

The School of the Clerk
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I. Introduction

This work provides information for civil war reenactors who wish to add a further element of verisimilitude to events – and help others – by portraying military clerks. It updates and expands a work in progress begun in 2003 and revised in 2004 by incorporating as best I can the results of additional experience and research. It still represents little more than a beginning and I feel my ignorance continuing to expand with every bit I learn. Readers who have corrections, comments, or additional information would do me a great favor by contacting me online at m.a.schaffner@att.net.

A word about how to use this information: I can't stress enough the need for judgment on the part of the reenactor. Much of what I have learned relates to the operations of the Army of the Potomac. Practices in other armies of the United States may have varied and varied over time. This would prove even more the case in the armies of the Confederacy although, based on the account of John Jackman, a regimental clerk in the Orphan Brigade², the burdens of paperwork knew “neither north nor south.”

One should also bear in mind that, while the Regulations and theoretical requirements of military administration remained consistent throughout the war, application varied, even within the Army of the Potomac. In reading period accounts and reviewing records in the National Archives, one gets the impression of a kind of “trajectory of compliance” – confusion at the start of the war, by-the-book reporting under McClellan, gradual decline as the great campaigns of Antietam and Gettysburg shredded red tape along with boot leather, horses, and men, until, in the final months of the war, a workmanlike stability settles in. For example, in February 1863, Theodore Ayrault Dodge, adjutant of the 119th NY, would note: “Now that Hooker is in command the old severity about reports is coming back, which was prevalent in the old Army of the Potomac on the Peninsula.”³ Later in 1863 regiments might go months without updating their official books, and when entries reappear, the florid hand of the quill-wielding clerk of 1862 is replaced by the clean, cold steel pen of the veteran of 1864.

Clearly then, any clerical impression must consider not just the regulations, but how the clerk would likely have applied them at a specific time and place. On the whole, however, I have been surprised at the degree to which officers, noncoms, and clerks continued to keep up with their paperwork, often under the most daunting of circumstances.

Finally, I advise anyone trying to play clerk to bear in mind where their particular reenacting unit and event stands in the continuum of authenticity, and exercise an appropriate sensitivity to their role. There are few if any units and events that cannot benefit from someone who wishes to provide period administrative support in a helpful manner, and few reenactors who resist learning from someone who is cheerfully willing to learn from them as well.

² John S. Jackman's *Diary of a Confederate Soldier* – see [References](#) for this and other works cited.

³ [On Campaign with the Army of the Potomac](#), *The Civil War Journal of Theodore Ayrault Dodge*, Stephen W. Sears, ed., Cooper Square Press, NY 2001

II. Background – A Glance at Army Bureaucracy in the 1860's

As of December 31, 1860, the United States Army aggregated 16,367 officers and men.⁴ Of these, about a thousand served in eleven headquarters departments, with the largest being Ordnance (557, including Ordnance Sergeants), Medical (186), and Engineer (146). Although many if not most of these soldiers were posted outside of Washington, a core – augmented by a sizeable body of civilian clerks -- occupied the Winder Building across the street from the White House. Until Secretary Stanton established a Board of the principal bureau heads, the departments operated more or less autonomously.

The bulk of the Army's military personnel occupied posts in about 90 separate locations, from Plattsburg, New York to Hatch's Ranch, New Mexico, often in increments of no more than one or two companies. A number of additional forts and arsenals boasted no greater garrison than a military storekeeper.

Despite the paucity of these forces, Congress demanded a strict accounting for every dollar spent, enforced both by steady inquiries and subjecting all War Department expenditures to review by the Second and Third Auditors of the Treasury Department.

One should note that, in contrast to the bulk of the Civil Service (perhaps 50,000 clerks and mechanics nationwide in 1861⁵), the departmental clerks in Washington comprised a quasi-elite strata who were generally spared the massive layoffs and replacement that went along with the "spoils system." Those in the Treasury Department were even subject to a rudimentary civil service exam. After all, someone had to actually run the government.

But think about this set up: You have eleven Army departments in Washington, each with their own functional concern and procedures. They are subject to constant Congressional scrutiny and review of all expenditures by Treasury Department clerks. Because of this, they each create separate requirements for documenting every transaction involving money or equipment. If you look at the regulations, you find scores of forms, each numbered sequentially under its department with no attempt at standardization.

In the meantime, out in the field, because of its scattered deployment, the basic administrative unit of the Army is essentially the company. It becomes the duty of the captain, relying upon his first sergeant, assisted by his clerk, to meet all the demands for monthly, quarterly, bi-monthly, triannual, and special reports to the various departments as well as document day-to-day business.

This was the administrative situation that confronted the volunteers of '61 and '62, often to their dismay as Wilbur Hinman described:

⁴ *War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Volume 1, p. 22 "Abstract from returns of the U.S. Army"

⁵ *History of the United States Civil Service*, Van Riper, 1958

“Monthly returns of clothing and ‘camp and garrison equipage,’ as it was called in a lump, and quarterly returns of ordnance and ordnance stores had to be made to the Grand Moguls at Washington. In these returns every thing in the way of baggage, down to a hatchet or a tent-pin, had to be accounted for, as well as every article in the line of ordnance, from a musket to a belt-plate. Even the tompons...had to be momentarily entered in the long columns of items and figures. If one of the little things disappeared it had to be accounted for, with an imposing array of certificates and affidavits, as though the salvation of the country hung by a thread on the fate of that lost tompon.”⁶

Or, from Thomas Wentworth Higginson:

“...All this, beside the discipline and drill and the regimental and company books, which must keep rigid account of all these details; consider all this, and then wonder no more that officers and men rejoice in being ordered on active service, where a few strokes of the pen will dispose of all this multiplicity of trappings as ‘expended in action’ or ‘lost in service.’”⁷

The disadvantage of this system was of course a degree of red tape that seems absurdly disproportionate to the number of men and level of activity involved. And yet at the same time one might argue that the Union had blundered into an advantage. When war came, the system that was wildly overblown for a far-flung scattering of companies became the administrative infrastructure that allowed the United States to field, equip, and sustain an army of hundreds of thousands. While some clerks in the City of Washington might have sported a secession cockade in the early days of 1861, most stayed at their day jobs when the fighting began and provided the necessary cadre for a similar expansion of the bureaucracy. It was an advantage the South would not have, and the Confederacy would have to assemble its own bureaux from scratch.

Not to digress too far, but even these armies of civilian clerks occasionally played a more direct role in the fighting. The Confederate “Departmental Battalion” broke the Dahlgren raid on Richmond and participated in the city’s final defense. In Washington by 1864 there were enough clerks in the Treasury Department alone to form their own regiment, as Elisha Hunt Rhodes noted when the 6th Corps advanced to confront Early’s attack on Fort Stevens:

“Many citizens had guns in their hands, and the Treasury clerks were drawn up in front of the Treasury Buildings. One young man had on a straw hat, linen duster, kid gloves, well polished boots and eye glasses. He also had a full set of equipments and a musket. Wishing to be polite to me as I passed he ‘Presented Arms’ with the barrel of his musket to the front. Our boys cheered him in great style.”⁸

And well they should have. He might have just approved their pay-roll.

⁶ Wilbur F. Hindman, *Corporal Si Klegg*, The cost of a tompon, by the way, was two cents.

⁷ *Army Life in a Black Regiment*, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Dover Publications Inc., 2002

⁸ Elisha Hunt Rhodes, *All for the Union*, p. 162

III. A Note on Sources

August V. Kautz, General of Cavalry and later a Corps commander, attempted to come to the rescue of the volunteers with his 1863 work, The Company Clerk. Still the basic reference for anyone interested in the subject, Kautz's work provides an extensive treatment of forms, records, and reports, all reflecting the bureaucratic situation described above, and based on his experience in the regular army before the war.

One can wonder, however, just how much this helped the actual clerk in the field. Did the company clerks of Grant's army at Cold Harbor actually spend that evening filling out Form 21, "Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing," noting the precise nature of each wound, mortal, serious, or slight? Did any of them even survive? Kautz notes in his introduction "the want of care of public property, the informality and want of method in the keeping of the records, and the total neglect, in most of the regiments, to render the prescribed returns." How much difference did publication of his book make? Even in later editions of Clerk, Kautz himself failed to note that one of the principal returns, that for Clothing, Camp and Garrison Equipage (QM form 51), had become monthly rather than quarterly.⁹

Kautz also tells us little about matters taken for granted at the time. For example, how much paper would a clerk actually carry into the field, and how? What stayed with the wagons and what happened if they got lost (perhaps this was why the Ordnance Department suggested officers keep a running record of ordnance accounts in a pocket book kept on their person¹⁰)? Nonetheless, The Company Clerk is indispensable, if only for describing the ideal from which the real clerk frequently veered. Kautz's two volumes of Customs of Service provide similar help. The volume for enlisted men has only a few paragraphs on the clerk's duties, but contains a lengthy description of the work of the First, or Orderly Sergeant, whom the clerk assists. The CoS for officers has a useful section on the work of adjutants, which helps us understand how the clerk's duties support the management of the regiment.

In addition to Kautz, we have the Army Regulations, available on-line, with definitive information on the official paperwork of the army (including more forms than you should ever need), and Scott's Military Dictionary, whose entry for "Books" gives detailed information on keeping up correspondence records.

And fortunately, we also have the diaries and letters of the soldiers themselves, which can go a long way to answering the question of what it was really like. Read, for example, the letter of a regular engineer from Harrison's Landing on July 4, 1862:

⁹ According to Lenette Taylor ("The Supply for Tomorrow Must Not Fail"), Congress made the change in July 1862 to forestall corruption through speedier accounting. They also required officers to submit the original and a copy of the return directly to Treasury, bypassing the War Department. This so troubled Quartermaster General Meigs that he ordered officers to prepare two additional copies, one for QM Department review and one for their own records. So now clerks had to fill out twice as many forms, by hand, three times as often.

¹⁰ Instructions for Making Quarterly Returns of Ordnance and Ordnance Stores, GPO, 1863, para. 23

“When we woke up the pitiless rain was beating in our faces – drenched to the skin and stiff, hungry, and sick, we came down here where the water until just now has been a foot deep under the wheat straw which thank Heaven was stacked up here by the hundreds of tons and which we have piled up as I said so we do not actually sleep in water. Our company papers had to be made out immediately and I went to work yesterday morning on the rolls sitting on my rubber blanket and writing on a book on my knees. My pants were so wet and thick with mud I could not put them on, and the only dry things I had was a shirt and a pair of drawers and my overcoat and I sat and wrote all day with those on and today have got all through except my clothing rolls and Quarterly returns which can be put off until tomorrow or a little while at any rate.”¹¹

Now *that's* hard-core.

¹¹ “The Letters of Newton Timothy Hartshorn,” <http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~hartshrn/NTHletters.htm>

IV. Types of Government Property – Yours, the Captain's, and the Company's

As a general rule, most paperwork pertains to people and property, with the Adjutant General concerned with people, the Quartermaster General with clothing, camp and garrison equipage, and the Ordnance Department with weapons and accoutrements.

As for property, during the Civil War, the United States Army supplied its soldiers with three main categories of materiel: 1) clothing; 2) camp and garrison equipage; and 3) ordnance. Each category had different requirements for issuing and accountability.

Clothing

This included nearly all uniform items: hats, coats, pants, drawers, shoes, etc., as well as blankets, both woolen and rubber. The soldier signed for these on a Receipt Roll (QM Form 52) and the company tracked issues in a Clothing Book. As clothes wore out, soldiers could draw more against an allowance. The allowance and cost of individual items were established in the Regulations and general orders and periodically updated. If a soldier overdrew his allowance, the cost of additional items came out of his pay. If he under-drew it, he received the balance at the end of his enlistment. The soldier thus had a financial incentive to keep his uniform in good order.

While the soldier's clothing belonged to him, he did not have discretion over what to wear and when. His commanders decided this for him, in some cases dictating the use of articles not used in other outfits (e.g., the black hats of the Iron Brigade). Regular inspections, with judgments reinforced by fines, ensured a minimum standard of care and appearance, especially in the Army of the Potomac.

Camp and Garrison Equipage

This included tents, bed sacks, mess pots, shovels, axes, and the like. These were issued to the company, usually placed in the care of a sergeant in charge of a squad, who in turn used a register to keep track of which soldier was responsible for the article. If an article was lost or damaged, a "Board of Survey" would determine the culpability of the soldier and the value of the article could be deducted from his pay at the next muster.

Interestingly, certain articles, sometimes listed as "clothing," (even, apparently, on the Form 51 – "Quarterly Return of Clothing, Camp and Garrison Equipage" – in the Regulations), were treated as Camp and Garrison Equipage and issued not to the men individually but to the company. These would also be tracked by an NCO on a register. This category included knapsacks, canteens, haversacks, and hat brass (as well as NCO sashes). Thus, a soldier's hat belonged to him, but the brass bugle on it was company property. Both were accounted for on the Form 51 (which midway through the war became a monthly, rather than quarterly, report), but in different places and ways.

Sound confusing? It was, and mistakes in reporting often occurred. But it all explains why a soldier might embroider his initials on a wool blanket, or paint a chuck-a-luck board on his rubber blanket, but only stencil a number on his haversack, canteen, or knapsack. The blankets were his, but the others belonged to the company and could be assigned to another man if he was transferred or went to the hospital.

Whether knapsacks, haversacks, and canteens are Clothing or Camp and Garrison Equipage depends on whether we're talking early war or late war. If we use Scott's Military Dictionary as a guide, then at the beginning of the war these articles, along with hat brass, were Clothing. Scott's (p. 162) provides the annual "Statement of the cost of Clothing, Camp and Garrison Equipage" for July 1, 1859, which places hat brass, knapsacks, haversacks, canteen, and talmas on the list for Clothing, clearly separate from C&GE, with the note that these particular items of "clothing" "will not be issued to the soldiers, but will be borne on the Return as company property while fit for service. They will be charged on the Muster Rolls against the person in whose use they were when lost or destroyed by his fault."

However, in Kautz's Company Clerk, we find on the November 12, 1863 "Statement" the same footnote, except that knapsacks, haversacks, and canteens (but NOT hat brass, sashes, or plumes) have migrated over to the list for Camp and Garrison Equipage. As if in confirmation of this transmogrification, in the revised Regs the Form 51 (Quarterly Return of Clothing, Camp & Garrison Equipage) shows all the above as Clothing, but in the Sullivan Press collection of forms, the MONTHLY return (which the 51 became in '63) clearly shows knapsacks, haversacks, and canteens as C&GE.

I have not yet identified the order responsible for this change.

Like clothing, Camp and Garrison Equipage was handled by the Quartermaster Department, which issued or specified all the forms appropriate for tracking it, as well as general office stationery, company books, tactical manuals, and copies of regulations.

Ordnance

Ordnance includes the soldier's arms and accoutrements, as well as any associated tools. For the infantryman, this meant the musket, sling, bayonet, scabbard, cartridge box and cartridge box sling (as well as the plates on both), waist belt and buckle, tompon, screw driver, spare cone, etc. All of these were separately accounted for in the Quarterly Return of Ordnance and Ordnance Stores.

As the Ordnance Department insisted, ordnance could never be "issued" to a soldier. The Captain in charge of the company was personally responsible for all ordnance, and in fact could not even leave the Army officially until his ordnance accounts had cleared, not just the Ordnance Department, but the Treasury Department.

NCO's kept registers of ordnance in the hands of the men. Losses or damage would come out of the responsible party's pay, and the fact would be noted in

explanation on the quarterly returns. Losses in combat were reported in manuscript by the officer in command of the company; after February, 1863, his certification was sufficient evidence of such loss. To the Department, only serious wounds or death justified the loss of arms in battle, and the first duty of the officer after action was to secure his ordnance.

Ordnance stores also included the forms used for ordnance reports.

Consequences for the Soldier

Reasonably regular pay, in currency that retained most of its value during the war, helped keep the system of accountability functional in the U. S. Army. Though soldiers often, and famously, threw away excess clothing or other baggage, they knew – or soon learned – that their decisions would have financial consequences.

In the case of clothing, officers often settled accounts at each muster, so drawing a new uniform coat soon after throwing away or losing one could cost over half a month's pay (\$7), with the amount tracked in the company's clothing account book. As a result, many soldiers took advantage of storage offered by the government to put away their greatcoats and other articles during the campaign season.

For camp and garrison equipage, it was one thing to lose a knapsack because the company had been ordered to drop packs, and couldn't recover them after battle – that loss would not be charged to the soldiers. But if a soldier simply threw his pack away, he could expect to have its full cost -- \$2.78 -- come out of his pay, as well as any fine punishing him for his willful negligence.

Loss of ordnance would be especially punished, and especially costly, with bayonets worth \$2.50 and the full cost of a Springfield running up to \$20.

Note that the cost of all items changed during the war. For example, in 1859 a knapsack cost \$2.78; in 1863 (Kautz, *Clerk*, 1st ed.) \$2.14; in 1865 (Kautz, 12th ed.) \$1.85 -- a drop of a third over 6 years, even without taking inflation into account (who says the government can't, occasionally, get more efficient?). Appendix 2 has further examples. In general, the basic outfit for the Federal soldier cost about \$10 to \$12, plus a few dollars more for blankets, another \$3-4 dollars for CG&E, a similar amount for accoutrements, and \$20 for a rifle musket, bayonet, and accompanying tools.

Overall, the regular reporting and accounting – though generally disliked during the war, and never remembered fondly afterward – may well have contributed as much to the material standard of the U.S. Army as the northern industrial base and communications network. The Confederate States, which had to create their bureaucracy from scratch and never had a sound currency, suffered accordingly.

V. Reenacting 101: The Weekend Company Clerk

The actual duties of a company clerk varied widely according to the needs of the company commander and orderly sergeant. At the simplest level, the clerk copied letters or filled out forms as directed – a sort of human xerox machine or printer.

At the highest level, the company clerk serves as an orderly to the Orderly Sergeant. He maintains the company books (Morning Report Book, Clothing Book, Descriptive Book, Sick Book, Order Book, Record of Target Practice, Company Fund book, etc., etc.), finds and fills out forms, prepares invoices and receipts, composes letters and transmittals, and even helps other enlisted men file grievances. He spares the First Sergeant and officers from a world of minutiae, even as he learns the administrative details that may equip him for further advancement. At this level the clerk is, in addition to a copier, a laptop, filing system, automatic reports generator, and primitive weapons system all in one.

As Kautz explains, the basic principle that governs the clerk's job, and explains the system that he serves as the foundation of, is that all government property (including the men) must be meticulously accounted for. While today we focus on analyzing and manipulating data, at the time of the civil war it was difficult enough just to collect and maintain it, and keep the Adjutant General updated on the men, the QM General on the clothing and camp and garrison equipage, and the Ordnance Department on the weaponry and accoutrements.

And yet, for the typical weekend reenactment, clerical duties should pretty much revolve around the following:

Morning Report:

- Kautz mentions a morning report book, handed in before eight a.m. and received back at the First Sergeant's meeting (around 11 a.m.). The regs call for a book of "three quires" (72 pages) of 16" x 10.5" paper (twice the size of period writing paper), a version of which Sullivan Press sells. But it's hard to imagine anyone lugging one of these around in the field.
- In fact, the Army Regulations also provide, as part of the quarterly issue of "blanks" (forms) a number of morning reports separate from the Morning Report Book, yet clearly not enough for each day. Probably the forms served for when the book itself could not be kept up. Kautz's example of a quarterly stationery return (per regulation 1158) indicates issuance of 70 report forms and consumption of 40 over a period of three months.
- To fill out your morning report, check the roster after the First Sergeant has called roll. Note those excused by the Doctor at Sick Call (should this ever happen at a reenactment). Complete the form accordingly.

- The morning report is usually very simple if you're only trying to account for people actually attending a weekend reenactment. You only need the columns for "present," "total" (the number of enlisted men), and "aggregate" (the total of enlisted men and officers), as well as changes from the previous day. I would advise not getting cute and listing people as sick or on detached duty, unless you actually do have someone from your company serving at headquarters. If someone said they'd show up for the event but isn't there, don't report them unless asked – otherwise you'll just confuse and irritate the adjutant.
- In any case, just as a practical matter, it seems a good practice to encourage your comrades to show up by 8 am so they can attend morning parades, drills, etc. Only rarely should your unit allow exceptions, and appearances five minutes before safety inspection should be strongly discouraged by your safety officer.
- Remember to keep your own record of the morning report. You can use a modification of the attached form, lined for several days, to do this (which would not be unlike contemporary practice). This will make it much easier to keep track of changes and save you from embarrassment should the adjutant have questions.
- Remember to note changes from one day to the next, giving names and circumstances on the back of the form. This will help you remember who attended and when, which your unit should have some interest in tracking.

Rosters:

- The attached "Form 2" lists the company's privates opposite 31 columns for the days of the month. On separate rosters for Guard, Fatigue, and Detail, you check which men have been chosen for duty in the column for the appropriate day. (Note: The adjutant keeps the duty rosters for Officers and NCOs.)
- As a general rule, no one should serve twice until all have served, and no one should have incompatible assignments (e.g., fatigue immediately following guard).
- Over the course of the weekend, you and the First Sergeant should try to ensure both fairness and safety: e.g., avoid guard tours on Saturday night for folks with long drives on Sunday.
- In practice, unless otherwise necessary (like you have a Sergeant Major who's checking), you might just want to keep one master roster, with everyone's name listed (crossing off those who don't make it to the event), and noting duty assignments with a small "g", "f", or "d" in the appropriate box.
- For the benefit of the Sergeant or Corporal leading the detail, you should write out the names of those for duty on, as Kautz says, "small slips of paper." One-third of a standard (period) 8" x 10.5" sheet of writing paper gives a slip 3.5" tall and 8" wide.

- In order to be fair, you should also keep a record of those given passes, which are strongly recommended even at “mainstream” events.

Company Books:

- Kautz calls for keeping nine of these on a daily basis: Morning Report Book, Sick Book, Rosters, Descriptive Book, Clothing Book, Order Book, Account Book for Company Fund, Register of Articles Issued to Soldiers, and Record Book of Target Practice. Note that most of these have little relevance to the typical reenactment and little likelihood of being required on a daily basis.
- Still, in my first experience as a company clerk (McDowell, 2003), I wanted to do the right thing. I decided to take four books with me into the field: **Order Book** (a blank book in which to write down general and special orders, usually given out at First Sergeants’ meetings); **Sick Book** (comprising a number of Form 1’s stitched together – I’ve included an example in the attachments); a **Morning Report Book** (I used another small blank book in which to note changes from the previous day rather than the full, 10” by 16” hardbound volume); and a personal book, called “Accounts” in which to write down everything as it happened and use later as a basis for updating the other books.
- I decided that I could skip the Descriptive Book (detailed information on every man in the company), the Clothing Book, and others as too bulky for carrying in the field (they would in fact be in the wagons), and in any case impractical to replicate for a single event. I might have felt different about a camp or garrison scenario.
- As it was, at McDowell the only book I actually used was my personal account book. With a nearly-full sized company of some 30 men requiring organization, rations, details, for guard and a full schedule of weekend activities, I was kept pretty busy helping the first sergeant and simply didn’t have time to juggle entries among several different blank books.
- And it seems that clerks at the time faced a similar situation and would accumulate notes and forms to enter into the books later. Going back to Hartshorn, on May 14, 1862, we hear: “As for danger from the enemy – that has been considerable but I have now two weeks of the company writing to do. Still, I want to go out some and bear my part with the rest of the boys.” That is, when actually in the field he kept notes, then updated the books later when he got the chance.
- Your challenge is to consider the scenario of your event (e.g., in garrison, in a temporary camp, in the field at the beginning of a campaign, several days into a forced march) and ask yourself some basic questions. What do you actually need for the weekend? What else would you likely have had? What would you have needed and *not* have had? Based on this your kit can range from a desk and table with a full issue of office supplies and books (including Kautz) to a ragged portfolio or a few scraps of paper and a pencil stub.

Special Forms:

- **Form 13, Provision Return:** (Shown as form 15 in Kautz but 13 in the Revised Regulations, Subsistence Department.) Some events will ask for this, others not (see the attached forms). When they do, you'll be responsible for filling it out with the number of men and women (laundresses), and for obtaining your company commander's signature before turning it in to Regiment for verification, signature, and return. It will then go to the Quartermaster or Commissary of Subsistence with the detail for drawing the rations, which you may be asked to lead. Get an **invoice** for all supplies issued; write down the quantities issued and ask the COS to sign. Whether this irritates or impresses them is less important than the fact that you'll have a record. The form 13 sold by Sullivan's is 7" by 10."
- **Form 21, Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing:** I hate to admit it, but this is the form I've had the most fun with (attached). Companies were to submit these immediately after a battle to give an account of casualties, though it's difficult to imagine. I've used this at several mainstream events to explain the disappearance of fellows leaving after the Saturday battle. The "fun" comes both from asking people how they want to be reported (and what to put in the "Remarks" column), as well as in seeing the expression on the faces of adjutants who've never seen one before.

In filling out the 21, "Wounded" fall into three categories – *mortally* (they're definitely in the check out line); *severely* (in danger of death or permanent disability); and *slightly* (just in a lot of pain). For Company D at McDowell I reconstructed the 21 from two historical accounts. I found a statement that there were two killed, eight severely wounded, and five slightly wounded, and compared it with a copy of the roster, which noted who was killed and wounded at McDowell – eight of the wounded later died or were discharged, and were clearly the ones in the "severely" category. I invented the notations in "Remarks" (e.g., "leg carried away by cannon ball") based on examples in Kautz. Don't forget (like I have) to total the number of casualties at the bottom (what the hell – there was a war on).

I have yet to see a period form 21, although one can find online a copy of the manuscript return filed by the 42nd IVI after Chickamauga¹² This lacks the macabre detail on individual wounds, but is probably more representative of what was actually submitted. Returns like these fed into the abstracts of casualties that one often sees appended to after action reports.

For the real aficionado, an unusual example of the British equivalent of the 21 comes to us from the Maori Wars. First entry: "KILLED, LLOYD, Capt., Gunshot wound

¹²

http://freepages.history.rootsweb.com/~indiana42nd/Report_of_Killed_Wounded_Missing_Chickamauga.htm

penetrating L chest, abdomen, pelvis, R shoulder, R thigh, fractured femur; tomahawk wound R Calf; body decapitated.”¹³

- **Certified Statement for Losses Incurred in Action:** This is a manuscript return (also attached) submitted by an officer to account for any ordnance or ordnance stores lost in battle. If you took casualties you may also have lost gear, so here’s something else to bemuse the Adjutant with.

General Note on Forms:

Not all versions of the same form will look alike. The armies’ requirements for paperwork were hugely unprecedented, and variously met by blanks provided by the War Department, private printers, the Government Printing Office, printing presses at different Army headquarters, and other sources. This variation in source is matched by varied use of the terms “returns,” “reports,” “forms,” and “blanks,” and varied references to the same organization, for example, as the “Ordnance Bureau,” “Ordnance Office,” and “Ordnance Department” – all within the same document! Speaking of which, the contemporary thinking behind the use of forms seems best expressed in the Ordnance Department’s own Instructions:

10. Delinquent Officers. – The impression seems to prevail among many officers of the Army that because they have not been furnished with blank forms for making the returns called for by the Regulations, they are under no obligations whatever to make them... The printed forms hereinafter enumerated have but recently been prepared, and are furnished as well for the convenience of the bureaux as of officers having stores in charge. *Although never before supplied*, every officer will be held to a strict accountability for past dues, and will be required to make a return for every quarter during which he may have had such stores in his possession.

Italics added. Note that before 1863 the Department did not provide any forms, and even then only the most common ones. Others would be printed locally or ruled out by hand. In any case officers were expected to make their returns in the appropriate format even when pre-printed blanks weren’t available.

Sometimes even printed forms were not exact copies of those in the regulations. I have, for example, an original QM form 38 “Voucher to Abstract I” – a quarterly stationery requisition for Co. D, 102nd Illinois Volunteers, dated July 1, 1863. Compared to the version in the Regulations, it is in “portrait” rather than “landscape,” with accompanying differences in spacing, and some differences in typeface.

Good sources for printed forms include Sullivan Press, and online editions of the Regulations, from which one can download a pdf version.

Or, if you’re really feeling hardcore, you can line one out by hand, in ink.

Other Papers:

- **Writing Paper:** Standard writing paper at the time came in 8 by 10.5 inch sheets. Interestingly enough (to me, anyway), this remained the size of official Government stationery well into the 1980’s.

¹³ <http://pearlspad.tripod.com/WarCasualties1864.htm>

- **Foolscap Paper:** Issue stationery also included this size, which based on several not entirely consisted sources I have concluded to be legal, 8.5” by 14.” In the absence of blanks for quarterly ordnance returns, Kautz advises one to rule one out on a sheet of “ordinary foolscap.”
- **Folio Post:** Also mentioned in quartermaster returns, this seems to have been 17” by 24” or 22”, which would probably be quartered into 8.5” by 112” – standard letter size today.
- In any case, you should always have some **blank sheets** with you in case your sergeant or officer needs it or you run out of the appropriate printed forms. For some uses, such as letters of transmittal or reports of ordnance stores lost in action, there may be no forms, although Kautz gives examples of how to write the appropriate statement. In these cases, you will need blank paper.
- **Invoices and Receipts:** Kautz gives it as a general rule that you must receipt any property you give and invoice any you receive. I have included in the attachments blanks constructed from examples in Kautz and period civilian samples I’ve seen.
- **Passes:** The attached also provides examples based on Kautz. These apply to soldiers within the lines. Passes for other needs, such as going between the lines, would come from the adjutant or above. So far as I know there were no standard versions. Here’s an alternate form from the Order Book of the 16th Michigan:

Not having been in arrest for the past month, his accouterment and Tent in good order and police, _____ has permission to leave camp to go to _____ on important private business, Viz., _____. He will return by ____ o’clock this P.M.

_____ Orderly Sergeant
 _____ Captain

- **Other:** Kautz recommends ruling out lines in pencil on forms in order to promote neatness and save space. On a monthly return, several names may go on a single line, if they share the same status (e.g., privates on extra duty). He also encourages the use of standard abbreviations, e.g., Col., Maj., Capt., Lieut. or Lt., Sergt., Corp., and Pvt.

Rank and Privileges of the Company Clerk

Nothing in the regulations or common practice specifies a particular rank for the clerk, but there does seem some relation between doing good work and getting to wear stripes. Elisha Rhodes was already a corporal when detailed to the staff of General Keyes’ division; after working there on consolidated morning reports he returned to his regiment as Sergeant Major. On the other hand, in November 1862, Hartshorn saw promotion as an escape:

“I have at last got my dues [promotion to corporal] and am ordered out of the Clerk’s place with honor. They can find no one to fill my place and begin to see my usefulness. A green hand which they tried spoiled the Muster Rolls and I had to go back again for a little while until some one

could learn to take my place. In the mean time I have had an awful lot of work to do, sitting up two nights out of three in the cold to write....If you chose you could be Company Clerk... but I tell you if you came you would have to make up your mind to very hard usage, sometimes.”

And sometimes the usage was not so hard: in the same month as Hartshorn’s letter, William Clayton writes home to say: “I have not stood guard much since we left Keokuk. I act as clerk for the captain and am relieved from guard duty.”¹⁴ Clayton would receive promotion directly to Sergeant in April 1863 and serve as a company clerk in the 19th Iowa till the end of the war.

William Ray of the Iron Brigade assisted his captain as a clerk after an abortive promotion to First Sergeant (“Orderlyship is not so verry desirable but I am a poor man and the other four dollars a month on the wages is an incentive to striver for it. But the labor is Terible.”)¹⁵

According to Kautz, the clerk “is reported on daily duty, and...is excused from all other duties. In times of actual service, however, he should always be prepared for service in the field.” That last statement is worth dwelling on. Twice – once as a company clerk and once as regimental – a superior saw my corporal’s stripes and, in the heat of action, directed me to take command over a part of a line in battle. It does not do at such a time to look back and say, “But I’m only a clerk!” Do not wear stripes unless you are prepared to accept whatever responsibilities go with them.

¹⁴ *A Damned Iowa Greyhound*, Donald C. Elder, ed.

¹⁵ *Four Years With the Iron Brigade*, William Ray

VI. Reenacting 201: The Weekend Regimental Clerk

The regimental clerk works for the sergeant major, who in turn works for the adjutant, and his duties will depend entirely on their requirements. Here are some of the tasks I've found myself involved in:

- **Consolidated Morning Reports.** Technically, this means just taking the reports from lower level units and transcribing them onto the consolidated form. In practice, you may encounter the following complications:
 - *Finding the form.* The consolidated report goes on an oversized form that is not available commercially and is difficult to get reproduced. So unless you have a private source for these, you're out of luck. I have attached a foolscap-sized form as a stopgap. But, as with the Morning Report itself, most of the categories have no real relevance to the weekend reenactment. So, in a pinch, you can draw up a manuscript form showing the various ranks present for duty and noting any changes from the previous day.
 - *Getting and interpreting reports.* Some companies will submit clear and accurate reports on time. Others will forget, or lose their forms, or show weirdly different totals from the previous day without explanation (OK -- I've done this myself), or simply have incorrect totals and aggregates. Even with good intentions all around you may find yourself visiting your top sergeants several times to figure things out – tactfully, too, because of course everyone has something more important to attend to.
 - *Keeping everyone straight.* In addition to subordinate units, you'll have HQ staff to add to the report. But are they already listed somewhere else? You'll need to find out. At higher echelons – say at Army level – you'll face this problem with entire units. For example, is the 200th Indiana cavalry actually counted with the cavalry brigade, or are they still answering to Second Division? Have fun.

Some contemporary commanders seemed to have looked forward to their morning report. Higginson writes:

To a regimental commander no book can be so fascinating as the consolidated Morning Report, which is ready about nine, and tells how many in each company are sick, absent, on duty, and so on. It is one's newspaper and daily mail; I never grow tired of it. If a single recruit has come in, I am always eager to see how he looks on paper.¹⁶

- **Consolidated ration returns, casualty returns, etc.** Anything required for the regiment as a whole will present the same problems as the morning report. Introduce yourself to the lower echelon staff at the earliest opportunity and be as courteous and helpful as you can. I say this having neglected to do so myself -- at first.

¹⁶ Army Life in a Black Regiment, p. 22

- **Letter and Order Books.** Regiments in the field (as opposed to a stationary camp) may have no formal books, but you should still make copies of letters and orders given in your memorandum book. For more formal set ups, I have appended the entry for “Books” from Scott’s Military Dictionary, which you can streamline as appropriate to your situation (they did).
- **Guard Report.** This report will contain the names of the men on each relief and any prisoners, as well as items of note. It largely explains itself but warrants careful study. Kautz indicates that the sergeant of the guard enters the names, but we may assume that this task, like the clerical tasks of the orderly sergeant, could be delegated.
- **Other.** The tasks assigned to a supernumerary enlisted flunky at headquarters are limited only by the imagination of those who outrank you there, which will be everyone. I have at various time served as, among other things, copyist for general orders, courier for commands or alarms in battle, a spoilsport sent to chase spectators out of the line of fire, and general repository for every scrap of paper that found itself to the command. But it’s all been great fun. Really.

VII. Reenacting 301: Additional Fun With Clerking

Most of the heavy lifting done by clerks during the war involved matters that we can scarcely touch upon – keeping detailed records of people and materiel (and who had what) over months and years of constant, often radical change. But living history events may afford us an opportunity to try, and I’ve listed below some ideas I would like to follow-up on. Until I do, however, this version of “School of the Clerk” will discuss them only in the broadest outline. If any reader has actually done any of the following, or something else in the administrative line, I would be delighted to hear from them.

- **Council of Administration.** Under Article XIII of the Revised Regulations, this consists of a regimental or company commander and the three officers next in rank – or two, or one, or none, depending on who’s available. The Council administers the company or regimental fund, deciding whether to spend the money on potatoes, peppers, or books for the library. They also administer the effects of dead soldiers by, for example, auctioning them off and depositing the money with the paymaster. Kautz’s CoS for Officers (pp. 158 to 169) has an extensive discussion, including sample reports, Inventory of Effects, and paymaster’s voucher. Properly handled, either a meeting on the company fund or an auction of effects could make an interesting activity for spectators.
- **Board of Survey.** Covered by Article XLI and Kautz’s COS for Officers (131-140), the Board consists of company officers present (i.e., up to three) who assess responsibility for and recommend disposition of damaged property condemned by an inspector. They seemed to have had some leeway: in the case of a shipment of rotten hominy received by the 16th Michigan in 1862, the Board recommended burial “in an unfrequented place.” Every unit should have some old, worn-out, funky clothing and equipment for a Board of Survey to examine and deliberate over.
- **Recruiting Office.** Under Article XL, a recruiting party consists of a Lieutenant, one NCO, two privates and a drummer or fifer, with a full allotment of stationery supplies and forms. For a living history, recruitment can consist of a cursory physical examination just to make sure the “recruit” can stand up and has the necessary teeth (a more complete exam will take place at the depot). Prepare enlistment forms in triplicate (one for the Adjutant General, one for the superintendent of recruiting, and one to accompany the recruit to the depot). Other actions from the Regulations:

“... 926. They will not allow any man to be deceived or inveigled into the service by false representations, but will in person explain the nature of the service, the length of the term, the pay, clothing, rations, and other allowances to which a soldier is entitled by law, to every man before he signs the enlistment. 927. If minors present themselves, they are to be treated with great candor; the names and residences of their parents or guardians, if they have any, must be ascertained, and these will be informed of the minor's wish to enlist, that they may make their objections or give their consent.... 929. Any free white male person above the age of eighteen and under thirty-five years, being at least five feet three inches high, effective, able-bodied, sober, free from disease, of good character and habits, and with a competent knowledge of the English language, may be enlisted.... 934. The forms of declaration, and of consent in case of a minor, having been signed and witnessed, the recruit will then be duly examined by the recruiting officer, and surgeon if one

be present, and, if accepted, the 20th and 87th Articles of War¹⁷ will be read to him; after which he will be allowed time to consider the subject until his mind appears to be fully made up before the oath is administered to him. 935. As soon as practicable, and at least within six days after his enlistment, the following oath will be administered to the recruit: 'I, A- B-, do solemnly swear or affirm (as the case may be) that I will bear true allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or opposers whatsoever, and observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to the rules and articles for the government of the armies of the United States.' (See 10th Art. of War.)"

- **Pay roll.** According to Article XXXI, troops were to be mustered every two months – at the ends of February, April, June, August, October, and December – for their pay. In practice, of course, they often went quite a while longer before seeing their money. Preparation of the rolls could take several days as it required noting all changes in personnel since the last muster, as well as computation of deductions for the Soldiers Home, services of a laundress, allotments to family, arrearages to the sutler, as well as charges for lost or damaged equipment, and fines. All of this provides a rich, if tedious, subject for play (for the best account of the possibilities here, read any history of Colonel D'Utassy of the Garibaldi Guard). I know several units have done this from time to time, and would appreciate any accounts for future editions, with full attribution.
- **Quarterly Returns.** Like the pay roll, preparation of quarterly returns of ordnance and ordnance stores, or of clothing, camp and garrison equipment, involved pouring over, consolidating, and balancing months of receipts, invoices, vouchers, affidavits, and other returns in order to assure higher authority that appropriate use and disposition had been made of all assigned Federal property (see the quote from Si Klegg under Background above). It would require a labor of fanaticism, but it is theoretically possible to reconstruct one of a company's quarterly returns by researching or extrapolating its personnel changes and, after tracking its activities over those three months, determining what losses and issues of clothing, ordnance, or camp and garrison equipment it had. As someone once wrote:

"It is an interesting question, for example, whether the battle of Gettysburg – which occurred just after the conclusion of the second quarter of FY63 – was viewed with relief or alarm by the Army's clerks. Relief, perhaps, because any difference in accounts of Clothing, Camp and Garrison Equipage (or Ordnance Stores), from the previous quarter could be balanced on an officer's affidavit (per the Act of February, 1863) that said tompon, sack coat, etc. was lost in battle. Horror, maybe, at the thought of having to copy out descriptive lists for all the wounded in hospital so they could draw their pay, and Inventories of Effects and Final Statements for those killed in action."¹⁸

¹⁷ ART. 20. All officers and soldiers who have received pay, or have been duly enlisted in the service of the United States, and shall be convicted of having deserted the same, shall suffer death, or such other punishment as, by sentence of a court-martial, shall be inflicted. ART. 87. No person shall be sentenced to suffer death but by the concurrence of two-thirds of the members of a general court-martial...

¹⁸ OK, so this was me in my AAR for the 2003 Gettysburg living history, "The Worst Night of My Life."

- **Courts Martial and Courts of Inquiry.** I'll just point out here that Kautz, again in his COS for Officers, devotes nearly fifty pages to Military Justice, with copious details on procedures, not excluding seating arrangements. A further eight pages of The Company Clerk describe how to draw up charges and specifications. Combine this with actual court martial information from regimental histories (or Letter and Order Books in the National Archives), and you have the material for an interesting couple of hours.¹⁹
- **Other.** The more you perform in the role of clerk, the more opportunities will unexpectedly arise to do a bit more. Last year I found myself with some fellows doing a little impromptu "living history" after a mainstream reenactment – specifically dragging the bodies of our "dead" comrades off to the side of a road, presumably for burial. Suddenly I realized that, while it was all very well to bury them in their clothes, we couldn't leave their accoutrements on. "Secure the ordnance!" I cried, "That's the captain's, and we'll pay for it sure if it's buried with the boys." Or words to that effect. Fortunately we didn't wrench anyone's arm out of its socket while retrieving their cartridge boxes, with belts and plates.

Along similar lines, you might, with previous arrangement, bring the "recovered" arms and accoutrements of your company's casualties to the regimental quartermaster (or whoever else is serving as de facto ordnance officer). Don't forget to provide the correct invoice, Ordnance Department form 2(b), and make darn sure you don't leave without your receipt, form 7(a).

¹⁹ Of course, my favorite court martial story of all time is the one about Frederick the Great overturning on review the death sentence given to a hussar for sodomizing a horse: "Sentence cancelled," wrote the Enlightened Monarch in the margin of the document – "Transfer the swine to the infantry."

VIII. Material Culture – Tools, Methods, and Stuff

“Oh pshaw a pencil is a bad thing to write with.” William Ray, June 4, 1862.

“This is the first letter that I have written with ink for nearly two months.” Elisha Hunt Rhodes, June 29, 1864.

“I am writing with a quill pen...” Richtmyer Hubbel, April 16, 1865

Compared to weaponry, not a lot of research seems to have gone into the material culture of the 19th century office. For period sources I can’t recommend highly enough Melville’s “Bartleby the Scrivener,” and we have this classic description of “the Law Writer” from Dicken’s Bleak House:

“In the shade of Cook’s Court, at most times a shady place, Mr. Snagsby has dealt in all sorts of blank forms of legal process; in skins and rolls of parchment; in paper--foolscap, brief, draft, brown, white, whitey-brown, and blotting; in stamps; in office-quills, pens, ink, India-rubber, pounce, pins, pencils, sealing-wax, and wafers; in red tape and green ferret; in pocket-books, almanacs, diaries, and law lists; in string boxes, rulers, inkstands--glass and leaden--pen-knives, scissors, bodkins, and other small office-cutlery; in short, in articles too numerous to mention...”

The United States Army was not far behind. According to Regulation 1130, each company, for example, was entitled to a quarterly issue of the following stationery supplies: five quires (120 sheets) of writing paper; ½ quire of envelope paper (or 50 envelopes); 20 quills (or “steel pens, with one holder to 12 pens”); ½ ounces of wafers²⁰; three ounces of sealing wax; one paper of ink powder; and one piece of “office tape.”

In addition, each office table warranted “one inkstand, one stamp, one paper-folder, one sand-box, one wafer-box, and as many lead pencils as may be required, not exceeding four per annum.”

The amount and type of stationery drawn in actual service offers a less Dickensian view of the army at war. The return for the 102nd IVI that I mentioned earlier simply asks for three quires of letter paper and two of foolscap, 50 envelopes, 20 pens, six ounces of ink, and one memorandum book – no wafers, wax, quills, red tape, papers of powder, or loose envelope paper. A similar picture emerges from returns uncovered for Confederate units by Mark Jaeger. Lenette Taylor’s study of the Union quartermaster, Captain Simon Perkins, states that the Eastport Tennessee depot had, in the summer of 1862, 100,000 sheets of paper, 70,500 envelopes, 3,600 steel pens, 972 two-ounce bottles of ink, and 120 pieces of red tape. In May and June of that year, General Buell’s division headquarters consumed 2,400 pieces of paper, 1,000 envelopes, 432 steel pens, and 32 ounces of wax.

That envelopes pretty much superceded envelope paper seems clear from this January 29, 1863 entry from Theodore Dodge’s journal:

²⁰ “As articles of stationery, wafers consist of thin brittle, adhesive disks, used for securing papers together, and for forming a basis for impressed official seals” -- <http://84.1911encyclopedia.org/W/WA/WAFER.htm>

After supper the Colonel and Lieut. Colonel generally come to our tent a little while, and we four sit round the table and converse, the Q.M. and Colonel generally getting into some argument or other. Tonight the question arose as to what we were to do, having run entirely out of envelopes. The Q.M. suggested folding in the old style, and Col. P. showed us several ways of folding paper. Thereupon we degenerated into making paper boxes and paper bellows, and paper nicknacks of all kinds, from which intellectual occupation we verged into making night caps and rabbits out of pocket handkerchiefs; and the Col. gave us a Polichinelle exhibition with the handkerchiefs on his fingers. This gave rise to shadows on the wall, and Harry, the Q.M.'s clerk, came in and gave Syers and Heenan [two boxers] on the wall, producing universal merriment...

War is hell.

But whether it's envelopes or envelope paper, you face much the same questions. How much of this do you need? Should you use pen or pencil? The answer depends again on when, where, and who you are. If you're a clerk at a Union brigade headquarters in February of 1862, you will certainly do your work with a pen, and if you can get a nice desk and some pounce, all the better. If you're doing a company morning report in the Wilderness in May, 1864, a stub of a pencil and a soldier's portfolio may be the best you can hope for.

Here are the most common articles you'll need, and some gratuitous advice on how to use them:

- **Steel Pens:** Sutlers have begun to offer rather ornate Victorian writing kits. A soldier *might* have something like one of these; I've seen several references in diaries to soldiers ordering pens at a discount and then selling them to their comrades for a nice mark-up, and writing supplies are listed among articles available from sutlers. But you could just as easily go to an art supply shop and get a wood pen holder and a few nibs, which is both cheaper and more appropriate. Or get the plain barrel pen from Sullivan Press. I've even constructed reasonable examples from old dowels and spare parts. Remember, what you use will probably be Government issue – serviceable, but not fancy. If you use a period ink well, especially a traveling one, you'll soon discover that the barrel must be pretty thin (think analog for quill). This can take a little getting used to at first.
- **Quill Pens:** If you want a quill (which at least by the end of the war were sufficiently unusual to warrant a special entry in Richtmyer Hubbel's diary), try to obtain one from one of the few dealers who has actually prepared them properly, and be prepared to cut yourself a new point every few pages (which also means you need a real pen-knife with a blade like an X-acto). Several on-line sources will tell you how to do this, or even how to prepare the quill from scratch²¹ if you know a friendly goose, but remember that there's a reason the steel pen won out – although less expressive, it was cheaper and more reliable, and corroded no more quickly than the quill lost its points. Note that most quills were trimmed of all or nearly all the feather.

²¹ See <http://www.jasa.net.au/quillpen.htm> or <http://www.regia.org/quill2.htm>

- **Using a dip pen:** We have all become so used to grabbing a sharpie and just scribbling till it runs out, that the idea of writing as a craft skill can seem a bit intimidating. First bear in mind that you will never get to the point where a dip pen feels as easy and convenient as a ball point or roller ball, or even a modern fountain pen. Dip pens and inks are not stable, standard, and homogenized, but constantly changing. A new pen point is stiff and tricky till you break it in, and it will then continue changing until it gradually becomes unusable. You have to clean it after every use (keep a small cloth “pen wipe” and use coffee or spit). Your ink will change, too, depending on evaporation, weather, and -- for all I know -- phases of the moon. But having said that, if you regularly use your pen you will fairly quickly find yourself surprised at how well it works and how much fun it becomes. Key points to remember:
 - First, think brush rather than ballpoint; paint, don’t press.
 - Second, practice – keep a journal or copy letters. Try to write something every day. To brush up on your cursive writing, you can begin by using a ball point.
 - The script most in vogue in our period is Spencerian, which had a number of slight variants and countless individual interpretations. Most of the small letters are identical to contemporary cursive; the capitals differ primarily in favoring a lot of additional loops. If you search online, you can find several facsimiles of period correspondence²².
 - That said, don’t worry too much about how pretty your handwriting is. In original records you’ll see roughly three levels of handwriting – an ornate hand for formal documents or showing off, a business hand for everyday communication, and a rough hand for casual messages and notes. I’ve seen all three types in the same man’s copy book. In the Order Book of the 16th Michigan at the National Archives one sees some of the first type early in the war (along with some really florid quill work), but mostly the second. By late 1864 the writing looks decidedly modern, with even the capitals losing their ornaments.
- **Ink:** Use black ink. Red ink was also issued, primarily for drawing lines between entries in letter indexes and descriptive books. You can find authentically made inks (see Sullivans for powder; John Neal Booksellers has oak gall and walnut inks, as well as period nibs and instruction books). I’ve had good luck with Higgins Eternal – at least for awhile -- but I would advise you to use whatever works for you; I happen to believe that the fact that you’re writing is more important than the chemical composition of your ink. Avoid India ink, which will quickly clog your nib and cause massive blotting. Fountain pen ink will work, but is too thin and runny to be reliable.
- **Inkwells:** Aka inkstands, ink pots, and just plain “inks.” A great many 19th century glass and ceramic inkwells have survived and can be bought online. Lord’s Encyclopedia shows a variety of dug examples. I do not know what issue inkwells

²² E.g., <http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/isr/sheary/website/civilwar/docs/doclist2c.htm>

looked like. Round or hexagonal plain glass inkwells currently cost from \$5-\$15 for an ordinary example and go up from there. But you're a soldier – ordinary should do for you. There are so many possible variations that I advise you to spend a few hours online researching. Ideally you'd want a "traveling inkstand" such as those made by the Silliman Company during the war: these were small (about 2" high), wooden, screwtop barrels with a small glass vial inside. The problem is price, and the field readiness of any antique. Again, you will find that period inkwells tend to have narrow openings (think quill again), which will affect the sort of pen you use.

- **Pencils:** If all else fails, just use a pencil. It's not appropriate for updating your official books or corresponding with the Adjutant General, but will do under most field conditions. The niggardly ration in the Regulations illustrates how much more expensive they were than pens, but their practicality won out. In looking at the Archives' microfilmed records of Corps-level letters and telegrams I discovered that, from 1863 on, more and more of even the highest level communications in the field were done in pencil. The round cedar pencils available from sutlers are fine, though they would be more indicative of well-made German imports than domestically produced examples. Pencil sharpeners may have been invented, but do not seem to have been available – use your knife. For a stylish yet practical touch, you can keep your pencil in your coat pocket, secured by a string tied to a buttonhole in the manner of a topographical engineer.²³ If the string is the right length and the pencil correctly marked, you have a handy stadia sight, too.²⁴
- **Mechanical Pencils.** Often referred to in diaries as "silver" or "gold" pencils, these were also in use during the war, though the propelling mechanism tended to be a simple push button rather than screw. Many later examples are available and bear a close resemblance to period pencils. The leads, interestingly, were not always black. Again, from Dodge, on July 20, 1862: "As you see, my letter acknowledges the receipt of the pencil you sent out (a blue everpointed pencil), just the thing..."
- **Erasers:** Rubber erasers date back to the late 18th century but became common after the patenting of vulcanization in 1844. Try to find a naturally colored piece. Pieces of "india rubber" are mentioned not only by Charles Dickens, but in at least one period abstract of stationery supplies.
- **Erasers (steel):** According to collector and reenactor Mallen Cunningham, the erasers noted on QM quarterly returns were small steel blades (somewhat like scalpels) used to scrape ink from the page. Similar blades are still available at some drafting supply stores.
- **Rubber bands:** Patented in England in 1845. Virginia Mescher of Ragged Soldier Sutlery notes that "Stationer's Bands" (1/2 to 2 inches wide) appear in an 1860 catalogue of rubber and gutta percha goods. "Gum bands" appear on at least one

²³ See [Maps and Mapmakers of the Civil War](#)

²⁴ Thanks to Tim O'Neil for that tip. See information about his Staff College at <http://www.cwlhi.org>

stationery return (see <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/sd/r19sd4.htm>, series #19.159).

- **Folders:** At McDowell I carried three cardboard folders – one for stationery (blanks and extra forms), one for rosters, and one for common forms. I’ve since moved to a pasteboard portfolio (again from the friendly local art supply store). The paper folders mentioned in stationery abstracts were apparently wooden rulers about 3 1/2” wide used to, well, fold paper.
- **Paper Fasteners:** Staples will not appear until the late ‘70s and paperclips must wait till the end of the century. For our period, use straight pins, thread, or ribbon. Stationers serving the City of London still provide a variety of interesting fasteners and tools, such as “Treasury Tags” and “Lawyer’s Bodkins”, but I have insufficient information on their use here. Ornate bronze letter clips – like binder or “bulldog” clips on steroids – saw use in some homes and offices, but seem a bit rich for clerks.
- **Where to put all this:** As with most other things, there is no universal answer, although we find interesting hints:
 - *Company desks* were generally custom made, sometimes quite ingeniously,²⁵ and often from hardtack boxes, which had the advantage of being available, durable, and transportable. Frederick Gaede has documented the production of several nearly identical desks by a Federal carpentry shop at 19th Street and New York Avenue in Washington City. These were of 1” thick pine boards, neatly dovetailed together, 18” by 18” and 12” deep. The inside space was divided by thinner boards in three rows of four by four-inch cubbyholes, with a bottom space, about 4” by 18,” sufficiently large to hold the company books. The front face is paneled and folds down as a writing surface. On top sits a japanned handle, which seems entirely too petite for this sturdy desk.
 - Lord’s Encyclopedia mentions a Confederate “*Adjutant’s Knapsack*” with compartments for forms and papers.²⁶
 - At various events I have used a second *haversack* to carry books, folders, writing equipment, and, of course, a copy of Kautz’s The Company Clerk. This proved

²⁵ E.g., Mark Jaeger has uncovered the following in the United States Army and Navy Journal, 5 December 1863: “A FIELD DESK.--We have lately seen the plan of a very ingenious field desk for brigade headquarters, devised by Lieutenant E. B. VAN WINKLE, late of Brigadier-General E. L. VIELE's staff. It is the result of personal experience with the field desks in ordinary use in our Army, and is designed to remedy their defects and increase their advantages. In a chest 42 x 30 by 24 inches are included two desks with pigeon holes for every letter of the alphabet, and four in addition; drawers for a month's supply of stationery and candles and retained papers; places for fixed inkstands for red and black ink, so constructed as to secure them from losing ink in moving; racks for record books and books of reference; also four stools and stand for the desk; and two tables, one of which is capable of containing six months' supply of blanks [forms]. All these are so arranged as to be packed in the small space named, forming a chest which is portable and just the width of an army wagon.”

²⁶ Again, thanks to Mark Jaeger for digging this up.

more portable, accessible, and convenient all round than trying to stow everything in my knapsack, though I have since streamlined the contents to portfolio, journal, inkstand, and a very small quantity of office supplies (pencil, eraser, pocket rule, etc.). I hang the haversack over my left shoulder and push it all the way to my back so it doesn't block access to my cartridge box (after all, the pen may be mightier than the sword, but a rifle-musket trumps both). Another example of the use of a haversack for something other than rations comes from Alfred Apted of the Brady Sharpshooters, 16th Michigan who, during the Battle of the Wilderness on May 24, 1864, writes that "one ball passed through the bottom of my haversack spoiling quite a lot of paper and envelopes, but I was glad that it was not worse."²⁷

- Several diarists mention the use of *portfolios*; Clayton writes, on September 21, 1863 -- an occasion in which the 19th Iowa was in light marching order, without knapsacks -- "One of the boys happened to bring his port folio along in his haversack, and I was fortunate enough to get this sheet of paper and envelope."
- Rob Jonas has found, and is investigating the possibility of reproducing, a period accordion folder made from leather, which would serve as a sort of portable filing system for folded forms and letters.
- Map and dispatch cases existed in various forms, but might be a little rich for a clerk.
- A tip for keeping completed forms within the knapsack, desk, haversack, or other container comes from The Army Navy Journal of October 22, 1864, which recommends keeping squad reports in "large sized envelopes, sealed, and then reopened at one end."

²⁷ Another ball passed through the *coffee pot strapped on top of his knapsack*, which is just one more thing that would have got him in trouble on the AC Forum...

IX. Problems of the Confederate Clerk

At this point I will only attempt a brief overview, which I hope to flesh out in a future revision of the “School” as I learn more. Some general observations seem valid: as much as it could, the Confederate army attempted to follow the forms and procedures of the old U.S. Army. This should surprise no one since most of its commanders, and the President, had graduated from West Point. The structure of the Confederate government paralleled that of the Federal government, with a very similar War Department (save for a few interesting variants in the Signal Corps and other secret services), and an only slightly simplified Treasury Department. Regulations copied the U. S. Regulations and most, if not all, of the forms were essentially the same. As but one of many possible examples, Robert Patrick writes, on February 16, 1863, “I have been working very hard to-day on abstract ‘K’...” – the same record of special requisitions that his Federal counterparts would have labored over.

Nonetheless, the Confederates faced awful shortages. These were not limited to materiel. The much greater industrial base and transportation networks of the north also meant that it had proportionally more clerks experienced in shipping, receiving, inventory, stenography, accounting, and general business correspondence. Of the population of the south, over one third were slaves to whom literacy was generally forbidden by law. Of the white population, Bell Irvin Wiley notes a review of North Carolina musters indicating an illiteracy rate of as much as 40%.²⁸ Robert Patrick writes, on July 4, 1864:

I was not aware that there was so much ignorance in the South until I came into the army. Here I am thrown amongst all classes. There is a considerable number around me now, asking questions... They didn't know there was such a thing as short hand writing. There are a great many officers who hold high positions in our army, who are woefully deficient in the commonest English branches, and sometimes their office is one that imperatively demands a common education.

A paucity of skilled clerks and a high general level of illiteracy would provide a considerable challenge in keeping books by the Regulations, even had everything else been available in abundance. It wasn't, and the Confederacy faced the additional stress of continual pressure from the Army and Navy of the United States and their massive supporting forces of quartermasters, commissaries, storekeepers, and clerks. In contrast, the lack of a dependable logistical infrastructure gave the Confederate counter-invasions that ended at Antietam, Gettysburg, and Chattanooga the character of great raids rather than sustained operations.

Despite this, the Confederate forces persevered, with nearly as much heroism behind the pen as the sword. In April 1865, as the Orphan Brigade conducted its final operations, John Jackman took a train to Augusta, Georgia with “ ‘the Old Guard’ ...having in charge several boxes of books, papers, etc...”²⁹ – keeping what records they had to the very end.

²⁸ The Life of Johnny Reb, LSU Press, 2000 p. 336.

²⁹ Diary of a Confederate Soldier, USC Press, 1990, p. 166

X. Areas Ripe for Further Research:

Basically all of the above. I invite any reader who has additional information or insights to contact me (again, that's m.a.schaffner@att.net), especially on the following:

- The whole question of regulations vs. reality; e.g., how complete and timely the paperwork actually was at various places and times.
- The materials actually used, both in garrison and in the field.
- The requirement of different states for additional reports.
- Additional information on the Confederate Army. We know from Jackman's diary that the South also endeavored to maintain a structure of records and reports, often with great resourcefulness. Jackman writes of ruling reports by hand. Mallen Cunningham's collection includes a morning report book captured from the Union Army and, with suitable emendations, put to use by the Confederates. We have hardly begun to uncover the story of the Confederate clerk.

XI. Annotated References

I imagine this list will expand with future revisions of “School of the Clerk” as we encounter and uncover more and more information about clerical work and the vicissitudes of writing from the front. In the meantime, these and the Revised Regulations provide a good place to start.

Apted, Alfred. Diary. *Typed manuscript prepared by the Apted family, 1984*. An obscure and rare document that consists primarily of one-line daily entries, generally about the weather. Within it though are a few invaluable fragments, including that gem about the damage he suffered in the Wilderness. Countless neglected diaries of this type must exist and one should ignore none of them.

Billings, John D. Hardtack and Coffee, The Unwritten Story of Army Life. University of Nebraska Press, 1993. With Wilbur Hinman’s “Si Klegg,” this is one of the essential sources for day to day life in the Union Army. Like Hinman, however, Billings writes from the perspective of postwar nostalgia, years after the life he looks back on, and the reader is well advised to consider contemporary accounts, in diaries or letters, before accepting any of their statements as gospel.

Davis, William C., ed. Diary of a Confederate Soldier. *The Journal of John S. Jackman*. University of South Carolina Press, 1990. Yes, Virginia, there were clerks in the Confederate army. Jackman was the regimental clerk of the 9th Kentucky in the “Orphan Brigade” and refers several times to his duties, beginning in September, 1862, when the sick Jackman was “Detailed in the Adjutant’s office as a clerk. Am hardly able to do the duty of a soldier, any way.” The bulk of his diary was kept in “a notebook out of old quartermaster blanks.”

Elder, Donald C., ed. A Damned Iowa Greyhound. *Letters of William Henry Harrison Clayton*, University of Iowa Press, 1998. Despite the bellicose title chosen by the editor, Clayton’s account of the war has a good deal more of the pen than the sword in it. But that’s fine by me. A young farmer who had studied at Hughes High School in Cincinnati before the war, Clayton refers several times to his administrative duties, e.g.: “I can hardly get time enough to write a letter without being interrupted. I have been honored with the position of company clerk and do all of the writing pertaining to the company – which is no little I can tell you...” and, “I am considerably fatigued and you must excuse this scribbling. I know you would do so if you were to see me writing. I am seated on the ground, beneath my shelter tent sort of tailor fashion with the paper on my port folio before me.”

Fisk, Wilbur. Hard Marching Every Day. *Emil & Ruth Rosenblatt, ed.* University Press of Kansas, 1992. Although primarily a combat infantryman with a literary bent, Fisk also worked in the AG’s office during the 1864 valley campaign, and later as a clerk at a hospital at City Point and has several interesting observations on the returns he compiled. This is an example of a great general account that also has information of use to students of administrivia.

Gaede, Frederick C. “A Federal Civil War Field Desk,” in *Military Collector and Historian*, Vol. 55, No. 3, Washington, D.C. Fall 2003. A small jewel of research into the ordinary.

Hartshorn, Newton Timothy. “The Letters of Newton Timothy Hartshorn,” <http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~hartshrn/NTHletters.htm> I’ve only seen this online, but it’s well worth printing off (it’s fairly short, too). Hartshorn served as a clerk with a regular engineer company until picking up a commission in Washington in 1863. In addition to his heroic efforts on the peninsula (see quote on page 5 above), Hartshorn has numerous additional references to clerking.

Higginson, Thomas Wentworth. *Army Life in a Black Regiment*, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Dover, 2002. Higginson served as Colonel of the “1st South Carolina Volunteers, later 33rd United States Colored Troops, from November 1862 to May 1864, when he was invalided out. An interesting view of the challenges of command in one of the new USCT regiments, by a confirmed abolitionist.

Hinman, Wilbur F. *Corporal Si Klegg and His “Pard”* The Williams Publishing Company, Cleveland, Ohio, 1887. See above, under Billings. A great, must-have book for the northern reenactor, but tainted perhaps a little by the warm glow of nostalgia.

Kautz, August V. *The Company Clerk*, J.B. Lippencott & Co., Philadelphia, 1865. Reprint by Crescent City Sutlers in paperback. Sullivan Press offers the 1863 first edition in hardback. The only difference I’ve noticed lies in the costs of various items of clothing and property. In either edition it serves as our most authoritative reference – Hardee’s, Casey’s, Gilham’s, and Scott’s for clerks. We can assume that battle occasioned variations in clerking as it did in tactics, but this is our essential starting point.

Kautz, August V. *Customs of Service for Non-Commissioned Officers and Soldiers*. Stackpole Books, 2001.

Kautz, August V. *Customs of Service for Officers*. Stackpole Books, 2001. Both of the above are mentioned in passing throughout this work and are extremely important for understanding the context for *The Company Clerk*.

LeDuc, William G. *Recollections of a Civil War Quartermaster*. The North Central Publishing Company, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1963. About a third of this deals with LeDuc’s war time experience as a quartermaster, with some fascinating accounts of the challenges he faced. Contains an interesting defense of Hooker.

W. Springer Menge and J. August Shimrak, eds. *The Civil War Notebook of Daniel Chisholm*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1989. Chisolm enlisted February, 1864, 116th PVI (attached Irish Brigade). First battle, The Wilderness. Interesting details: records regular inspections starting up again within a few weeks of the opening of the campaign; opening boxes at the end of the campaign and finding several times as many stored

overcoats as there are men left in the regiment; returning, on furlough, the wallet of a dead comrade to his widow – and taking a receipt.

Newman, Marc, ed. Potomac Diary – A Soldier’s Account of the Capital in Crisis, 1864-1865, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston SC 2000. Journal of Richtmyer Hubbell, a 21 year old one-time medical student, corporal and clerk in Co. M, 1st Wisconsin Heavy Artillery, posted at Fort Weed, Virginia, in the defenses of Washington.

O’Brien, Kevin E., ed. My Life in the Irish Brigade, The Civil War Memoirs of Private William McCarter, 116th Pennsylvania Infantry, Da Capo Press, 1996. Clerk to General Meagher, his penmanship endeared him to his commander; his dedication to his comrades earned him a shattered writing arm at Fredericksburg.

Ray, William. Four Years With the Iron Brigade. *Da Capo Press, 2002*. One of the great soldier’s accounts of service in the Army of the Potomac, Ray’s book overflows with details of the quotidian existence of the union soldier. From combat to laundry, from varnishing Lorenzes to sewing extensions to his shelter half so he can stretch out, everything Ray does seems to fascinate him. Lucky for us, because the result is a work that no reenactor should ignore. While his exposure to clerical tasks is episodic, his journal also contains many references to writing and writing materials, including the popular sport of mail-ordering pens from New York for resale to comrades.

Rhodes, Robert Hunt, ed. All For the Union. *Diary and Letters of Elisha Hunt Rhodes. Vintage, 1992*. Most of us know Rhodes as one of the heroes of the Ken Burns’ series on the Civil War. Who knew he was also, at least for a time, a clerk? At the start of the war, having attended a Commercial College, Rhodes worked as a clerk for a mill supplier. By the end he had become a Colonel. In between, the winter of 1861-62 saw him as a clerk on General Keyes’ staff in Washington, waking at seven to a leisurely breakfast and a smoke, going to the office at nine, and – from ten to three – compiling morning reports. Nice work if you can get it.

Sears, Stephen W., ed. On Campaign with the Army of the Potomac, The Civil War Journal of Theodore Ayrault Dodge, Stephen W. Sears, ed., Cooper Square Press, NY 2001. Dodge served as adjutant in the 101st New York, the remnants of which were absorbed into the 119th after Second Bull Run. At Gettysburg, Dodge was seriously wounded in the defeat of the XIth Corps on the first day and, shortly after, left the Army minus a foot. The journal, compiled after the war, comprises Dodge’s letters to his mother as well as diary entries, which themselves he often included in letters home.

Taylor, F. Jay, ed. Reluctant Rebel – The Secret Diary of Robert Patrick 1861-1865, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge LA, 1959, 1987. The journal of a Confederate brigade clerk in the Army of Tennessee. Patrick wrote the original in shorthand, which perhaps explains the freedom with which he describes the army, the war, and the men and women he encounters during his service.

Taylor, Lenette S., “The Supply for Tomorrow Must Not Fail” – The Civil War of Captain Simon Perkins Jr., a Union Quartermaster. The Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio, 2004. An excellent view of quartermaster operations at division and army level in central Tennessee, 1862-1864. Taylor’s principal source was the trove of original documents – eight crates full – that Perkins brought home from the war and his descendants preserved.

XII. Attached Forms:

All these are meant to be trimmed down to 8 by 10.5 inch sheets; the invoices, receipts, and passes to slips of 8 by 3.5 inches. In most cases this will result in a form of the correct size although the 52 should probably be on foolscap, i.e., legal. These are of course not facsimiles, but as close as I could get using Word. You may find, online or elsewhere, original examples better suited to your unit, but these will get you started.

- 1) **Morning Report** – based on examples from Sullivan Press and others. I do not know that there was any one prescribed form – there is none in the Regulations. Companies were meant to use morning report books, hardbound, with pages 10.5” wide by 16” long, with the columns running across two pages and rows sufficient to cover a month. The books were turned in to the adjutant at morning first sergeants’ call and returned later in the day after the consolidated reports had been completed. Obviously this was not a practical way to proceed in the field, so the same information was handled on forms; often these, too, were 21” wide, which would both match up to the consolidated report and facilitate later transcription to the official book.
- 2) **Form 2. Roster for Duty.** From Kautz’s Clerk, modified to include lines.
- 3) **Form 1. for Sick Book.** Same source.
- 4) **Form 13. Provision Return.** From Kautz and the Revised Regulations; for use at the Company level.
- 5) **Form 14. Consolidated ration return.** From the Revised Regulations; for use at the regimental level. Combine 13s on the 14, return the 13s to the companies, who will then draw their rations; give this to the Commissary of Subsistence for a control.
- 6) **Form 21. Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing.** From Kautz’s Clerk. Used by the company to report casualties as soon as possible after action.
- 7) **Invoices.** A generic form to record anything you receive; have the issuer sign it.
- 8) **Receipts.** A generic form to give to someone turning over property. Don’t use it if you’re providing another form, such as the 13.
- 9) **Passes.** A generic form based on Kautz, but these weren’t standard. See the text for a variation.
- 10) **Form 52, clothing receipt roll.** If you issue clothing at an event (from a “group buy”, say), this is a good way to keep track of who got it.
- 11) **Weekly strength report.** This is not an official form, but an example of the sort of additional records that might be required by commanding officers. This example comes from the Order Book of the 8th New Jersey, courtesy of Rob Jonas.

- 12) **Consolidated Morning Report.** For your weekends as a regimental clerk. Like the morning report itself, this could vary from unit to unit throughout the war and would frequently be printed on much wider paper.
- 13) **Multi-day Company Morning Report.** Sort of a cross between a one-day form and the Morning Report book, this is lined for a fortnight; it would be turned in to the adjutant by 9:00 and returned at first sergeant's call for reuse.
- 14) **Guard Report.** For keeping a complete record of those assigned to, and incidents occurring on guard.
- 15) **Register of Ordnance and Ordnance Stores** and
- 16) **Register of Camp and Garrison Equipage.** These forms track who has what at the company level, for the benefit of the officer in command, the first sergeant, and any noncommissioned officer charged with camp equipage for a squad. They would also serve as source documents for monthly and quarterly reports.
- 17) **Roster for One Week.** A reenactorism. Call me a farb and shoot me, but I find the full 30 day form too cumbersome for practical use in a weekend event, so I created this variant. I justify myself on the assumption that it's better to use a period-style form than nothing, and that they, too, devised their own forms and reports when they thought it appropriate.³⁰
- 18) **Certified Statement for Losses Incurred in Action.** Not a form, per se, but the form of statement to make in order to explain ordnance and ordnance stores lost in action, provided in Instructions for Making Quarterly Returns of Ordnance and Ordnance Stores (GPO, 1863), also presented in Kautz's Company Clerk.

³⁰ Examples include not only the 8th NJ weekly form above, but squad daily forms and others discussed in the October 22, 1864 number of the Army and Navy Journal under "The Care and Discipline of Troops" (thanks to Mark Jaeger).

Morning Report of Captain _____, Company (), _____ Regiment of _____
Volunteers

PRESENT.														ABSENT.						Present and Absent		REMARKS.	
For Duty.				Sick.			On Extra, or Daily Duty.			In Arrest, or Confinement				Total	Detached Service		Furlough		With-out Leave.	Alterations since last Report.			
Captain.	1 st Lieutenant.	2 nd Lieutenant.	Sergeants.	Corporals.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.		Enlisted Men.	Aggregate.	Aggregate last Report.

Station:

Date:.....

(Signed).....

Commanding the Co.

(Signed).....

First Sergeant.

Note – The names of the absentees, both Officers and Soldiers, must be given on the back of the report

Morning Report of Captain _____, Company (), _____ Regiment of _____
Volunteers

PRESENT.														ABSENT.						Present and Absent		REMARKS.	
For Duty.				Sick.			On Extra, or Daily Duty.			In Arrest, or Confinement				Total	Detached Service		Furlough		With-out Leave.	Alterations since last Report.			
Captain.	1 st Lieutenant.	2 nd Lieutenant.	Sergeants.	Corporals.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.		Enlisted Men.	Aggregate.	Aggregate last Report.

Station:

Date:.....

(Signed).....

Commanding the Co.

(Signed).....

First Sergeant.

Note – The names of the absentees, both Officers and Soldiers, must be given on the back of the report

Form 1

Company __, _____ _____ Names _____, 186__	In hospital	In quarters	For duty	Excused	REMARKS

Form 13.

Provision Return of _____ Company, _____ Regiment of _____, for _____ days, commencing the _____ day of _____, 186 _____, and ending the _____ day of _____, 186 _____.

STATION.	Number of men.	Number of women.	Total.	Number of days.	Number of rations.	RATIONS OF																REMARKS.												
						Pork.	Salt beef.	Fresh beef.	Flour.	Beans.	Rice.	Coffee.	Tea.	Sugar.	Vinegar.	Sperm candles.	Adamant candles.	Soap.	Salt.															

The A.C.S. will issue on the above return,

_____, *Commanding Officer*
_____ , *Commanding Company*

NOTES. – This return must embrace only the *actual* strength of the company *present*, including the authorized company women *present*.
 The sick in hospital, hospital attendants, & c., will be returned for, by the medical officer in charge, on a *separate* return.
 Subsistence stores for the use of officers, their families, and authorized servants, may be *purchased* from the commissariat.
 Provisions should ordinarily be drawn for a period of from five to ten days at a time.

FORM 14.

*Consolidated Ration Return for _____ Regiment of _____, for _____ days, commencing the ____ day of _____,
186 , and ending the ____ day of _____, 186 .*

STATION.	Number of men.	Number of women.	Total.	Number of days.	Number of rations.	RATIONS OF																REMARKS.		
						Pork.	Salt beef.	Fresh beef.	Flour.	Hard Bread.	Beans.	Peas.	Rice.	Hominy.	Coffee.	Tea.	Sugar.	Vinegar.	Sperm candles.	Adamant candles.	Soap.		Salt.	Pepper.

The A.C.S. will issue on the above return, _____,

_____,

Major _____, Reg't of _____, Comd'g Regiment

Col. _____ Reg't of _____, Comd'g Post

NOTES. - This return must embrace only the strength of the regiment *actually present*, -not those in Hospital, nor those provisioned elsewhere.

Rations must not be issued to officers' servants unless they are *enlisted* men. In this case, the *names, companies, &c.* of servants will be stated in the column of "Remarks."

Every return upon which provisions have been *issued* must be entered on the *proper* Abstract.

Form 21

Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing in _____, at _____, _____, 18__

NAMES.	Rank.	Killed.	WOUNDED.			Missing.	REMARKS.
			Mortally.	Severely.	Slightly.		

I certify that the above is a correct return of the killed, wounded, and missing in _____
_____, at the engagement at _____ on _____ 18__

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

Invoice of _____, this day turned over to _____,
Co. __, _____, by _____, _____, viz:

Number	Articles

Signed _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

Invoice of _____, this day turned over to _____,
Co. __, _____, by _____, _____, viz:

Number	Articles

Signed _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

Invoice of _____, this day turned over to _____,
Co. __, _____, by _____, _____, viz:

Number	Articles

Signed _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

Received this day, of _____, _____, _____
the following articles of _____, viz:

Number	Articles

Signed _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

Received this day, of _____, _____, _____
the following articles of _____, viz:

Number	Articles

Signed _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

Received this day, of _____, _____, _____
the following articles of _____, viz:

Number	Articles

Signed _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

_____, Company __, _____, has permission to be absent for the purpose of _____, until _____.

1st Sergt., Co. __, _____

Capt., Co __, _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

_____, Company __, _____, has permission to be absent for the purpose of _____, until _____.

1st Sergt., Co. __, _____

Capt., Co __, _____

In the Field near _____, _____, 186__

_____, Company __, _____, has permission to be absent for the purpose of _____, until _____.

1st Sergt., Co. __, _____

Capt., Co __, _____

No. 52.

We, the undersigned Non-commissioned Officers, Artificers, Musicians, and Privates of _____, do hereby acknowledge to have received of _____ the several articles of Clothing set opposite our respective names.

Date of the issue.	Name and designation of the soldier.	Caps.	Cap-covers.	Pompons.	Eagles and rings.	UNIFORM COATS.				UNIFORM JACKETS.				Trowsers, pairs.	Flannel shirts.	Drawers, pairs.	Boots, cavalry, pairs.	Bootees, infantry, pairs.	Stockings, pairs.	Leather stocks.	Great-coats.	Fatigue overalls.	Stable-frocks.	Blankets.	Signatures.	Witness.
						N. C. S.	Sergeants'	Corporals'	Musicians'	Privates'	Sergeants'	Corporals'	Musicians'													

Notes. – Erasures and alterations of entries are prohibited.
 Regular and extra issues will be distinguished on the receipt-roll.
 Each signature, whether written by the soldier or acknowledged *by mark*, must be witnessed.
 Vacant space will be filled by a cipher.
 Mounted men may receive *one* pair of “boots” and *two* pairs of “boot-ees,” instead of *four* pairs of bootees.

As the metallic shoulder-scales, letters, numbers, castles, and shells and flames will last for many years, they will be borne on the returns as company property, in the same manner as are sashes, knapsacks and straps, haversacks, canteens and straps, and other articles of camp and garrison equipage, and will be charged to the soldier only when lost or destroyed through neglect.

Consolidated Morning Report of Colonel _____, _____ Regiment of _____ Volunteers

COMMAND or POST	PRESENT.													ABSENT.				PRESENT and ABSENT		REMARKS. <i>Alterations since last Report.</i>																
	For Duty.									Sick.		On Extra, or Daily Duty.	In Arrest, or Confinement	Total	Detached Service	Furlough	With-out Leave.	Total	Aggregate.		Aggregate last Report.															
	Colonel.	Lieutenant Colonel.	Major.	Captains.	1 st Lieutenants.	2 nd Lieutenants.	Sergeants.	Corporals.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers.	Musicians.	Privates.	Commissioned Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers.	Musicians.	Privates.				Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.	Commissioned Officers.	Enlisted Men.					

Station:

Date:.....

(Signed).....
Adjutant.

(Signed).....
Commanding the Regiment

FORM OF GUARD REPORT

Report of a Guard mounted at _____, on the _____, and relieved on the _____

Parole.	Lieutenants.	Sergeants.	Corporals.	Musicians.	Privates.	Total.	Aggregate.	Articles in Charge.						Received the foregoing articles.			
Countersign.																	
Detail.																	

LIST OF THE GUARD

Reliefs, and when posted.										Where Posted	Remarks.
1st Relief. From ___ to ___ and ___ to ___			2d Relief. From ___ to ___ and ___ to ___			3d Relief. From ___ to ___ and ___ to ___					
No.	Name.	Co	Rt.	Name.	Co	Rt.	Name.	Co	Rt.		

LIST OF PRISONERS

No.	Names.	Company	Regiment.	Confined.		Charges.	Sentences.	Remarks.
				When.	By whom.			

Lieut., _____ Regt. _____

Commanding the Guard.

Form 5.

Register of Camp and Garrison Equipage issued to _____

Date.	Names.	Bugles.	Letters.	Numbers.	Scales.	Knapsacks.	Knapsack straps.	Haversacks.	Canteens.	Canteen-straps.	Greatcoat-straps.	Spades.	Axes.	Hatches.	Camp-kettles.	Mess-pans.	Shelter-halves &c.			Remarks.		

NOTE. – Sergeants or corporals in charge of tents or messes are charged with the spades, axes, hatchets, camp-kettles, and mess-pans issued to their squads or messes. A separate register should be kept for those articles not issued to the soldiers, as for sashes, fifes, drums, bugles, &c. &c.

[FORM OF CERTIFIED STATEMENT FOR LOSSES INCURRED IN ACTION]

Camp near Murfreesboro' Tenn.,

December 31, 1862

I certify, on honor, that on the 30th day of December, 1862, at Murfreesboro', Tenn., the Stores enumerated below were lost, under the following circumstances:

The Regiment to which my company belongs was directed to advance under the fire of the enemy to take a certain position; in so doing, ten privates and two non-commissioned officers were killed, and ten privates and one non-commissioned officer were severely wounded.

The arms carried by all these men were left on the field, as we were repulsed, and they could not be recovered. The following is the list of Stores so abandoned:

23 Springfield rifled muskets, calibre .58.

12 Infantry cartridge boxes and plates.

12 Infantry cartridge-box belts and plates.

12 Infantry waist belts and plates.

12 cap pouches and picks.

12 gun slings.

10 ball screws.

1 spring vise.

JAMES G. BROWN

Captain 250th Del. Vols.

Commanding Company C

IN DUPLICATE.

Appendix 1

BOOKS

An Extract from
Scott's Military Dictionary
by
Colonel H. L. Scott
Inspector-General, U.S.A.

New York:
D. Van Nostrand, 192 Broadway
London:
Truebner & Co.
1861

BOOKS. *Regimental* books to be kept, are: 1. General order book; 2. Regimental order book; 3. Letter book; 4. Index of Letters; 5. Size or descriptive book; 6. Monthly returns. *Company* books required are: 1. Descriptive book; 2. Clothing book; and 3. Order book.

The following rules for keeping books at the head-quarters of the army and in the adjutant-general's office may, with modifications that will readily occur, be used with armies in the field, at the head-quarters of divisions, departments, regiments, &c.:

I. LETTERS RECEIVED.-(7 quires, demy-Russia, with spring back.)

1. All official communications received will be entered in this book, excepting only such letters of mere transmittal of orders, returns, certificates of disability, requisitions, &c., as need not be preserved. The orders, returns, certificates, requisitions, &c., themselves, will be appropriately entered in other books specially provided for the purpose.

2. Preliminary to being entered every letter will be folded and endorsed. Letter paper will be folded in three equal folds-*Cap* paper in four. The endorsement will give the place and date of letter, name, and rank of writer, and a summary of its contents, and if other papers accompany the letter, the number transmitted will also be noted on the back, in red ink. Each enclosure will be numbered and bear the same *office marks* as the letter transmitting it. Figures A, b, c, exemplify the manner of endorsing.

Fig. A.

<p>G. 1</p> <p>Fort Adams, R. I. May 8, 1849.</p> <p>Col. _____, 3d Artillery, Com'd'g ==</p> <p>Relative to unhealthi- ness of quarters at the Post, and enclosing Surgeon ___'s report on the subject, dated Apr. 30, 1849; forwards also a copy of a report, dated Aug. 16, 1840, of a Board of Officers assembled to examine into the condition of the quarters.</p> <hr/> <p>[Two enclosures.]</p> <p>Rec'd (Hd. Qrs.) May 11, 1849</p>
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fig. b.

<p>1.</p> <p>G. 1. (Hd. Qrs.)</p> <p>May 11, 1849</p>

fig. c.

<p>2.</p> <p>G. 1. (Hd. Qrs.)</p> <p>May 11, 1849</p>

3. Every letter required to be preserved will be entered *alphabetically* and numbered-the series of numbers beginning and terminating with the year, and including all letters *dated* (whether received or not) within the year. Only one number will be given to each letter received with its enclosures, so that the sum of the numbers under each

alphabetical entry in the book of "Letters Received," during any year, will show the number of letters received in that year.

4. As a general rule, every letter will be entered in the name of its writer; but there are cases where it is preferable, for convenience of reference, to enter it in the name of the person who forms the subject of the letter and not in that of the writer. Applications from citizens for the discharge of soldiers, &c., are of this nature. Usually, a single entry of each letter and its enclosures will suffice, but it may sometimes be necessary, in addition, to make entries in the names of one or more of the individuals to whom it relates. Such entries, however, will not be *numbered*, but merely contain the date of receipt, name of individual, place and date of the letter concerning him, with a reference, in red ink, to the number of that letter. Fig. E is an illustration of an entry of this kind.

5. The book of "Letters Received" will contain a *side* index extending throughout, and will be divided among the several letters of the alphabet according to the probable space required for entries under each letter. The book will be paged, and each page divided into three columns, headed "When received," "Name," "Date and purport of letter," respectively, as shown by figure *D*, which also exhibits the entry in the book of the letter represented by figure *A*.

Fig. E.

S. LETTERS RECEIVED.

1849.

When received.	Name.	Date and purport of letter.
May 11 th .	[Surgeon _____.]	Fort Adams, R.I., May 8, 1849. See No. 1., Letter G.

Fig. D.

LETTERS RECEIVED.

G.

1849.

When received.	Name.	Date and purport of letter.
May 11 th . 1.	Col. _____, 3d Artillery, command'g.	Fort Adams, R.I. May 8, 1849 Relative to unhealthiness of quarters at the Post, and enclosing Surgeon _____'s report on the subject, dated April 30, 1849; forwards also a copy of a report, dated Aug. 16, 1840, of a Board of Officers assembled to examine into the condition of the quarters.

6. Each entry will be separated from the one preceding it by a red ink line; and where two or more letters relate to the same subject they will be either filed together, or made to refer to each other by their *numbers*, and the filing or reference be noted in the book as well as on the letters themselves.

7. Letters from the Executive and Staff Departments and other public offices in Washington, will be entered alphabetically in the names of the *departments* or *offices* themselves, but the entry will always exhibit the writers' names likewise;-thus, communications from the War Department would be entered in the letter *W*, as follows "War, Secretary of, (Hon.,) &c."

8. Communications from the President will be entered in the letter *P*-from State Department, in *S*-Treasury, *T*-War, *W*-Navy, and its bureaux, *N*-Post Office and its bureaux, *N*-Interior, *I*-Attorney general, *A*-Adjutant-general's office, *A*-Quartermaster-general, *Q* -Subsistence, *S*-Surgeon-general, *S*-Paymaster-general, *P*-Engineer Department, *E*-Topographical Engineers, *E*-Ordnance, *O*-Recruiting service, Superintendent of, *R*—Pension Office, *P*-Comptrollers, (1st and 2d,) *C*-The several Auditors, *A* —Treasurer U. S., *T* -Commissioner Indian Affairs, *I*-General Land Office, *L* -Solicitor's Office, *S*-and Patent Office, *P*.

9. Communications from Governors of States will be entered in the names of the *States*, the entry showing likewise the Governors' names; -thus a letter from the Governor of New York would be entered in the letter *N*, as follows: "New York, Governor of, (His Excellency ,)" &c.

10. Letters from *Staff Officers*, written by direction of their generals, will be entered in the names of the *Generals* themselves;-thus a communication from General K's Staff Officer would be entered in the letter *K*, as follows:

"Bvt. Major Gen'l, comd'g West'n Div'n,"

"(by Assist. Adj. Gen'l -.)"

11. Communications addressed to the War Department or Adjutant-general's office, and thence referred, without an accompanying letter, to head-quarters for report, or to be disposed of, will be entered in the ordinary way, in the names of their writers, a note (in red ink) being simply made in the second column of the book, to show the fact of reference, thus-" (from A. G. O.)"

12. Where letters are referred from the office for report, &c., a note of the fact must be made (in red ink) in this book with a citation of the page, (or number of the letter,) in the "Endorsement" or "Letter Book" where the reference is recorded, thus-Ref'd for report to Comd'g Offi'r Fort T., May 11-see Book of "Endorsements," p. 3, -(or, "see Letter No. 7, vol. 1st.") When the communication is returned, a memorandum to this effect will be made in the book-" Returned with report, May 25th."

13. Should the portion of this book appropriated to any particular letter of the alphabet prove insufficient for entries under that letter, they will be transferred to a few of the last leaves allotted to some other letter of the alphabet, where there is more space than will probably be required. The fact of transfer will be noted in large characters, (in red ink,) at the bottom of the page from which transferred, and at the top of the page to which carried, as follows: "TRANSFERRED TO PAGE 250," and "BROUGHT FROM PAGE 60."

II. LETTER BOOK.-(7 quires, demy-Russia, with spring back.)

1. Every letter recorded in this book is numbered, (in red ink,) the numbers commencing and terminating with the year, and each letter is separated from the one which follows it by a red line.

2. The address of all letters should be at the top, the *surname* being written conspicuously in the margin, followed by the official title (if any) and Christian name, thus:

Bvt. Maj. Gen^l _____
Comd'g, &c., &c., &c., or
Esq. Samuel H.

3. Each letter should be *signed* in the record book by its *writer*.

4. Wherever copies of letters are furnished, the names of the persons to whom they are sent should be noted in red ink in the margin with the *date*, when the last differs from the date of the letter itself. In like manner, when a letter is addressed to one officer, under cover to his commander, &c., this fact should also be noted in red ink in the margin.

5. The name of every person to whom a letter is addressed is indexed alphabetically, in black ink, and the names of the individuals whom it principally concerns are indexed in red ink. A red ink line is drawn in the body of the letter under the names so indexed, to facilitate a reference to them. In the margin, immediately under the name of the person to whom a letter is addressed, there are two references, above and below a short red line, the one above (in red) indicates the last preceding letter to the same individual, and the one below (in black) the next following. A *detached* index is used until the record book is full, when the names are arranged under each letter as in City Directories, and thus classified they are transferred to the *permanent* index attached to the record book.

III. GENERAL ORDERS.-(7 quires, demy-Russia, with spring back.)

1. Every order recorded in this book should be signed by the staff officer whose signature was attached to the originals sent from the office, and each order should be separated from the one following by a red line.

2. The mode of numbering, distribution, and general form of orders are prescribed by the Regulations-(see paragraphs 904, 905, and 908, edition of 1847;) but the distribution in each particular case should be noted in red ink in the margin to show that the Regulations have been complied with; and where orders are sent to one officer, under cover to his commander, (which course ought always to be pursued,) or furnished at a date subsequent to that of their issue-these facts should likewise be added: where the order has been *printed*, it will be sufficient to write the word "*printed*" in red ink in the margin, to indicate that the widest circulation has been given to it.

3. There are *two* indexes attached to the book-one of *names*, the other of *subjects*-every order will be indexed ill the *latter* immediately after being copied.

For *names*, a *detached* index will first be used until the record book is full, when they will be arranged under each letter as in City Directories, and thus classified, transferred to the *permanent* alphabetical index attached to the record book. Every proper name will be indexed and a red line drawn in the body of the order under it, to facilitate a reference to it.

IV. SPECIAL ORDERS.-(7 quires, demy-Russia, with spring back.)

1. Every order recorded in this book should be *signed* by the staff officer whose signature was attached to the originals sent from the office, and each order should be separated from the one following by a red line.

2. The mode of numbering, distribution, and general form of orders are prescribed by the Regulations-(see paragraphs 904, 905, and 908, edition of 1847;) but the distribution in each particular case should be noted in red ink in the margin, to show that the Regulations have been complied with; and where orders are sent to one officer, under cover to his commander, (which course ought always to be pursued,) or furnished at a date subsequent to that of their issue-these facets should likewise be added.

3. There are two indexes attached to the book-one of *names*, the other of *subjects*-every order will be indexed in the latter immediately after being copied.

For *names*, a *detached* index will first be used until the record book is full, when they will be arranged under each letter as in City Directories, and thus classified, transferred to the *permanent* alphabetical index attached to the record book. Every proper name will be indexed and a red line drawn in the body of the order under it, to facilitate a reference to it.

V. ENDORSEMENTS AND MEMORANDA.-(5 quires, Cap-Russia, with spring back.)

1. Every endorsement made on letters or other communications sent from the office will be copied in this book, and be *signed* by the staff officer whose signature was attached to the endorsement itself. A brief description of the communication sent out (the name of its writer, date, subject, and *office marks*) should precede the record of the endorsement, to render the latter intelligible; and where such communication has been entered in the book of "letters received," the disposition made of it should also be noted in that book, with a citation of the *page* where the endorsement is recorded. Should the communication be returned to head-quarters, a memorandum will be made to that effect, with the date when received back, in all the books where the fact of the reference from the office may have been noted.

2. In the case of such papers as proceedings of general courts-martial, certificates of disability for the discharge of soldiers, requisitions for ordnance, &c., which are not filed at head-quarters, but forwarded thence for deposit in other offices, it will generally suffice to make a brief memorandum of the general-in-chief's action upon them, instead of copying the endorsements. Where the endorsement, however, settles any rule or principle, it ought, of course, to be copied in full.

3. The name and address of every officer to whom a communication is referred will be written in the margin, and all *proper* names, no matter in what connection employed, must be indexed.

4. The name of the person to whom a communication is sent will be indexed in black ink, and the names mentioned in the description prefixed to the endorsement on the communication, as well as in the endorsement itself, will be indexed in red ink. To facilitate a reference to these last names, a red line will be drawn under them. In the margin, immediately under the name of the person to whom a communication is addressed, there are two references, above and below a short red line; the one above (in red) indicates

the last preceding reference to the same individual, and the one below (in black) the next following.

VI. BOOK OF RETURNS.

Besides the foregoing blank books of appropriate size according to circumstances, the following books of reference are necessary: HETZEL'S Military Laws; Army Regulations; Ordnance Manual; Artillery Manual; Prescribed Tactics for Infantry, Artillery, and Cavalry; McCLELLAND'S Bayonet Exercise; Aide Memoire du Genie; Aide Memoire d'Etat Major; WHEATON'S International Law; KENT's or STORY's Commentaries; MAHAN's Field Fortifications; Military Dictionary.

Appendix 2

Selected Clothing and Property Costs, early, mid, and late war
U.S. Infantry

Item	Scott's ⁱ	Kautz 1 ⁱⁱ	Kautz 2 ⁱⁱⁱ
<i>Clothing</i>			
Uniform Hat	\$2.35	\$1.68	\$1.65
Forage Cap	\$0.57	\$0.56	\$0.58
Uniform Coat, Pvt.'s	\$6.56	\$7.21	\$7.00
Sack Coat, lined	\$2.56	\$3.14	\$3.12
Sack Coat, unlined	\$2.10	\$2.40	\$2.35
Trowsers, Sgt.'s	\$3.00	\$3.75	\$2.70
Trowsers, Corp.'s	\$2.87	\$3.75	\$2.70
Trowsers, Pvt.'s	\$2.82	\$3.55	\$2.50
Flannel Shirt	\$0.90	\$1.46	\$1.53
Knit Shirt	--	\$1.30	\$1.27
Drawers	\$0.71	\$0.95	\$0.90
Knit Drawers	--	\$1.00	\$1.04
Stockings, pairs	\$0.24	\$0.32	\$0.32
Bootees, sewed	\$2.20	\$2.05	\$2.05
Bootees, pegged	--	\$1.48	\$1.48
Great Coat	\$6.40	\$9.50	\$7.50
Blanket	\$2.44	\$3.60	\$3.25
Rubber Blanket	--	\$2.55	\$2.48
Painted Blanket	--	\$1.65	\$1.27
<i>Camp and Garrison Equipage^{iv}</i>			
Knapsack & straps	\$2.78	\$2.14	\$1.85
Haversack	\$0.39	\$0.56	\$0.49
Haversack, unpainted	--	\$0.48	\$0.38
Canteen	\$0.32	\$0.44 (complete)	\$0.41 (complete)
Canteen strap	\$0.14	\$0.15	\$0.15
Talma	\$5.00	\$5.00	--
<i>Ordnance</i>			
Cartridge Box	\$1.02	\$1.10	\$1.10
Cartridge Box Plate	\$0.07	\$0.10	\$0.10
Cart. Box Belt	\$0.55	\$0.69	\$0.69
Cart. Box Belt Plate	\$0.07	\$0.10	\$0.10
Waist Belt	\$0.32	\$0.25	\$0.25
Waist Belt Plate	\$0.07	\$0.10	\$0.10
Cap Pouch & Pick	\$0.45	\$0.40	\$0.40
Gun Sling	\$0.25	\$0.16	\$0.16
Scabbard & Frog	\$0.45	\$0.56	\$0.56
Rifle-musket, .58 cal.	\$19.25	\$20.00	\$20.00

ⁱ *Military Dictionary*; for year beginning July 1, 1859; ordnance from Ordnance Memo No. 1, February 1863

ⁱⁱ From *The Company Clerk*, first edition, 1863

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid.*, twelfth edition, from General Order No. 864, November 12, 1863

^{iv} Changed from Clothing (but company property) to Camp and Garrison Equipage before 1863