

Kentucky Swing (E.E. Ellsworth)

Stacking Arms

Hardee's 1855 edition used ramrods for stacking 2-banders. His method of stacking for 3-banders, using the bayonets, has an interesting history. Many reenactors call this method the "Kentucky Stack" or "Kentucky Swing," mainly because when it was introduced in the First Confederate Brigade in 1866, the source was an 1861 manual of arms for the Kentucky State Guard. (See note 12) However, evidence indicates that this method was in use at least as early as 1857 (possibly even 1855) by E. E. Ellsworth's Zouave drill demonstration units, and Ellsworth was given credit for inventing it. Hardee may have picked this method up while at West Point, and subsequently used it in his Confederate revisions. (See note 13)

Basically, this method hooks the shanks of the bayonets together, and locks them by swinging the butt of one of the muskets out to the front. This results in a very stable musket stack. The method is similar to the arms stacking found in Scott's musket drill, but it is easier and quicker. Each group of four men, front and rear ranks Numbers One and Two (the "comrades in battle" of skirmishing), forms a separate stack. In detail, the stack is formed as follows:

The men being at ordered arms, the instructor will command: Stack - ARMS.

First Motion - At this command, Number Two of the front rank will pass his piece before him, seize it with the left hand about the middle band, slope it across the body, barrel to the rear, the butt three inches above the right toe of the man on his left, muzzle six inches to the right of his shoulder (para. 410).

Second Motion - Number Two of the rear rank will turn his piece, lock square to the front, and pass it to his front rank man. who will seize it with his right hand about the middle band and incline it forward, resting the neck of the bayonet on that of his own bayonet and close to the blade. Number One of the front rank will turn the barrel of his piece square to the front, slope it across the body, place the neck at his bayonet, above the necks, and between the blades of the other two bayonets, holding the piece with the right hand at the middle band, the butt three inches from the ground in front of his right toe (para. 411).

Third Motion - Number Two of the front rank will throw the butt of the rear rank man's piece about 30 inches to the front, at the same time resting the butt of his own piece on the ground on the left, and a little in rear of his left toe. At the same instant, Number One of the front rank will rest the butt of his piece on the ground a little in front of his right toe. Number One of the rear rank will incline his piece on the stack thus formed (para. 412). [File closers are apparently to lean their muskets against the nearest stack, without waiting for command to do so (see Note 14).]

To Resume Arms - Both ranks being reformed in rear of their stacks, the instructor will command: Take -- ARMS. At this command Number One of the

rear rank will retake his piece [file closers will also retake their leaners, if they did not do so upon falling in]. Number Two of the front rank will seize his own piece with his left hand, at the middle band, and his rear rank man's piece in the same manner in his right hand; and Number One of the front rank will seize his piece with his right hand in the same manner. These two men will raise the stack, bring the butts toward each other, and disengage the bayonets. Number Two of the rear rank will receive his piece from his front rank man, and all will resume the position of ordered arms (para. 415).

For those who are not familiar with this method, it sounds very complicated. It can be simplified somewhat by memorizing the barrel position for each man within each group of four, in the order that each places his musket onto the stack. We have used the following method: "Rear, Right, Front." That is, the barrel of the **first** musket (Front Rank Number 2) is turned to the **rear**, the barrel of the **second** musket (Rear Rank Number 2) is turned to the **right** (as the bayonet shank is placed on top of the first musket's shank), and the barrel of the **third** musket (Front Rank Number 1) is turned to the **front** (as its bayonet shank is placed on top of the Second bayonet). The second musket is then thrown to the front, and the fourth musket is leaned in place. Note that the Front Rank Number Two does most of the work. Practice in this method makes it easy to form a very steady arms stack in a few seconds. For those who are familiar with the "Kentucky Stack," note that in Hardee's version the stacks are not aligned after they have been formed and there is no command "Prepare to Take Arms" (see Note 14).

Many readers familiar with Scotts and similar arms manuals (musket drill in Gilham's manual, the *U.S. Infantry Tactics*, &c.) will note the similarities in some of Hardee's revised movements, particularly in the position of the musket during loading and fixing the bayonet. Hardee's revisions should not, however, be taken as a simple return to an older musket manual. The placement of the piece on the left is the easiest way to negate the effects of its greater length. None of the other distinctive movements of the old musket drill, such as Shoulder Arms on the left, "cast about" during loading, or the older method of arms stacking, were brought back. Hardee saw his revisions as improvements, not simply falling back on some older system because his 1855 -manual was not suited to 3-banders. For this reason we do not advocate a return to the older style drill, but a change to Hardee's revised drill appropriate to 3-banders. (See note 15)

Conclusions

There is evidence that Hardee instituted the revisions to his manual of arms beginning with the forces under his command in 1861. The First Georgia Regulars, Hardee's Savannah regiment that completed its organization after his departure, was "armed with muskets, and drilled in Hardee's tactics for heavy infantry" in July 1861 (see note 16). Since there was no such "heavy infantry" manual (Hardee's revised manual being applicable to all infantry, no matter how armed), this apparently referred to Hardee's own re-visions for 3-banders.

It is quite probable that Hardee's revisions received wide dissemination, particularly in the western theatre, due to Hardee's early assignments. Following

his posting in Mobile, he was promoted to Brigadier General and sent to Arkansas to organize the Confederate forces there. Hardee brought these troops to Bowling Green, Kentucky, in the fall of 1861, to the force that would become the nucleus of the future Army of Tennessee. Wherever he went, Hardee's fame as the author of the Army "Tactics" manual brought demand for his services as a drill instructor. There is every reason to believe that the manual of arms he taught contained his revisions for 3-banders. (See note 17)

Hardee's revisions were also taught in the east. North Carolina published an edition, by order of the Governor, for the use of North Carolina troops. This edition was al-most a verbatim copy of Goetzel's version, complete with all the revisions for 3-banders. Original copies of Goetzel's manual have also been identified as being used in the east. (See note 18)

In addition, all officers who had been at West Point since 1855 were intimately familiar with Hardee's methods, as his new drill manual was first tested there in 1854. Hardee himself was Commandant of Cadets from 1856-1860, during which period his manual was the primary infantry drill instruction. Even the Virginia Military Institute cadets were familiar with Hardee's drill after his visit to their annual examination in July 1860. (See note 19) Adopting Hardee's revised manual of arms would have been a simple procedure for those already familiar with his 1855 manual.

In conclusion, it appears that the infantry drill manual of choice in the Confederate army was Hardee's "Tactics." In the almost total absence of period sources specifically naming other manuals, Hardee's was the most likely taught throughout the Southern military. It is probable that Hardee's own revisions were wide-spread, not only where he served in the western theatre, but also among eastern troops. Evidence points to this being the most common manual of arms throughout the Confederacy. Goetzel published more editions of Hardee's revised work than did any other publisher of any other Southern manual. (See note 20).

Confederate infantry reenactors should in general adopt Hardee's revised manual of arms for the 3-band musket and rifle-musket. We would have done so long ago and thought nothing of it had Goetzel's or another revised edition been reprinted in the 1970s or 1980s. We know from long experience that Hardee's 1855 manual just doesn't work well with 3-banders, but the answer does not lie in going back to the cumbersome and outdated musket drill found in Scott's and Gilham's. Some units have already adopted the type of arms stacking and other movements that appear in Hardee's revisions (to these, we apologize for "preaching to the choir"). We should take the next step and adopt the entire "correct, complete, perfect, and revised and improved" manual of arms, as Hardee himself intended.