

Mountain Howitzer Drill

Intro

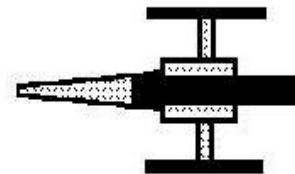
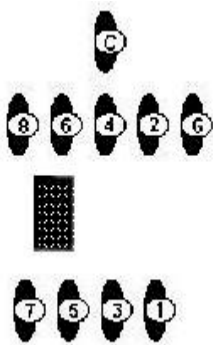
It has been reported that most Mountain Howitzers used in the eastern theater at this time are used in a static gun line of some type. With this in mind, the NCWAA standard drill remains the preferred core drill with adaptations for use with static Mountain Howitzers. This modified drill allows these small guns to be safely integrated into a standard gun line while keeping confusion to a minimum and maintaining a uniform look and drill down the line.

Note: For those guns that move with the infantry, there is an adaptation of the 1863 Mt. Howitzer drill, which is being used by some units and may be an alternative to the NCWAA std. drill. This drill will be discussed later.

REQUIRED DEVIATIONS

and adaptations of the standard drill.

I. When Marching To The Piece: The box may be carried by the cannoneers at the rear of the column. At the gun line, it is advanced to the front of the column and placed in line with the other boxes and limbers. Equipment is then distributed as per the std. drill.



II. Post on the Piece: This step follows the std. drill, with Numbers 1 and 3 advancing to the right side of the gun and Numbers 2 and 4 to the left side. It differs from the std. drill with the placement of 1 and 2. Numbers 1 and 2 locate themselves outside the gun wheels, in front of the axel, but behind the front edge of the wheel. *Numbers*

1 and 2 will be working over the wheels for all servicing of the piece.

III. Tend Vent or Piece: Number 3 steps inside the wheel and kneels, resting on the right knee. Number 3 now continues with his duties, as per the std. drill, while being careful to keep his face and body away from the vent.

Note: Placement of Number 4 remains the same as std. drill at this time.



IV. Worm: Number 2 steps up and works over the wheel to worm and service the piece. While being careful not to move in front of the muzzle at any time, the std. drill procedure is followed at this point,



V. Sponge: This step follows the std. drill **except** sponging and all servicing of the gun is done over the wheels.

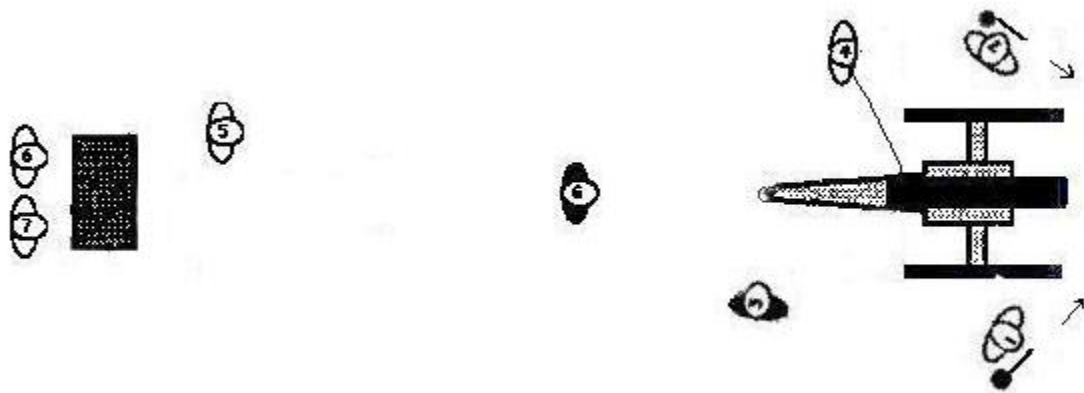
VI. Advance The Cartridge or Round: Number 2 remains outside the wheel at the same position used to worm and service the piece and works over the wheel to place

the cartridge into the muzzle. If the worm is to be used to indicate “round in” it will be placed on top of the wheel instead of the hub.

VII. Ram: While observing the std. safety precautions for ramming, Number 1 works over the wheel to ram the cartridge. After completing this step Number 1 places the ram on top of the wheel.

VIII. Ready the Piece: Number 3 punctures the cartridge and continues to work from the kneeling position. This step proceeds as normal, with Number 4 taking extra care that he does not expose any part of his body to the vent while the primer is being placed.

IX. The Piece is Ready and Prepare Positions: Number 3 stands and moves back to assume the std. prepared stance. Number 1 and 2 remove the implements from the wheel tops and move into their prepare stances. For added protection from primer splatter, 1 and 2 may take position with their backs to the guns vent. They should cover the ear facing the muzzle direction, lean toward the rear of the gun and look forward as normal.



X. Misfire Drill: Number 2 does not move inside the wheel area, but continues to work over the wheel and behind the muzzle.

Diminished Man Drill

Diminished Man Drill: The number of cannoneers necessary to operate a mountain howitzer on a pack carriage was six as detailed in The Drill link. Six men were not always easy to come by so procedures were established to run the piece with less:

Six men: As detailed in The Drill link. #5 alternates habitually with #2. #4 remains at the chests. The other numbers serves as with four men.

Five men: #4 attends the chests, and serves ammunition to #2, occasionally alternating with him. The other numbers serve as with four men.

Four men: The gunner commands, tends vent, points and pricks. #1 sponges. #2 serves ammunition, and loads (and in reenacting sponges/worms also). # 3 primes, and fires.

Three men: The gunner commands, tends vent, points, pricks, primes, and fires. #1 sponges. #2 serves ammunition, and loads (and in reenacting sponges/worms also).

Two men: The gunner commands, tends vent, points, pricks, primes, and fires. #1 sponges, serves ammunition, and loads (and in reenacting dry sponges/worms also).