

## **The 149th Regiment: Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Bucktails**

A Living History Unit Honoring Our Bucktail Civil War Heroes

### **Understanding Facings and Company Drill**

In the next few Paragraphs I will try to explain the basic facings used by the Federal Army during the Civil War....

Once the soldier understands the facings and can execute the movements without thinking, he will be able to perform flank movements with ease..

We will start with understanding the three types of commands.

1. The command of caution, which is attention. This command is not always given.
2. The preparatory command, indicates the movement being executed.
3. The command of execution, such as march of halt, or in the Manual of Arms the word "arms" which means to execute the preparatory command.

### **The Formation of the company**

1. The soldiers will align themselves to the left shoulder of the Corporal from tallest to smallest facing the 1<sup>st</sup> SGT.

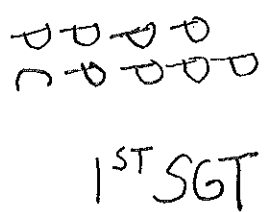
CPPPPPPPP

1<sup>st</sup> SGT

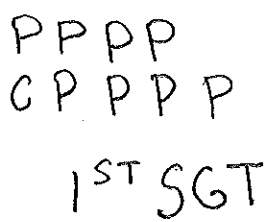
2. The SGT will then command to "Form Company to the Right, Right Face.'

On the command of execution, the company will turn right with the first soldier next to the Corporal turning right and "stepping up" and aligning himself with the

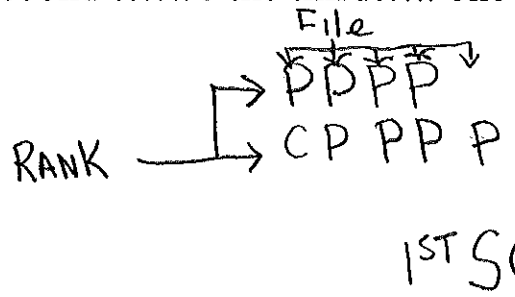
Corporal. The next soldier will turn right and the one after him will turn right and step in alignment with previous soldier. This will continue until all soldiers are in proper placement and have dressed.



3. Once concluded, the Sgt will then command "Front" the company in place will smartly turn left and face the SGT. This position is known as a Battlefront or a Company front.



4, The SGT will command "In each rank count 2's". The first file will say one the second ...two the third..... one the fourth 2.



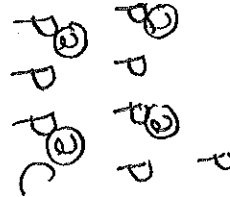
At this point the company is formed!!

- a. **It is important to remember who you are standing beside in front of or behind... they are your battle buddies.. when in a front you should always be by these people and in this order.**

## From A Front

The first and most common command is "Right, Face" Face being the command of execution, the ones will simply turn to the right with the rear rank ones sidestepping to the right and the two's will turn right and step between and to the right of the one's...*the SGT and Corporal will be saying "two's up"*

① ② ① ② ①  
P P P P  
C P P P P



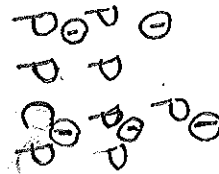
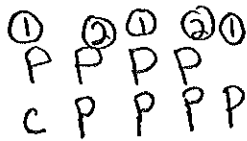
**It is important the one's do not move forward and the preceding ones must keep an interval in case of the command to front or while on the march, they are commanded to flank. The interval should be the width of a man standing in a battlefront.**

**When the soldier is put into this position, it is known as a column of fours.**

When the command to "Front" is given, the ones will turn left while the two's will turn left and return to their position in the company front.  
*The SGT and Corporal will be saying "Company front"*

*If there is a right there must be a left*

When the command to “Left Face” is given, the two’s will simply turn left with the rear ranks two’s side stepping to the left and the one’s turn left and step up and to the left of the two’s in front of them.....*the SGT or Corporal will be saying “one’s up”*



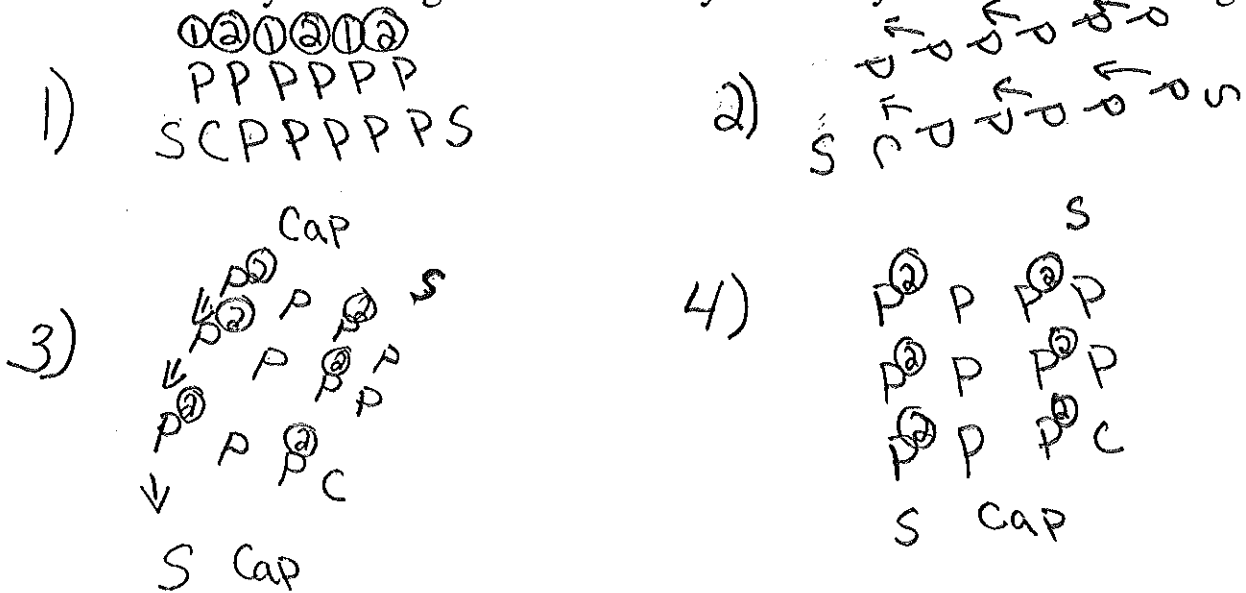
On the command to “Front” the two’s will turn right with the one’s turning right and stepping back into the original battlefront.....  
*The SGT and Corporal will be saying “Company front”*

**\*\*\*\*\* once the facings are mastered the commands to flank are the same as a facing except it is while on the march..**

**\*\*\* We will now discuss commands the Brigade uses most often\*\*\***

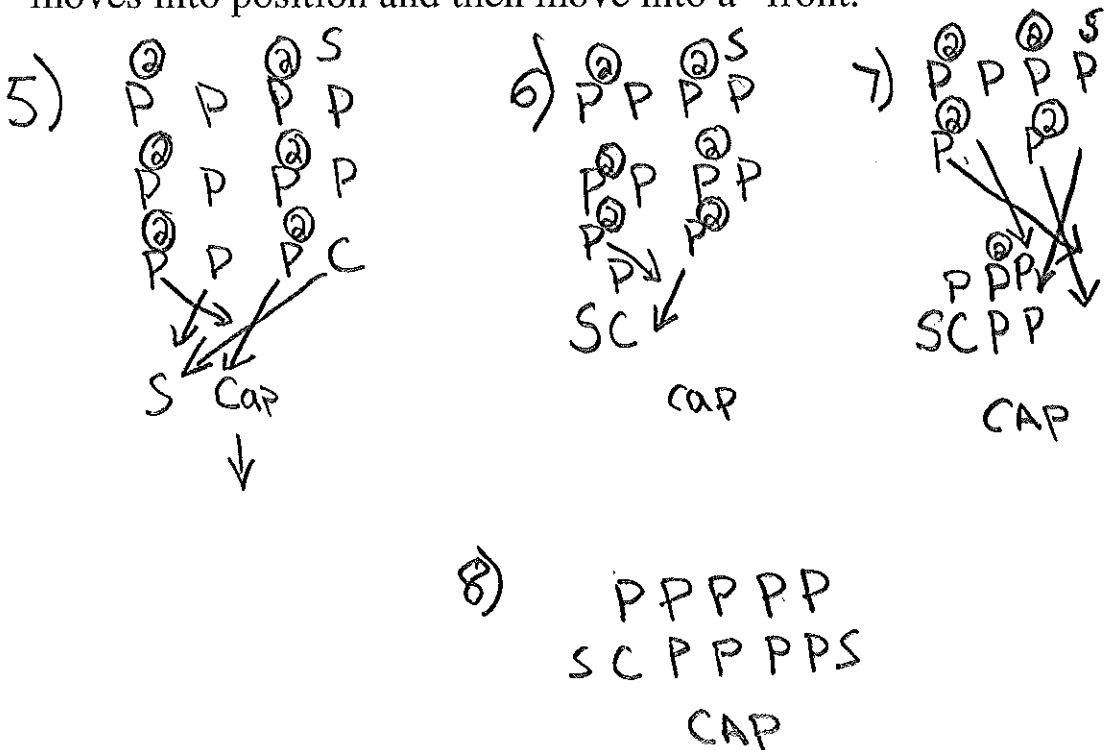
**By the right of companies and to the front, Right face, March.**

On the command MARCH the soldiers will execute, from a company front, A right face by breaking file and smartly march by files left... see diagram



**The soldier to the right of the column will guide behind the 1<sup>st</sup> SGT.**

From diagram 4, the next command will be company into line. Simply reforming the Company front. The rear rank 1's and 2's will wait until their filemate passes, moves into position and then move into a "front."

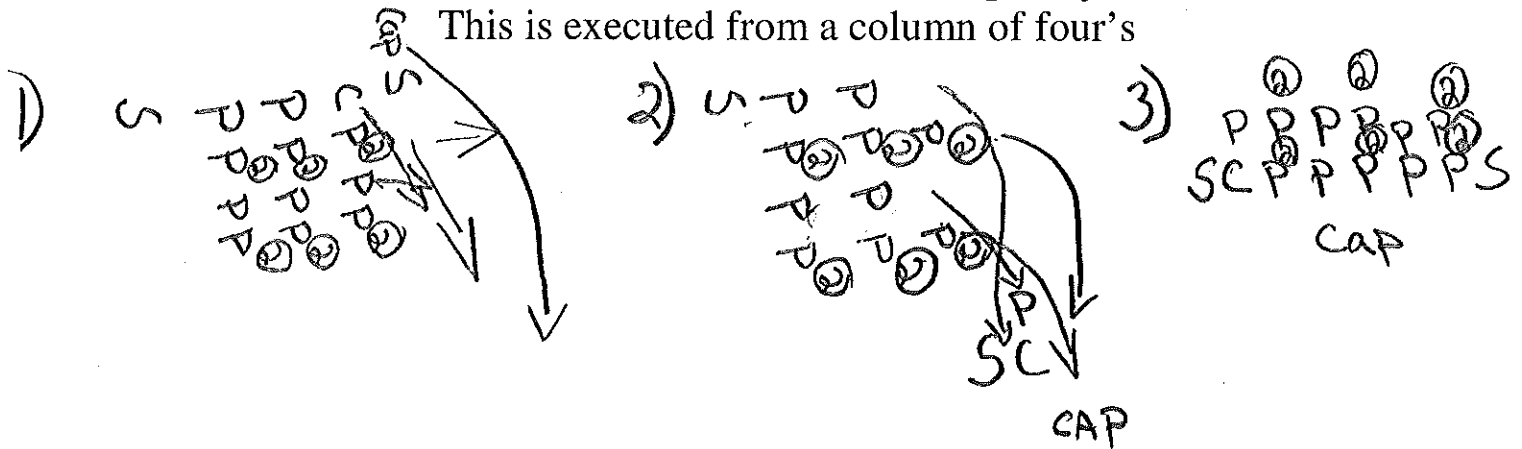


**By the left of companies and to the front, Left face, March.**

This is an easier execution. Simply Left face and by files left.

**One of my Personal Favorites... On the Right By files onto line.**

This is executed from a column of four's



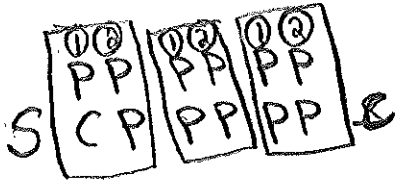
**\*\*\*Note- when hearing the phrase "*into line*"... the soldiers need to remember two things. 1) place the weapon at right shoulder shift**

**2) rear rank must wait until front rank in their four have passed before moving into position. This is called marking time.**

**Another key element is whenever a Halt is called the weapons will be placed at shoulder arms.**

## Skirmish Deployment

In order to explain Skirmish Deployment we must establish what a squad or Comrades in arms are:



This example shows a company front with three squads a 1<sup>st</sup> SGT, Corporal as the left guide.

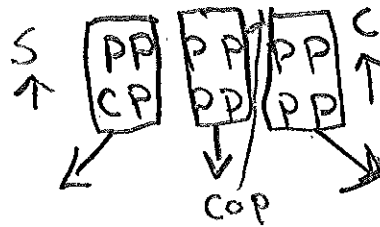
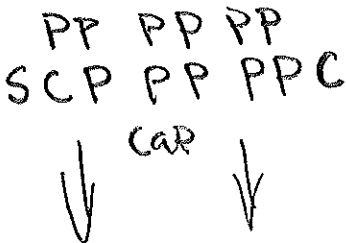
For teaching purposes we will teach a forward deployment. As we learn our jobs we will move on to flank deployments and other maneuvers.

A forward deployment can be done in three ways a right, left and center deployment.

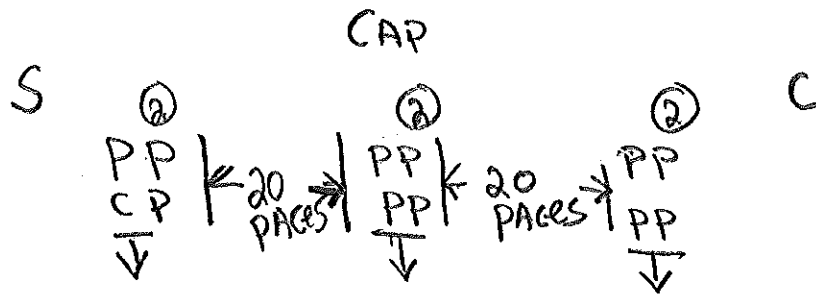
We will start with a Center File deployment.

- The command will be
- 1) Company as skirmishers
  - 2) On the center file take intervals
  - 3) March

the center file will continue at a normal cadence while the squads to the left and right will oblique march taking longer strides to achieve a twenty pace interval between squads. Once the interval is achieved, the squad will then march forward until the command halt is given.



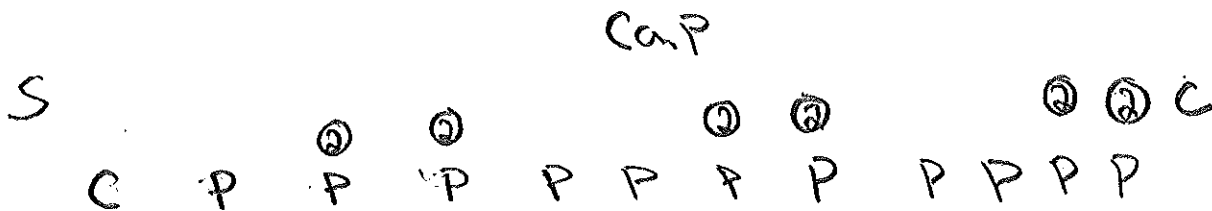
**\*\*Note the Sgt and Corporal, acting as left guide, will be controlling intervals and alignments.**



On the command Halt. The skirmishers will deploy in one line with the front number 2's standing fast. See diagram



The front 1's will move ten paces to the right with the rear 1's splitting the difference between the front 1 and front 2. The rear 2 will move five paces to the left of the front 2. see diagram



The NCO's will make sure the alignments are correct and the line is straight. It is also important to remember the deployment will be at the quick time.

After learning this deployment we will learn left and right intervals on the field we will also explain leap frog advance and retreat.

When we are ordered to withdraw we will reform the company in a company front in front of the Captain facing the enemy with the Captain to the rear.



## *Stacking Arms*

Every soldier should become proficient when stacking Arms. I have broken it down to simple terms in order to less confuse the soldier from Casey's Manual of Infantry Tactics.

Executing the stack will be the Front number two of each squad. A squad is made up of four soldiers (front and rear rank set of 1's and 2's.)

### **When the command to Stack Arms is given:**

Front number two will rotate weapon with the sight to the front and place the butt on the outside of his left foot.

He will then grasp the front number one weapon and cast the butt thirty inches in front of his right foot with the sight to the rear.

He will then lean his weapon to the other weapon with the flat of the bayonets touching. Once he feels the weight of the weapons on the number one weapon he will switch his hand position. Taking his left hand from his own and placing it on the number one weapon near the third band.

Once the right hand is removed he will turn his shoulders to the right and lean the weapons to the right.

The rear rank number two will thread his weapon with the flat up under the curve of the bayonets. Once he has the bayonet curve, of his weapon, into the other bayonets the front number two will then grasp the rear weapon with his right hand between the first and second band lean the stack left and swing the butt between the front rank and place it between the feet of the front number one.

The rear number one will pass his weapon forward and it will be placed on the stack.

### **To break the stack.**

The command "Take Arms" will be given.

On take the last weapon will be passed back to the owner and on arms the stack will be broken by reversing the order of stacking.