



Federal Volunteer Brigade



Manual of the Sword



**THIS WILL BE THE OFFICIAL
SWORD MANUAL
OF THE FEDERAL VOLUNTEER BRIGADE.**

INTRODUCTION.

Officers on all duties under arms, draw and return sword without waiting for any command. All commands to soldiers under arms are given with the sword drawn.

If officers do not have their swords drawn, they should do so at *Attention*.

HOW THE SWORD IS WORN.

When on duty, the sword will be hooked up, the sword reversed, edge to the rear, hilt behind the arm.

Sword held at *Shoulder Arms*
or at *The Carry*

This *Manual of the Sword* incorporates several resources. References are made herein to articles by Dom DalBello of the Army of the Pacific and by T. R. Wheeley of the Lazyjacks Mess. The MoS was patterned after an earlier publication by John Duffer and photographer Michael Hicks.

TO DRAW THE SWORD (two motions).

First Motion: Bring the right hand quickly to the *first* position of *salute* [without arms] - palm to the left; at the same movement seize the scabbard with the left, and turn the sword, bringing the hilt to the front; pass the right hand through the sword knob, and seize the gripe. ... Draw the sword from the scabbard by extending the right arm easily; turn the hand and bring the sword to the position about to be described. →



← **Second Motion...** Draw the sword from the scabbard by extending the right arm easily; turn the hand and bring the sword to the position of *Carry*.

THE CARRY (SHOULDER)

The arm nearly extended, back of the blade against the shoulder; sword supported by the thumb and two first fingers, extended and placed on the gripe in such a manner that in raising the sword to the *salute*, etc., the fingers can be introduced inside the guard, and a firm grasp of the sword obtained without effort.

The gripe is in the right hand, which will be supported against the right hip, the back of the blade against the shoulder.

**TO RETURN
SWORD**

(Two Motions)

First Motion— Raise the sword perpendicularly, point up, the flat of the blade opposite the right eye, the guard at the height of the shoulder-elbow supported by the body; carry the hand to the left opposite the left shoulder, and reverse the sword; insert the point of the blade in the scabbard which is held by the left hand. ...

Second Motion— Insert the blade, withdraw the hand from the sword knob; with the left hand turn the sword, back of the blade to the front, hilt behind the arm; drop the hands by the side. →





ORDER ARMS.
From *Shoulder (Carry)*
Arms

Drop the sword to the front, the edge down, point three inches from the ground. →



REST
or **STACK ARMS.**

At the command, "REST," or "*Stack Arms*," return the sword to the scabbard.

At *attention*, draw it.



PARADE REST.

Reverse the sword; rest the point on the ground in front of the feet; clasp the left hand over the right, both resting on the guard ledge to the right]





THE SUPPORT.

Blade diagonally across the body, supported by the left hand, which is held opposite the shoulder. [The gripe is in the right hand].



RIGHT SHOULDER SHIFT ARMS.

Point downward, held a little above the ground - back of the blade to the left - sword held easily by the right hand.

IN-PLACE REST. From *Shouldered* or *Support Arms*

Carry the right hand to the left and clasp it with the left hand - blade in the hollow of the right arm.

From *Order Arms*
Hold the sword at pleasure.

DOUBLE QUICK TIME.

In marching in double time, the sword is carried diagonally across the breast, edge to the front, the point in front of and at the height of the left shoulder; the left hand steadies the scabbard.

THE SALUTE.
OR
PRESENT ARMS
TO SALUTE WITH THE
SWORD OR SABRE
 [from *Shouldered Arms*].

Three times (or pauses).

One. At the distance six paces from the person to be saluted, raise the sword or sabre perpendicularly, the point up, the flat of the blade opposite to the right eye, the guard at the height of the shoulder, and the elbow supported on the body. ↗

Two. Drop the point of the sword or sabre by extending the arm, so that the right hand may be brought to the side of the right thigh, and remain in that position until the person to whom the salute is rendered shall be passed, or shall have passed, six paces. Far →

Three. Raise the sword or sabre smartly and place the back of the blade against the right shoulder. →



Sources:

1. Berriman, M.W., *Militiaman's Manual and Sword-Play without a Master*, New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1858, 1864, pp. 7,8,11.
2. DeWitte, J.H., *Baxter's Zouave Light Infantry Tactics*, 1861, pp. 107-108.
3. Ellsworth, E.E., *Manual of Arms for Light Infantry Adapted to the Rifled Musket*, 1859, pp.71-75 (see DeWitte's work).
4. Hardee, William J., *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1861, p 214.
5. Upton, Emory, *Infantry Tactics*, New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1874, Paras. 755-758, 760-761.

From Berriman's *Militiaman's Manual and Swordplay without a Master*:

MANUEL [sic] OF SWORD AS INFANTRY. III

SHOULDER ARMS. [drawing the sword]

1st Motion. - Raise the right hand as high as the breast, pass it over to [thel] sword, and draw it six inches.

2d Motion. - Draw it out and extend the right hand to the front, and drop the sword in the hollow of the elbow.

3d Motion. - Bring the right hand to the hip, holding the sword between the thumb and two fingers, the edge to the front, the blade perpendicular.

SUPPORT ARMS.

1st Motion. - Raise the sword hand as the [sic] high as the right breast, edge to the left.

2d Motion. - Raise the left hand as high as the shoulder, fingers closed, turn the edge to the front, and drop the sword between the thumb and joint of fore finger of left hand, and lower the right hand to the hip.

CARRY ARMS. A

Raise the sword hand as high as the right breast, extend it as to second [third?] motion of shoulder arms.

ORDER ARMS.

Drop the sword to the front, the edge down, point three inches from the ground.

SHOULDER ARMS.

Raise the sword hand as high as the right breast, extend the hand as in second [third?] motion of shoulder arms.

0-REST FROM AN ORDER ARMS.

Step the right foot to the rear opposite to its place, the right toe on a line with the left heel, right leg straight, left knee bent perpendicular from the knee to the heel, at the same time fold the arms, the sword hand under the left elbow, sword hanging down the left hip.

At the word Attention Battalion, or Company,

Resume the position of Order Arms.

As with the Musket, Rifle, or Rifle Musket Drill, *Carry Arms* is the command to go from *Support* to *Shouldered Arms*. While neither Hardee nor Casey include such a command, other works describing the Rifle Musket drill do specify the *Carry* command (to go to the *Shoulder* in the right hand).