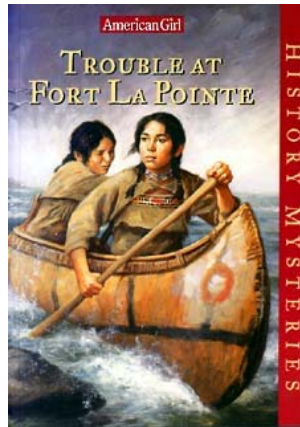


Rock County Volunteer

February 2001
Volume 17, Issue 1

Kathleen Meeker Nominated for Book Award!

Scott Meeker is proud and pleased to announce that Kathleen Meeker's 'history mystery' book for the Pleasant Company, *Trouble at*



Fort La Pointe, has just been nominated for a 2001 Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Children's Mystery Book in 2000!

The nominations were released February 8, 2001. Suffice it to say that Pleasant Company is EXTREMELY pleased. The Edgars are considered to be the highest honor in mystery writing. That is an especially incredible coup given that Kathleen has never written a mystery before.

The Edgar Allen Poe Award is a national award, given by the Mystery Writers of America, which is also who picked the nominees (there were 5 in her category). As a nominee Kathleen has been invited to the awards ceremony in New York City where the category winners will be named. Her

publisher, Pleasant Company, will fly her out there and pay for her hotel room and the ceremony dinner. The award banquet is to take place on May 3, 2001.

Details of the award are posted at: http://www.mysterywriters.net/awards/edgars_01_nominations.html

I am sure that all members of the 33rd Wisconsin join in sending their congratulations to Kathleen for this special honor.

Kathleen is the author of four other books for children with a historic theme, *Retreat from Gettysburg*, *Too Afraid to Cry*, *The Bravest Girl in Sharpsburg*, and *The Night Riders of Harpers Ferry*.

Survey Results

1 = Agree Strongly
6 = Disagree Strongly

Question 1: I like the present format of supporting events that pay the unit money, in exchange for no annual membership dues and free newsletters.

Respondents	13
Mean	1.15
Median	1
Standard deviation	0.38

Question 2: I like the way the membership decides on its event schedule.

Respondents	13
Mean	2.23
Median	2
Standard deviation	1.09

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Rock County Volunteer
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Question 3: <i>I am informed about events and have no problem finding event sites.</i>	Respondents	13	Respondents	12
	Mean	5.08	Mean	2.92
	Median	5	Median	3
	Standard deviation	1.19	Standard deviation	1.31
Respondents	13			
Mean	1.85	Question 10: <i>The civilians are a real asset to our group.</i>	Question 17: <i>The newsletter content is helpful to me as a member.</i>	
Median	2			
Standard deviation	1.14	Respondents	13	
Question 4: <i>I would like to see annual elections for non-commissioned officers.</i>	Mean	1.38	Respondents	13
	Median	1	Mean	1.85
	Standard deviation	0.65	Median	2
Respondents	13	Question 11: <i>We expect too much conformity from other units who fall in with us.</i>	Standard deviation	1.14
Mean	4.08		Question 18: <i>The website content is helpful to me as a member.</i>	
Median	4	Respondents	13	
Standard deviation	1.32	Mean	3.62	Respondents
Question 5: <i>I think it makes more sense for our group to be lead by a sergeant at events.</i>	Median	4	Mean	1.92
	Standard deviation	1.57	Median	2
Respondents	12	Question 12: <i>We should relax our authenticity standards.</i>	Standard deviation	1.00
Mean	3			
Median	3	Respondents	14	
Standard deviation	1.21	Mean	5.64	
Question 6: <i>I like the idea of the organization providing rations at events.</i>	Median	6	Median	6
	Standard deviation	0.93	Standard deviation	0.93
Respondents	13	Question 13: <i>I like the open, consensus format of our meetings.</i>	By Michael Thorson, with contributions and editing by Dom J. Dal Bello	
Mean	2.23		Hardee's <i>Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics</i> does not specify when or how file closers are to <i>stack arms</i> .	
Median	2	Respondents	13	
Standard deviation	1.42	Mean	1.31	
Question 7: <i>I feel like I have a say in the 33rd Wisconsin.</i>	Median	1	Median	1
	Standard deviation	0.63	Standard deviation	0.63
Respondents	13	Question 14: <i>I have ideas for events, but am apprehensive to offer them for consideration to the membership.</i>	Currently, file closers in different reenacting groups often <i>stack</i> and <i>take arms</i> in one of two ways.	
Mean	1.62			
Median	1	Respondents	13	
Standard deviation	0.87	Mean	4.38	
Question 8: <i>I think most of the events I attend serve some higher purpose than just reenacting.</i>	Median	5	Median	5
	Standard deviation	1.61	Standard deviation	1.61
Respondents	13	Question 15: <i>I want to be more physically challenged at events.</i>	After the stack is formed, and the odd-numbered rear rank man leans his piece on the stack, a common reenacting procedure is for the file closers to pass their pieces up through the ranks to also be leaned on the stack.	
Mean	1.85			
Median	2	Respondents	13	
Standard deviation	0.77	Mean	3.08	
Question 9: <i>We need a more formal organization : by-laws, elections, and so forth.</i>	Median	2	Median	2
	Standard deviation	1.26	Standard deviation	1.26
		Question 16: <i>The 33rd's leadership is on the right track.</i>	File closers receive their pieces from the front or rear rank man at the preparatory command of "Take-". This is of course followed by command of execution, "Arms," when the rest of the men receive their pieces.	

When Should File Closers Stack and Take Arms

By Michael Thorson, with contributions and editing by Dom J. Dal Bello

Hardee's *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics* does not specify when or how file closers are to *stack arms*. Nor will these instructions be found in Casey's and Gilham's manuals.

Currently, file closers in different reenacting groups often *stack* and *take arms* in one of two ways.

A Common Reenacting Method

After the stack is formed, and the odd-numbered rear rank man leans his piece on the stack, a common reenacting procedure is for the file closers to pass their pieces up through the ranks to also be leaned on the stack.

File closers receive their pieces from the front or rear rank man at the preparatory command of "Take-". This is of course followed by command of execution, "Arms," when the rest of the men receive their pieces.

The only source this author had seen for this method of stacking arms is a contemporary drill manual, *Heitman's Simplified Hardee's* [1], which states:

File closers pass their rifles up to be stacked on the nearest stack. (pg. 21)

Heitman's manual does not mention when or how the file closers' arms should be taken.

The author was then made aware of another manual in an article written by Dom Dal Bello and Geoff Walden - the 1861 Kentucky State Guard's "A Manual of the Piece" [2]. This manual was written for Kentucky troops, and was bound with a standard Hardee's 1855('61) *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*.

The Kentucky State Guard instructions for the command "Stack-Arms" conclude as follows:

... 76. (*Fifth Motion*)... The file-closers will give their pieces to No. 2 of the front rank, who will place them on the stack.

78. If ranks have been broken in order to rest, the squad will be called to attention; and arms will be resumed by the following commands -

Prepare to Take Arms.

79. At this command the pieces of the file-closers will be passed to them by No. 2 of the front rank, and each No. 1 of the rear rank will step forward with his left foot, seize his piece with his left hand, withdraw it from the stack, and take the position of *order arms*.

The rest of the men will take their pieces at "*Take-Arms*."

One may reasonably speculate that the Kentucky State Guard manual was not widely circulated, and only

used by a small percentage of soldiers who fought in the American Civil War. Therefore, the unique manual of arms techniques contained therein should not be used by the vast majority of today's reenactors [Ed: see Editor's Note A].

Like Hardee's, Emory Upton's 1866 *A New System of Infantry Tactics: Double and Single Rank* (authorized in 1867) does not specify how the file closers are to stack arms. Upton did not try to rewrite everything, and like other tactics writers, copied what others had already written. However, his 1873 revision specified that file closers were to pass their pieces up when the stacks had been formed, and receive them back at the command of "Take." [3].

Inspection Arms Method

Another method is occasionally used by reenactors, in which the file closers march to the front of the formation and stack arms. When the company re-forms, the file closers form on their stack and take their positions after being given the command "Post."

Why? This rather impractical method is derived from the instructions for the "Form of Inspection" for an infantry battalion, given in the *U.S. Army Regulations*. This method is only for a formal inspection (with the battalion in a column of companies, not in a battalion line), and is not meant to be used in field service [Ed: why not just make the file closer stack in rear? In front, they are in no position to oversee the men. See Ed. Note B].

Actual Instructions for Federal Troops

Enter Robert Chandler's *Infantry Tactics: Compiled for the use of Wisconsin Volunteers* [4]. It was when this author was reviewing this manual that the question of the "file closer stack" came to mind. Page 49 states (italics as per original):

Not to recur on this subject, it is here laid down, that when organized companies stack arms, the sergeants, and the corporals, if in the rank of file closers, will rest their pieces against the stacks nearest to them respectively, *after ranks are broken*, and resume their pieces on the signal to re-form ranks.

Why would Chandler use this technique? Because it is in **Winfield Scott's 1835 *Infantry Tactics*** [5]. The passage used in "Chandler's" is copied verbatim from Para. 417 of Scott's manual. "Hardee's" was written for the regular army who already knew "Scott's" drill well, and the "file closer stack" was omitted, as were numerous other items [Ed. Note C]. Since Casey's *Infantry Tactics*, published in late 1862, was basically "Hardee's," file closer instructions were again left out [6]. Chandler's *Tactics* was written as a combination of Scott's and Hardee's works, with the manual of arms being primarily "Scott's," most of the units being armed with 3-band muskets.

When the war began, those with previous military experience were often given the responsibility by their respective states to help instruct other drill masters and officers in the complexities of drill (and a few, like Chandler, to write drill manuals). The manual for the Army, written by Winfield Scott, was the manual of choice. As Bob Braun put it: "Winfield Scott was America's preeminent soldier and thinker in regards to drill and tactics. No one knew it better than he did" [7]. With the exception of one obscure, Kentucky drill manual, and no mention of it in "Hardee's," it was Scott's technique for file closers that was surely utilized [Ed. Note D].

In conclusion, it is this author's belief that the majority of reenactors should use Scott's method of stacking and taking arms for file closers.

- **Notes:**

1. Heitman, Don, *Heitman's Simplified Hardee's and Skirmish Drill*, 2nd Ed, Prussian Press, Lancaster, Ohio, 1990. This manual has helped many understand 19th-century drill, specifically the 1855 edition of Hardee's *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*. But, because this edition of "Hardee's" is the only drill manual reproduced by the Civil War "reproduction" goliath C&D Jarnagin, AND because Heitman admirably tries to fill in omissions in the 1855 "Hardee's" (such as when file closers stack arms) with other (at times obscure) manuals or a "best guess," it has unfortunately fostered some drill myths. This is not the fault of Don Heitman; reenactors are at fault because of a general lack of effort to understand American Civil War drill.

2. Walden, Geoff and Dom Dal Bello,* "Manual of Arms for Infantry: A Re-Examination, Part II," *Camp Chase Gazette* (CCG), April 1996, pages 38-42, and "Chapter II, Part IV: A Federal Perspective," by Dom Dal Bello, CCG, Nov./Dec. 1996, pages 36-43. The K.S.G. "A Manual of the Piece," is bound with a standard 1855('61) Hardee's *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics* (Vol. I) Louisville, KY: J.W.Thompkins & Co., 1861.

*The 6-part series written by Walden and Dal Bello is a MUST for American Civil War drill enthusiasts as it debunks many myths and brings to light many interesting facts regarding drill.

3. Upton, Emory, *A New System of Infantry Tactics: Double and Single Rank*, New York: D. Appleton & Co, 1868 (authorized in 1867, written during most of 1866).

Upton, Emory, *Infantry Tactics: Double and Single Rank*, New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1874 (authorized in 1873). The 1873 manual states

- 116. ... The [3-piece] stack being formed and aligned, the command, *lay on loose pieces* is given; at which the remaining pieces in the rear rank are passed to the even numbers of the front rank, who lay them on the stacks. The pieces of the file-closers are laid on the stacks at the same time.

Upton's '73 manual also specifies how files closers should resume arms:

- 117. ... At the command *take*, the pieces of the odd numbered men of the rear rank, and the file-closers, are passed to them; ...

Upton and K.S.G. manual excerpts courtesy of Dom Dal Bello.

4. Chandler, Robert, *Infantry Tactics: Compiled for the use of Wisconsin Volunteers*, Milwaukee: Jermain & Brightman, Book and Job Printers, 1861.

5. Walden, Geoff, and Dom Dal Bello, "Manual of Arms for Infantry: A Re-Examination, Part II," CCG, April 1996, page 41.

6. Correspondence with Dom Dal Bello and Bob Braun, May - December, 1996.

7. Correspondence with Bob Braun, December, 1996

Editor's (D.J. Dal Bello's) Notes on "When Should File Closers Stack and Take Arms":

A. The Kentucky State Guard "A Manual of the Piece" (Louisville, KY: J.W.Thompkins & Co., 1861) was bound in back of a standard 1855 Hardee's *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics* (Vol.

I), Louisville, KY: J.W.Thompkins & Co., 1861.

The manual, put together by a board of K.S.G. officers chaired by Simon Buckner, was indeed unique and well thought out, even giving reasons why the light infantry shoulder arms (in the right hand) was preferred to that of the musket drill (in the left hand):

- *This manner of carrying the musket is adopted in preference to the position at the left shoulder, for the following reasons:

1st. It is a more natural position, and therefore more readily acquired by the recruit

2nd. In this position the musket is more under the control of the soldier when in rapid motion, for instance when turning at drill, or forming forward into line.

4th. It is less liable to be damaged by any carelessness of the soldier in ordering arms.

5th. With the piece in this position, the soldier can assume more readily and rapidly the positions of trail arms, charge bayonets, ready, and aim.

6th. It is less fatiguing than the shoulder arms [in the left].

No "3rd." reason was printed, likely a printer's error.

B. For the "Inspection of a Battalion," the battalion is formed *in column of companies*, the ranks opened, and the Officers and Sergeants posted in front of their respective companies. After arms are inspected, knapsacks are to be inspected, at which point the arms must be stacked. The

companies close ranks, stack, and reopen ranks to drop packs. The Sergeants, still in front of their companies, close on the center and stack arms, then return to their positions along the whole front of the company to display their packs. This method is impractical for "everyday" stacking.

C. Hardee's 1855 *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics* was the American translation and adaptation of the 1845 French system, and was meant to be used when the troops were acting as light infantry or riflemen (see the order by Jefferson Davis on the front-piece of "Hardee's"). This was one reason why "Hardee's" did not have a Volume III ("Evolutions of the Brigade") - it was assumed that the reader had Scott's. But Scott referred to paragraphs in his lesser Volumes; and those paragraphs did not match Hardee's paragraphs. Additionally, many of Scott's useful instructions in Vols. I and II were also omitted in "Hardee's."

D. Scott's 1835 *Infantry Tactics*, Vol. I, "School of the Soldier:"

- 417. Not to recur to this subject, it is here laid down, that when organized companies stack arms, the sergeants, and also corporals, if in the rank of file closers, will rest their pieces against the stacks nearest to them respectively, *after* ranks are broken, and resume their pieces on the signal ... to re-form ranks.

We may speculate that this method might have originally been specified for one or both (perhaps other?) of the following reasons: (1) ideally, 3 ranks were prescribed, with each file forming its own stack; it thus

may have been deemed too difficult for the file closers to pass up their pieces; or (2) the file closers were expected to be "in control" and thus have possession of their pieces whenever the men were in ranks/falling in. The reader should note that under peacetime authorization (when companies were smaller than war-time authorization), and often in war (due to attrition), only two ranks were to be formed. Two ranks were specified in Secretary of War Lewis Cass' 1835 order authorizing Scott's latest *Tactics*. Scott himself specified with less than 72 rank-and-file, two ranks were to be formed.

Great Dane Pub

Potters Run India Pale Ale, Stone of Scone Scotch Ale and Crop Circle Wheat all call to mind visions and memories of great beer. On this coming Saturday, February 24, you are invited to attend a get together to revisit old times, talk about the upcoming season, or merely jawbone with your pards. No *RSVP* is necessary, just show up around 1pm and stay as long as you want. Check it out at www.greatdanepub.com. The Great Dane is located at 123 East Doty Street in Madison, just north east a block of Col. Heg on the square.

Hard Tack Bake

Sunday, March 11, Baraboo

The annual hard tack bake will take place in Baraboo, at Darrow's Country Market beginning at Noon on Sunday, March 11. We seem to have a crew of experienced bakers now, but new people are always welcome. Last fall we made over 1,000 crackers in less than 3 hours, including baking and cooling time.

Upcoming Events

February 24

1:00, Great Dane Pub, Madison
Get together with your pards!

A pre-season get together to see your pards and talk about the upcoming season. Not a unit meeting, but rather an informal get together. For further info contact Mark Reitz 608 356-3129 (eves), or e mail as shown below.

March 11

Noon, Baraboo
Hard Tack Bake

Our annual hard tack bake. We will once again be at the Darrow's Country Market in Baraboo. We hope to make 1,000+ crackers. Come help if you can. Contact Mark Reitz, mreitz@baraboo.com or at phone as shown above.

April 21

LaRue, Wisconsin
Spring Muster

Our spring muster, to prepare us for the coming season, and in particular the Whitewater and Raymond Events. LaRue is also the site of the Mid-Continental Railway Museum event. See further information in this issue.

April 27

Whitewater
School presentation

One of our few paying events, we will once again be mustering at Whitewater for a presentation to the 5th and 8th grades. POC: Betsy Urven, burven@whitewater.k12.wi.us, phone 608 883-2825 (eves).

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May 4-6

**Raymond, Mississippi
AoP Vicksburg Campaign**

This year's big event, we will fall in with Dom Dal Bello and the AoP. The first registration deadline is March 14, so move fast to get your registration in. More information appears in this issue. POC: Mark Reitz.

May 25

**Appleton
School presentation**

Our second school presentation and paying event. An all day event, and we need a minimum of 8 people. POC: Kres Peckham, kbpeckham@aol.com, phone 414 738-9033.

May 28

**Stoughton
Memorial Day**

We change locations this year and attend the Stoughton Memorial Day event. Future years may alternate with Fulton. POC: John Wedeward, jwedeward@inxcass.net, Phone 608-873-8503.

Ft. Snelling

**June 9-10, Minneapolis MN
Garrison event with 1st Minn**

Not a unit event, but a fun one to go to none the less. POC: John Atkinson, badgerboyjjea@aol.com

July 1

**Old World Wisconsin
GAR Reunion**

A tentative date for a tentative event. This event will only be held if there is sufficient interest to do so. Please contact Bob Braun to let him know if you can commit to come. braunwis@ticon.net, phone 920 568-4530.

The quality was near to perfection. We plan to make a similar number at this year's bake.

To get to Baraboo, take I-90/94 north from Madison to Hwy 33 (Exit 106). Travel west on Hwy 33 about 13 miles to Baraboo. Darrow's Country Market is located at the east edge of town, just as you get to the city, on your left. Enter the store and go all the way to the left to the bakery. We will be located back in the baking area. POC: Mark Reitz, mreitz@baraboo.com, phone 608 356-3129 (eves).

1863 Vicksburg Campaign

The AoP Main Event for 2001

The Army of the Pacific will be mustering at this year's Vicksburg Campaign, which will take place the weekend of May 3-6. This event is located south west of Jackson, MS, at the same location as the event of a couple years back. Registration is enclosed with this newsletter. *The first deadline for registration if March 14th*. If you plan to go, please register as soon as possible.

The 33rd is attempting to put together a company strength unit to attend this event. We need to have as many of our own as can make it to the field. If we cannot garner enough men for our own company, we will be assigned as a squad to other forming units by Col. Dal Bello.

Registration is \$30 per person if mailed by March 14. Thereafter the price goes up to \$37. With your registration you will be allowed entry to the event, and will be provided two days' rations. You also receive future AoP mailings.

Dom is currently anticipating at least five companies of 25-30 men. He stresses that pards will not be broken up, but assigned as a squad.

Start rolling your cartridges now. You will be expected to arrive on site with at least 150 authentic

rounds. Note, however, that the event organizers are recommending 300! rounds per man.

The unit impression will be the 31st Illinois, 17th Army Corps (Maj. General James McPherson). Standard uniforms for all; slouch hats and sack coats. Tents may be carried, but will most likely not be raised unless the weather turns wet.

Dom would like to see people arrive at the event by Friday morning. On Friday afternoon, May 4, there will be sharp skirmishing at the company and battalion level after a short march recreating the fighting along Fourteen Mile Creek southeast of Edwards on May 12, 1863 by Hovey's and Bowen's Divisions.

Dawn Saturday will see further skirmishing, to re-stage the fighting that occurred as General McClernand pulled back across Fourteen Mile Creek to move toward Raymond. Later in the morning, the armies will break-out onto open high ground enabling maneuver forces to engage at brigade and higher strength. At 4:30 pm the Battle of Raymond will be recreated for the public. Following the battle the troops will occupy new camps and set up picket lines to separate the forces.

On Sunday morning, the skirmishing will continue until the forces deploy for the premier battle of the campaign, the Battle of Champion Hill at 1:30 pm. The battle will conclude the event. The armies are to be combatants for the whole weekend beginning noon Friday.

This Event is designed for those interested in a campaign-style scenario. In general, the entire campaign is staged along a three mile stretch of abandoned railroad that resembles an 1860 road accessing all bivouacs and battlefields. POC: Mark Reitz, mreitz@baraboo.com. Phone 608 356-3129 (eves).