

# THE OLD HICKORY Chronicle

NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD HICKORY ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTORY EDITION

## WELCOME! TO THE OLD HICKORY ASSOCIATION

By Mike Fox

**G**reetings and welcome to the introductory issue of the Old Hickory Association's newsletter. We hope that this publication will answer some of the most common questions about our group and our hobby. Of course, you should feel free to ask any member anything that you think of that is not covered here.

We have worked very hard in the past to build and maintain a close knit quality organization. We have an excellent reputation within our hobby, with museums and historical groups and with the general public. Our strength lies in the quality of the people in our outfit. You may recognize old friends from other time periods of living history when you look at the roster. Not only do we have a group of fun, easygoing and interesting people but we also have an extraordinary amount of collective living history experience. We have also benefited from new members who did not have any previous living history experience as their enthusiasm has inspired all of the "veterans!"

If you are willing to make the effort

there are many personal benefits to be gained by membership in our group. First, no matter how much you already know, I guarantee that you will learn a great deal more from the collective membership. You will also have the pleasure of sharing your knowledge with other members and the public. As a member of our group you will also have the opportunity to interact in a significant way with many actual W.W.II veterans, including members of the 30th Division. We have provided color guards and displays for several veterans groups. They are always very appreciative and generally willing to share a story or two about their experiences! Finally, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are doing your part to preserve and honor the history of the men and women who have made such great sacrifices for the freedom of our Country!

I hope you will take full

advantage of this opportunity and make the most of it! Welcome and we look forward to having you in the unit!

**THE OLD HICKORY  
ASSOCIATION**



**WANTS YOU!**

# Unit Information

## UNIT DUES

Dues for new members of the Old Hickory Association are \$15 for the first year. Thereafter calendar year dues are \$10 and are payable between January 1 and March 1. The bulk of this goes to cover the cost of the bimonthly newsletter, which averages about \$1.00 an issue with postage and copying. There are also special event information packages which occasionally need to be mailed. The extra \$5 for new members covers the initial package of recruiting information as well as a 30th Division patch. Checks should be made payable to the "Old Hickory Association" and should be sent to *Eric Townsend, Don Skupe*

In addition to membership in the Old Hickory Association you may also wish to join one of the "umbrella" W.W.II organizations. These organizations sponsor almost all of the W.W.II reenactments. At one point you had to belong to a particular organization if you wanted to participate in their events. Recently, however, good sense prevailed and now all organizations honor memberships in the other groups for purposes of event attendance. Technically, you are required to belong to one of the groups in order to participate in almost any reenactment. Practically speaking, I can't remember the last event that I was asked to show proof of membership. There is no requirement from the Old Hickory Living History Association that you belong to any other group. Obviously, if you only intend on participating in Old Hickory Living History Association "display" and "Living History" events, then you do not need to belong to any organization.

As for the differences between the various groups, the bottom line is that there are only two benefits to membership in any group; event attendance and newsletters. Since all groups allow other group's members to attend their events, the first benefit is a wash. The second benefit, therefore, becomes more important. With newsletters, two things count, quality of information and regularity of publication. In regard to quality, a newsletter from a group that has activities in your region will obviously be more useful than one from another part of the country. Unfortunately, there is no truly "national" organization. Most of them

are regional, and I have indicated that beside the organization name. Likewise, getting regular monthly newsletters is a better value for your money than the two to three sporadic issues per year that some groups put out. With that in mind, I recommend the National Military Historical Association (NMHA) out of Atlanta. First, they are a southeastern organization, but they also publish information on every event they find out about. Second, they have a regular monthly newsletter. If you wish to join an organization or request information, simply write to the address listed below:

**National Military  
Historical Association**  
P.O. Box 2, Marietta, GA 30061  
(Southeast) (\$15/year)

**W.W.II Historical  
Preservation Federation**  
P.O. Box 1360, Leesburg, VA 22075  
(East Coast) (\$20/year)

**W.W.II Historical  
Reenactment Society**  
4950 N. Menard, Chicago, IL 60630  
(Mid-West) (\$20/year)

**Twentieth Century  
Tactical Studies Group**  
P.O. Box 945,  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63702  
(Mid-West) (\$15/year)

**War Memorial  
Museum of Virginia**  
9285 Warwick Blvd-Huntington Park,  
Newport News, VA 23607  
(Virginia) (\$10/year)



The Old Hickory Chronicles will come out the first week of January, March, May, July, September and November. Any copy relevant to a particular newsletter must be in by the 21st of the month before. That way I have the time to key in the information and ask any appropriate questions. I accept any copy upon approval, as long as I can read it!! I prefer typewritten or computer disk articles, and if you have a modem on

## EDITORIAL POLICIES

By Eric Townsend

your personal computer, I can accept via that too. It makes my life much easier and helps the newsletter get out on time! If an article needs to be placed in after the deadline, like a battle review, relevant news to the group, etc... please call and let me know to expect it. The absolute deadline is the 30th of the month before, and I'll only run material only if there is space to do so.

If you are running a marketplace ad and are having to update it, please call me for the changes. This way, I can print the most updated entries possible. Of course, marketplace ads are free to members and have a three issue lifespan. If you aren't a Old Hickory Association member, you can still run an ad: 25 words for 75¢ and a nickel for each word after that, per issue.

If you submit a general interest article, like a how-to, a history of, etc., I may not print it right away, but keep it and print it along with articles on similar subjects at a later date to enhance reading enjoyment of the articles. A soldier's letter that was printed in a newsletter along with the unit history article makes for a good combination; standing alone, the letter would have just been a curiosity.

If you have an article you would like to write, please don't hesitate to send it in! The more people who write, the more the newsletter improves. Of course, the subject headers will stay the same, so if you have a small tidbit you would like to put in as far as unit news, unit history, historical perspective, book & movie reviews, events (please coordinate this with Mike Fox) and marketplace, please present it. Right now, I'm in need of a constant and varied supply of battle and book reviews. The group will appreciate the effort. Thanks and good writing (and reading)!!

# WWII Reenacting Information

## What To Expect At A WWII Reenactment

By Mike Fox

For those of you who are new to World War II reenacting most reenactments occur on military bases and we stay in Army barracks. Some events do involve camping, more on this later. Most people arrive at the event Friday afternoon or evening. Give yourself plenty of time to get lost once you arrive on the military base. All those two story barracks tend to look alike! If in doubt, you can generally find a helpful M.P. who will point you in the right direction. After arrival you will need to locate the registration area so you can check in for the event. At registration you should receive information about the event and find out which barracks our unit is assigned. Once you find the barracks you can generally get some help unloading your equipment if you find anyone just standing around!

We generally sleep in open bay army barracks with either single or bunk beds. When you arrive on Friday check in with the duty N.C.O. in our unit who will assign you to a Squad and a bunk. You will need a W.W.II wool blanket to cover your bunk. Anything that is not W.W.II era will need to be concealed in either the foot or wall lockers which are provided. The barracks are usually well heated in the winter (this means HOT) so prepare yourself. For you veteran reenactors of earlier periods the barracks offer one other amazing luxury: hot showers!! Bring a towel. You may also want to bring a set of white sheets for your bunk. Pillows are generally provided but bring your own pillowcase.

Friday night is generally spent renewing old friendships, settling in, and preparing for the tactical on Saturday. Most people also enjoy shopping at the ever present flea market of militaria, books, equipment and uniforms. Bring some spending money as there are usually bargains to be found!

Saturday is mostly consumed by the tactical battle. Reveille is usually at 0530 or 0600 so that everyone can get to the mess hall for breakfast and back in time to form up for the tactical at 0830 or 0900. After a safety and authenticity inspection the troops generally pile into their cars to drive to the tactical area. Occasionally transportation is provided in WWII period trucks. The tactical usu-

ally lasts from about 1000 until 1500. Lunch is usually eaten in the field under tactical conditions. After the tactical it's back to the barracks to shower and put on the Class "A" uniforms for dinner. Occasionally there is special entertainment like a dance with a Big Band or free beverages at the post club. Otherwise Saturday evening is a repeat of Friday night. There is usually little planned for Sunday so most people pack up and go home first thing in the morning after helping to clean up the barracks.

Some events are "field" events and involve camping. This is why you need that shelter half, pins and poles! Depending on the weather, you may want to invest in an extra wool blanket! You will also get an opportunity to use your mess kit at the camping events as the unit has a field stove and kitchen equipment. You can also expect to have a turn at K.P.! Ha! Some of the "field" events are run as "24 hour tacticals" and are designed to give you a chance to experience more of the life of a WWII G.I. than the barracks events. This can include guard duty, digging foxholes and night patrols!

In the field we represent the organization appropriate for the number of participants which will typically be either one or two squads or a platoon. Rank will be appropriate for the particular organization. We generally designate the squads once we arrive on Friday evening. Designated officer and NCO should be the only ones with rank and insignia.

The tactical battle usually lasts most of the day Saturday so bring plenty of blank ammo. You can ask the veterans in the group, we are a hard charging outfit that does not avoid a fight! As a result most people carry about 150 rounds of blanks. Of course only you know how trigger happy you are-plan accordingly! Also bring something for lunch Saturday that you can eat in the field. Saturday breakfast and supper are usually provided by the event.

The uniform for the event depends upon the time period of the battle being reenacted. However, the M1941 Jacket, wool shirt and trousers with leggings will always be appropriate. At later events the M1943 Jacket and pants will be fine. Our uniform and equipment guidelines reflect a desire to portray the average

infantryman in a combat situation, rather than a "barracks" impression. There is little opportunity to do "living history" at most battle reenactments because the typical events are so brief and there are so few spectators. Therefore, the uniform and equipment guidelines reflect those items that a combat infantryman would have carried into battle.

Of course, everyone is encouraged to expand beyond the basic combat impression to the extent they desire for "living history" events. A list of optional equipment will be available for those who wish to expand beyond the basic combat impression. Separate uniform and equipment guidelines will also be provided for impressions other than infantry such as weapons crews, vehicle crews and combat support troops.

The appearance of a W.W.II soldier includes a proper haircut. If necessary, wait until the Thursday before the event to get it cut. Remember that it needs to be off the ears. Also, please do not take your modern sunglasses out in the field. W.W.II issue sunglasses are available if you wish to wear them. If you wear prescription glasses, they also need to be appropriate for the WWII era.

Remember that first and foremost we are honoring and remembering the actual veterans of the 30th Division. Your conduct not only reflects on our unit but also on the original members of the 30th Division. Please conduct yourself in a dignified and military manner while at events.



# FINDING THE EQUIPMENT

Our primary impression is that of a U.S. Infantry Company in Northwest Europe in 1944-45. As such our uniform and equipment guidelines are designed to ensure both a historically correct impression for living history demonstrations as well as an appearance which will be acceptable for the authenticity requirements of the national reenactment organizations which sponsor most events.

Because very few items are reproduced you will have to find original items that both fit you and are in good enough condition to use. This can be quite a challenge, but with patience and persistence you will succeed! Remember, it's easier to buy the right stuff initially than to have to replace incorrect equipment later. The equipment and vendor list that follow will provide a good start.

## VENDOR LIST

Woodhaven Army Surplus  
6295 S. Harrison Drive, # 14  
Las Vegas, NV 89120  
(702) 262-9798

Good source for usable equipment, shoes and clothing at reasonable prices. Note: the quality of merchandise varies greatly, from excellent to very used, but Woodhaven has always been good about accepting returns without charge.

M & M Collectibles  
P.O. Box 40236  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
(612) 561-0873

Not in service

Great source for almost anything at low prices. The catch is that his stuff sells very quickly. You should read the catalog the instant you receive it and call your order in immediately. It still may be gone, but the prices and quality make it worth the effort.

Military Marketplace  
3643 East River Rd.  
Bainbridge, GA 31717  
(912) 243-0430

Good service

Extensive catalog with good selection of equipment and clothing. Good service, but generally prices are high. Good source for hard to find items.

National Capital Historical Sales  
(George Peterson)  
P.O. Box 605  
Springfield, VA 22150-0605

(703) 569-6663

Virtually the only source for reproduction wool shirts, trousers, and '41 jackets. For very large sizes (17+ shirt, 40+ trousers) this may be the only option. Expect to pay two to three times the cost of more common original sizes. Peterson is also a good last resort for many items because he has a large albeit expensive inventory.

Hayes Otoupalik  
14000 Highway 93 North  
Missoula, MT 59802  
(406) 549-4817

Very extensive catalog with good selection of equipment and clothing but generally prices are high. Good source for hard to find items.

Warpath Military Collectibles  
(Ed Hicks)

P.O. Box 42324  
Fayetteville, NC 28309  
(910) 425-7000

Good source for uniforms and some equipment at reasonable prices.

The following are secondary sources that you may want to call to check on individual items:

Military Specialties, Inc. - Newington, CT (203) 666-4275

Strand Surplus - Galveston, TX  
(409) 762-7397

Gary Forbis - Greensboro, NC  
(910) 621-8141

David Riley - Wilmington, NC  
(910) 452-5679

~~Paul Berry~~ <sup>Tom Henderson</sup> - Wilmington, NC  
(910) 763-5280

Bob Bruce - Uniontown, OH  
(216) 699-1200

Brian Fryar - Chattanooga, TN  
(615) 867-7945

Steve Bakke - Douglasville, GA  
(404) 948-0618

Ted Hogan - Burlington, NC  
(910) 228-7549

Tim Sloan - Haw River, NC  
(910) 578-3844

Tim Ketchum - Dumfries, VA  
(703) 590-4960 (Blank Ammo)

## BASIC UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

-**Shirt** - wool flannel, mustard color, enlisted man's (no epaulettes), these are hard to find in size 16+ but are available if you are willing to search for them, if you run out of patience National Capital Historical Sales has them for \$90.

-**Trousers** - wool, mustard color, not the darker shade that goes with the "Ike" jacket, again larger sizes (38+) are hard to find, as a last resort reproductions are available for similar prices as the shirt.

-**Waist Belt** - M1937 khaki/pea green web w/open faced blackened brass buckle and tip.

-**Undershirt** - Olive drab or white cotton, athletic or crew style, modern undershirts are ok if you can't find originals, just be sure that the style and material are close to the originals, this is more important than you might think because your undershirt will be exposed around the barracks or when it gets hot in the field.

-**Drawers, Cotton, Shorts** - OD or white original or plain white new boxers can be used.

-**Socks, Wool, Light or Heavy** - OD socks, original or modern acceptable.

-**Shoes, Service** - brown leather, composition sole, rough out is preferred but captoes are acceptable due to the difficulty in obtaining them, this is one of the harder items to obtain, originals are available but even when they are in good condition and fit you, 50+ year old leather doesn't hold up very well especially if it gets wet, because we wear leggings period paratrooper boots (Corcoran's) are ok, the brown army boots from the early '50's will work, as well as some older Dutch combat boots are also acceptable, if you can't find anything talk to the recruiting coordinator for more options.

-**Leggings, canvas** - M1938, pea green or khaki color, before you ask, there doesn't seem to be any official method of lacing them, veteran interviews and photo's reveal a variety of different methods.

-**Jacket, Field, OD** - unofficially but commonly known as the M-1941, this is the standard jacket of the U.S. Army during WWII, originals are ok but are getting hard to find in good condition in larger sizes, fortunately high quality reproductions are available from National Capital Historical Sales for about \$125.

-**Helmet - M1 w/Liner**, early shells had a fixed bail to which a khaki chin strap with a brass or black metal snap was sewn, these bails often broke under

Continued on page 5

## FINDING EQUIPMENT

### Continued

the stress of field use so a swivel was designed for later models, production of the new hinged design began in October, 1943 so either model is acceptable for our impression, it is somewhat difficult to distinguish the WWII hinged shells from later models, while the paint color can help, one cannot always count on a WWII shell remaining its original color, a more reliable method is the location of the seam of the rim, the early fixed bail models and the first models of the swivel bail had the rim in the front center of the helmet, in October 1944, the rim material was changed from stainless steel to manganese and it is believed that the seam was also placed in the center rear at this time, if the seam is in the front its definitely WWII, if not it may be late or post war production, the liner should have khaki web straps on its interior with a leather sweatband.

-**Dog Tags** - A WWII era set with the rolled edges and tooth notch is preferred, but because of scarcity, modern ones are acceptable. Please try to find ones with the notch. Ask the recruiting coordinator about what information goes on the dog tags.

### BASIC WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ -**Cartridge Belt** - M1923 web belt, pea green or khaki color, this is the basic 10 pocket belt which holds your garand clips, should be in good usable condition with all snaps functional.
- ✓ -**First Aid Pouch** - M1942, pea green or khaki color, should have one snap, for displays you will want a Carlisle bandage to place inside.
- ✓ -**Haversack** - M1928, w/meat can pouch and pack carrier, pea green or khaki color, the standard "backpack" of the WWII G.I., the haversack's straps help support your cartridge belt, food can be stored in the meat can pouch and the main compartment can be filled out nicely with a shelter half, which gives it bulk without a lot of weight.
- ✓ -**Canteen Cover** - M1910, pea green or khaki color.
- ✓ -**Canteen & Cup** - M1910, both early metal topped or later plastic topped canteens are acceptable.
- ✓ -**Meat Can** - M1942 w/utensils (knife, fork and spoon)
- ✓ -**Shovel** - both the M1910 (T-handle) or M1943 (folding) are acceptable, with the appropriate cover, generally the folding shovels are cheaper and easier to find.
- ✓ -**Mask, Gas, Service** - M1 style w/kidney shaped bag or square "3 snap"

bags acceptable, the actual mask is nice for displays but is not required, these bags were widely used by the WWII G.I.'s to carry numerous items such as food or personal items, they are also good for carrying cameras, food and grenades at reenactments.

✓ -**Blanket** - wool WWII, should be a mustard color, similar to the shirt and trousers or the lining of a M-1941 jacket

✓ -**Shelter half** - w/ pins and pole, the early khaki model only has one end flap while the later OD 7 (green) model has double end flaps, both are acceptable, you will need 5 tent pins (pegs) and the appropriate pole, the early pole is a 3-piece folding model while the later poles were 3 separate "pop-together" pieces, you will also need the proper ropes, one per "half," while one "half" is all that is required many people go ahead and purchase an entire tent, it makes it easier to set up a display and gives us some extra space for new members who may not have a tent yet.

✓ -**Rifle** - M1 Garand w/sling, clips and blank adapter, the one generally distinguishing feature of a WWII M1 is the rear sight, on most Garands the rear sight is a post war sight and should be replaced with the WWII "locking bar" mechanism, both the M1903 leather and the khaki web slings are acceptable, most importantly your weapon should be safe and function properly.

✓ -**Bayonet** - either the "long" M1905 or the "short" M1 bayonet are acceptable with the appropriate scabbard.

### OPTIONAL UNIFORMS

- ✓ -**Coat, Wool, Serge OD** - the "Class A" or "4-Pocket" tunic, this is a dress uniform so it should be in nice condition, should be worn with a wool flannel shirt and a pair of mustard wool pants in good condition and a tie and clean and polished shoes, at barracks events it is nice to be able to put on a nice clean uniform for dinner after your shower, this uniform should have all the appropriate insignia including division patch, regimental crests, and brass collar insignia.
- ✓ -**Jacket, Field, Wool, OD** - this is the famous "Ike" jacket, a good alternative dress uniform to the "4-Pocket," the Ike jackets are generally easier to find in large sizes in good condition, the pants that match the jacket are also easier to find, they are the same color and have a flap on the back pocket, again this outfit is worn with a clean wool flannel shirt and a tie with clean shoes, should have all appropriate insignia.
- ✓ -**Cap, Garrison, OD** - wool overseas hat with infantry piping.
- ✓ -**Necktie, Cotton, Khaki** - Original tie in excellent condition.

-**Jacket, Field, M-1943** - the popular '43 jacket upon which most modern combat jacket designs are based, this is a good jacket to have as it was generally in use by the fall of 1944, many people like the numerous pockets and the loose fit which was designed to allow layering in cold weather.

-**Trousers, Field, Cotton, OD** - these are the pants that go with the '43 jacket, they were designed to be worn over the mustard wool trousers for field use.

-**Coat, Mackinaw, OD** - short coat with or without blanket wool collar, a good cold weather item.

-**Overcoat, Wool, OD, Roll Collar** - Long wool coat as an option to the Mackinaw.

-**Cap, Wool, Knit, M1941** - This is the Jeep Cap. Originals or proper reproductions acceptable.

-**Raincoat, Dismounted** - this is a useful but difficult to obtain item in good condition.

-**Overshoes, Arctic, Cloth top** - these are the WWII version of rubber galoshes, they will be very useful in the wet or cold.

-**Shoepacs** - Option to above, in useable condition they will keep your feet warm and dry.

### OPTIONAL WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT

-**Belt, Pistol, M-1936** - generally only used by officers, NCO's, motorized troops and weapons crews.

-**Suspenders, Belt, M-1936** - these are the "combat suspenders that support the cartridge or pistol belt when the M1928 Haversack is not worn, again generally only used by officers, NCO's, motorized troops and weapons crews.

✓ -**Bag, Canvas, Field, OD M-1936** - this is the "musette" bag which was used as a backpack with the combat suspenders, again generally only used by officers, NCO's, motorized troops and weapons crews.

-**Ammunition Bag, General Purpose** - great bag for grenades, cameras, food and anything else you want to carry in the field.

-**M-1910 Pick Mattox** - Good useable condition free of rust with clean carrier.

-**M-1938 Wire Cutter** - Good useable condition free of rust with clean carrier.

-**M-1910 Hand Axe** - Good useable condition free of rust with clean carrier.

-**Carbine, M1** - This is an acceptable weapon for NCO's and weapons crews, may also be used for a limited time by new recruits until they purchase an M1 Garand.

-**M-3 Fighting Knife** - Good condition original or repro knife with M-6 leather or M-8 plastic scabbard.

Continued on page 6

## FINDING EQUIPMENT

### Continued

-**Rifle M1903** - Early bolt action rifle may be used for displays and certain impressions such as anti tank grenadiers and snipers.

-**Browning Automatic Rifle** - .30-cal., various models dated before war's end, with approved sling. Bipod is recommended, we need at least one of these in each squad.

-**M1928 through M1A1 Thompson** - .45-Cal. submachine gun with correct sling, pouch and 20-round stick magazines.

-**M3 Grease gun** - .45-cal. submachine gun with correct sling, pouch and magazines

-**M1911 or M1911A1 Colt** - .45-cal. semiautomatic pistol with russet colored holster, generally carried only by officers, NCO's and weapons crews.

Because reproductions of uniforms and equipment are not widely available, it takes considerable effort to outfit yourself correctly. Persistence and patience is the key. If you are looking for a particular item, it may be necessary to call the various vendors frequently to stay abreast of new inventory. You must also be persistent in checking out other possible sources such as militaria and gun shows, antique stores, estate sales, and flea markets as well as local surplus stores. Finally, place a "wanted" notice in the unit newsletter, as other unit members often have equipment for sale or know where it may be available.

A note on sizes and labels, don't give up if the label indicates a small size. Try it on anyway, with thousands of manufacturers the sizes were not always uniform. You will often find that an item that is labeled two or three sizes too small will fit. Most WWII era clothing and equipment has a label which indicates size, and date of manufacture. Of course the label is in different locations on various items but once you get the hang of looking for them they are generally easy to spot if they are not faded out.

Remember, most of the the above list covers the basic uniform and equipment. Members are always free to expand beyond this basic impression and wear any uniform or equipment appropriate for particular historical simulations or displays. You may also want to acquire a dress uniform to wear in the evenings to dinner or special events. Consult with the recruiting coordinator or NCO's for guidance on acceptable dress uniforms or any other uniform or equipment questions

# 5

# Rules For Maximizing Your Fun!

By Mike Fox

Over the years the "old hands" have come up with a few simple but important concepts which we have found to be important to enjoying a W.W.II reenactment. They are as follows:

**1. Think Safety At All Times** - Since most events involve the discharge of blank ammunition in weapons, safety is always a priority. Instruction will be provided in the safe handling and operation of all weapons and strict safety rules will be followed to ensure that everyone goes home without an injury. Never discharge your weapon directly at anyone closer than 15 yards. Burning powder and paint from blanks can injure someone at close range. Equally important, know where your buddies are before you empty your clip. Don't fire over someone's head or behind them, it can be very painful for their ears. Likewise, be aware of firing over casualties, ours or the enemy's, their ears hurt too! Era protection is recommended. Finally, there will be a code word disclosed at the event safety meeting to notify everyone of a real injury. It is usually some variation of "Medic." If you hear this, immediately cease firing and do what you can to either help or stay out of the way.

**2. Be A Good Sport!** - If you see someone get a clean shot at you, take a good hit. For those of you who are new to W.W.II reenacting, the tradition is that when you take a hit you remove your helmet. This way people on both sides can distinguish casualties from those people who are just hugging the ground for cover. Even better, ham it up if possible and make it obvious that you are taking a hit! You will enjoy it when the enemy returns the favor. Likewise, be realistic when you fire at the enemy. No one knows that you are shooting at them unless they are close enough to both see and hear you. Don't expect the enemy to fall when you fire from 400 yards away. Most important of all, ignore those who insist on acting like children. There are people on every side that develop the "superman" complex and refuse to take a hit, even

when faced with overwhelming odds. Those of you who have some W.W.II reenacting experience know that one of the biggest criticisms of the hobby is the tendency of battles to break down into "Cowboy & Indian" affairs resulting in a lot of yelling back and forth of "I got you" and "No, I got you first." For those of you who do not have any W.W.II reenacting experience, take my word for it, the fun quickly disappears when people begin acting like children. We will not let 2-3 Germans armed with bolt action rifles hold up 15-20 of us. We will take a few hits and move right through them. If they refuse to withdraw or take hits, then we will ignore them and move on.

**3. Stay with the unit!** - This can not be emphasized enough! We will be much more effective fighting together as a team than we will be as a collection of 20 individual "Rambo's." Stay with your squad at all times. Your squad leader will make sure the squad stays with the platoon. Don't straggle. If your squad is given an objective it won't get taken if half of you are not there to help! Pay careful attention to your position in the squad and always keep an eye toward the squad leader for new instructions. Remember, in the middle of a firefight you can't always hear the squad leader. That's why the hand signals are so important! Study the signals in this newsletter until you know them all. A valid criticism of U.S. W.W.II reenacting units is that there are not many units that can actually perform squad and platoon level tactics. Our unit has broken that tradition and proven at every event that we can fight effectively as a platoon, using correct W.W.II tactics, and give the Germans a tough fight. Of course, we are also have a great deal of fun doing it!

**4. Keep Moving!** - If we are attacking an enemy position everyone should not hit the dirt when the first shots ring out. If you are the closest person to the enemy then you should take cover or take a hit. The next person needs to move beyond the first person at least 5-10 yards before taking a hit or taking

Continued on page 7

## 5 RULES TO HAVING FUN

### Continued

cover. As the battle passes you by, get up and rejoin the rear of the unit. This way we keep advancing! This can continue until we overrun the enemy position or encounter such an intense volume of fire that the attack stalls. Then we can regroup and either attack again or try to flank them. This way everyone has an enjoyable battle; the Germans get to see GIs take a lot of hits and we get to participate in a successful assault. If everyone drops to the ground immediately at the first gunshot, the attack will stall and the battle will revert to "I got you" and "No, I got you first." Also it is vital that you watch your squad leader once the shooting starts for new instructions.

5. **Have Pride In What You Do** - Anything worth doing is worth doing well. We have the opportunity to be one of the best GI units around. While we are in the field, act like a soldier in combat. There is plenty of time for horsing around once we get back to the barracks. This doesn't mean that we can't have fun. Just don't treat that patrol for the enemy like a nature walk. Likewise, after a firefight don't sit down with the enemy and replay it, there is plenty of time to reminisce Saturday night!

## AT THE MOVIES

Here are a few movies to check out next time you rent or are looking to add to your collection -

### **Battle Ground**

The war movie to watch. Excellent filming of action scenes and gritty plot make this a must to watch.

### **A Bridge Too Far**

A realistic movie about operation Market-Garden. The best movie to watch for all around authenticity, with a great story to boot.

### **The Longest Day**

An early 60's movie about D-Day. The excellent filming is thing to watch for in this movie. Has a authentic "feel." Please opt for the black and white version, the colorized version is very substandard.

### **The Cross Of Iron**

Even though this is the eastern front German viewpoint, it really shows the brutality of the war. An another all around authentic movie with a great story.

# Readings to Further Your Interest

If you want to learn more about the U.S. infantryman in Europe during W.W.II or the 30th Infantry Division the following books are recommended:

**FM 21-100 The Soldiers Handbook** - World War II dated, this is the basic manual which contains almost everything that a soldier was expected to learn including marching, the manual of arms, proper care and wear of equipment. This book is required reading for new members.

**Workhorse of the Western Front** - 30th Division History, hardbound reprint of original, lots of great photos, available from the 30th Division Veterans Association, we always print a list of books which are available from them in each newsletter along with their address and price list.

**120th Infantry Regimental History** - photocopy of the hard to find original available from the 30th Division Veterans Association, again lots of great photos and very detailed text covering the combat movements of the regiment.

**Civilian At War** - by Ken Parker, soft-bound, available from the 30th Division Veterans Association, Parker was a private in the 30th Division from Normandy until the crossing of the German frontier, absolutely one of the best accounts of life in the front lines by a private soldier.

**Saving The Breakout** - by Alwyn Featherston, a recent book which focuses on the 30th Division's heroic stand at Mortain. An excellent book and a must read about that hard fought battle.

**Company Commander** - by Charles B. MacDonald, long considered "the infantry classic" of W.W.II combat, this excellent book follows a company of the 2nd Infantry Division from October 1944 through the Battle of the Bulge

through the end of the war in Europe from the perspective of the author who was the "company commander."

**If You Survive** - by George Wilson, the author was a replacement platoon leader in the 4th Infantry Division from Normandy onward. This is an excellent account of life in the front lines from the perspective of a platoon leader.

**The Men of Company K** - by Harold P. Leinbaugh & John D. Campbell, this book follows the men of Co. K, 333rd Infantry Regiment, 84th Division from training through the horrors of combat in Europe. As good as the two previous books but covers the perspectives of the enlisted men as well as the officers.

**Beyond The Beachhead** - by Joseph Balkoski, the author tells the complete story of the 29th Division from training through the battles in Normandy. This book has several excellent chapters devoted to the organization, training, tactics, and weapons of an American infantry division and their German counterparts. A great introductory book to W.W.II infantry tactics.

**Closing With the Enemy** - by Michael D. Doubler, this recent book is an outstanding study of how the G.I.'s actually fought the war in Europe. The author successfully destroys the often heard myth about the "superior" German soldier being defeated by the numerical superiority and the overwhelming materiel of the G.I.s. Doubler portrays the G.I. as much more resourceful, innovative and combat savvy than previous historians. This is a good book for the real story of the American G.I.

**Up Front** - by Bill Mauldin, the most famous cartoonist of the War, this book is filled with cartoons of "Joe & Willie" and their often heartbreaking and always humorous view from the eyes of an average G.I. in the front lines.

# Basic Skills & Training

## SKILL AND TRAINING BRIEF

By Howard Hendricks

From its inception, the interpretive mission of the Old Hickory Association has centered on the combat soldier of the Thirtieth Division, and by extension, the combat soldier of the European Theater of Operations in 1944-45. With this focus on field conditions, a minimum of attention is directed toward close order drill and barracks-oriented "impressions" when attending reenactments at the various military installations. Instead, members of the Association strive for proficiency and accuracy in the field, therefore, education and training is tailored with this goal in mind. This is not to say that the Thirtieth does not recognize barracks impressions. Courtesy is understood, moreover, a military bearing and appearance is required at these events. Those of us who wish to participate more fully in barracks impressions or competitions are welcome to do so. But remember, once we leave the barracks for the field, the Thirtieth is in its element and will be expected to act accordingly.

Most, if not all, of the information that members need is contained in the period manuals, such as the various editions of the infantry drill regulations. Probably the most informative source is the Soldier's Handbook, which is a basic field manual. Weapons proficiency and safety is of paramount importance and members will be expected to know the rifle drill for the inspection of arms, plus the manual of arms. A limited knowledge of close-order drill is useful and normally includes the facings; squad, platoon and company formation; and some marching. An exception to this general rule about close-order drill involves our color guard which performs at veterans functions and other occasions. Those interested participating with the color guard may inquire through their squad leaders for information.

## SCHOOL OF THE SOLDIER

### PART #1: BASIC HAND SIGNALS

#### MANEUVER & MOVEMENT SIGNALS



ASSEMBLE



FORWARD



DOWN  
TAKE COVER



DOUBLE TIME



HALT



QUICK TIME



CHANGE  
DIRECTION

#### COMBAT SIGNALS



ENVELOP  
RIGHT

CEASE  
FIRING



ENEMY IN  
SIGHT



COMMENCE  
FIRING



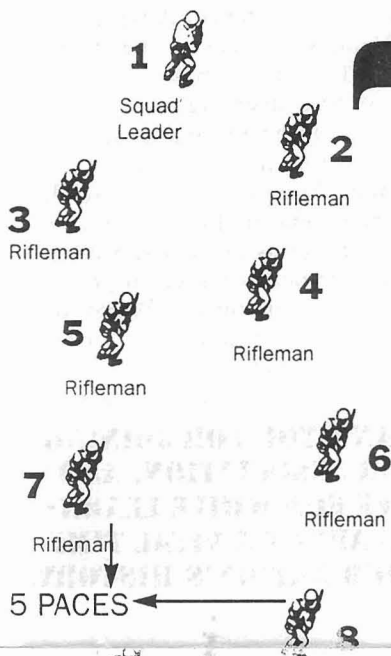
OUT OF  
ACTION

# SCHOOL OF THE SOLDIER

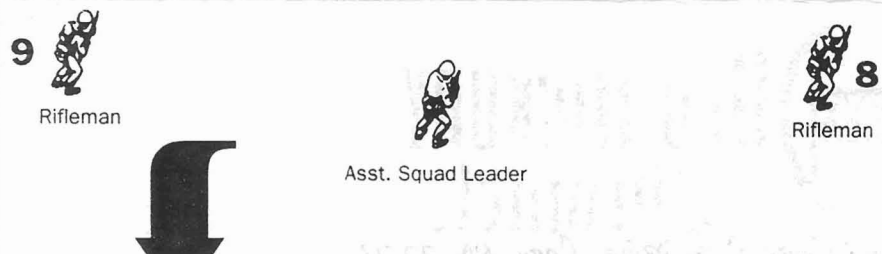
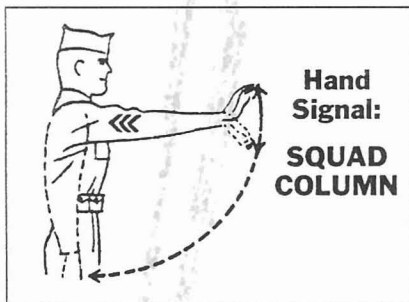
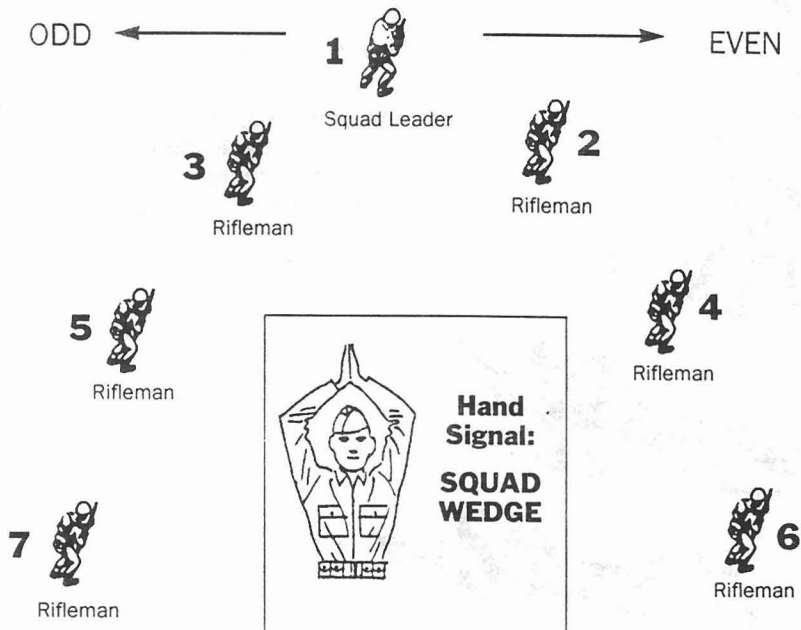
## PART #2: BASIC SQUAD TACTICS

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
The distances here are approximate.  
Spacing may need to be increased between soldiers.

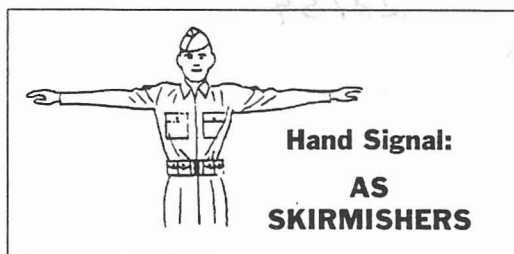
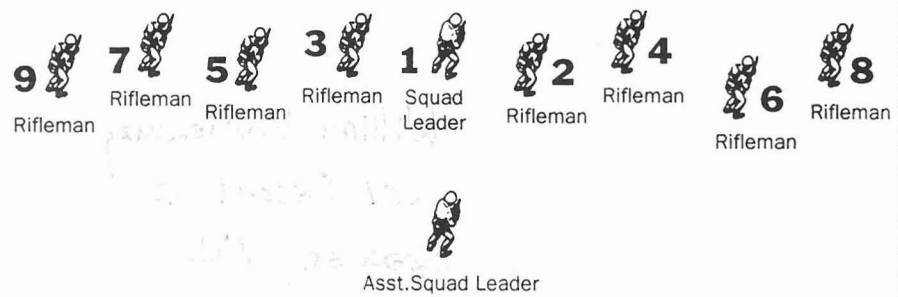
### SQUAD COLUMN



### SQUAD WEDGE



### SKIRMISH LINE



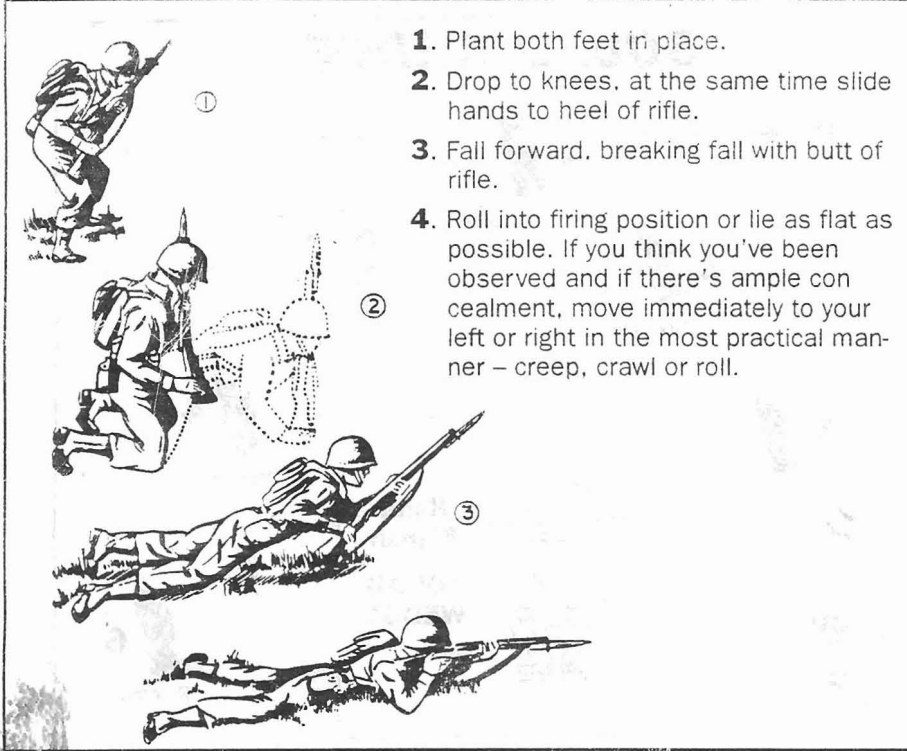
### GENERAL RULES

- 1) THE PURPOSE OF THESE RULES ARE TO ENSURE AN ORDERLY DEPLOYMENT OF SMALL UNITS FOR BATTLE.
- 2) STRAIGHT LINES ARE TO BE AVOIDED EXCEPT WHEN HALTED BEHIND LINEAR COVER.
- 3) PLATOON, SECTION AND SQUAD LEADERS DEPLOY, ASSEMBLE AND MANEUVER THEIR UNITS AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE BY ARM SIGNALS.

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
The distances here are approximate.  
Spacing may need to be increased between soldiers.

# SCHOOL OF THE SOLDIER

## PART #3: GOING TO A PRONE POSITION FROM A RUN



1. Plant both feet in place.
2. Drop to knees, at the same time slide hands to heel of rifle.
3. Fall forward, breaking fall with butt of rifle.
4. Roll into firing position or lie as flat as possible. If you think you've been observed and if there's ample concealment, move immediately to your left or right in the most practical manner – creep, crawl or roll.

### SKILL & TRAINING BRIEF Continued

For the field, new members will need to be familiar with hand signals, scouting and squad tactics on the march, attack and defense. The hand signals are easily learned and informative illustrations are included in this introductory newsletter. Squad tactics are not difficult either, and illustrations of the formations are also shown. After a little practice and some field experience, the tactics will begin to make sense. All recruits or first-timers are given instruction before an event and at any time thereafter if they have questions.

Probably the best resources are the other members of the Association. Some of us act as officers and NCOs and are specifically tasked to provide instruction and training in World War II small-unit organization and tactics. However, the membership at large is very informed and willing to help.

**THANK YOU FOR JOINING  
OUR ASSOCIATION, AND  
HAVE FUN WHILE LEARN-  
ING ABOUT A VITAL TIME  
IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY.**

## THE OLD HICKORY Chronicle

414 CARY PINES DRIVE, CARY, NC 27513



William Vanderburg  
201 Second St.  
SPENCER, NC  
28159

