



A SEMINAR ON CASEY'S SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION

SCHOOLS OF THE SOLDIER AND COMPANY

CHARGE TO THE INSTRUCTOR

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My Background

- I've been reenacting since the Fall of 2002.
 - I've devoted my time to learning and teaching Company-level drill.
 - I've spent a few thousand hours studying Casey's Schools of Instruction.
- My personal standard = do what they did, the way they did it.
 - For me, it's not just the clothing that truly represents the CW Soldier.
 - Photo-thentic alone (Pho-thentic / Faux-thentic) does not equal Authentic
 - We need to carry ourselves and maneuver on the field the way that they did!!
- My objective with these lessons, is to share with you my understanding of these Schools of Instruction, with the hope that they will be put into practice in the field.
- I've applied the "by the motion" technique used for the instruction of the Manual of Arms to teach various marching skills.
 - I've found this technique useful in teaching muscle-memory skills.
- I welcome challenges, debates, and discussions.
 - If you think my understanding is incorrect or inaccurate, please let me know.

Same Commands – Same Execution

- General Rules and Division of the School of the Battalion.
 - S.B. 19. This school has for its object the instruction of battalions singly, and thus to prepare them for manoeuvres in line. The harmony so indispensable in the movements of many battalions can only be attained by the use of the same commands, the same principles, and the same means of execution. Hence, all colonels and actual commanders of battalions will conform themselves, without addition or curtailment, to what will herein be prescribed.
- The “use of the same commands, the same principles, and the same means of execution”
 - Enabled the Civil War Officers to take command of other units without a need to re-train the men in a different set of commands.
 - Enables multiple distinct reenactor groups to combine and perform as a single unit.

Why use Casey's for a Federal Impression? The Secretary of War says so!

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, August 11, 1862.

The System of Infantry Tactics, prepared by Brigadier General SILAS CASEY, U.S.A., having been approved by the President, is adopted for the instruction of the Infantry of the Armies of the United States, whether Regular, Volunteer, or Militia, with the following modifications viz.:—

First. — That portion which requires that two companies shall be permanently detached from the battalion as skirmishers, will be suspended.

Second. — In Title First, Article First, the following will be substituted for paragraph 6, viz.:

“A regiment is composed of ten companies, which will be habitually posted from right to left in the following order: *first, sixth, fourth, ninth, third, eighth, fifth, tenth, seventh, second*, according to the rank of Captains.”

EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

Note that in 1855, Hardee's Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics became the standard instructional manual for the U.S. Army.

It was revised in 1861 and again in 1862. Casey's is a revision of Hardee's. Many of the Commands in Casey's are exactly the same (yes, word for word) as those in Hardee's.

Our Challenge – Many Manuals

- Multiple manuals exist
 - Different manuals of instruction are used. Sometimes there is a legitimate historic basis for their use.
- We need to overcome reenactor “urban legend”
 - On the Job Training (OJT)
 - New Instructors use the commands and means of execution they were taught by their Instructors
 - Different Instructors learned and understand the material differently
 - OJT passes on sometimes correct, almost always incomplete, and frequently incorrect instruction
 - Too many educated men in the ranks are trying to “figure it out” on the fly.
 - Manual Stew: i.e., mix and match instructions from different manuals and sometimes different time periods
 - Some instructors don’t read the manuals
 - Some instructors fill in perceived gaps with modern experience
 - Some instructors don’t read the manuals completely.
 - Some instructors cherry pick commands and then use them out of context, without satisfying the prerequisites.
- We need to instruct the Officers and troops properly! If we don’t:
 - Diminished ability to properly and consistently execute a maneuver within and among the companies.
 - Diminished ability to accurately portray the Civil War soldier.
- Drill is particularly challenging during these years of reduced-participation:
 - Soldiers that fall-in with different companies
 - Companies that are combined
 - Officers trying to command combined companies
 - Officers assigned to command companies other than their own

The Challenge of Small Company Size

- It is next to impossible to accurately portray Civil War period maneuvers when our “Companies” rarely field enough men to qualify as a Section let alone a Company.
 - 2 Sections per Platoon; 2 Platoons per Company
 - Early war Section approximately 25 men
- Officers expect “Company” maneuvers to be completed almost instantly, instead of allowing sufficient time and distance for a period correct maneuver.
- A comment I heard from a fellow spectator at the 2002 Antietam reenactment:
 - “There are more straps and stripes in that Company than privates.”

Perfection and Accuracy

- I've heard all the clichés and excuses rationalizing why these instructions can't be performed or why it doesn't have to be done according to the instructions.
 - “Perfection is the Enemy of Good”
 - “Good Enough is better than Perfect”
- My counter: these rationalizations are the “Tyranny of the Status Quo”
 - People create any excuse to resist change
 - Perfection was expected of the Civil War Officers and troops.
- My desire is accuracy!
 - We claim to represent them.
 - This is what they did.
 - This is the way they did it.
 - Why don't we do the same?
 - Formations
 - Maneuvers
 - Commands
 - Execution

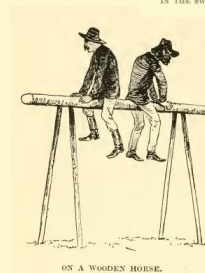
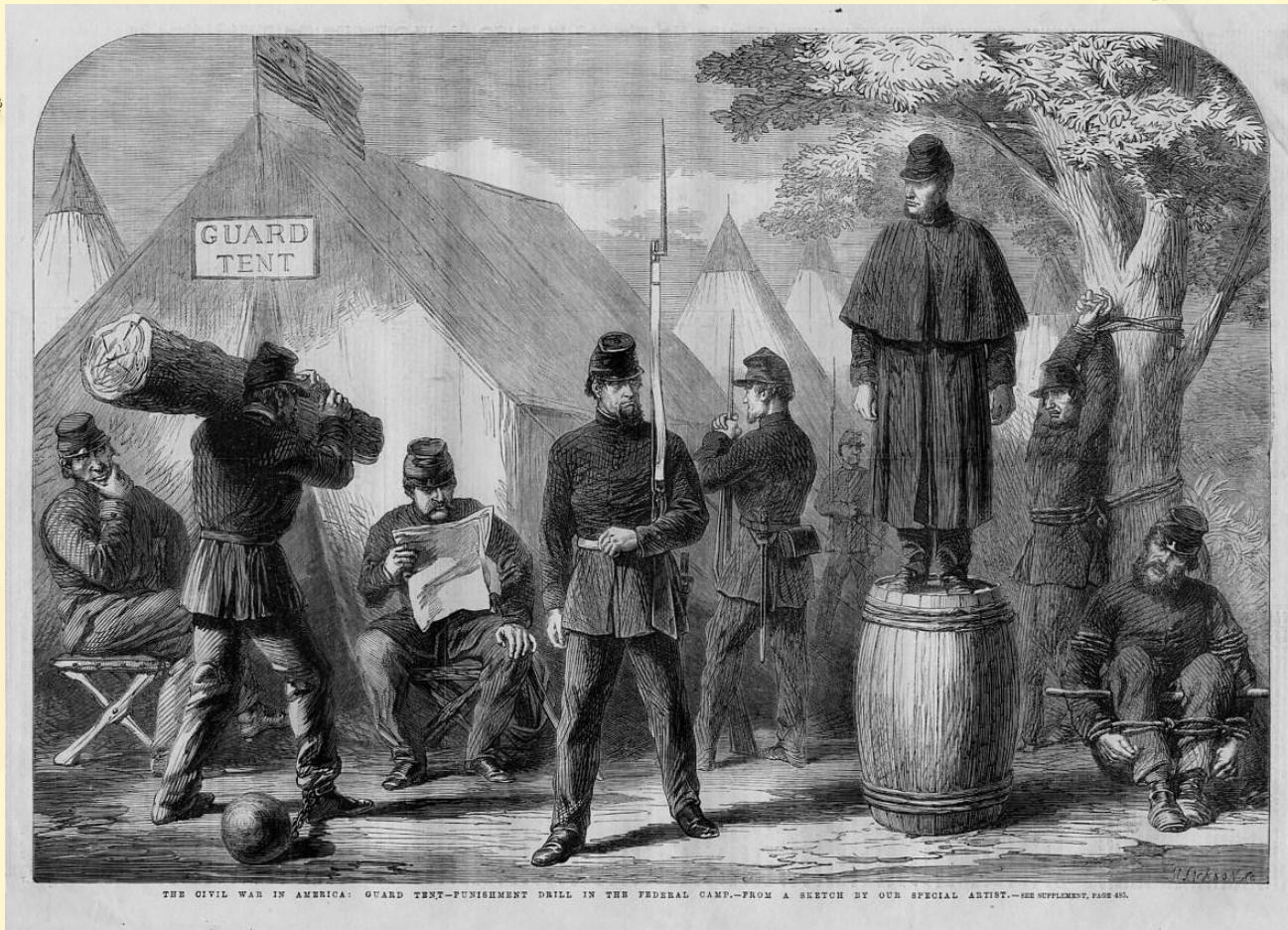
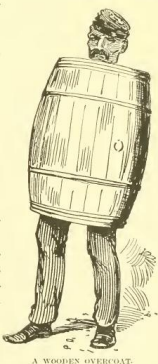
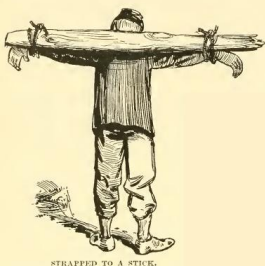
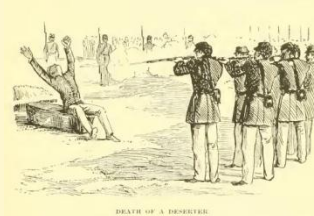
Perfection and Accuracy

- Perfection **was** expected of Civil War officers and enlisted.
 - Lives depended on it.
 - Tactical advantage depended on it.
 - Victory depended on it
- Accuracy should be expected of reenactors
 - Our safety depends on it.
 - The impression spectators take away depends on it.

Perfection demanded of Civil War Officers and Enlisted

- I've highlighted various examples of instructions where perfection was expected.
- INSTRUCTION OF OFFICERS.
 - **lotB. 60.** The instruction of officers can be perfected only by joining theory to practice. The colonel will often practise them in marching and in estimating distances, and he will carefully endeavor to cause them to take steps equal in length and swiftness. They will also be exercised in the double quick step.
 - **lotB. 61.** The instruction of officers will include all the Titles in this system of drill, as well as a perfect knowledge of the system of firing as proscribed by the War Department.
 - **lotB. 62.** Every officer will make himself perfectly acquainted with the bugle signals; and should, by practice, be enabled, if necessary, to sound them. This knowledge, so necessary in general instruction, becomes of vital importance on actual service in the field.
- Manual of Arms
 - **S.S. 138** As soon as the recruits shall well comprehend the positions of the several motions of a time, they will be taught to execute the time without resting on its different motions; the mechanism of the time will nevertheless be observed, as well to give a perfect use of the piece, as to avoid the sinking of, or slurring over, either of the motions.
 - **S.C. 67.** The fire by file being that which is most frequently used against an enemy, it is highly important that it be rendered perfectly familiar to the troops. The instructor will, therefore, give it almost exclusive preference, and labor to cause the men to aim with care, and always, if possible, at some particular object. As it is of the utmost importance that the men should aim with precision in battle, this principle will be rigidly enforced in the exercises for purposes of instruction.
- Marching
 - **S.C. 96.** If this sergeant should fail to observe these principles, undulations in the front of the company must necessarily follow; the men will be unable to contract the habit of taking steps equal in length and swiftness, and of maintaining their shoulders in a square with the line of direction – the only means of attaining perfection in the march in line.

Discipline Options available to Civil War Officers



We don't need to discipline our volunteers. With a little desire & effort – It can be done!

In 2014, I observed 300+ VT Freshmen-Cadets trained by a small cadre of Junior- Cadets in proper bearing, marching, and formation fundamentals ... in just 4 hours!

2014.
Day 1's
evening
formation.

Just 4
hours after
arriving on
campus for
first day of
college.



Just 7 days Later

That same group of Freshmen-Cadets were marching in Battalion formation for their first Dress Parade and performed their Manual of Arms



Casey's Manuals of Instruction

- Is the Instructors' "Lesson Plan", or Cookbook for Instruction
 - Instruction of Officers
 - Instruction of Sergeants
 - Instruction of Corporals
- These Manuals are written for the Instructor not the soldier
 - They identify the prerequisite conditions for each Instruction.
 - What to Instruct.
 - How to Instruct It.
 - Why you instruct it.
 - Things to watch out for and correct while instructing.
- Throughout these lessons, I provide the relevant references from the manuals
 - any emphasis appearing in these lessons (bolding, underlining, etc...) is provided by me, to highlight key aspects of the instruction.

The Manuals

- Reading School of the Soldier is NOT sufficient
 - To fully understand some of the basic commands, you must read School of the Soldier, School of the Company, and School of the Battalion
 - Often subtle enhancements are made to instructions, or additional explanations are added as you progress through the Schools
- Infantry Tactics, Title I, Article II, “Instruction of the Battalion” (lotB) immediately precedes Title II, School of the Soldier, and tells us how it should be done
 - Theoretical and practical instruction should be provided as often as necessary
 - Company officers will be the instructors of the squads (intelligent sergeants may be substituted)
 - Individual instruction being the basis of the instruction of companies
 - Instructors will explain, in a few clear and precise words, the movement to be executed
 - Always use the same terms to explain the same principles.
 - Join example to precept
 - Officers explain
 - NCOs demonstrate
 - Only after the instruction has been explained and demonstrated properly should the soldier be tasked to perform the maneuver
- No pop-quizzes! No “Let’s see what you remember”.
 - **S.S. 77.** The object of this school being the individual and progressive instruction of the recruits, **the instructor never requires a movement to be executed until he has given an exact explanation of it;** and he executes, himself, the movement which he commands, so as to join example to precept. He accustoms the recruit to take, by himself, the position which is explained – teaches him to rectify it only when required by his want of intelligence – and sees that all the movements are performed without precipitation.
- Most movements build upon the previous lesson
 - Each movement should be understood before passing to another

Title I. Article II

Instruction Of The Battalion (1 of 3)

- **lotB. 49.** Every commanding officer is responsible for the instruction of his command. He will assemble the officers together for **theoretical and practical instruction** as often as he may judge necessary, and when unable to attend to this duty in person, it will be discharged by the officer next in rank
- **lotB. 50.** Captains will be held responsible for the theoretical and practical instruction of their non-commissioned officers, and the adjutant for the instruction of the non-commissioned staff. To this end, they will **require these tactics to be studied and recited**, lesson by lesson; and **when instruction is given on the ground, each non-commissioned officer, as he explains a movement, should be required to put it into practical operation.**
 - NCOs need to “recite” the lessons: say the instructions, as written in the manual out loud
 - NCOs need to “put into practical application” each lesson: practice what you preach
- **lotB. 51.** The **non-commissioned officers should also be practised in giving commands.** Each command, in a lesson, **at the theoretical instruction, should first be given by the instructor, and then repeated, in succession, by the non-commissioned officers**, so that while they become habituated to the commands, uniformity may be established in the manner of giving them.
 - Use the correct command!!!

Title I. Article II

Instruction Of The Battalion (2 of 3)

- **lotB. 52.** In the school of the soldier, the company officers will be the instructors of the squads; but if there be not a sufficient number of company officers present, intelligent sergeants may be substituted; and two or three squads, under sergeant instructors, be superintended, at the same time, by an officer.
 - NCOs, know thy stuff!
- **lotB. 55.** Individual instruction being the basis of the instruction of companies, on which that of the regiment depends, and the first principles having the greatest influence upon this individual instruction, classes of recruits should be watched with the greatest care.
 - One-on-one, one-on-four, works best as described in the manual
- **lotB. 56.** Instructors will explain, in a few clear and precise words, the movement to be executed; and not to overburden the memory of the men, they will always use the same terms to explain the same principles.
 - Be consistent
 - Use the words as stated in the manual
- **lotB. 57.** They should often join example to precept, should keep up the attention of the men by an animated tone, and pass rapidly from one movement to another, as soon as that which they command has been executed in a satisfactory manner.
 - Bored boys become distractions!
 - Separate the fast learners from the slow learners.
 - Don't advance a student to the next level until they satisfactorily execute the current level.
 - If a soldier doesn't know how to properly execute instruction N, then most probably he will fail to properly execute instruction N+1.

Title II

School Of The Soldier

- **S.S. 77.** The object of this school being the individual and progressive instruction of the recruits, the instructor **never** requires a movement to be executed until he has given an exact explanation of it; and he executes, himself, the movement which he commands, so as to join example to precept. He accustoms the recruit to take, by himself, the position which is explained-teaches him to rectify it only when required by his want of intelligence-and sees that all the movements are performed without precipitation.
 - “without precipitation” means without haste, hastiness, hustle, hurry
 - Demonstrate first. Provide correct first impressions; develop proper muscle memory.
 - No Pop Quizzes!!!! “Let’s see what you remember!” = Wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong!!!!
- **S.S. 78.** Each movement should be understood before passing to another. After they have been properly executed in the order laid down in each lesson the instructor no longer confines himself to that order; on the contrary, he should change it, that he may judge of the intelligence of the men.
 - This is our biggest challenge as reenactors! We don’t have (make?) enough time to drill fundamentals before taking the field.
 - We don’t have consistent attendance at the few drill sessions we do have.
 - We don’t execute the maneuvers at period-correct scale.
 - Only *after* they learn how to properly execute a movement, should you start mixing up the sequence.
- **S.S. 79.** The instructor allows the men to rest at the end of each part of the lessons, and oftener, if he thinks proper, especially at the commencement; for this purpose he commands REST.
 - Hold this thought until the next slide

REST; *In Place* – REST; *Break ranks* - MARCH...

- **S.S. 80.** At the command REST, the soldier is no longer required to preserve immobility, or to remain in his place. If the instructor wishes merely to relieve the attention of the recruit, he commands, in place-REST; the soldier is then not required to preserve his immobility, but he always keeps one of his feet in its place.
 - This one foot maintains the alignment of the battle front
- NOTE: You are NOT allowed to break ranks on the command REST!
 - Basis? => explicitly stated in Casey's School of the Battalion
 - S.B. 72. When the colonel may wish to give some relaxation to the battalion, **without** breaking the ranks, he will execute what has been prescribed in the S. C., Nos. 37 and 38 or Nos. 39 and 40.
 - S.C. 37 and S.C. 38 are the instructions for *In place* – REST.
 - S.C. 39 and S.C. 40 are the instructions for REST.
- There is a specific command to break ranks,
 - *Break ranks*. MARCH
 - which is taught in the section "TO STACK ARMS." (S.S. 426)

Soldier, Don't Think. Do!

Method to the Madness = Physiology

- “Conditioned Reflex” = Instruct. Do as instructed.
 - Pavlov’s Dog:
 - Nobel Prize winning Russian physiologist, Ivan Pavlov had learned then when a bell was rung in subsequent time with food being presented to the dog in consecutive sequences, the dog will initially salivate when the food is presented. The dog will later come to associate the ringing of the bell with the presentation of the food and salivate upon the ringing of the bell.
 - (source: Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ivan_Pavlov)
- “Motor Learning” and “Muscle Memory” = Just do it!
 - Motor behavior:
 - When first learning a motor task, movement is often slow, stiff and easily disrupted without attention. With practice, execution of motor task becomes smoother, there is a decrease in limb stiffness, and muscle activity necessary to the task is performed without conscious effort.
 - (source: Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muscle_memory)
 - Muscle memory:
 - When a movement is repeated over time, a long-term muscle memory is created for that task, eventually allowing it to be performed without conscious effort. This process decreases the need for attention and creates maximum efficiency within the motor and memory systems.
 - (source: Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muscle_memory)
- We, the instructors, need to get it right, and set the example!
 - Casey (and his predecessors and peers) may not have known the physiology terms (which were defined in the late 1890s early 1900s), but his instructions are in sync with those concepts.
 - **Teach small groups**
 - **Provide precise instruction for motor movements**
 - **Say commands consistently**
 - **Instruct maneuvers consistently**
 - **Execute maneuvers consistently**
 - **Repeat**
 - **Start slow, work up to required speed**

