

Authenticity Guidelines
53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry
Company C



Produced by the 53rd PVI's Authenticity Committee

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PART I

Purpose



To provide accurate information and reasonable guidelines for the purchase and use of uniform clothing and equipment as it related to the original organization known as the 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry (53rd PVI), 1861-1865. It is the central goal of this guideline to accurately portray the regiment collectively chosen by the membership of 53rd PVI, as a veteran organization with minor alterations to adapt to events and living histories of different periods of the Civil War.

Guideline for Use

The Uniform and Equipment Guidelines for the 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Company C is expressly meant for use by members of 53rd PVI, Company C as a guide to acquire information on the unit we portray, and procure clothing and equipment to accurately portray a veteran company in a

Pennsylvania regiment. Each issue item is briefly described with sources of background information cited as available, with a current suggested manufacturer or supplier deemed to have the most accurate reproductions and value. A complete list of recommended suppliers is attached to this document. Members will have the freedom to choose among any of these recommended suppliers for their needs and all are encouraged to add additional suppliers that they find meet our guideline requirements.

Requirements for Supplier Recommendation

A supplier recommended in this guideline will have a product judged by members of this organization to have an accurate reproduction of a Federal issue item or Civil War period item that may have been used by soldiers of the original 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. "Sutlers" listed in this category handle a variety of goods, many of which are provided by the manufacturers in this list. We suggest members contact seasoned veteran members of the 53rd PVI before making any purchases for equipment or clothing. Working with manufacturers and dealing with them on a one-to-one basis before going to sutlers and retail merchants, foregoing the middleman in the reproduction business and saving you some money in the long run.

PART II

The Clothing and Equipment System, 1861-1865

Clothing and equipment came to the army initially through army *depots*, established for central clothing and equipment storage and distribution prior to the Civil War. The largest depot on the east coast was located in Philadelphia and proportionally surrounded by military contractors of every type prior to 1861. With the sudden need to supply a growing army of 75,000 volunteers called for by the President in 1861, the army supply system was taxed to supply so many troops in so many states from Maine to Missouri. The Philadelphia Depot was the only quartermaster depot operating until additional depots were established at New York on Governor's Island, Boston, Cincinnati, Louisville, Detroit, and several other cities. Within a few weeks, the depots were in full operation receiving and distributing military stores.¹ Contractors delivered their goods to a depot where it was inspected and either passed or rejected, usually by an ink stamp. Inspected goods were then shipped to camps of instruction and warehouses in Washington, Alexandria, and other places where a supply base was established to support the Union armies in the field.

The Philadelphia and New York depots were the two primary suppliers of uniforms and equipment to Camp Curtin at Harrisburg and eventually to the *Army of the Potomac (AoP)*. Clothing and equipment were sent by rail to quartermaster warehouses in York, Chambersburg, Pittsburgh, Erie, Allentown, and several other cities, where it was then inventoried and stored. The more notable contractors that supplied military goods for Pennsylvania regiments during the war period were the Schuylkill Arsenal (clothing & equipment), J.T. Martin (coats, blouses & trousers), Brooks & Brothers and George Hoff (forage caps), Alfred Adolph (hats & caps), Albert Dorff (canteens), and a host of others. Two of the more familiar contractors in Philadelphia were William Horstmann, who manufactured fine swords, saddles, drums, flags, and other military items, with stores in Philly and New York. The other was "Rockhill & Wilson", tailors and clothiers who made zouave uniforms for the 114th, 72nd and 95th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiments, and also delivered standard issue blouses, trousers, and shirts to the Philadelphia Depot through an 1864 contract. Here is some general information on some of the more prominent manufacturers we know about:

Schuylkill Arsenal - The Schuylkill Arsenal factory was located on the river of the same name in Philadelphia, and by the War of 1812 the arsenal's "Office of Clothing & Equipage" was the primary source of clothing, tents and accoutrements for the U.S. Army. The Quartermaster Department ordered first pattern clothing and equipment directly from Schuylkill for issue to all regular army troops. When the Civil War began it was found that the abilities of the arsenal to supply for the large demands was taxed, and clothing items were often subcontracted out to smaller suppliers who delivered directly to the arsenal. Schuylkill relied on a piecework system of clothing manufacture utilizing several thousand seamstresses in the local Philadelphia area, a system viewed as a type of pension for widows, since the Government provided no compensation to wives of men lost while in service. Some clothing items (headgear, buttons, insignia and blankets, for example) were obtained solely by contract, before and during the Civil War. Tents and footwear were procured by contract until the Mexican-American War, when their production was brought in-house with the creation of the "Bootee Establishment", which was a separate department of the arsenal. Knapsacks, haversacks and canteens were the responsibility of the Quartermaster Department and all other accoutrements were the responsibility of the Ordnance Department. The Office of Clothing and Equipment prior to the Civil War produced the first two, whereas canteens were always obtained by outside contract.²

The demands of the large numbers of volunteers at the beginning of the Civil War forced QM General Montgomery Meigs to expand Schuylkill's contracting force and open several depots of contract, the largest being the New York Depot on Governor's Island. In addition, several new depots with dual roles (manufacturing and contracting) were established or expanded, with Cincinnati and St. Louis being the most prominent. Further, several smaller "clothing halls" were established, such as at Louisville, Kentucky

¹ David Miller, *Second Only to Grant, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs*, White Mane Books, Shippensburg, PA, 2000, pp. 116-118

² "Quartermaster Department Contracts", Entry 236, Record Group 217, Treasury Department Records, NARA

where clothing was made from material and patterns supplied by Schuylkill Arsenal. Schuylkill also supplied a number of contractors with patterns, specifications and material for clothing items they were to produce. Surviving examples of Schuylkill clothing are totally hand sewn, thanks to the busy hands of the ladies of Philadelphia. Contractors and sub-contractors hired seamstresses to make the uniforms and deliver them to the factory where they were stamped and then sent to the depot in Philadelphia for inspection.

J.T. Martin - Based in New York City, clothing contractor John T. Martin was among the most prominent contractors to the U.S. Army Quartermaster Department during the Civil War. Part of a partnership called "Martin & Brothers" which had contracts as early as July 1861 for dress coats, Martin went independent the following year. Between August 1862 and January 1865, Martin obtained approximately 72 contracts for a wide variety of goods under his own name. Martin provided a huge amount of clothing items during those years:

- over 800,000 trousers for foot soldiers and an additional 230,000 trousers for mounted soldiers
- 1,200,000 white and gray flannel issue shirts
- 320,000 great coats for foot soldiers and 125,000 great coats for mounted soldiers
- over 1,060,000 fatigue coats, both lined and unlined

Martin delivered blouses both lined and unlined, as well as shirts, greatcoats, and foot trousers, and many of his examples survive today. For the most part, his clothing is machine sewn with hand-finished seams and buttonholes.³

William Deering - A manufacturer in Portland, Maine, Deering supplied blouses, dress coats, and trousers. Successful contracts by Deering delivered over 200,000 blouses to the New York Depot and approximately the same amount of trousers, undergarments, and shirts.

Alex T. Lane - Alex Lane was a Philadelphia clothier that supplied over 130,000 blouses and trousers to the Philadelphia Depot between 1862 and 1865. Lane's clothing was machine sewn with hand finished seams and details.

Joseph Lee - A New York based clothing contractor who supplied over 285,000 blouses, dress coats, trousers and undergarments from 1862-1865.

J.F. Page (or Paige) - A Newark, New Jersey clothing contractor that delivered 264,000 blouses to both the New York and Philadelphia Depots. A blouse in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution maybe a Page manufactured coat, and is entirely machine sewn except for the sleeve lining and thin flannel body lining that is hand tacked in, the interior side of the collar, and the buttonholes.

Separate from the clothing and equipment depots were the *arsenals* under the supervision of the U.S. Army Ordnance Department, responsible for the acquisition of enough weapons and accoutrements to outfit the mass of new regiments. In 1861, a full belt set including cartridge box, cap box, belt and bayonet scabbard with all of the plates, cost the government \$3.11. The most expensive item was naturally the cartridge box at \$1.30 each. Contractors such as Christian S. Storms in New York, James Boyd & Sons in Boston, H.A. Dingee of New York, J.I. Pittman of New York, and Emerson Gaylord in Chicopee, Massachusetts manufactured these items.⁴ Additional contractors in Philadelphia, Chicago, and New England also delivered accoutrements and, by the end of the war, the price of a set had risen to \$4; still a bargain by today's standards. Apart from private contractors, the Ordnance Department's own shops produced sets of accoutrements at the Allegheny, Watervliet, Washington, & St. Louis Arsenals with repair shops at other arsenals and "Arsenals of Deposit" in New York, Detroit, and Kennebec.⁵ Contractors delivered their finished sets to Watertown, Watervliet, New York, Allegheny, Frankford, and St. Louis arsenals where they were inspected and then shipped to temporary arsenals following the armies. Like their comrades in

³ "Quartermaster Department Contracts", Entry 236, Record Group 217, Treasury Department Records, NARA

⁴ Paul D. Johnson, *Civil War Cartridge Boxes of the Union Infantryman*, Andrew Mobray, Lincoln, RI, 1998, p. 103.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19

the Quartermaster Department, transport was by rail and wagon and storage in buildings and tents. The Ordnance Department was also responsible for repair of damaged or recovered accoutrements and weapons.

Initial clothing and equipment issue to the 53rd Pennsylvania Infantry took place at Camp Curtin, supplied from the Philadelphia Depot and warehouses in Harrisburg that had been stockpiled prior to and during 1861. Some of the items issued to the regiments organized at Camp Curtin were state property, including cartridge boxes, tents, blankets and possibly some uniform items. Once the regiment left Camp Curtin, clothing and equipment issue came directly through the army clothing distribution system established by the US Army Quartermaster Department. Alexandria, Virginia had a distribution warehouse that operated through the war and supplied troops garrisoning the forts and camps in northern Virginia and was most likely the supplier for the 53rd PVI during the first winter of the war.⁶ Once the 53rd left those camps and joined the *Army of the Potomac*, clothing and equipment distribution came directly through the Quartermaster Department of the Second Corps, commanded by Colonel Richard N. Batchelder. Batchelder's department was responsible for corps supply and logistics and proved so efficient that Batchelder was appointed chief quartermaster of the Army of the Potomac in August 1864.⁷

Clothing and equipment requests made by the commander of a regiment were forwarded to the corps quartermaster who, in turn, drew items from warehouses and temporary depots established near the army's area of operations.⁸ For example, City Point, Virginia became a massive quartermaster complex in 1864-65 during the siege of Petersburg, where supplies for both the *Army of the Potomac* and the *Army of the James* were stored and distributed. There were times that obtaining replacement items was difficult, but invariably clothing and equipment was made available as soon as practical.

Clothing & equipment issue in the US Army was based upon the need and annual use of the average soldier, as based on specifications devised by the ordnance and quartermaster departments.⁹ The "soldier's clothing allowance" established in 1861:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5 YEARS (IN SERVICE)</u>
Hat with trimmings	1	1	1	1	1
Forage cap	1	1	1	1	1
Trousers	3	2	3	2	3
Flannel shirt	3	3	3	3	3
Flannel drawers	3	2	2	2	2
Bootees, pair	4	4	4	4	4
Stockings, pair	4	4	4	4	4
Blanket	1	0	1	0	0
Fatigue blouse	2	2	2	2	2
Coat, dress	1	1	1	1	1
Great coat	1	0	0	0	0

⁶ Frederick Todd, *American Military Equipage, 1851-1872*, Company of Military Historians, Providence, 1974, Volume 1, pp. 38-41.

⁷Francis A. Walker, *History of the Second Army Corps in the Army of the Potomac*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1891, p. 612.

⁸ David Miller, *Second Only to Grant, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs*, White Mane Books, Shippensburg, PA, 2000, pp. 231-233

⁹ Todd, pp. 12-18

Every soldier drew clothing according to his own needs and despite the toughness of Federal clothing, everything inevitably wore out. Private Henry Keiser, Co. G, 96th PA Volunteer Infantry recorded his entire clothing issue during his service from 1861-1865, and his account may be typical of the average soldier in the Army of the Potomac:

“overcoats- 2; blue pants- 12 pair; blouses, at \$3.14 each- 7; dress coats, 2; pairs of socks- 22; shirts- 16; drawers- 18; shoes at \$2.05 per pair- 13; leggins- 1 pr.; fatigue caps- 4; gum blankets- 2; knapsacks- 5; canteens- 3; woolen blankets- 4; high hat- 1; shelter tent- 4; haversacks- 7; epaulets (scales)- 1 pair; cartridge boxes- 2; Harper’s Ferry musket- 1; Prussian rifle- 1; Enfield rifle- 1; Springfield Rifle- 2.”¹⁰

The use of such clothing and equipment was probably very similar in the 53rd Pennsylvania with some minor exceptions. There is no evidence that the 53rd was issued dress hats or leggings, and, luckily, did not have .69 caliber smoothbore muskets beyond the first few months of their enlistment.

The Quartermaster Sizing System

When shopping for reproduction clothing, you may hear about numbers placed in clothing to specify particular sizes. The Quartermaster Department was not in the business of custom-made uniforms, so they chose a system of clothing sizes based on average heights and builds of young American men at that time. A number stamped into the garment or placed on a label and glued into a hat, designated sizes for caps, blouses, trousers, and overcoats. Only shoes were marked full and half-sizes for proper fit. Forage caps were initially made in five sizes, 1 to 5 with the last number being a 7 ½. Four extra numbers, 6 through 9, were later added. Fatigue blouses were made in four standard sizes, 1 to 4, the last number being the largest in sleeve length and neck size. Trousers also came in four sizes, 1 to 4. The only difference in sizes of trousers was the waist, most having a 31 or 32 inch inseam. Size “4” was the largest size, specified to have a 38” waist and 34” length. Soldiers with longer legs either had high cuffs or obtained longer trousers from a non-quartermaster source. Army drawers and undershirts were also sized in a similar manner.



Oddly enough, the Quartermaster Department specified only one standard size for the army issue shirt. Made of a cotton and wool flannel, issue shirts had a 22” sleeve and neck size between 16 ½” and 16 ¾”, enough to fit anyone with a bull neck and less. This probably added to the general dissatisfaction among soldiers and many chose to wear shirts from home or private purchase shirts from tailors and sutlers.

You can imagine the chagrin felt by new recruits being outfitted for the first time when their particular size could not be obtained, or just did not exist. It is no wonder that so many surviving images of soldiers bear testimony to private purchase uniform items including vests, shirts, blouses and caps or hats.

Following the accepted societal standards of the 1860s, the men are expected to be probably dressed when in camp, including tucking their shirt into their trousers, wearing of headgear when outdoors, etc. It is the duty of the company NCOs to remind the men to be properly attired.

¹⁰ Diary of Henry Keiser, Co. G, 96th PA Volunteer Infantry, collection of the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, copy at Gettysburg NMP.

PART III

The Original 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry

The 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry was organized at Camp Curtin outside of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and mustered in for 3 years service on November 5, 1861. Under the command of Colonel John Rutter Brooke, the regiment trained at Camp Curtin for three weeks, when it was ordered to proceed to Washington, DC. In mid-December the 53rd Pennsylvania left Harrisburg for winter camps at Alexandria, Virginia where the regiment drilled and performed guard duty before the opening of the spring campaign against Richmond. The 53rd saw its first battles during the Seven Days Campaign and participated in the subsequent battles fought by the Army of the Potomac through 1865. The regiment remained in service with the Second Army Corps, Army of the Potomac until December 1863 when the unit re-enlisted for the war as a veteran volunteer regiment. The 53rd Pennsylvania continued service with the Second Corps and saw its last battle action at High Bridge, Virginia on April 7, 1865. The regiment participated in the final pursuit to Appomattox Court House and then to Washington where it marched in the Grand Review of the Army of the Potomac. The 53rd Pennsylvania was mustered out of service on June 30, 1865 at Harrisburg.¹¹



LEFT: Adjutant Samuel Rutter, 1864. Rutter began the war as a private in Company A, 53rd PVI and was promoted to lieutenant and adjutant in 1864 before transfer to the Veteran Reserve Corps in September 1864. Rutter wears a regulation officer's coat with early shoulder boards, private purchase vest & regulation trousers. (Collection of Gettysburg NMP)



RIGHT: Sgt. Samuel Coldren, Co. I, 1864. Promoted to 1st sergeant of I Company on November 2, 1864, and then 2nd Lieutenant on December 15, 1864, Coldren wears the issue dress coat, trousers, a private purchase vest and holds his cap with its oilcloth cover. (Collection of Gettysburg NMP)

Company C was raised in Blair & Huntingdon Counties. The company's first officers were Captain John Wintrode, 1st Lt. Robert McNamara, and 2nd Lt. Samuel Royer. Lt. McNamara was the first officer to resign in May 1862. Lt. Royer was promoted to 1st Lt and 1st Sgt. Henry Smith to 2nd Lieutenant. Both Lt. Royer and Captain Wintrode resigned in early December 1862, and Lt. Smith and a newly promoted Lieutenant, D.S. Fouse, led the company at Fredericksburg. Smith was promoted to Captain on January 1, 1863 and commanded the company until March 1865 when he was discharged for disability. Lt. Fouse was discharged in October 1864, leaving 2nd Lt. John McLaughlin as company commander. McLaughlin was discharged in April 1865. Command of the company fell to 2nd Lt. Andrew J. Merrett after Captain Smith was discharged in March 1865. Merrett was promoted to 1st Lieutenant and commanded the company until mustered out of service on June 30, 1865.¹²

¹¹ Samuel Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers 1861-1865*, Harrisburg, PA, 1870. Volume 2, pp. 92-98; William F. Fox, *Regimental Losses in the American Civil War 1861-1865*, Morningside Bookshop (reprint) Dayton, 1985, p. 271

¹² Bates, p. 106.

The 53rd PVI Today

Evidently, no record exists as to specific contractors who may have supplied clothing and equipment specifically to the 53rd PVI, so members of the unit have the leniency of choice in clothing markings and manufacturers' stamps. It is recommended that choices be based on Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York contractors who delivered to the Philadelphia and New York Depots. We know from photographs of individuals in museums and private collections¹³ that the 53rd Pennsylvania received Federal issue dress coats, forage caps, sack coats, dark blue (1861-1862) and sky blue trousers (1862 and later), bootees, and newly made accoutrements and equipment based on US Army patterns established in the 1850's. To that end, every member should have a quality reproduction of the following Federal issue items:

- Forage Cap – of accepted US 1861 pattern
- Four Button Sack Coat (aka fatigue blouse) – of accepted US 1861 issue pattern
- Sky blue trousers – of accepted US 1862 issue pattern
- Shirt – of period civilian purchase or US issue pattern
- Wool socks
- Bootees - of accepted US 1861 issue pattern
- Waistbelt/plate - of accepted US 1855/1861 pattern
- Cartridge box with shoulder sling, 2 tins, and breast plate - of accepted US 1855 pattern
- Cap pouch - of accepted 1861 pattern
- Tarred haversack - of accepted US 1861 pattern
- Canteen with cotton (preferred) or leather sling – of accepted 1861 pattern
- Wool blanket – of accepted US 1855 or 1861 pattern
- Gum blanket – of accepted US 1861 pattern
- Tin Cup – of accepted Civil War-period purchase or issue patterns
- Tin plate, knife and fork of accepted Civil War-period purchase of issue patterns
- Model 1861 Springfield Rifled Musket (defarbed preferred)
- Model 1861 Springfield rifle-musket Bayonet – of accepted 1861 pattern
- Springfield bayonet scabbard and frog - of accepted US 1861 or 1863 pattern

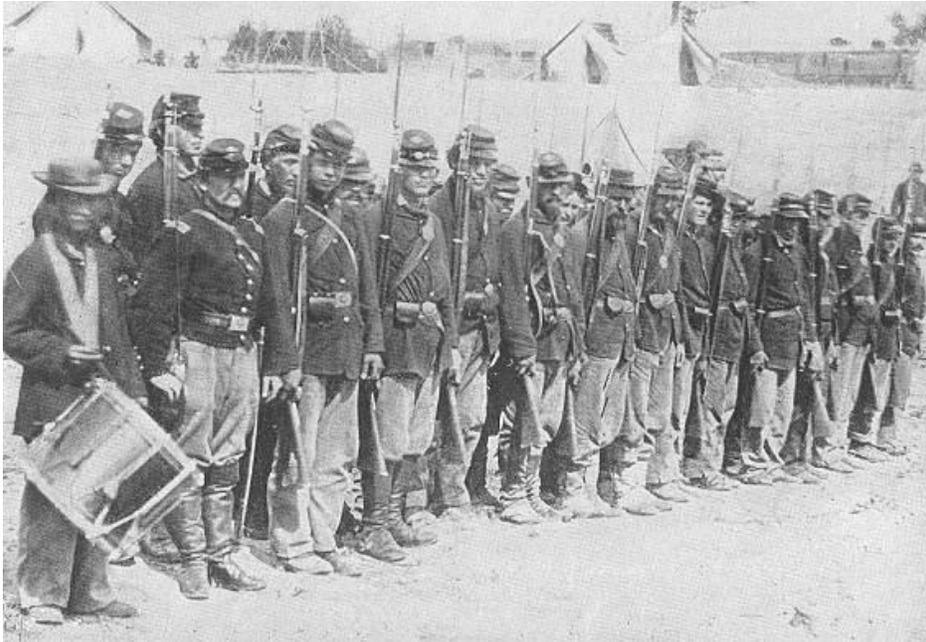
Additional items include a **dress coat** (frock), dark blue issue trousers (1861), knapsack, issue drawers & undershirt, corps badge of the 1st Division, Second Corps, cooking utensils, and personal items.

Time Frames in Our Event Choices

Due to the nature of this hobby, it is imperative that the membership be able to adapt to events in which we participate that take place in other theaters and time frames of the American Civil War. The 53rd Pennsylvania Infantry looked quite different during the Gettysburg Campaign in 1863 when compared to its appearance in 1861. Likewise, there was possibly a difference in 1864 from the time the regiment entered the Wilderness Campaign to when it marched toward its terrible destiny at Ream's Station that August. Since our goal is to accurately portray a veteran unit, we must adapt our appearance through minor alterations at events and living histories where the year or theater of war is concerned. These changes are subtle, but can make a difference in accurate impressions for the period. When the 53rd Pennsylvania was mustered into service in November 1861, they received stockpiles of current Federal and state issue equipment including and limited to pre-war manufactured items. The most notable differences between this period and later times of the war were dark blue issue foot trousers, buff leather cartridge box slings and belts with the earlier "puppy paw" US belt plate, "shield front" cap boxes with a two-piece front instead of a single piece, and smooth-side 1858 canteens with leather sling & jean or wool covers. As the war progressed these items changed and those changes were reflected in the units in the field.

¹³ US Army Military History Institute; Ron Palm in Gettysburg.

A revealing photograph of the 110th Pennsylvania Infantry taken in the spring of 1863 illustrates how much of the early equipment survived through that period and was not replaced until an individual's item was worn out or lost, and the newly drawn item was of the later pattern or design. This is true of cartridge box slings and belts, the buff finish replaced with a smooth finish and the belt altered with a brass keeper instead of the early leather loop. Smooth side canteens were replaced with ring-sided or "bullseye" models with cloth slings. These wartime innovations made their way to the armies soon after approval but it was a long time before entire units exhibited the same style of sling or identical canteen on every hip. Late war events, ca. 1864-65 are acceptable events for a mixture of pre-war, early, and mid-war production equipment, though events prior to the summer of 1863 should exhibit a prevalence of pre-war manufacture and early wartime production equipment.



110th PA Infantry,
Co. A near
Falmouth, VA,
May 1863
(*Miller's
Photographic
History*)

There were always exceptions to this rule; bridle leather slings and early canteens with cloth straps did appear in the quartermaster department as early as 1862, but their use is not documented in the 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. Thus, it is recommended to all members purchasing uniforms and equipment to first consider the earlier styles and models as appropriate before purchasing items, such as a "bullseye" canteen that is more appropriate for late 1862 and later events, for general use at every event.

Headgear is another alternative to consider in our overall impressions. Members of the 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry wore the Model 1858 forage cap from 1861 until 1865. Doubtless, felt "slouch" hats of military issue or civilian purchase were also worn, but their use was probably limited to summer months or individual taste. Few original photos of Pennsylvania units show any preference for slouch hats prior to the summer of 1864, so members should consider this in their choice of what to wear to events.

Private Purchase Uniforms

It was a common practice for veterans to purchase military clothing styled to their own tastes and often for a better fit. Styles ranged from short jackets to tailor-made sack coats with exterior pockets and civilian styled lapels. This is very evident in individual photographs, many on CDVs with 1864-66 backmarks and tax stamps. The author of this guideline also believes that individuals purchased jackets and other uniforms at the end of the war to be rid of lice-ridden clothing or non-descript fatigue coats, though many individuals simply drew a new clothing issue of standard garb before they were mustered out.



Private John Mauck, Co. H, 53rd PVI, 1865

Private Mauck poses in a private purchase sack coat with exterior waist pockets, civilian style lapels, and three-button functional cuffs - a coat more typical for officers than enlisted men. The remainder of his uniforms appears to be standard issue trousers and a private purchase light blue vest. Mauck enlisted in 1861 and served until February 1865 when he was discharged on a surgeon's certificate. Next to Mauck on the stand is his private purchase forage cap with patent leather visor. On top, Mauck has added his company letter over brass numerals "53" and "PVV" below for Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers. (*Collection of Gettysburg NMP*)

Photographic evidence of military jackets and private purchase uniforms existing in the ranks of the 53rd Pennsylvania, excluding officer's dress, dates mostly from the early 1865 period. It is advised that private purchase uniforms be kept to a minimum in the ranks for late war events or reserved for special events such as the Holiday Party.



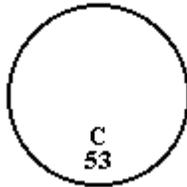
Weapons

The 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry was first issued Austrian Rifle muskets, which were replaced with the Model 1861 Rifle Muskets and bayonets in 1862; thus, this model is the standard arm of the 53rd PVI, Co. C. Model 1863 Rifle Muskets are acceptable at late 1863-65 events. Enfield, Austrian, and unique contract rifles are discouraged. Special purchase weapons such as Henry, Sharps, or Spencer Rifles should be kept to a minimum, as there is no documentation of their use in the 53rd Pennsylvania Infantry. Individuals are allowed to bring these weapons to living history events for demonstration purposes only or use them at late-war field events where we portray a unit other than the 53rd PVI. Only officers may carry side arms.

Note – it is the policy of the 53rd PVI to only allow 4-wing percussion caps in the field at all events where firing will occur. 5-wing caps are strictly prohibited. Also, 'hot caps' are likewise forbidden; these are percussion caps typically used for modern black powder hunting rifles and have extra fulminated mercury in them. 5-wing and 'hot caps' have the potential to increase the risk of injury to the men in the ranks. Verification of the approved type of caps in each man's cap pouch will be made upon weapons inspection by the officer or NCO in charge. Any man found with unapproved percussion caps will either (1.) be pulled out of the ranks, or (2.) be given the opportunity to replace their unapproved caps with the approved type of percussion caps.

Cap Ornamentation

1861-1865

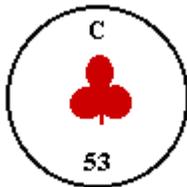


top of disc

to soldiers for forage caps. Among hundreds of photographs the author has seen, there are only one or two instances where this was not true and the soldier had one of the horns sewn to the disc of his cap, but this was very rare and members of the 53rd PVI should avoid this.

An order issued in 1862 required soldiers to have a regimental numeral on the top disc of their forage caps (illustration at left) at the bottom of the disc toward the visor, with the company letter placed over the numerals. Brass numerals may have been issued for this purpose, but some soldiers ignored the order and did not wear any such ornamentation at all. This order changed with the introduction of corps badges in the spring of 1863, which were to be added to the top of the cap over the numerals. Photographs reveal various ways in which soldiers adorned their caps, added the regimental numeral and little else. The brass infantry horn was meant specifically for the dress hat and was not issued

1863-1865

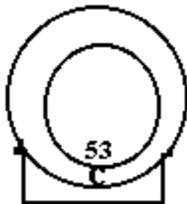


top of disc

events and encampments. The badge should not be worn at events with a time frame pre-April 1863.

In early 1864, the design was finalized by an order in the Second Corps that the corps badge should be worn in the center of the disc with the regimental number at the bottom and the company letter at the top. Soldiers complied with this order in many ways and though it apparently was not consistent among all regiments, corps badges had become a begrudging symbol of pride and many men wore them on their caps or as a coat pin. Photographs of soldiers in the Sixth Corps show a prevalence of badges, sometimes two per man with one on the coat and one on the cap. Second Corps badges were worn, and members should sew them to their caps in this prescribed manner for late 1863 to early 1865 living history

Late Variation



ornaments to prepare for events in different time periods. Members should consider purchasing two forage caps, one with a corps badge for 1863-65 era and 53rd specific events and the other without ornamentation for early war and other events.

With army corps being dissolved in 1865, the Army revised these orders and specified that numerals would still be placed on the top of the disc toward the visor with the company letter sewn just above the visor and below the disc. This variation was common among US Regulars throughout the war and some individuals adopted this pattern, including a corps badge in the center of the disc or as a pin on the coat.

When it comes to the choice of individuals in the 53rd PVI, the basic rule should be less is better- the less ornamentation, the less hassle it is to remove or add

Care and Repair, or Soldier Qualities

As “soldiers” we need to regard our equipment and clothing in the same manner as the real soldiers did, with care and maintenance. It was drilled into each and every recruit right from the beginning that a poorly maintained appearance, especially on the parade ground, was met with disciplinary action such as extra guard duty, cleaning the officer’s kits, etc., everything short of a lashing. A soldier's issue was government property that he had to take care of and we must consider that training in our representation. This is not to say that we should always appear in a spit and polished condition, which was impossible during the times of hard and continual campaign activity. Yet the occasions where soldiers in the Army of the Potomac were ragged or using exhausted equipment were EXTREMELY rare. A veteran soldier knew to take care of his weapon and his equipment. If something wore out, he drew a new one from the quartermaster or ordnance sergeant. Worn corners of leather boxes and corroded brass were no excuse. Leather gear was blackened.

and brass shined with regularity. The individual soldier or a company tailor who had been a tailor prior to military service, and charged a small fee for his services, repaired loose stitching, rips or tears in clothing. Rusty weapons were pure negligence. There are some reenactment units that pride themselves on their ragged impressions, and this shows a lack of research or understanding on their part, of what soldier life really was. Soldiers treated the clothes that were issued with great care. They didn't have the luxury of buying off the rack. The need to care for their clothing was instilled in them from civilian life nothing was thrown away.

Men in the ranks need to keep their rifles properly maintained. This means a good cleaning of the weapon after an event. Cleaning the bore of left-over black powder and other possible debris; this can be done with hot water and running patches down the barrel in the field. Black powder solvent can be a useful tool when cleaning at home. Keeping the cone clear is also a must. Cleaning rust off all metal components is also necessary as basic humidity or even oil from one's hands can leave marks on the metal. High humidity can sometimes accumulate at the bottom of the breach preventing proper discharge of a round. Before the weapons are fired at events, the weapons will be inspected by an NCO, officer, or site official for basic function and appearance. Ensuring that the main spring works as designed (such as not firing when the trigger is pulled at half cock) and that the mechanism does fire at full cock is critical for safety purposes. Capping off the rifle is also needed to ensure that it is clear before firing it in a demonstration or in battle. The ramrod should also be properly maintained to prevent rust and inspected regularly to help ensure that it remains straight.

To that end, each member of the 53rd PVI should make monthly inspections of their kits, make necessary repairs to clothing, blacken leather goods and polish brass items. This does not mean we appear spit and polish at all times, but adapt ourselves to the soldierly routine of these daily chores. Only on campaigns where the Army outran its base of supply did ragged or extremely worn out appearances occur, such as during the prolonged Wilderness Campaign. A better example is the "March To The Sea" and Carolinas Campaign waged by General Sherman in 1864-65 where his army was cut off for months from a supply base and, by the time the army reached North Carolina, equipment and clothing was in a deplorable state. Adapting to the time frame and different armies for particular events is covered in "Time Frames in Our Event Choices" above.

In Camp and Field



As we embark on our weekends away from reality, it is essential that for, at least, one weekend we leave behind the modern conveniences of fast food, refrigeration, and hot showers on call. Soldiers of the original 53rd PVI faced daily deprivations and what we would consider hardships of camp life, but for some it was not a great change from the rugged farm environment in which they had grown up in. The transition to camp life took some time for adjustment, but the best soldiers emerged as bodies

acclimated to the outdoors and bland diets. Their camps were not fancy affairs even for short stays and especially while on active campaign. A camp consisted of shelter halves pitched in company streets with company baggage such as axes, etc., arriving with the regimental quartermaster and baggage wagon. Sinks were dug and, if time permitted, awnings made from saplings and covered with green boughs were constructed. Of course, campaign camps where the army was on the move were drastically different. For the most part, the men stacked arms in a field adjacent to the road, spread out their blankets and rubber blankets on the ground around their particular messmates, built small cooking fires, and slept there right on the spot.

Our camp impressions should reflect that simple way of army living at all of our living history and campaign events. Field camps will be shelter halves and personal equipment with the addition of company cooking equipment. Campaign camps will be simple with few extras apart from what can be carried into the site. The choice of pitching a shelter half is up to the



individual and “shebangs” or shelters made from fence rails or tree branches are most appropriate. The only time that a larger tent such as Sibley or larger “A” tents would be used by this unit will be at camps of instruction, those camps that were considered semi-permanent such as Camp Curtin in Harrisburg.

Rations

Members should consider carefully their choice of food for a weekend event and keep their rations choices as close to the original food items enjoyed (?) by the 53rd PVI from 1861 to 1865. Choose items that will last for some period without spoilage and can be carried into the site easily. Most of these fit the bill when looking at the typical Federal Army menu. A single day’s ration consisted of 1 1/2 lbs. salt pork or salted beef or fresh beef if available, 6 hard crackers, 4 oz. coffee, 6 oz. sugar, 3/4 cup beans or rice, salt, vinegar and molasses. Total weight about three pounds. Three days’ rations would weigh approximately 9 1/2 pounds, not including soap, candles and other items added to the mix including dried (“desiccated”) vegetables, dried fruit, or other fresh items when available.



If a campaign was imminent, soldiers were ordered to cook their rations right away so they could be readily consumed on the march. Obviously, fresh meats had to be cooked right away and then left to stow away in haversacks for a day or two, not the most palatable or safest way to store such items. Salted meats also required cooking such as roasting or frying so they would not spoil so easily. Salted or not, the stuff went rancid after a day or so. Only smoked meats would keep for any length of time but this time-consuming process was just not feasible for an army quartermaster department trying to feed so

many at one time. Apart from the meat, just about everything else could wait for cooking later or consumed without cooking. Still, with everything stored in one hot bag, improperly wrapped, it is no wonder that most soldiers experienced repeated bouts of dysentery, diarrhea, and stomach ailments.

We can use modern shortcuts to safely carry our rations for a weekend event by making our own careful choices. Dry items such as homemade hardtack, coffee, salt, sugar and the like can be stored in cloth ration bags in the haversack. For the meat ration, we suggest that smoked bacon or similar meat be used as it will keep safely in the haversack for a weekend. Wrap the meat ration in brown wrapping paper or tan butcher’s paper for safe keeping. Smoked or cured ham and side meat will also keep for the weekend and is very similar in appearance to the type of salt pork issued during the Civil War. Fresh meats should be kept in a cooler in your vehicle and only retrieved when you are ready to prepare it, which is not always convenient at events. Other fresh items that can be used include potatoes, carrots, onions, tomatoes, apples, and peaches, which may be more appropriate for a field encampment rather than a campaign style event. If you cannot carry them all in your haversack, you should bring them into camp minus any modern wrapping or container.

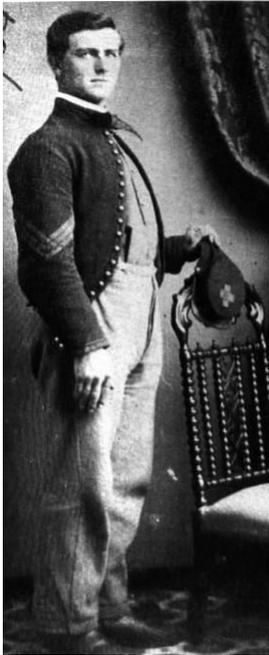


At some events during the year, the 53rd PVI will supply rations using company funds. These occasions will tend to be living history events where the public can get an idea of how rations were issued on a regular basis, and will include only staples of the soldier’s diet: meat, crackers, coffee, sugar, and salt. Supplemental items brought in by individuals are acceptable. Members with special dietary needs are also allowed to bring necessary food items into the camp as long as these items are kept in Civil War period containers.

Though we do not encourage the habit of smoking due to health concerns, Civil War soldiers smoked and chewed tobacco at every opportunity. If you must light up or put in a plug, do it authentically and keep your tobacco products typical of the period- cigars and pipes. Pipe tobacco is best kept in a leather or treated cloth pouch. Chewing tobacco came in a plug or wrap and not stored loose like today’s pouch tobacco is. Liquor and alcohol consumption should be limited for safety reasons and most sites that we do events at forbid alcohol onsite, other than for medicinal purposes. Any such product must be kept out of view of the public at living history events and maintained in period bottles when consumption is allowed

and is restricted to members who are the state's required age.

Our 95th Pennsylvania Infantry, "Gosline's Zouaves" Impression

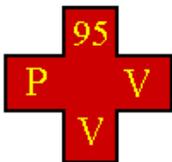


The 53rd PA also occasionally does a 95th Pennsylvania impression. The 95th PA "Gosline's Zouaves" was raised in Philadelphia in the summer of 1861, and included a company (B) from New Jersey. The regiment was initially issued a uniform manufactured by Schuylkill Arsenal, later supplemented by a matching uniform procured from Rockhill & Wilson Clothiers in that city. The trousers, flannel shirts, canvas leggings, and distinctive caps wore out as time passed, but the jackets were retained and replaced. Recruits for the regiment received the zouave jacket as well. The 95th PVI served in the 3rd brigade and then 2nd brigade, 1st Division, Sixth Army Corps. The regiment re-enlisted in December 1863 and entered the Wilderness Campaign in Colonel Emory Upton's brigade of the 1st Division, Sixth Corps. Upton gained fame for his attack at Spotsylvania Court House on May 10, 1864 and though the 95th Pennsylvania was not involved, the regiment did participate in the 18 hour-long fighting for the Mule Shoe on May 12.

LEFT: Sgt. Michael Lawn, Co. K, 95th PVI, 1864. Lawn wears the 95th's zouave jacket with issue trousers, Model 1858 forage cap and bootees. Lawn was promoted to 2nd Lt. of Company C in November 1864. (*Gettysburg NMP*)

Due to the regiment's reduced numbers, the 95th was reorganized into four companies in September 1864 and consolidated with the 96th Pennsylvania Infantry under one commander, but the regiment retained the numerical designation of "95th Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry". The regiment participated in the 1864 Valley Campaign as part of the *Army of the Shenandoah* under General Phil Sheridan and then the Appomattox Campaign, seeing its final battle at Saylor's (or "Sailor's") Creek on April 6, 1865. The regiment was mustered out of service in July 1865.

As the alter-ego of 53rd PVI, Co. C., members of the 53rd are encouraged to acquire the zouave jacket to participate in the portrayal of 95th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Co. C in late-war events where the Sixth Corps was present. Modifications of our uniform requirements for that impression will be dealt-with on an event-by-event basis. The requirements for this uniform are standard Federal issue equipment substituted by the zouave jacket worn by the 95th PVI from 1861 to 1865. Like the 53rd PVI, the 95th PVI was equipped with Model 1861 Springfield rifled muskets in early 1862 and supplanted with this or similar models throughout its war service.



The corps badge of the 1st Division, Sixth Corps is a red "Greek Cross" sewn to the disc of the forage cap. Of all units of the Army of the Potomac, original photos of members of the Sixth Corps show a proliferation of corps badges on hats, vests, and coats from 1863 to 1865. Note the Sixth Corps badge on Sgt. Lawn's cap, which has the unique lettering of "95 P. V.V" for "95th Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers".

Part IV

Clothing and Equipment Guide: Assembling Your Kit

What to Look for at the Sutlers

Not all reproduction uniforms are made equal. You will notice differences among the racks and tables in sutler's row or in catalogs how the reproductions uniforms and equipment look or appear, but knowing how the originals were constructed will give you an advantage. Do not jump at the first item you see just to get your kit together as it could be of poor quality, not close to the original item and simply a waste of your hard-earned money!! What is true is that sometimes the extra cost for a more authentic item will net you a piece that will survive your reenacting career and make your appearance as close to what the boys had in 1861-1865 that can be attained. If you're going to do anything, do it right from the beginning and an authentic kit is something to be proud of! Before making a purchase, check with the unit's veterans to help guide you. The unit website (under the "Equipment" tab) has a useful list of approved vendors that members of the unit have used over the years.



It's important to understand that hundreds of suppliers made uniforms and equipment for the Union army, so there were indeed slight variations that can be spotted in studying original items in museums and private collections. While some of these can be easily spotted in original photographs, and museum collections, but it is best to start out with the basic items that were most common in style and construction, NOT some sort of "variant" that will call into question how you are different from everyone else in your company. Do NOT fall for the cheap and quick sale as many sutlers are in business to outfit you, not make you understand the differences and realities of Union Army supply.

Here's what to look for in repro uniforms and gear compared to the originals for Federal eastern theatre infantry (typical of the Army of the Potomac):

CLOTHING

Forage Cap

Original forage caps came in two different styles, the Model 1858 and later Model 1861 (also called the "McClellan" mode with the smaller rounded visor). We strongly prefer the Model 58 with the squared visor as the Model 61 version was not common for enlisted men in PA units. The caps' bodies were made of dark blue broadcloth, a fine lightweight wool flannel, with a leather visor and chin strap. Small brass US regulation eagle buttons held the strap to the cap that also had a brass slide. The leather visor was "tarred", coated with black oil-based paint to maintain the shine and add some element of water proofing. Many contractors made these so there are numerous variations in the size of the crown (disc) and seam work, but all were based on the French-style army cap with a moderately floppy top. The interior had a 1 to 1 ¼" thin leather sweat band and polished cotton lining. Notably, like all Union clothing, logwood-dyed blue thread was used in construction of the caps as well as the other Federal clothing. Surviving examples exhibit a brown thread as the blue dye has long since faded out of the thread. Original caps were made in 5 sizes, later expanded to 9 and labeled on the interior. Size 1 was approx. 6 ¾"; size 5 was 7 ½". Also, your forage cap's visor should be kept flat and not rolled or folded like modern baseball caps. Also, do not confuse forage caps with kepis; they are 2 different types of period-style headwear. A kepi is similar although its crown is inset and its body is more rigid and less floppy. Kepis were more predominant amongst the officer ranks compared to what enlisted men wore. Also, forage caps are preferred over the issue or "Hardee" hat (these will be discussed later on).

Fatigue or “Sack” Coat

Typically, these coats fit loosely and were made of an approx. 10~14 oz. dark blue wool flannel of a coarser weave, a less costly material that stood up well against wear and tear. The fatigue coat had one interior pocket in the left breast (also called a “kidney pocket”), closed with four medium US general service eagle buttons, and was made to cover the soldier’s undergarments. Surviving examples exhibit a number of different qualities, from fully hand-stitched coats to some that are partially machine sewn with hand-stitched buttonholes. Collars were typically rounded as was the bottom of the coat front. The back of the coat generally should be a single piece of material, although some 2-piece examples survive. The sleeves should have a small, scalloped vent in the rear of the cuff.

This style is the most common observed in the few surviving examples and photographs. These coats were not the Regular Army uniform coat (the “Dress Coat”) but were reserved for fatigue duty when wearing the Dress Coat would have been deemed impracticable for work detail, for example. Later on during the war, the Fatigue (or Sack) Coat became the standard uniform coat worn by the men. Some officers, also, opted for private purchase versions of the Sack Coat as part of their everyday uniform. The exact shade of blue varies at times based upon the manufacturer who made the garment sometimes ranging from a blue with a hint of green to a dark blue that almost borders slightly into purple. Lower grade navy blue wool that fades into purple over time is often a sign of lower quality material. Later in the war, some enlisted men also private purchased sack coats that varied slightly from the standard issue variety. Some had 5 buttons and/or extra pockets, for example. As mentioned in Part II, these were often available lined or unlined. The lining was an off-white or tan cotton or light flannel material and the sleeve linings were light linen or cotton muslin.

Sack coats came in 4 sizes so finding a perfect fit was rare and some men opted to modify them for a better fit. At least, 33 contractors supplied sack coats to the Federal government. J.T. Martin supplied the most of any contractor (1,076,700) between 1862-1865. James Boylan Clothier supplied over 584,000 of them. Most eastern theater sack coats came through the New York or Philadelphia Depots.

Dress Coat (“Frock” Coat)

Made of fine dark blue broadcloth with a nine-button front, interior polished cotton lining in the breast, glove pockets in the tail of the coat with a split skirt meant to reach the soldier just above the knee. They had a single front breast pocket and 2 small rear buttons at the waist. Also, the low end of the skirt was left raw. The dress coat was a well-made and tailored item, made to fit snug in the waist and a puffed-out breast that gave the soldier a more regal appearance. The buttons on these coats were the medium-sized US “Eagle” button (and if you don’t know the difference between CW-time and post war eagle buttons, just ask one of our members). All of the buttonholes are hand stitched, dark blue thread. Prior to and early on in the war, these were the Regulation uniform coat.

Note that reproduction dress coats are one of the most expensive items necessary for your full uniform, so be fully aware of materials, proper cut and fit before laying out the money necessary for your dress appearance. When debating between whether to first buy a Dress Coat versus a Sack Coat in order to begin getting your kit together, opt for the Sack Coat. We typically wear Dress Coats for parades and special events and Sack Coats for most everything else when portraying early 1862 to the end of the war.

Trousers

At the beginning of the war, the army standard issue trousers were dark blue in color. Late in 1861, in order to save money on dying, light blue trousers (“sky blue”) were authorized. These were constructed of approx. 15~16 oz. wool flannel that was heavier than the sack coats and included 3 pockets: two on the upper sides of various designs as well as a front right side watch pocket. There were typically 2 (and later 4) exterior 5/8” buttons in the front and 2 on the rear to install the braces (suspenders) plus a button-down front fly consisting of 5 buttons each of the ½” size. The buttons were either metal or paper-backed tin.

The rear of the trousers was constructed of 4 pieces including a split in the waistband, with machine sewn flat-felled seams appearing later in the war. The top of the rear had a split in the waistband with 2 hand-sewn eyelets. Earlier trousers evidently had single-stitched seams with no exterior stitching except for around the pockets and waistband. The inside of the waistband and fly placket was lined with linen, brown polished cotton or drill cotton, the former partially hand-stitched into the body of the trousers. Trousers of the period were high-waisted and had an outer seam with the rear waistband being approx. 2” higher than the front. The

top of the waistband should reach your navel and the cuffs should just cover the top of your shoes. The lower cuff had a 1" outer side opening (vent).

Trousers came supplied in 4 sizes: 1 (approx. 32" waist x 31" inseam), 2 (approx. 34" waist x 32" inseam), 3 (approx. 36" waist x 32" inseam), and 4 (approx. 38" waist x 34" inseam). Like the sack coats mentioned above, nothing was a custom fit as issued and some tailoring wasn't uncommon amongst the men for a better fit. When choosing trousers, they should be loose in the legs but not 'baggy'. As you can tell by the sizes, most modern men in the hobby today wouldn't be able to fit into period sizes.

Originally, pattern kits were made by the Philadelphia depot and assembled by local seamstresses who got paid based upon their quality of work. Like many other items needed to supply the army, the number of available finished trousers was limited so the government issued contractors to textile manufacturers. Quite a number of contractors, including J.T. Martin and the Schuylkill Arenal, supplied Federal eastern theater troops. The contractors were required to stamp their information inside the garment so government inspectors could easily tell what items came from what contractors. The size of the trousers was also indicated inside using a variety of stamping methods including dots or numbers plus the inspector's stamp.

Shirts

The U.S. government issue shirt was a 'domet' flannel white or off-white shirt which was durable but not comfortable against the skin. These normally also only came in one size, which did not always suit the wearer. Due to the material comfort and sizing issues, many men opted to wear civilian shirts. Down the front, these issue shirts normally only had a slit instead of a placket of buttons. (See "*Hardtack and Coffee*" for comments on this issue item)

Civilian shirts were made of various weights of cotton, wool, or linen and often of plaid or printed patterns. The ends of the sleeves each had single buttons with the lower sleeve buttons placed slightly off center towards the shoulder away from the hand-end to allow the cuffs to be turned back. Also, most civilian shirts of the era had placket fronts meaning they were not fully buttoned down the front like modern dress shirts but generally had between 3 and 5 front buttons. Today, we'd call them 'pull-over shirts'. There are many different styles of civilian shirts observed in photos, etc. so be cautious if you go this route. These civilian shirts were most often either sent from home or purchased at the local sutler in camp. Button materials were typically bone, tin, or china. Wood buttons should be avoided as they were becoming rare in the 1860s. If deciding on whether to buy a civilian shirt versus an issue shirt, you'll most likely be happier with a civilian shirt.

Drawers/Undergarments

Under their trousers, the men often wore drawers or sometimes called 'underwear'. They were either a thick cotton or flannel material with a 1 or 2 button fly, had a rear waist drawstring, as well as drawstrings at the lower ends of the legs to help prevent them from riding up and also to help keep the men warm on cold nights. They were generally a white or off-white color although a variety of patterns were available. Drawers were an indispensable part of the soldier's uniform, and a pair of Federal issue canton flannel drawers would have been issued to every soldier. Top shirts were also issued but wear of that garment was most likely rare during the warmer months. Civilian drawers are also acceptable if they are made from correct cotton or linen materials in appropriate style similar to the military-issue drawers. Caution – drawers made of muslin by some sutlers are not correct and have limited durability.

Suspenders or "Braces"

Issue trousers initially came with 4 suspender buttons, yet suspenders were not issued to the men. It was up to the men to purchase them in order to help hold up their trousers. Most suspenders at the time were made of canvas, cotton drill, or linen and came in solid colors as well as stripes and other patterns. Since these were private purchase items, the designs and patterns varied. Elastic suspenders did exist at the time but were not the stretch type sometimes seen today. A pair of forked suspenders used 4 front buttons with a pair of single rear buttons. As noted above, originally, trousers had only 2 suspender buttons on the front and 2 on the rear. If the forked type of suspenders were worn, either both sides of the fork would need to be secured to a single button or 2 extra buttons would need to be installed on the front. The "poor boy" suspenders were simple cloth straps with buttonholes on each end secured to single front and rear buttons and these were normally not adjustment for length. They could be adjusted, however, if a second set of holes were put in the front straps.

Socks

The men in the armies wore many types of knit socks, both those that were US issued (wool) and those that were either sent from home or privately purchased including cotton and wool. Socks from this era had no elastic tops but were banded with a different pattern of knit. Color choices included white, off -white, gray, or brown and very few contractors or civilians dyed their socks.

Shoes/Bootees

The low 'rough-out' shoe or bootee was the issue US footwear, with a squared toe, sewn 2 piece upper, and layered leather sole and heel. Two styles were produced by contractors, the first a sewn-sole and typical of the earliest years of the war. Wood-pegged soles and heels slowly replaced the sewn sole booties, though there are some contractors who supplied this type of shoe as early as 1862. State arsenals produced shoes of a similar design, but very few have survived. The outside of the shoe was waxed with a mixture of beeswax, tallow and lamp black to help preserve the leather, smooth the rough finish, and provide some sheen to the shoe. Laces were also blackened though replacement laces were often unfinished and required blackening by the soldier. Small horseshoes called "heel irons" and hobnails were often added to the soles of the bootees to provide traction and prevent wear on hard surface roads.

When choosing shoes, avoid those with a very fuzzy exterior. Shoes should be periodically blackened and treated with any type of wax treatment containing beeswax, tallow and lanolin to help with waterproofing. Periodic treatment with Neatsfoot oil or mink oil will help keep them supple and prevent dry rot. Shoe laces or "strings" should be blackened. The US Army issued boots to artillery drivers and sometimes they found their way into the ranks of the infantry, but they were rare.

The terms "bootee" and "brogans" should not be used interchangeably as these were not the same type of shoe. The terms "shoe" or "bootee" are the correct terms (also referred to as the "Jefferson bootee") for the type of shoes worn by the vast majority of eastern theater Federal infantry during the Civil War.

Vests

An optional clothing item, not officially issued by the Federal government. Vests were a common clothing item of the period, worn close to the body. Enlisted men and officers purchased military style vests or wore civilian vests sent from home. Both styles are acceptable for our purposes. The military style vest was of dark blue broadcloth in the front with three pockets, polished cotton interior and reverse, and a 9 button front with small US Eagle buttons. The lower back had a cloth adjustment with a japanned iron buckle to ensure a close fit. A civilian style vest of acceptable civilian pattern is acceptable. Many civilian vests featured cloth covered buttons made of the same material as the body of the vest.

Overcoat

The overcoat is a recommended item of purchase especially useful during fall, winter, and early spring events. This garment was manufactured from the same weight blue wool kersey used in trousers. Overcoats included an attached cape, turned back cuffs, and reinforced stand-up collar. The overcoat has a five button front with ¾" brass general service buttons, a cape with six ½" general service buttons, and a high collar usually closed with a hook and eye. The back of the coat had a Kersey waist strap with general service buttons and were half lined with woolen flannel although a wide variety of warm materials were used as lining included heavy cotton and jean material.

Dress Hat

Prior to the forage (or bummer) cap becoming the common issued headware for enlisted men in the Army of the Potomac, the common hat in the U.S. Army (Regular) was the dress hat, often referred to today as the "Hardee Hat" or the "Regulation Hat". These hats were more commonly issued to western units than to those units fighting in the east. In some units, there was a mixture of hats and caps (and, sometimes even civilian hats), although this sometimes did not go over well with their commanders as the appearance of uniformity was often what was strived for in many AoP units. Special orders were even issued at times forbidding the men in the ranks from wearing hats and ordering them to, instead, wear forage caps.

These dress hats were introduced in 1858 and were constructed of approx. 1/16" thick black felt that had a perimeter brim and a raised flat crown. The brim's width was ¾" and the height of the crown was approx. 5/4". Dress hats for enlisted men had a double row of stitching around the edge. The hats were stiffened with a mixture of shellac and alcohol and the sweatband to be 3" wide and made of black japanned leather, sewn to,

but not through the hat. They were issued with the flat brims and their sides were slightly tapered similar to what we imagine as a ‘pilgrim hat’ without the buckle. They had a black silk ribbon attached to the hat. They included a leather sweatband inside and a paper label on the crown’s underside. They were often issued with some ‘trimmings’ which could have been a black ostrich feather, a brass hunting horn, blue cord with tassels, regimental numbers and letter as well as an eagle to pin up the left side of the hat. When in the field, many men resorted to reforming the hats into various shapes, such as punching down the crown slightly or creasing the hat’s top. For the purposes of assembling your kit for a 53rd PVI (or common AoP) impression, we strongly recommend forage caps in the field.

FIELD EQUIPMENT

Model 1855 Cartridge Box with tins

The standard contract and arsenal made box is a finished bridal leather, sewn construction with belt and box straps and two interior tins. Like the belt, the leather has a stiff appearance due to its weight and thickness. The front flap of the box exhibits a stitch line where the interior closure strap is attached. The inner flap is made of thinner leather with end pieces. An oval “US” plate is affixed to the center of the outer flap and attached with a rawhide wedge under the flap. The oval plate helps keep the outer flap down when marching or running. We recommend that the earlier large “US” plate be purchased for the box.

The box is required to have a leather sling, preferably a buff or wax type with the eagle breast plate. Slings with the bridal leather outside finish are late 1862 to 1865 items and are only recommended for a secondary purchase. Cartridge boxes with copper rivets were used beginning in late 1863. Like many contract items purchased by use in the army, contractors were required to stamp their names inside the item for later inspection. Inspection stamps, however, were not placed on inspected boxes and accoutrements until July 1864, meaning earlier boxes would not have any of these inspector stamps. Pattern 1864 boxes with the embossed “US” on the flap were late war and likely were not seen in the 53rd PVI’s ranks until the spring of 1865; these should be avoided.

M1855 Waist Belt and Belt Plate

Federal infantry waste belts during the war were of heavy black leather slightly over one in 7/8 inch wide and in one length, 38 ½ inches. There were four holes punched between 1 and 1 ½ inches apart. These earlier belts were buffed or waxed leather with a leather loop keeper. Pre-war manufactured “US” belt blades were secured to the belt with two round studs called “puppy paws”. The belt was slipped through the loop or keeper on the opposite end of the buckle, then the plate affixed and hooked to fit. The belt changed in 1862 to 1863, reduced in size with the more rounded appearance and brass arrow shaped hooks replacing the puppy paws in the back. It is also around this time when the army changed specifications for the belts to a smooth finished exterior surface with a brass keeper, but these did not begin to appear in the field until late summer of 1863. We recommend the early buffed or wax belt. Circa 1861 to 1862 photos of soldiers in the 53rd universally show the large “flat face” US belt plates, with puppy paw backs, which fit naturally with the early belts and members should attempt to purchase these plates. Caution - some reproduction plates are made with an epoxy resin filled back instead of lead; these should be avoided.

M1850 and M1861 Cap Box

Finished bridal leather with two sewn straps on the reverse, interior flap and full front closure, brass ‘tear drop’ finial. The interior of the box should have an interior flap with two sewn end pieces, the pouch natural wool lining, and leather loop for the cone pick. The box flap is one piece and cut so that, when the box is closed, the pouch body is visible on either side of the flap. The M1850 “Shield Front” cap box is acceptable as this pre-war into early war production box which used for the out the war. Caution – Some reproduction boxes are made larger than the specified size of 3” x 3” x 1 ¼”, or missing end pieces from the inner flap. These should be avoided.

M1855 Bayonet and Scabbard

The M1855 bayonet was used for the M1855, M1861, and M1863 rifled muskets. Made of carbon steel, the bayonet and socket were one piece with a steel locking ring to tighten the bayonet to the muzzle. All bayonets were stamped with “US” and eagle proof marks. Any other marking should be removed. Occasionally, the steel locking ring may need to be adjusted slightly to ensure easier operation when installing or removing the bayonet from the rifle musket.

The scabbard was made of black dyed bridal leather to uniformly fit the Springfield and Enfield bayonets, the scabbard hung from the belt by a broad leather hanger or “frog” attached to the scabbard, which had a brass tip attached by brass rivets. Surviving examples are of three patterns, the earliest being completely hand sown. The most common was the two rivet belt sling pattern that is sewn with two copper rivets between the frog and scabbard. A second model had seven copper rivets as reinforcement for the frog (used in mid-1863 and later), followed by a third model with eight copper rivets reinforcing the frog and attachment to the scabbard. This later model is only acceptable for 1864 to 1865 period events.

Canteen

The first US issue canteen was called the model 1858 and featured a body made of 2 pieces of dish shaped tin soldered together with a pewter spout, cork stopper and iron ring attached to the canteen by a linen cord or length of juniper string. The body was covered with a thick cloth cover and a cloth shoulder sling run through three flat metal tabs soldered to the canteen body. Research has shown that the 53rd PVI was only ever issued cotton canteen slings, so members should choose that option instead of leather canteen slings.

Some early examples had wool covers with various shades of material until the cheaper jean material was universally substituted. Canteens from the Philadelphia depot were like this, often with a gray or brown jean wool cover and the cork stopper attached by a linen cord. Canteens from the New York Depot were similar except for the substitution of a chain for the cord attached to the cork stopper. The later “bulls-eye” canteens were similar in size and components except the body of the canteen had between 5 and 7 circular rings to reinforce the canteen from dents and crushing. Bullseye canteens came with cotton linen, duck, cotton twill, and leather slings, jean wool covers, and corks usually attached usually with a cord or juniper string, depending upon the manufacturer. First manufactured in 1862, these are suitable for late 1862 to 1865. Caution – Avoid stainless steel body canteens and those with “spun” pewter or tin spouts.

Also, canteens and haversacks should be worn around the waist and not allowed to fall below your hips. The leather slings are easily adjustable and it is common to tie or knot in the cloth slings to get the canteen and haversack to ride higher up on the body.

Haversack and contents

The US issue Model 1851 haversack was a two or three-piece cloth bag with a rounded flap, flat-felled seams, and painted with several thin coats of boiled linseed oil and lamp black as a waterproofing, often finished with a coat of Varnish. Sizes varied slightly, but should be no larger than 13: long x 13” wide. The sling is a one-piece strip, doubled upon itself, and single-stitched down the center, cotton canvas, and made no longer than 42”. Closure is with a black leather strap and japanned or painted wire roller buckle. The interior rice bag is made of cotton drill with flat-felled seams, and buttoned in with three bone or paper back metal buttons.

Surviving haversacks exhibit a variety of weights of cotton fabric, tarred, with interior cotton lining that is left natural.

Look for a haversack with sheen in the black finish; this will be from the varnish. Haversack with worn or chipped finishes that show the white canvas underneath should be repainted or replaced. Many reproduction haversacks are made with slings that are longer than 42”. Like the canteen, the haversack should hang around your waist and not fall below your hip. They were originally made short and, thus, didn't need to be shortened. Ideally, the slings of reproduction haversacks should be of the correct length and should not need to be shortened, but if yours is a little long, it is recommended that you cut the sling from one end of the bag, adjust the length, and then hand-stitch the sling back on the bag body. Do not tie a knot in the sling.

M1855 Knapsack

Knapsacks in the period typically came in 2 varieties: a hard shell with a wooden box liner (to help keep the knapsack’s shape) and a soft double-bag version, the latter being most common after 1861. The later variety (the M1855) is what was issued to the 53rd PVI and consisted of 2 bags of painted cotton canvas or drill and sewn leather slings and straps. The canvas was painted with coats of linseed oil and lamp black, with a finished coat of varnish. Leather parts were dyed black.

One bag has a pair of cross-straps with roller buckles and the other bag has two (2) top leather laces to enclose this bag’s top flap. Two top straps can be used for storing the rolled wool blanket or the overcoat. The right side large strap was fixed with a large roller buckle whereas the left side large strap had a hook mechanism

allowing the knapsack to be fastened in place on the man by reaching the right hand between the man's back and the knapsack in order to secure the left large strap's lower fastener to the base of the knapsack. At the upper front of each of the larger straps were thinner leather cross straps to allow the man to secure the knapsack to the other front side strap across the man's upper chest using brass hooks.

Caution – Avoid knapsacks with nickel plate or stainless-steel buckles. Should have a high glass finish from the varnish, which will soon dull after use.

Wool Blanket

The wool blanket provided to soldiers came from numerous sources including the United States, Ireland, England and France. It was woven wool, dyed gray or brown, with dark brown/gray stripes on each end. - Wartime-produced blankets, including many imported from Europe, were usually brown or tan wool with brown and stripes, displaying a variety of "US" logos sewn into the blanket centers. A typical blanket measured about 60" wide by 82" long with the edges remaining unbound. Something to keep in mind is that few blankets were 100% wool. Surviving examples contained up to 20% linen or cotton thread, woven through the blanket for strength. Northern mills could not turn out enough blankets to supply Union Army demands and Europe was a major source of blankets. The "US" was stitched into the blankets at the depots where they were inspected before being bundled up for shipment to the armies.

Rubber Blanket

The so-called "gum" blanket was a canvas cloth coated on one side with rubber, the underside left blank (white), and measured 71" long x 46" wide. There were small (3/8") grommets around each edge with reinforcement pieces around each, glued to the surface of the blanket. The infantryman was issued one of these useful rubber blankets (many made by the fledging Goodyear Rubber Company). Some reproduction rubber blankets on the market do not conform to these standards, such as having the incorrect measurements, having large grommets, and/or having rear edges with the front rubber folded over.

Shelter Half ("Dog Tent")

The early shelter half, called the "Type II", was made of three vertical pieces of linen drill, though some originals are a denser cotton drill, the centerpiece being narrower than the two outer pieces, and typically 65" long x 65" wide. These early halves have cloth reinforcements in all four corners, the bottom corners with two hand sewn "grommets" (holes) for tent pin ropes, the top corners with a grommet for a rope and a smaller grommet for a pole pin. There were 23 bone buttons and hand-sewn button holes on three sides of the half, though paper backed tin buttons may have appeared on some contract deliveries in 1863. More than likely, the Philadelphia Depot supplied the initial issue of shelter halves to Pennsylvania units around Washington, though shelters from the New York Depot would also have been an ample supply by early 1862.

The later two-piece shelter half, called the "Type III" or the 1864 model, is acceptable for late 1863 to 1865 events. Made of cotton duck or cotton drill, this shelter half was made of two pieces of clothes with 3"x 3" cloth reinforcements in all four corners and an additional reinforcement on the bottom center of the half for a 3rd tent pin rope in the center.

Two (2) or more shelter halves of either Type II or III could be connected together to form a 2-sided tent or more than 2 shelter halves could be connected together to make a shebang using nearby trees, branches, or even upside-down muskets bayoneted into the ground.

Earlier on, each shelter half was issued with 2 poles and a piece of rope. The poles fit together and the top portion of the top pole had a dowel-like piece incorporated into it that fit into a small sewn opening of the tent's upper corner. The piece of rope with a loop in it would slide down this dowel-like piece of the pole and then acted like a guy to secure the pole and rope into the ground using a pin. After a while, these poles and rope were discarded and tree branches (or similar) were often the method used to put up these tents in the field.

Note - metal grommets were never used on Civil War-era tents. Also, the end closures sometimes seen in reenactment camps today was a late-war development that evidently never saw field use until very late in the war.

M1861 Springfield Rifled Musket

The most commonly used rifle used by the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War, including the weapon issued to the 53rd PVI in 1862. Originally manufactured at the Springfield arsenal, in order to be able to supply large numbers to the army in a more-timely manner, the government contracted out the manufacture of this weapon to various companies. Each weapon delivered was inspected and an inspector's stamp was applied to each accepted rifled musket. Also, Federal issue leather slings are required. They should be natural in color and not dyed black. They will gradually get dirty naturally, over time, while being used in the field.

Keeping his weapon clean and operational was the duty of every soldier. Here's a good video which shows the basic cleaning processes (in the field and at home) that we recommend using (the video shows an Enfield although most of the cleaning process is identical for the M1861 (Model 1861) Springfield):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89cYlgUOtro>

The 1853 Enfield's rammer has a place for a cleaning patch in the end of it. For M1861 Springfields, however, that is not the case. You should have a M1861 Springfield musket tool (which incorporates a screw-driver and a small wrench for screwing/unscrewing the cone) and a cleaning worm. The cleaning worm screws onto the end of the Springfield rammer which is threaded.

In the field, use the basic cleaning process shown in the video which uses hot water and cleaning patches. Also, use a small (approx. 2"x 2", for example) piece of scrap leather to seal the open end of the cone when pouring water in the barrel initially so traces of water don't run out the cone and potentially drain into the lock mechanism, for example. We recommend not removing the small bore screw near the cone in the field as it is very easy to lose. Only removing the small screw when cleaning at home is suggested. After cleaning your rifle at home, applying some gun oil on all metal parts will help lubricate the inner workings of the trigger mechanism and also help prevent rust on the rifle's metal parts while being stored. Properly maintaining your rifle in the field and performing a good cleaning at home after events will help prevent misfires when your rifle is next used and will help prevent embarrassment at the next event if your NCO or officer finds flaws with your rifle's condition at inspection time. Also, a cone/nipple pick is essential as well and can be stored in the small leather loop inside your cap pouch.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Wallet ('purse')

Civil war wallets, also known as purses, were usually made of leather, similar in size to a checkbook or smaller, with multiple pockets. The pockets typically had gussets like the side of an accordion. Most wallets had an outer leather binder or flap that closed over the pockets, with a leather loop to close it. Soldiers would store period money, etc. in this item.

Housewife

These were made of most any type of cloth, wool, oil cloth, rubberized cloth or leather and were a simple affair that held needles, thread, pins, thimbles, beeswax, scissors and extra coat and trouser buttons. These are indispensable for making repairs in camp or in the field such as replacing buttons or tears in clothing.

Razor

Straight razors were the only type used in the 1800's, with wood or bone handles. We recommend that you do NOT purchase one for use in the field as they can be dangerous to transport in your gear. Besides, almost every company had an official barber who shaved his comrades for a few pennies.

Mirror

There are several styles of mirrors sold by sutlers that have survived. Most were encased and wood with a sliding wood cover.

Toothbrush

Wood or bone handled toothbrushes with natural bristles were the most common. Baking soda or "tooth powder" were both available as modern toothpaste didn't yet exist.

Towel

Towels from this area were generally huckabuck, linen, or cotton. Avoid terry cloth towels.

Comb

Most combs were bone or hard rubber with no manufacturer stamps. Companies such as Goodyear patented their name to manufacturers that made the original hard rubber combs, but these old stampings are difficult to find today. A plain rubber comb is suitable.

Soap and container

Soap from this era was either lye, castille, or hard milled soap. Containers were generally tin.

Plate

The plate was also known as a tin pie plate or pan. A low-sided tin dish or “mess pan” made of three pieces of tinned sheet iron or similar to what we think as a miner’s pan, was also issued from several depots including the St Louis and Chicago depots. It’s unclear how many of these were given out to Pennsylvania units, but some of the original camp wear from Camp Curtin was of this type in their handy for soup and stew. A photo of several New York soldiers at mess at Harper’s Ferry in 1862 also shows this type of pan being used. A canteen half is also acceptable though these may be better used as a fry pan.

Boiler/cup

These were tin with flat (non-crimped edge) bottoms and wire and/or rivet attached handles. Boilers made from cans should have no corrugated sides.

Utensils (knife, fork and spoon)

The knife and fork should have wooden or bone handles or grips, with iron or brass rivets. Avoid grips with fancy pewter inlays as these were post-Civil War. The best spoons are the medium, tablespoon size ‘fiddleback’ with a rectangular or rounded handle (no wooden handle). No fancy silverware please. Sutlers offer reproduction knife/fork/spoon combinations that combine all three utensils and fold into a package about the size of a large pocket knife. Though there were a number of variations of this item manufactured during the war, the most common surviving items have wooden grips with iron fittings and a detachable knife that would slide off the fork/spoon combination. This is a neat item to have in the pocket or haversack and true to the private purchase soldier use.

Eyewear

Period eyewear consisted of wire rim glasses that had straight temples. Arms that wrapped around the ear did not yet exist during the Civil War but were popular by the 1880s. The lens shape of the 1860's was either rectangular with rounded corners or oval, round. Frames from this era had no nose pads. The bridge between the lenses should be straight (lateral) across the nose and not rounded (like a partial semi-circle) nor squared above the nose. The wire frames and arms can be silver, nickled, plated or spring steel. Due to the fact that these glasses could slide down or off the face, some men chose to wear their glasses tied to a string around the back of their head utilizing the teardrop holes which are found on certain arm ends. Sliding-temple frames also existed during this era. Tinted lenses did exist. Proper period frames can often be found at antique shops or flea markets. Modern prescription lenses can be installed into period frames provided there is a screw at the ends of the frames. Be aware that some sutlers may claim their eyeglasses are period correct but are not. As an alternative for the modern re-enactor, contact lenses are also an option.

Other Items

Some other items to include to your kit include writing implements, paper, CDV’s, reproduction Federal notes (including fractional currency), playing cards, dice, a diary, pocket testaments, etc.

Priority list of items to build your kit:

Check with a veteran of the unit before making a purchase to help you get quality gear that you'll only have to purchase once, instead of buying cheap gear and then having to buy quality gear, which overall, is more expensive.

M1858 Forage Cap
Fatigue Coat/Sack Coat
Issue Trousers (sky blue kersey)
Wood Socks
Bootees
Shirt (either civilian or issue)
Suspenders/Braces
Waist Belt and US Plate
M1861 Cartridge Box with Sling and Eagle breast plate
M1861 Springfield Rifle with leather sling
M1861 Cap Pouch
M1855 Bayonet (make sure the bayonet fits your rifle)
Bayonet Scabbard (2 rivet type)
Haversack
Wool Blanket
Gum Blanket
Tin Cup
Tin plate, knife, spoon, fork
Shelter Half (early 3 piece is recommended) - many buy 2 halves to assemble a full tent
M1855 Knapsack (Double-Bag)

Secondary List to build onto your kit later on:

Dress (Frock) Coat
Overcoat (Great Coat)
Personal items – pocket knife, wallet, cloth ditty bags, mirror, etc.

Note – always look for clothing with hand-sewn button holes, proper weight of the cloth, etc.

Part V

Miscellaneous

Unit Equipment

Loaner equipment is held in the unit's quartermaster inventory as a courtesy for probationary or regular members to use on an as-needed basis. Members (regular or probationary) using unit equipment are responsible for the care and maintenance/cleaning of that unit equipment. This includes weapons, leathers, clothing, etc. Probationary members may only use this loaner unit equipment up to 12 months from when they first joined the unit, assuming there are no other newer probationary members needing to use it. Unit equipment being used by probationary members is only meant for use until they complete their basic kits (clothing, leathers, rifle, etc.) and must be returned to the unit quartermaster in the same condition as it was when issued. If unit equipment is damaged or lost by a regular or probationary member, the member who the equipment was issued to will be held financially responsible to re-imburse the unit for the approximate value of the equipment.

Military Courtesies and Decorum

To ensure respect, when addressing an officer or non-commission officer (NCO) in a military setting (such as in camp during 'live hours' or in the field), men of a lower rank should always address the individual by their rank or rank and last name, not by their first name.

Commissioned officers should be appropriately saluted as a sign of respect for the rank and uniform. The proper salute entails raising one's right hand to the bill of their headwear with their palm facing outwards and their elbow as high as the shoulder.¹⁴ When soldiers on the march are passing an officer, the highest-ranking enlisted man in the group (assuming they are not being led by an officer), shall salute the highest-ranking officer being passed. If under arms, the sergeants salute shall be given by the highest-ranking enlisted man to the highest-ranking officer being passed, again assuming the men are not being led by an officer. At the same time, the rest of the men should go to 'shoulder, arms'. When soldiers are in camp and an officer approaches, the first person noticing the approaching officer should announce "officer in camp", the enlisted men should stand up if seated, the men should come to attention, and the highest-ranking enlisted man in the group, shall salute the highest-ranking officer based upon one of the two conditions listed above (depending upon whether he is under or without arms).

When on Guard, when a company-grade officer (a 2nd Lt. up to Captain) approaches, enlisted men under arms should provide the sergeants salute. If a field-grade officer (a Major up to General or the President) approaches, the appropriate salute for enlisted men under arms is 'present arms'.

When indoors (a fixed building, tent, etc.), you do not salute officers unless you are armed (musket or a bayonet, for example). Also, headwear should be removed when indoors if not under arms.

It is recommended that the officers and the men in the ranks be familiar with the 1861 Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States: <https://archive.org/details/revisedunitedst00deptgoog/mode/2up>

¹⁴ 1861 Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States - Article XXIX, Section 256.

PART VI

Manufacturers & General Sutlers*

S & S Sutler of Gettysburg (Tim & Debbie Sheads)

331 Buford Avenue, Gettysburg, PA 17325 phone 717-338-1990

web: www.ss-sutler.com email: sheads@comcast.net

Recommended: clothing including blouse, trousers, shirts (issue & civilian); also has blankets, gum blankets, haversacks, knapsacks, & tin ware. Check for items in stock.

C&D Jarnagin Company

PO Box 1860, Corinth, MS 38834-1860 phone (662) 287-4977

web: www.jarnaginfo.com

Equipment: Buff or waxed belt with US plate, two-rivet bayonet scabbard, mess gear (boiler, etc.), rubber blanket, haversack, knapsack, canteen, bootees, Model 1861 Springfield rifle.

County Cloth (Charlie Childs)

13797 Georgetown St., Paris, OH 44669 phone (330) 862-3307

web: www.crchilds.com email: chasrchilds@gmail.com

Fatigue blouse kits, blankets, shirt kits- you must sew them or have someone sew them for you.

Dell's Leather Works

83 First Avenue, Kingston, N.Y. 12401

phone (845) 339-4916

web: www.dellsleatherworks.com/

Belts (mid-to-late war), cap boxes, bayonet scabbards, haversacks

Dirty Billy's Hats (Bill Wickham)

20 Baltimore Street, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17315

(717) 334-3200 (shop) (410) 775-1865 (mail order)

www.dirtybillyshats.com/

Recommend: Model 1858 forage caps, slouch hats, civilian and issue shirts

Missouri Boot and Shoe Co. (Bob Serio)

951 Burr Crossing Rd., Neosho, MO 64850. phone (417) 451-6100

web: missouribootandshoe.tripod.com

Recommend: knapsacks, Model 1861 cartridge box, cap pouch, bayonet scabbards, belts, slings, bootees (they will make custom bootees!). (NOTE: They do generally offer a package price for a complete accoutrement set.)

The Quartermaster Shop (Jeff O'Donnell)

5565 Griswold Road, Smiths Creek, MI 48074 phone (810) 367-6702

www.quartermastershop.com

"Arsenal blouse", trousers, overcoats* (NOTE: buttonholes & some details will have to be hand done by purchaser)

John G. Zimmerman

P.O. Box 1351, 1195 Washington Street, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425 phone (304) 535-2558

No website apparently, but he does have a YouTube Page ([@johnzimmerman8146](https://www.youtube.com/@johnzimmerman8146))

Model 1861 Springfield rifle; also musket repair, defarbing, retooling, and improvements

Wambaugh, White & Co.

P.O. Box 445, Charlotte, MI 48813

phone: 517-303-3609

web: wwandcompany.com or email: dan@wwandcompany.com

Recommend: sack coats, frocks, trousers, shirts (issue and civilian), shelter halves. They also have kits for many of these items.

The Button Baron

P.O. Box 3163, Gettysburg, PA 17325

phone: 717-549-2074

web: www.buttonbaron.com or email: buttonbaron@earthlink.net

The Depot

P.O. Box 1219, Erwin, TN 37650

phone: 423-330-0003

web: www.thedepothistoric.com or email depot2023@gmail.com

They stock a wide range of N.J. Sekela-made uniform items.

Also, please see the Approved Sutler list at the unit website: <https://www.53rdpvi.org/equipment/>

- List is subject to change; Revised August 2024

General Resources:

The Authentic Campaigner.com - www.authentic-campaigner.com