

EXERCISE
FOR
GARRISON AND FIELD ORDINANCE
TOGETHER WITH
MANEUVERS

AS ALTERED FROM
THE MANUAL OF GENERAL KOSCIUSKO

BY AN OFFICER
OF THE UNITED STATES ARTILLERISTS

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SECTION V.

Exercise of Field Artillery, 4 and 6 Pounders,

For the exercise or management of a 4 or 6 pounder in time of action, one non-commissioned officer, two gunners, and six matrosses, are requisite. They will be paraded and divided into sections of four files each, and the men of each section designated and numbered alternately in both ranks (beginning on the right of the rear rank) as follows:—

On the left.

No. 2.

No. 4.

Gunner. No. 6.

On the right.

No. 1

No. 3.

Gunner. No. 5.

The officers and non-commissioned officers will parade in front of the line, and have their posts assigned them as directed in the exercise of the garrison ordnance.

The sections will then be wheeled and marched to their respective pieces, where the following implements, previously selected and arranged, will be distributed. among the men of the section.

To 1, a sponge and rammer, and a *bricole*¹; a ladle and worm-will be lashed to the carriage.

¹ The *bricole* possesses important advantages over the drag rope. It consists of a strap and trace, a hook and a ring, with or without a thimble. The strap must be of good leather, about two inches and a half broad, and sufficiently long (usually five feet two inches to pass over the shoulder, and to meet under the opposite arm, where (after run through the ring) the two ends are doubled about one inch and a half, and well sewed together. The trace must be made of good twisted rope, half an inch in diameter, and eight feet long; one end fastened to the ring or thimble on the strap, and the other end to the eye of a small hook, which catches on the hooks of the carriage, and serves to -put the piece in motion so that the strap and trace together, when fitted for use, measure nearly 10 feet and 8 inches. No. 1 and 2, as also the two gunners, must use short *bricoles*; and the way to shorten them is to bring up and hook the extreme ends in the rings: hence those with short *bricoles draw up*-by the *doubling* of the traces put on the hooks of the piece. The *bricoles* carried by the gunners may be used by them, or kept to replace such as may be broken or injured by the matrosses.

To 2, 3, and 4, a *bricole* each. To the gunner of the right, a gunner's belt *complete*, a tube box, a thumbstall, and a *bricole*. To the gunner of the left, a lint stock, a port-fire stock, a port-fire case, and a *bricole*. To 5 and 6, a haversack, and *bricole* each.

The *bricoles* hang from the right shoulders to the left sides of 1, 3, and 5, and the gunner of the right; and from the left shoulders to the right sides of 2, 4, and 6, and the gunner of the left. The haversacks and other implements, hang from the right shoulders to the left sides, wider the *bricoles*, The tube boxes are suspended round the waist by leather straps.

Attached to each piece, in addition to the above, is a bucket, an ammunition box, containing eighteen rounds, two trail handspikes, one cross handspike, and one narrow or felling axe.

Ammunition waggons, and sometimes tumbrels, accompany the Artillery to the field; the former will carry 88 rounds for six pounders, or 150 rounds for four pounders.

They ought likewise to carry one set of spare implements, a supply of slow matches, port-fires, tubes, spikes, *bricoles*, dressed sheep skins, tanned hides, sponge tacks, and such other articles as may be deemed necessary. Travelling forges are of the utmost importance in the field; but these seldom leave the park, except to accompany detached portions of the army.

1. *Parade!*

The officers draw their swords, and the men assume their stations at the pieces. 1 places himself on the right side of the chace, between the piece and the right wheel, with the sponge at an order, with which he sponges the piece, and with the rammer forces home the charge. 2 places himself on the left side of the chace, between the piece and the left wheel, to put the load into the gun; the gunner of the right on the right side of the breech, to tend the vent, and to prime; the gunner of the left on the left side of the breech, to fire the gun; 3 at the outside of the right trail handspike; 4 at the outside of the left trail handspike; 5 at the ammunition box; 6 about five yards, in the rear of the left wheel of the carriage, to receive the charge from 5, and to supply 2; the section officer in the rear of the left of the trail, to point the gun and direct the men; who, as they arrive at their stations, will front with the piece.

It is here supposed, that the piece is separated from the limbers. When it is otherwise, the second word of command should be *Unlimber!* The limbers and ammunition box are placed 25 yards in the rear of the piece, the latter of which is removed and superintended by 5, who furnishes 6 with the necessary ammunition, by occasionally exchanging haversacks with him. The ammunition waggon or tumbrel, containing ammunition for *immediate use* is placed 50 yards, and the spare ammunition waggons and tumbrels, 50 yards in the rear of the pieces. The supernumer-

aries are divided into sections, and the men in each, numbered from 9 to 14, both inclusive, with a proper proportion of gunners. They are stationed with the spare ammunition, and keep the waggon or tumbrel for immediate use, supplied with cartridges and shot, as also the ammunition boxes at the limbers; they likewise fill the vacancies at the pieces as they occur, according to their respective numbers.

2. *To – Action!*

At this command, 1 raises the sponge from the ground, seizes the staff with his right hand near the rammer head, and holds it in a horizontal position on his right side, his hand extended downwards, and the back of it to the front: he also seizes the staff with his left hand across the breast, with the back of the hand to the front, and the elbow turned a little up. At the same time he advances his left foot one pace in front, and stands with both legs straight, his back near the axle-tree, and his head turned a little to the left. As soon as the command *To – Action!* is given, 2 takes out the tompion, and lashes it to the carriage, he advances his right foot one pace in front, and stands with both legs straight; his back near the axle-tree, and his head turned a little to the right; 3 unhooks the bucket, and places it near 1; the gunner of the left unties and removes the apron, and lashes it to the carriage; he also lights his port-fire, and the section officer moves up to the trail handspike.

3. *Sponge Tend – Vent!*

1 steps briskly forward with his right foot, turns a quarter round on the ball of his left foot, keeping the former a large pace in the rear of the latter ; at the same time seizes the staff just below the sponge head with his left hand, first brings it down near the upper part of the swelling of the muzzle, then sinks it down on the side next to him to the bottom of it, and guides it into the bore with his left hand; he then takes his left hand from the staff, and with his right, forces the sponge head home to the bottom of the bore, and turns it once or twice round, and then draws it out; he receives the staff near the sponge head on the palm of his left hand, and with this hand throws the sponge head end of the staff over his right, letting the staff slide his right hand, till the sponge head touches it; and while it is thus sliding, he drops the staff near the rammer head, in the hollow of his left hand, between the thumb and fingers ; the latter on the upper part, ready to enter the rammer head into the bore. The instant the word is given, 2 steps forward with his left foot, turns a quarter round on the ball of his right foot, keeping the former a large pace in the rear of the latter, ready to receive the charge from 6; -who, at the same time, advances to the breast of the carriage, clear of the left wheel, takes a flannel cartridge from his haversack [filled with powder and tied with a string on top], and holds it ready for delivery with the top towards 2. At the command *Tend – Vent!* the gunner of the right makes half a pace to the left, moves his left foot a moderate pace obliquely to the left, the toes turned out, steps forward with his right foot, raises his left hand to the breech of the piece, the fingers extended on the breech moulding, and the thumb

on the vent, and so pressed as to exclude the² air, where it remains till the piece is loaded; at the same time he takes a tube from the box with his right hand, and holds it between his fore and middle fingers, the pen part towards the muzzle, and the thumb on the cap.

4. Handle -Cartridge!

6, with his right hand, gives the cartridge, to 2, who receives it with the top towards, him ; if canister or fixed shot be used, he receives them with the case or ball towards him, and then 6 retires to his post.

5. Charge - Piece!

2 enters the bottom of the cartridge into the bore. and gives it a moderate stroke with his left hand; when 1 enters the rammer head, brings up his left hand, and with it seizes the staff just below the grasp of his right hand.

6. Ram down – Cartridge!

4 gives one or two strokes on the charge; at each of which he bends both his knees, throws back his left hand and arm, sinks his body, and also throws it back, to keep it clear of the muzzle; after which he springs the rammer out of the bore with his right hand, strikes the head of it with his left, so as to swivel it, first brings it to a poise, and then to an advance. As soon as the piece is loaded, 1 and 2 resume their posts by contrary motions.

In case the shot be not fixed to the cartridge, 1, on withdrawing the rammer, holds it in a horizontal position clear of the muzzle, till 3, serves the shot and wad, when he enters the rammer again, and performs the motions before directed.

² It is now found, that a body of air, when rapidly compressed, produces fire. When, therefore, the vent is closed, and the air cannot escape by the cartridge, much danger is to be apprehended ; to this cause must be attributed many of the accidents which occur in loading pieces. To avoid this evil, it would be prudent to take the thumb from the vent as soon AS the piece is sponged : particularly when flannel cartridges are used. {EDITOR NOTE: DO NOT DO THIS}

7. *Prime!*

The gunner of the right, as soon as the cartridge is rammed home, withdraws his thumb from the vent, and places a tube in it with his right hand, pressing it down till it enters the cartridge. If be destitute of tubes, he seizes the priming wire with his left hand, inserts it in the vent, pricks the cartridge as soon as it is driven home, and then returns the priming wire to the case on the belt; after which he takes out the stopper, and seizes the powder-horn with his right hand, the fore finger over the top, draws back his left thumb from the vent, and primes; he breaks the grains of powder by rolling the horn on them, and then covers the priming with the hollow of his left hand.³

8. *Take—Aim.*

The gunner of the right takes his hand from the tube or priming, when the section officer, or whoever else points the piece, steps up, and places his right leg between (or strides) the checks of the carriage; he then places his two thumb nails nearly together on the centre line, or horizontal surface, looks between them, and ranges the centre line with the object aimed at by which means he obtains his vertical direction: He next brings his eye to the side lines, seizes the handle of the screw with his right hand, by which he elevates or depresses the piece, according to the distance of the object.

The centre line is easily traced and no difficulty occurs in tracing the side lines, where the trunnions are placed below the axis of the bore. If, however, these lines be not marked, the section officer takes aim, to the best of his judgment, along the sides of the piece, and on the superior superficies of the base ring, and the swelling of the muzzle; he gives signals to 3 and 4 to traverse the piece as he may direct. As soon as the piece is pointed he gives the word, retiring in the rear to the left of the trail, when the gunner of the right covers the priming.

9. *Fire!*

The gunner of the right takes his post, clear of the wheel in the recoil. The gunner of the left, if, firing with slow match, holds the lint stock in his right hand, extending his arm downwards; at the word *fire* he brings the lint, stock up, forming a semicircle, by which the fire of the match is quickened; briskly moves up his right foot, and places the heel of it in the hollow of the left: On the contrary, if firing with port-fire, he carries the lint stock on the left arm, and the port-fire stock in his right

³ If powder be used for priming, or even short tubes, the best way is to prick the cartridges; except, perhaps, at a critical moment, when a quick fire is necessary. When paper cartridges are used, the employment of the priming wire is indispensable.

hand, considerably depressed; when the word *fire* is given, he brings up the port-fire to the tube or priming, and so gradually, as, to, prevent any damage from the burning drops of composition ; care should be taken not to put either the lint stock, or , port-fire stock, directly over the vent. The gunner when he is about to fire, steps obliquely to the left, to clear himself of the wheel in the recoil; and stands with his body to the front.

The instant the piece is discharged, the gunner of the right tends the vent, the rest of the men stand ready to obey their orders, and to renew their several duties.

When the men, are well practiced in this exercise, a few seconds only intervene between the first and last of the preceding motions ; they will load and fire without a repetition of the several words of command, the words *To action! – or Charge!* will put all in motion.

If it becomes necessary to *advance* or *retreat*, the following words of command and duties occur:

1. Forward! Shorten – Bricoles!

At these words, 1 and 2, as also the two gunners, shorten their *bricoles* to one half their length, by hooking the extreme ends in the rings ; 3 hooks on the bucket; 1, 3, and 5, and the gunner of the right, hook their traces with the left hand; 2, 4, and 6, and the gunner of the left, with the right hand; 1 and 3 to the right breast hook; 2 and 4 to the left breast hook ; 5 and the gunner of the right, to the right washer hook; 6 and the gunner of the left, to the left washer hook. Those with short *bricoles* put the *doubling* of their traces on the hooks of the piece. If necessary, the two gunners will assist the section officer at the trail handspikes, and dispense with the use of their *bricoles*.

2. March!

The whole front the enemy, and march as they are directed. The limbers and ammunition waggons likewise advance, following the direction of their respective pieces and preserving their distances as near as possible. If the ammunition box is not restored to its place between the cheeks of the carriage, it must be carried by 5 and 6.

3. Halt! To Action!

The bucket and *bricoles* are unhooked, the men resume their posts, and the piece is made ready for actions before.

4. Retreat!

5 hooks on the bucket; the men on the right of the piece face to the left about, those on the left of the piece face to the right about: each one instantly, throws the strap of his *bricole* over his head, shifts it to the opposite shoulder, and hooks his trace with the opposite hand; 1 and 3 to the right .washer hook, 2, and 4 to the left washer hook; 5 to the right, and 6 to the left retreating hooks of the trail. In case, however, it may be necessary for 5 and 6 to carry the ammunition box, the two gunners will either take their place at the retreating hooks, or resume their former stations at the trail handspikes.

5. March!

The whole, with their backs turned to the muzzle, march briskly forward in the direction pointed out, observing the greatest silence. The limbers and ammunition waggons wheel about, and precede the pieces in the retreat endeavoring at the same time to preserve their respective distances.

6. Halt! To—Action!

The two gunners face to the right and left about; 3 unhooks the bucket: the men with *bricoles* face inwards, and unhook their traces; instantly shift the straps of their *bricoles* to the opposite shoulders, and then take their respective positions at the piece. The rest as before explained.

To the preceding *exercise*, it may not be amiss to add the following observations. According to modern improvements, the Artillery in time of action, though acting in *concert* with the Infantry, is so far detached from it, as to assume what are called batteries of apposition on the flanks, especially when in a situation to enfilade the enemy's line and the movements and evolutions of either of these arms are not permitted to impede or embarrass those of the other. If the ground will admit, and an enfilade on the part of the enemy be not apprehend, the line in time of action usually resembles one side of a regular fortification, the Infantry forming the curtain, and the Artillery the flanks of the bastions ; or there may be as many curtains supported by these flanks of bastions, as there are battalions or brigades, It generally happens, however, that if the Infantry advance or retreat, the Artillery must do the same, as a *concert* of movement is necessary to ensure success or safety, and as the separation of the two arms, if they stand in need of mutual support, would expose one or the other to destruction. In most cases, therefore, the Artillery must be governed in its maneuvers by the words of command given by the commanding officer of the line, repeated by each commanding officer of a batter or half battery.

If an army, or one or more divisions of an army, be drawn up in order of battle, each brigade ought, to have at least six pieces attached to it, divided into two half

batteries, one on each flank. As soon as the word *To – Action!* is pronounced, the Artillery commences firing, without regard to the infantry; always directing an *oblique* or *diagonal* fire, which is more destructive than one perpendicular to the enemy's line ; the latter seldom does much execution, while the former, when well directed, often sweeps down whole platoons. If the brigade either advances or retreats, the batteries must generally do the same; though, during the movement, they seize eligible positions to throw in their fire with effect, and are not obliged to dress with the line.

If, while advancing, the words *Halt! To – action!* be given, the men at the pieces instantly unhook their *bricoles*, assume their positions, and renew the fire; always taking care to load, if necessary, while on the advance. At the word *Retreat!* the men at the pieces instantly face to the right and left about, shift their *bricoles* as before directed, hook them to the pieces, and at the word *March!* drag them to the limbers in the rear, where if necessary, they unhook their *bricoles*, and extend the *prolonge*⁴. If it be proper to fire on the retreat, the officer orders *Halt! To – Action!* the men resume their positions; and as soon as the firing ceases, the pieces instantly move on again by means of the horses, and are re-loaded as quick as possible. The loading and firing is repeated as long as the brigade continues to retreat, or as long as the enemy is within reach of the shot. If, during the retreat, the Infantry wheels about and renews the action, the words *Remove-Prolonge! To -Action!* will be given, when the limbers will be taken to their stations in the rear, the men assume their positions, and commence the fire. , If after the battle, the brigade continues its march, and there be no enemy to oppose, the *prolonge* may be restored to its place, and the pieces limbered

⁴ **Prolonge** \Pro*longe", n. [F. See Prolong.] (Field Artillery) A rope with a hook and a toggle, sometimes used to drag a gun carriage or to lash it to the limber, and for various other purposes.