

## Stack Arms

### Eliminating Fumbling in the Federal Ranks

By Paul Calloway

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Oh, but our fumbling with rifle stacks in the ranks can be frustrating. Chiefly it's caused from assimilating several distinct groups into a single unit, all of whom are using different drill manuals and all having learned this or that in a separate but functional way. Functional is not always authentic.

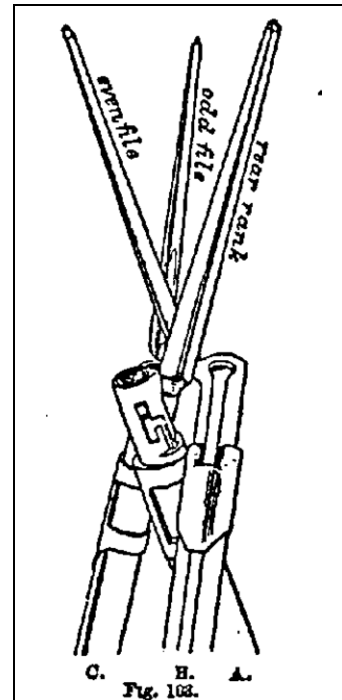
First, let's get some important business out of the way. In the 1855 manual written by W. J. Hardee, the only guidance he provides for stacking arms refers to 2-banders with rammers.<sup>2</sup> There is no description for using bayonets at all. Hardee did subsequently describe a stack, in his revised 1862 manual, which is now fashionably referred to as the "Kentucky-Swing" or "Ellsworth Stack." There's nothing wrong with this way of doing things as it is thoroughly documented.

In this article, however, we're going to direct our attention to the *Casey* stack, which differs from the "Kentucky-Swing" in the manner in which you lock the shanks. I like that old saying, "When in Rome do as the Romans do." I think you'll usually find that the Romans want you doing the traditional *Casey* stack in most Federal reenacting organizations because it's the easiest to document and prove. Accordingly, *G.H. Thomas' Invincibles* (GHTI) requires knowledge and execution of the *Casey* stack. You'll see below that *Casey* prescribes a stack almost identical to what *Gilham* prescribes in 1860, what *Baxter* describes in 1861 and what Winfield Scott prescribes in his pre-war manual of 1835.

Let's see what these manuals have to say about this stack.

### **From Casey:**

425. At the command stack arms, the front-rank man of every even-numbered file will pass his piece before him, seizing it with the left hand above the middle band, and place the butt behind and near the right foot of the man next on the left the barrel turned to the front. At the same time the front-rank man of every odd-numbered file will pass his piece before him, seizing it with the left hand below the middle band, and hand it to the man next on the left; the latter will receive it with the right hand two inches above the middle band, throw the butt about thirty-two inches to the front, opposite to his right shoulder, inclining the muzzle toward him, and lock the shanks of the two bayonets: the lock of this second piece toward the right, and its shank above that of the first piece. The rear-rank man of every even file will



**Figure 1: Bayonet Stack – image from Baxter's Drill manual. Figure 103.**

"A is the front rank (even file) man's piece, the butt of which is placed outside of, and near to his left foot - B, is the odd file's (front rank) piece, its butt placed thirty-six inches in front of the right heel of the even file - C, is the rear rank man's piece, (even file,) the butt of which is placed between the feet of the odd file, (Front rank)."<sup>1</sup>

*project his bayonet forward, and introduce it (using both hands) between and under the shanks of the two other bayonets. He will then abandon the piece to his file leader, who will receive it with the right hand under the middle band, bring the butt to the front, holding up his own piece and the stack with the left hand, and place the butt of this third piece between the feet of the man next on the right, the S plate to the rear. The stack thus formed, the rear-rank man of every odd file will pass his piece into his left hand, the barrel turned to the front and sloping the bayonet forward, rest it on the stack.<sup>3</sup>*

### **From Gilham:**

*17. At this command, the front rank man of every even numbered file will pass his musket before him, seizing it with the left hand above the middle band, and place the butt behind and near the right foot of the man next on the left, the barrel turned to the front.*

*At the same time the front rank man of every odd numbered file will pass his musket before him, seizing it with the left hand below the middle band, and hand it to the man next on the left. The latter will receive it with the right hand two inches above the middle band, throw the butt about thirty-two inches to the front, opposite to his right shoulder, incline the muzzle towards him, and lock the shanks of the two bayonets. The lock of this second musket is towards the right, and its shank above that of the first musket. The rear rank man of every even file will project his bayonet forward, and introduce it (using both hands) between and under the shanks of the two other bayonets. He will then abandon the musket to his file leader, who will receive it with the right hand under the middle band, bring the butt to the front, holding up his own musket and the stack with the left hand, and place the butt of this third musket between the feet of the man next on the right, the S plate to the rear.*

*The stack thus formed, the rear rank man of every odd file will pass his musket into his left hand, the barrel turned to the front and, sloping the bayonet forward, rest it on the stack.<sup>4</sup>*

### **From Scott:**

*415. At the command stack arms, the front rank man of every even numbered file will pass his piece before him, seizing it with the left hand above the middle band, and place the butt behind and near the right foot of the man next on the left, the barrel turned to the front. At the same time, the front rank man of every odd numbered file will pass his piece before him, seizing it with the left hand below the middle band, and hand it to the man next on the left; the latter will receive it with the right hand two inches above the middle band, throw the butt about thirty-two inches to the front, opposite to his right shoulder, inclining the muzzle towards him, and lock the shanks of the two bayonets: the lock of this second piece towards the right, and its shank above that of the first piece. The rear rank man of every even file will project his bayonet forward, and introduce it (using both hands) between and under the shanks of the other two bayonets. He will then abandon the piece to his file leader, who will receive it with the right hand under the middle band, bring the butt to the front, holding up his own piece and the stack with his left hand, and place the butt of this third piece between the feet of the man next on the right, the S plate to the rear. The stack thus formed, the rear rank man of every odd file will pass his piece into his left hand, the barrel turned to the front, and, sloping the bayonet forward, rest it on the stack.<sup>5</sup>*

### **From Baxter:**

*At this command, the front man of every even numbered file, will pass his piece before him, seize it with the left hand above the middle band, turn it barrel to the front, and place the butt outside of and near to the left foot, nearly opposite the right shoulder. At the same time the front rank man of every odd numbered file, will pass his piece before him into his left hand a little below the middle band, hand opposite to and at the height of the elbow which should be close to the body.*

*The even numbered files of the front rank will then seize the piece of the odd file on his right with the thumb*

*and first two fingers of the right hand, two inches above the middle band, carry, without turning it, opposite his right shoulder, swing the butt to the front and set it thirty-six inches in front of the right heel, barrel towards you, lock the shanks of both bayonets and press muzzles to the right. Every even numbered file of the rear rank will project his bayonet forward and insert it through the opening below the shanks of the other two, bringing the three shanks together without shock, holding his piece with both hands and advancing his right foot for that purpose. When the front rank man of his file seizes it with his right hand between the tail and middle bands, brings it to the front and places the butt between the feet of the man on his right, (Fig. 103). Every odd numbered file of the rear rank will pass his piece into his left hand, barrel turned to the front, and place it against the stack, advancing his left foot for that purpose.<sup>6</sup>*

## **Breaking it down: Stack ARMS!**

Since the manuals are all so similar, I will be quoting from *Casey* except as otherwise noted. Baxter wrote his manual as much for the individual volunteer as he did for the instructing officers, and therefore we find that Baxter provides more description in the various movements. You'll note the differences in the following descriptions - those additions are in brackets. I provide this not to confuse the various manuals, but rather to add more depth to the description of the rifle stack. Example. [Baxter: "barrel to the front".]

### **Position 1: Front Rank Two (First Action)**

*"The front rank man of every even numbered file will pass his musket before him, seizing it with the left hand [Baxter: "barrel to the front"] and place the butt behind and near the right foot of the man next on the left, the barrel turned to the front. [Baxter: "nearly opposite the right shoulder."]*

2	1
2	1

Practice this in front of a mirror. You're at attention, left hand along the seam of your trousers, rifle at order arms place correctly forward and about one inch off your right foot. It should be leaning comfortably into the swell of your arm. At the command to stack arms, grasp the rifle right where your hand is resting on it and sweep it up in a crisp manner in front of you. From there, the instructions in the manual couldn't be more clear, "*seizing it with the left hand above the middle band, and place the butt behind and near the right foot of the man next on the left, the barrel turned to the front.*"

### **Position 2: Front Rank One**

*"At the same time the front rank man of every odd numbered file will pass his musket before him, seizing it with the left hand below the middle band, [Baxter: "hand opposite to and at the height of the elbow which should be close to the body"] and hand it to the man next on the left. "*

2	1
2	1

That's it. Mr. Front Rank One, you're done with this stack. That's all you do.

### Position 3: Front Rank Two (Second Action)

*"The latter will receive it with the right hand two inches above the middle band [Baxter: "of the odd file on his right with the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand, without turning it"], throw the butt about thirty-two inches to the front [Baxter: 36 inches], opposite to his right shoulder, incline the muzzle towards him, and lock the shanks of the two bayonets. [Baxter: and press muzzles to the right]."*

2	1
2	1

The real key here is the 32 inch placement (36 in *Baxter*). Too shallow and the stack will not be stable, too deep and you'll trip the guys in the next camp over. Measure out 32" and get a feeling for the distance. As long as you're hitting near that magic number, the stack should prove strong.

If there's any question where the butt of the front rank one's rifle is to be placed, *Baxter* fleshes this point out in his description of Figure 103, "in front of the right heel of the even file."

You're now holding your own rifle with your left hand and the Front Rank One rifle with your right, stand up to your fullest height possible and let the Rear Rank Two pass his bayonet into the stack underneath your armpit. *Baxter* indicates we should press the muzzles to the right, presumably to remove the natural obstruction of the Front Rank Two's body. The manual would tell us if you're supposed to release your grip on that first rifle. It does not. Maintain your grip until the Rear Rank One has inserted his bayonet into the stack all the way to the shank.

### Position 4: Rear Rank Two

*"The rear-rank man of every even file will project his bayonet forward, and introduce it (using both hands) between and under [Baxter: "below"] the shanks of the two other bayonets [Baxter: "bringing the three shanks together without shock"] [Baxter: "holding his piece with both hands, and advancing the right foot for that purpose."] He will then abandon the piece to his file leader, "*

2	1
2	1

Note that the manual specifically describes the Rear Rank Two as using both hands and *Baxter* specifically indicates bringing the three shanks together without shock. Don't go into your fencer stance and try to pierce the target with just your right hand. You're not Errol Flynn, you're a Federal soldier. Do it right and do it crisply but don't bang them around. *Baxter* also indicates the Rear Rank Two should be "advancing the right foot" for the purpose of bringing the three shanks together.

### Position 5: Front Rank Two (Third Action)

*"[The file leader] will receive the rifle with the right hand under the middle band [Baxter: "between the tail and middle band], bring the butt to the front, holding up his own piece and the stack with the left hand, and place the butt of this third piece between the feet of the man next on the right, the S plate to the rear."*

2	1
2	1

Once the Rear Rank Two has placed his bayonet into the stack, release the *Front Rank One* rifle with your right hand. Reach around to the Rear Rank Two rifle, seize it about the second band. Your left hand is still on your own piece. Swing the Rear Rank Two piece into place. If need be, you can lean the entire stack to the left in order to swing the Rear Rank Two into place. Front Rank Two, stand up, put both hands by the seams of your trousers. You're done with this stack.

### Position 6: Rear Rank One

*"The stack thus formed, the rear-rank man of every odd file will pass his piece into his left hand, [Baxter: "advancing his left foot for that purpose"] the barrel turned to the front and sloping the bayonet forward, rest it on the stack."*

2	1
2	1

Note that it says the bayonet is sloping toward the stack, which puts the butt of the rifle in perfect alignment with the butt of the Rear Rank Two rifle on the outside right of the stack. *Baxter* indicates the Rear Rank One should advance the left foot when placing his rifle on the stack, in much the same manner the Rear Rank Two advances his right when inserting his bayonet into the stack.

### **Position 7: Front Rank Two (Keep your hands to yourself!)**

Note in the above description from *Casey*, the Front Rank Two man DOES NOT receive the rifle from the Rear Rank One. The Rear Rank One places his own piece on the stack. Keep your hands to yourself.

2	1
2	1

### **Position 8: All Files**

Take the position of the soldier. Upright, at attention, hands to your sides – little fingers along the seams of your trousers.

It is my hope that the above description of the stacking of arms will clear up some of the confusion of stacking arms.

### **Take Arms:**

Sir Isaac Newton said, “What goes up must come down” and that certainly remains the case even in the military.

### ***From Casey:***

*At this command, the rear-rank man of every odd-numbered file will withdraw his piece from the stack; the front-rank man of every even file will seize his own piece with the left hand and that of the man on his right with his right hand, both above the lower band; the rear-rank man of the even file will seize his piece with the right hand below the lower band (if the rifle musket be used the piece will be seized at the middle band); these two men will raise up the stack to loosen the rammers, or shanks of the bayonets. The front-rank man of every odd file will facilitate the disengagement of the rammers, if necessary, by drawing them out slightly with the left hand, and will receive his piece from the hand of the man next on his left; the four men will retake the position of the soldier at order arms.<sup>7</sup>*

### ***From Gilham:***

*At this command, the rear rank man of every odd numbered file will withdraw his piece from the stack; the front rank man of every even file will seize his own piece with the left hand, and that of the man on his right with his right hand, both above the lower band; the rear rank man of the even file will seize his piece with the right hand below the lower band; these two men will raise up the stock to loosen the rammers or bayonets; the front rank man of every odd file will facilitate the disengagement of the rammers, if necessary, by drawing them out slightly with the left hand, and will receive his piece from the hand of the man next on his left; the four men will retake the position of the soldier at order arms<sup>8</sup>*

### ***From Scott:***

*416. To break ranks, and to resume arms, the same commands will be given in this, as in the preceding case; but at the command take arms the rear rank man of every odd file will withdraw his piece from the stack; the front rank man of every even file will seize his own piece with the left hand, and that of the man on his right with the right hand; the rear rank man of every even file will seize his piece with the right hand at the middle band, advancing for the purpose the hollow of his right foot as far as the right heel of his file leader; these two men will raise up the stack to loosen the shanks; the front rank man of every odd file will*

receive his piece from the hand of the man next on the left, and the four men will retake the position of the soldier at ordered arms.<sup>9</sup>

### **From Baxter:**

*At this command the front rank man of every odd file will remove his piece from the stack - the front rank man of every even file will seize his own piece with his left hand, and that of the man on his right with his right hand, both below the middle bands. The rear rank man of every even file will advance the hollow of his right foot towards the right heel of his file leader, and with his right hand seize his own piece below the middle band - both men will raise the stack, close together, turn the knuckles in, which movement unlocks the bayonets readily - the front rank man will pass the piece in his right hand over to the man on his right, and all taking the position of ordered arms.*

### **Breaking it Down: Take ARMS!**

#### **Position 1: Rear Rank Two – the so-called Leaner**

*“The rear-rank man of every odd-numbered file will withdraw his piece from the stack”*

2	1
2	1

[*Baxter* indicates that the Front Rank (One) man should remove his piece from the stack, that’s clearly impossible without collapsing the stack so it seems apparent this is a transcription error and he intended to indicate the Rear Rank One should remove his piece (the leaner).]

*Baxter* had indicated when placing the “leaner” that the Rear Rank One should advance the left foot – he makes no similar notation for removing the piece. One might assume however that if the Rear Rank One had difficulty reaching his piece that it would be appropriate to advance the left foot when retrieving.

#### **Position 2: Front Rank Two**

*“the front-rank man of every even file will seize his own piece with the left hand and that of the man on his right with his right hand, both above the lower band”*

2	1
2	1

The Front Rank Two grabs his own piece with his left hand and reaches around the piece on the right to reach the piece of the Front Rank One (the foremost piece.) He grabs both pieces above the lower band (*Casey* and *Gilham*.) *Scott* does not specify where he grips the pieces. *Baxter* indicates he should take hold “*below the middle bands*.”

**Position 3: Rear Rank Two**

*“the rear-rank man of the even file will seize his piece with the right hand below the lower band (if the rifle musket be used the piece will be seized at the middle band)”*

2	1
2	1

At the same time the Rear Rank Two seizes his piece (the piece between the feet of the front rank one) below the lower band, however, *Casey* adds (if the rifle musket be used the piece will be seized at the middle band.) Yes even the middle band is still a bit of a reach, which is perhaps why *Scott* and *Baxter* add to *“advance the hollow of his right foot towards the right heel of his file leader.”*

**Position 4: Front Rank Two and Rear Rank Two Together**

*“these two men will raise up the stack [Gilham: “stock”] to loosen the rammers, or shanks of the bayonets.”*

2	1
2	1

*Baxter* once again adds some flourish to this movement by indicating that the men should *“close together, turn the knuckles in, which movement unlocks the bayonets readily”*

**Position 5: Front Rank One**

*“The front-rank man of every odd file will facilitate the disengagement of the rammers, if necessary, by drawing them out slightly with the left hand, and will receive his piece from the hand of the man next on his left”*

2	1
2	1

Seeing how we so rarely stack with rammers, the Front Rank One will principally be simply receiving his piece from the Front Rank Two in this step. One important thing to note however, recall how the stack was initially executed - the Front Rank One was to pass his piece to his left by *“seizing it with the left hand below the middle band”*, one may presume that in executing this position in reverse that the front rank one is likewise *receiving* his piece from the Front Rank Two with his left hand.

**Position 7: All Files**

Take the position of order arms.

I believe that is as faithful a reconstruction of Stack ARMS and Take ARMS as is possible using the manuals available to us. If more information comes to light in the months and years preceding this article, we would certainly make appropriate corrections.



If you feel you have information that might shed more light on this maneuver of arms, please share them so that we may all benefit.

Let's summarize the major aspects of Stack ARMS and the Take ARMS in which we often see mistakes:

When Stacking Arms:

- ❑ The Front Rank One passes his piece to the Front Rank Two, he does not cast it out himself.
- ❑ The Front Rank Two casts the piece out 32 inches (36 *Baxter*) and locks the bayonets.
- ❑ Occasionally, I've seen Front Rank Two holding the stack up at this point by seizing the bayonets about the shanks. I really don't see any justification for this, the manual certainly doesn't prescribe it. Maintain your grip on your own rifle with your left hand with your right-hand about the foremost piece. After the Rear Rank Two has inserted his bayonet all the way to the shank, reach to control his piece.
- ❑ The Rear Rank Two uses both hands to place his bayonet into the stack (without shock) and then relinquishes the piece to the Front Rank Two.
- ❑ The Front Rank Two sets the stack and is now done. He does NOT receive the piece from the Rear Rank One. Stand up and put your hands along the seams of your trousers.
- ❑ The Rear Rank One places the piece himself on the stack, bayonet sloping toward the stack, which puts the butt of the rifle in perfect alignment with the butt of the Rear Rank Two rifle. If necessary, he may advance his left foot (*Baxter*).

When taking arms:

- ❑ The Rear Rank One retrieves his own rifle from the stack on the command "Take." If necessary, I believe he may advance his left foot to accomplish this.
- ❑ The Front Rank Two seizes his own piece with his left and the Front Rank One piece with his right while the Rear Rank Two seizes his own piece at the middle band (*Baxter*: advancing his right foot). They raise the stack together.
- ❑ If the stack does not break immediately when raised, the Front Rank Two can turn his knuckles inward (toward one another), which breaks the lock handily.

Simply using the manual, and with a degree of practice, we should all be able to execute the *Casey*, *Scott* and *Gilham* stacks almost without effort. As with anything, it's always best to listen to your friends with a smile, but refer to the manuals as a matter of habit. Your friend's intentions are good, but as with most of us, his recollection of the manual may not be – that's why they wrote these things down.

### **A Conversation with Mr. Christopher Daley:**

As with any research project I embark on, I think it prudent to ask others whose own experience and research might lend more light on a given subject. Christopher Daley of

the Southern Guard Living History Association (SGLHA) had a few interesting comments regarding the drill manuals.

“It’s crucial that the Captain dresses the company right before stacking and that the orderly makes sure the rear rank is precisely 13”. I ask them to pretend that someone has nailed their heels to the ground. None of this will work otherwise and when it’s dressed properly, you can plot the stars with a straight line of musket stacks.

Once the stack is formed, the front rank will feel a bit uncomfortable with how close they are, but when all the muskets are in place, their faces should be pretty close. Breaking ranks once the stacks are formed can be tricky as the Front Rank 2 (F2) musket is essentially behind him and he’ll need to take care when

Resuming ranks shouldn’t be a problem as Front Rank 1 (F1) will take the position of the soldier with his feet broken at a 45 degree angle on either side of Rear Rank 2’s (R2) musket and F2 will place his left heel near the butt of his own musket. Providing you don’t have a company of Jonahs, there should be no need for the Captain to redress the company.”<sup>10</sup>

### **File Closers:**

The manuals of *Casey*, *Baxter*, *Gilham*, and *Scott* are curiously uninformative in regard to the handling of pieces by file-closers. However, Mark Jaeger, of the Purdue University Graduate School, has located an 1866 National Guard, State of New York (NGSNY) drill manual offering some guidance on the subject. The author, Colonel George M. Baker of the Seventy-Fourth Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., drew most of his inspiration from *Casey* but added some additional twists, particularly when addressing the role of file closers while stacking arms.

#### **From Baker - Stack ARMS: File Closers**

*Once arms have been stacked, there is a FIFTH MOTION in which "Number one, rear rank, and file closers rest their pieces on the stack."*<sup>11</sup>

#### **From Baker - Take ARMS: File Closers**

*"At the command **take**, the file closers and number one, rear rank, will retake their pieces; number one of the front rank grasps his piece with his right hand under the middle band; number two, front rank, grasps the piece in advance under the middle band with his right hand, and the piece to the left with his left hand, under the middle band. (First motion.) At the command **arms**, numbers one and two, front rank, raise the stack and bring the butts together. (Second motion.) Number two, front rank, gives number two, rear rank, his piece, and all assume the position of order arms."*<sup>12</sup>

### **Breaking it down: File Closers**

Baker’s manual was not published until early 1866 but it is almost certainly based upon his field service in the 21st New York Volunteer Infantry, in 1861-1862, his practical experience as a NGSNY company commander whose unit was federalized during the Gettysburg Campaign, and—most importantly—his day-to-day familiarity with the “good, bad, and ugly” of Silas Casey’s manual. Baker is clearly indicating that file closers’ pieces are to be leaned upon the stacks on the main line – presumably the outermost stacks. He further adds an additional motion in Stack ARMS cueing file

closers as to when they should place their pieces on the stack. Then, when taking up arms, there is a “pregnant pause” between the preparatory order of Take and the execution command of ARMS. It is during this pause that file closers move to the front, quickly retrieve their weapons, and return to their places in the rear.



Figure 2: Library of Congress Photo: “[Petersburg, Va. Row of stacked Federal rifles; houses beyond]”<sup>13</sup>

### **Furthermore on File Closers:**

Mr. Daley included a note for file closers, “When you are inspecting a column of companies, the file closers are to come out 5 paces in front of the company.” This is seen in this photo available at the *Library of Congress* of Federal troops about Petersburg. Pay particular attention to where the two stacks of rifles are, stacked independently of the company front. Of interest, I believe the fourth piece is clearly visible in

the first stack – the second stack is a little more difficult to make out. Clearly the file-closers have stacked their pieces separate from the company and have not simply leaned on to the outermost stacks. This seems to run counter to Scott’s instruction in paragraph 417 and certainly conflicts with Baxter.

*From Scott:*

*“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 (See No. 840.) to re-form ranks.”<sup>14</sup>*

Mr. Daley’s statement on File Closers while in column of companies is clearly supported by the Library of Congress photo and is a subject deserving of more attention.

### **Gilham’s Arcane Knowledge:**

It’s interesting to note Mr. Daley also pointed out that *Gilham* does not even give a command to ground arms. The clear implication being that the only way to ‘let go’ of your musket while in ranks is with the Stack ARMS command.

## **Other items of instruction important to stacking arms:**

### ***Fix Bayonet:***

*One time and three motions.*

*197. (First motion.) Grasp the piece with the left hand at the height of the shoulder, and detach it slightly from the shoulder with the right hand.*

You're seizing it at the height of the shoulder, which will be different for each person - roughly the middle band.

*198. (Second motion.) Quit the piece with the right hand, lower it with the left hand, opposite the middle of the body, and place the butt between the feet without shock; the rammer to the rear, the barrel vertical, the muzzle three inches from the body; seize it with the right hand at the upper band, and carry the left hand reversed to the handle of the bayonet. If the rifle musket be used (emphasis mine) the barrel will be inclined forward, the muzzle eight inches from the body, and the left hand reversed to the handle of the bayonet.*

As a matter of clarification, you're turning your left hand 180° in a clockwise direction and grasping the socket of the bayonet with your thumb and index finger down and flush against the shank of the bayonet.

*199. (Third motion.) Draw the bayonet from the scabbard and fix it on the extremity of the barrel; seize the piece with the left hand, the arm extended, the right hand at the upper band. If the rifle musket be used the clasp will be turned as soon as the bayonet is fixed upon the barrel.<sup>15</sup>*

Note that if you're having difficulty with your bayonet sticking and having to use both hands to free it, grease it down and it should spring more freely.

### ***Unfix Bayonet:***

*One time and three motions.*

*209. (First and second motions.) The same as the first and second motions of fix bayonet, except that, at the end of the second command, ...turn the clasp of the bayonet by pressing against it with the thumb of the left hand, and then grasp the socket of the bayonet with the left hand, the shank resting between the thumb and fore-finger, the, thumb pointed up.*

*210. (Third motion.) Wrest off the bayonet, turn it to the right, bringing the point of the bayonet down; change the position of the hand without quitting hold of the shank of the socket,*

This requires just a bit of dexterity and some practice. Hold your bayonet point up with the US stamp facing you. The thumb is laying across top of the shank, the fingers beneath it and gripped around the socket, your knuckles are opposite you on the socket. Your palm is in. "Wrest off the bayonet", turn the point down clockwise and then change your hand position. Essentially you need to reverse your hand position on the socket without dropping the bayonet and without assisting with the right hand. It seems more natural to let the bayonet fall over in a counter-clockwise position, and I've been instructed to do it that way on a number of occasions, but Casey specifically tells us to do it in a clockwise movement.

*return the bayonet to the scabbard, and seize the piece with the left hand, the arm extended.<sup>16</sup>*



**Figure 4: From Casey, No. 209.**

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- <sup>1</sup> Colonel D. W. C. Baxter. *The Volunteer's Manual*. King & Baird Publishers. Philadelphia. 1861. Fig. 103.
- <sup>2</sup> Geoff Walden & Dom Dal Bello. *Manual of Arms for Infantry: A Re-examination Part II* by Camp Chase Gazette. April 1997.
- <sup>3</sup> Casey's Infantry Tactics, Vol. I, *The School of the Soldier*. 1862. para. 425-426.
- <sup>4</sup> Major William Gilham. *Manual of Instruction for the Volunteers and Militia of the United States With Numerous Illustrations* 1860. para. 17.
- <sup>5</sup> Major General Winfield Scott. *Infantry Tactics or Rules for the Exercise and Manoeuvres of the United States Infantry, New Edition*, U.S. Army. 1835. para. 415.
- <sup>6</sup> Baxter. *Volunteer's Manual*. Para.
- <sup>7</sup> Casey *Infantry Tactics*, para 197-199.
- <sup>8</sup> Gilham. *Manual of Instruction for the Volunteers* para. 19.
- <sup>9</sup> Scott. *Infantry Tactics or Rules* para. 413.
- <sup>10</sup> Daley, Christopher. Personal communication, September 5, 2003.
- <sup>11</sup> Baker, G. M. (Colonel, Seventy-fourth Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y.). *Manual of Arms[,] Bayonet Exercise and General Instructions for Officers and Soldiers of the National Guard[,] State of New York*. Buffalo. NY: J. M. Johnson Steam Press, 1866.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Civil War photographs, 1861-1865 / compiled by Hirst D. Milhollen and Donald H. Mugridge, Washington, D.C. : Library of Congress, 1977. No. 0433
- <sup>14</sup> Scott. *Infantry Tactics or Rules* para 417.
- <sup>15</sup> Casey *Infantry Tactics*, para 197-199.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid, para 209-210.