



## Firearms Safety Rules

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### Introduction

Firearms safety must be the first concern of any SVR member. The term “SVR member” shall be interpreted to mean soldiers of the 10th Tennessee. Impatience or being hurried could result in serious injury for the SVR member or another re-enactor participant. For this reason each new

member of the 10th Tennessee will required to review these safety regulations and demonstrate the ability to safely handle and fire a musket..

After reviewing this Firearms Safety Guide, the applicant must be checked by the unit commander or Armorer. It is the responsibility of the member to notify the commander of his readiness and arrange a time for an evaluation. Prior to taking the evaluation check, the unit commander or Armorer will review procedures with you so that you have a complete understanding of what is expected. Remember, it is not our intention to make this a difficult process, but to make this a safe environment for everyone.

The primary weapon of an infantry member is most commonly the rifled musket. Although the muskets employed by most members are replicas of the originals used during the War, they are almost identical in design and are capable of being just as deadly. The ammunition used by reenactors with the musket consists of a paper cartridge filled ideally with 60 grains of FF black powder. This would be considered a "blank" as it contains no ball or other projectile. Once the musket has been charged with powder, it is fired using a percussion cap. The hammer falls on the cap, which explodes sends a spark into the breech of the musket, igniting the black powder, which then explodes sending flame, smoke and unburned powder from the muzzle. The explosion of the cap and the resulting discharge of the musket are the occurrences that represent the most danger. These dangers will be covered specifically in the next section, The Musket in the Field.

## **Safety – General**

Without a doubt safety is the most important subject that can be covered in the Handbook. Safety is the concern of all 10th Tennessee members.. Never hesitate to correct an unsafe situation, regardless of the ranks involved. We must all look out for each other! If there is doubt, get clarification. Ask questions. **When in doubt during any field exercise, call CEASE FIRE!**

The use of alcoholic beverages in any form is strictly prohibited prior to or during any exercise.

The first law of safety is always: **Common Sense.**

**It goes almost without saying there will be zero tolerance of the use of illegal substances.**

## **Safety – Firearms**

**First Law of Firearms** The First Law of firearm safety is: Always **Consider a firearm as being LOADED and DEADLY at all times!**

### **Firearms Definition**

Weapons shall be understood to be "Firearms" are defined as a weapon capable of firing a missile, especially a rifle or pistol using an explosive charge as a propellant.

## **Firearms Safety**

- A. No weapon will be allowed onto the field if it slips out of half cock when activated by the trigger on your finger (full weight of weapon on trigger or normal pressure applied).
- B. Muskets will be of the three (3) band type, unless used in Living History demonstration and/or approved by both the unit commander and Armorer.
- C. All parts of the weapon must fit properly and tightly.
- D. No weapon may field with cracks in any part of the stock.
- E. Only FF or FFF black powder may be used in muzzle loading firearms for reenactment or ceremonial purposes..

### **Blank vs. Live round definition**

A blank round or cartridge is defined as a round consisting of a black powder charge and absolutely nothing which could be construed as being a projectile. This could include but not necessarily be limited to staples, wads, etc.

A live round or cartridge is defined as a round consisting of a black powder charge and anything which could be construed as a projectile. This could include but not necessarily be limited to bullets, stones, etc.

### **Qualification**

To qualify to handle arms of any kind, military members of the 10th Tennessee must meet two criteria:

1. Age requirements, as follows:
  - a. Age 16 - 17: Must have parent's written consent and demonstrate the ability to handle these firearms safely in training, ceremonial and re-enactment scenarios.
  - b. Under 16 – Only if accompanied by their parent or legal guardian, have passed a safety evaluation and are deemed competent by the Armorer.
2. Certification by the unit commander or Armorer.

### **Firearms Do's and Don'ts**

In the following list of Do's and Don'ts.

#### **Don'ts**

- a. Do not bring real "live" rounds to any event.

- b. Do not smoke around black powder, especially when making rounds.
- c. Do not use Wonder wads, staples, tape, etc., when making blanks. They can become dangerous when fired from a gun.
- d. Do not transport any weapon loaded.
- e. Do not place your face or hands over the muzzle of your rifle. Keep your face, hands and fingers away from the muzzle.
- f. Do not load a weapon from a powder flask in the field. You may reload only with pre-rolled blanks.
- g. Do not fire your weapon toward anyone.
- h. Do not allow spectators to handle your weapon.
- i. Do not load your weapon unless instructed.

#### **Do's**

- a. If you wish to use filler in your blanks, use facial tissue only.
- b. Bring blank cartridges only.
- c. Have a clear field of fire. Elevate the muzzle. The muzzle blast is deafening. In addition there is the danger of burning embers. Look carefully before firing. Be sure your muzzle is not near the man in front of you.
- d. Count your tools, before and after cleanup. Never leave the ramrod in the barrel.
- e. Check any borrowed weapon to see if it is loaded. It is your responsibility!
- f. If you fire live rounds from your gun at a range, remember to clean your gun carefully. A lead buildup can occur in the barrel. Use a copper brush when cleaning the barrel.

#### **General Firearms Provisions**

All muskets employed by the 10th Tennessee shall be of the three (3) band type subject to approval and inspection by the Armorer. Prior to purchasing a firearm it would be prudent to consult with the unit commander or Armorer so that they may make recommendations to assist in your purchase. This is especially true for new and inexperienced members.

Inspections during an event are the responsibility of the unit commander or Armorer. The unit commander and unit Armorer are authorized to make note of discrepancies in the interest of rectifying any safety issues. The following are general rules:

1. Bladed weapons are to have sheaths that fully enclose and guard the edge. Scabbards shall be complete with tips in good repair and shall be properly mounted on the belt.

#### **The handling of firearms when under the influence of alcohol or drugs is strictly forbidden.**

All firearms must be unloaded subsequent to stacking or storage during or after an event. The event commander may require caps to be fired to make sure the weapons are safe and powder free..

When a "Cease Fire!" is called for any reason, any and all firing is to stop, **immediately!** All members of the 10th Tennessee are to scrupulously observe this order. Under no conditions are

we to begin firing again unless so ordered by the unit commander or NCO. A "**Cease Fire!**" order will be obeyed at all times. If you have or suspect you have a loaded weapon the following procedure will be observed:

Keep the muzzle of your weapon elevated and inform the unit commander or Armorer of your situation. The unit commander or Armorer will collect those members with loaded firearms and take them to a safe place for clearing. After announcing, "**Fire in the hole!**" and only upon command members will discharge their firearms at elevation into the air. This will render the weapon safe for capping off.

**This requirement will be strictly enforced for the safety of all concerned.**

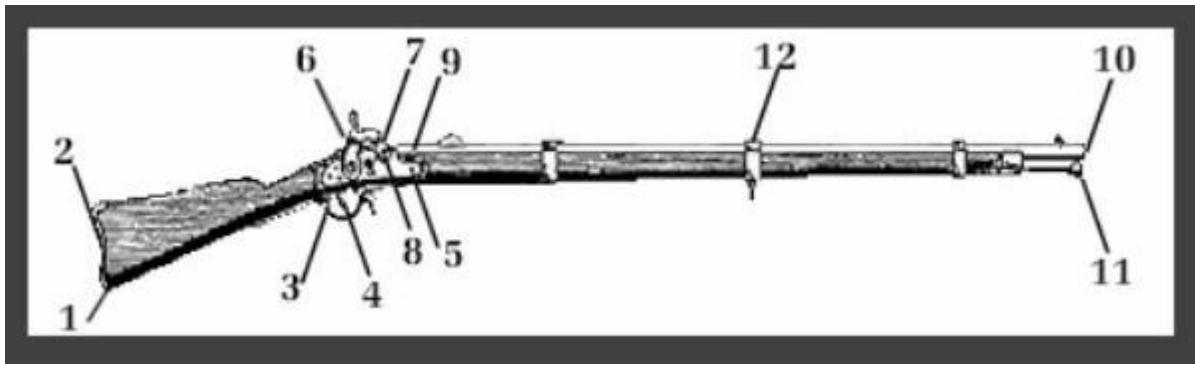
### **Failure of musket to fire**

If your musket fails to fire for any reason, the following instructions are to be followed. Safety being the major consideration at all times. Keep the muzzle elevated unless instructed otherwise.

If the cap fires but the gun fails to discharge or you are not sure it went off, at the next command to Load **do not put more powder down the bore**. Pull the hammer back to half cock, take off the old cap and put a new one on the cone. Fire at the next command. If the weapon discharges, continue as you normally would. If it fails to discharge then there is likely a problem. If you are in a formation, do the following:

- a. Remember to keep the firearms muzzle elevated, unless you are instructed to do otherwise.
- b. Await the Armorer, who will assist you.
- c. The most common problem is a fouled cone. Take the cone pick or paper clip and run it through the hole in the cone several times.
- d. If on the next command to Fire, the gun still fails to discharge, await assistance.
- e. At the end of the evolution, move to a safe place with the Armorer. Turn the gun so the muzzle is several inches off the ground. Slap the stock several times with the flat of your hand. Take notice if any powder leaves the barrel. If not, then it could be it was not loaded or has in fact discharged. In any case, pull the hammer back to half cock and put a new cap on the cone.
- f. The Armorer will say, "**Fire in the hole**" and tell you to fire at the ground, if the grass moves; then the problem has been cleared.
- g. If the grass does not move there is a problem. The problem will need to be looked at in detail. Keep the muzzle elevated and away from yourself and all others.

*KNOW THE PARTS OF YOUR MUSKET*



- |         |            |                  |            |            |           |
|---------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Toe  | 2. Heel    | 3. Trigger Guard | 4. Trigger | 5. Lock    | 6. Hammer |
| 7. Cone | 8. Bolster | 9. Breech        | 10. Muzzle | 11. Ramrod | 12. Band  |

### ***1861 Springfield Rifle Musket***

INSTRUCTION-The members of the 10th Tennessee should be practiced in the nomenclature of the arms and the precautions and care required for their preservation.

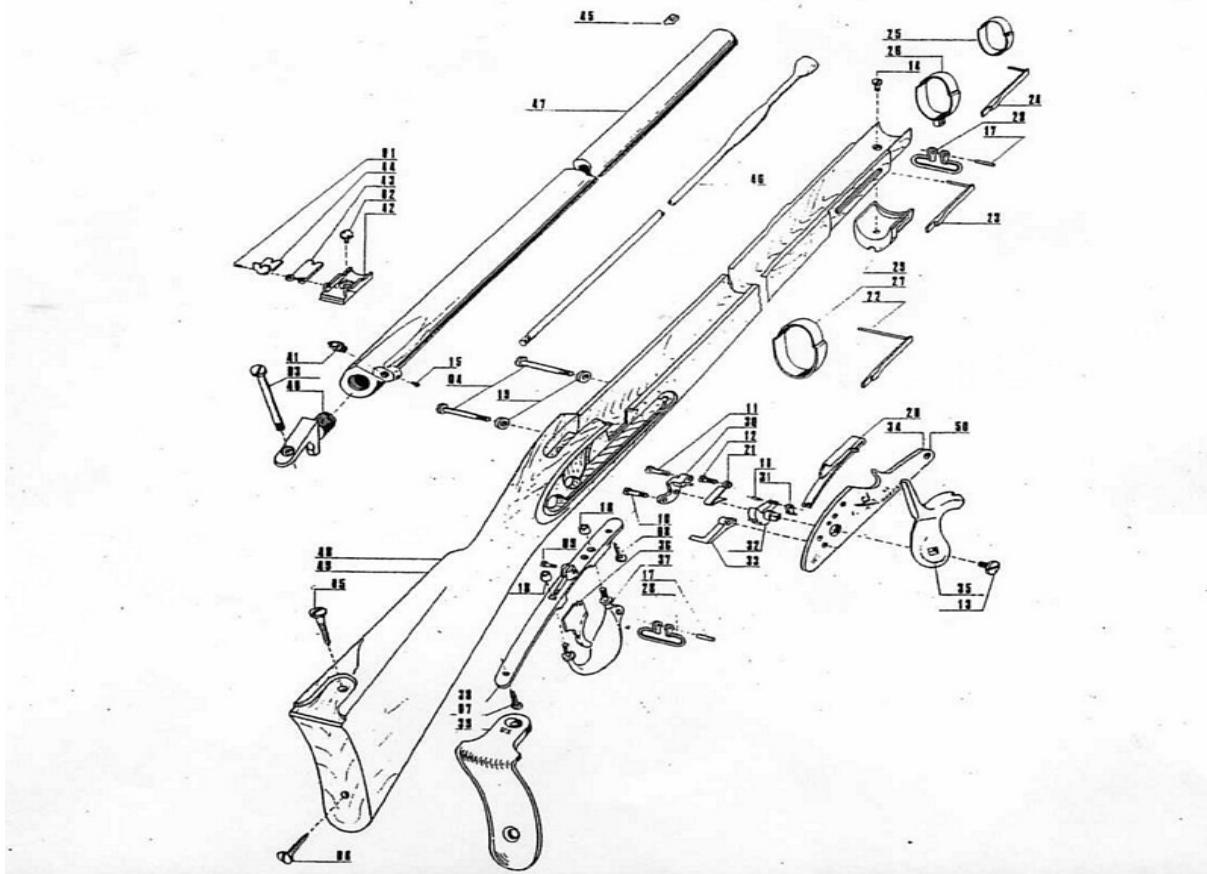
The rifled musket should be thoroughly cleaned after every use and maintained in the proper manner to prevent rust and corrosion.

**Always remember to handle your musket as if it were loaded. You will never regret being overly cautious!**

**Precautions in Using.** - On ordering arms on parade, let the butt be brought gently to the ground, especially if the ground be hard. This will save the mechanism of the lock from shocks, which are very injurious to it and which tend to loosen and mar the screws and split the woodwork. The ramrod should not be "sprung" with unnecessary force, for fear of injuring the corners of the grooves; and, in stacking arms, care should be taken not injure the bayonets by forcibly training the edges against each other. No cutting, marking, or scraping the wood or iron should be allowed; and no part of the gun should be touched with a file. Take every possible care to prevent wear from getting between the lock or barrel, and stock. If any should get there, dismount the gun as soon as possible, clean and oil the parts as directed, and see that they are perfectly dry assembling them.

# 1861 SPRINGFIELD CIVIL WAR MUSKET

Part #*	Description
AC 220/01.....	REAR SIGHT LEAF SCREW
AC 220/02.....	REAR SIGHT BASE SCREW
AC 220/03.....	TANG SCREW
AC 220/04.....	LOCK PLATE SCREW (2 PCS.)
AC 220/05/06.....	BUTT PLATE SCREW (2 PCS.)
AC 220/07/08.....	TRIGGER GUARD SCREW(2 PCS)
AC 220/09.....	TRIGGER SCREW
AC 220/10.....	SEAR SCREW
AC 220/11.....	BRIDLE SCREW
AC 220/12.....	SEAR SPRING SCREW
AC 220/13.....	HAMMER SCREW
AC 220/14.....	NOSE CAP SCREW
AC 220/15.....	NIPPLE BASE SCREW
AC 220/16.....	TUMBLER STIRRUP PIN
AC 220/17.....	BELT SWIVEL PIN
AC 220/18.....	TRIGGER PLATE NUT (2 PCS)
AC 220/19.....	LOCK PLATE SCREW WASHER (2 PCS)
AC 220/20.....	MAIN SPRING
AC 220/21.....	SEAR SPRING
AC 220/22.....	REAR BARREL BAND RETAINER SPRING
AC 220/23.....	MIDDLE BARREL BAND RETAINER SPRING
AC 220/24.....	FRONT BARREL BAND RETAINER SPRING
AC 220/25.....	FRONT BAND
AC 220/26.....	MIDDLE BAND
AC 220/27.....	REAR BAND
AC 220/28.....	BELT SWIVEL (2 PCS)
AC 220/29.....	NOSE CAP
AC 220/30.....	BRIDLE
AC 220/31.....	TUMBLER STIRRUP
AC 220/32.....	TUMBLER
AC 220/33.....	SEAR
AC 220/34.....	LOCK PLATE
AC 220/35.....	HAMMER
AC 220/36.....	TRIGGER
AC 220/37.....	TRIGGER PLATE
AC 220/38.....	TRIGGER GUARD
AC 220/39.....	BUTT PLATE
AC 220/40.....	TANG
AC 220/41.....	NIPPLE
AC 220/42.....	REAR SIGHT BASE
AC 220/43.....	REAR SIGHT FIRST LEAF
AC 220/44.....	REAR SIGHT SECOND LEAF
AC 220/45.....	FRONT SIGHT
AC 220/46.....	RAM ROB
AC 220/47.....	BARREL
AC 220/48.....	STOCK, SEMI FINISHED
AC 220/49.....	STOCK, FINISHED
AC 220/50.....	COMPLETE LOCK



## Gun Powder

- No loose powder shall be allowed except that in possession of the Armorer. All powder must be in pre-rolled cartridges.
- All powder must be stored in spark resistant, fire proof containers. (Military ammo cans lined with cardboard are acceptable.)
- Powder must not be stored in plastic containers.
- Care must be taken with powder around fires or possible sources of ignition. Stay away from fire pits and cigarettes, pipes, cigars, etc.

- E. No powder will be allowed in powder horns at any time.
- F. No loading of firearms using a powder horn will be allowed — no exception

### **Safety while making blanks**

The first thing you must consider is the fact that you will have to buy, store and handle a quantity of black gunpowder. Black powder is an explosive and as such is potentially dangerous. Further you should consider these facts very carefully if you have children. If the powder is stored and handled responsibly, any danger will be minimized. This is by no means intended to discourage you from making your own blank cartridges. It is however, an effort to acquaint you with the potential dangers of mishandling black powder. Safety must always be uppermost in your mind.

### **Common Sense Tips**

Develop safe handling habits and use common sense:

- a. **NEVER smoke near or around exposed black powder!**
- b. **NEVER use a charge greater than 60-65 grains of FF black powder when making musket blanks or 25 grains for pistol blanks.**
- c. Do not store percussion caps and black powder in the same place.
- d. Lock up your powder and caps in separate locations. A dry, cool place is required.
- e. Avoid sparks of any kind, sources of heat, friction and static electricity. Do not use a vacuum cleaner for clean-up. A damp rag is the best method.
- f. Handle percussion caps carefully as they are explosive.

When rolling blanks do not use staples, tape, etc. to hold the tubes together. When the blank is fired this material can become dangerous. If properly made, like originals, you do not need them.

**Should you have any questions as to how to roll and load blank cartridges, the Armorer will answer your questions and demonstrate proper procedure. If you are unsure, be sure and ask. Experience is the best teacher and the Armorer can provide it.**

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Regimental Armorer