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Civil War-Topical Issues

FIRING RATES, CIVIL WAR SMALL ARMS

According to Scott's 1864 Military Dictionary (NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1864. 674 p. U24.S42) (p. 30, muzzle-loading small arms were discharged two or three times per minute, single-shot breech-loading arms about ten times per minute. Other sources indicate that the Spencer repeating carbine, which became the standard arm of Federal cavalry, held seven cartridges in its magazine. Although it required only ten seconds to fire the magazine, reloading slowed the rate of fire to fifteen rounds per minute. The faster-loading Henry repeating carbine is said to have been capable of thirty shots per minute. See:

Boatner, Mark M. III. The Civil War Dictionary. NY: McKay, 1959. p. 782. E468.B7.

Greener, W.W. The Gun and Its Development. London: Cassell, 1907. pp. 698-699. UD380.G82.

Lustyik, Andrew F. Civil War Carbines. Aledo, IL: World-Wide Gun Report, 1967. pp. 44-45.
UD383.L8.