

# AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ARMIES 3 SPECIALIST TROOPS



PHILIP KATCHER RON VOLSTAD

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**179**

**AMERICAN CIVIL  
WAR ARMIES 3  
SPECIALIST TROOPS**

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# American Civil War Armies (3)

## The US Army

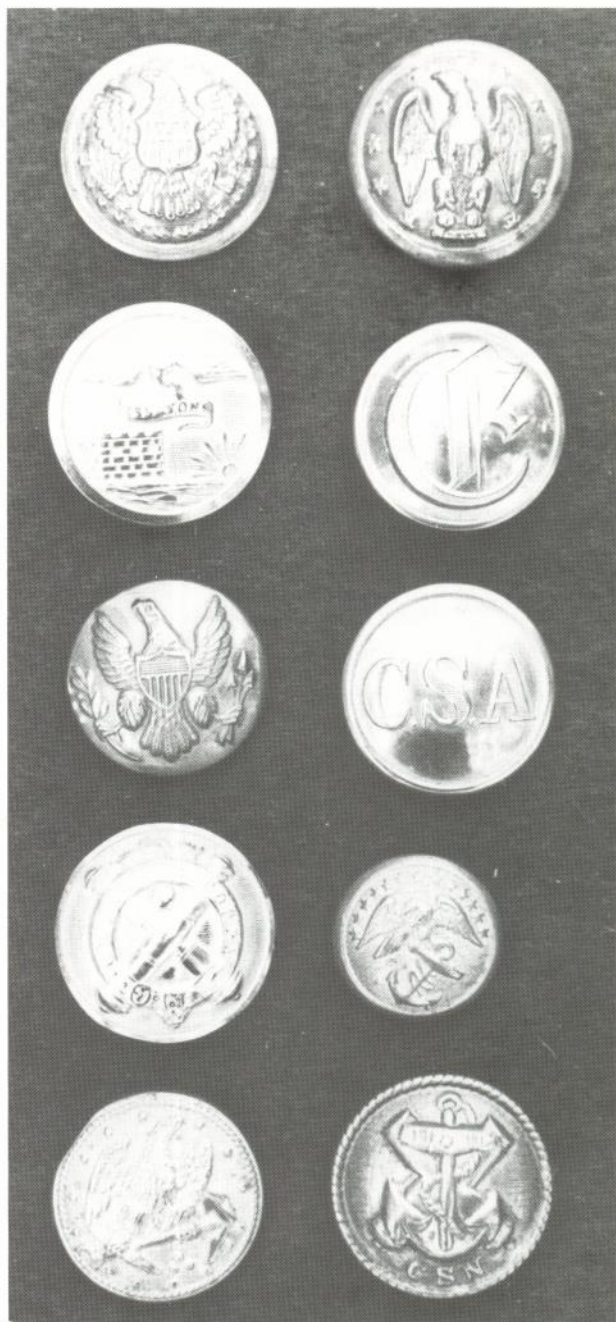
With two million men under arms, a US Army that in pre-war days had depended upon a minute number of technical troops now required virtually an army of specialists alone. There were more full generals in the wartime army than there had been engineers of all ranks in the pre-war army. Special sharpshooters were recruited for skirmishing duty; men whose wounds would have led to their discharge in the past now found themselves guarding important posts in the Veteran Reserve Corps; and large numbers of civilians found themselves in uniform as members of the Telegraph or Hospital Corps.

### Generals and Staff Officers

A total of 583 men reached the full rank of general officer in the US Army during the Civil War. Of these, 47 were either killed in action or died of wounds received in battle.

Generals were to wear double-breasted frock coats that reached two-thirds to three-quarters the distance from the top of the hip to the bend of the knee, with dark blue velvet standing collars and cuffs. Major-generals had nine front buttons placed in threes down each of two rows, while brigadier-generals had eight buttons in each row, placed in pairs. For dress occasions a gold epaulette, with two silver stars for a major-general and one for a brigadier-general, was worn on each shoulder. For other duties a black shoulder strap, edged with gold embroidery, bearing the same stars, was worn on each shoulder. This coat was worn with a white shirt, black tie and, usually, a dark blue waistcoat which had nine small buttons in a single row and a standing collar.

Generals were also to wear plain dark blue trousers. Their black felt hats were  $6\frac{1}{4}$  ins. tall with brims  $3\frac{1}{4}$  ins. wide, pinned up on the right side



Regulation buttons. Top row, from left: general and staff officers, US and CS; second row, engineers, US and CS; third row, general service, US and CS; fourth row, US Ordnance Corps, US Marine Corps; bottom row, US Navy, CS Navy. (Author's collection)

under an embroidered gold eagle badge, with three black ostrich feathers on the left, an all-gold hat cord, and, as with all staff officers, the silver embroidered Old English letters 'US' within a gold embroidered wreath on the hat front. If they preferred, generals and staff officers could wear a French-style fore-and-aft *chapeau* for dress occasions instead of the hat. A French-style forage cap could be worn for fatigue duties. Around their waists was worn a buff silk sash, tied behind the left hip, under a Russian leather sword belt made with three strips of gold embroidery.

A general's overcoat was dark blue, with four silk 'frogs' across the front to close it, and a cape which

**Maj.Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks wearing the full dress of a major-general. His hat is the *chapeau-de-bras*, which has a diagonal strap of gold lace, an eagle and a button on the other side. His sash is buff, and his belt has gold embroidery on the face. Banks, commissioned for political reasons, proved to be a poor field commander. (Author's collection)**



reached the cuffs. Rank was indicated by five silk braids, forming a double knot, on each cuff.

In the field, however, many generals preferred to wear dark blue versions of the civilian 'sack' coat, either single- or double-breasted. Brig.Gen. Horace Porter, one of Grant's staff officers, recalled seeing Maj.Gen. Warren during the Wilderness Campaign: 'He was mounted on a fine-looking white horse, was neatly uniformed, and wore the yellow [sic] sash of a general officer. He was one of the few officers who wore their sashes in a campaign, or paid much attention to their dress.'

Staff officers from the Adjutant-General's department, Inspector-General's department, Quartermaster's, Subsistence and Pay departments, and the office of the Judge Advocate all wore the same basic uniform, except that cuffs and collars were plain dark blue; field-grade staff officers had two rows of seven buttons each down the front, while company-grade officers wore a single row of nine buttons. Their epaulettes were marked with the insignia of their corps and their rank devices. The same rank devices were worn on dark blue shoulder straps. There were a silver eagle for a colonel; two silver oak leaves (one at each end) for a lieutenant-colonel; two gold oak leaves for a major; two gold bars at each end for a captain; a gold bar at each end for a second lieutenant; and plain borders around the dark blue for a first lieutenant. Their trousers had an  $\frac{1}{8}$ -in. gold cord down the outer seams; their dress hats were dressed with interwoven black and gold cords; their sashes were crimson; and the number of braid stripes on their overcoat cuffs varied, according to rank, from five for a colonel to one for a first lieutenant and none for a second lieutenant.

The Army's 2,500 chaplains were essentially staff officers. Of this number 11 were killed in action, while one—Milton Haney of the 55th Illinois Infantry—won the Medal of Honor fighting on the line outside Atlanta on 22 July 1864. In 1862 Jewish rabbis were also allowed into the chaplains' ranks. According to orders of 25 November 1861, chaplains were to wear a 'plain black frock coat with standing collar, and one row of nine black buttons; plain black pantaloons; black felt hat, or army forage cap, without ornament. On occasion of ceremony, a plain *chapeau de bras* may be worn.' On 25 August 1864 the uniform was changed by the

addition of a 'herring bone' of black braid around the buttons and button holes and also the generals' and staff officers' cap badge.

Many chaplains, however, wore uniforms of their own design. Since they received the pay of a cavalry captain, many wore captain's shoulder straps. One veteran of the 127th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry recalled: 'Chaplain Gregg, arrayed in a new uniform with prominent shoulder straps, a regulation hat with a golden circulet, and a gold cord, sashed, belted and spurred, and with a sword dangling at his side, was seen approaching headquarters, but was then to them a stranger. The Lieutenant-Colonel said, "What damn fool is that?"'

While not a commissioned staff member, there was a military store keeper at each post. His function was to be in charge of the stores at that post. He was authorised 'a citizen's frock-coat of blue cloth, with buttons of the department to which they are attached; round black hat; pantaloons and vest, plain, white or dark blue; cravat or stock, black.'

### Medical Department

The Medical Department was headed by a Surgeon-General, seconded by an Assistant Surgeon-General. The staff included a Medical Inspector-General and 16 Medical Inspectors. The Army recorded, during the four years of war, 170 surgeons and assistant surgeons; 547 volunteer surgeons and assistant surgeons; 2,109 regimental surgeons, 3,882 regimental assistant surgeons; 85 acting staff surgeons; and 5,532 acting assistant surgeons.

Surgeons wore the uniform of a major, assistant surgeons wore the uniform of a captain. Their dark blue trousers were to have an  $\frac{1}{8}$ -in. gold cord down each leg, and they too wore the 'US' on their hat fronts. However, their sashes were medium or emerald green silk; and their epaulettes had the Old English letters 'MS' in silver within a gold wreath.

In addition to the commissioned surgeons, the Army, under pressure to obtain sufficient doctors for the vast number of men it had recruited, hired a number of contract surgeons. These men wore their civilian clothes and worked, generally at large base hospitals, under a contract which preserved their civilian status.

The Army authorised a number of medical cadets—men who had some medical training and were on their way to becoming doctors, but who were not yet fully qualified. They were to assist in hospitals or to dress wounds on the field, as needed. They wore the uniform of a second lieutenant, but only with the forage cap instead of the dress hat. Their rank was indicated by a 3-in.-long,  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in.-wide gold stripe placed in the middle of a green wool strap  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ins. long by  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ins. wide. Their trousers were to have a buff cloth welt instead of a gold cord down each leg.

Each regiment also had a senior non-

**Brig.Gen. A. A. Humphreys at the balloon camp during the Peninsular Campaign, 9 June 1862. An officer of the Corps of Topographical Engineers before the war, he was Chief Topographical Engineer in the Army of the Potomac during this campaign; he later commanded a division and a corps. He wears a private's fatigue blouse, but has a general's swordbelt and a general's and staff officer's light sword. (US Army Military History Institute)**





**Brig. Gen. George Sykes, seated second from right, wears the regulation fatigue dress for his rank. Sykes was in command of a division largely made up of regular army troops when he was photographed here during the Peninsular Campaign. His three aides wear company grade officers' uniforms, the one on the left with his rank bars pinned directly to his shoulders, the one on the right with an infantry officer's cap badge and private's trousers. The swords appear to be light cavalry sabres. (US Army Military History Institute)**

commissioned officer called a hospital steward, who was to assist the surgeon. He wore a dress frock coat with standing collar and nine buttons down the front, trimmed around the collar and cuffs in crimson. For dress occasions he was to wear a brass staff NCO's shoulder scale on each shoulder. On each sleeve, above the elbow, was a 'half chevron of the following description,—viz.: of emerald green cloth, one and three-fourths inches wide, running obliquely downward from the outer to the inner seam of the sleeve, and at an angle of about thirty

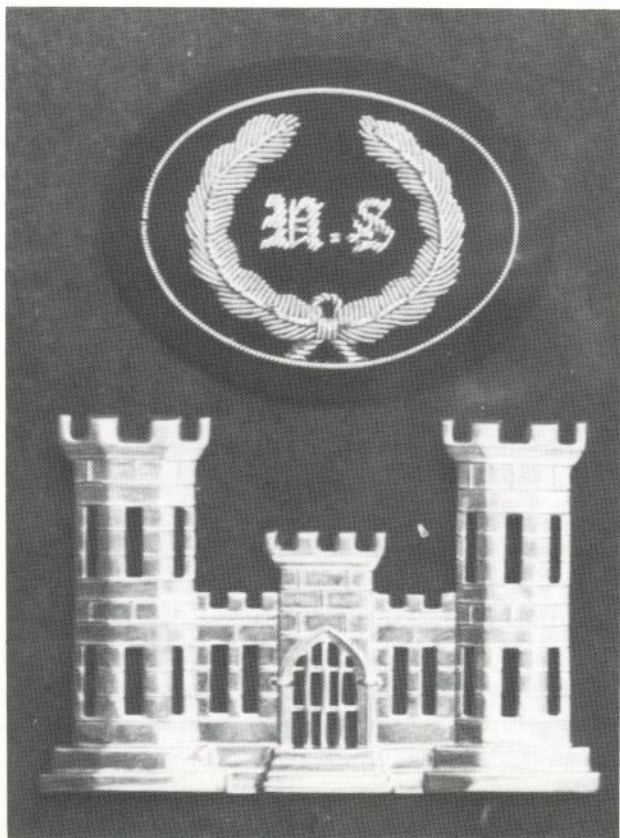
degrees with a horizontal parallel to, and one-eighth of an inch distant from, both the upper and lower edge, an embroidery of yellow silk one-eighth of an inch wide, and in the centre a "caduceum" two inches long, embroidered also with yellow silk, the head toward the outer seam of the sleeve.' The hospital steward's sky blue trousers (dark blue until December 1861) were to have a crimson stripe  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ins. wide down each leg. His dress hat bore a buff and green mixed cord, and a brass wreath around white metal Roman letters 'US' in front. His sash was of red worsted.

Originally, getting wounded men off the field was a haphazard affair. Bandsmen were given that duty, but were not especially trained for it. Each regiment was to assign ten men for stretcher bearer duty, but often took the opportunity to get rid of their worst men: the result was chaos. Therefore, on

2 August 1862, General Orders set up an Ambulance Corps for the Army of the Potomac, the first one in the US Army. Three ambulances, commanded by a sergeant, were assigned to each infantry regiment. Two private stretcher bearers and a driver served with each ambulance. A second lieutenant commanded the brigade's ambulances. On 2 January 1864 the Army of the Cumberland set up an Ambulance Corps in which a first lieutenant commanded the divisional ambulances, acting simultaneously as the train quartermaster. He was assisted by a blacksmith and a saddler. A captain commanded the corps ambulances, which had two additional vehicles assigned. An Army-wide Ambulance Corps was established in 1864.

According to the orders that set up the Army of the Potomac's Ambulance Corps: 'the uniform for this corps is: For privates, a green band 2 inches broad around the cap, a green half chevron 2 inches broad on each arm above the elbow, and to be armed with revolvers; non-commissioned officers to

**Cap badges: top, a general's or staff officer's badge for a forage cap, smaller than for a dress hat; bottom, a Corps of Engineers enlisted man's cap badge. (Author's collection)**



**Lorenzo Thomas, Adjutant General of the US Army, wears the full dress uniform of a field grade staff officer. A graduate of the US Military Academy's class of 1823, Thomas became a brigadier-general in August 1861. (Author's collection)**

wear the same band around the cap as a private, chevrons 2 inches broad and green, with point toward the shoulder, on each arm above the elbow.' In August 1863 the band was reduced to 1¼ ins. wide. The Army of the Cumberland adopted the same insignia system. The XVIII Corps, when in the Department of the South on 30 December 1862, ordered that 'The uniform or distinctive badge of this corps shall be, for privates and non-commissioned officers, a broad red band around the cap with a knot upon the right side, and a red band, one inch wide, above the elbow of each arm.'

Different commands marked the men who served in the hospitals with different field signs. Pte. Louis



Kakuske of the 9th Wisconsin Infantry, a hospital attendant in March 1864, noted that he wore 'the white band that every hospital attendant was required to wear on his left sleeve.' Pte. Robert Strong, 105th Illinois Infantry Regiment, recalled in 1864: 'Our musicians were a kind-hearted, jolly set of boys, who during the battle wore a yellow ribbon on their arms to show they were noncombatants engaged only in carrying the wounded off the field.'

Civilians were hired into a Hospital Corps to further assist medical efforts. According to orders of 5 June 1862, they were to wear privates' uniforms, marked with a green half-chevron on the left forearm.

**This officer from Wilmington, Delaware, wears the dress coat, with the undress cap, of a company grade staff officer. His weapon is the officer's light cavalry sabre. (Author's collection)**



## The Corps of Engineers

When war broke out the Corps of Engineers had an authorised strength, on 3 August 1861, of a colonel, two lieutenant-colonels, four majors, 12 captains, 15 first lieutenants, 15 second lieutenants, 40 sergeants, 40 corporals, eight musicians, 256 artificers, and 256 privates. The Topographical Engineers were authorised 42 officers of various grades. The regular army's Engineer Battalion fought as infantry at Malvern Hill—the traditional mission of the Engineers being to fight as well as build. There were volunteer engineers, too, including the 15th and 50th New York Engineer Regiments, the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics Regiment, and an independent company of engineers from Philadelphia. The Michigan unit set an example of valour when 391 of their officers and men stood off repeated attacks by over 3,000 Southern troops at Lavergne, Tennessee, on 30 December 1864.

Engineer officers wore the standard officer's dress, with black as the branch of service colour displayed on their shoulder straps. Their trousers had a gold cord down each leg. Corps of Engineers officers wore a silver turreted castle within a wreath for a hat badge, while officers of the Topographical Engineers (who were responsible for creating maps) wore a gold shield within the wreath. Their buttons also differed: Topographical Engineers officers had a shield above Old English letters 'TE', while Corps of Engineers officers had the motif of an eagle with a scroll reading *Essayons* flying over a bastion on water in front of a rising sun. Sashes were crimson. In the winter of 1863 the Topographical Engineers and Corps of Engineers were merged, although many officers who had been in the TE continued to wear their old insignia, and to call themselves topographical engineers as a matter of pride.

Enlisted engineers wore foot soldiers' frock coats with standing collars, nine buttons down the front, and two on each cuff. Piping around the collar and cuffs was yellow, as were non-commissioned officers' chevrons. A brass turreted castle was the cap badge. Sergeants had 1½-in. yellow stripes down each trouser leg, while corporals' stripes were ½ in. wide. Non-commissioned officers wore red worsted sashes for dress.

In addition, according to regulations, enlisted engineers were to receive white canvas overalls: 'one

garment to cover the whole of the body below the waist, the breast, the shoulders, and the arms; sleeves loose, to allow a free play of the arms, with narrow wristband buttoning with one button; overalls to fasten at the neck behind with two buttons, and at the waist behind with buckle and tongue.'

### Signal Corps

The Signal Corps was created on 3 March 1863, to consist of 100 officers and men. The ranking Signal officer wore the uniform of a major of the General Staff.

According to orders of 22 August 1864, the officer's cap badge consisted of crossed, embroidered Signal Corps flags  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. square with the letters 'US' above the cross, within a wreath. The men, according to a Corps veteran, wore 'cavalry jackets', 'mounted man's trousers', and carried 'Colt's revolvers'. These were plain dark blue jackets, with a sleeve badge consisting of crossed signal flags on 3-in.-long staffs, each flag  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. square. This badge was worn within the angle of sergeants' chevrons.

The Signal Corps was also responsible for the balloons used for reconnaissance during the Peninsular Campaign. Officers and men assigned to this duty did not have any special uniform, but did from time to time wear the letters 'AD', for Aeronautic Department, or 'BC', for Balloon Corps, on their hats.

There was also a civilian Telegraph Corps under Signal Corps control. These men usually wore civilian dress, although orders in the Department of Cumberland dated 26 March 1864 directed them to wear a dark blue blouse with staff officers' buttons; dark blue trousers with a silver cord down each leg; a buff, white, or blue waistcoat; and a plain commissioned officer's forage cap. This uniform was also worn, according to orders of 5 July 1864, in the Department of Tennessee, with the addition of a small silver cord around the hat band.

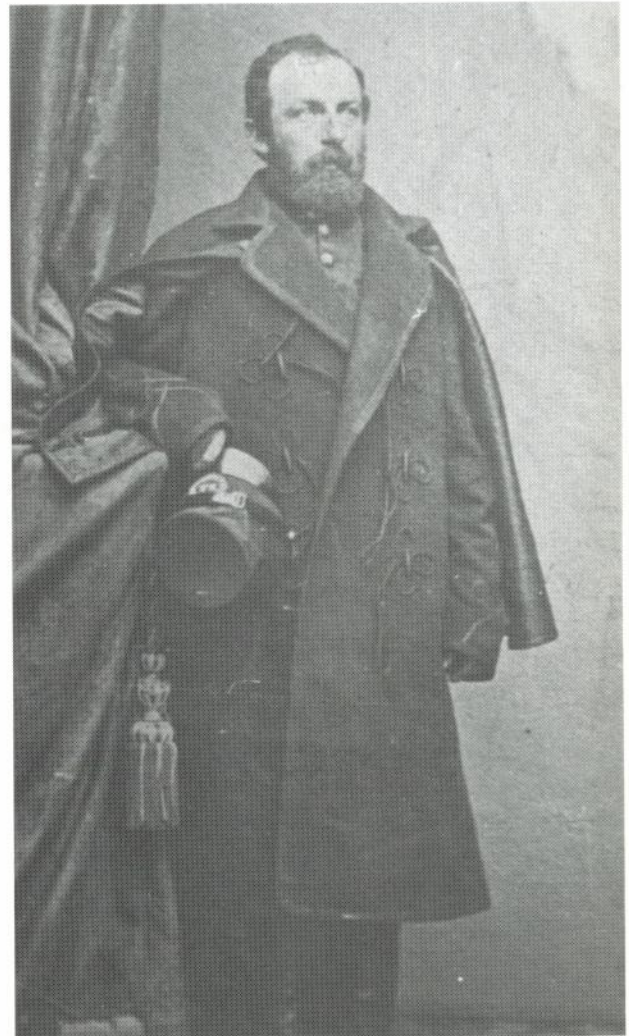
### US Sharpshooters

Two regiments of US Sharpshooters were formed, the men being drawn from most of the Northern states. Each man had to be an expert shot. These regiments fought in all the battles of the Army of the Potomac, usually being assigned by company to

different commands as needed. Serving as skirmishers, they were especially effective. In all, 1,392 officers and men served in the 1st Regiment, while 1,178 served in the 2nd Regiment. A total of 1,008 US Sharpshooters officers and men from both regiments were killed or wounded in action. The 1st Regiment was merged into the 2nd Regiment in the autumn of 1864, and that regiment was disbanded in February 1865.

Originally the men brought their own target rifles. These were replaced with Colt revolving rifles and, in May-June 1862, with Sharps rifles. This excellent breech-loading weapon was the one which had been desired from the start.

**A staff officer from Philadelphia wears the regulation officer's overcoat. His rank of first lieutenant is identified by the lace knot on each cuff; an additional strip of lace was added for each higher rank. He wears the staff officer's cap badge on his forage cap front. (Author's collection)**





**Chaplains of the US IX Corps, photographed near Petersburg in 1864. Most of them wear plain black civilian dress, but a few have added military touches to their hats and one, seated far left, wears silver Latin crosses on his collar. (Library of Congress)**

The two regiments' original uniform was described by Capt. C. A. Stevens as being 'of fine material, consisting of a dark green coat and cap with black plume, light blue trousers (afterward exchanged for green ones) and leather leggins, presenting a striking contrast with the infantry. The knapsack was of hair-covered calf-skin, with cooking kit attached, considered the best in use, as it was the handsomest, most durable and complete. . . .

'We wore for a time, principally on outpost duty or in bad weather what were called "Havelocks", a grey, round hat with a wide black visor, good enough around Washington far within the lines, but after our appearance before the enemy the following spring, they were discarded as endangering a fire from the rear. Certain grey felt, seamless overcoats were likewise abandoned, although they were good rain shedders, only they became when wet stiff as a board.'

Capt. Ripley also described the uniform in 1862: 'The uniform of the regiment consisted of coats, blouses, pants and caps of green cloth; and leather leggins, buckling as high as the knee were worn by

officers and men alike. The knapsacks were of a style then in use by the army of Prussia; they were of leather tanned with the hair on, and although heavier than the regulation knapsack, fitted the back well, were roomy, and highly appreciated by the men. Each had strapped to its outside a small cooking kit, which was found compact and useful.' The men's coats were dark green trimmed, in the manner of foot frock coats, with light green.

A Swiss-born officer who served with the Sharpshooters, Heinz Meir, recalled: 'The officer's uniform, although made with more care and of finer cloth, was not much different from those of the soldiers.' The officer's cap badge was a pair of gold embroidered rifles, crossed, with the letters 'US' above the cross and 'SS' below it, within an embroidered gold wreath.

One season in the field, however, convinced the

troops to get rid of the fancy hats and overcoats; and Meir recalled that 'for fatigue use, or the so-called lesser tenue, we had a blue flannel jacket which was worn in the field even by officers.' Generally, the regulation US Army fatigue uniform was worn in the field, with the exception of the green caps which the men kept, along with the Prussian haversacks. Non-commissioned officers wore green chevrons and trouser stripes on their blue uniforms.

### **Veteran Reserve Corps**

Men who became ill or were wounded in service and were no longer capable of active field campaigning, but who were still able to perform light duty, were, from 28 April 1863, assigned to the Veteran Reserve Corps. (This was originally called the Invalid Corps, but this name was highly unpopular, and it was changed on 18 March 1864.) Eventually sound men, who had previously been in combat units and who were willing to re-enlist, but not for combat duty, were also recruited into the Corps. In all, between its founding and 30 September 1865, 1,036 officers and 60,508 enlisted men served in the Corps. Men who could handle weapons were assigned to First Battalions, where they received muskets, while those missing an arm went into Second Battalions, and were armed with non-commissioned officers' swords.

Despite the fact that the men were only to serve as hospital, post, and prison guards, or to assist in hospitals, there were many instances of their seeing action. During the Confederate raid against Washington in June 1864 the 6th Regiment had an officer and four men wounded outside Fort De Russy; while the 9th Regiment charged Southern skirmishers at Fort Stevens, losing five killed and seven severely wounded. The 18th Regiment took part in the successful defence of White House on 20 June 1864. Several times during the battle the regiment's commander was asked, 'Will your invalids stand?'

'Tell the general', was the answer, 'that my men are cripples, and they can't run.' They didn't.

The men wore dark blue forage caps, often plain, but in some units decorated with the infantry horn, regimental number, and company letter. Trousers were sky blue, as was the jacket, which was trimmed with dark blue and cut long in the waist. Officers wore a sky blue frock coat with collar, cuffs, and

shoulder strap grounds of dark blue velvet, and sky blue trousers with a double stripe of dark blue down the outer seam, the stripes being  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. wide and  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. apart. The colour was not popular, as the officers and men disliked being marked out by a distinctive dress. The officers especially complained, saying that sky blue soiled too easily, and they were eventually allowed to wear dark blue coats. The men also wore regular dark blue fatigue blouses as needed.

Each large post or hospital had a band. There was no special VRC band uniform ordered, so each band differed. Pte. Alfred Bellard, 1st VRC, wrote: 'Our band were getting along nicely and were handsomely uniformed in blue jackets trimmed with black facings and three rows of brass buttons, shako hat with plume, and brass eagle ornament, epaulettes, and black pants with blue, black and gilt

**Dr. Alexander Mott, a surgeon from New York, wears the regulation dress of a surgeon, equal in rank to a major. (David Scheinmann Collection)**





stripe down the seam. They looked very gay, but the company funds had to sweat in rigging them out. The officers paid an assessment for that purpose and the funds did the rest.'

A Veteran Volunteer Corps of men who had already served in action and volunteered to return to the front was also authorised. Their only unique uniform items were their service chevrons worn on the lower forearms. The Corps was not fully organised by the time the war ended, and hence never saw action.

## *The US Navy*

The job of preventing supplies from reaching Southern ports and defending the merchant marine fell to the US Navy, which, throughout the war lost 95 vessels and 2,100 sailors in action. The war coincided with a period of transition during which wooden ships were giving way to iron. The Navy commissioned 138 ironclad vessels during the four years of war.

This scene, called 'the amputation' by its Gettysburg photographer, although posed, shows typical battlefield operating conditions. The doctors are all assistant surgeons. A soldier's poncho or rubber blanket has been thrown over the operating table. The wooden bucket, lower right, waits to receive the amputated limbs. (US Army Military History Institute)

### **Officers' Uniforms**

The basic officer's uniform consisted of a dark blue, double-breasted frock coat, nine buttons in each of two rows, with a roll collar. (Engineers had only one row of buttons until February 1861.) Chaplains had a single row of nine buttons; professors and commodores' secretaries had a row of eight buttons, and clerks had six. Trousers were dark blue wool in winter, white duck or linen in summer. Dark blue peaked caps were worn in winter, and broad-brimmed straw hats in summer. There was also a dress uniform: a tail-coat with a standing collar, plentifully trimmed with gold and with gold epaulettes, a cocked hat, and gold-trimmed trousers. Its use was abolished during the war, however.

At sea officers were allowed to wear double-breasted blue wool or white drill jackets. These were

unpopular, however, and were usually worn only by recent Naval Academy graduates. Officers did take to wearing 'sack coats' resembling civilian or Army fatigue coats. Capt. Alfred T. Mahan noted that 'War, which soon afterwards followed with its stern preoccupations and incidental deprivations, induced inevitably deterioration in matters of dress. With it the sack-coat, or pilot-jacket, burrowed its way in, with the cut and insignia of these showing many variations.'

Mahan also recalled: 'We had a prescribed uniform, certainly; but regulations, like legislative acts, admit of much variety of interpretation and latitude in practice, unless there is behind them a strong public sentiment. In my earlier days there was no public sentiment of the somewhat martinet kind; such as would compel all alike to wear an overcoat because the captain felt cold. In practice there was great laxity in details.'

Originally, a captain, the Navy's highest rank, wore three gold stripes around each cuff; a commander, two; and a lieutenant, one. A master wore three large buttons parallel with the cuff edge, while midshipmen had plain cuffs. Shoulder straps further indicated rank. All of them were on a dark blue background edged in gold embroidery. A captain had an eagle over an anchor; a commander, two fouled anchors; a lieutenant, a single fouled anchor; and a master, plain straps with no insignia inside. A passed midshipman wore a narrow gold strip on each shoulder. The same insignia, within a gold wreath, were worn as cap badges for each different rank. Masters and midshipmen wore a fouled anchor on its side within the wreath.

Engineers wore on their caps a wheel, surmounted by an anchor, within a wreath. A chief engineer wore shoulder straps with an Old English 'E' in the centre of each, and four large buttons around each cuff. A first assistant engineer wore three cuff buttons and no shoulder straps; second and third assistant engineers had plain cuffs.

Surgeons and pursers wore two  $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. gold stripes on their coat cuffs. The surgeon's shoulder strap bore an insignia of three oak leaves in its centre, with acorns at either end for surgeons with over 12 years' experience. A passed assistant surgeon had the same insignia in the strap centre with a gold bar at each end, while an assistant surgeon had only the central insignia.



**A hospital steward wearing the dress frock, trimmed with crimson, displaying his rank insignia and the half-chevrons showing his veteran status. He wears a crimson sash and issue non-commissioned officer's sword. (Richard Carlile Collection)**

Pursers wore a shoulder strap with three oak leaves and two acorns in the centre. Another oak leaf was added at each end of the strap after 12 years' service.

In 1861 the engineers' device was changed to a set of four oak leaves worn in the strap centre, with an acorn at each end for 12 years' service. First and second assistant engineers wore very narrow shoulder straps bordered with gold lace. Cuff markings were also changed so that chief engineers with 15 years' service wore three gold stripes; with five years' service, one wide and one narrow stripe; and with less than five years, two narrow stripes. First assistant engineers wore one wide stripe, while second assistants wore a narrow stripe.



Enlisted engineers of Co. B, US Engineer Bn. at Petersburg, 1864. Most of them wear the Corps of Engineers cap badge. Note that the top hat on the pile of hats, bottom centre, bears

both a Corps of Engineers badge and a company letter. Otherwise, they wear standard fatigue dress. (Library of Congress)

### Relative Rank in US Navy

The following ranks used the same sleeve markings, with line officers using a star above their stripes after 1863 and other officers being indicated by cap insignia and shoulder straps.

	<i>Bureau of Medicine and Surgery</i>	<i>Bureau of Provisions and Clothing</i>	<i>Bureau of Steam Engineering</i>	<i>Bureau of Constructions</i>	<i>Chaplains</i>	<i>Miscellaneous</i>
Line Rear Admiral	—	—	—	—	—	—
Commodore	Chief of the Bureau	Chief of the Bureau	Chief of the Bureau	Chief of the Bureau	—	—
Captain	Fleet Surgeon/ Surgeon over 15 years	Fleet Paymaster/ Paymaster over 15 years	Fleet Engineer/ Chief Engineer over 15 years	Naval Constructor over 20 years	—	—
Commander	Surgeon over 5 years	Paymaster over 5 years	Chief Engineer over 5 years	Naval Constructor over 12 years	Chaplain over 12 years	Professor of Mathematics over 12 years
Lieutenant Commander	Surgeon under 5 years	Paymaster under 5 years	Chief Engineer under 5 years	Naval Constructor under 12 years	Chaplain under 12 years	Professor of Mathematics under 12 years
Lieutenant	Passed Assistant Surgeon	—	—	—	—	—
Master	Assistant Surgeon	Assistant Paymaster	First Assistant Engineer	Assistant Naval Constructor	—	Secretary
Ensign	—	—	Second Assistant Engineer	—	—	—
Midshipman	—	—	Third Assistant Engineer	—	—	Clerk

As the Navy grew, new ranks were added. On 16 July 1862 the entire rank system was changed. Now a rear admiral wore three wide and three narrow gold cuff stripes; a commodore, two narrow stripes between three wide stripes; a captain, three wide stripes; a commander, a narrow stripe between two wide ones; a lieutenant-commander, two wide stripes; a lieutenant, a narrow stripe over a wide one; a master, a wide stripe; and an ensign, a narrow stripe. A ship's executive officer wore a star above his top stripe.

Shoulder straps were also changed so all ranks wore a fouled anchor in the centre of their straps and an Army rank badge at each end (e.g., two gold bars at each end for a lieutenant; and a silver oak leaf for a commander). A captain wore an eagle over his anchor, while the commodore wore a silver star at one end and an anchor at the other. Cap badges were changed so that ranks from ensign through lieutenant wore a fouled anchor on its side within a wreath, while higher officers had an eagle on an anchor within a wreath. A rear admiral had a single star within a wreath.

This rank identification system was changed yet again in May 1863. Under the new system, all officers wore thin gold stripes on their cuffs to indicate their ranks, starting with one for an ensign and ending with eight for a rear admiral. Spacing was equal for the first three stripes, but wider between the third and fourth. All line officers had a gold star centred above the top stripe, while other officers simply wore the stripes. Shoulder straps remained the same as they had been in 1862, save for a slight design change on the captain's straps. All line officers were now to wear a vertical fouled anchor within a wreath on their caps, save for a rear admiral, who had a star.

Cap badges now indicated the branch of service for all other officers. Surgeons wore a single large oak leaf within a wreath. Pursers (who now became paymasters) wore three oak leaves and two acorns within a wreath. Engineers wore a cross of four oak leaves within a wreath. Officers of the Bureau of Construction wore two oak leaves and two acorns within a wreath. Chaplains wore a cross within a wreath. Professors of mathematics wore an Old English 'P' within a wreath, secretaries an Old English 'S', and clerks wore plain wreaths. Non-line officers wore cuff stripes equivalent to those of the



The Corps of Engineers of the Army of the Potomac built this chapel behind the lines at Petersburg, 1864. Note how they have worked the Corps insignia out of logs over the door. Corps officers and enlisted men stand in front of their work. (Library of Congress)

appropriate line rank but without the star.

In practice, photographic research is further confused by the fact that many officers mixed uniform items from different periods—a cap which was regulation in 1861 may be seen worn with a coat with the 1863 rank insignia.

### **Petty Officers' and Crew Ratings' Uniforms**

According to the 1852 dress regulations: *'Boatswain's Mates, Gunner's Mates, Carpenter's Mates, Sailmaker's Mates, Ship's Steward, and Ship's Cook, will wear, embroidered in white silk, on the right sleeve of their blue jackets, above the elbow in front, an eagle and anchor, of not more than three inches in length, with a star of one inch in diameter, one inch above. The same device, embroidered in blue, to be worn on the sleeves of their white frocks, in summer.*

*'All other petty officers, except officers' stewards,*





A sergeant in the Signal Corps. He wears a Signal Corps officer's cap badge, with the Corps' plain dark blue jacket, and mounted man's trousers. His sabre is a cavalry weapon, and he appears to have a lanyard for his revolver. (Richard Carlile Collection)

and yeomen, will wear the same device on their left sleeves.

'The outside clothing for *Petty Officers, Firemen, and Coalheavers, Seamen, Ordinary Seamen, Landsmen, and Boys*, for muster, shall consist of blue cloth jackets and trousers, or blue woolen frocks, with white duck cuffs and collars: black hats, black silk neckerchiefs, and shoes; the collars and cuffs to be lined with blue cotton cloth, and stitched round with thread. Thick blue cloth caps, without visors, may be worn by the crew at sea, except on holidays or at muster.'

Mahan noted: 'Respect for individual tastes was rather a mark of that time in the navy. Seamen

handy with their needle were permitted, if not encouraged, to embroider elaborate patterns, in divers colors, on the fronts of their shirts, and turned many honest pennies by doing the like for less skillful shipmates . . .

'A very curious manifestation of this disposition to bedeck the body was the prevalence of tattooing. If not universal, it was very nearly so among seamen of the day. Elaborate designs covering the chest, back, or forearms, were seen everywhere, when the men were stripped on the deck for washing.'

#### *Naval Accoutrements and Weapons*

Captains of guns, boarders, small-arms men, and field-howitzer crews wore waistbelts and various accoutrements. The waistbelts were black leather; at first they simply hooked closed, but a japanned iron buckle was introduced in 1862. Various black leather accoutrements, all embossed 'USN' within an oval on their flaps, were worn on the waistbelt as needed. These included a primer box; musket, carbine and pistol cartridge boxes; and a cap box. These generally resembled the Army models, although they slipped on to the belt with a single belt loop sewn to the rear centre of the box.

Pistols were carried in holsters on the right hip, while Dahlgren knife-bayonets, battleaxes or cutlasses were carried on the left hip. The pistols were generally the Model 1842 smoothbore, single-shot percussion model, or a Colt 'Army' or 'Navy' revolver. Longarms included the Whitney Model 1861 Navy Rifle, a 0.69 cal., 50-in.-long weapon with a brass-hilted, 22-in. sabre-bayonet. The Navy also issued the Sharps & Hankins Model 1862 breech-loading carbine, and a Model 1861 breech-loading rifle. Both were 0.52 cal., and used a rimfire cartridge.

The Model 1860 brass-hilted, leather-gripped cutlass was the usual issue, although a number of the straight-bladed, double-edged Model 1841 cutlasses were still to be seen. Other edged weapons included 9-ft. boarding pikes with iron spike ends, and battleaxes about 20 ins. long with a 4¼-in. blade. Most seamen also carried a clasp knife.

Officers were armed with the Model 1852 sword, which is essentially the US Navy officer's sword still used today. It had a fishskin grip, and a brass hilt featuring oak leaves, acorns, and the letters 'USN'. The blade was engraved and slightly curved.

## The Revenue Marine/Revenue Cutter Service

The Revenue Marine was formed in August 1790 to collect customs revenues for the Treasury Department. At the outbreak of the Civil War the Revenue Marine had eight cutters in service, the largest being the *Harriet Lane*, which was enforcing the slave trade laws off the Florida coast. According to law, the Revenue Marine came under Navy command when the war began. The vessels were fitted with heavier armament, and served largely on blockade duty, although some were retained for various other duties in Northern harbours. The organisation was renamed the Revenue Cutter Service in 1863, although the old name remained in use for many years thereafter. (This was the ancestor of today's US Coast Guard.)

Officers and men wore uniforms which were virtually identical to those of the US Navy—quite a sore point with Navy officers. According to 1843 regulations, a captain was marked by a 1-in.-wide black braid stripe worn around the sleeve several inches above the cuff, and two plain gold epaulettes. A first lieutenant wore three buttons around each cuff and single epaulette on his right shoulder, while the second lieutenant's epaulette was worn on the left shoulder. Third lieutenants wore the left shoulder epaulette, but no cuff buttons. Photographs show many officers wearing two epaulettes even if they were not captains. Caps were of the Navy type with two gold  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. bands around the bottom, and a badge of gold Treasury Department arms surmounted by an anchor.

In 1862 the Treasury Department ordered that all officers should wear the Navy double-breasted frock coat with shoulder straps, and gold lace on each cuff: captains would have two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. stripes, while all lieutenants would have one. Captains' shoulder straps were dark blue with a pair of crossed fouled anchors; first lieutenants had a fouled anchor over the Treasury shield, and two bars at each end; second lieutenants had the anchor and shield with one bar at each end; and third lieutenants, no bars.

Engineer officers wore the same uniform as deck officers, save for insignia. A chief engineer's shoulder straps had a gold wheel surmounted by an anchor, and his cap badge was a wheel surmounted by a star within a wreath; a single  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. stripe of gold lace was worn on the cuffs. A first assistant engineer

wore three Treasury buttons on each cuff instead of lace; his shoulder straps had a wheel only, while his cap badge was a wheel within a wreath. Second assistant engineers wore plain gold-bordered shoulder straps, and a cap badge of a plain gold wreath.

In the spring of 1863, to bring insignia into line with US Navy patterns, all officers were ordered to wear  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in.-wide gold stripes around their cuffs, ranging from one for a third lieutenant to four for a captain; a gold Treasury Department shield was worn above the stripes. Similar stripes, without the shield, were worn by engineers, with the chief engineer wearing three stripes. At the same time, engineers were ordered to wear a cap badge of a 'wheel within a wreath . . . worked in gold', regardless of rank.

Warrant officers throughout the period wore dark blue wool coats or jackets with nine brass Treasury buttons down the front, three more on each cuff and three under each pocket flap. In hot weather they wore white frocks with a large blue

**Signal Corpsmen man the signal tower on Elk Mountain, Maryland, during the Antietam Campaign, September 1862. The two lieutenants in charge of the post sit upper left. The enlisted men have stripped to their shirts. (Library of Congress)**





This Signal Corps private is identified by the embroidered red-and-white flags worn on his upper sleeve. (Richard Carlile)

collar, a star 'worked on each side of the collar, and two on each breast.' Trousers were white or blue, depending on the season. Seamen wore similar uniforms to those of the warrant officers, but no buttons on the cuffs or under the pocket flaps. They also wore, from 1862, Navy-type peakless 'muster-ing caps', as well as straw hats.

At the beginning of the war Revenue Marine officers carried a unique sword which had been adopted in 1834. This was abandoned in 1862 in favour of the US Navy Model 1852 officer's sword. Sailors carried, when necessary, Navy-issue cutlasses and pistols. The Revenue Marine's standard pistol was a version of the US Model 1842, 0.54 cal., single-shot percussion smoothbore. This had a 'box lock', in which the hammer was placed under the lockplate so that it would not snag when carried stuck under a belt or trouser top; and was marked 'USR'.

Revenue Marine cutters had a unique flag with eight red stripes and eight white stripes, running vertically. The canton in the upper left corner was white bearing a blue eagle with a red, white, and blue Treasury Department seal on its chest. Thirteen blue stars surrounded the eagle in a semi-circle.

## *The US Marine Corps*

The US Marine Corps fought on land at First Bull Run and in the taking of Fort Fisher, and in all the actions of the Navy on the high seas and rivers. It was never large, reaching a peak strength during the war of 4,167 all ranks. Of these, 148 officers and men were killed in action.

### **Uniforms**

Marines had a number of uniforms. For dress occasions they wore a double-breasted, dark blue frock coat decorated with yellow braid and scarlet trim, with a standing collar, and gold or yellow worsted cuff lace indicating rank. Musicians' coats were scarlet. There were eight evenly-spaced buttons in each of two rows, except for the commandant, who wore his in pairs. Field officers, sergeant majors, and quartermaster sergeants wore four lace loops; captains and sergeants, three; and



**A military telegraph battery wagon. The telegraph, under Signal Corps authority, was nevertheless operated by civilians who wore a mixture of civilian and military dress, as do these operators. (Library of Congress)**

lieutenants and privates, two. Gold (for officers) or brass with worsted fringe (for enlisted men) epaulettes were worn on each shoulder, the width of the fringe indicating the rank. Non-commissioned grades were also indicated by gold chevrons edged red and worn, points up, above the elbows on each sleeve. These were, for a sergeant major, three bars and an arc; quartermaster sergeant, three bars and a tie; drum major, three bars and a tie with a star in the centre; first sergeant, three bars and a lozenge; sergeant, three bars; and corporal, two bars. The same chevrons were worn on the overcoat cuffs.

Trousers were sky blue with a scarlet welt for officers and a scarlet stripe for senior non-commissioned officers. Staff officers wore dark blue trousers with the scarlet welt. White linen trousers were worn in hot weather. For dress occasions shakos were worn, with a gold net pompon for officers, red worsted for enlisted men. The badge was a gold wreath around a shield bearing an

**This sergeant of US Sharpshooters wears the regiment's dark green coat with light green trim, sky blue trousers, dark brown gaiters, and a dark green forage cap. His weapon is the issue Sharps infantry rifle. (Richard Carlile)**



infantry horn with an Old English 'M' within its loop.

For undress, officers and men had dark blue frock coats with plain collars. Officers wore double-breasted coats with a gold Russian knot, bearing a silver rank badge, on each shoulder. Enlisted men had single-breasted frocks edged in red on the standing collar. A dark blue *chasseur* pattern fatigue cap, with the infantry horn and 'M' badge on the front, was worn with the undress uniform. Officers could also wear a waist-length fatigue jacket, decorated with ½-in. gold lace. At sea, enlisted men could also wear a pullover blue flannel shirt as an outer garment, over a white cotton shirt. Chevrons were worn on all undress outer garments.

**This Veteran Reserve Corps captain wears the unit's sky blue coat and trousers with dark blue velvet collar and cuffs and two dark blue stripes down each trouser leg. His sash is crimson. His shoulder straps are dark blue edged with gold with two gold bars at each end. (Author's collection)**



The enlisted overcoat was blue-grey, single-breasted, with seven large buttons and a detachable cape that reached the upper edge of the cuff. Officers wore the Army officers' dark blue 'cloak coat.' The Army cuff braid system was also used by Marine officers.

#### *Marine Accoutrements and Weapons*

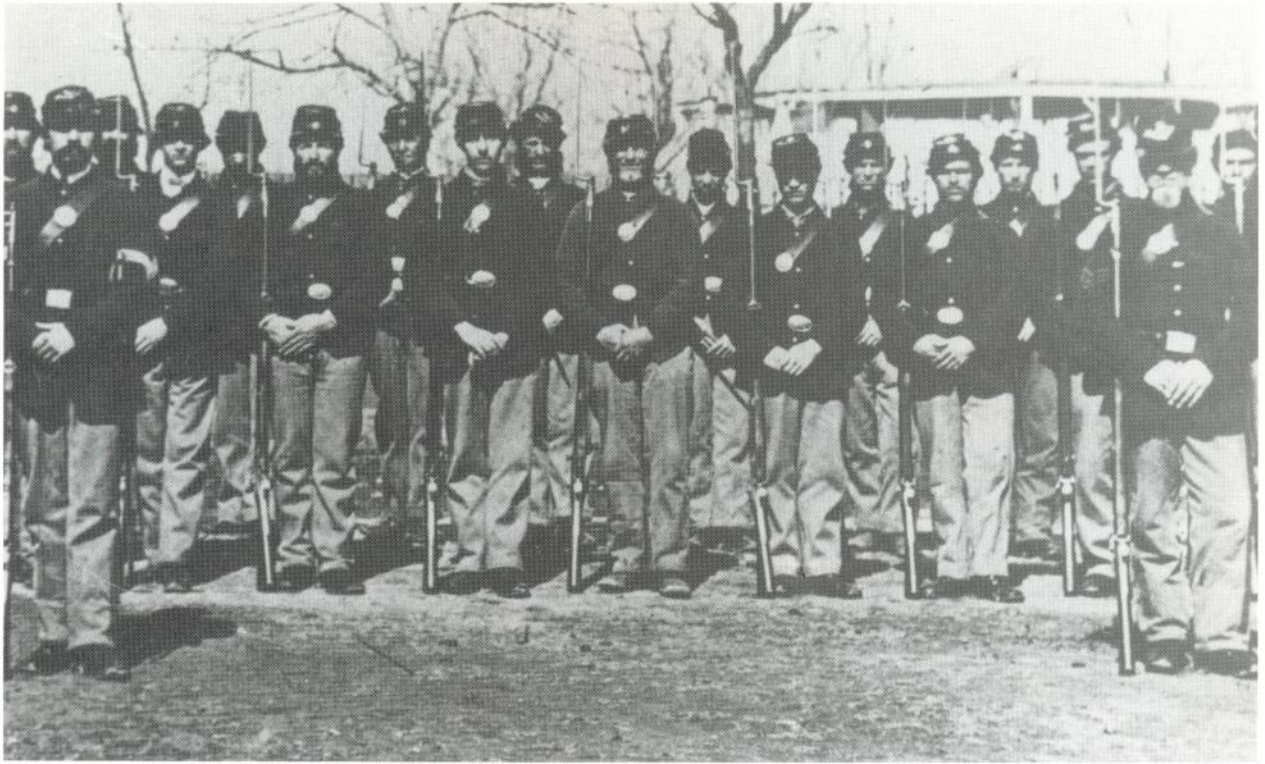
Enlisted Marines wore white buff leather cross belts, the Army cartridge box being carried on the right rear hip and the bayonet scabbard on the left. A black cap pouch was worn on the front right hip on a narrow white waistbelt fastened with a plain brass rectangular beltplate. The Army's circular shoulder belt plate was worn on the cartridge box sling. A distinctive knapsack was worn by enlisted Marines from time to time: this was of black painted canvas, with two carrying straps and an adjustable breast strap across the chest, and was marked 'USM' within an oval on the back. No blanket was worn around the knapsack. Canteens and haversacks were of Army pattern.

Officers wore black leather swordbelts with the Army officer's belt plate, and carried the Army foot officer's sabre. When necessary they carried pistols, usually the 0.36 cal. Colt revolver, although at least one carried a Model 1855 pistol-carbine. For dress, many officers wore a white swordbelt.

The standard Marine longarm was, in 1861, the Model 1855 rifled musket; in 1864 Model 1863 rifled muskets were issued. Non-commissioned officers carried the Model 1850 Army foot officer's sword with a leather grip, and a frog stud on the scabbard instead of the rings.

#### **The Mississippi Marine Brigade**

This organisation was created on 1 November 1862 from soldiers who manned the fleet on the Mississippi, since the Navy could not supply Marines for the job. It was to have one infantry regiment, four cavalry squadrons, and one light artillery battery; in practice it never had more than 800 men, in six infantry companies, four cavalry companies, and a battery. The unit was disbanded in August 1864. Officers and men wore whatever they could get from the Army and Navy. There was one unique uniform item, a cap made with a full round top, broad straight peak and wide green band edged with gold. The cap badge featured



crossed cannon, fouled anchors and an infantry horn. Arms included revolvers and carbines.

**These men of the 9th Regt., Veteran Reserve Corps photographed in Washington, DC, were part of the group that defended Fort Stevens when Confederates under Jubal Early attacked it in 1864. They wear the standard infantry fatigue dress, with the insignia of their corps of service, regimental number, and company letter on the tops of their forage caps. (Library of Congress)**

## *The Confederate Army*

The Confederate Army did not have nearly the number of combat troops fielded by the Union Army, nor did it recruit nearly as many specialist troops. Many of those who were recruited did not have any special regulation uniform, either. Nevertheless, there were specialist personnel among the Confederates who did important work for the South.

### **General and Staff Officers**

In all, the South commissioned 425 men as fully ranked generals; of these, 77 were either killed in action or died of their wounds.

Generals, and staff officers of the Adjutant General's department, the Quartermaster General's department, and the Commissary General's department were to wear grey frock coats reaching half way between the hip and knee, with two rows of eight buttons in pairs for generals, and seven

buttons evenly spaced for other officers. The standing collars were to be buff, as were the pointed cuffs. Rank was marked on the collar by three gold embroidered stars within a wreath for general; three, two, and one stars without a wreath for field officers from colonel to major; and three, two, and one horizontal bars for captain to second lieutenant. In addition, each sleeve was to be decorated with a gold Austrian knot: a general had four braids in his knot; field officers, three; captains, two; and lieutenants, one. Buttons were to bear an eagle surrounded by stars.

Many generals preferred wearing waist-length jackets instead of the regulation frock coats. Maj.Gen. Thomas J. ('Stonewall') Jackson was photographed in a totally plain jacket. A British soldier in a New Jersey artillery battery described Confederate Brig.Gen. William Walker in May 1864: 'His uniform was not unlike our British Volunteers—*Gray*, only he wore a jacket instead of a



A corporal of the 172nd Co., 2nd Bn., Veteran Reserve Corps wears the dress uniform of that corps—sky blue jacket trimmed with dark blue, and sky blue trousers. Second Battalion men were not considered capable of firing a musket and were assigned to hospital work. This particular company was stationed in Davenport, Iowa. (Author's collection)

coat having three stars on the collar to indicate his rank like these \* \* \*'. Col. Arthur Fremantle, Coldstream Guards, in July 1863 'saw General Wilcox (an officer who wears a short round jacket and a battered straw hat)'. Maj.Gen. Patrick Cleburne in 1864 was described by one of his men: 'He had on a bob-tail Confederate coat, which looked as if it had been cut out of a scrimp pattern.'

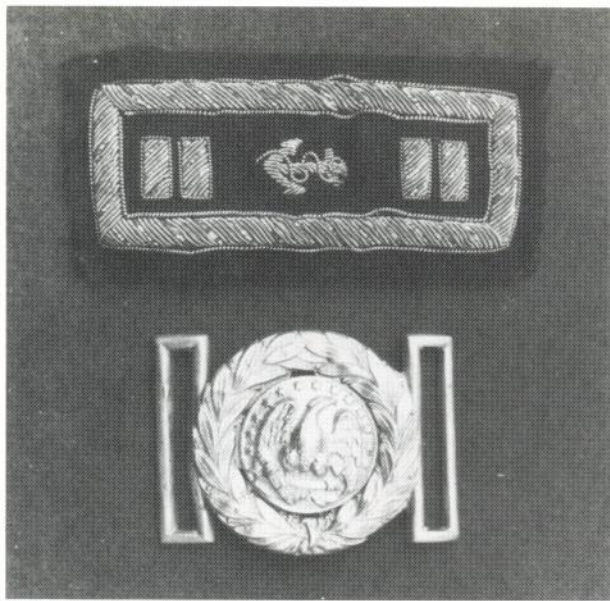
Trousers were to be dark blue with two stripes of gold lace on the outer seam,  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. apart for generals; other staff officers were to have  $1\frac{1}{4}$ -in.-wide gold lace stripe down each leg. Caps were to be entirely dark blue French-type *képis*. These were to be decorated up the front, back, sides and top with the same number of gold braids as appeared in the wearer's Austrian sleeve knot. Generals and staff officers were also authorised to wear French-type fore-and-aft *chapeaux*; but only Maj.Gen. John B. Magruder, who was noted for his fancy dress generally, was photographed with such a hat. In the field, the broad-brimmed slouch hat was the most common headgear.

Sashes for generals were to be of buff silk—and, indeed, Gen. Robert E. Lee wore such a sash at Appomattox. Staff officers were to wear red silk sashes.

There was no regulation chaplain's uniform. Chaplains of the II and III Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia voted in June 1863, to wear, as a badge, 'the letter C, with a wreath of olive leaves worked in gold bullion, on a ground of black velvet, the whole about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide.' Chaplains of the Army of Tennessee later chose to wear the Maltese Cross as their badge.

### The Specialist Corps

On 24 October 1861 President Jefferson Davis wrote that the Engineers were 'a corps not having lieutenants, and the members of which were selected for their special qualifications.' Originally the Corps did not have enlisted men either, men being put into temporary pioneer brigades whenever engineering work was needed. In late 1863 two regiments of Engineers were authorised, and filled in time for the 1864 campaign. The First Regiment served with the Army of Northern Virginia, as did two companies of the Second Regiment; the rest served in the West. The Corps was most active in fighting around Petersburg,



*Top, the shoulderstrap of a lieutenant, US Navy, c. 1864; the anchor is silver, the other embroidery gold. Bottom, the two-piece beltplate worn by US Navy officers. (Author's collection)*

where it was responsible for the fortifications; and in the Appomattox Campaign, where it built bridges ahead of the army, destroying them while standing off pursuing Union troops as the rest of the army passed on.

Officers of the Engineers wore staff officers' uniforms, with buff facings and red sashes; their buttons bore the Old English letter 'E'. Engineer enlisted men did not have an authorised button, probably wearing general service or even plain wood buttons. Their typical wear was waist-length grey or brown jackets with matching trousers. Non-commissioned officers would have worn, when available, buff or white chevrons, and perhaps, in more established posts, a white cotton stripe down each leg.

A visiting Austrian officer wrote in 1863: 'The signal corps is an institution peculiar to the American armies. On marches and during battles, high and commanding positions are occupied by squadrons of this corps, who communicate with each other by flags, on the old semaphore system, and report all important communications to their generals. The corps was found very useful last year, and has been very much increased since.'

The Corps had been authorised on 19 April 1862 under command of a major. It consisted of ten captains, ten first and ten second lieutenants, and

30 sergeants. These were especially trained in signal techniques. Privates were detailed from various line units as needed. Their signal flags came in two sizes, the largest being 12ft by 8ft, the smaller ones being described as 'about four feet by two and a half feet in size and contain in their centers squares of another color than that of the body of the flag.' Unlike other Confederate organisations, the Signal Corps appears to have had special cap badges. One Corps member described 'a pair of silver plated cross flags w'h can be gotten on Wall St., or near the Columbian Hotel' in a letter dated 2 October 1863. This badge would apparently have resembled that worn by the US Army Signal Corps. Otherwise, Signal Corps officers and men wore standard issue dress, with buff facings and general service or staff officer buttons.

An Invalid Corps of veterans unable to fight but still able to stand guard duty was authorised on 17 February 1864. It had no special uniforms, although frock coats were a standard issue.

### **The Medical Department**

According to a visiting Austrian officer in 1863: 'The medical department is organised thus:— Medical director of the army; medical director of the army corps; chief surgeon of division; senior surgeon of brigade. Each regiment has a surgeon, an assistant-surgeon, two ambulances, and a medical waggon, belonging to it. Two men from each company are detailed to act as litter-bearers and attendants upon the wounded; these follow the troops on the field of battle, and convey men to the hospitals in the rear.'

Recalled Pte. James Nisbit, 21st Georgia Infantry: 'Each company had two men detailed as litter-bearers who were excused from all company duty and the regimental drill. Their principal duty was to pick up wounded men and carry them back to the surgeon and assist the surgeons after the battle. The captains selected the strongest and bravest men for this duty. Often each litter-bearer had to carry a man on his back or in his arms, which called for great strength, and to return to the firing line was more trying than to stay and shoot.' These men were described by Col. Fremantle as 'unarmed men carrying stretchers and wearing in their hats the red badges of the ambulance corps.' The badge was not described in army orders and was probably





Capt. William B. Shubrick came out of retirement to serve as chairman of the Navy's Lighthouse Board during the war. He wears the US Navy officer's dress uniform coat, apparently with undress trousers—dress trousers had a gold lace stripe down each leg. Full dress was not required of officers during the war. (Author's collection)

any shape and size of red cloth, ranging from a circle on the hat front to a band around the entire hat.

Surgeons and assistant surgeons wore double-breasted grey frock coats, with black collars and cuffs. The surgeon wore the single star of a major, while the assistant surgeon wore the three stripes of a captain on his collar. Their trousers were to be dark blue with a  $1\frac{1}{4}$ -in.-wide black velvet stripe, edged with gold, down each leg. The regulation sash was green silk net. Although not regulation, many of them wore the gold embroidered Old English letters 'MS', sometimes within a gold wreath, on the front of their *képis*.

Each regiment was supposed to have a hospital steward to assist the surgeon. According to Confederate Surgeon Deering J. Roberts, 'the chevrons on the coat sleeves and the stripes down the trousers of the hospital steward were similar to those worn by an orderly or first sergeant (three chevrons and a lozenge), but were black in color.' This insignia is not mentioned in Confederate dress regulations.

## *The Confederate Navy*

A navy to defend the South's waters and to prey on Northern shipping was authorised on 16 March 1861. In late 1864 it numbered 700 commissioned and warrant officers and 3,674 enlisted men, probably its peak strength. Despite a lack of shipbuilding facilities, the Navy launched 37 ironclads, the most famous of which was the CSS *Virginia*, better known as the *Merrimac*. This was the first ironclad naval ship in American waters, and its battle with the Northern *Monitor* changed naval history. The Navy also formed a land brigade for the defence of Richmond in 1864–65, which surrendered with the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox on 9 April 1865.

### **Officers' Uniforms**

The first Confederate Navy officers' uniforms appear, from photographs of officers of the CSS *Sumter*, to have been dark blue like those of their US Navy counterparts, save for cuff rank insignia. The insignia were made up of gold stripes, one for a lieutenant and two for a commander. The

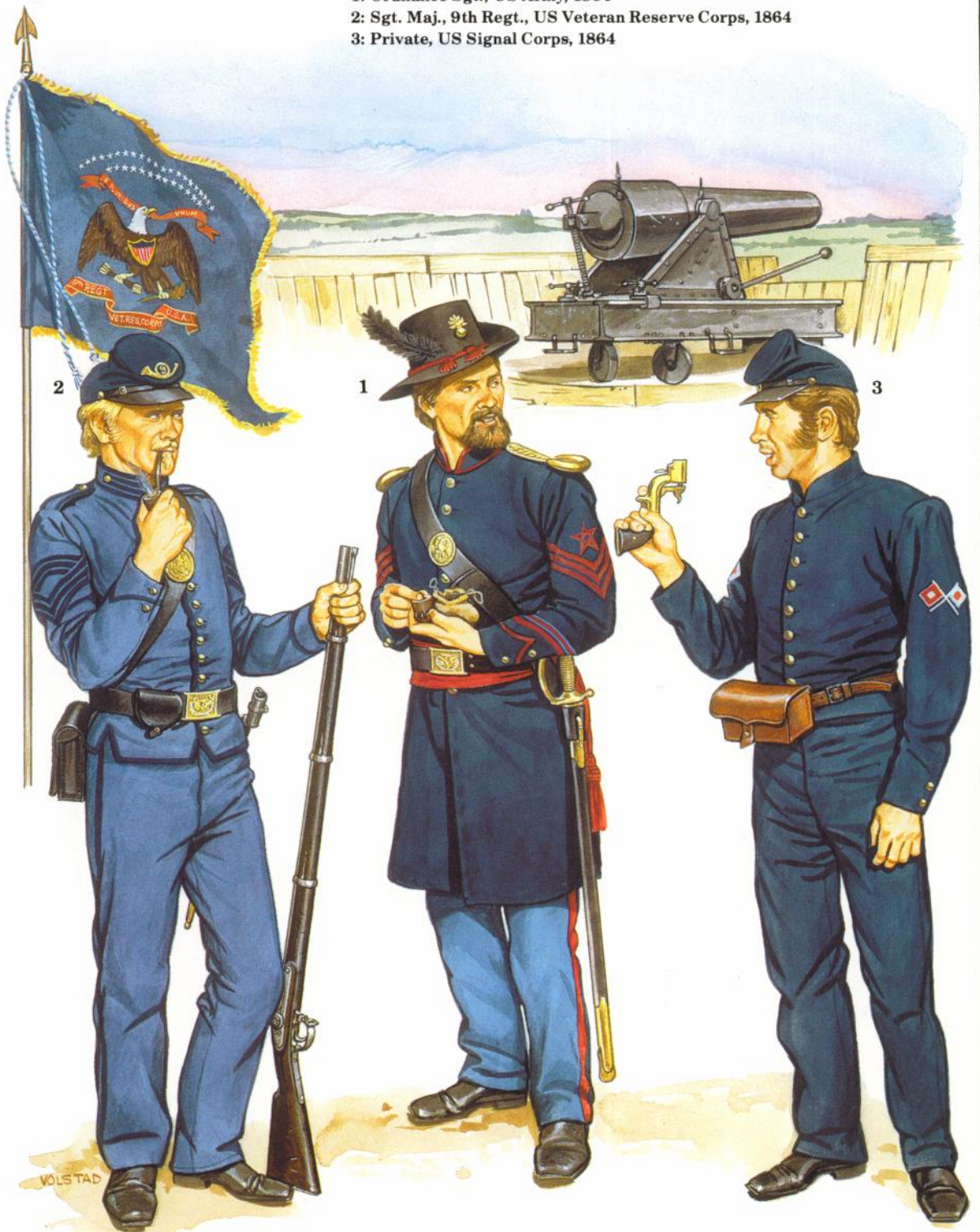
- 1: Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, 1864  
2: Maj. Gen. George G. Meade, 1864  
3: Major, US Topographical Engineers, 1864



- 1: Asst. Surgeon, 3rd Div., US XVIII Corps, 1863  
2: Hospital Steward, US Army, 1863  
3: Ambulance Corpsman, US XVIII Corps, 1863



- 1: Ordnance Sgt., US Army, 1864  
2: Sgt. Maj., 9th Regt., US Veteran Reserve Corps, 1864  
3: Private, US Signal Corps, 1864



- 1: Gen. Robert E. Lee, 1863  
2: Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill, 1863  
3: Surgeon, CSA, 1863



- 1: Lt. Col., 1st Engineers, CSA, 1864  
2: Sgt., 1st Engineers, CSA, 1864  
3: Lieutenant, CS Navy, 1864



- 1: Seaman, CS Navy, 1865  
2: 2nd Lt., CS Marine Corps, 1865  
3: Sgt., CS Marine Corps, 1865





lieutenant's stripe had an 'executive' loop, while the commander's top stripe looped up and the bottom stripe looped downwards. Epaulettes, apparently of US Navy type, were also worn for general musters. Caps were also US Navy types.

In 1862, after the return of the *Sumter*, the Navy issued dress regulations. Since indigo, used for dyeing cloth blue, was no longer available in the South, the overall naval colour was ordered to be steel grey. Caps were to be between 4 ins. and 3½ ins. tall, with a patent leather peak and a gold band. Cap badges were, for executive officers, a fouled anchor within a wreath. Stars over the anchor indicated rank; four for a flag officer, down to one for a lieutenant. The master had no stars, while a passed midshipman wore only a wreath. Plain wreaths were also worn by assistant surgeons and paymasters. Engineers wore an Old English letter 'E' within the wreath, under stars indicating their relative rank. On 19 June 1863 it was ordered that volunteer officers were to wear the plain gilt ¾-in. letters 'VN' on their cap fronts. Straw hats were also allowed in the summer.

**The officers of the victorious USS *Kearsage* after its fight with the CSS *Alabama*. Captain John Winslow, third from left, wears the 1852 captain's insignia and cap. The rest wear the late 1863 insignia and caps. The officer standing on the far right is a surgeon (under five years' service), while the two men on his right in the front row are masters. On the far left is a chief engineer (under five years' service). (Library of Congress)**

The steel grey frock coat was lined with black silk serge, 'double breasted, with two rows of large navy buttons on the breast, nine in each row, placed 4½ ins. apart from eye at top, and 2½ ins. at bottom. Rolling collars, skirts to be full, commencing at the top of the hip bone and descending four fifths thence towards the knee, with one button behind each hip and one near the bottom of each fold.'

Chaplains had the same coat, but with only one row of nine buttons down the front. Professors and commodores' secretaries wore single-breasted coats with eight buttons, while clerks had only six buttons in a single row.

Rank and type of service was indicated by shoulder straps. For executive officers these were sky blue, edged with black, 4 ins. long and 1¾ ins. wide, bordered by ¼-in.-wide gold embroidery. Flag



1: Seaman, CS Navy, 1865  
2: 2nd Lt., CS Marine Corps, 1865  
3: Sgt., CS Marine Corps, 1865





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**The officers of the victorious USS *Kearsage* after its fight with the CSS *Alabama*. Captain John Winslow, third from left, wears the 1852 captain's insignia and cap. The rest wear the late 1863 insignia and caps. The officer standing on the far right is a surgeon (under five years' service), while the two men on his right in the front row are masters. On the far left is a chief engineer (under five years' service). (Library of Congress)**

The steel grey frock coat was lined with black silk serge, 'double breasted, with two rows of large navy buttons on the breast, nine in each row, placed 4½ ins. apart from eye at top, and 2½ ins. at bottom. Rolling collars, skirts to be full, commencing at the top of the hip bone and descending four fifths thence towards the knee, with one button behind each hip and one near the bottom of each fold.'

Chaplains had the same coat, but with only one row of nine buttons down the front. Professors and commodores' secretaries wore single-breasted coats with eight buttons, while clerks had only six buttons in a single row.

Rank and type of service was indicated by shoulder straps. For executive officers these were sky blue, edged with black, 4 ins. long and 1¾ ins. wide, bordered by ¼-in.-wide gold embroidery. Flag

officers had four stars in their straps; captains, three; commanders, two; lieutenants, one; and masters, none. Passed midshipmen wore a 4-in.-long, ½-in.-wide, gold lace stripe on each shoulder. Civil officers had straps in colours according to their branch—black for medical officers, green for paymasters, and dark blue for engineers. Officers with over 12 years of service wore two crossed olive sprigs on their straps; one sprig was worn by those with less than 12

**This lieutenant wears the insignia worn by US Navy officers from the beginning of the war until 1862, with the addition of a star indicating his position of executive officer of a commissioned ship. He also wears the rare 'boat cape', sometimes worn in place of the overcoat. He was executive officer of the USS *Hunchback*, which served at Roanoke Island, North Carolina, in February 1862 and thereafter in Virginian waters. The *Hunchback* took part in the six-hour-long fight at the Blackwater River in October 1862, and fought the CSS *Virginia* and CSS *Richmond* in January 1865. (Author's collection)**



years. A passed assistant surgeon wore one olive leaf at each end of his straps.

Rank was also indicated by cuff stripes. These were gold, ½ in. wide, separated by a space ⅜ in. wide. A gold lace stripe also ran up from the cuff edge, along the rear cuff opening, to the bottom stripe. Executive officers had a 3-in. loop on their top stripe, while civil officers had all their stripes parallel with the cuff edge.

Flag officers wore four stripes (one admiral wore five); captains and civil officers of that relative rank wore three; commanders, two; and lieutenants, one. Masters and civil officers of that relative rank wore a ¼-in.-wide stripe. Passed midshipmen wore three medium-sized Navy buttons parallel to the cuff edge, while midshipmen wore the same buttons but no shoulder straps. Chaplains, professors, secretaries, and clerks had plain cuffs.

'In summer or in tropical climates, officers may wear frock coats and pantaloons of steel gray summer cloth . . . with medium size navy buttons.'

'Jackets may be worn as a service dress for all officers when at sea, except when at general muster. To be of steel gray cloth or white drill linen with the same, double breasted, rolling collar, same number of small sized buttons on breast as for undress coat, open fly sleeve with four small buttons in the opening, with shoulder straps for appropriate grades.'

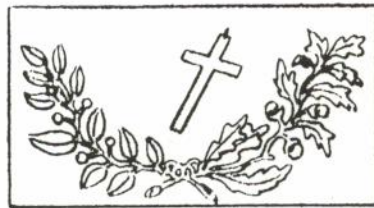
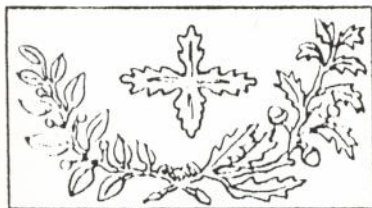
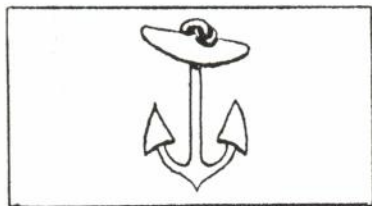
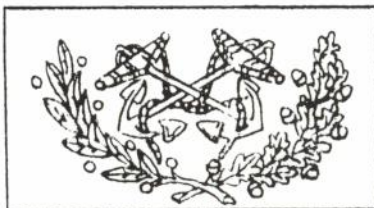
An order issued by Adml. Franklin Buchanan in Alabama noted: 'In consequence of the hot weather from June 1 to October 1, officers attached to the Mobile Squadron may wear their gray flannel frocks or sack coats with navy buttons, gray pantaloons, and vests.'

Vests, or waistcoats, were to be steel grey or white, 'single breasted, standing collar, with nine small buttons in front, and not to show below the coat.' Trousers were of the same colours, 'made loose to spread well over the foot and to be worn over boots or shoes.' Overcoats were also steel grey, 'double breasted, rolling collar, skirts to descend three inches below the knee, the same number of navy buttons, and similarly arranged as the undress coat. No buttons to be worn on the cuffs or pocket flaps. Officers entitled to wear shoulder straps will wear the same on their overcoats as directed for undress coats. Gray cloth cloaks may be worn in boats.'

### Relative Rank in the Confederate Navy

Line Officers	Medical Officers	Paymasters	Engineers
Flag Officer (Rear Admiral, Commodore)	—	—	—
Captain	—	—	—
Commander	Surgeon over 12 years*	Paymaster over 12 years*	Chief Engineer over 12 years*
Lieutenant	Surgeon under 12 years	Paymaster under 12 years	Chief Engineer under 12 years
Master	Passed Assistant Surgeon	—	1st Assistant Engineer
Passed Midshipman	Assistant Surgeon	Assistant Paymaster	2nd, 3rd Assistant Engineers
Midshipman	—	—	—

\*No Confederate Navy officers, obviously, could have held their Confederate Naval ranks for over 12 years.



US Navy officers' cap badges. *Top row, from left, the 1852 insignia of captain, commander, and lieutenant; second row, warrant officer, ensign-lieutenant (1862-63), and line officer (1863-65);*

*third row, 1863-65 insignia of engineering officer, paymaster, and surgeon (1862-63); bottom row, surgeon (1863-65), naval constructor, and chaplain. (Rebecca Katcher)*

The regulation buttons had a full-rigged ship above the letters 'CSN' within a rope border and 13 stars. A limited number of these buttons were made

in Richmond. A more common type of button was made by Firmin & Son in London: these bore a foul anchor, upright, over a pair of crossed cannon,



Seamen of the USS *Unadilla* wear the regulation sailors' dress. The sailor seated centre displays the eagle and fouled anchor badge of a petty officer, as does the man standing at top left. The *Unadilla* was part of the fleet that took Beaufort, South Carolina in November 1861, and then spent the rest of the war on blockade duty. (US Army Military History Institute)

above the letters 'CSN' within a rope border. Many officers, including Adml. Buchanan, wore their state buttons, however.

Two-piece beltplates were also made in England and bore the same design as the Firmin-made button after April 1863. Another, earlier type of British-made two-piece beltplate simply had the letters 'CN' on the male part of the plate.

Many officers were not happy with grey coats and hats, as one of them wrote, 'contemptuously demanding to know, "Who ever had seen a gray sailor, no matter what nationality he served?"' And, indeed, blue uniforms survived throughout the period. Lt. George Gift, CSS *Gaines*, wrote in September 1863 that he looked elegant in his 'dark blue flannel suit.' Most, however, wore regulation dress.

### Warrant Officers' Uniforms

According to regulations, uniforms, 'For a Boatswain, Gunner, Carpenter and Sailmaker, shall be of steel gray cloth, lined with the same; rolling collar, double breasted, two rows of large navy buttons on the breast, eight in each row; pointed pocket flaps, with three large buttons underneath each, showing one-half their diameter; three medium size buttons around each cuff, and two small ones in each opening; one button behind on each hip; one in the middle of each fold, and one in each fold near the bottom of the skirt. On each side of the collar to have one loop of three-quarters wide gold lace, to show one inch and a half wide, and four inches long, with a small size navy button in the point of each loop.'

### Petty Officers' and Ratings' Uniforms

An Englishman, Francis W. Dawson, shipped out as a landsman on the CSS *Nashville* when she left Southampton, England, in January 1862. He wrote that he wore 'a blue woolen shirt open at the neck, a

black silk handkerchief, with ample flowing ends, tied loosely around the neck; blue trousers, made very tight at the knee and twenty-two inches in circumference at the bottom, and on my head a flat cloth cap ornamented with long black ribbons.' He also brought a pea jacket, sea boots, and 'the necessary underclothing.'

This matches the first uniforms ordered by the Navy's purchasing agent in England, James D. Bulloch. They included blue flannel overshirts, undershirts and underdrawers, blue cloth caps, black silk handkerchiefs, cloth or cassinette pants, cloth jumpers, round jackets, duck pants, shoes, woollen socks, blankets, pea jackets, and 'Barnesley shirting frocks' for 1,000 men. Most Confederate seamen recruited or equipped outside the South wore this type of dress. Sailors on the CSS *Alabama* were described by Lt. Arthur Sinclair as wearing 'our paymaster's nobby blue-and-white uniforms.' Officers were, however, photographed in regulation grey.

Sailors in the South appear to have received by late 1863 uniforms that agreed with the 1862 regulations. They consisted of 'gray cloth jackets and trousers, or gray woolen frocks with white duck cuffs and collars, black hats, black silk handkerchiefs and shoes, or boots in cold weather. In warm weather it shall consist of white frocks and trousers, black or white hats, as the commander for the occasion directs, having proper regard for the comfort of the crew; black silk handkerchiefs and shoes. The collars and cuffs to be lined with blue cotton cloth, and stitched round with thread. Thick gray caps without visors may be worn by the crew at sea, except on holidays or at muster.

'Boatswains Mates, Gunner's Mates, Carpenter's Mates, Sailmaker's Mates, Ship's Steward and Ship's Cook, will wear embroidered in black silk on the right sleeve of their gray jackets above the elbow in front, a foul anchor of not more than three inches in length. The same device embroidered blue to be worn on the sleeves of their white frocks in summer.

'All other petty officers except officers, stewards and yeomen will wear the same device on their left sleeves.'

A similar device was an 'honorable discharge badge', consisting of a foul anchor  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ins. long, embroidered above the elbow on the left sleeve in blue or white. A  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in.-long star above this was



**The sleeve badge of a US Navy petty officer. This was taken from a printed sample issued for each petty officer to use to embroider his badge on his uniforms. (Author's collection)**

awarded for every additional discharge.

The Navy made its own canvas shoes for seamen in a plant in Mobile, Alabama. Buttons for pea jackets were made in Britain from a black composition material. These had the design of a foul anchor, upright, over a pair of crossed cannon above the letters 'CSN' within a rope border; they also had four holes through the centre for sewing to the jacket. These buttons were first ordered in about April 1863.

#### *Naval Accoutrements and Weapons*

The belt for seamen, according to the 1864 *Confederate States Navy Ordnance Instructions*, was 'to be made of buff leather, 2 inches wide, and from forty to forty-four inches long; a standing loop and eyelet-holes at one end and a brass hook riveted to the other.' An original surviving belt is similar to this, but is made of heavy canvas.

English-made pouches for gunners' fuses and implements were stamped with the foul anchor and crossed cannon design found on officers' buttons. Naval ordnance instructions call for the letters 'CSN' to be stamped on musket cartridge box flaps.



1st Lt. Robert Meade wears the double-breasted dark blue frock coat, made without trim, which was the typical undress US Marine Corps officer's dress. He wears his rank insignia—the same as Army officer's insignia—on gold Russian knots on each shoulder. His trousers are sky blue with a red stripe down each leg. His forage cap bears the bugle horn with the Old English 'M' within its loop. (Author's collection)

Otherwise, accoutrements were similar to those of the US Navy.

In May 1861 Bulloch was ordered to buy 1,000 'navy carbines,' with ammunition and equipment. These were apparently the British P1858 Naval Rifle. It is believed that Bulloch acquired Enfield-type carbines with 24-in. barrels. He also bought for

the Navy British-made 0.54 cal., breechloading rifles made to a design patented by T. Wilson.

At the same time, Bulloch was to purchase 1,000 'navy revolvers', and he bought Kerr pattern revolvers for the Navy. The Navy also ordered 2,000 French-made Le Mat revolvers on 7 April 1864. (Three Le Mat revolvers were captured on the CSS *Atlanta*.) Designed by a Southerner from New Orleans who had moved to France, this weapon was a novelty in that it had a cylinder holding nine 0.42 cal. pistol rounds which revolved around a 20 gauge smoothbore 'shotgun' barrel. Such a weapon could be useful for shipboard fighting; however, Confederate Navy inspectors said that their quality was generally poor.

Seamen carried cutlasses when required. Southern-made cutlasses were copies of the US Model 1841 and Model 1860 types (mostly the M1841), while the Navy also imported a number of Royal Navy-type cutlasses. Officers' swords were often imported from Britain, too. Firmin's were the largest supplier; their sword was like the Royal Navy officer's pattern with the foul anchor and crossed cannon cast into the hilt.

## *The Confederate States Marine Corps*

On 16 March 1861 a Marine Corps was authorised, to consist of a major, a quartermaster, a paymaster, an adjutant, a sergeant major, a quartermaster sergeant, and six companies each with a captain, a first lieutenant, a second lieutenant, four sergeants, four corporals, 100 privates, and ten musicians. A total of 1,600 officers and men served in the Corps, no more than 600 at a time. The Corps fought in all the Navy's sea battles, as well as in the naval brigade around Richmond.

### **Officers' Uniforms**

There are no known published Confederate Marine Corps dress regulations. However, enough photographic and written evidence remains to give a reasonable picture of this small unit.

Officers wore caps like French *képis*. 1st Lt. Thomas P. Gwynn, in May 1864, referred to his

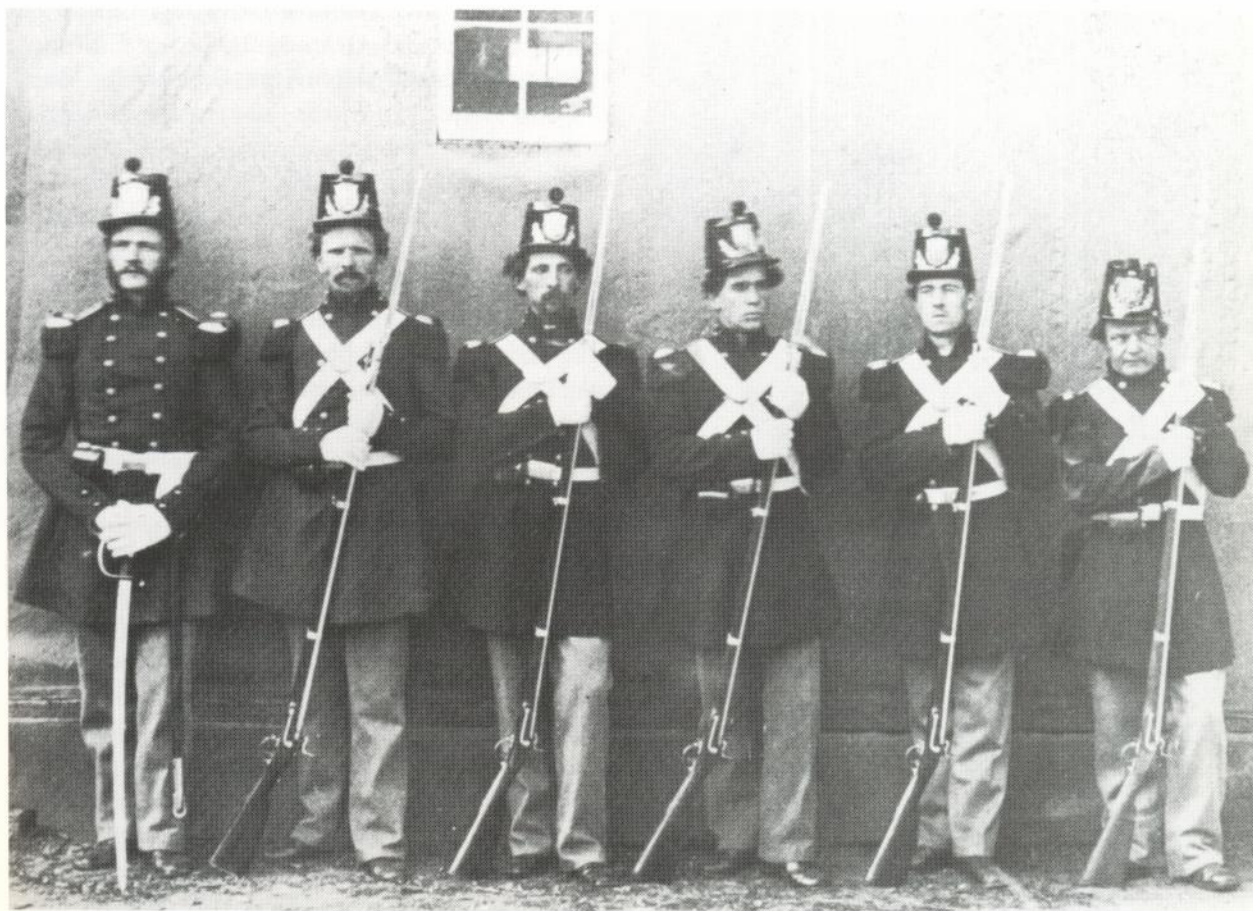
'uniform cap' as being blue, while Lt. Henry L. Graves wrote home that he had a grey cloth cap stolen. 2nd Lt. Robert Ramson was photographed in a plain dark blue *képi*, while 2nd Lt. James C. Murdoch wore a *képi* with a dark blue band and crown and grey sides. Peaks and chinstraps were black leather.

Coats appear to have been universally grey frock coats with two rows of seven brass buttons each. They were marked with Army officer's rank insignia: one, two, and three collar stripes for second lieutenant to captain; one, two, and three stars for major to colonel; and gold Austrian knots on each sleeve—one braid for lieutenant, two for captain, and three for field-grade officers. Many of these coats were all grey; however, a significant number had dark blue collars and pointed cuffs. A significant number also had the US Marine Corps officer's gold Russian shoulder knots.

Trousers were usually dark blue, although an original pair worn by Graves is sky blue with a black welt down each outer seam.

Blue was also worn for fatigue dress. Lt. Graves wrote home in April 1863: 'I got me a coat & pants the other day, made out of a sort of blue flannel, which is light & will do for the weather for a while yet.' Later he wanted 'some light material, jeans, or something else for a summer coat.' He also wanted his family to 'look among my old clothes and see if that pair of sailor pants are fit for wear. If so, please send them with as many more white pants as you can find, blue jackets and white pants you know are regular sailor style.' Lt. Thomas St. George Pratt wrote from Savannah that he wanted a 'dark jacket' in April 1864; and Lt. Ruffin Thomson wrote that he wore a blue flannel summer

**A squad of US Marines in full dress. The shakos have brass plates with a silver Old English 'M' in the centre, and red pompons. The coats have yellow lace on the collars and cuffs, with yellow fringe which appears black here from the shoulder scales. The collars and cuffs are also edged in red. The sergeant (left) can be seen in the original print to wear three chevrons, points up, of yellow edged in red on each sleeve above the elbow. Trousers are plain sky blue except for the sergeant's, which have a red welt down each leg. The beltplates are plain rectangular pieces of brass, but the cross belt plates are of the Army pattern. (Library of Congress)**





outfit, as well as a grey wool uniform coat in late 1864–early 1865.

Graves also wanted, in April 1863, some ‘white vests made military.’ Such vests, or waistcoats, were also worn in winter. In November 1863 he wanted ‘remnants of black cloth or casimer or indeed anything that will make a vest.’ These vests were usually made with a standing collar, three or four slash pockets, and nine small brass buttons down the front.

Graves also wanted an overcoat. He sent home 18 buttons for this coat, and told his mother to cut it ‘a little longer than Pa’s coat (that black sack-looking overcoat of the raglan style is the one I mean) but I wish them cut exactly in every other respect. I

**This Revenue Marine second assistant engineer, photographed in Baltimore, holds the officer’s cap with the engineer’s badge of a wheel within a wreath. His gold cuff lace and shoulder straps conform with the August 1864 uniform regulations. Deck officers wore a gold shield over the top line of cuff lace. (Author’s collection)**



believe I told you about the cape; make it to meet in front, under the throat to be held up by buttons under the collar of the coat. Please make button and eyelet holes to the number of six at regular intervals down the front of the cape so that it can be buttoned up and worn at times by itself; I have buttons for the cape.’

Marine buttons, which were made in England, were brass, plain, bearing the Roman letter ‘M’ on the face. Examples of this button have been found at Fort Fisher, where a number of Marines were stationed. There was, however, no unique Marine Corps beltplate design.

### Enlisted Uniforms

The Navy’s purchasing agent in England, James Bulloch, was told in May 1861 to buy 1,000 fatigue caps for the Marines. These appear to have been dark blue wool French-type *képis* with black peaks and chinstraps and brass side buttons.

Bulloch was also told to buy 2,000 jackets, the regulations indicating that each enlisted Marine was to receive two uniform coats and four fatigue jackets during his enlistment. ‘Marine cloth,’ the Secretary of the Navy wrote Bulloch in March 1863, ‘is gray.’

Both coats and jackets appear to have been worn—Marines were described in 1864 near Richmond in jackets; however, the longer frock coat appears to have been more common. A corporal who deserted from the Marines in Savannah in June 1863 was described as being ‘dressed in a grey coat trimmed with black.’ From quartermaster vouchers it appears that this black trim, probably used to pipe the collar and the cuffs, was common; it was made of linen flax or, for senior non-commissioned officers, silk. From other quartermaster reports it appears that the cloth was ‘blue grey’ in colour, and each coat had a single row of seven brass buttons, each bearing the Roman letter ‘M’ on its face. A drawing of Marines near Richmond shows the frock coat reaching to just above the knee.

Grade was indicated by black chevrons, worn points up. Two chevrons indicated a corporal; three, a sergeant; three with a diamond, a first sergeant; three and ties, a quartermaster sergeant; and three and arcs, a sergeant major.

Trousers were dark blue wool for winter and white cotton for summer. Capt. J. E. Meiere wrote

to the Corps Quartermaster on 9 June 1863 that he could obtain in Mobile, Alabama, 'about eighty or ninety yards of Blue Cloth such as the Marines' Pantaloons are made of . . . from the Naval storehouse.'

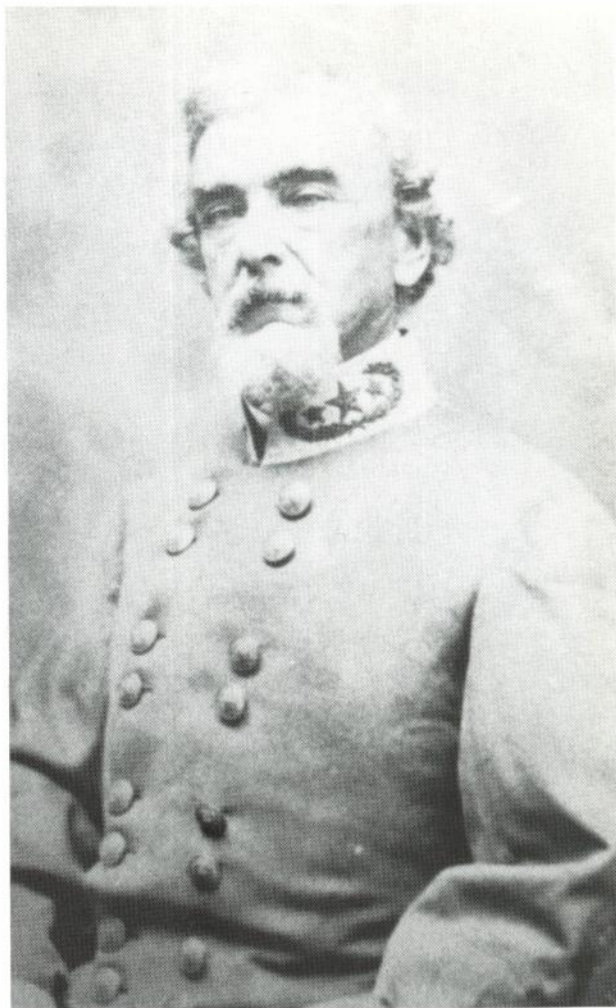
Both grey and blue flannel shirts were also worn as outer garments from time to time in hot climates. White cotton shirts were also worn, usually under the coats. Bulloch was told to buy 2,000 flannel and 1,000 linen and cotton shirts for the Corps. Black leather stocks were to be worn over the white shirt collar and under the frock coat. A hundred of these were issued to a company in Florida in October 1861, but they were quickly stored, and apparently not issued in the Corps thereafter. Drilling or canton flannel drawers, like those provided in the Army, were issued, along with 'infantry bootees' and woollen socks.

#### *Marine Accoutrements and Weapons*

Bulloch ordered 1,000 black leather waistbelts, probably made with two-piece brass 'snake buckles' like those used by British riflemen. Bulloch also acquired British-made cap boxes, cartridge boxes, bayonet scabbards and knapsacks 'such as used in the British service, with straps to connect with the waist belt.' Southern-made haversacks and water-bottles were also issued as needed.

The Navy Department allocated 1,000 Pattern 1853 British Enfield-type rifled muskets to the Corps in early 1862. A Marine recruiting advertisement published in February 1863 says that the Corps was armed with 'Enfield Rifles, with Sword Bayonets.' However, the Corps also used whatever other weapons were available. Marines in Mobile in March 1863 had 'very worthless Old Flint Lock Muskets altered. A very few will snap a cap—some with Bayonet—& some without.' Later they received 0.54 cal. Austrian Lorenz rifled muskets. Marines who surrendered at Appomattox in April 1865 were armed with 0.58 cal. captured US Army rifled muskets, or copies of those weapons made in Richmond or Fayetteville, North Carolina. These were the types of weapons captured on the CSS *Tennessee* in August 1864.

Bulloch was also told in September 1861 to buy 20 swords with shoulder belts for Marine non-commissioned officers. Officers carried Army or Navy officers' swords.



**Maj. Gen. Benjamin Huger wears the regulation Confederate general officer's dress. A failure as a field commander, Huger was named Inspector of Artillery and Ordnance on 12 July 1862, and served valuably in this rôle throughout the rest of the war. (Author's collection)**

## *The Plates*

*A1: Lieutenant-General Ulysses S. Grant, 1864*

U. S. Grant was possibly the best all-around soldier the US Army has ever produced. He had an unerring grasp of what was needed to defeat the enemy, and an ability to do it with the men given him. His strategic abilities were somewhat better than his tactical abilities, but both were head and shoulders above his compatriots in either army. He was not, however, a dressy individual: his first campaigning service was under the successful but badly dressed Maj. Gen. Zachary Taylor in Mexico



**Maj.Gen. William Mahone, hero of the battle of the Crater, wears a short pleated jacket with a lay-down collar. Coats—both jacket and full-length—with pleated fronts were popular with Confederate generals. Jackets, with both pleated and normal fronts, were also very popular among generals, because of their comfort when mounted. The star badge on his hat was not authorised. (National Archives)**

in 1846, and he saw then that clothes do not make the soldier!

Grant was described by one of his staff officers, Horace Porter, in what he wore during the Wilderness Campaign: 'General Grant was dressed in a uniform coat and waistcoat, the coat being unbuttoned. On his hands were a pair of yellowish-brown thread gloves. He wore a pair of plain top-boots, reaching to his knees, and was equipped with a regulation sword, spurs, and sash. On his head was a slouch hat of black felt with a plain gold cord around it.' This is essentially the costume illustrated here, minus the boots and sword, which he does not wear in any photographs taken at this period.

By the time the Army reached Petersburg, according to Porter, Grant's dress became plainer:

'The general's blouse, like the others, was of plain material, single-breasted, and had four regulation buttons in front. It was substantially the coat of a private soldier, with nothing to indicate the rank of an officer except the three gold stars of a lieutenant-general on the shoulder-straps. He wore at this time a turn-down white linen collar and a small, black "butterfly" cravat, which was hooked on to the front collar button.'

Behind Grant floats the headquarters flag of the Army of the Potomac, adopted by its commander, Maj.Gen. George G. Meade, in 1864. The earlier style had been a simple US national flag. When Grant saw this showy design in 'solferino' purple for the first time during the Wilderness Campaign, he exclaimed: 'What's this? Is Imperial Caesar anywhere about here?'

*A2: Major-General George G. Meade, 1864*

Meade was photographed during the 1864 campaigns in a broad-brimmed hat and a double-breasted version of the sack coat. This was typical of the informal wear of general officers in the field.

*A3: Major, US Topographical Engineers, 1864*

Mounted staff officers often wore waist-length jackets, single-breasted for company grade officers and double-breasted for field grade officers. He wears the St. Andrew's Cross badge of the VI Corps on his coat front. His sword is the staff officer's pattern, heavier than the foot officer's sword, although similar in design.

*B1: Assistant Surgeon, 3rd Division, US XVIII Corps, 1863*

The corps badge on top of this assistant surgeon's cap identifies his corps by its shape and his division by its colour—blue for the third division<sup>1</sup>. He wears the Old English letters 'MS' on his shoulder straps—against regulations, but commonly seen. (His straps should have borne nothing but his rank bars.) His green sash and the all-metal sword peculiar to this branch further indicate his medical status. Behind him is a 'rocker' ambulance, which could carry four wounded men with water casks, cans of beef stock, bread, cooking and mess gear, and bed sacks.

<sup>1</sup>See full details, MAA 177, *American Civil War Armies (2): Union Artillery, Cavalry and Infantry*

*B2: Hospital Steward, US Army, 1863*

This hospital steward has one of the medical knapsacks issued after 1862: one of the steward's jobs was to carry it in the field, so that the surgeon could have medical supplies immediately to hand. Behind him floats the yellow and green flag that indicated a hospital: smaller yellow flags marked the way to the hospital.

*B3: Ambulance Corpsman, US XVIII Corps, 1863*

The XVIII Corps was unique in having its ambulance corpsmen marked with red half-chevrons and cap badges instead of the standard green medical corps colour used in the Armies of the Potomac and the Cumberland.

*C1: Ordnance Sergeant, US Army, 1864*

This ordnance sergeant wears the foot soldier's full dress uniform. The two half-chevrons on each forearm indicate ten years' service, with the blue edging indicating service in war. Only true ordnance sergeants could wear the star-above-three-chevrons insignia in the US Army, and these chevrons were always supposed to be red. He is armed with the M1840 non-commissioned officer's sword. He is standing inside Fort Stevens, one of the defences of Washington, where President Abraham Lincoln came under fire during the Confederate raid on the city in early 1864.

*C2: Sergeant Major, 9th Regiment, US Veteran Reserve Corps, 1864*

The 9th Regt. Veteran Reserve Corps was one of the defending units at Fort Stevens. It made several charges there, driving back Confederate skirmishers and holding up their advance until regular troops from Petersburg could arrive to save the city. The 9th, from photographs, had the tops of their forage caps marked with company letters, regimental numbers, and infantry horns; most VRC units had plain forage caps. The regimental colour of the 9th is displayed here, similar in design to the regulation US Army infantry regimental colour.

*C3: Private, US Signal Corps, 1864*

This Signal Corps private holds a US Army signal pistol, used to send messages at night. He has around his waist the special cartridge box designed to hold the signal cartridges. Signals at night were

also passed with torches that burned turpentine, and during the day with flags.

*D1: First Sergeant, 50th New York Engineers, 1863*

Engineers were proud of their special qualifications, and showed off whenever possible the Corps' castle cap badge. This first sergeant's corps is marked, too, by the yellow stripe down each leg and his yellow chevrons. The colour behind him was flown over the headquarters of the Chief of Engineers of the Army of the Potomac.

*D2: Sergeant, 1st US Sharpshooters, 1863*

This typical Sharpshooter in the field is taken from photographs and original items of two sergeants. The buttons on an otherwise issue blouse are black thermoplastic or gutta percha, while the green chevrons and the stripes down the leg indicate the

**Three Confederate surgeons and their servant (upper right). The man seated left wears the single-breasted sack coat so popular among staff officers; the other two wear regulation double-breasted frock coats. Their trousers are plain grey, rather than the regulation blue with stripes down the legs. The two in front hold plain black broad-brimmed hats. (US Army Military History Institute)**



unit. The green cap, with its 1st Division, III Corps badge, was worn by a sergeant in Company H, 1st Sharpshooters; he also wore the chevrons with the corps badge. He has retained the Prussian Army knapsack issued to both Sharpshooter regiments.

*D3: Second Lieutenant, US Marine Corps, 1863*

The short jacket was popular for field wear among Marine officers. His cap is decorated up the sides and on the top with dark braid, and has the officer's Marine Corps badge in front. His dress knots are plain, and his sword is the Corps' version of the Army officer's pattern.

*E1: Corporal, US Marine Corps, 1865*

The frock coat was the typical enlisted Marine's fatigue dress. White cross belts and waistbelts were worn for all types of service. He is armed with the Army's latest issue rifle musket. He stands on the

**Commodore French Forrest, head of the Bureau of Orders and Detail of the Confederate Navy, wears regulation dress. His cap peak appears to be edged in yellow metal, after the Royal Navy fashion for high-ranking officers. His sabre is the regulation model made by Firmin of London. (US Army Military History Institute)**



beach in front of Fort Fisher, successfully stormed on 15 January 1865 by a detachment of 1,600 sailors and 400 Marines as well as some Army regiments. It was the last port of the Confederacy to fall; with its loss the supply line to Europe disappeared and the South was doomed.

*E2: Lieutenant-Commander, US Navy, 1865*

The sailors and Marines who attacked Fort Fisher were split into three divisions, each led by a lieutenant-commander. These wore standard Navy officer's dress, with rank insignia on the cuffs and shoulder straps of the patterns made official in May 1863. The sword and swordknot are of patterns peculiar to the Navy. Captains and flag officers had a special interwoven blue and gold swordknot.

*E3: Quartermaster, US Navy, 1865*

The sailors who took part in the storming of Fort Fisher were described by an officer who participated in the attack as having 'never drilled together, and their arms, the old-fashioned cutlass and pistol, were hardly the weapons to cope with the rifles and bayonets of the enemy. Sailor-like, however, they looked upon the landing in the light of a lark, and few thought the sun would set with a loss of one-fifth of their number.' This petty officer carries these weapons, and the issue accoutrements for a landing or boarding party—a cap box on the right hip, a cutlass on the left, a holster on his right side, and a cartridge box on the square of his back—all worn on his waistbelt.

*F1: General Robert E. Lee, 1863*

Raised by post-war legend almost to the status of a god, Lee was an outstanding and inspiring leader. His tactical sense was usually sound, although his errors—like Gettysburg—were too often fatal. His strategic sense was apparently not as great; nor was he able to bring himself to discipline his generals as they should have been disciplined. Nevertheless, he became the very symbol of the Confederacy.

Lee's first dress was described by a private of the 1st Tennessee Infantry Regt. in West Virginia in 1861: 'He was dressed in blue cottonade . . . he had no sword or pistol, or anything to show his rank. The only thing that I remember he had was an opera-glass hung over his shoulder by a strap.' Lee described his own outfit to Mrs. W. H. F. Lee on 22

June 1862: 'My coat is of gray, of the regulation style and pattern, and my pants of dark blue, as is also prescribed, partly hid by my long boots. I have the same handsome hat which surmounts my gray head . . .' In November 1862 he requested a waistcoat 'of blue, black or grey cassimere or cloth, rolling collar & army buttons.' He mentioned wearing an old blue overcoat in February 1863, and a grey sack coat in May 1863. On 13 June 1863 he wrote home that he found his 'old blue flannel pants yielding to the wear & tear of the road. I have another blue pair in my trunk of summer cloth, which I wish you would send me. They are plain without cords on the seams.' He requested a pair of similar plain blue trousers in May 1864; and check shirts in November 1864.

In the early war years he wore a standing collar, as seen here; after 1863 he began wearing a lay-down collar. According to a veteran of the Washington Artillery, Lee 'always wore during the campaigns a gray sack coat with side pockets like the costume of a business man in the cities.' At Appomattox, however, this veteran 'noted particularly his dress. He was in full uniform, with a handsome embroidered belt and dress sword, tall hat and buff gauntlets.' Photographs generally show this uniform worn with grey trousers that matched his coat.

*F2: Lieutenant-General A. P. Hill, 1863*

A. P. Hill, original commander of the Army of Northern Virginia's Light Division, was one of Lee's better generals. He was photographed in a regulation Confederate general's uniform, complete with forage cap. All general officers, regardless of specific rank, wore this basic uniform. The horse furniture in the background was used by 'Stone-wall' Jackson.

*F3: Surgeon, Confederate States Army, 1863*

The regulation Confederate officer's dress is worn by this surgeon, with the addition of a non-regulation but common 'MS' within a wreath on the cap front. His sword is a cavalry officer's sabre made by L. Bissonnet, Mobile, Alabama—a copy of the US Model 1840 cavalry officer's sabre. There was no special sword required for Confederate medical officers.



**1st Lt. David G. Raney, Confederate States Marine Corps, was captured on the CSS *Tennessee* but escaped two months later. His grey coat appears to have dark blue collar and cuffs, and he wears US Marine Corps shoulder knots. His beltplate appears to be a US Army officer's model. (David L. Sullivan/Margaret Key)**

*G1: Lieutenant-Colonel, 1st Engineers, CS Army, 1864*

The sack coat, as worn by this officer, was typical field wear for many staff officers, and even on occasion for Gen. Lee. He wears a two-piece Virginia belt plate and a foot officer's sword. The flag behind him designated the headquarters of the Chief Engineer of the Army of Northern Virginia.



**1st Lt. Frances H. Cameron** served first with the Confederate Marine Corps' Company A, but after 1861 on the Corps staff. His coat is apparently a darker grey than usual, made with a lay-down collar like that of a Naval officer. (National Archives)

*G2: Sergeant, 1st Engineers, CSA, 1864*

Confederate engineers played a vital part in the fighting during the Appomattox Campaign, bridging rivers in front of the army, burning down bridges behind them, and fighting off the advancing troops as they moved on. The white tape this sergeant has used for chevrons is an alternative to the regulation buff required for staff officers. In keeping with the dual mission of the engineers, he has both an Enfield rifled musket and a shovel.

*G3: Lieutenant, CS Navy, 1864*

This lieutenant, taken from a photograph of Lt. Arthur Sinclair, wears regulation Confederate Navy dress. His sword is a regulation weapon made by the London firm of Firmin & Sons.

*H1: Seaman, CS Navy, 1865*

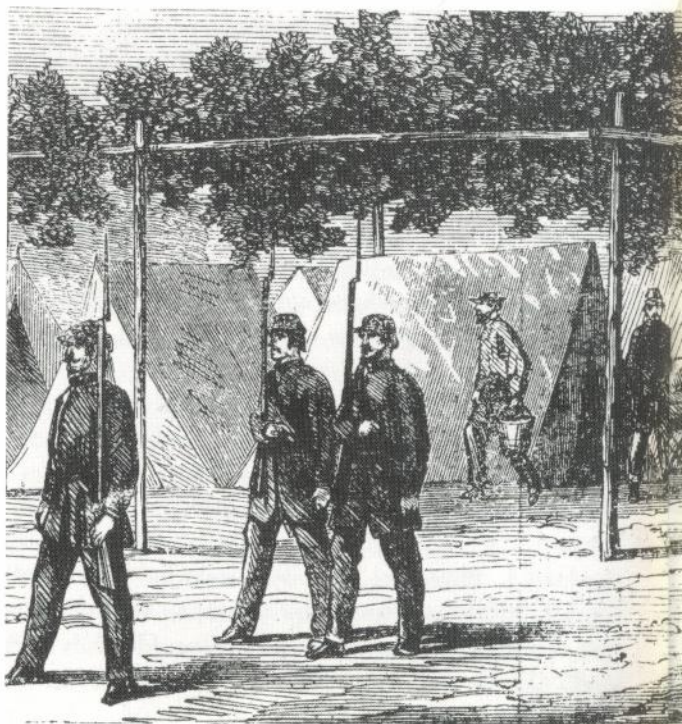
This seaman, serving with the defending forces at Drewry's Bluff, outside Richmond, carries the British-made equipment issued to the Confederate Navy. His cutlass was made by R. Mole in England and was imported by Courtney & Tennant, Charleston, South Carolina: it is a copy of a Royal Navy cutlass. He also carries a British naval-pattern rifle.

*H2: Second Lieutenant, CS Marine Corps, 1865*

Dark blue facings distinguished the Confederate Marines from Army officers: otherwise, this lieutenant could pass for an infantry officer. His sword is a Southern-made copy of the US Army foot officer's sword. He wears a rare Confederate Navy beltplate, made in England. His handgun is the Le Mat revolver, a number of which were bought for the Navy.

*H3: Sergeant, CS Marine Corps, 1865*

This sergeant wears the typical dress uniform of the Confederate Marines, with British-made leather accoutrements and a Southern-made haversack and tin waterbottle. His weapon is an 1853 pattern Enfield. Marines serving in the defences of Drewry's Bluff were also noted wearing waist-length jackets.

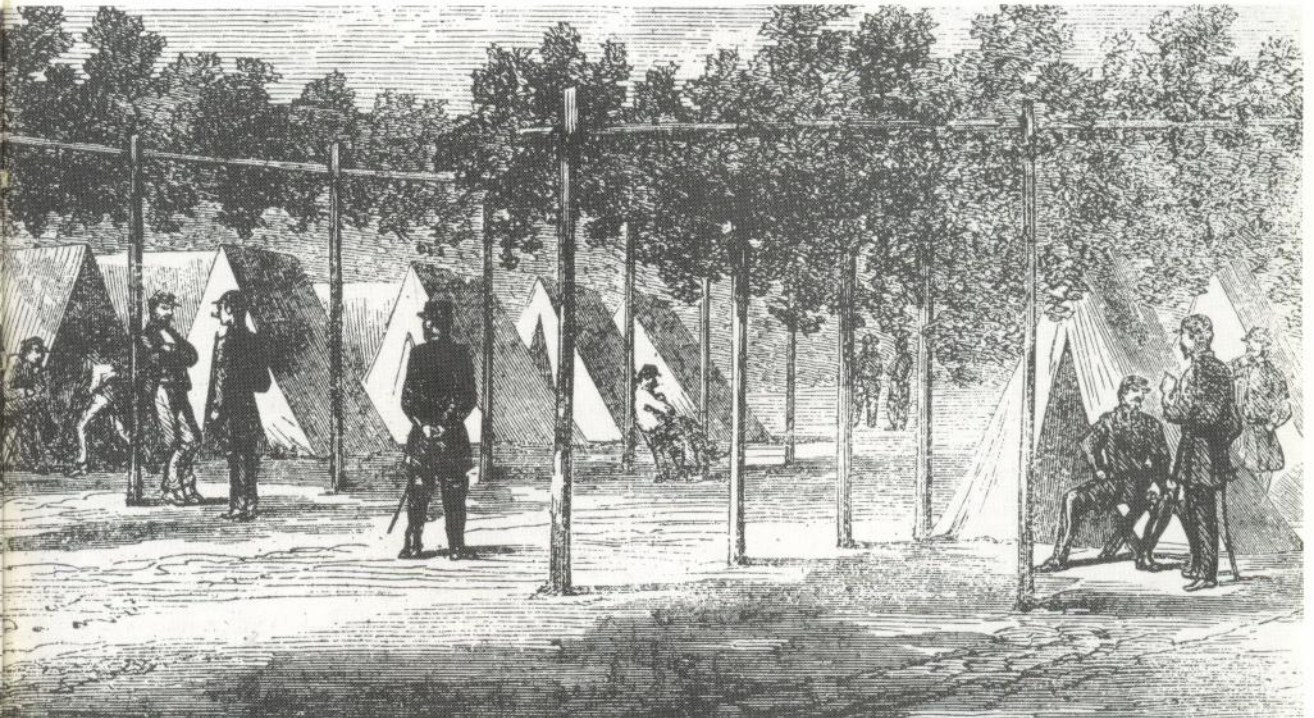
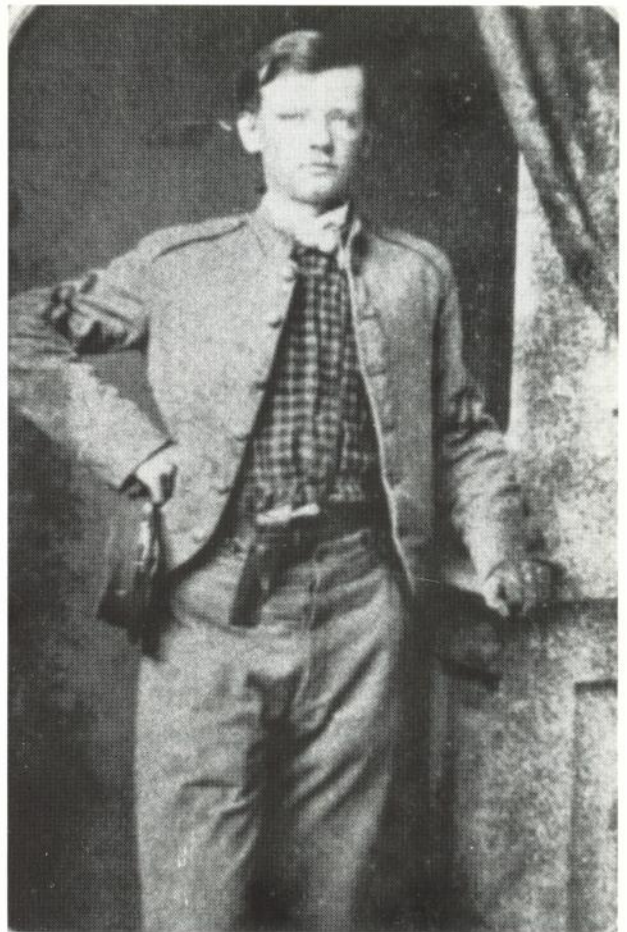


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This corporal's organisation is not known for sure. However, the dark blue forage cap, short jacket, and two black chevrons pointing upwards suggest that he is an enlisted man in the Confederate Marine Corps. (George M. Cress collection)

A view of the Confederate Marine camp at Drewry's Bluff in 1862, as seen by the *Illustrated London News's* Frank Vizetelly. Note the frock coats, with one row of buttons, and the three chevrons on the sergeant marching off the extreme left of the picture. (David L. Sullivan)





## Notes sur les planches en couleur

**A1** Les uniformes Grant étaient toujours très sobres; cette peinture s'appuie sur des photos et sur un témoignage visuel qu'il fit lui-même de sa tenue durant la Peninsular Campaign. Au second plan, le drapeau des quartiers généraux, US Army of the Potomac, adopté par le général Meade en 1864. **A2** L'habit de Meade est caractéristique de la simplicité des uniformes adoptés par les généraux. Il existait de nombreux modèles de vestes légèrement différents les uns des autres.

**A3** Les officiers d'état-major à cheval portaient souvent de longues vestes, à simple rangée de boutons pour les grades inférieurs à celui de major, et à deux rangées au-dessus. A noter l'insigne VI Corps sur le devant du manteau.

**B1** A noter l'insigne Corps sur le képi, le bleu désignant la 3rd Division du Corps. Les lettres 'MS' sur les épaulettes étaient fréquentes parmi les membres du service médical, mais non réglementaire. L'écharpe verte indique également un médecin. **B2** Le sac à dos spécial du service médical comportait des tiroirs et des compartiments pour les médicaments et les instruments, et il était utilisé par le chirurgien sur le champ de bataille. **B3** La plupart des membres du personnel médical et ambulancier portaient des insignes verts; le XVIII Corps n'utilisait généralement pas la couleur rouge.

**C1** Uniforme complet de fantassin; à noter l'insigne en forme d'étoile placée au-dessus des chevrons et que porte un sergent d'ordonnance, et les deux diagonales sur chaque avant-bras, qui indiquent dix ans de service. Dans les autres secteurs de service, les diagonales brunes étaient bordées de rouge pour indiquer la participation à la guerre; dans l'ordonnance, dont la couleur était le rouge, les diagonales étaient bordées de bleu pâle. **C2** Cette unité défendit Fort Stevens contre les attaques des Confédérés. A noter la lettre de la compagnie, le numéro de régiment et l'insigne du clairon d'infanterie sur le képi; la plupart des unités Veteran Reserve portaient des képis unis. **C3** Il tient un pistolet de signal et porte à la taille un récipient spécial contenant des cartouches de signal.

**D1** Les ingénieurs portaient des marques de distinction jaunes et montraient en toute occasion le signe 'castle' de leur branche de service d'élite. **D2** Peint à partir de photos et de deux uniformes existants: à noter la veste réglementaire avec des boutons noirs, le képi vert avec l'insigne 1st Div., III Corps, les chevrons à bord vert avec l'insigne Corps, et les bandes vertes du pantalon. Le sac à dos est d'origine prussienne. **D3** Les officiers de marine aimaient la veste courte lors des opérations sur le terrain. Remarquer les détails du képi, orné de galons noirs, et l'insigne USMC.

**E1** La redingote et l'équipement blanc étaient caractéristiques de l'habit de campagne de la marine, ainsi que des parades. **E2** Les capitaines de corvette de la US Navy conduisaient les trois colonnes de soldats, de marines et de marins qui s'emparèrent de Fort Fisher en janvier 1865. Cet officier porte l'uniforme réglementaire, avec les marques de distinction de mai 1863 sur les manchettes et les épaules. **E3** A noter le pistolet, le coutelas, l'étui de cartouches et l'étui de capsules fulminantes, tous portés à la ceinture.

**F1** Nombreuses variantes d'uniformes pour Lee; ce type de manteau, avec col relevé, était fréquent jusqu'en 1863, mais après cette date, le général préféra un manteau avec col rabattu. **F2** Hill porte ici l'uniforme réglementaire des officiers généraux confédérés, assorti du képi; rien ne permettait de distinguer les différents grades de général. **F3** Excepté l'insigne officiel MS sur le képi, il s'agit là de l'uniforme réglementaire de chirurgien. Le sabre est un sabre de cavalerie; le service médical n'avait pas un type spécial de sabre.

**G1** Simple veste-sac, tenue de campagne typique des officiers d'état-major. A noter la boucle de ceinture virginienne. **G2** La bande blanche remplaçait parfois les marques de distinction en cuir réglementaires de cette branche de service. Les ingénieurs CSA jouaient un rôle important durant les combats de la campagne Appomattox, portant à la fois des armes et des outils. **G3** A partir d'une photo du lieutenant Arthur Sinclair, portant la tenue réglementaire de la marine confédérée.

**H1** Ses armes et son équipement sont de fabrication britannique. **H2** Les officiers de marine se reconnaissent à des revers bleu foncé. Mis à part la boucle de ceinture, on ne peut le différencier d'un officier d'infanterie. A noter le revolver Le Mat. **H3** Uniforme typique, complété d'un havresac et d'un bidon, et avec un équipement et des armes de fabrication britannique.

## Farbtafeln

**A1** Grants Uniformen waren immer sehr einfach gehalten; dieses Gemälde basiert auf Photos und einem Augenzeugenbericht über seine Bekleidung während der Peninsular Campaign. Im Hintergrund die Flagge des Hauptquartiers der US Army of the Potomac, 1864 von General Meade übernommen. **A2** Meades Bekleidung ist typisch für die formlosen Uniformen der Generale. Es gab viele verschiedene Modelle für die einfachen Jacken. **A3** Berittene Stabsoffiziere trugen oft Hüftjacken, einreihig für Ränge unterhalb des Majors und zweireihig für die darüber. Man beachte das Abzeichen des VI Corps auf der Vorderseite des Mantels.

**B1** Man beachte das Corps-Abzeichen auf der Kappe, die Farbe blau identifiziert die 3rd Division des Corps. Die Buchstaben MS auf den Schulterriemen gehörten nicht zu den vorgeschriebenen Merkmalen, fanden sich aber im Medical Service sehr häufig. Die grüne Schärpe verweist auf einen Arzt. **B2** Der Spezialrucksack für medizinisches Personal hatte Schubladen und Abteile für Medikamente und Instrumente für den Chirurgen auf dem Schlachtfeld. **B3** Die meisten Angehörigen des medizinischen und Ambulanzpersonals trugen grüne Kennzeichen; das XVIII Corps verwendete ausnahmsweise die Farbe rot.

**C1** Volle Uniform für Fussvolk; man beachte das spezielle Sternabzeichen für einen Ordonnanzsergeanten über den Winkeln und die beiden Diagonalen auf den Vorderarmen (für 10 Dienstjahre). In anderen Waffengattungen hatten die Diagonalen rote Ränder für den Kriegseinsatz; bei der Ordonnanz, mit der Stammfarbe rot, waren die Ränder hellblau. **C2** Diese Einheit verteidigte Fort Stevens gegen Angriffe der Konföderierten. Man beachte die Kompaniebuchstaben, Regimentsnummer und das Infanterie-Hornabzeichen auf der Kappe; die meisten Einheiten der Veteran Reserve hatten einfache Kappen. **C3** Er hält eine Signalpistole und trägt einen speziellen Behälter für Signalpatronen an der Hüfte.

**D1** Ingenieure trugen gelbe Kennzeichen und stellten bei jeder Gelegenheit das 'castle'-Abzeichen ihrer Elitetruppe zur Schau. **D2** Nach Photos und zwei erhalten gebliebenen Uniformen gemalt: Man beachte die reguläre Jacke mit schwarzen Knöpfen, grüne Kappe mit dem Abzeichen der 1st Div., III Corps, grüne Rangwinkel mit Corps-Abzeichen und grüne Hosenstreifen. Der Rucksack ist preussischen Ursprungs. **D3** Die kurze Jacke war bei Marine-Offizieren für Feldausrüstung beliebt. Man beachte die Details der Kappe mit schwarzem Besatz und das USMC-Abzeichen.

**E1** Mantelrock und weisse Zusatzteile waren typisch für die Bekleidung der Marine, im Einsatz wie bei Paraden. **E2** Ein Lieutenant-Commander der US Navy führte drei Reihen von Soldaten, Marines und Matrosen, die im Januar 1865 Fort Fisher nahmen. Dieser Offizier trägt die reguläre Uniform mit Rangabzeichen nach den Vorschriften vom Mai 1865 auf Manschetten und Schultern. **E3** Man beachte die Pistole, den kurzen Säbel, Patronenbeutel und Sprengkapselbehälter, alle über den Hüftgürtel gehängt.

**F1** Für Lee sind verschiedene Uniformen bezeugt, diese Ausführung mit Mantel mit Stehkragen war bis 1865 verbreitet, dann folgte ein liegender Kragen. **F2** Hill trägt die reguläre Uniform eines Konföderierten-Offiziers, einschliesslich Kappe; die verschiedenen Generalsränge waren nivelliert. **F3** Abgesehen von dem inoffiziellen MS-Zeichen auf der Kappe ist dies die reguläre Chirurguniform. Das Schwert ist ein Kavalleristensäbel, medizinisches Personal hatte kein eigenes Schwert.

**G1** Einfache 'Sack'-Jacke, typische Feldbekleidung für Stabsoffiziere. Man beachte die Virginia-Gürtelschnalle. **G2** Das weisse Band war die Alternative zu den regulären Lederabzeichen dieser Waffengattung. Die CSA Engineers spielten während der Appomattox Campaign eine wichtige Rolle beim Kampf und trugen Waffen und Werkzeuge. **G3** Nach einem Photo von Lt. Arthur Sinclair, die reguläre Bekleidung der Confederate Navy.

**H1** Seine Waffen und Ausrüstung stammen aus Grossbritannien. **H2** Marine-Offiziere hatten dunkelblaue Aufschläge. Abgesehen von der Gürtelschnalle ist er von einem Infanterieoffizier nicht zu unterscheiden. Man beachte den Le Mat Revolver. **H3** Typische Bekleidung mit Brotbeutel und Wasserflasche sowie britischen Zusätzen und Waffen.