home Magazine. They'll be running a new serial by T. S. Arthur which is entitled "Out In The World" and begins in January. This gift will run you \$2.00 (\$55) for a yearly subscription, which isn't too bad. For the young lad learning to pull himself up by his bootstraps, you might pick up a copy of "The Bobbin Boy", the life of General N.P. Banks: "Yes, this famous man, whom all are praising, was once a poor Bobbin Boy, and he has risen to what he is by his own efforts, by constant study. Boys, read 'THE BOBBIN BOY;' it will show you how to become like him and it is a true story, handsomely illustrated. Price 75 cents (\$20)... (and, allegedly) sold by all booksellers".

On the other hand, if you're really boring you might enjoy "The People's Weekly", which includes: "an original poem by GEO. FRANCIS TRAIN, with a ringing letter; an original poem by MRS LIEUT. GEN. SCOTT; Sketch of Hon. Gilbert Dean; quaint poem by Elsie Grey... [and] the episodic and sensational features of the Boards of Supervisors, Aldermen and Councilmen" (That has to be sarcastic, right?) Lastly, you could also take out a subscription to The Atlantic, which was

founded in 1857 and was essentially the same periodical it is today. For the soldier in your life, of course, there are plenty of options. Tomes, Son & Melvain (ad pictured below) will be happy to assist with all your

weaponry needs. When you're searching for a nice way to thank your officers for keeping you well-drilled, consider one of their "RICH PRESENTATION SWORDS". Or try a pair of field glasses "Important to Army and Navy Officers". In case you've got more money than you know what to do with, there's always Ward's Perfect Fitting Shirts, including "French Flannel Army Shirts, \$24, \$27, \$30, and \$33 per dozen" (\$657, \$740, \$820, \$900). If you want to get something they may actually use, though, I'd recommend Haskin's Army Portfolio, "Which every soldier wants. UNION PAPER and ENVELOPES, many varieties. Best and cheapest to be had." Communication with loved ones, in the army or at home, probably does make Haskin's Army Portfolio the actual best gift on this list.

Tomes, Son & Melvain,
6 Maiden Lane, New York.



Dealers in Arms and Military Goods of
every Description.

RICH PRESENTATION SWORDS

Smith & Wesson's Breech-loading Rifles
and Pistols. Bacon Manufacturing Co.
Revolving Pistols.



FIELD GLASSES,
SUMMONS' BINOCULAR
LANDSCAPE GLASS. Inval-
uable to sportsmen, officers,
travellers, &c.; compact, port-
able, efficient; combining ex-
traordinary defining power and
wide field of observation. Cat-
alogue sent free, by enclosing
stamp.

There are a lot of
great things in here
that we don't have
space for,

including Steinway pianos, imported China and glass, hair products by a company called Heimstreet's (which I imagine received some flack for an earlier advertisement, since this one starts "*IT IS NOT A DYE*") and microscopes for 28 cents (\$8) apiece or "*five of different powers, \$1*". (\$27) If you're Lucy, from the Peanuts cartoons and all you really want for Christmas is real estate, Harper's can help you there also with an ad for "*LANDS... Rich*

soil, mild climate."

While we're here, I'd be letting you down if I didn't make sure you knew about the prize packages. I might have the wrong demographic here, but the concept of sending away for a collection of vaguely-described stuff on a given theme reminds me (and, according to my informal survey of several friends, every woman my age) of a thing Claire's stores in the mall used to do, where they bagged merchandise that was sitting on the shelves too long and sold it for \$5 per bag. You had no idea what was in the bag, but that was half the fun even if, as one survey recipient observed, you never actually wanted what was inside.

Some of the prize packages available in 1862 include: "*A FINE WATCH FREE to each person who buys our Mammoth Eureka Prize Packages*" or, the "*GREAT STATIONERY PORTFOLIO PACKAGE*" which notes that "*We also give better watches to our Agents than any other firm*". You can also get Union Prize Packages. What's in them? The ad doesn't say, but I assume it's patriotic or military themed. The copy is a little more clear on "*A Novel Prize Package For the Christmas Holidays, filled with rich Gifts from Santa Claus' Basket.*"

You can also get roped into a pyramid scheme. My favorite one reads, mysteriously: "*WANTED- AGENTS- one of the most useful little articles ever invented. Everybody will buy it. The profit to Agents is 400 per cent. For particulars, inclose (sic) a stamp and address McKELVEY, Sandusky, O.*" They never say what the item is, so I assume it was useless and difficult to sell.

Another offers this: "*\$15 PER DAY MADE EASY and more if you persevere selling our Great New Union Prize and Stationary Packages, largest and best of all, containing over \$1 worth of Fine Articles... Each person who orders 100 Packages will receive as a free present a SPLENDID WATCH... This is a CHANCE FOR SOLDIERS in camp or discharged to make money. Profits immense. Sales quick.*" Proof that some of my facebook friends have been around a lot longer than I thought.

The best thing about all of the above is how little things have really changed over the years. Although none of the items offered by Harper's run on electricity, the types of things they're advertising are really familiar; games, household items, entertainment, and, of course, scams.

So whatever goes on your wish list (and let's be real, it'll be reenacting gear), I wish you all happy list-making and happy holidays and I hope to see you all at an event soon!

Want to Contribute to the Civilian Corner? Read below:

Civilians, this section is yours to share information, whether it be a period article from a contemporary magazine/periodical of the time or your own article focusing on our impressions as civilians of the civil war period. **Any member of the unit is welcome to contribute to this section** and all contributions are welcome. This is our unit, our civilian section and so this section of the newsletter should be our creation. **To submit an article, please simply email a copy of the article** you wish to contribute to Rebecca Welker at r.welker64@gmail.com by the 15th of the month prior to the newsletter in which you wish your contribution to appear. For example, if you wish your contribution to appear in the May edition of our Newsletter, then you must have your article to me by the 15th of April.

If you have not done so, please review our section of the unit's website and review the material we have saved there. All material is a work in process and we welcome feedback. **Military members, if you have family members that wish to join our civilian section, it is essential that you have them read the civilian handbook - and that you read it too!** ☺

The handbook is a good place to start to familiarize yourself on how to get someone started in successfully portraying a civilian of the civil war period. Authenticity is a journey and the journey should always be based on a foundation of period research and documentation so we can do justice to those civilians we strive to portray.

Respectfully yours, *Ms. Rebecca Welker*

Reading Aloud and Non-Commissioned Officer Elections

- 1ST Sgt. Neil T. Burke

Coming up with authentic camp activities can be tricky. We have had everything from bayonet drill to baseball, but for those of us a bit less physically coordinated (and I am not just saying this because my baseball luck has been 0 for 2), here is a super simple but widespread part of camp life: Reading aloud.

Reading in the 19th century often was a social activity, especially for consuming periodicals. Just as you might listen to a podcast while you finish sewing that skirt or polishing your brass, folks in the 1860s would listen to a family member or friend read aloud from *Harper's Weekly* while completing day-to-day tasks. This had nothing to do with illiteracy (which was fairly low by the Civil War); instead, it was a way to get the most value out of a single newspaper and start discussions on the issues of the day.

From a living history perspective, reading aloud from contemporary articles is a great way to fill out our idea of the time period. Choosing the right periodical can help "ground" an event to a specific time and place. Many larger newspapers have digital archives of their 1860s articles and, of course, there are always those trusty *Harper's Weekly* reproductions as well as the Beadle's *Dime Speaker* series reproduced by Sullivan Press and possibly others. Consider packing some reading material and bringing it out the next time there is a "hurry up and wait" period.

Speaking of talking in front of people, we are having our NCO elections this January. There are **no** incumbents when we elect NCOs, as in everyone, including the Sergeant, has to run for their position again. This is key because this is how we develop leadership. It allows anyone with the inclination to run, and I encourage you to do so.

The only true requirements of the position are: (1) being able to make a majority of the events (but certainly not every single one) each year; and (2) an attitude of wanting to help the unit expand and improve. If you think you can't run because you don't know all the drill commands yet, that is okay, because I assure you that being a Corporal (or a Sergeant) is as much about educating yourself as it is about helping others. There are a total of 4 NCO "slots" that will be open. Of these, the commander selects one NCO to serve as Sergeant and the remaining 3 serve as Corporals. However, this can change from event to event, especially if the Sergeant is unable to attend. Additionally, even if you do not get elected as NCO, just expressing your interest through nomination helps for when temporary NCOs are needed or if life happens, such as our beloved Corporal Craig Ross leaving us to work in the UK for a bit.

I hope you will consider continuing to make this an excellent unit by joining the leadership of the 3rd, whether through the corporate board or the military chain of command.

Musket Lock Maintenance – Part 3: Lubrication and Assembly

Cpl Steve Blancard

[Editors Note – This is the last appearance of the weapons maintenance articles that were first posted within the June edition of our monthly newsletter]

This is the third of a three part article on musket lock maintenance. These articles appeared in succeeding newsletters. Part #1 discussed lock disassembly, part #2 discussed cleaning and inspection and part #3 will discuss lubrication and assembly. Unless you are familiar with this procedure, it is recommended that you read and print all three parts before performing this maintenance. In the last newsletter we cleaned all the lock parts. Then inspected all the pieces, replaced any worn or damaged parts. Today we will discuss what you do with all those pieces and how to prepare them for reassembly.

With all your parts cleaned and inspected, it's time to lubricate and assemble the lock. In days of old they may have used whale oil or axle grease. Today, the best choice is white lithium grease. You can pick up a tube of it at a NAPA auto parts store for under \$3.00.

Step #1 - Apply a little grease around the tumbler hole in the lock plate and the round part of the tumbler's shaft. Insert tumbler into lock plate.

Step #2 – Take a small block of wood and drill a 3/8" hole in it. Holding the tumbler in the lock plate, turn the lock facing up and place it on the block. Allow the small nub on the tumbler to set in the hole you drilled. You now have the lock on a solid surface with tumbler supported, ready to install the hammer.

Step #3 – Install the hammer. Note that there are four possible positions that the hammer can be installed on the tumbler. Refer to the previous photos to ensure you mount it in the correct position. The hammer should press part way onto the square shaft.



At this point it's a good idea to have a friend hold the lock plate in place while you tap the hammer down on the tumbler. Use a wooden dowel or block of wood and tap it down firmly onto the tumbler.



The hammer should go down almost flush with the top of the threaded hole. There needs to be a little clearance between the hammer and lock plate, so the hammer/tumbler set rotates freely on the lock plate. Now install the hammer screw. The screw should not be used to pull the hammer down further onto the tumbler. It is simply there to keep the hammer from coming off the tumbler. Attempting to pull the hammer down with the screw could cause the screw to break off. Not a good thing.



Step #4 – Put a little lithium grease on the exposed side of the tumbler.



Step #5 – Press the bridge into place over the tumbler. Be sure the alignment pin goes in the correct hole. Install the bridge screw. Again, check to make sure the tumbler/hammer rotate smoothly.



Step #6 – Installing the sear screw. As a refresher, in part #2 of this article I discussed the shoulder at the end of the threads on original Springfield sear screws and how the Italians often omit this shoulder. Without this shoulder it is very easy to over tighten the sear screw causing the tumbler to bind and the lock to be unsafe. The good news is that there is an easy way to resolve this. In the absence of a shoulder to stop the screw where it needs to, we will use a drop of liquid chemical thread locker. The most common and readily available product is “Loctite”. It comes in several different versions, but you want the medium strength “Threadlocker Blue 242”. This can be found at almost any auto parts store or places like Walmart where they sell glue. If your lock has a shouldered screw that stops without pulling down the bridge, disregard this. But otherwise, I recommend the Loctite.

Be sure the sear screw threads are clean and completely free of oil or grease, the same goes for its threaded hole too. Use a little alcohol or lacquer thinner and Q-tips to clean the hole and threads. This is important for the Loctite to work properly. Now put a small drop of Loctite in the sear screw threaded hole in the lock plate. Then put a little lithium grease on the smooth shank of the sear screw (don't get any on the threads) and sides of the sear around the sear's hole. Slip the sear into place under the bridge, insert the sear screw and tighten it just until the head of the screw is against the bridge, no further. Again, make sure the tumbler rotates freely. If all is well, wipe off any excess Loctite and set the lock aside for

about 10 minutes to allow the Loctite to set. Now your sear screw will be set in place. If you used the #242 blue threadlocker, the screw can still be removed with a screwdriver.

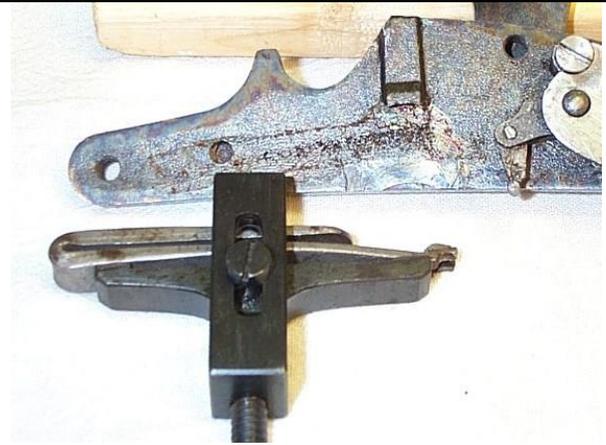


Step #7 – Install the sear spring and screw. This is pretty much just the reverse of how you removed it. Insert the screw into the loop on the spring and with the spring up out of the way, thread the screw into the lock plate. Stop just a little before it is tight.



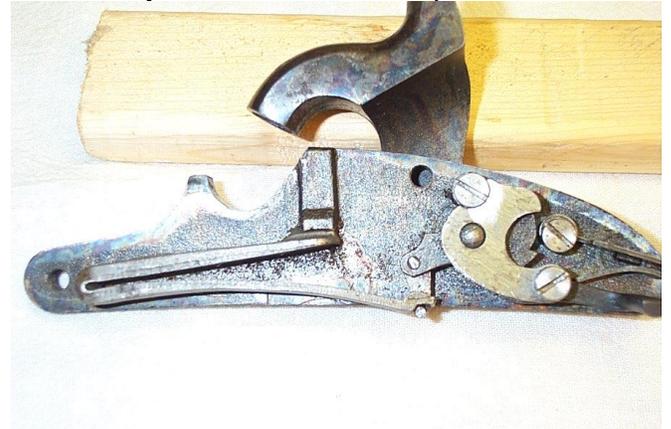
Press the spring down into place against the top of the sear, slightly compressing the spring as it bears against it. Ensure the little tab on back of the spring slips into its slot, then while holding the spring in place, finish tightening the screw.

Step #8 – Install the mainspring. You do still have it held in a compressed state by the spring vise – right? Look closely at the lock plate where the spring goes. Are there any wear marks from the spring moving up and down? Smear a little lithium grease on the lock plate over the wear marks. Lower the hammer to the rest position. This will put the stirrup at its lowest position, making it easy to hook the end of the main spring onto it.



With the spring hooked to the stirrup, position the mainspring alignment pin into the alignment hole in the lock plate and press the main spring firmly onto the lock plate. Next, bring the hammer back to full cock. This will allow the tumbler and stirrup to take the load of the mainspring off the spring vise. Now unscrew the spring vise and remove it.

The lock is now completely assembled. Test it out by cycling the lock through all its positions. Make sure it holds on half cock when the sear is pressed and that it holds on full cock and only releases when the sear is pressed.



If you have followed this guidance and serviced your lock, you've probably found that it's not as hard as it sounds. With a few tools and a little attention to detail, it takes less than an hour to complete the entire lock service. You'll have the peace of mind not only knowing that it's clean and properly lubricated, but how the lock actually works. As mentioned in part #1, the basic lock design is over 250 years old. I can't help but marvel and admire the ingenuity and craftsmanship of arms manufacturers from before the American Revolution.

Hopefully this series has given you the insight and confidence to provide your musket with the service it deserves.

Steve Blancard is a retired US Navy weapons specialist who has been building, repairing and shooting antique and reproduction firearms for over 40 years. He has been a reenactor and living historian for 12 years and served as the 3rd Regiment, ANV Ordnance Sergeant for 5 years where he conducted weapons training, safety oversight and field repairs. While he only works on his own weapons now, he gladly shares his advice and experience.

If you have any questions regarding the policies or schedule of the 3rd U.S Regulars Infantry, Co. K please contact one of the elected Leadership:

President: Neil Carmichael

E-mail: buddy324th@gmail.com

Vice President: Peter Vaselopoulos

E-mail: pvaselop@gmail.com

Treasurer: Kelly Cochran

E-mail: kellytcochran@gmail.com

Secretary: Neil Burke

E-mail neil.burke2013@gmail.com

Member at Large: TJ Bradley

E-mail: bradley.thomasj@gmail.com

Civilian Coordinator: Rebecca Welker

E-mail: r.welker64@gmail.com

Military Chain of Command

1st Lt., Geoff White Company Commander

1st Sgt. Neil Burke

Corporal – Joseph Gillespie

Corporal – TJ Bradley

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AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO EACH OF YOU**