

BASICS OF CIVIL WAR HISTORY for the 1848 Archway Venture Crew by Joe Carlson

The Civil War started in April 1861 when South Carolina troops fired on the Union fort of Ft Sumter guarding Charleston harbor. It ended in April 4 years later at Appomattox Court House in Virginia. The president of the US was Abraham Lincoln and the most famous general was U.S. Grant. The president of the Confederate States of America (CSA or CS) was Jefferson Davis and his most famous general was Robert E. Lee.

The underlying reason for the war was the issue of slavery, much of the South's economy of cotton and sugar required large numbers of slaves to do manual labor. Congress was divided on allowing slavery into the newly created western states. In Kansas there was fighting between those who wanted Kansas to be a slave or free state. However, **when the Union soldier marched off to war in 1861 it was not to free the slaves, the main reason was to keep the Union together, keeping alive the goal of the American Revolution and the Constitution.** It wasn't until after the Battle of Antietam that Pres. Lincoln signed the proclamation freeing the slaves (and that freed only the slaves in the Southern States that had tried to leave the Union). The freeing of slaves and keeping the Union together then became the main reasons to fight.

Southerners felt that they had freely joined the United States or Union and that they were under no long term obligation to remain if they were not being treated fairly. A large number of congressman from the South relied upon slaves or some of their wealthy constituents were large plantation owners and they wanted to keep slavery. They were also opposed to the high taxes levied by Congress on goods coming from England in the way of finished products (which they thought helped the New England merchants) which caused England to respond by putting high taxes on the cotton exported from the South to England. The North was also increasing in population and industry while the South was mainly farming.

When the war started Southerners felt their highest loyalty was to their State not the United States of America. They felt when the Union troops came south to force them to remain with the Union that it was a "War of Aggression" or invasion of the South and they were called to defend their homes. The "straw that broke the camel's back" was the election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States. Most of the Southern soldiers did not own slaves but were from very small farms that they owned themselves. Large plantation owners were exempt from military service though many did fight.

Union, or Federal, "Yankee" soldiers wore blue uniforms and were usually assigned to the Infantry, Artillery or Cavalry or as general support troops. They were nicknamed "Billy Yanks" Most were white until later in the war when Black soldiers were allowed to enlist. See the movie "Glory" of the 54th Mass. Regmt.

Confederates or Rebels were nicknamed "Johnny Rebs" and wore any kind of uniform they could find. Standard wool uniforms were gray with gray or light blue pants, but up to a 1/4 of the army wore brown or "butternut" colored uniforms. Many did not have uniforms and wore their clothing they brought from home or took off of dead Union or Southern soldiers on the battlefield.

Their military equipment and tactics were almost identical on both sides, only the Union had

more of it and could make their own in great quantities. The South could not. They had to rely on England providing equipment running the Union blockade of their coast and from using captured Union equipment, they did produce small quantities of their own weapons and equipment.

Union batteries usually consisted of 6 guns divided into three, 2-gun sections (left, middle and right section) They used the same type of ammunition and took about 100 men to operate. CSA batteries were of mixed types and only had four guns per battery of about 65 men (G'burg p. 23).

The average Infantry regiment (Regmt) consisted of 10 companies, 30 officers and usually 800 men, but during combat, the average strength was only about 480 men.

The Union private in 1861 was paid \$13 per month which was a lot for most of the men who had been farmers or laborers in factories. It was also a lot for emigrants who had just arrived in the US and needed money and an opportunity to show their patriotism.

The heaviest loss during any single battle was Gettysburg 1-3 July 1863. Between 40 and 50,000 casualties. 21% on the US side and 30% on the CSA. p. 13

The Union regiment that had the most casualties in a single battle was the 1st Maine Heavy Artillery Battery while attacking as Infantry at Petersburg, VA. They suffered 604 casualties within 20 minutes, half of the Regmt. The South's Regmt. that suffered the highest casualties was the 26th North Carolina Regmt. at Gettysburg. Watch the movie "Gettysburg"

US 2.3 mil. men. 70% under age of 23
approx. 200,00 were 15 and 16. (p. 11)

US peak strength 1864- 1,044,660 men

US battle deaths - 110,100

US deaths to disease - 224,000 (diarrhea and dysentery 44,558)

CSA peak strength 1864 - 484,800 men

CSA battle deaths -94,000

CSA deaths to disease -60,000 (Price p. 17)

Ave. US daily rations (if available) in oz. 20 beef, 18 flour, 2.56 dry beans, 1.6 green coffee, 2.4 sugar, .64 salt CSA 1/4 lbs of bacon, 18 oz of flour, 10 lbs. Of rice and some peas etc.

Pay was \$13 per month for a US private 1861 (Price p. 11)

During 1st Bull Run between 8,000 to 10,000 bullets were fired for every man killed or wounded (Price p. 12).

Only 20% of battle casualties can be attributed to artillery (Price p. 54).

1/4 of West Point Officers went to the CSA

Movies to watch: The Blue and the Gray, Gettysburg, Glory, Ken Burn's Civil War (available at the Kearney Public library).

Reference Books: *Hardtack and Coffee* by John D. Billings (also in *Soldier Life* by Philip Stern the same book), or *Billy Yank* by Bell I. Wiley.

QUICK INFORMATION GUIDE

Prepared by Joe Carlson

“C” 3RD US FIELD ARTILLERY
from the book *Cannons* by Dean Thomas

12 - Pounder Mountain Howitzer p.32

Bore Diameter 4.62"
Tube Material Bronze
Length of tube: 37"
Wt of tube 220 lbs
Powder charge .5 lb. (We use 4 oz.)
Range at 5 deg. elevation: 900 yards
(2000 yards equal 1 mile)
cannister wt. 9 lbs. length-6.4'
2 shots per minute for a good crew
3 shots of cannister, without safety
caisson chest: 32 rounds of 4 types
crew of 6 men

12 Pounder field gun: Napoleon p. 28

The most common gun on both sides.
Bore diameter 4.62
66" bronze tube, wt. 1,227 lbs
Total wt: 2,600 lbs.
Powder charge 2.5 lbs
Range at 5 degrees: 1,619 yards
Pulled by 6 horses:

24 Pounder, p. 31

wt. of tube: Ours: 1490 lbs.
Length of tube: 65'
Powder charge: 2 lb. (We use 1 lb.)
Range at 5 deg. 1,322 yards
(range: prob. 1 mile, 3 mile area hit)
manufactured at: CA & Co. Boston 1847
Date Insp. Jun 15, 47 Ser. # 162
Returned to Ft Kearny, Dedicated 1987

Our unit had the **3 inch Ordnance Rifle** p.
39 on p. 41 is a picture of our unit in 1862
bore diameter: 3.0'
tube: wrought iron
length of tube: 73"
wt. of tube: 816 lbs.
Powder charge: 1 lb.
Range at 5 deg. 1,835 yards
Range of rifled guns at their max. 12-13
degrees was 3-3,500 yds. Higher elevations

were possible allowing them to reach 6,000
yds. or about 3 ½ miles. (Lords, p. 27)
Most 12 Pdr. smoothbores were limited to
less than a mile. (G'burg Guide p. 21)

Types of ammunition: p. 16 and p. 29

Solid Shot: solid iron ball, wt. 12 lbs. dia.
4.52

Common Shell: explosive shell with a
hollow projectile filled with about 90%
black powder. Fuses were cut to time (0-5
sec.) And lit by the firing charge. Designed
to break into fragments

Case Shot (Shrapnel) hollow shell filled
with about 75 iron or lead balls and a
bursting charge.

Cannister: thin metal can containing iron or
lead balls in sawdust. (25-27 one and one
half inch balls) Max. Effect. Range of 200 to
400 yards. Sometimes fired 2 or 3 loads at a
time.

Grapeshot: 9 iron balls held together in
three tiers. Diameter varied but larger than
cannister.

Friction Primer p. 25

Consisted of 2 copper tubes soldered
together at right angles. The short tube was
filled with a friction composition into which
was inserted a wire serrated on the end.
Musket powder filled the long tube, which
was closed with a plug of wax. It was then
varnished to make it somewhat waterproof.

Commands: p. 3

LT : Commence Firing:

Gunner/SGT: Load (begin worming)

Gunner/SGT: Ready (we use: prick and
prime)

we use #3 : Good Powder

Gunner/SGT: Fire

LT: Cease Fire

Quick Facts by Joe Carlson

1861 US Springfield vs. Enfield

(Info. from Lord's p. 243)

.58 cal. Rifle-Musket vs. .577

length 58 ½ in. vs. 54 in.
Wt. 9.75 lbs vs 8 lbs. 14 ½ oz.
muz. Vel. 950 ft/sec
wt of projectile 500 grains vs. 530 grains
wt of charge 60 grains vs. 70 grains
\$14.93 to manufacture
Enfield fired at 500 yds. Had a mean deviation of 2 ½ ft. Parts were not as interchangeable.

11 separate motions had to be made to fire a musket. Regulations stated that 3 rounds per min should be fired. (Price, p. 12)

Revolvers: Colt Army 44 cal. 6 shot, length 14 in. Wt. 2.69 lbs. 260 grain bullet, 30 grams of charge. **Colt Navy: 36 cal.** Length 13 in. Wt. 2.63 lbs. wt. of bullet 125 grains, 14 grams of charge. **Remington Army 44 cal.** Length 13.75 in. Wt. 2.88 lbs. 260 grain bullet with 30 gram charge. (Lord's p. 206)

Civil War Trivia:

Col Henry Hunt: Union Chief. of Artillery
Col. E. Porter Alexander: CSA Chief of Art.
CSA only had one cannon foundry-
The greatest reg. loss was by the 1st Maine Heavy Artillery in 1864 at Petersburg. They lost 604 men killed and wounded in less than 20 min. while fighting as infantry. All told they lost half of their 2,202 men in less than a year. (Price, p. 13)
According to the *Gettysburg Guide* p. 19. An efficient artillery crew could load, aim and fire **twice in one minute**. When under heavy attack, crews had ben know to fire four canister shots in a minute.

Union batteries usually consisted of 6 guns divided into three, 2-gun sections (left, middle and right section) They used the same type of ammunition and took about 100 men. CSA batteries were of mixed types and only had four guns per battery of about 65 men (G'burg p. 23).

The heaviest loss during any single battle was Gettysburg 1-3 July 1863. Between 40 and 50,000 casualties. 21% on the US side and 30% on the CSA. US largest % was at Port Hudson in 1863 with a loss of 26.7%. p. 13

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www.geocities.com/Athens/Agora/8289/civilwar.html **C Battery 3rd US FA SITE**

www.xibus.com/crew For the home web site of the 1848 Venture Crew

Ft Kearny on the Platte by D. Ray Wilson 1980. **1848-1871** *Notes by J. Carlson* Fort (10 sq. miles) Selected by Lt Woodbury "Ft Childs" until Dec

Reasons selected:

1. Slight elevation 10' above Platte
2. Heaviest timber nearby at foot of G. Isl.
3. Strategic location between Pawnee & Sioux

Jun 48, 175 Mo. Vol. arrived, making sod shelters and bricks and adobes. Higher HQ was at Ft Leavenworth 300 miles away. CPT Rush's wife, Annie 1st woman and daughter Margaret 1848 in Oct.

Mormon Trail 1847 on North of River Oregon Trail S. side of river, Gold Rush 49'
Famous people at Ft K: 1LT Harry Heth (CSA general at Gettysburg), Jeb Stuart and Robert E. Lee either visited Ft. or was involved in expeditions leaving Ft.

Indian Troubles: In Nov 54 and Feb 55 Brules Indians stole mules from Ft K. p. 63 then killed Lt Grattan and 28 soldiers. Ft, served as staging area for battle at Ash Hollow Sept 1855, 600 soldiers against 200 Sioux "Brules". 86 Brules killed, 70 women and children held at Ft K for short period. Aug 56, mail carrier killed E. of Ft by small party of Cheyennes.

1857 Bill Cody age 11, went west with freighters/cattle and were attacked 35 mi. W. at Plum Creek (Lexington area) at noon, 3 killed. Rest retreated to Ft K. Troops didn't catch. 10 pm Cody killed 1st Indian.

1864 on Little Blue River 25 white men killed, several women and children captured. Every stage station for 400 miles burned except Ft K.

Cody served as a scout for 9th KS Cav, then as hospital orderly for 15 mon. w/ 7th KS Vol. Then as stage driver from Ft K. to Plum Creek until 1866 p. 138.

In a 1857 report: several pieces of artillery were placed around the parade ground including 16 block house guns, 2 field pieces, 2 mountain howitzers and a prairie piece. p. 70

Stage/mail service started 1850 from

Independence MO to Salt Lake City. Eventually daily Western Stage Co. service to Ft Atkinson, Omaha, Neb. City, & Calif. Home stations were 50 miles apart, Ft K. was one of them. A driver's run was 2 home stations. Swing stat. 10-12 mi. apart. p. 72

Pony Express: Apr 3, 1860 to Nov 20, 61 Started at St Joe, MO 2000 miles to San Fran.

To take 10 days, Ft K. 230 mi. from St. Joe Bill Cody was 14 and a rider.

1860 population of Neb. Territory was 28,841

210 in Dobytown W. of Ft. 133 men, 30 women

1862: Ft K. 70 enlisted men, only 38 available for guard duty, others absent from post or sick.

1864: 125 soldiers (7th Iowa Cav.) at start of Indian hostilities. More added, 4 Co. of 1st Neb. Cav. & Co. B Neb. Militia

Oct 11, 1864 Schedule by CPT Lee Gillette 1st Neb. Cav. Commanding Ft K

6 am Reveille, 6:30 Stable Call, 7:15 Breakfast

7:45 Water Call, 8 Sick Call, 8:15 Fatigue duty

9 Guard Mounting, 12 Dinner, 4 Water Call, 4:45 Stable Call, 6 Supper, Sunset Retreat

8:30 pm Lights Out p. 87

2 bldgs. 50 men each, 1 bldg. held 100 telegraph was in sutler's store 1864 p. 133

Pawnee Scouts Jan 65 to Apr. 66, to be paid as cav. released during winter months. Maj.

Frank & CPT Luther North, 3 off. 18 NCOs, 74 pvts., used own horses, issued uniforms but fought dressed as Indians.

Also about 85 Omaha Scouts. P.S. recalled for 13 years of service, not until Jul 66 was a law passed that auth. them. Jul. 69 SGT Mad Bear won Medal of Honor in KS. p.

172 Guarded RR.

Galvanized Yankees or white-washed rebs, spring of 65, 6 regmts. of 1,000 men each, 3rd

regt. at Ft K. left Nov 65 mustered out p. 140. Co. A & E 5th rgmt. assigned 1866, released at end of 66. 6th rgmt. from Ft K to Ft Laramie 1865.

May 65, 15 man unit of unarmed convalescent soldiers of the 3rd regmt was attacked 2 mi. East of **Elm Creek Station** by 12-30 armed Pawnee. 5 men were wounded and 1 killed. The same day the Overland stage fought a 6 mi. Running fight 35 mi. E. of Ft K. they got away safe. Pvt. Francis Lohnes Co. H 1st N. Cav won the Cong. Medal of Honor May 1865 at Gilman's Ranch (8 mi. W. of Gothenburg-Stage Stat. Pony Exp.), promoted to Cpl. Other fights at **Ft Cottonwood** (changed later to Ft McPherson in 66) had 5 companies assigned.

May 1866, Ft K staging area for 18th In. 2,200 troops, 1,900 recruits and 300 veterans

30 piece regt. band, **Apr. 27, 1866 1st bridge built across Platte** at Ft K. 1st N and 7th IA mustered out in 1866

Railroad: Arrives at Ft 15-20 Aug 1866 (4 ½ mi. NW of Ft was depot, moved telegraph there) RR made at 1 mi. per day in NE. May 69 in Utah. Reported in *The Kearny Herald*, the Ft Newsletter run by Gal. Yankee. p. 173

WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE CIVIL WAR

by Joe Carlson 23 Jan. 2003

Basic information for the 1848 Venture Crew

Women played very important parts during the civil war time frame. Activities that women participate in at civil war reenactment events differ, as do the desires of the woman reenactor. Any of these below impressions could be performed.

Due to the social customs of the time, most women remained at home when their husbands, sons or fathers took off for the war. They assumed more work that had been traditionally done by the men because there was no one else at home to do it. In the larger cities they even moved into war time factories rolling bullets and packaging them for the soldiers. Women in both the North and South would also get together in homes to roll bandages for the use of wounded soldiers. They organized themselves into the United States Sanitation Commission and worked to improve the life of soldiers. Many women offered their services as nurses and even a few were accepted as doctors. Louisa May Alcott, who later wrote "Little Women" was one such nurse. Women worked primarily in the hospitals but some were at the front lines offering medical care to the wounded. There are many stories of such women in the service of their country both in the North and South.

The Union army allowed women to enlist as laundresses and were paid the same amount as a private, \$13 per month. There were usually 4 laundresses to a company of soldiers, and normally they were the wives of the sergeants or younger enlisted men. Their duties were to launder the uniforms for the men. They also probably helped with meals and nursing when needed.

Because of their gender, women were not expected to be spies and were generally treated as ladies and non-combatants. However, women served as spies on both sides of the battlefield. Numerous articles and books have been written about their exploits. For the most part they portrayed themselves as women to obtain information about the other side and had a greater chance of getting information across enemy lines. Such women were Pauline Cushman for the North and Belle Boyd (age 17) and Rose O'Neal Greenhow for the South.

Women also went to war to fight. A few women served as Vivandieres (caregivers) wearing a colorful blue union coat with large amounts of red on it, and skirts. This role is said to have originated with the French army. These women provided comfort and encouragement to the troops and carried water for the wounded or helped tend the wounded in battle. Most of these women were the wives of soldiers within the unit. "French Mary" Tepe, was wounded carrying water to her wounded comrades of the 114th Pennsylvania Infantry regiment. Another woman, Kady Brownell (age 19), was the wife of one of the soldiers and she was allowed to wear a union uniform dress into combat and serve with the 1st and later 5th Rhode Island regiments. She carried a rifle and even on occasions carried the American flag into battle.

Other women felt their duty was to fight. Since women were not allowed to be soldiers, they hid their identity. These women changed their names to reflect those of men, cut their hair short and wore clothing that would disguise them. Since there were no required medical physicals of the entire body, they could pass themselves off as men. There is no way of knowing how many

women did serve in both armies as soldiers, but it is estimated at least 200 did so. We have records and photographs of about 10 of them who were either discovered after they were wounded, or after the war when they revealed their true gender. Some of the most famous were Sarah Edmonds alias Franklin Thompson with the 2nd Michigan Inf. Regmt., Jennie Hodgers alias Albert Cashier with the 95th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, and Frances Clalin with the 4th Missouri heavy artillery and Company A of the 13th Missouri cavalry. I was just told that one such woman was the wife of another infantry soldier in the 1st Nebraska, who later deserted but her husband went after her and brought her back. I need to do some more research on it.

A number of women were diarist such as Mary Chesnut and Susan Bradford from the South who kept detailed records of the events that went on during the war and the events they witnessed. During this time frame women also were very involved as teachers. Some women portray having to leave their homes as “refugees” fleeing from the enemy. Women were also starting to be involved with denouncing the use of alcohol. Many women reenactors have studied the type of language used when writing during this period and will write letters to their soldier sons or husbands using quill pens and bottles of ink. While I am not aware of a specific example, I would suspect some women were involved with doing some correspondent work for local papers, drawing of sketches, and possibly even early photography.

It appears that women who reenact the civil war period usually take on the role of wives or daughters of officers or sergeants. These women are visiting the camp which was fairly common during the war when units were not fighting. These women plan and attend “tea parties”, prepare meals, assist the surgeon when needed, and attend the Military Balls (dances). Most of them wear “hoop” skirts and many have two dresses, one for everyday wear and to go to the tea, and a second “Ball gown” that is much more decorative and only worn on special occasions such as the dances. Dresses can be bought from the sutler for about \$75, or patterns can be purchased along with the material and sewn.

Many of the women actually bring their sewing to camp and make or mend clothing. They also knit and on occasion, a quilting frame is set up and a quilt tied or quilted. Those who are musically inclined can bring musical instruments to camp and it really adds to the atmosphere when old songs are played or sung. This is a favorite of visitors to camp.

Other vital roles the women reenactors play are involved in are historians, public relations greeters, or tour guides of visitors to the camp. Visitors are curious as to the many aspects of the civil war and camp life and women need to know just as much as the men to educate visitors.

Sources of information from *Famous Women of the Civil War* by Peter F. Copeland and *Civil War Heroines* by Jill Cannon