



THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR – INFANTRY – WORM TOOL

Soldiers didn't have bullets in the Civil War. They used paper cartridges for their rifles. The paper cartridge was full of black powder. To fire his rifle, a Civil War soldier needed a paper cartridge and a percussion cap. These caps looked very much like the caps for toy cap guns sold today. The soldier put the percussion cap into the firing chamber of his rifle. Then, he tore open the paper cartridge. He emptied the black powder into the barrel of the gun. Next, he packed the powder into the barrel with a ramming rod. When the soldier pulled the trigger, the hammer came down on the percussion cap. Pop! This ignited the black powder. The musket ball or bullet zoomed down the barrel of the gun. Boom! The bullet sailed through the air toward its target.

During a battle the soldier fired his rifle many times. This made the rifle barrel heat up. The overheated barrel made the musket ball or bullet jam in the barrel. The soldier used a tool made out of steel to get the bullet out of the barrel. It was called a "WormTool." It had a screw on both ends of it. One end screwed onto the soldier's ram rod. This was put into the barrel of the rifle. The other end had a sharp tip on it that could be screwed into the jammed bullet. The bullet was then pulled out of the barrel.