

US CAVALRY ON THE PLAINS 1850-90



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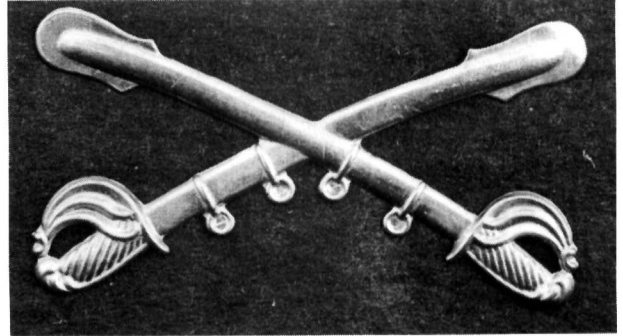
US Cavalry on the Plains 1850-90

The 1850s

Two events in the 19th century turned the minds of Americans westwards towards eventual and inevitable conflict with the Plains Indians. The first was victory in the Mexican-American War in 1848, which brought millions of acres of new land in the West under the control of the United States, and opened the way for settlement by landless Easterners. The second was the discovery of gold in Sutter's Creek, California, in 1849. Thousands travelled westwards to share in this strike—many by ship, but still more by wagon across the Plains. Many of these pioneers never reached California, but settled instead in places along the way.

One of the results of this migration was conflict with the Indians who inhabited the Plains, and whose way of life depended on hunting the roaming buffalo herds. So it was natural that the Army, the nation's armed peace-keepers, should be sent to garrison the West and, ostensibly, to protect settlers and Indians from each other.

To Army headquarters and Congress back in Washington, the Army which had fought all its wars would be sufficient to police the Plains. It was an army heavy in infantry and artillery, which had at that time only three mounted units: the 1st and 2nd Regiments of Dragoons, which had been raised in the 1830s, and the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen which had been raised in 1846 for service in the Mexican-American War. To anyone with experience in the West, however, it was obvious that more mounted troops would be needed. Col. George McCall, from the Army's Inspector General's office, reported after an inspection of Army bases in New Mexico: 'I am persuaded that the nature of the service to be required of the Army for the next ten years will be such as to require that the cavalry arm shall greatly predominate in its organisation.'



The brass crossed sabre insignia has been used by US cavalry from 1851 to the present day. Officers' versions of this cap badge were embroidered. The blades were made narrower than the example shown here after 1872. (Author's Collection)

Cavalry was expensive, however. Buying horses—horses that had to be fed grain rather than the grass the Indian ponies ate—presented the government with a prospect of continuing cost. In the actual event it would be many years before more cavalry was authorised. In the meantime the Army's existing mounted units would have to do the best they could. The 1st Dragoons were sent to the Pacific Coast, and initially the Mounted Rifles went with them. The task of policing the Plains fell to the 2nd Dragoons alone.

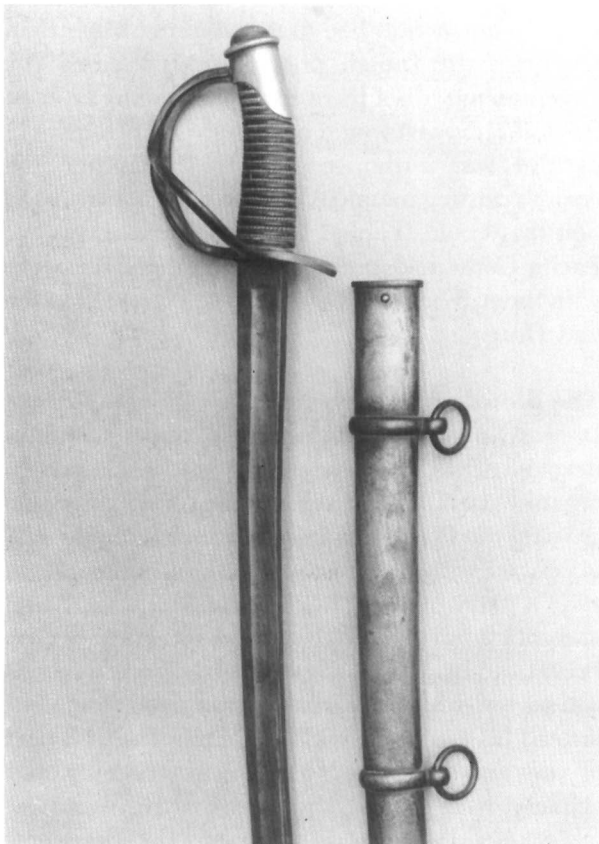
The Sioux and Cheyenne

It was some time before any major conflicts developed, which gave the Army a chance to organise itself. At first the number of white people crossing the Plains was low, and they did not come in contact with the Indians on a large scale. But in 1855 a party of Sioux braves robbed a stagecoach, and shot a ferryboat operator on the Platte River. Brevet 2nd Lt. John L. Grattan of the 2nd Dragoons was sent with a small force to arrest these Sioux; but instead his own force was massacred. In April part of the 2nd Dragoons, along with infantry and artillery, were gathered at Fort Kearny, Nebraska, under Col. William S. Harney, the dragoons'

commanding officer. Their task was to punish the Sioux.

With the dragoons under Lt.Col. Philip St George Cooke leading the way, the force started out. About half the Sioux facing them surrendered immediately, but the rest fled. The troops found the site of the new Indian camp, and after making a night march on the evening of 2 September they surrounded it, with the infantry on one side and the dragoons on the other. The Indians spotted the infantry, struck their tents, and began to move towards where the dragoons were waiting in ambush. The infantry then opened fire from one side, while the dragoons charged in from the other. Caught in the middle, the Indians continued to attempt to flee, and lost 85 dead and five wounded in the ensuing cavalry pursuit. The Army loss was four killed, seven wounded and one missing. Papers from the robbed stagecoach, together with two

An example of the Model 1840 heavy dragoon sabre. This was essentially the same design as the Model 1861 light cavalry sabre, which replaced this 'old wristbreaker' in that year. (Author's Collection)



white women's scalps and clothing worn by Grattan's men, were found in the camp.

After sending their captives back to Fort Kearny, Harney's men moved on to Fort Laramie, Wyoming. They then marched north-east into the heart of Sioux country, reaching the Missouri River at Fort Pierre on 20 October without finding one Indian. On 25 October the Indians who had robbed the stage, awestruck by this display of persistence and strength, surrendered at Fort Laramie. In March 1856 Harney signed a peace treaty with the Sioux.

Harney's campaign proved to even the most cost-conscious congressman the value of cavalry in dealing with the Indian tribes. On 3 March 1855 two more regiments of mounted troops had been authorised: these were to be designated the 1st and 2nd Regiments of Cavalry, rather than 'dragoons', or the more expensively equipped 'mounted rifles'.

The Army's next clash was with the Cheyenne, who had been engaging in small raids against the whites. When, in early 1856, they tried to stop the Salt Lake mail coach and wounded the driver, one and a half companies of the new 1st Cavalry under Capt. George H. Stewart were sent after the offenders. They found a Cheyenne camp on the Platte and charged into it, killing ten Indians and wounding another ten. The Indians managed to regroup, however, and harassed Stewart's men during their return march.

After this episode the Cheyenne signed a treaty agreeing to move from the Platte and to cease their raids on white settlers. However, as they brooded on this through the following winter, the younger men grew keen to return to the war path the next spring. Hearing of this, Col. Edwin Vose Sumner, the 1st Cavalry's commander, took his regiment, with two companies of the 2nd Dragoons, towards Cheyenne country in late May and early June. He divided his force: Lt.Col. Joseph E. Johnston took four companies of the 1st Cavalry and two infantry companies; Maj. John Sedgwick had four companies of the 1st Cavalry; and Sumner took the rest of his regiment and the two dragoon companies.

On 29 July Sumner's group found a group of Indians near Greeley, Colorado. The 300 mounted Indians drew up in an actual 'line of battle' (one of the rare instances when this occurred). Their left flank rested on the timbered bank of the Solomon

River, their right on bluffs bordering a valley to the north. The ensuing action was possibly the only Plains Indian battle that foreshadowed the fictions of the movie writers 100 years later. Sumner lined up his troops and commanded, 'Bugler, sound the advance!' The other orders quickly followed: 'Trot, march. Sling carbine. Draw sabre. Gallop, march. Charge!' One of the participants later wrote: 'With a wild yell we brought our sabres to a "tierce point" and dashed at them.' As it turned out, the Indians had protected themselves with 'medicine' against carbines, but had not expected to face sabres. After a moment's hesitation, they turned tail and ran. The cavalry chased them for seven miles, killing nine braves in the process. The Army's losses were 20 enlisted men shot by arrows and a lieutenant, one James E. B. Stuart, shot in the chest with a pistol ball. (The gods of the cavalry had more work for this young man, however; and it was to be many years and many miles away that they finally took him, in a cavalry skirmish near a place called Yellow Tavern.)

The excited but exhausted cavalymen camped on the site of battle. Two days later they returned to the trail, finding an abandoned Indian village 15 miles south. They burned this; then headed first for the Arkansas River, and from there to the site of Bent's Fort. At this point the campaign was ordered to end, and the troops were sent off to Utah. Sumner regretted the lack of a total victory and, as he had foreseen, later in the summer the Indians once again started sending out raiding parties. However, once in their winter camps, the Cheyenne thought over the actions of the summer and, considering themselves beaten, remained peaceful for six years.

The Texas frontier and the Southern Plains

Meanwhile, the Kiowa and Comanche were ravaging the Texas frontier relentlessly. In December 1855 Col. Albert Sidney Johnston's 2nd Cavalry Regiment reached Fort Belknap, to replace the Mounted Rifle Regiment which was now ordered to New Mexico. Johnston's cavalymen defended the frontier with such zeal that the Indian Agent in Texas wrote in 1856: 'Our frontier has, for the last three months, enjoyed a quiet never heretofore known. This state of things is mainly attributable to the energetic action of the 2nd Cavalry, under the command of Col. A. S.



This cavalryman wears the uniform jacket made regulation in 1854. He has two Colt 0.36 calibre 'Navy' revolvers tucked into his belt, and a Model 1859 Sharps carbine, as well as his sabre. The broad, brass-buckled belt across his chest is his carbine sling. (Mick Kissick Collection)

Johnston.' Over the next four years, elements of the 2nd Cavalry were involved in some 40 small actions with Indians.

Even so, many inhabitants considered the task of keeping the peace in Texas to be too big for one regiment. Consequently, in 1858 the state organised its 'Texas Rangers', a group whose primary mission was to subdue the Indians. On 11 May 1858 the Rangers surprised a large Comanche village on the Canadian River near Antelope Hills. In the seven-hour battle that followed 76 Indians were killed and another 300 put to flight, and the village was destroyed. This 'Battle of Antelope Hills' was the first time that the Comanche had been so badly beaten in a major action by white men. Far from being cowed, they were outraged, and returned to raiding with a real vengeance.

As a result of this sudden increase in raiding, the 2nd Cavalry, who had been alerted for duty in Utah, were ordered to stay in Texas to crush the



Detail of the lock of a Confederate-made, but fairly faithful copy of the Sharps carbine. The lock at the rear of the trigger guard was pulled back, the trigger guard/lever swung down and forward, and the breech block dropped, opening the chamber for the loading of a single round. (Russ Pritchard Collection)

Comanche. The regiment's new commander, Col. David Emanuel Twiggs, organised a striking column of the regiment's Companies A, F, H, and K, with some infantry to serve as a camp guard. His 'Wichita Expedition' left Fort Belknap on 15 September 1858. On 1 October they found a Comanche village near Rush Spring and charged into it. Though taken completely by surprise, the Comanche managed to hold off the cavalrymen for an hour and a half to enable their women and children to flee before the warriors followed them. Indian losses were 56 warriors and two women killed, and 25 warriors mortally wounded, although they managed to escape. The 2nd Cavalry captured 300 horses and burned 120 lodges.

During the following winter the cavalry were sent to scout after the Indians, but were unable to bring even the smallest party to battle. A squadron of the 1st Cavalry was sent to Fort Arbuckle to reinforce the 2nd.

On 30 April 1859 six companies of the 2nd Cavalry began a march up the Arkansas River in search of Comanches. On 13 May they found a village on Crooked Creek. Mounted troops were sent up into the hills above the village to trap the Indians by sealing off their escape route, while dismounted skirmishers swept through the ravine and into the village. In driving rain the Indians fell back, taking cover behind fallen trees while still fighting fiercely; but they were completely trapped, and none escaped. In all, 49 warriors were killed and another five wounded; and 32 women and five men became prisoners. Losses to the Army were two

troopers dead, and five officers and nine troopers wounded. Four of the Army's Indian scouts also died as a result of their wounds.

In September 1859 elements of the 1st Cavalry built Fort Cobb at the junction of Pond Creek and the Washita River in the Wichita Mountains.

A large campaign, involving four separate columns, was planned for 1860. Maj. Sedgwick led one column, made up of four companies of the 1st Cavalry and two companies of the 2nd Dragoons, from Fort Riley, Kansas. This expedition amounted to a profitless scout south of the Arkansas to the Antelope Hills, and then up to the foot of the Rockies. During the march they had only one skirmish, with Kiowas, in which two Indians were killed.

Capt. Samuel D. Sturgis led another column, consisting of elements of the 1st Cavalry, north from Fort Cobb on 6 June. His force ran into a large band of Kiowas on Solomon's Fork, Kansas, in early July. The Indians formed a skirmish line to enable the rest of the group to escape, and the resulting battle ended inconclusively for the cavalrymen.

Maj. Charles R. Ruff, soon replaced by Capt. Andrew Porter, led six companies of the Mounted Rifles out from Fort Union, New Mexico, to scout the Plains east of the Canadian River. On the way they ran across an abandoned Comanche village, but could report no better results than this for their efforts. The last column was made up of the 2nd Cavalry, and headed from Texas to the head of the Concho and Colorado Rivers, where they skirmished with about 11 Comanches, killing one.

The only concrete result of the 1860 campaign was the strengthening of the Santa Fé Trail defence system and the building of Fort Rise at Big Timbers.

The Civil War Years

On 4 March 1861 Texas voted to secede from the United States. The 1st Cavalry just managed to escape becoming immediate prisoners of war as the Civil War broke out, by fleeing to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. It was obvious, even to Congress, that more Regulars would be needed. A 3rd Cavalry Regiment was authorised to be raised on 5 May 1861 at the Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania;

and on 3 August 1861 all the regular mounted regiments were redesignated. The 1st and 2nd Dragoons became the 1st and 2nd Cavalry; the Mounted Rifles became the 3rd Cavalry; and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Cavalry became the 4th, 5th and 6th Cavalry. All units were sent east to fight the Confederates, leaving the Plains defenceless.

However, volunteers flocked to recruiting offices to fill the gap. The various states organised volunteer cavalry regiments to defend the frontiers against the Indians while the Regulars were handling the bloody work in the East. Many of these volunteer regiments were not raised until the autumn of 1861, and were not ready for action until the next year; yet luckily the Indians failed to take advantage of this critical period. By mid-1862 enough volunteer cavalrymen were in place to police the Plains adequately.

The 1st Independent Battalion, Ohio Volunteer Cavalry was a typical example of these volunteer units. It was raised in late 1861 and trained in Camp Dennison, Ohio. In March 1862 it was sent to Benton Barracks, Missouri, and from there to Fort Laramie. Redesignated the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, the unit was split up among posts which included Fort Halleck, Sweetwater Station and Fort Mitchell. This was only one of the many volunteer units which eventually put 20,000 men on the frontier by 1865.

It was not until August 1862 that the volunteer regiments were first badly needed. A group of Wahpeton Sioux youths killed five settlers in Minnesota, striking a spark which burst into flame when other members of the tribe destroyed the Redwood Agency and attacked Fort Ridgely and the town of New Ulm. The Indians failed to take either the fort or the town, so they settled in for a siege. Volunteer infantry with a volunteer mounted ranger company attacked the besieging Indians on 3 September at the Battle of Birch Coulee, and succeeded in driving them off.

After this attack on white settlers by the Sioux, additional volunteer infantry were called in to help. The Sioux suffered a heavy defeat at the hands of the infantry at the Battle of Wood Lake, after which many braves lost their enthusiasm. By the end of October the Sioux War in Minnesota was over; the whites went on a hanging spree, killing many of the Indians they had captured, while the really



Two good Confederate-made copies of the Colt 'Navy' revolver: the top one is by Rigdon and Ansley, the bottom by Leech and Rigdon. (Russ Pritchard Collection)

implacable Sioux leaders managed to escape north to the Dakota Territory.

A brigade made up of the 1st Minnesota Mounted Rangers, three volunteer infantry regiments and a volunteer artillery battery was sent to follow them. On 24 July 1863 they overtook a group of Sioux at the site of what is now Bismarck, North Dakota. The infantry broke through lines of Sioux warriors repeatedly, until they took to their heels and fled with the mounted men in pursuit. Nightfall ended the battle. Two days later the brigade found and burned a Sioux village. On the 27th, while the white men were marching towards Stony Lake in pursuit of the Indians, the whole Sioux force launched a 'do or die' attack on the head of the column. They were easily driven off, however, and turned towards Missouri. The brigade, after reaching Stony Lake without any further contacts, returned to Minnesota.

The Sioux were considered by white men to be so great a threat that Brig.Gen. Alfred Sully was given command of the 6th Iowa and 2nd Nebraska Cavalry Regiments and ordered to beat them into submission. On 3 September four companies of the 6th Iowa found some 4,000 Indians camped near present-day Ellendale, North Dakota. The Sioux spotted the bluecoats, however, and quickly surrounded them. One Iowa cavalryman managed to escape with word of the trap; and Sully charged forward with the rest of his brigade, driving the Sioux into a ravine. The trapped braves managed to fight off the cavalrymen until nightfall when the survivors escaped, leaving some 3,000 warriors

behind them dead, wounded or captured. The total cavalry loss was 22 killed and 50 wounded. The Battle of Whitestone Hill was the worst loss the Sioux ever suffered at the cavalry's hands.

In July 1864 Brig.Gen. Sully was searching for Indians along the Missouri River, reinforced by the 7th Iowa Cavalry, two companies of Dakota cavalry, Brackett's Minnesota Cavalry Battalion, the 2nd Minnesota Cavalry, and some infantry and artillery. The Indians, appalled by the losses at Whitestone Hill, headed off for the wild country between the Missouri and the Yellowstone. On 28 July, however, some 1,600 Indians were discovered

This corporal shows how the 1854 uniform jacket was cut to come to a point in front and to ride higher at the sides. Because of the poor colour balance of films of the period, yellow usually photographed as dark as the dark blue. However, his trousers have the NCO's yellow stripe, and his chevrons and jacket trim are faintly apparent. (Author's Collection)



at Killdeer Mountain. Due to the hilly terrain the cavalry dismounted and formed into squares. The Indians attacked from their front, rear and flanks, but were driven back as the squares advanced slowly into the village. The Sioux fell back, forming a skirmish line to allow their women and children to escape. At this point Brackett's Minnesotans, who had remained mounted, charged and broke through their line at sabre point. In the ensuing battle the Indian loss was 31, while the Army lost five killed and ten wounded. Most of the Indians managed to escape as darkness fell; Sully ordered the destruction of the village, writing: 'I would rather destroy their supplies than kill fifty of their warriors.'

Brig.Gen. Sully's force then headed westward to the Yellowstone country. It was a rough march: food and water were in short supply, and the Indians harried them relentlessly. They reached the Yellowstone River on 12 August, and then marched down to the Missouri and Fort Union, North Dakota. On 28 August they moved on to Fort Berthold, and on 8 September to Fort Rice. The campaign left the Sioux badly beaten, and pushed the frontier further west.

Sand Creek and After

During 1862 and 1863 there was little action on the central Plains, which were guarded by volunteer cavalrymen from California, Kansas and Ohio. This pause was not to last long. After a series of small raids in Colorado, Col. John M. Chivington, commander of the 1st Colorado Cavalry—who must rank as one of the worst officers the US Army has ever commissioned—sent out troops with the order to 'burn villages and kill Cheyennes wherever and whenever found'. This kind of mindless action naturally incensed the Indians, who as a result increased their warlike activities.

The defending force, besides Chivington's men, included the 11th Ohio Cavalry at Forts Laramie and Halleck; the 7th Iowa Cavalry at Forts Kearny and Cottonwood; and the newly arrived 7th Nebraska Cavalry. A brigade made up of the 1st Nebraska, 7th Iowa, and 16th Kansas Cavalry Regiments was organised at Fort Kearny and sent on a search for the hostiles, which proved fruitless.

The Indians had had enough bloodshed, however, and sent a peace party to Colorado. Their

efforts were ignored: Chivington and the government of Colorado were not interested in peace. Moreover, they wanted to use the newly raised 3rd Colorado Cavalry, who had been recruited from the toughest bars in Denver, and who were soon due to be released from their 100-day active service. Chivington (who wrote: 'I want no peace till the Indians suffer more') found the perfect job for the 3rd Colorado. On 29 November 1864 he hurled them into an Indian camp at Sand Creek, which was flying both a US flag and a white flag. They massacred 70 peaceful Indians, of whom only 30 were males of warrior age. The 1st Colorado Cavalry, part of the expedition, refused to carry out Chivington's massacre orders.

Congress's Joint Committee on the War found that Chivington 'deliberately planned and executed a foul and dastardly massacre which would have disgraced the most savage among those who were the victims of this cruelty'.

Immediately afterwards, in bitter revenge, the Brulé Sioux, Northern Arapaho, and Cheyenne took the war path against all whites. Every regiment had its hands full. On 6 February 1865 some 120 troopers from the 11th Ohio and 7th Iowa Cavalry Regiments were attacked by a huge body of Indians at Mud Springs but managed to drive them off. On 7 February Indians burned the town of Julesburg, Colorado; and on 8 February the two forces met again, this time at Rush Creek. The bluecoats were saved only by entrenching and by rapid fire from breech-loading Smith and magazine-fed Spencer carbines. These weapons, and the onset of severe weather, put an end to further raids in the winter of 1864-65.

Meanwhile, in the south, the departure of the Regulars left the Texans to defend themselves, as the Confederacy could spare not one man from its fight for independence. Texas raised its own volunteer cavalry regiments for frontier defence, many of which were in fact never mounted and served as infantry.

Ambush at Dove Creek

In December 1864 a band of scouts found evidence of a large Indian band moving into the state. In late December a brigade of regular Texas volunteers and local militiamen was organised to pursue this party. A unit of 380 men found some 4,000



Handkerchiefs such as that worn by the corporal on the left were common among Plains cavalymen. The corporal's jacket also has only one lace buttonhole, on the collar, which was common when the tall collars were cut down for ease of wearing. (A. S. DeShazo Collection)

Kickapoo Indians camped in a 100-acre thicket of oak and green briar on Dove Creek. The Texans planned to divide their unit: some 161 men were to capture the horses and then drive across the creek, while the remainder charged straight into the camp.

Unfortunately, it was an ambush. One half of the unit ran straight into an abandoned camp, and were surrounded by some 500 warriors who then opened a well-timed fire with British-made 1853 pattern rifled muskets. The Texans who were trying to steal the horses were driven off by another group of Indians. Both groups of Texans tried to flee, only to find themselves in cross-fires. By 3 o'clock in the afternoon the Texans were in a desperate situation. They had managed to regroup, with 35 of their men wounded. They recrossed the creek about half an



The black slouch hat was often worn on the Plains instead of the issue forage cap. Even so, most cavalrymen still wore their cap badges, even on slouch hats. Henry H. Abbott was a commissary sergeant with Co. E, 7th Indiana Cavalry during the Civil War. (Mick Kissick Collection)

hour before dark, with a rearguard skirmish line to defend the crossing. The remounted Indians now charged, and the Texans took off, every man for himself. Only a furious storm—which sprang up as suddenly as only Texas storms can, with rain, hail, wind and snow—saved the survivors. Total losses were some 36 whites killed and 100 wounded, and a loss of faith in the Texas and Confederate governments as protectors of the frontier.

The 1865 campaigns

By the beginning of 1865 it was obvious that the US Army would have to strike the Indians on the Plains in force to put down a repeat of the raids which followed Chivington's foolish atrocity. Again, several columns would be used.

Brig.Gen. James H. Ford would take 1,200

cavalrymen against the tribes south of the Arkansas. Sully would have 1,200 cavalrymen for a push across Dakota north of the Black Hills to set up a fort on the Powder River. Brig.Gen. Patrick Conner and 2,000 cavalrymen would march against camps on the Powder River and, hopefully, co-operate with Sully.

Before the campaign could get started, however, the main Confederate armies surrendered, and the volunteers in the ranks of the cavalry began clamouring for their demobilisation. Nevertheless Ford, with the 2nd Colorado and some of the 7th Iowa and 11th Kansas Cavalry Regiments, got his march under way on 29 April. When they reached the Arkansas they found it was running too deep to ford. Many of Ford's men were mustered out on 1 October without achieving anything, although the campaign had some measure of success in that the southern tribes did sign a peace treaty on 4 October.

Among the northern Santees, however, the Yaktonais and Tetons were still hostile; and the Sioux were still raiding around Fort Laramie. Some 137 men of the 7th Iowa Cavalry encountered a group of 2,000 Sioux on 11 July, and in an exchange of fire killed 20–30 warriors while losing four dead and four wounded. A group of 234 cavalrymen from California, Ohio and Kansas were sent in pursuit, but 103 of them returned within three days because of foundered horses. The rest were surprised at breakfast on 17 June, and the Indians drove off their horses. The unwary cavalrymen had to burn their saddles, and return to the fort on foot—to a welcome that may be imagined.

In late July the Indians made a major raid on the Platte Bridge Station (now Casper, Wyoming). The post was held by men of the 11th Ohio and 11th Kansas Cavalry Regiments and the 6th US Volunteers, the latter being an infantry regiment made up of Confederate prisoners of war who had volunteered to serve in the West rather than rot in northern prison camps. On 26 July the Indians struck at a wagon train guarded by 23 men bringing supplies to the post. A small group sent out from the fort to rescue the train was ambushed, with an officer and four men killed; but the firepower of the wagoners' carbines, and a mountain howitzer, drove off the Indians. Platte Bridge Station still stood, and the Indians were foiled in their attempt to destroy the immigration route and telegraph line.

The brief Indian confederation dissolved after this failure.

Conner did not believe that the war was over, however. His force, including men from the 12th Missouri, 16th Kansas, 15th Kansas, 7th Ohio, 11th Ohio, 2nd California, and 6th Michigan Cavalry Regiments, headed off in July along the Powder River. There was a small fight on 29 August when they captured an Arapaho village of some 300 warriors, which they burned after driving off the inhabitants. For the most part, however, the enemy was not so much the Indians as the heat of daytime and the cold of night, exhaustion and starvation. On 5 September part of Conner's force was attacked, but the Indians were driven off by Spencer carbine firepower. That evening one of the frightening Plains storms hit, leaving by morning no less than 514 dead mules and horses. The force retreated to Fort Conner, which another part of Conner's unit had previously built. Conner himself then returned to Salt Lake City, abandoning an expedition which produced very few concrete results.

Sully's force of Iowa, Minnesota and Dakota Cavalry marched through the Plains in June and

Buglers were marked by the yellow lace bars, within a frame of lace, worn on the fronts of their jackets. (Al and Claudia Niemiec Collection)



July with equally meagre results. On 28 July the Sioux struck Fort Rice, garrisoned by men of the 6th Iowa Cavalry and 1st and 4th US Volunteers. They were driven off after a three-hour fight, but Sully was unable to catch the Indians even though he followed in pursuit.

The campaigns of 1865 ended, generally, in failure. The emphasis thereafter would be on making peace treaties with the various tribes. Nevertheless, it was not until 12 July 1866, long after most Eastern volunteers had gone home, that the 11th Ohio Cavalry and many of their fellows on the frontier were finally demobilised.

The Climax: 1866-76

Luckily for the country, the summer of 1866 was relatively peaceful, while Regulars and volunteers changed places. Moreover, Congress was finally convinced of the value of cavalry; and on 28 July 1866 authorised four new regiments, two of which, the 9th and 10th Cavalry, were manned by black enlisted men (the subsequently famous 'Buffalo Soldiers') under white officers. These regiments were actually organised on 21 September: the 7th at Fort Riley, Kansas; the 8th at Angel Island, California; the 9th at Greenville, Louisiana; and the 10th at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Red Cloud's War

That winter the relative calm was broken by a serious setback for the Army. Ignoring the warnings of the formidable Oglala Sioux chief Red Cloud, Washington persisted in building a line of posts along the Bozeman Trail—a wagon road linking the Oregon Trail with the mining town of Virginia City, Montana. Once across the Powder River these posts violated sacred Sioux hunting grounds in Wyoming. The most ambitious was Fort Phil Kearny, high in the Rockies.

The regular parties sent out from the fort to cut timber were as regularly ambushed by the Sioux, and usually had to be escorted back to the fort by rescue columns. Once the pattern of these inconclusive encounters had become habitual—and frustrating, to the officers of the rescue parties—Red Cloud sprang his trap. On 21 December 1866



Plain, untrimmed, dark blue uniform jackets were also common, especially among volunteer cavalrymen. Sergeant Israel Coombs of Co.G, 1st Maine Cavalry wears the dark blue trousers originally ordered in the 1861 dress regulations, although sky blue was the regulation colour after December 1861. He holds a Smith carbine slung from the usual broad sling. (Terry O'Leary Collection)

one of these rescue parties, consisting of 80 men of the 18th Infantry and 2nd Cavalry under Capt. William Fetterman, was decoyed too far from the fort by a party of Sioux led by the young Crazy Horse. Forty minutes later Fetterman and his whole command lay stark and horribly mutilated in the snow. Indian losses were about 60 dead and 300 wounded, out of an attacking force of around 2,000. (Tradition holds that it had been Fetterman, a noted hot-head, who had boasted once that with 80 men he could smash the entire Sioux nation.)

In the uproar which followed, Maj.Gen. William Scott Hancock was ordered to pursue the killers with the 7th Cavalry and supporting infantry and artillery. The cavalry found some 111 Cheyenne and 140 Sioux lodges on 19 April 1867 at Pawnee Creek, and burned them. Then the 7th Cavalry's field commander, Lt.Col. George A. Custer, displayed his dubious judgement by ordering his regiment to push on, to the point of exhausting both horses and men. As usual under Custer (whom both officers and men had good reason to hate) the desertion rate was high. The results of this forced march were minimal. The 7th finally rejoined Hancock, who now adopted a more defensive strategy. There followed some famous, but basically defensive and inconclusive engagements, such as the 'Hayfield Fight' on 1 August; and the 'Wagon Box Fight' near Fort Kearny on 2 August, where some 40 men stood off nearly 1,000 braves by virtue of disciplined firepower.

In 1868 Red Cloud—as skilled a diplomatist as a war leader—concluded a peace treaty with Washington. The Bozeman Trail was abandoned, and the forts with it. The Sioux rode into deserted Fort Phil Kearny and burned it down, the victors in the Indians' only winning war against the Army.

Beecher's Island

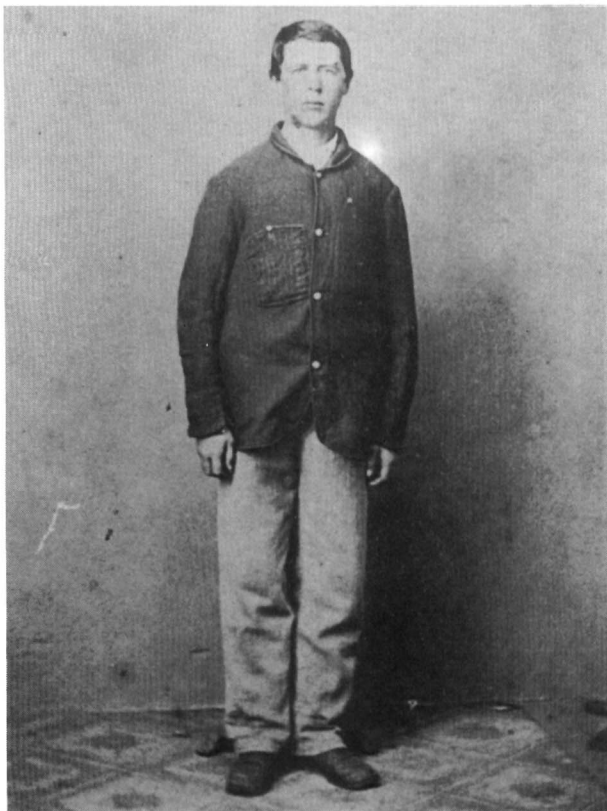
In the south the summer of 1868 had seen constant raids. On 17 September a band of 50 frontier volunteers under Maj. George Forsyth were attacked by some 600 Cheyenne at the Arikaree River in eastern Colorado, in what was to be known as the Battle of Beecher's Island. They stood off the Indian charges from a low, scrubby sandbar in the shallow river, losing seven dead and suffering 16 wounded. The Indians only seem to have lost nine dead; but one of them was their great war chief Bat

(‘Roman Nose’), whose fall discouraged the braves from further mass charges. Even so, they kept the little band of whites pinned down on the island for a week before relief arrived.

The Washita

A winter campaign against the tribes was planned; Gen. Sheridan rightly calculated that their permanent winter camps, limited winter food stocks and thin winter ponies were the most vulnerable targets the nomads would ever offer the white soldiers. On 23 November 1868 Custer led his 800 troopers out of Camp Supply, Oklahoma, in a blizzard. Four days later they found a camp of about 75 Cheyenne lodges in the valley of the Washita River. Custer attacked the village at dawn, with a divided command coming from four directions, and without proper reconnaissance—all highly characteristic of his tactical weaknesses. In fact the village was only the first of a large series of encampments, and Custer was lucky to escape with a victory before Indian reinforcements arrived. Maj. E. S. Godfrey of the 7th wrote later that he ‘was ordered, after charging through the village, to take my platoon and bring in the pony herd. While executing this I saw some dismounted Indians escaping over the hills on the opposite side of the creek. I sent the herd in by a guard, and made a pursuit. The Indians picked up a herd out grazing, mounted and made escape. I followed for nearly four miles, until I saw in the open valley beyond them a large village. The escaping Indians began circling, and the warriors started to their rescue. Retreat was necessary.’

Back in the first village, Custer’s dawn charge had killed 105 Indians of all ages and both sexes; it is thought that about 38 were warriors. Among the dead was Black Kettle, who had survived the Sand Creek massacre two years before. Custer lost, initially, six dead and several wounded; but he inexplicably abandoned to their death Maj. Joel Elliott and 19 men, ambushed and wiped out allegedly within hearing of the main force. Custer burned the village, shot 700 horses, and marched 53 women and children into captivity. The Washita was a devastating blow to the Cheyenne: and on Christmas Day troopers of the 3rd Cavalry inflicted an equally devastating blow against the Kiowa at the Battle of Soldier Spring. Custer then led the 7th



This private would have the perfectly regulation 1858 fatigue dress of a four-button dark blue blouse and sky blue trousers—except that he apparently decided that the single inside pocket wasn’t enough, and added another pocket, of an unmatching material, to the right outside breast! Such alterations were common among Plains cavalymen. (Author’s Collection)

Cavalry to a Cheyenne village along the Sweet-water Creek, where he talked the Indians into surrendering, and thus spared two white women captives in the camp.

In June 1869 the 5th Cavalry left Fort McPherson on the Platte, finding a group of Indians camped while waiting for the South Platte River to go down. They attacked and destroyed this Pawnee village, freeing a wounded white woman, although another was killed in the attack. Before this campaign was over the regiment had broken forever the grip of the Dog Soldiers on the Republican and Smoky Hills, ending their days of serious resistance as a group.

The effective tactic of wiping out Indian villages did not set well with the civilians back East, however. On 23 January 1870 two squadrons of the 2nd Cavalry destroyed a Piegan village on



A private of c.1865, wearing the oilskin cover on his forage cap; the brass shoulder scales—regulation, but rarely seen in the field; and gauntlets—not regulation at this date, but widely adopted. (New York War Museum)

Montana's Marias River; and after reports of this reached Eastern newspapers, public opinion led to a peace policy being pursued by the government.

The Red River War

In 1871 the 4th Cavalry, trained by its commander Ranald S. Mackenzie to be, in the opinion of many, the best cavalry regiment in the Army, replaced the rather more lethargic 6th Cavalry in Texas. That fall they skirmished with Comanches on the Staked Plains, returning there in the summer of 1872. On 29 September the unit surprised Mow-way's Kotsoteka Comanches on the North Fork of the Red River, routing them and burning their village. Even so, the Kiowa, Cheyenne and Comanche raided in Texas throughout the winter of 1873-74. The result was the Red River War of 1874-75.

Gen. Sheridan's plan was for the 6th Cavalry and Col. Nelson Miles's 5th Infantry to drive south from Fort Dodge, Kansas, while the 8th Cavalry marched east down the Canadian River, and the 10th Cavalry west from Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The climate was terrible: temperatures reached 110° in the daytime; water was scarce; and a plague of locusts killed the grass that the horses ate. Despite this, the 6th Cavalry was able to destroy a number

of villages on the Staked Plains Escarpment, and the 8th Cavalry found and pursued large numbers of Indians. Mackenzie's 4th was also attacked, but drove the war party off, subsequently following them to find a village in Palo Duro Canyon. In their attack on 27 September the 4th captured all the Indians' food, camp equipment and 1,424 horses.

Then the weather turned even worse, with the 'great northers' bringing rain, hail and wind storms sweeping over the area. The cavalry were forced to return to their various home stations; but the Indians, low on everything they needed for life, also had to return to their reservations. Some of them reached friendly northern Cheyennes, but most surrendered to the Army by early March 1875. The last battle of the Red River War was on 23 April 1875 when a troop of the 6th Cavalry caught up with 60 Indians at Sappa Creek, Kansas. For a loss of only two soldiers killed, over half the Indians were captured. This campaign had tamed more Indians than any previous phase of the 40-year war: while they suffered relatively few casualties, they surrendered in large groups when pressed, preferring the security of reservations to the hardships of war.

There were also raids on the northern Plains in the winter of 1873-74. On 4 August two troops of the 7th Cavalry, part of an expedition against Sitting Bull's Sioux, were ambushed. After standing the Indians off for three hours, the cavalrymen mounted, charged and scattered their attackers. On 2 July 1874 ten troops of the 7th, with two infantry companies, left Fort Abraham Lincoln to explore the Black Hills of Dakota. There they claimed to find traces of gold; and white prospectors began to pour into this territory, which was held sacred by the Sioux. Despite previous treaties, the government decided that the local Sioux should move to a reservation by 31 January 1876. They refused.

The Sioux War, 1876-77

As a result, Maj.Gen. George Crook gathered five troops of the 5th Cavalry, five of the 3rd Cavalry, and some infantry companies at Fort Fetterman, Wyoming, to move on 1 March 1876 up the old Bozeman Trail against the hostiles. Despite terrible

winter weather, the force found and destroyed an Indian village. Indian counter-attacks drove them off, forcing them to leave two dead soldiers behind, and they returned rather the worse for wear to Fetterman.

A summer campaign was now planned. Crook would go north from Fort Fetterman; a second column led by Gen. Alfred Terry, with cavalry under Custer, would go west from Fort Abraham Lincoln; and a column under Col. John Gibbon, with four troops of the 2nd Cavalry and some infantry, would go east from Fort Ellis, Montana. The columns would converge; and it was hoped to trap the Sioux and bring them to battle somewhere in the area where the Bighorn, Rosebud, Tongue and Powder Rivers run up from the south-west to join the Yellowstone.

Crook's column was stopped on 17 June on the Rosebud, when Capt. Anson Mills' squadron of the 3rd Cavalry went forward to capture an Indian village and instead were ambushed themselves. Rescued at the last minute by the 9th Infantry, they fell back. The Indians pressed their attack on Crook; his troops stood off the assault in a six-hour battle, but were so mauled that Crook fell back on his supply base at Goose Creek, from where he refused to advance again unless reinforced.

Meanwhile the 7th Cavalry were sent south from the Yellowstone to scout the Powder and Tongue River valleys. Gibbon moved south parallel to Custer and to his west. The Indians were believed to be encamped between the two columns, in the valley of the Little Bighorn. Custer was following a large trail left by the movement of many ponies; he was under orders not to follow it if it turned west towards the Little Bighorn, but to continue south to cut off the Sioux retreat. Instead, he chose to follow the trail when it did, indeed, turn west. On 25 July he reached high ground overlooking the Little Bighorn; the evidence of huge pony herds and a forest of campfire smoke indicated a large encampment below¹.

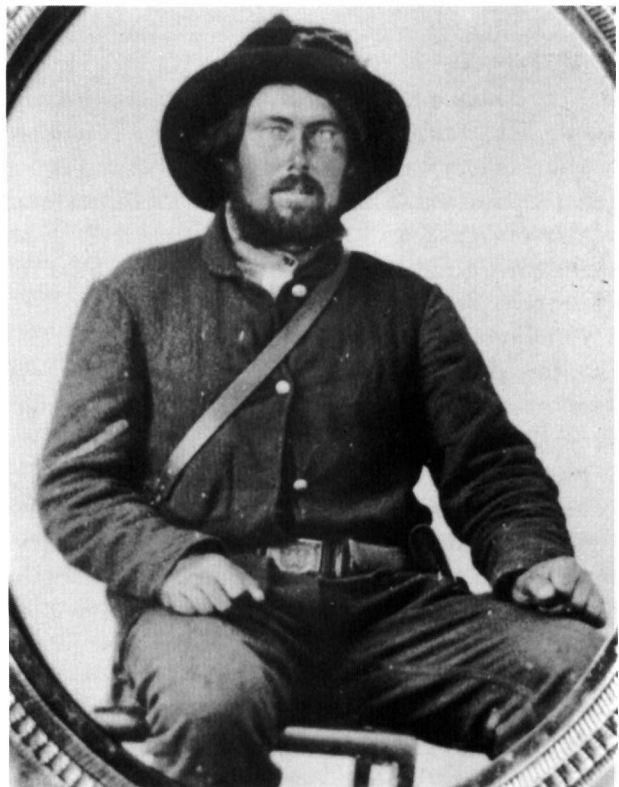
Custer did not reconnoitre the strength of the Indians, and proceeded to split his command into dangerously small groups. Capt. Frederick W.

Benteen was sent with three troops—about 125 men—to hook south of the camp; three troops were to follow Maj. Marcus A. Reno directly down into the southern end of the camp; and he himself led the remaining five troops down the eastern bank towards the northern end of the village. He had no idea of the north-south length of the camp, or whether there was a practical route for him to follow down from the bluffs and across the river to the encampment along the west bank. In fact the camp stretched for more than two miles; and Custer never did get across the river.

Reno attacked the village; found that he had ridden into a hornets' nest; and, after a brief defensive fight in a cottonwood grove, remounted and dashed eastwards. His men managed to set up a defensive position on a bluff, where they were later joined by Benteen. The combined force managed to hold out until relieved by Terry on the 27th.

Custer, riding north-west along the gullied slopes

The grizzled Plains cavalryman as he really was, c.1865. The slouch is battered, but still bears the cavalry cap badge. The fatigue blouse is worn with some buttons fastened and others not. The single chevron on his arm is not explained, and was certainly not regulation: it was probably a unit distinction of some sort. (Robert C. Marcotte Collection)



¹Custer clearly realised that this was an unusually large camp, but saw this as an opportunity to inflict a crushing defeat. He reckoned without the 2,000 or more Sioux and Northern Cheyenne warriors encamped below with their families.

across the river from the huge encampment, led a total of about 215 men of Companies C, E, F, I and L to their deaths in the most famous, and most costly action of the Indian Wars. To his left and ahead of him he was blocked by a large party of Oglala Sioux and Cheyenne under Crazy Horse, who came boiling out of the camp and across the river. A second body of Hunkpapa Sioux, under Gall, crossed behind Custer and closed the trap. The cavalymen and scouts were surrounded, split up, overrun, and wiped out to a man. In all, the Battle of the Little Bighorn cost the Army some 250 dead and 44 wounded, including half the strength of the 7th Cavalry. The defeat was a traumatic shock to a nation then proudly celebrating its centenary year. Army and public opinion alike called for a decisive revenge.

Col. Wesley Merritt—unlike Custer, a very good Indian-fighting soldier—was bringing the 5th Cavalry to reinforce Crook when, on 17 July, he intercepted a Cheyenne band and forced them to retire to the Red Cloud Agency. Merritt continued his march, linking with Crook on 3 August, and advancing with him until, on 10 August, Crook and Terry met in the valley of the Rosebud. Terry abandoned the campaign and returned eastwards; but Crook remained in the field, on what soon became known as the ‘Starvation March’. Harrying the Indians until he ran out of rations, he sent Capt. Mills’ troop of the 3rd Cavalry to collect supplies from Deadwood on 7 September. En route the troop ran into a Sioux camp at Slim Buttes, and were pinned down until rescued by the arrival of the main force. In the village the troopers found one of Custer’s regimental guidons.

Operations by several columns continued well into the winter. Crook led an expedition from Fort Fetterman on 14 November, heading up the old Bozeman Trail. The Indians were harried in their winter camps until late December, when the column was forced to turn back by blizzard weather. Many of the tribesmen—sick, hungry, freezing, out of ammunition, and all too conscious of their families’ vulnerability to these winter attacks—now preferred to surrender and accept reservation life.

In spring 1877 Sitting Bull, the great medicine chief of the Sioux, led a number of his followers into Canada, while another small force headed for the

Rosebud. A squadron of the 2nd Cavalry and some infantry soon found the Rosebud camp, and at dawn on 7 May attacked it in what was called the Battle of Muddy Creek. The few Indian survivors were hunted down all summer. By 16 July 1877 the Sioux War was over. A famine in Canada—where



The short shell jacket was most commonly worn by cavalry officers in the field in the 1850s and 1860s. This officer, a second lieutenant, wears one dark gauntlet (most likely brown leather) and has turned his coat collar down for comfort. (David Scheinmann Collection)

they had lived peacefully under the eye of the redcoat Mounted Police—forced Sitting Bull's people to return to the United States, and they surrendered at Fort Buford, North Dakota, on 19 July 1881.

The Last Campaigns: 1881-91

Much of the subsequent action on the Plains involved Indians who were not strictly Plains tribes at all. In June 1877 Chief Joseph's peaceful Nez Percé were provoked into resisting forced movement from their lands in Oregon. An initial clash at White Bird Canyon cost Capt. Perry's troop of the 1st Cavalry, and a civilian volunteer unit, 34 dead. Thereafter Joseph led his band of some 200 warriors and 550 dependents more than 2,000 miles in a brilliant retreat towards sanctuary in Canada. During this campaign their humane treatment of helpless white settlers who encountered them earned the Nez Percé the grudging admiration of even the bloodthirsty post-Custer press. Only about 30 miles short of the border the main body was trapped, and finally forced to surrender to Col. Nelson Miles and Gen. Oliver Howard, on 5 October; but some 98 men and 200 women and children managed to reach Sitting Bull's camp over the border.

The Utes were the next tribe to rebel, sacking their Indian Agency on 25 September and killing the white men at Fortification Creek. There they besieged several troops of the 3rd and 5th Cavalry until the arrival of a relief force of four troops of the 5th and some infantry on 2 October. The Utes lost 23 dead, the soldiers 11 dead and 23 wounded.

Reinforcements from the 3rd, 4th and 9th Cavalry and a number of infantry units were rushed into the area. Cooler heads prevailed, however, and after some negotiation the White River Utes moved to the Uintah Reservation in Utah, leaving Colorado forever.

Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee

In 1889, eight years after the last Indian bands were confined to reservations, a Nevada Paiute shaman named Wovoka founded the religious movement

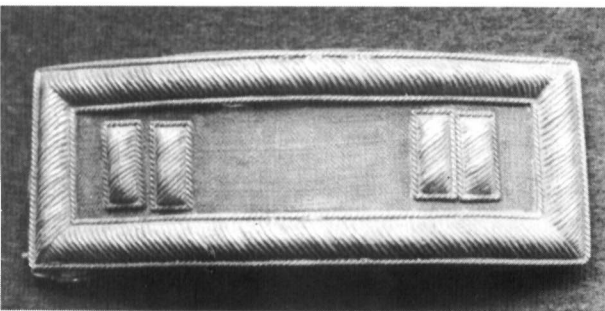


The company grade officer, such as this captain, was to wear a frock coat like this between 1851 and 1872. His cap badge is a pair of gold embroidered sabres, and should have a regimental number. (T. D. Mante Collection)

which became known as the 'Ghost Dance'. This visionary cult promised a new world in which the Indians would be re-united with their dead loved ones and with the lost buffalo herds, free of pain and want and—more importantly—free of the white man. The beliefs and rituals associated with this movement, centring on the Ghost Dance and the special Ghost Shirt worn for it, were originally pacifist; but in some groups—notably the Teton Sioux—the movement took on militant overtones, and the shirts were claimed to be proof against bullets. The movement spread like wildfire among the despairing reservation Indians, and it was claimed that the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations were on the edge of anarchy. Elements of the 9th Cavalry and various infantry regiments were sent to police the tribesmen. Several ringleaders were arrested; and one squadron each



The brass belt plate, with its separate silver wreath, authorised for all mounted men in 1851. After 1881 it was authorised only for officers. (Author's Collection)



Officers' shoulder straps were not always embroidered. This one is made of stamped brass, with a cotton branch-of-service colour insert and has the captain's rank bars pinned on so that the rank insignia could be changed. It has a patent date of 1861 on the back. Bars like these were also sometimes worn without the frame and coloured backing, pinned directly to the collar or to the coat shoulders. (Author's Collection)

from the 6th and 9th Cavalry were sent after a band led by Big Foot of the Miniconjou Sioux. Some claim that the Sioux were escaping the authorities, others that they were merely travelling to pick up rations. In any event, they were surrounded at Wounded Knee Creek by troops of the 7th Cavalry.

Exactly what happened there on 29 December 1890 will probably never be known. It seems that one Indian fired a concealed gun, and a general massacre ensued. According to Godfrey: 'As soon as the Indians crossed the ravine, perhaps two hundred yards distant, and attempted to escape on the Agency road, I gave the command "Commence firing!" They fired rapidly, but it seemed to me only a few seconds till there was not a living thing before us; warriors, squaws, children, ponies and dogs—for they were all mixed together—went down before that unaimed fire, and I don't think anything got

nearer than a hundred yards. I believe over thirty bodies were found on our front.' In all, some 150 Sioux men, women and children were shot down.

There was a spark of retaliation the next day, when some Indians set fire to sheds near the Drexel Mission Church and pinned down troops of the 7th Cavalry who came to investigate. Another squadron soon drove the Sioux from their position.

On 15 January 1891 the last major camp of independent Indians surrendered. Six days later the Pine Ridge Agency saw the final review of the 6th, 7th and 9th Cavalry and the 1st Infantry. The Plains Indian Wars were over.

Cavalry Organisation

The basic organisational unit within the Army was the regiment, and this remained so throughout the period. But the strength of the regiment varied a good deal—and not only through death, disease and desertion, either. At times of apparent danger Congress would authorise the strengthening of the regiment by an increase in sub-unit establishment; but in years when the legislators decided that they could get away with a low budget, the unit was weakened in the same manner.

General Orders of 4 May 1861 spelled out the regimental organisation. Each cavalry regiment had a minimum of: '975 battalion officers and enlisted men; one colonel, one lieutenant-colonel, one regimental adjutant (lieutenant), one regimental quartermaster and commissary (lieutenant), two chief buglers, 16 musicians for band: aggregate, 997. Maximum: 1,167 battalion officers and enlisted men, for an aggregate, 1,189.'

Each regiment was potentially divisible into three battalions, each of four companies, the battalion being numbered and commanded by a major. (Note that at other times the term 'squadron' was used for 'battalion', and 'troop' for 'company'—the terms are used more or less interchangeably in this text.) The May 1861 orders defined the battalion as having a minimum of: '316 company officers and enlisted men; one major, one battalion adjutant (lieutenant), one battalion quartermaster and commissary (lieutenant), one sergeant-major, one quartermaster-sergeant, one

commissary-sergeant, one hospital steward, one saddler-sergeant, one veterinary-sergeant: aggregate, 325. Maximum: 380 company officers and enlisted men, aggregate, 389.'

In practice, regiments and battalions/squadrons were widely dispersed in the West; the one-company/troop fort was the normal posting. In 1861 each company was to comprise a minimum of: 'One captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, one first sergeant, one company quartermaster-sergeant, four sergeants, eight corporals, two musicians, two farriers, one saddler, one wagoner, 56 privates: aggregate, 79. Maximum: 72 privates, aggregate, 95.'

Not only did Congress order variations in company/troop strength from time to time, but also between unit and unit in the same year, depending upon conditions in the different areas of deployment. For instance, General Orders of 9 May 1877 specified 54 privates per troop in the 1st, 6th and 9th Cavalry, and 84 privates per troop in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 7th and 10th.

The 12 companies or troops of each regiment were identified by letter, omitting 'J'. If there was a 'J Troop' it was the 'John' or recruit training group.

The Regiments

Each regiment was sent to its stations by the Department of War in Washington, DC. Once in place it reported to a district, department or division commander, usually a major-general. This officer's command was based upon geographical considerations, and areas were constantly being changed according to need. In the 1870s the Military Division of the Missouri, commanded by Lt.Gen. Philip Sheridan, embraced the Departments of Dakota, the Platte, the Missouri and Texas—together, more than a million square miles, covering the whole of the United States between the Canadian border and the Gulf of Mexico north to south, and between Chicago and the Great Salt Lake east to west.

The regiments were as follows:

1st Cavalry Authorised 2 March 1833 as the US Regiment of Dragoons. Redesignated 1st Dragoons, 15 May 1836. Redesignated 1st Cavalry, 3 August 1861. *Indian Wars service:* California 1846, 1852, 1860, 1868; New Mexico 1849–51, 1855, 1856; Oregon 1851, 1853, 1855–56, 1860, 1866,

1867, 1868; Colorado 1855; Arizona 1857, 1859, 1866, 1868–69, 1870–71, 1881; Washington 1858; Idaho 1897; Montana 1887; and campaigned against the Modocs, Apaches, Nez Percés, Bannocks and on Pine Ridge Agency.

2nd Cavalry Authorised 23 May 1836 as 2nd Dragoons; redesignated the Regiment of Riflemen, 5 March 1843; 2nd Dragoons, 4 April 1844; and 2nd Cavalry, 3 August 1861. *Indian Wars service:* New Mexico 1852, 1854; Wyoming 1866–67; Kansas 1869; Montana 1870, 1872, 1879, 1880; and campaigned against the Nez Percés, Bannocks and Cheyennes, and in Sioux War of 1876.



The officer's overcoat authorised in 1851 and worn throughout the Plains Indian Wars period. The single lace knot design on the cuffs indicates that the wearer is a first lieutenant. (Author's Collection)

3rd Cavalry Authorised 19 May 1846 as the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen; redesignated 3rd Cavalry, 3 August 1861. *Indian Wars service:* Texas 1856; New Mexico 1857–58, 1860–61, 1867, 1869; Oklahoma 1868; Arizona 1870–71, 1882; and against the Comanches, Cheyennes and Utes, and in Sioux War.

4th Cavalry Authorised 3 March 1855 as 1st Cavalry; redesignated 4th Cavalry, 3 August 1861. *Indian Wars service:* Kansas 1857, 1860; Mexico 1873; New Mexico 1882; and against the Comanches, Apaches, Cheyennes and Sioux.

5th Cavalry Authorised 3 March 1855 as 2nd Cavalry; redesignated 5th Cavalry, 3 August 1861. *Indian Wars service:* Texas 1856, 1860; Oklahoma 1858–59; Arizona 1872, 1874; and against the Comanches, Apaches, Nez Percés, Bannocks, Cheyennes, Utes and Sioux.

6th Cavalry Authorised 5 May 1861 as 3rd Cavalry; redesignated 6th Cavalry, 3 August 1861. *Indian Wars service:* Texas 1874; Oklahoma 1874; Arizona 1876, 1881–82; New Mexico 1882; Colorado 1884; and against the Comanches, Apaches and at Pine Ridge.

7th Cavalry Authorised 28 July 1866 as 7th Cavalry. *Indian Wars service:* Montana 1873; Dakota 1884; and against the Comanches and Nez Percés, at Pine Ridge, and Little Bighorn.

8th Cavalry Authorised 28 July 1866 as 8th Cavalry. *Indian Wars service:* Arizona 1867–69; Oregon 1868; Mexico 1877; and against the Comanches and Apaches, and at Pine Ridge.

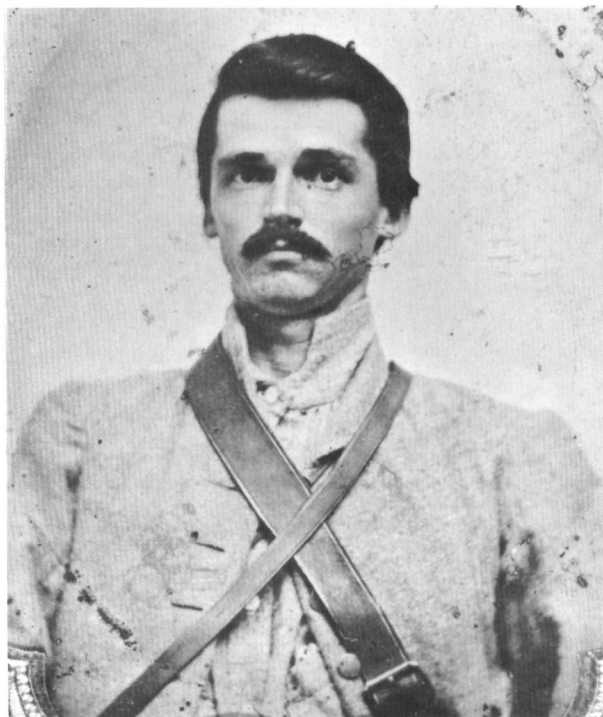
9th Cavalry: Authorised 28 July 1866 as 9th Cavalry. *Indian Wars service:* New Mexico 1877–81; Montana 1887; and against the Comanches and Utes, and at Pine Ridge.

10th Cavalry: Authorised 28 July 1866 as 10th Cavalry. *Indian Wars service:* New Mexico 1880; Texas 1880; and against the Comanches and Apaches.

Army Life on the Plains

Given all the problems faced by the Indian-fighting cavalry, their record was, in fact, astonishingly successful.

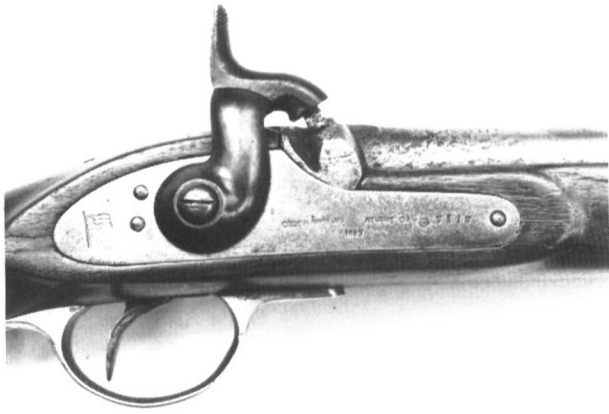
The main handicap was simple weakness in



This Confederate cavalryman wears an all-grey jacket with plain brass buttons over a grey shirt. The wide belt is his carbine sling, rather narrower than the US Army issue and made with a plain iron buckle. (Lee Joyner Collection)

numbers. With the exception of the four years of Civil War the US Army was always understrength. In June 1853, for example, only 6,918 officers and men were actually stationed in the 54 Western posts, out of a total authorised Army strength of 13,821 all ranks. Nor did the situation improve greatly. In 1866 total authorised strength was 37,133, and this was decreased to 27,000 in 1874; yet by the latter year the Army was responsible for manning 200 posts.

During the Civil War—which represented only four years out of 40, and which was by no means typical of the overall picture—the Plains cavalry was both stronger and of better quality than was the case during the rest of this period. In 1863 Maj.Gen. Henry Halleck (in practice, if not in title, the Army's chief of staff) was able to report: 'The number of troops now stationed in the frontier departments and Territories is much larger than in time of peace.' On the whole the quality of both officers and men was also superior during these years. They were drawn from among frontiersmen, used to horses and weapons and often of a higher



The lockplate of a copy of an Enfield muzzle-loading carbine by Cook & Brother, Athens, Georgia. This type of carbine was eventually the official Confederate Army issue. (Russ Pritchard Collection)

educational level than was generally found in the Regular Army. Being locally recruited volunteers, they had better motivation to defend the countryside; they were more familiar with the Indians, and less frightened of them, since they drew on first-hand experience rather than blood-curdling dime novels; and they were physically stronger and more active than the urban poor among whom the Army recruited before and after the Civil War.

For much of the period covered by this book the small Army was spread very thinly over a large number of posts. A 3rd Cavalry officer wrote in 1876: 'I am captain of Company D. I am absent on sick-leave; my first lieutenant is absent on recruiting service; my second lieutenant is an aide-de-camp to General Crook, and there is not an officer on duty with the company.' The 7th Cavalry fought at the Little Bighorn with 15 officers missing out of an authorised establishment of 43. In 1877 there was only one first lieutenant serving with the 5th Cavalry.

One serious consequence of the wide dispersion of cavalry units on the frontier was the lack of opportunity for training or operations at any level higher than the single troop or company. Sgt. Percival Lowe wrote that his company of the 1st Dragoons had never served with another company during his whole five-year enlistment. This made for poor training of all ranks.

When officers first joined their commands they were usually proficient enough. In the 1840s and

1850s many were veterans of the Mexican War, and in the 1870s and 1880s their places were taken by Civil War veterans, as the older men either moved up to higher command appointments or retired. Officers who were not veterans of active service were generally graduates of the US Military Academy at West Point; and there was also a scattering of good men commissioned from the enlisted ranks for proven ability. Once in their posts, however, too many officers seem to have simply stagnated: and there was little reason for them to do anything else.

Promotion was criminally slow. An analysis made in 1877 indicated that a newly commissioned second lieutenant could not expect to become a major for at least 26 years, while it would take at least 37 years to attain the rank of colonel. This was partly because promotion up to captain was within the individual regiment, and by 'arm'—with candidates for a rank being considered from within the cavalry as a whole—only for the field ranks. If there were a number of young company officers in a lieutenant's regiment, he might stay a lieutenant for many weary years. Another part of the problem was the lack of any official retirement age.

While the officers at least started out well trained, the same could not be said of the enlisted men. From the earliest years there had been a cavalry training station at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri; and a cavalry basic training facility was later established at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Here the new recruit was supposed to learn how to ride a horse, how to perform a limited amount of dismounted drill, and how to handle his weapons. Such training was vitally necessary, since the average recruit was simply not used to horses. He was generally from a city background, poor and uneducated, and quite possibly of foreign birth. Studies indicate that before the Civil War about half the US Army had been born in Ireland and a fifth in Germany. Between 1865 and 1874, 20 per cent came from Ireland and 12 per cent from Germany. Most enlisted to fill their bellies; a number of depressions swept the country during these decades, and hunger, as always, made a good recruiting sergeant. Some, at least, joined up to escape the attentions of the law. But while their need for training was obvious, it hardly seems to have been fulfilled.

Testifying at the court martial of Maj. Reno

following the Custer massacre, Sgt. Ferdinand A. Culbertson of the 7th Cavalry stated that ‘most of G Company were recruits, about half; and about a third of A Company—I don’t know about M. And they had very little training. They were poor horsemen and would fire at random. They were brave enough, but had not the time or opportunity to make soldiers. Some of them were not fit to take into action. About all of the instruction they had in the duties of a soldier was what Major Reno had given them that spring. Most of the time they were on some other duty that gave them no chance to learn how to fight.’ According to Lt. George D. Wallace’s testimony, ‘Many of the men had never been on a horse until that campaign, and they lost control of their horses when galloping into line.’ And this was a regiment considered to be one of the better Indian-fighting units on the Plains.

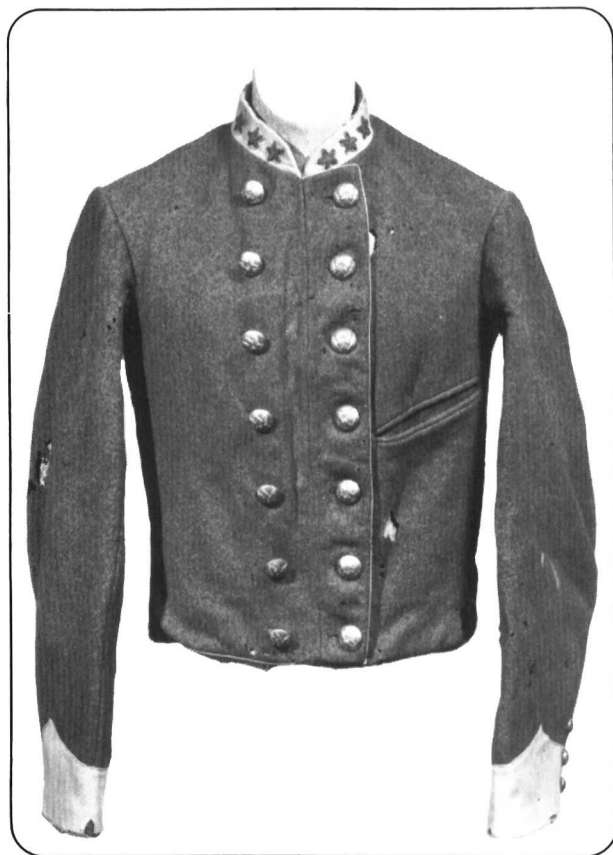
Most of the recruit’s instruction was actual ‘on the job’ training. To keep an Army trained in this way at a high level of efficiency requires a constant core of good, long-service soldiers; and in this, too, the US Army failed, since its turnover of personnel was quite remarkably high. The enlisted ranks were depleted by between 25 and 40 per cent annually during the years after the Civil War. (In 1853 the Secretary of War had reported that some 1,300 out of 10,000 enlisted men would take their discharge that year.) And discharge was an almost insignificant drain on manpower when compared with desertion.

In 1856, out of an Army of 15,000 men, no less than 3,233 deserted. In 1871 a full 32.6 per cent of the Army’s total strength deserted; but at least we may record that this almost incredible figure did represent an all-time peak. More typically, the Adjutant General was to report that between 30 June 1873 and 30 June 1874 there were 4,606 desertions—19 per cent of the Army. Local commands sometimes lost dramatically more than the average for the Army as a whole, when specific causes presented themselves. The combination of nearby gold strikes and inconsiderate officers could produce remarkable results, as in Custer’s 7th Cavalry on the Platte River—which lost 40 men in a single night.

It must be acknowledged that those who remained in the ranks had little reason to do so. Certainly, the wages were nothing to write home

about. Before the Civil War a cavalry private earned \$8 a month, and a sergeant \$13. This rose to \$16 a month for a private during the Civil War, but dropped back to \$13 thereafter. Moreover, the troops were paid in paper money, which was not yet readily accepted in the West and which had to be changed, at a loss, for coin.

The rations were less than attractive, consisting of poor quality salt or fresh beef or pork; hard bread (or soft, if the fort was large enough to justify a bake oven); large amounts of strong coffee; beans, pease and rice. This was supplemented with locally hunted game, and occasionally with greenstuff from ‘private enterprise’ vegetable gardens—though the location of many posts in harsh terrain limited the possibilities of gardening. Post sutlers might offer the occasional imported treat, such as canned oysters, hams and sardines. In the later years of the



The shell jacket was the standard, although not regulation dress of Confederate cavalry officers; this example is grey of a rather dark shade, with yellow collar and cuffs. The three stars indicate the rank of colonel, and the buttons on this jacket are US Army cavalry officers’ pattern. (Smithsonian Institution)

century the Army did make some attempt to improve and balance diets by issuing dried fruit and vegetables, but these were unappetising and not well received.

In isolated frontier posts boredom was a serious problem: Hollywood notwithstanding, it was not a matter of 'hitting the trail after pesky Redskins' day after day. The soldier's life was more commonly a repetitive round of morning formation, breakfast and sick call, drill, and various work details. In fact, the work details were a good deal more common than the drill. Some soldiers petitioned Congress in 1878, complaining that instead of real soldiering they were put to 'building quarters, stables, storehouses, bridges, roads and telegraph lines; involving logging, lumbering, quarrying, adobe and brick making, lime-burning, mason-work, plastering, carpentering, painting etc. We are also put at teaming, repairing wagons, harness, etc., blacksmithing, and sometimes wood-chopping and hay-making.' The legionaries of ancient Rome would have found the life entirely familiar.

The reason for all this labour is not hard to understand. Each post on the Plains was, in effect, a

small and necessarily self-sufficient community, far from other communities and dependent on its own skills and effort. Since enlisted Engineers were almost unknown on the Plains, the garrisons themselves had to build and maintain their posts, and do all the other work involved in maintaining a community and its immediate links with the outside world, such as roads, bridges and telegraph lines.

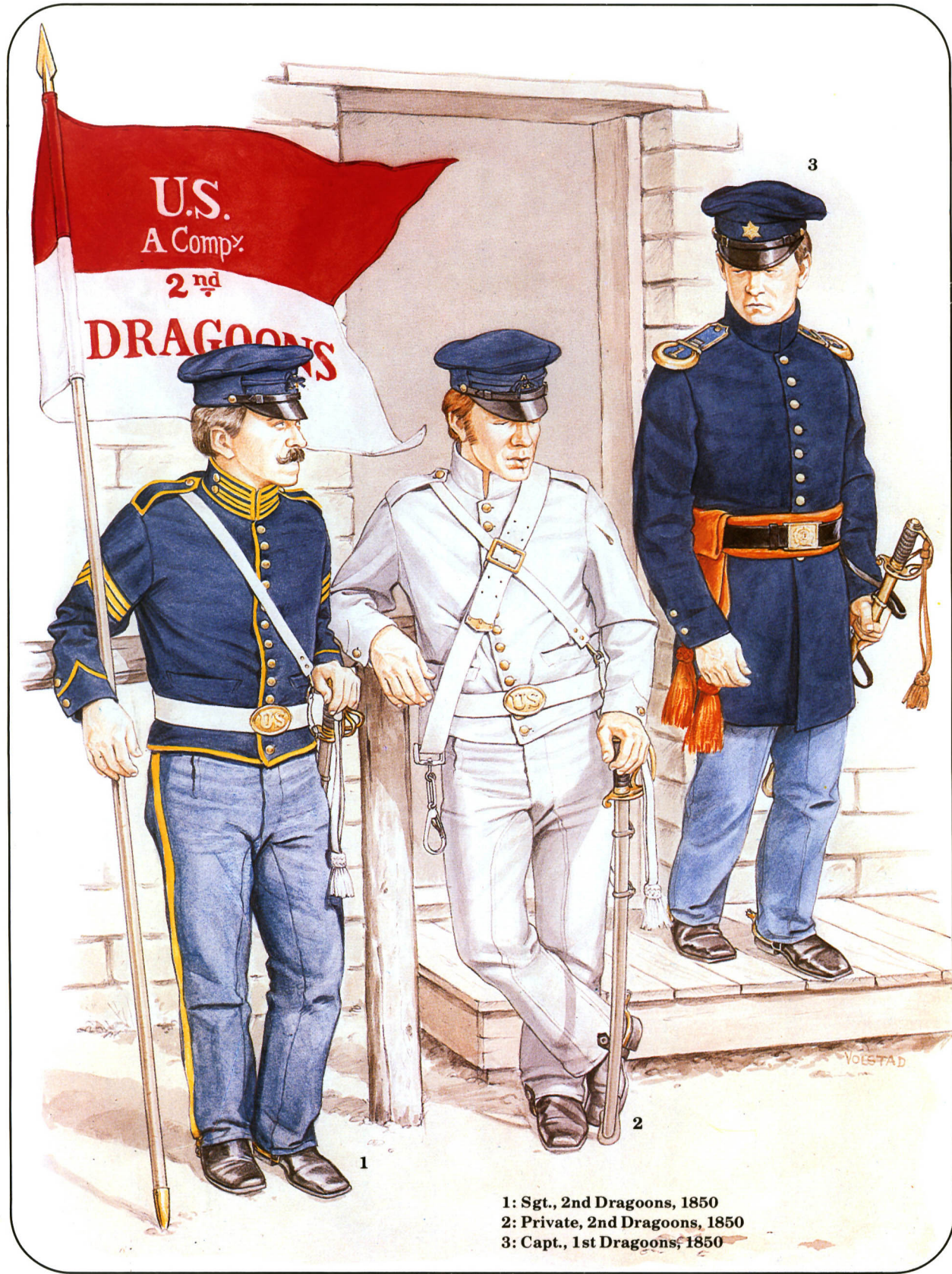
Since the men were even less well trained in building than they were in riding and fighting, the posts they constructed for themselves often left much to be desired. Troopers in Col. Harney's 2nd Dragoons wintered in the upper Missouri area in 1855-56 in unlighted log cabins with dirt floors which were mud around the fireplaces and frozen in the corners. Rough wooden bunks were thrown up, and covered with straw.

It was rare for walls or defensive works to be built around the frontier posts. Most were little more than a collection of buildings huddled together in the middle of the featureless Plains—a barracks for the men facing a building for the officers, with one room for the commander, and a stable block. Larger posts may also have had a stockade, a warehouse, a sutler's store, a post headquarters office, and even a mess hall with bake ovens. The buildings were grouped around a parade ground, over which flew the US flag. As the decades passed, of course, those forts which remained in active use, such as Fort Sill, Oklahoma, tended to become more sophisticated and better built; but many of the small, one-troop forts scattered through the wilderness were hardly improved at all before they were finally abandoned.

If the men fell sick from exposure, bad living or inadequate diet, they were in real trouble: the average post did not boast its own surgeon. It was lucky if it had the services of a hired civilian doctor—often little more than a quack—or of a hospital steward. This latter was an enlisted man who was supposed to have picked up some knowledge of medicine in civilian life or by studying under a doctor. Medicines were few, considering the vast number of threats to the system of the frontier soldier. Little consideration was given to maintaining high standards of hygiene. Cholera, acute dysentery, fevers, respiratory ailments, scurvy and venereal diseases were all common, and killed many more bluecoats than Indian arrows ever did.

Texas, isolated from eastern supply depots, provided for its own troops. This canteen was made by Kirschbaum, Solingen in Prussia under a state contract. It is all tin, made drum-style. (Don Johnson Collection)





1: Sgt., 2nd Dragoons, 1850
2: Private, 2nd Dragoons, 1850
3: Capt., 1st Dragoons, 1850

- 1: Sgt., 2nd Dragoons, 1854
2: Cpl., 2nd Dragoons, 1854
3: Capt., 1st Dragoons, 1858



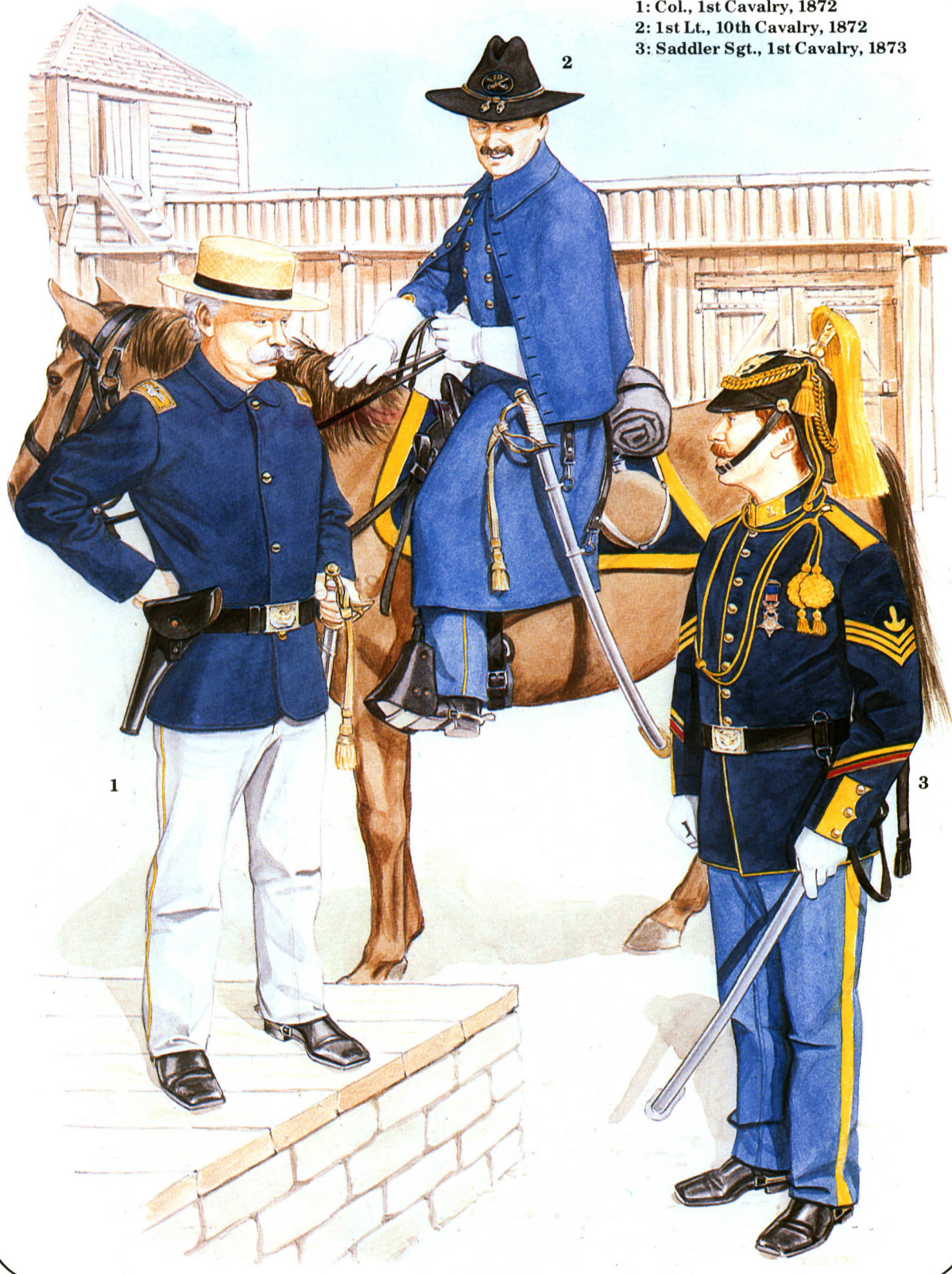
1: Sgt.Maj., 2nd Colorado Vol. Cav. Regt., 1864
2: Cpl., 1st Bn., California Vol. Cav., 1863
3: 2nd Lt., 7th Iowa Vol. Cav., 1864



- 1: Capt., 9th Texas Vol. Cav., 1864
2: Private, 9th Texas Vol. Cav., 1864
3: Sgt., Co.D, 4th Texas Vol. Cav., 1864



1: Col., 1st Cavalry, 1872
2: 1st Lt., 10th Cavalry, 1872
3: Saddler Sgt., 1st Cavalry, 1873



1: Lt. Col., 5th Cavalry, 1875
2: 1st Sgt., 1st Cavalry, 1872
3: QM Sgt., 5th Cavalry, 1876



1: Private, 6th Cavalry, 1877

2: Sgt., 6th Cavalry, 1885

3: Sgt., 4th Cavalry, 1890



1: Chief Trumpeter, 8th Cavalry, 1883

2: Capt., 3rd Cavalry, 1885

3: Private, 3rd Cavalry, 1885



Records indicate that of every 1,800 men treated by surgeons, 1,550 were suffering from disease and only 250 from wounds.

As well as indicating the frequency of disease, these figures hint at the rarity of battle. A man could easily spend his entire five-year enlistment without ever firing his weapon in action. In fact, the average trooper probably fought in one minor action, if at all, during his enlistment. And since the average trooper seems to have enlisted for no more than one hitch, it was a rare man who saw anything like a major battle on the Plains.

When he did fight, the bluecoat had two advantages over the Indians which usually outweighed their local superiority in numbers and their far superior fieldcraft and horsemanship. The cavalry fought as disciplined soldiers, acting on command; the Indian brave fought as an individual, and hardly ever under active and coordinating leadership. Secondly, the cavalry enjoyed a great advantage in firepower. Although many Plains warriors carried guns during the 1860s–80s, they were limited by their lack of skilled smiths to maintain and repair them; and by a chronic shortage of ammunition, which prevented enough practice to bring proficiency. Co-ordinated, concentrated firing, even by men lacking more than rudimentary training in marksmanship, often gave the outnumbered bluecoats the victory.

On those occasions when the Indians did appear to be winning, generally because of overwhelming numbers, there is ample evidence that the cavalymen killed themselves rather than face the torture which they felt sure would follow capture. One veteran remembered, years later: 'When we fought with the Indians we had to fight for our lives, because they took no prisoners, or if they did, only to torture them to death.' Sgt. Samuel Gibson recalled that at the Wagon Box Fight many of the soldiers made preparations to kill themselves if overrun, 'rather than be captured and made to endure the inevitable torture'. Lt. Frederick W. Sibley, sent out on a scout by Gen. Crook on 7 July 1876, ran into a band of Cheyenne. 'As the volume of Indian fire seemed to increase,' he wrote, "'No surrender!" was the word passed around the thin skirmish line. Each of us would, if he found it necessary, have blown out his own brains rather than fall alive into Indian hands.'



In 1872 the officer's dress coat was changed to give every rank two rows of buttons. In addition, rank was indicated on the cuffs: company grade officers, such as this 4th Cavalry second lieutenant, had two gold lace loops, while field grade officers wore three. Field officers also had nine buttons in each row, while company officers had seven. Dress swordbelts were made of mixed stripes of gold and yellow silk in the cavalry. This officer also wears the cape from his overcoat; and an unauthorised, but widely worn type of pillbox cap. His rank is indicated on the shoulder knots which replaced the earlier dress epaulettes. (National Archives)



George Armstrong Custer, shown here in the uniform of a major-general, a temporary Civil War rank to which he was promoted while only 24, became the most controversial figure of the Plains Indian Wars. In many ways his erratic later career symbolises all the arrogant stupidity of too many whites on the Plains. (US Army Military History Institute)

Terror of the enemy was one factor in making a soldier's life less than pleasant; the discipline meted out by his own officers was another. With time weighing so heavily on their hands, the men seem to have been quick to get into trouble, and their officers quick to discipline them. Some officers went too far—Custer was court martialled for sending men after deserters with orders to shoot them out of hand, which even the Army brass found too strong!—but enough other forms of punishment were available to satisfy the most sadistic martinet. Before the Civil War flogging and even branding were common. Even after the war punishments included 'bucking and gagging', suspending by the thumbs, and confinement in a 'sweatbox'. Punishments also seem to have been awarded rather arbitrarily; the character or mood of an individual officer determined how apt he was to hand out harsh punishments without explanation. The

Articles of War, dating from 1806, were vaguely phrased, and left too much to the individual officer's discretion. It was not until almost the end of this period that a movement directed towards reform of the Army's disciplinary system really began to make headway.

Records indicate the freedom with which courts martial were convened. During a ten-month period in 1875–76, when the Army's total strength stood at only 25,000, there were 4,587 court martial convictions.

Off-duty hours brought little relief. Officers stayed apart from their men. Being generally better educated, they tried to alleviate the suffocating boredom of life in a small, isolated fort by staging amateur dramatics and musical evenings, reading, holding dinner parties, and arranging picnics. They had a major advantage over their men in that many married officers had their wives and children living with them, which brightened their daily lives considerably. They paid for the pleasure in a cruel coin, however; as in every 'colonial' army of this period, the US Cavalry's posts included pathetic cemeteries of small graves. The life of the frontier was sometimes killing hard on women and children.

The enlisted men had little to do in their off-duty hours. Most sutlers sold liquor, especially light beer and various wines, and the soldier's main leisure activity was drinking. This naturally contributed to the disciplinary problems: during that ten-month period of 1875–76, 1,568 of the 4,587 court martial convictions were for drunkenness. The second most popular pastime was probably gambling—at least, on those rare occasions when the trooper still had a few cents in his pocket. Since the single greatest cause of illness was venereal disease, we may infer that there were women available near many of the posts, often in neighbouring 'hog ranches'. These establishments were a powerful attraction for the off-duty trooper, particularly after 2 February 1881, when the sale of liquor was banned on military property. It was only after the Indian Wars period that post canteens were finally built, and to some extent put the 'hog ranches' out of business. There were few more edifying pastimes for the cavalry trooper. Some of the larger forts did establish post libraries, at least towards the end of the period. Chaplains occasionally offered school-

ing, which was helpful to the many men who were unable to read or write English. Dances and parties were occasionally organised, especially to mark holidays; but these were rare pleasures.

The life of the Plains cavalry, officer and man alike, was grindingly hard and brought meagre rewards; and the military quality of the average trooper was not impressive. At times he fought notably well; but it was not brilliant soldiering which beat the Plains tribes. It was the overwhelming weight of the white man's growing numbers; the dogged patience of the US Army's operations, over decades; and the superiority of the bluecoats' firepower.

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The Plates

A1: *Sergeant, 2nd Dragoons, 1850*

The sergeant's jacket is of 1833 pattern, with his chevrons worn points up, as made regulation in 1847. (In 1851, new regulations would reverse these chevrons.) Essentially, this is the same uniform as worn in the Mexican-American War, and would be worn officially until 1851. Officers were authorised a similar jacket in 1839, but piped with gold lace on the collar only; in addition, they had two diagonally inset pockets on the breasts, with a small pocket flap edged in yellow and fastened shut with one brass button. The Regiment of Mounted Riflemen wore the same jackets, trimmed with green, and wore dark blue trousers with black stripes edged in yellow cord.



For duty around the post or in garrison in the 1870s and 1880s, officers often wore plain dark blue suits, cut in civilian styles, with only their shoulder straps indicating that they were even in the Army. (Author's Collection)

The forage cap shown is the 1839 pattern. These were usually, but not always, worn with earflaps which could be tied up out of the way when not needed. A 2nd Dragoon veteran who served between 1842 and 1845 recalled that in his regiment sergeants and below wore yellow worsted bands on their caps, while first sergeants, non-commissioned staff and officers wore gold lace around their cap bands. Sergeants and the regimental band of the 1st Dragoons wore 'two yellow bands of worsted or cloth around the Cap with the number of the Regiment on a blue ground in front'. It is possible, but not certain, that these practices were still in effect in 1850; lacking evidence, we have chosen to show the common form of the 1839 pattern cap.

The guidon was changed in 1863 to a stars-and-stripes design, but still cut in a swallowtail pattern. Guidons were carried one per company, by a trustworthy enlisted man, normally of a rank below sergeant.



This private of Co.A, 8th Cavalry wears the 1874 fatigue blouse, which was piped around the collar and on each cuff in yellow. His headgear is the 1872 pattern 'chasseur' forage cap. He also wears an elaborate brocade civilian waistcoat under his blouse, and a rather flowing, and definitely non-regulation tie. (A. S. DeShazo Collection)

A2: Private, 2nd Dragoons, 1850

The Army made an effort to provide clothing suitable for the summer heat of the Plains during the years 1833–1851. The result was this two-piece white cotton suit, made to the same pattern as the wool dress uniform. This outfit was common, and apparently popular, on the frontier. In October 1850 Col. George A. McCall inspected the garrison at the Presideo de San Elizario, New Mexico, and reported that there was 'no woollen clothing on hand' there.

The sabre is the model 1833 dragoon sabre, a copy of the British pattern 1822 light cavalry sabre. These weapons were universally condemned. Col. George Groghan—like McCall, a member of the Army's Inspector General's Corps—wrote in 1838 that their blades were 'so soft that it may be questioned whether or not the skull of an Indian

might not prove too hard for them'. Moreover, he reported, 'the scabbard is too thin and easily indented'.

A3: Captain, 1st Dragoons, 1850

The 1839 dress regulations authorised frock coats for dragoon officers, these being slightly modified in 1847 when field grade officers were authorised double breasted frocks, while company grade officers kept their single row of buttons. Officers were also authorised jackets, both in dark blue wool and white cotton duck or linen.

Rank, as described in 1833, was indicated by shoulder straps formed like epaulettes. The regimental number and rank badge were to be embroidered on the strap, the number in the crescent and the badge on the strap. Rank badges (throughout the period discussed in this book) included a silver eagle for colonel; an oak leaf for both lieutenant-colonel and major; two gold bars for a captain, and one for a first lieutenant; and a plain strap for a second lieutenant. Until 1851 the lieutenant-colonel's leaf was gold and the major's silver; thereafter, the colours were reversed.

The cap badge shown, a gold-embroidered six-pointed star, was not apparently authorised in any regulations, but does appear in photographs of dragoon officers of this period. Crossed sabres were authorised in 1850.

The sabre scabbard is yet another variation from regulations, which called for all scabbards to be browned. One officer's sabre in the US Military Academy Museum has a brass scabbard, while another has a brass drag, bands and sling rings.

The deep orange sash was regulation until 1851, when officers of all branches of service were ordered to wear crimson sashes.

B1: Sergeant, 2nd Dragoons, 1854

Despite its appearance, there had been much dissatisfaction with the uniform authorised in 1847, with the result that a new set of very different regulations appeared in June 1851.

A cloth shako was now ordered for all ranks—something that most officers disliked. In fact, the commander of the 1st Dragoons wrote to the Adjutant General in October 1854: 'The present uniform cap, however ornamental it may be, or however suitable for the other Corps of the Army, is

entirely unsuitable for the Dragoon service, being heavy, heating and painful to the head when used in the sun, wind, or at a rapid gait. It incommodes the Dragoon in the use of his arms, in the management of his horse when mounted and in the care of his horse in the stable, as well as in all fatigue duties.’

Frock coats were now to be worn by all ranks. The shoulders of these coats were originally to be topped with ‘worsted bullion epaulettes’, but these were replaced by all-brass shoulder scales in January 1854. All enlisted dragoons wore the same orange trim on their coats, save musicians, whose coat fronts were covered with a large orange facing. The same coat was to be worn all year round—the summer uniform had been abandoned. Mounted Riflemen wore the same coat trimmed in medium or emerald green.

Other changes made in 1851 lasted throughout the period under discussion. One was the wearing of chevrons points down. Another was the adoption for all ranks of a sword belt plate which bore the design of an eagle and clouds in brass within a silver wreath.

The weapon used is the Model 1847 cavalry musketoon—the last smoothbore weapon the cavalry was to be issued. His sabre is the improved Model 1840 heavy dragoon sabre, copied from the French Model 1822 light cavalry sabre. This was slightly modified in 1861, but was even thereafter virtually the same weapon, although lighter and easier to use. It remained the standard cavalry sabre throughout the period.

B2: Corporal, 2nd Dragoons, 1854

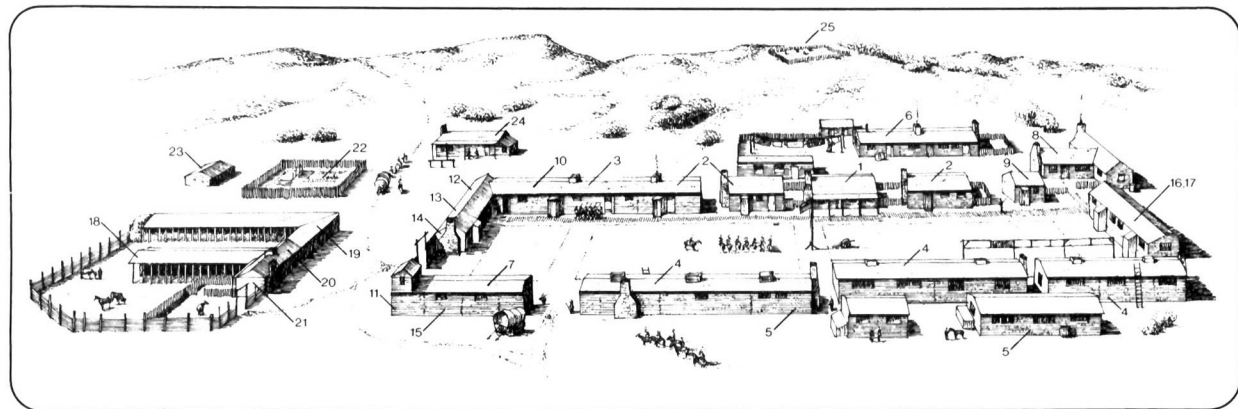
A number of modifications were made to the mounted man’s uniform in 1854. First of all, the

wide band on the shako was replaced by a narrow welt of the facing colour above a dark blue band. The reason was apparently that dye differences led to uneven fading and a poor appearance on parade. An even more striking change, as far as dragoons and mounted riflemen were concerned, was the re-introduction of the uniform jacket for all mounted men. Brass epaulettes, or shoulder scales, were still to be worn with the new jacket, but were often boxed and left behind when troops went into the field. Other frequently observed campaign items included civilian chaps or leggings, and civilian knives carried on the sword belt.

B3: Captain, 1st Dragoons, 1858

Even with revised dress regulations issued in 1857 there was no provision for comfortable field dress. Consequently, it appears that both officers and men improvised when serving on the Plains. Their most common form of improvised dress was borrowed from clothing worn by American fighting men as early as the Seven Year’s War—the hunting shirt. A lieutenant described soldiers, including those of the 1st Dragoons, returning from the 1858 Spokane campaign: ‘The artillery and infantry wore blue flannel shirts drawn over their uniforms and belted at the waist; the dragoons had a similar dress of grey

A typical larger fort layout of the period after the Civil War: (1) CO’s quarters (2) Officers’ quarters (3) Officers’ kitchen and mess (4) Company barracks (5) Enlisted men’s kitchen and mess hall (6) ‘Suds Row’—quarters for laundresses, and married enlisted men (7) Adjutant’s office (8) Hospital (9) Guard house (10) Wainwright’s workshop (11) Storerooms (12) Magazine (13) Harness maker’s workshop (14) Bakery (15) Commissary (16, 17) Quartermaster’s store and office (18) Stables, corral (19) Granary (20) Saddler’s workshop (21) Smithy (22) Vegetable garden (23) Icehouse (24) Sutler’s store (25) Cemetery (Christa Hook, after Glen Dines)



flannel. The officers had adopted the same, with slouched hats. The only marks of their rank were the shoulder straps sewed on to the flannel.' Mounted Riflemen were described at drill in Texas in 1856 'with blue flannel hunting shirts and felt hats'; and Capt. E. Kirby Smith, 2nd Cavalry, wrote from Texas in 1855 that he wore 'corduroy pants; a hickory or blue flannel shirt, cut down in front, studded with pockets and worn outside; a slouched hat and long beard, cavalry boots worn over the pants, knife and revolver belted to the side and a double barrel gun across the pommel, complete the costume as truly serviceable as it is unmilitary.'

This officer has made his dress a bit more military by wearing the crossed sabre insignia authorised for dragoons in 1850.

C1: Sergeant Major, 2nd Colorado Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, 1864

When the first cavalry regiments were authorised in 1855 they were given the mounted man's uniform jacket trimmed in bright yellow. One innovative uniform item which they received was the black felt hat, authorised in August 1855. Originally, it had

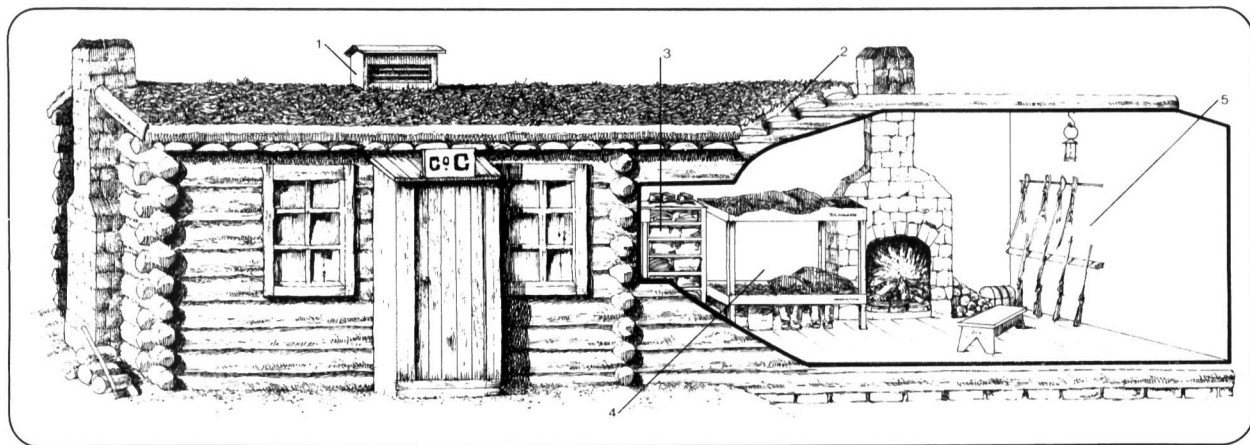
yellow cords draped around its crown, dipping under a brass company letter in front. This version of the 'Jeff Davis' or 'Hardee' hat, as they were popularly known, was issued only from 1856 until about 1859, when the insignia design was changed to include brass crossed sabres, regimental number and company letter in front; and thereafter only one hat cord was to be worn. Often only the branch-of-service badge was actually worn on the hat front; sometimes no insignia at all were worn.

The 2nd Colorado Volunteer Cavalry were armed with the Merrill carbine, one of dozens of types of privately manufactured carbines which the Army bought between 1861 and 1865. It used a paper cartridge with a 0.54 calibre bullet; other carbines came in 0.52 calibre. The Merrill, made in Baltimore, Maryland, was issued with this unique type of cartridge box.

The horse furniture is conventional for the period, based on the 1859 McClellan saddle.

A Moment's Halt, by noted Western artist Rufus Fairchild Zogbaum, shows the cavalry as it really appeared on the Plains. Note that one man wears a plain shirt without a coat, while the officer in the background wears a pith helmet. (Author's Collection)





C2: Corporal, 1st Battalion, California Volunteer Cavalry, 1863

Finally admitting that there was a need for a fatigue uniform, the Army authorised in 1858 a dark blue, plain 'sack' coat and a blue cloth forage cap with a leather peak. Originally, the forage cap was to have a branch-of-service colour—emerald green for mounted riflemen, orange for dragoons and yellow for cavalry—around the crown. The caps lacked chin straps until June 1859, when a 1st Cavalry officer complained that they blew off without them. Brass buttons and leather chin straps were then added. In February 1861 the caps were ordered to be made all dark blue, regardless of the wearer's branch of service. The sack coat was also made without any trim in branch-of-service colour. Moreover, only recruits received lined coats, the rest being unlined.

The 1st California Cavalry were armed with the New Model 1859 Sharps carbine. This was probably the best-known carbine of this period, some 50,000 being produced. It was 0.52 calibre, and used special linen cartridges. A 0.44 or 0.36 Colt six-shot revolver is also carried, along with the Model 1861 light cavalry sabre.

C3: Second Lieutenant, 7th Iowa Volunteer Cavalry, 1864

The 1861 dress regulations allowed mounted officers to wear 'for stable duty, a plain dark blue cloth jacket, with one or two rows of buttons down the front, according to rank; stand-up collar, sloped in front as that of the uniform coat; shoulder straps according to rank, but no other ornament'. This, rather than the uncomfortable frock coat, became the standard cavalry officer's field dress. This officer

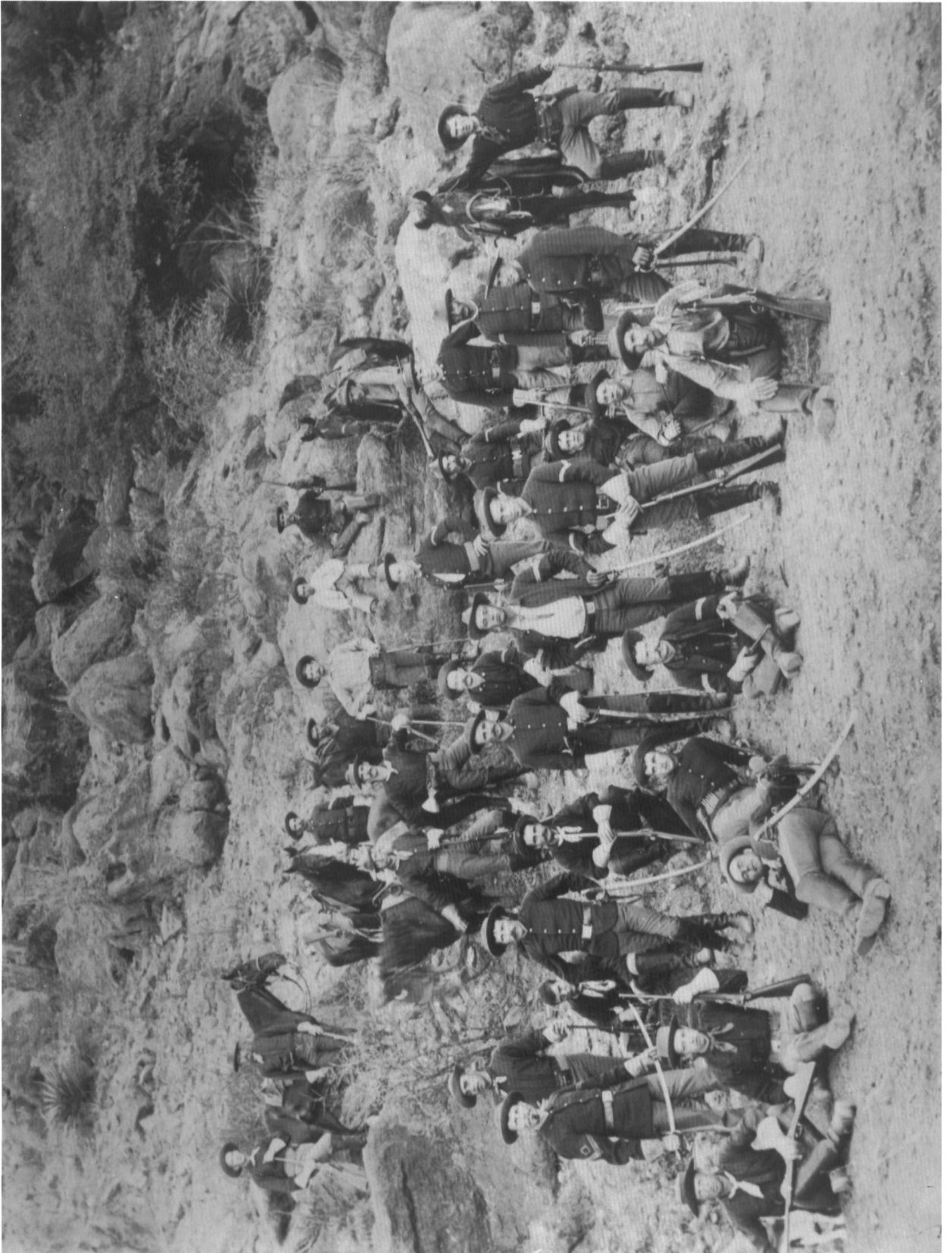
A typical log-built barracks in a frontier post, chinked with mud and straw. (1) Roof ventilator (2) Sod roof, laid over brushwood and straw on pole rafters (3) Shelves for clothing and kit (4) Bunks—sometimes shared, for warmth. There would be another set at far right. (5) Gun rack, with hooks for equipment above. (Christa Hook, after Glen Dines)

is armed with the ornate version of the 1861 light cavalry sabre which was regulation for officers. His sabre knot is gold, while other ranks had black leather knots. His sidearm is a Colt revolver.

D1: Captain, 9th Texas Volunteer Cavalry, 1864

Although Confederate Army regulations called for all officers to wear double-breasted frock coats, most mounted officers preferred the single-breasted shell jacket. His ranking is worn on the collar; the system was simple, with one, two or three gold bars for second lieutenant, first lieutenant and captain, and one, two or three gold stars for major, lieutenant-colonel and colonel. The number of braid stripes in the gold 'Austrian knot' worn on each sleeve also indicated rank—one stripe for a lieutenant, two for a captain, and three for a field grade officer. The same number of stripes was worn to indicate rank on the French-style képi.

This officer wears a mounted man's two-piece belt plate bearing the 'Lone Star' of Texas. His sword is a Southern-made copy of the US officer's light cavalry sabre. His revolver is a Texas-made Dance Brothers copy of a Colt Navy in 0.36 calibre. Although they were officially to be dyed black, his accoutrements are russet brown, reflecting the supply difficulties of the Confederate Army. The accoutrements were made in the Confederate arsenal in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.





Magnificent example of an 1881 pattern US Cavalry officer's dress helmet, made by the leading New York outfitter Henry V. Allien in c. 1890, and here complete with its original plume (longer than normal, of soft yak hair of a strong orange-yellow shade, and secured by a silk net at the top of the holder) and its gold cord, lines and 'flounders'. The eagle is of a design peculiar to Allien helmets, with wings noticeably fuller than on the regulation plate. The close-up shows the quality of the plate, which has raised details in brighter gold, including the regimental number of the 10th Cavalry, one of the two black regiments. The front peak of the helmet has a distinctly pointed, 'British' shape, in contrast to the more rounded regulation style. There is a fairly well-known portrait of Capt. Godfrey, 7th Cavalry, holding an identical helmet. (Sheperd Paine)



The 9th Texas Cavalry was noted as having a rectangular flag with a white crescent in the upper corner and scattered white stars on what was probably a blue field. The regiment was dismounted in 1862, but remounted later that year.

D2: Private, 9th Texas Volunteer Cavalry, 1864

Enlisted men wore much the same uniform as did officers. Frontier-style clothing was also commonly

(Left)

A group of 32 troopers of Company C, 3rd Cavalry, near Fort Davis, Texas, about 1886. They wear, for the most part, the Model 1883 drab campaign hat and the 1884 fatigue blouse. They have Smith & Wesson 'Schofield' model 0.45 calibre revolvers and 1861 cavalry sabres. Belts are a mixture of the 1881 and 1885 Mills cartridge belts (the former with an 'H'-shaped buckle, the latter with a frame buckle) and older leather sabre belts. (Fort Davis National Historic Site)





Another view of Company C, 3rd Cavalry, c. 1886. This photo includes the company commander, foreground, who wears a straw hat with a wide black band. His saddle cloth has a large '3' in the corner. (Fort Davis National Historic Site)

worn. On 25 March 1863 Private Dinnie Affleck, of Company B, Terry's Texas Rangers, wrote home: 'Mexican hats, and buckskin suits, are the fashion amongst the Rangers now.' Later, on 3 August 1864, he wrote home for '1 hat, 1 pr boots or shoes, 1 pr shoes for Alex [a servant], 1 pr drawers, 2 check shirts . . . 1 pr of buckskin gloves, 1 pr of buckskin pants . . .'

Arms varied, but rarely included sabres. This man has a Cook Brothers Confederate-made copy of the pattern 1857 Enfield carbine. He also carries two revolvers made in Texas by Dance Brothers: on 21 March 1862 Affleck wrote home for a pair of 'Texas made six shooters'.

The stiffened Western-style leather hat shown here is copied from one worn by a C. Bassett, 48th Texas; note the embossed badge.

D3: Sergeant, Company D, 4th Texas Volunteer Cavalry, 1864

Frontiersmen did not walk, they rode horses; so when it came to raising troops, Texas raised 106 cavalry units and only 41 units of infantry. However, many of these 'cavalry' units were in fact

never mounted, although they clung to the yellow colour and other distinctions of the cavalry. The 4th Cavalry was one such regiment.

Luckily, a photograph of the regiment's Company D, taken in the spring of 1864, still exists. It shows a rather well-clad unit, the officers wearing double-breasted frock coats while the men wear single-breasted ones. The trousers are made from the same cloth—probably jeans material made at the state's Huntsville Penitentiary—as the coats. Enlisted men wear oval brass belt plates, while officers have rectangular plates. Non-commissioned officers wear their chevrons to the same pattern as the US Army, which was according to Confederate Army regulations. The men were armed with pattern 1853 Enfield rifled muskets.

E1: Colonel, 1st Cavalry, 1872

In 1871 the Secretary of War authorised the wearing of white duck trousers and straw hats by officers and men stationed, at first, in Texas, and later everywhere south of Washington, DC, during specific summer months. This colonel also wears the enlisted man's fatigue blouse with shoulder straps of rank. Although not regulation, officers adopted these blouses widely, sometimes wearing metal rank badges on their collars instead of regulation



An 8th Cavalry first lieutenant, showing in detail the shoulder knots bearing rank and unit insignia. He wears the lines from his helmet as an aiguillette. (David Scheinmann Collection)

shoulder straps. Custom-made blouses of almost frock coat length, often with pockets added, were also common among officers.

E2: First Lieutenant, 10th Cavalry, 1872

According to the 1872 dress regulations: 'On the frontier and campaign, officers may wear the soldier's overcoat, with the insignia of rank on the sleeve.' This insignia took the form of a circle of the branch-of-service colour edged with gold embroidery, with the rank badge in its centre. This is essentially the overcoat described for the first time in the 1851 dress regulations, although that coat was to have a stand-up collar, which was changed to a stand-and-fall collar in the 1861 regulations. This coat was worn by the troops throughout the period under discussion.

E3: Saddler Sergeant, 1st Cavalry, 1873

The uniform changed radically in 1872 with the appearance of yet another set of dress regulations. This saddler sergeant—a newly created grade whose chevrons were authorised 25 June 1873—wears the new, rather Prussian-looking dress

uniform. With minor changes, this was the dress uniform worn until the end of the Plains Wars. The coat was modified in 1888 by making the collar solid yellow, eliminating the belt support loops, and simplifying the design on the back of the coat. The regimental numbers were ordered removed from the collar in 1884. In 1887 a more substantial change was made to this uniform, with the facing colour changing from lemon yellow to a much darker, almost orange yellow; this decision was made when it was found that the lighter shade bleached almost white in the glaring Western sun.

In 1881 a modified form of the Prussian-style helmet was ordered, with the deep rear neck guard being much reduced in size. There were also some modifications to the plume socket, and to the eagle design on the front plate.

The half-chevron worn on the forearm indicates five years' service each; the red one indicates service during a war—in practice, the Civil War.

This NCO wears the only medal awarded in the US Army at this period: the Medal of Honor. During the Indian Wars period 416 awards were made to soldiers—none of them to ranks above major. A campaign medal for the Indian Wars was instituted retrospectively in 1907.

F1: Lieutenant-Colonel, 5th Cavalry, 1875

General Orders of 27 July 1872 described this new undress coat for officers. It was worn until orders of November 1876 removed the elaborate braid and the slashes at the hips. Of plain blue, rather like the fatigue blouse of 1858, the new coat was worn until the end of our period as the standard officer's undress uniform.

The pillbox cap was never a regulation item; but it was widely worn from about 1864 and throughout the 1870s. This was the most common of several styles; note that the badges were actually of brass, stamped to look like embroidered bullion. Officers' wives are seen in some period photographs wearing dark blue pillbox caps with their husbands' regimental badges.

F2: First Sergeant, 1st Cavalry, 1872

The 1872 regulations brought the enlisted men a new style of pleated fatigue blouse, with branch-of-service coloured piping. It was not a success, and the soldiers disliked it heartily. This sergeant's cam-

paign hat is another failure dating from 1872. It was made with hooks round one side of the brim and 'eyes' round the other, so that it could be hooked up to form a sort of *chapeau-de-bras* for more formal occasions, or allowed to fall loose in the field. These hats did not stand up to the rigours of all-weather campaigning on the Plains at all well.

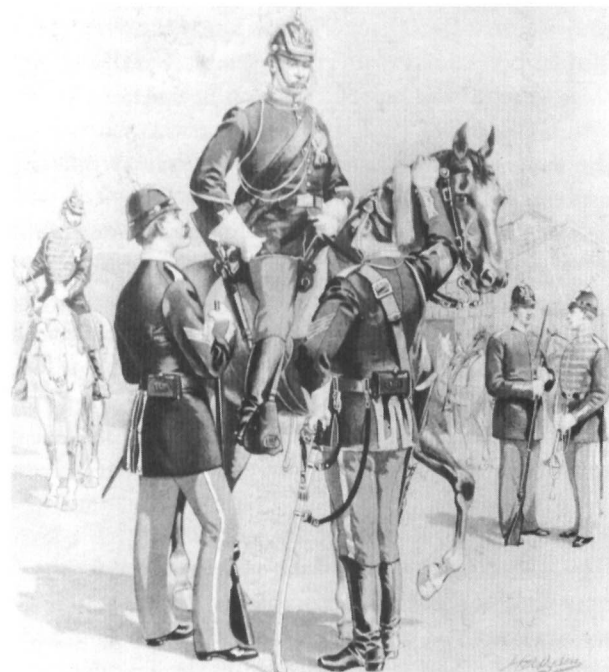
On the other hand, his weapon was a great success. This is the single-shot, breech-loading Model 1873 carbine, also known as the '45/70' or 'Trapdoor Springfield'. With slight modifications over the years, this hard-hitting weapon was used for the rest of the Plains Indian Wars.

The company/troop guidon is of the pattern authorised between 1862 and 1885.

F3: Quartermaster Sergeant, 5th Cavalry, 1876

Only two years after its introduction the unfortunate 1872 blouse was replaced by a more traditional design, though still piped in branch-of-service colour. This style was worn throughout the remainder of the Plains Wars, although the

An H. A. Ogden print showing the dress uniforms of 1888. The sergeant in the right foreground is in the Cavalry, as is the mounted trooper, and both show the enlisted uniform that was worn, with minor changes, from 1872 through to the end of the Plains Indian Wars period. Note, too, the cavalry bugler in the left background, indicated by the yellow braiding across his chest. (Author's Collection)



coloured piping was removed by orders issued on 6 June 1883. The sergeant's cap is the 1872 style, which replaced the 1858 forage cap. The cap badge shown was changed in 1877, when the regimental number was added above the crossed sabres.

The accoutrements worn here were first issued in 1874. The belt plate first appeared with the Model 1872 waist belt; thereafter, the 'eagle and wreath' plate was worn only by officers. The pouch, resembling the old 'cap box', was now used for pistol ammunition. Carbine ammunition was carried in the 1874 Hazen sliding cartridge loops on the back or side of the belt—a double-banked strip of 12 loops, making 24 in all, with belt attachment slides at each end and in the centre.

The saddlery and campaign equipment are a mixture of Civil War and a few Model 1874 items: the 1874 bridle, 1863 bit, 1874 saddlebags, etc. (All items of personal and horse equipment are illustrated in detail in *The Horse Soldier 1776–1943, Vol. II*, by Randy Steffen, University of Oklahoma Press/Norman, 1978.)

G1: Private, 6th Cavalry, 1877

The great heat of the Plains in summer caused much thought to be given to providing cooler fatigue uniforms. In 1877 these flannel shirts were issued as field dress on a trial basis. From 1874 the Army had issued a similar grey-flannel shirt which differed in that it lacked a pocket and had a small, laydown collar. Before that date both grey flannel and white cotton shirts had been issued. Civilian shirts, of all colours and designs, were also worn—but shirts had rarely been seen worn as a field dress without either a coat or jacket.

This trooper's hat is of the type adopted in 1875 to replace the 1872 pattern. The final novelty is his cartridge belt, made with loops of woven web material. The first such loop belt, although made of leather, was adopted in 1866 with the introduction of metal cartridges. The 3rd Cavalry was reported as being entirely equipped with looped cartridge belts as early as 1872; and there was much improvisation by units and individuals on the Plains. However, it was 1876 before the conservative Ordnance Department gave in to pressure, producing 30,000 canvas and leather cartridge belts to officially replace the leather cartridge boxes.

G2: Sergeant, 6th Cavalry, 1885

The concept of 'shirtsleeve order' as hot weather fatigue dress proved successful, but there was some dissatisfaction with the grey colour. On 16 February 1881 the Army ordered a new blue shirt, trimmed with branch-of-service colour, for fatigue dress. The sergeant's grade is not indicated by chevrons on the shirt—Hollywood's Indian War cavalry to the contrary—but rather by the one-inch stripe down each leg of his 1879-pattern trousers. The particular pattern of trousers is indicated by the lack of waistband. He wears the 1885 pattern woven webbing belt looped for carbine ammunition.

On 26 November 1883 this 1881-style shirt was ordered replaced by one of generally the same appearance but without the coloured piping, and made 'pull-over' style, with only three buttons down the front placket. Moreover, while some 1881 shirts had pockets and others did not, the 1883 shirt always had two pockets, without flaps but with buttons.

G3: Sergeant, 4th Cavalry, 1890

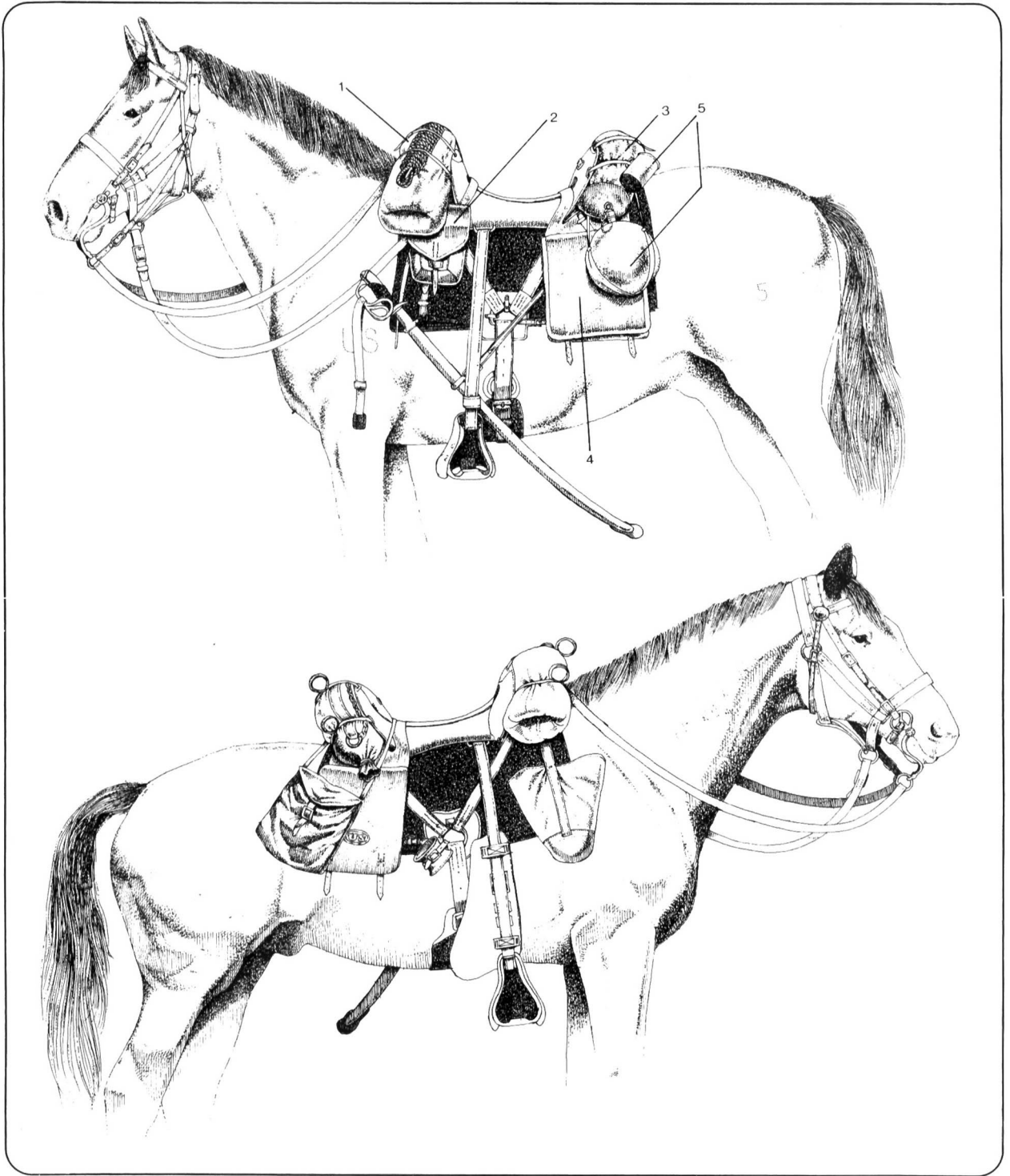
The final attempt to solve the problem of summer dress was this cotton duck uniform; it came in bleached white for non-commissioned officers, and unbleached for privates. The helmets were copies of the British Army's foreign service headgear, obtained through the help of the British Minister in Washington in 1875. These were made regulation dress in 'hot climates' in 1880. They were, however, totally unsuccessful, unpopular with the troops and officers, and rarely worn in the field. The sergeant is armed with one of the final versions of the '45/70', the Model 1884; it differs from earlier patterns in having new sights, and a hood for the front sight. His accoutrements include the sabre belt, carbine sling, pistol holster and sabre knot according to 1885 regulations.

H1: Chief Trumpeter, 8th Cavalry, 1883

Cold was as great a problem as heat on the Plains. This chief trumpeter, marked by the chevrons specified under regulations of 25 June 1873, wears the coat which had been regulation issue, with only minor changes of detail, since before the Civil War. This particular model was adopted in February 1880 and is identified by the yellow-lined cape: capes before this date had been unlined. Chevrons



This 7th Cavalry private wears the double-breasted overcoat, with its wrist-length cape, which was worn with only minor changes throughout the period. (Author's Collection)



Top: Trooper's saddlery and field equipment of about 1873; Model 1872 equipment on the 1872 modification of the 1859 McClellan saddle: (1) Blanket roll, tent half, overcoat, with spare clothing rolled inside, and lariat and picket pin strapped on top. (2) Brush and shoe pouch. (3) Forage sack, with oats or corn. (4) Saddlebags, with personal belongings, spare ammunition, etc. (5) Canteen and mug—some troopers carried cooking kettles,

coffee pots, skillets, and other camping gear. *Bottom:* Field equipment of about 1878; note carbine loop on rear girth strap, common to most periods. The 1874 sideline and halter chain are now carried on the forage sack at the cantle. A haversack containing rations—hardtack, bacon, coffee, etc.—is carried slung over one of the 1874 saddlebags.

(Christa Hook)

had earlier been worn above the elbows, but, because they were difficult to see when the cape was thrown forward or buttoned up, on 6 June 1883 they were ordered moved to the forearm with the points a half inch above the cuffs. These coats, while sufficient for keeping a man warm back East, were not much use on the winter Plains, where temperatures of 60° below 0°F were not unknown. Some commanders, such as George Crook, obtained for their men non-regulation overcoats made of buffalo, bear and beaver skin, and canvas lined with blanket fabric.

H2: Captain, 3rd Cavalry, 1885

This, basically the officer's overcoat throughout the period, was first made regulation in 1851. With this specific model, the pattern of 1884, it became truly double-breasted; the closure of earlier models was nearer the centre of the body. Rank was indicated by the number of braids in the knot on the sleeve, a second lieutenant having a plain sleeve: a first lieutenant, one braid; a captain, two; a major, three; a lieutenant-colonel, four; and a colonel, five. Earlier models of this coat also had a long, detachable cape which reached almost to the cuffs. This model came with the detachable hood illustrated; a slit was incorporated in the left side of this 1884 coat, giving access to a sabre belt worn beneath it. The captain wears the twisted gold and silver cap chin cord which replaced the black leather chin strap worn on officers' caps until 26 December 1883. No officer was allowed to wear the earlier chin strap after 1 March 1884.

The guidon in the background is the pattern carried from 1885 until the dismounting of the last horsed cavalry unit during World War II.

H3: Private, 3rd Cavalry, 1885

Continuing the search for good cold weather gear, the Clothing Bureau was issuing buffalo coats and muskrat caps and gauntlets in large numbers by 1881. These were quite expensive, however, and in 1883 the Bureau began experimenting with sheepskin. As early as 1876 canvas overcoats were being lined with blanket fabric by the Quartermaster's Philadelphia Depot, and these cheaper coats became widely issued by 1883. This private wears one, together with a muskrat cap of the style first issued in 1879. His 1884 gauntlets were

at first made of goatskin; this was not successful, and later versions were made of calfskin. Canvas hoods and mittens, lined with blanket fabric, were also authorised in 1884.



Within a decade after the last shots were fired in the Plains Indian Wars the cavalryman had acquired an entirely different appearance. This 8th Cavalry private wears the Model 1895 cap, which looks rather more like a railroad worker's than a soldier's; his Krag carbine is fed with a magazine, and his web ammunition belt has provisions for both carbine and pistol ammunition. His boots, too, have been replaced by gaiters. (Mike Hilber Collection)

Notes sur les planches en couleur

A1 Veste du modèle 1833; képi 1839; étendard du type porté jusqu'en 1863. Certaines unités portaient des bandes de képi jaunes dans les années 1840 mais probablement pas après 1850. **A2** Uniforme d'été en coton blanc, commun sur la frontière; il était coupé comme l'uniforme en laine bleue. L'arme est le sabre de dragon de 1833. **A3** Uniforme imposé par les règlements de 1839. Les insignes de grade et le numéro de l'unité sont indiqués sur les épaulettes. L'étoile était un insigne de képi non autorisé, vu sur de nombreuses photographies; elle fut officiellement remplacée par des sabres croisés en 1850. La ceinture en tissu orange foncé fut remplacée pour les officiers de tous les types d'unités par une ceinture vermillon en 1851.

B1 Uniforme imposé par les règlements de 1851, avec shako, non approprié pour service de frontière. Des épaulettes en laiton remplacèrent les épaulettes en laine à partir de 1854. Les *Mounted Rifles* portaient le même uniforme mais avec des agréments verts remplaçant les agréments oranges des dragons. Noter les chevrons 1851, portés maintenant la pointe vers le bas; la carabine 1847; le sabre lourd de dragon 1840. **B2** 1854 vit la réintroduction de la veste courte et le remplacement de la bande de shako de couleur par une lisière étroite. Des articles civils étaient souvent ajoutés pour le service de frontière, par exemple, jambières en cuir, couteaux, etc. **B3** La tenue de campagne était improvisée car les règlements ne prévoyaient rien à cet égard. Des blouses de chasse et des chapeaux à large bord étaient communs.

C1 Chapeau "Hardee" porté vers 1856-59 avec initiale de la compagnie sur le devant; par la suite, des sabres croisés, le numéro du régiment et l'initiale de la compagnie furent portés, avec un seul cordon jaune. Les premiers régiments de cavalerie recrutés en 1855 furent attribués le jaune comme couleur distinctive. Cette unité avait des carabines *Merrill*; noter la cartouchière spéciale. **C2** Uniforme *Fatigue* de 1858; certains képis avaient à l'origine des bandes de couleur, supprimées en 1861. Cette unité avait des carabines *Sharps* 1859. **C3** Une veste de tenue d'écurie fut autorisée en 1861 et généralement portée par la suite par les officiers en campagne. Le sabre est le type de cavalerie légère 1861 pour officiers; noter le revolver *Colt*.

D1 Les officiers *Confederate* aussi préféraient la veste de style court; le grade était indiqué par des barres ou des étoiles sur le col et le nombre de galons dans le noeud en passements complexe sur la manche. Ses armes sont des copies faites dans le Sud du revolver *Navy Colt* et du sabre de cavalerie légère. **D2** Noter l'insigne gravée dans le chapeau en cuir et une copie sudiste de la carabine *Enfield* 1857. **D3** De nombreuses unités du Texas combattaient démontées. Ce personnage est basé sur une photographie d'époque de cette compagnie. L'arme est un mousquet à fusil *Enfield* anglais.

E1 Tenue de campagne typique — une grande latitude était permise. Le colonel porte des pantalons en coton, un chapeau de paille et une veste de soldat ordinaire avec les insignes de grade sur les épaules. **E2** Les officiers portaient des manteaux à pélerine de soldat avec ces insignes de grade sur les manches. Ce manteau fut porté de 1851 jusque dans les années 1890 avec peu de changements — avant 1861 avec un col droit. **E3** Uniforme de grande tenue d'inspiration prussienne imposé en 1872, porté durant toute la période avec des changements mineurs seulement. Des galons diagonaux de manche indiquent cinq ans de service chacune — le galon rouge indique le service de Guerre Civile. Noter la médaille d'honneur congressionnelle, la seule décernée à l'époque.

F1 Paletot de petite tenue 1872 pour officiers; les passementeries complexes et les fente aux hanches furent supprimés à partir de 1876. La casquette, quoique non officielle, était très portée dans une variété de modèles, de vers 1864 à la fin des années 1870. **F2** *Fatigue jacket* à plus 1872 pour troupes, avec lisérés de couleur; elle était très impopulaire de même que le chapeau de campagne à large bords noir 1872 qui s'effondrait par mauvais temps. La carabine *Springfield* 1873 avait plus de succès. **F3** La veste des règlements 1874; les lisérés disparurent à partir de 1883. Ce képi 1872 remplaça le modèle 1858; à partir de 1877, le numéro de régiment figura au-dessus des sabres.

G1 Chapeau de campagne à larges bords 1875; chemise en flanelle 1877, officiellement distribuée comme tenue de campagne d'été; des ceintures à cartouches à boucle, souvent improvisées précédemment, remplacèrent les cartouchières officiellement à partir de 1876. **G2** Chemise distribuée en 1881; ceinture à cartouches en toile 1885; noter que le grade est indiqué par la bande de pantalon seulement. **G3** Les ordres de 1880 stipulaient cette copie du casque tropical britannique mais elle était rarement portée en campagne. Uniforme d'été en coton; équipement 1885.

H1 Manteau 1880 doublé de jaune, avec chevrons sur l'avant-bras à partir de 1883. **H2** Cordons de coiffe des règlements 1883; le paletot échangea saul pour des petits détails de puis 1851; le modèle 1884 est présenté ici; en arrière-plan, l'étendard 1885. **H3** Cette capote du type toile doublé de couverture apparut à partir de 1883 ainsi que plusieurs types de capotes en peau de bœuf et d'agneau. La coiffe en fourrure de rat musqué fut distribuée à partir de 1879.

Farbtafeln

A1 Jacke im 1933er Schnitt; 1939er Mutze Banner vom Typ, wie sie bis 1863 getragen wurde. Einige Einheiten trugen in den 1840er Jahren, jedoch vermutlich nicht nach 1950, gelbe Mützenbänder. **A2** Weiße Sommeruniform aus Baumwolle, an der Front ulbricht; sie war im gleichen Schnitt gehalten wie die blaue Wolluniform. Als Waffe diente der Dragonsäbel aus dem Jahre 1833. **A3** Uniform nach den Vorschriften von 1839. Rangabzeichen und Nummer der Einheit befinden sich auf den Schulterstücken. Der Stern war eine inoffizielle Mützenuspange, die auf vielen Fotos zu sehen ist und die 1850 offiziell durch gekreuzte Säbel ersetzt wurde. Die orangefarbene Schärpe wurde für die Offiziere aller Einheiten 1851 durch eine karminrote Schärpe ersetzt.

B1 Uniform nach den 1851er Vorschriften, mit einem Tschako, der sich nicht für den Fronteinsatz eignete. Ab 1851 wurden die Woll-Schulterstücke durch Schulterstücke aus Messing ersetzt. Die *Mounted Rifles* trugen die gleiche Uniform, hatten jedoch anstelle des Orange der Dragoner einen grünen Besatz. Auffällig sind die Winkel von 1851, die jetzt mit der Spitze nach unten getragen wurden; Karabiner von 1847; schwerer Dragonsäbel von 1840. **B2** 1854 wurde die kurze Jacke wieder eingeführt und das farbige Tschako-Band durch eine schmale Paspel ersetzt. Im Fronteinsatz wurden oft auch zivile Kleidungsstücke zusätzlich getragen, z.B. Leder-Beinschürzen, Messer usw. **B3** Der Kampfanzug war improvisiert, weil ihm die Vorschriften nicht vorsahen. Jagdröcke und breitkreppe Hüte waren weit verbreitet.

C1 "Hardee"-Hut, wie er ca. 1856-59 getragen wurde, vorn mit Messing-Kompaniebuchstaben und mit einer gelben Schnur. Die ersten, 1855 aufgestellten Kavallerieregimenter trugen Gelb als Truppenfarbe. Diese Einheit hatte *Merrill*-Karabiner; auffällig ist die besondere Patronentasche. **C2** Arbeitsanzug aus dem Jahre 1858; einige Mützen hatten ursprünglich farbige Bänder, waren jedoch ab 1861 nicht mehr verfügbar. Diese Einheit hatte 1859 *Sharps*-Karabiner. **C3** 1861 wurde eine Stalljacke zugelassen und ab dann normalerweise von Offizieren im Kampfeinsatz getragen. Der Säbel aus dem Jahre 1861 ist der leichte Kavallerie-Typ für Offiziere; auffällig ist der *Colt*-Revolver.

D1 Die Offiziere der Konföderation zogen ebenfalls die kurz geschnittenen Jacken vor; der Dienstgrad war an Balken oder Sternen am Kragen, sowie an der Anzahl der Streifen in der Zierrschmuck am Ärmel zu erkennen. Seine Waffen sind im Süden angefertigte Kopien des *Navy Colt*-Revolvers und des leichten Kavalleriesäbels. **D2** Auffällig ist das im Lederhut eingeprägte Abzeichen und die Südtaaten-Kopie des *Enfield*-Karabiners von 1857. **D3** Viele texanische Kavallerieeinheiten kämpften abgesehen. Diese Abbildung beruht auf einem zeitgenössischen Foto dieser Kompanie. Die Waffe ist eine englische *Enfield*-Muskete.

E1 Typischer Sommer-Kampfanzug — es gab viel Spielraum. Der Oberst trägt Baumwollhosen, einen Strohhut sowie eine normale Soldatenjacke mit seinen Rangabzeichen auf den Schultern. **E2** Die Offiziere trugen die normalen Umhängemäntel der Soldaten mit diesen Rangabzeichen auf den Ärmeln. Der Mantel wurde von 1851 bis 1890 ohne grosse Veränderungen getragen und hatte vor 1861 einen Stehkragen. **E3** Ausgehuniform nach den Vorschriften aus dem Jahre 1872 mit preussischer Inspiration, die mit nur minimalen Änderungen während des gesamten Zeitraums getragen wurde. Die diagonalen Ärmelstreifen bedeuten je fünf Jahre Dienst — der rote steht für den Dienst im Bürgerkrieg. Auffällig ist die Ehrenmedaille des Kongresses, die damals die einzige vergebene Medaille war.

F1 Dienstmantel für Offiziere; der aufwendige Besatz und die Schlitzlöcher an der Hüfte wurden ab 1876 unterdrückt. Der Pagenhut war zwar inoffiziell, wurde aber ab ca. 1864 bis Ende der 1870er Jahre in zahlreichen Versionen häufig getragen. **F2** Falten-Arbeitsjacke von 1872 für Soldaten, mit farbigen Paspeln; sie war sehr unbeliebt, genau wie der schwarze Kampfhut von 1872, der bei schlechtem Wetter einsackte. Der *Springfield*-Karabiner von 1873 war erfolgreicher. **F3** Die Jacke nach den Vorschriften von 1874; die Paspeln verschwanden ab 1883. Diese Mütze aus dem Jahre 1872 ersetzte den Typ von 1858; ab 1877 erschien die Regimentsnummer über den Säbeln.

G1 Kampfhut von 1875; Flanellehd von 1877, das offiziell als Sommer-Kampfanzug ausgegeben wurde; ab 1876 ersetzten die zuvor oft improvisierten Schlaufen-Patronengürtel offiziell die Patronentaschen. **G2** Hemd von 1881; Segeltuch-Patronengürtel von 1885; auffällig ist, dass der Dienstgrad nur an dem Hosensstreifen zu erkennen war. **G3** Die Aufträge aus dem Jahr 1880 schrieben diese Kopie des britischen Tropenhelms vor, der im Einsatz jedoch nur selten gesehen wurde. Baumwoll-Sommeruniform; Ausrüstung von 1885.

H1 Mantel mit gelbem Futter von 1880, ab 1883 mit Winkeln am vorderen Arm. **H2** Mützenkordel nach den Vorschriften von 1883; Mantel blieb seit 1851 bis auf kleine Details unverändert, hier das Modell von 1884; im Hintergrund Banner von 1885. **H3** Neben mehreren Typen von Mänteln aus Büffel- und Schafleder kam dieser mit Wollstoff gefütterte Segeltuchmantel ab 1883 heraus. Die Bisamratten-Pelzmütze wurde ab 1879 ausgegeben.

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planches en couleurs.
Mit Aufzeichnungen auf Deutsch über den
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