

# THE WATCHDOG.



## A QUARTERLY REVIEW FOR CIVIL WAR ENACTORS

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Guarding your interests...

SUMMER 2004

### Poor Research or Bad Interpretation?

When I first started in the hobby, I knew I could make an appropriate dress. I had a couple of things going for me, a solid background in fashion history, design and textiles. Also, my sewing skills were such that I did not require a clothing construction class at the university level. However, I did require the course credits. I got the credits by "examination", taking the course's final exam and completing a project selected by the instructor. My project was to reline Sister Evangelista's winter coat, which at the time seemed to at least one hundred years old.

Besides, there were patterns available to make these dresses and I was a whiz at reading directions. My first attempt turned out quite well, good fit, a synthetic fabric that resembled changeable silk, brown polish cotton lining, faced hem, etc. It was a wonderful costume and not in the Halloween sense of the word. If I ignore the synthetic fabric, I must say the dress looked right, but now I know it was not.

The bodice style, gathered, was questionable for the silk like fabric, as was the coat sleeve. The bodice lining was not fitted. The piping was too large in diameter. The skirt used hooks and eyes to attach it to the bodice and it (skirt) had no pocket. The fit was not correct because, who needed a corset with a gathered bodice? There was no white collar included in the ensemble.

So how did I come to recognize the problems with the dress? In a word, research. I studied original garments. I started collecting CdVs. I read diaries and periodicals from the 1860s. I attended conferences. I asked questions.

Even though it was dismissed by some, my background in textiles and design helped tremendously in interpreting what I studied.

I am not unique because I did and continue to do research. Research is a passion of most re enactors. I can not begin to enumerate the times I have been told this dress, this shawl, this fabric is identical to the dress, shawl, fabric in a museum, in Godey's, or described in a diary. Sometimes though, the item just does not look right. My conclusion, there is a problem interpreting the research. Some examples:

Saturday evening dinner at the recent Harrisburg Conference—A woman tells me about her dress. It was

plain weave light blue cotton, almost like a man's modern dress shirt, with small white hearts embroidered on it. Her research showed: a.) solid cotton fabric was not the norm b.) prints were organized and c.) embroidery machines had been invented. Her logical solution was to embroider tiny white hearts in straight lines on plain fabric using her new sewing machine.

The One Ton Dress—Simplicity, as most of you know, is now making historic patterns aimed at the re enacting community. I am specifically referring to pattern number 9761, peplum bodice over flounced skirt. The only fabric recommendation on the envelope is silk taffeta. Someone did research on fabrics for this style and learned that wool was an acceptable alternative. Unfortunately, her interpretation of wool was a cross between a worsted flannel and a melton or a gentleman's suit and winter coat. While one ton is so much hyperbole, the dress was incredibly heavy.

The Nameless Presidential Library—A docent needed to make a copy of a former first lady's wedding gown. The original gown was available and all that was needed was a hands-on examination of the dress, which was done. The result was a gown interpreted by someone who had no period sewing skills. Piping around the neckline and waist became topstitching, gauging became machine gathering, and the tucker became nylon veiling gathered at the neck. This latter interpretation was based on the fact that this particular first lady was a bit of a prude in her later life and would have never worn anything so daring.

It's an Exact Copy—It is always interesting to staff the **DOG's** Impression Improvement display. We feature poster-size copies of CdVs chosen for their variety of attire. The question we ask, "Do you look like these citizens?" Yes! My dress is an "exact copy" of the one in our local museum. The interpretation of what I suspect was twill became white pinwale corduroy.

Past Patterns and Fig Leaf Patterns—How could you ever go wrong using patterns from these companies? Their historic notes alone are a history lesson. Yet I still see the

Four Dollars at the Newsstand.

interpretation of their patterns looking more like craft projects than clothing. I have seen fitted bodices piped with white nylon cording at the neckline, waist and the back curved seams. The lovely gathered bodice from Fig Leaf has been trimmed with ribbon left over from Christmas décor department.

So what is the answer to sharpening our interpretive skills? Since one of the ways we are presenting history is by the clothing of the time, I have two suggestions.

Take a sewing class! Learning even modern sewing techniques will not hurt you. Flat-lining, inter-lining, backstitching, whip stitching and basting are being taught today. Even if you do not sew, getting this information will help you choose the right merchant. If "The Stars and Bars Yankee Lace Emporium Peddler" is offering inter-lined bodices with detachable machine gathered skirts, you will know enough to move along. The class should also include a study on fiber basics, man-made, natural, weaves, dyeing, printing, etc. Learning to assemble a modern garment will not ruin you for period sewing. Right sides together, match

#### IN THE FIELD

Our impression improvement display will be set up at the Battle of Franklin 140th Anniversary event during the weekend of 1 to 3 October 2004. It will be located in one of the large tent areas set aside for non-profits. The highlight of our presence will be to raffle off an Enfield rifle-musket "defarbed" by Mr. Barry. All the proceeds will go to the Save the Franklin Battlefield organization.

The Armi Sport Enfield is a copy of a Tower 1862 made by the Birmingham firm of Joseph Wilson. It is an exact copy, with a couple interesting idiosyncrasies unique to that particular firearm. The lock and barrel are polished bright, not because this is more authentic, but because this particular original was. Mr. Barry has tuned the lock to duplicate the trigger pull and hammer pull that is specified in Dr. C.H. Roads' *British Soldiers Firearms, 1850-1864* for the Enfield. The factory finish was stripped off and the stock was refinished with boiled linseed oil. The stock has the circular stamp for Birmingham Small Arms Trade.

Tickets are ten dollars each (with a limit of two hundred tickets). To obtain a chance simply mail the coupon below (or a copy) to the **DOG's** post office box with a check or money order for ten dollars per chance. Your name will be recorded on the roster of entrants. The drawing will be on

plaids, ease to fit, cut on bias, cut on straight of grain are universal and timeless, from Mrs. Pullan to Vogue.

Take a history of costume class! Some universities offer them; especially if they have a clothing design track. Large museums and state historical societies might have a staff member who can offer a tutorial on a fashion timeline. Contact the Costume Society of America web site at [www.costumesocietyamerica.com](http://www.costumesocietyamerica.com) or call 1-800-CSA-9447. They can direct you to knowledgeable people in your area. If you do not know when a certain style appeared, you are at the mercy of those, for example, who sell a skirt with an adjustable waistband. I guess you supply the bodice and said skirt is suitable for SCA, Renaissance, Colonial and Civil War. Four eras for the price of one; such a deal!

Do yourself a favor by giving yourself a large and solid foundation on which to base your interpretation of research. And since you are reading this in the **DOG**, send us your research or interpretation questions. We will do our best to answer them.

**Mrs. Soszynski**

Sunday at the event (you do not need to be present to win).

Another rifle with the same "accuracy improvements" has already been donated to the Cedar Creek Battlefield folks for a prize in a raffle for their fund-raising efforts. That raffle is under the supervision of that event's organizers.

Mr. Barry's research on Enfield and Springfield "defarbing" will be summarized in a new publication from the *Watchdog* called *Lock, Stock and Barrel*, which should be on sale at the end of the year. It will be similar in size to Pat Brown's *For Fatigue Purposes...*, which by the way is sold out (a second edition is in the works).

The Franklin event is sponsored by the *Civil War Courier* and is a North-South Alliance (N-SA) event. It takes place on and near the actual Spring Hill battlefield. Events where the N-SA is the military host, like Perryville two years ago, are successful because of the organization's advance planning, attention to details and commitment to safety and historic accuracy.

For more information about the event go to the *Courier's* web site at [www.battleoffranklin.com](http://www.battleoffranklin.com), the North South Alliance web site at [www.nsalliance.org](http://www.nsalliance.org), the First Federal Division at [www.firstfederaldivision.com](http://www.firstfederaldivision.com), the First Confederate Division at [www.nsalliance.org/fch.htm](http://www.nsalliance.org/fch.htm) or the Army of the Pacific web site at [www.armyofthepacific.com](http://www.armyofthepacific.com).

**Mr. Christen**

#### FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD ENFIELD RAFFLE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF CHANCES \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT ENCLOSED AT TEN DOLLARS PER CHANCE \_\_\_\_\_



“A Trip to the Store”

General Merchandise Stores: Superstores of the Nineteenth Century (part one)



SOURCE: 2000 *Early Advertising Cuts*, Clarence Hornung, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1956.

Below is an advertising poem that appeared in a Norwalk, Connecticut newspaper on 18 August 1859. It gives an idea of the items available for purchase in a typical general store in the middle of the nineteenth century.

**NOTICE**

Step up ye gallant fair and brave!  
Step up, Tom, Jake and Kate,  
Unto my store in Norwalk town,  
In Main Street, number eight!

In Main street, number eight, good folks  
Things very cheap are sold,  
To fat and lean, to rich and poor,  
And to the young and old.

It is the cheap Cash Store, my friends:  
At J. W. Renoud's, please call,  
And find things sold at reason's fee,  
To one, to ten, to all!

Yes, find things sold at reason's fee,  
Bread, butter, candles, cheese,  
Salt, Onions, Crackers, Coffee, Brooms,  
And choicest, best of Teas!

Sugar and Allspice, Flour and Pork,  
And matches, not the kind  
The young folks often, often make,  
So pleasing to the mind;

Theirs will light up their future hopes  
And gratify desire!  
While mine on a cold winter's day,  
Will soon light up a fire.

There's Yeast, Molasses, Eggs & Ham  
Not Ham, of olden days,  
Who lived with Noah in the ark,  
And sang sweet sacred lays!

No, this is Ham that fills us up,  
And gives us strength to work,  
And flog the French, the Spanish and  
The Russian and the Turk.

I've fine Codfish, Mackerel & Starch,  
Tobacco, choicest brand,  
And Ginger, Pepper, Chocolate,  
As good as in the land,

And Blue and Oats, & Colgate's Starch,  
Made from good Indian Corn  
And fit for Shirts of any man,  
Of any woman born.

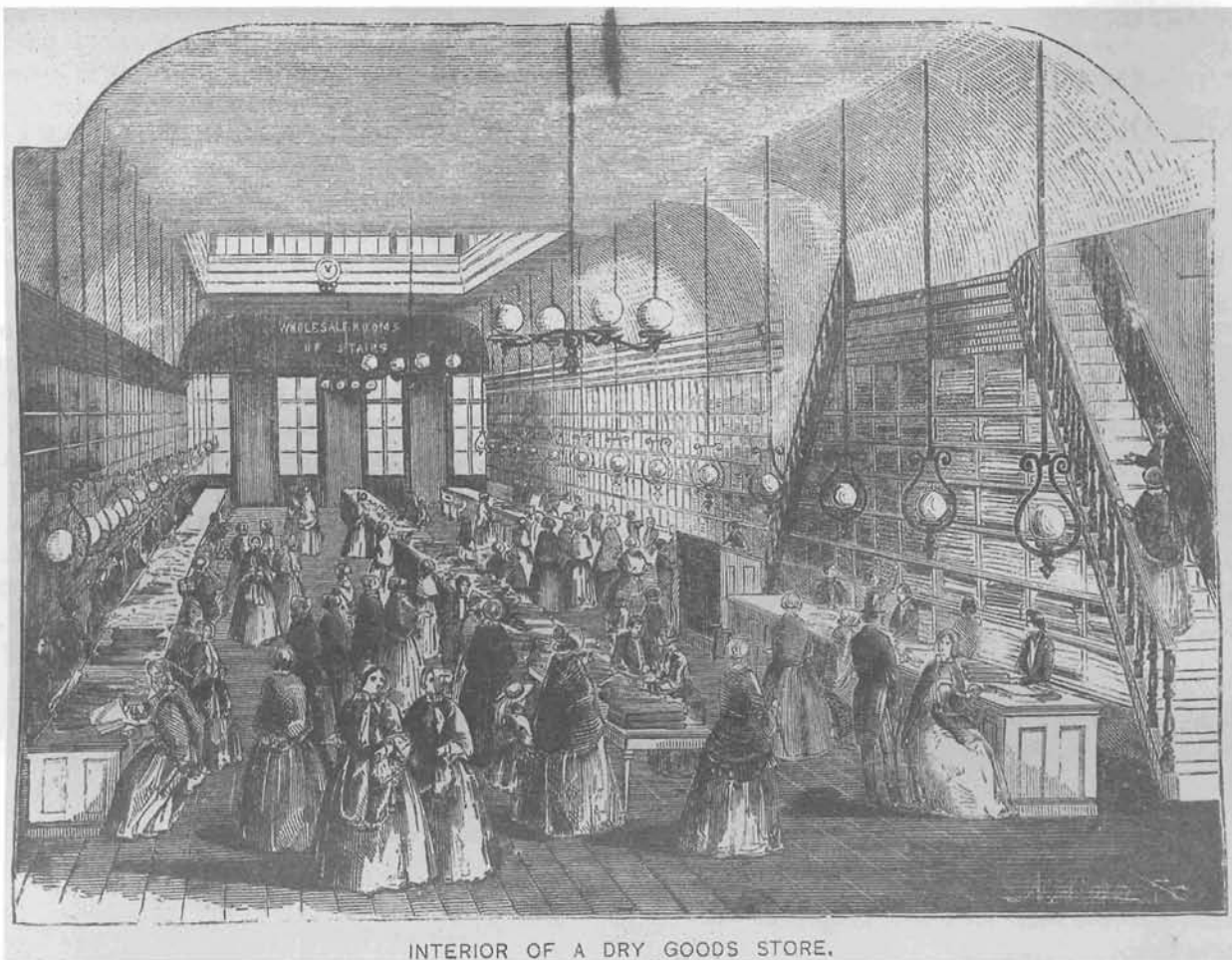
But oh to name all things I keep  
Would puzzle even Mars,  
But I must not forget to state  
I sell the best Segars.

And come my friends my goods are cheap,  
True, true, what I relate,  
All kinds of Groceries you'll find  
In Main Street, number eight!

J.W. RENOUD. [1]

Today we have the convenience of shopping for a wide array of goods in small specialty stores and boutiques, department stores, supermarkets, mega-marts, shopping malls or shopping via mail and on-line. As would be expected, in the nineteenth century, the venues for purchasing were more limited, but that did not limit the availability and variety of goods. Just as today, the number and type of stores were limited by location; people in rural areas had less variety of stores and merchandise; and towns and cities could offer more and different stores with a larger variety of goods. Depending on the size of the town or city, there may have been druggists, milliners, dressmakers, tailors, dry goods stores, grocery stores, stationers, bookstores, confectioners, green grocers,





INTERIOR OF A DRY GOODS STORE.

SOURCE: *Scissors and Yardstick*, C. M. Brown and C. L. Gates, C. M. Brown and F. W. Jaqua: Hartford, Connecticut, 1872 (in author's collection).

bakeries, fish markets (if near the coast), butchers, gunsmiths, jewelers and watchmakers, saddleries, leather and luggage shops and department, houseware and hardware stores where people could shop. The goods sold by these specialty stores were interesting, but they did not have nearly the large variety of wares generally stocked by the rural country store.

There is one type of store that may be most associated with the time period—the general merchandise store. In the middle of the nineteenth century, most of the population lived in rural areas and often there may have been just one all-purpose store at a crossroads. This store served the community, not just as a store, but as a meeting place to exchange local news and occasionally as a post office. Depending upon the storekeeper, the variety differed from store to store, but it was nonetheless a one-stop shopping experience. The store might have been small, but that did not mean the variety of goods offered was limited. If an item was not generally stocked, the owner could often special order items. Just imagine a modern superstore compressed into an area the size of a small house! Entering one of these stores was an assault to the senses with distinctive smells and a mind boggling selection of goods. Some museum villages have recreated stores in their exhibitions and do give the visitor a general idea of what

these stores were like. These exhibit stores usually only have a sampling of what the store may have stocked and they also lack the general ambience of original stores.

For a tour of one of these general merchandise stores, just close your eyes and use your imagination to place yourself in the store. Of all the senses, olfactory memory is the strongest and is a good start for trip back in time. In your mind, try to combine the smell of wood smoke from the stove in the middle of the room; the sharpness of vinegar from the pickle barrel; the acrid sweetness of molasses; the warm scent of tanned and polished leather used for reins, saddles, tack, boots and shoes; the oily smell of burning kerosene as well as stove and boot polish; the dusty odor of sawdust on the floor; the distinctive salty scent of salted fish and meats; the sharp metallic smell of rust and iron from nails and tools; the pungent aroma of cured tobacco; the redolent scent of spices such as cloves, allspice, cinnamon, mace, nutmeg, pepper and the steamy odor of wet wool in the winter or the summer smells of grass, hay, dust and the usual outdoor odors that drifted in and mixed with the other scents. This exercise will give you an idea of the distinctive odor of a general store rather than the sanitized odor of stores today.

Now, that you have an olfactory impression of a typical general store, keep your eyes closed and mentally visualize

the look of the store. If viewing the store from the street, there may be a large display window on either one of both sides of the door, but the interior is dim, with only the light coming from another window or two, and lit hanging oil lamps if the day is cloudy. There is a cast iron stove in the middle of the room for heat and maybe some chairs around the stove for customers; a spittoon for the tobacco chewing gentlemen; counters running on either side and maybe along the back of the store; shelves, cabinets and drawers are behind counters and there may be some glass display cases to present and protect small or valuable items; barrels filled with pickles, vinegar, crackers, various types of sugar and molasses, dried and salted fish, salt beef and pork, flour, spirituous liquors, sacks of coffee, rice, cornmeal, and salt, trunks and last of all, a multitude of boxes stacked on the floor and in the corners of the room. Open barrels display upended hoes, rakes, shovels, tool handles and brooms. Merchandise is not just on shelves, but is also hung from the ceiling and rafters. One might see carpet bags, baskets, chairs, horse collars and tools dangling above the heads of the customers. There may be a back room for the larger items such as tools, saddles, kegs of nails, farming equipment; wooden tubs, scrub boards and buckets; or these may be tucked in the first room.

On the shelves are horizontally stacked "bolts" [2] of fabric which display a wide array of textiles from fine silks to coarse osanburgs, laces, trims and reels of ribbons; blankets, counterpanes and tablecloths; dishes and glassware of all sorts, fine china tea sets and stoneware jars; iron and tin cookware; jars and cans of food and flavoring extracts; lamps, matches and boxes of candles and soap; chamber pots, wash basins and ewers; sad irons, starch and clothes pins; large tin containers of tea; cones or loaves of sugar; bottles of patent medicines, cosmetics and liniments for man and beast; fine kid and woolen gloves; shawls, hoop skirts, ready-made shirts, drawers, trousers, coats, vests, shoes and boots and hats and bonnets; fancy parasols and utilitarian umbrellas; bottles of wine, brandy, whisky, gin or schnapps; jars of brightly colored candy of all types; stationery items such as paper, envelopes, stamps, pens, ink and pencils; and popular books and textbooks for all ages. Drawers and bins may contain all types of spices, seeds for planting, dried beans, dyes, matches and match safes, drugs such as quinine, cocaine, opium and calomel, household and farm chemicals and laundry bluing; chocolate and raisins and other dried fruit. Hooks and eyes, papers of pins and needles, bunches of tape or braid, buttons, knitting needles, spools and hanks of thread, yarn, artificial flowers and trims for millinery, laces and ribbons are stored in smaller boxes or drawers. Displayed on the counters is a scale, a wheel of cheese, a basket of eggs, bowls of lemons and oranges or pineapples in season. Somewhere in the mix, one might find rifles, pistols, powder, shot and lead; toys such as tin trumpets, marbles, rubber balls, dolls; musical instruments and strings for violins, banjos and guitars.

Now, add people to the scene; there are customers

milling about, maybe a couple of men sitting in the chairs, a woman holding a large market basket filled with paper wrapped purchases tied with string, another woman deciding on a particular fabric for a dress, a child gazing at the candy jars before making a purchase, a muddy-booted farmer purchasing a part for his plow, a doctor purchasing some additional drugs for his patients, young man purchasing an elaborate Valentine card for his girl and a dog that has just wandered inside the store. With all of these images, you now have the sense of a general merchandise store in the nineteenth century.

A mental picture of a store alone is not enough to explain the immense variety of goods available to patrons of a country store. In recent years, the author has researched and read store ledgers from all parts of the country, dating from 1810 to 1880, and has transcribed several ledgers and excerpts from many other ledgers. In a database transcription of a country store in the south central Virginia country of Halifax covered the period between 1 January 1859 and 30 November 1861. There are almost 20,000 lines of data, most of which contain at least two items per line with an approximate total of over 40,000 sales in this one small store in almost a three year period.

Included in the astonishing variety of goods available, the sales ranged from adzes to zinc sulphate; opium and cocaine to candy; nails to gold watches; calico to fine silks and laces; fine china to a twenty pound-plus iron skillet and lid; and everything in between. For example, selected purchases made in one rural Virginia store, on 1 January 1859 included items such as: Catawaba brandy, screws, cotton and silk handkerchiefs, chest hinges, ladies' and men's shoes, a horn comb, a bottle of Cherry Pectoral, turpentine soap, cheese, tobacco, a blanket, nails, writing paper, gloves, rubber overshoes, sugar, matches, ax head and handle, skillet, shaving soap and brush, pound of lead, adamantine candles, whiskey, schnapps, canton flannel, coffee, a carpet bag, soda, scissors, calico, sole leather, paper of tacks, damask, cotton cards, knitting needles, thimble, spools of thread, buttons, a pocket knife, dyes, flannel, jean fabric, a shawl, a coat, cigars, quinine, horseshoes, a china tea set, pairs of pants, spices, lace, vinegar, molasses, a gold ring, panes of window glass, carpeting, beeswax, violin strings and towels. This is just a sampling of one day's purchases out of over a thousand days, minus Sundays.

Knowing what people purchased is just one research tool used in the study nineteenth-century material culture, but perceiving something about the people adds another dimension to the total picture of the time that we are trying to produce. A census profile of the customers adds more pieces to the puzzle, and by using state census records, one can find out about a customer's background such as age, race, sex, marital status, number of persons in the household, occupation, real and personal property worth, level of education. This type of profile puts the purchasing information in context with the actual lives of the individuals.

The study of these store ledgers offers the researcher



The largest Wholesale and Retail Store in the State. All Goods warranted as represented, or money refunded.

**THOMSON & CO.**  
SUCCESSORS TO E. N. THOMSON  
(ESTABLISHED 1830.)  
**CHOICE FAMILY GROCERIES**  
FRUITS, FINE WINES, LIQUORS, & C. & CIGARS,  
73 State Street, New Haven, Ct.  
D. W. THOMSON, [ G. G. THOMSON.

**GOODS DELIVERED IN ANY PART OF THE CITY FREE OF CHARGE. ORDERS SOLICITED.**

SOURCE: *Illustrated Catalogue of Carriages and Special Business Advertiser*, G. D. Cook and Sons, New Haven, Connecticut, 1860 (Dover reprint).

a first hand experience of nineteenth century material culture: they show the researcher what people actually bought and how often, how the location of the stores influenced the stock and items purchased; how the economic circumstances of the customer motivated his or her purchases; and how purchasing trends differed in various parts of the country. Store ledgers are just one more area of research that may be used to help present a more complete picture of nineteenth century life. [3]

Of lesser importance, but it is interesting to note the prices charged for the various items sold. The price charged in 1859 does not equate with modern prices but, in most cases, there are ways to roughly estimate the modern equivalent price. Stay tuned to the next issue of the **DOG** for period prices to common items and an estimated equivalent modern price.

### Virginia Mescher

#### NOTES:

- [1] Used with permission from the Food Reference web site [www.foodreference.com](http://www.foodreference.com).
- [2] Most fabric bolts did not have a stiff center around which the fabric was wrapped, but large pieces of fabric were just folded into sections of the width of the shelf and stacked on the shelf.
- [3] Editor's note: see *The Watchdog*, SUMMER 2002, Vol. 9, No. 3, for a

review of Virginia Mescher's *Historic Accounts: A Study of Store Ledgers from Mid-Nineteenth Century with a Searchable Database*. The book and CD (\$49.50 plus \$3.95 shipping) are available from Vintage Volumes, PO BOX 10311, Burke, Virginia 22009-0311 and [mmescher@erols.com](mailto:mmescher@erols.com).

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## Items of Interest from the *Saturday Evening Post*

**Mr. Jaeger** has found some good stuff in the *Saturday Evening Post*, a newspaper in the 1860s, which evolved into the present-day magazine. Here are a few of the items that he recently came across.

**CLOTH MITTENS.**—Mrs. Gage, of "Field Notes," says:—"I have seen a half dozen notices of good methods for knitting and crocheting mittens; but there is a cheaper and easier way of getting up mittens than by the tedious process of knitting and crocheting, which is quite as warm and lasting. Take any soft, strong cloth, of all wool, and the same amount of Canton flannel, or partly worn wool flannel, if you have it; let the hand be laid flat on a piece of paper, marked round with a pencil, then cut out a pattern, allowing for seams; cut the lining bias so as to have a spring to it; stitch the flannel and lining separate; turn the seams together inside, bind the wrist, leaving the mitten open two inches on the under part of the hand, work a button hole on one side, sew a strong button on the other, and you will have a durable mitten. [*Saturday Evening Post*, 8 February 1862]

Old pieces of broadcloth, coat skirts and linings, backs of pantaloons, or old stocking legs, can be worked up well into these useful things for the hands of soldiers or farmers. I have tried them for years, and know of what I speak. [*Saturday Evening Post*, 8 February 1862]

### HOW TO TELL GOOD LIQUOR.

A writer who represents himself to have been among the first who entered the rebel fortifications at Mill Springs after the rebel rout, describes an incident as follows: "A soldier had discovered a barrel which proved to contain apple brandy. Pulling out the corn-cob from the bung-hole, I turned it up and filled a canteen. While doing this one of Bob McCook's [9th Ohio] skirmishers came in, and says: "Vot you gets there?" I replied that it appeared to be a pretty fair apple brandy, upon which the Dutchman ran to the door, calling out furiously: "Hans! Henrick! schnapps! see, com a rous!" Upon which a dozen Dutchmen came in, and the brandy which was not spilled upon the ground was soon transferred to their canteens. I said: "Boys, you had better look out—this is a doctor's shop, and there may be strychnine in that brandy." They paused a moment to look at each other, when one of them exclaimed: "Py Got, Hans, I tells you vot I do; I trinks some, and if it don't kill me, den you trinks." Upon which he took a long and hearty pull at his canteen, and smacking his lips a moment, said: "All right, Hans, go ahead." [*Saturday Evening Post*, 8 March 1862]

**STONE JUGS versus TIN CANS FOR FRUITS.**—W. B. B., of Southern Minnesota, writes thus:—"Here at the West, tin cans cost at least 33 cents per gallon, and can be used but once, to which must be added considerable more if you live far from the tinman. The 'self-sealers' cost 45 cents a quart here! Stone jugs cost only a 'York shilling' (12 1/2 cents) per gallon, and will last for years. On three years' trial we find the jugs preserve fruit better than tin cans. We fill the jugs while standing on a hot stove; and while the contents are boiling hot, close them with a cork or nicely-fitting plug of soft wood, covering with melted sealing wax or resin."

**REMARKS.**—After using hundreds of tin cans, common and self-sealing, we have discarded them entirely, and advise others to do so, on account of the danger there always is of the corrosion of the tin and the production of poisonous salts. Well glazed stone ware, jars, bottles, or jugs, answer well. We prefer glass, however. The dark colored glass is cheap. We use wide-necked bottles, one and two quart sizes—mostly quarts—corking while hot, wiping clean and dry, and covering with cement made of one pound of resin with about one ounce of tallow melted together. The bottles are then set necks downward in small tin patty-pans, costing a penny a-piece, or in old saucers if these be on hand, and cement enough is dipped in to completely envelope the top of the bottle-neck. This entirely shuts out access of air. If the bottles be filled with hot fruits, and be corked and sealed while still hot, the pressure is always *inward*, but the tin or saucer covers prevent the cork being forced in by the air. We merely heat the fruits *through* in a kettle, dip them into the jars, or glass bottles of any kind, and seal as above. The experience of two years proves this mode to be the cheapest *and best*.—Ed. *American Agriculturist*. [*Saturday Evening Post*, 14 June 1862]

### An 1862 recipe for beer!

**BEER.**—Beer made in the following way has a fine color as well as a fine taste: Two gallons of water, a large handful of hops, fresh-gathered spruce, and one quart of wheat bran: boil two or three hours, strain and stir in while hot two cups of treacle. When lukewarm pour into a clean barrel, and add a pint of yeast. Shake it well together, and use next day. For bottling beer and ale, let the bottles be clean and dry; put in each bottle a small piece of lump sugar; fill the bottles from a newly tapped cask, cork the bottles well, and keep for about a fortnight before use. [*Saturday Evening Post*, 14 June 1862]

## How to Sling a Musket

Are musket slings more prevalent now in the Civil War enactment community than during the original Civil War? The answer depends on many variables such as when, where and which army. Photographs of the period show examples of many muskets without any sling at all. One must be careful drawing conclusions from this alone as muskets often used in studio photographs were props. We also know that battlefield photographers were known to "add" a musket to the picture when necessary, and viewed this practice as a form of artistic license. A more reliable source of information on the usage of musket slings is the candid photographic evidence of troops in the field. Slings are often seen in photographs of camp life with "stacks" of muskets. However, photographs of Confederate troops on the move are rare, so it is hard to use photographs as the sole basis from which to draw absolute conclusions. We will probably never know definitively. Research using existing CS documents suggests that large numbers of CS accoutrement sets (including slings) were issued not just from Richmond, but also from Atlanta, Baton Rouge and New Orleans before those cities fell into Federal hands. Did the slings ever get to soldiers in the field? It is difficult to state with certainty that slings were readily available to both armies during all four years of the conflict.

We also know soldiers with rifle slings sometimes used them for more pressing needs. There are examples of musket slings used for belts, suspenders and haversack straps. There is anecdotal evidence that some crates of Enfields shipped to North America during the war did not include slings at all. [1] Yet, virtually every musket in the ranks of enactors now has a sling on it. Even worse, often the slings in use are not correct for the type of musket, and they are usually installed improperly. Let's get updated on the correct slings and what type slings *not* to use.

There are two or three primary reproduction three-band infantry firearms used today: the P-53 Enfield, 1861 US Springfield (or derivative CS Richmond models) and the 1842 US percussion musket. Were there originally different slings for each model and for each army? Opinions vary on this, as well as the type of sling that accompanied each shipment of muskets. During the war there was a greater variety of infantry arms in the ranks than are currently represented. There were dozens of different type and caliber muskets imported from a variety of places. It is doubtful that the same sling could fit them all, or that a variety of replacements were readily available from either army's quartermaster departments. [2] Putting that question aside for a moment, we will assume it is appropriate for your impression to possess a musket with a sling. Which sling is right?

Let's look at available reproduction slings beginning with the popular P-53 Enfield. The correct type of sling is

the subject of an ongoing debate among those who study the common Civil War era Enfield. As best as I can determine, the sling for a British Army issued P-53 Enfield rifle-musket is quite different than what is often pictured in period photographs. The British version is *whitened buff leather* (whitened with calk or pipe clay) with a fixed loop on the bottom and with a buckle closure towards the top swivel. Most period photos (where the P-53 Enfield is clearly identifiable) will show them with dark colored slings instead of buff, which is actually a cream color and not "white." Well, it appears there is more to the story (FIG 1).

Geoff Walden wrote for *The Watchdog* in 1995: [3]

You'll have even more problems with an Enfield sling. Be aware that the vast majority of reproduction slings labeled as being for Enfields are complete fabrications, made up by the modern supplier; they bear no resemblance to the correct sling. One of the most common reproductions is simply a US type sling that has been lengthened, left unfinished and even stamped with S. Isaac, Campbell English maker's markings! The period English sling (many thousands of which were imported with the Enfield rifle-muskets) could be one of two types: a white buff leather infantry type sling, and a black leather sling (based on those issued to Rifle regiments in the British army). Judging from period photos, by far the most common was black leather Rifle style. This type had the following characteristics: It was made from bridle leather, 48" long and 1 1/4" wide. The leather was finished on the flesh side (the rough side out), and this side was finished to be rather smooth. The finished side and edges were dyed black. The smooth (inner) side was oiled. (*Equipment of Infantry*, London, 1865, Plate XV) *All models tied onto the lower sling swivel with a leather thong. Some models had a captive loop at the other end, while some had a simple brass buckle; all had a sliding keeper. Again there were no rivets.* [emphasis added]

Based on recent discussions with Enfield expert William Adams, Associate Editor Simmons and I share a divergent opinion. We have come to the conclusion that there is no substantial period photographic evidence of P-53 Enfield rifle-musket slings found *tied with a leather thong* and *using sliding keepers*. Instead, most examples are found with buckles or US-style hooks. The British slings were found in two varieties; there were buff slings (for rifle-musket), which were made forty-five inches in length and the black or brown sling (for the short rifle) which were forty-eight inches in





FIG 1. British soldiers of the Ninety-third Regiment and detail of slings in the rifle stack (lower right corner).



be folded over and sewn, and the back of the hook should pass between these leather pieces, and be riveted with two small brass rivets.

length. [4] Both are 1.25 inches wide. There are examples of these buff slings on P-53 Enfield rifle-muskets visible in post-Sepoy rebellion photos of British troops stationed in India. (FIGURE 1) [5] When Walden refers in the paragraph above to the “*Equipment of Infantry, London, 1865, Plate XV*” it is presumed to be the text commonly known as *Petrie* (as he was the illustrator). The *Petrie* drawings in front of me (Plate XV) are not particularly good illustrations at all; however the drawings are clear in that they *do not* show any thong or lace closure on the P-53 rifle-musket line infantry buff sling. None! The illustration shows one fixed loop, one sliding loop and a removable buckle. The other type shown in *Petrie* is the Enfield (two-band) rifle sling, black in color, with a permanently affixed buckle, and that secures to the swivel with a fixed, long V-shaped strip of leather. (See FIGURES 2 and 3 for the author’s redrawn versions of the *Petrie* drawings.) The method of attachment of the rifle sling to the rear swivel is unique and utilizes a button in conjunction with the leather strip. The V-shaped leather strip appears to be stitched or otherwise attached to the sling, not laced through two side-by-side holes top and bottom as a thong would be. Specimens of the British type buckle slings exist in private collections and are documented in scores of photographs of Union and Confederate soldiers. (See FIGURES 4 and 5). I do not know of a correct reproduction British style buckle sling for the Enfield rifle-musket in either style, buff or black leather, available at this time. However, that does not mean that there are no “correct” slings available for use on the reproduction P-53 Enfield rifle-musket.

There is agreement among most historians and experts that the common “Federal issue sling” is of the leather loop and hook variety, which should also be stitched. As Walden correctly states earlier in the “SLING, ARMS!” article about the US Springfield sling: “There should be no rivets, except those holding the hook on.” Concerning the hook, Walden notes:

The hook should be a flat brass hook with a point, about ¾ inches long. It should not be made of brass or iron wire. The end of the sling should

The standard length for the 1855/61 Federal Armory made US Springfield sling was forty-six inches long, 1.25 inches wide. [6] US troops commonly used regulation length (forty-six inch) US Springfield leather slings on their P-53 Enfields. [7] However, the CS cloth slings were made in a variety of lengths with some as short as thirty-four inches and some as long as forty-six inches (but these were not as common). In our current CS impressions the cotton cloth and leather model is commonly found, even on Enfields. Leather, a precious commodity in the Southern states as most tanneries were located in the Northeast and Midwest, was not used where cotton could be substituted. [8] These cloth slings have a leather keeper, leather reinforcements and a metal wire hook. The CS made slings for the Richmond rifle-muskets were largely produced by the CS Armory. This musket was a “kissing cousin” to the 1861 US Springfield in virtually every sense. The US Springfield and CS Richmond models are all slung from the middle, not the top barrel band. A field modification sometimes performed on the P-53 Enfield rifle-muskets (one of my original private contractor P-53s is this way) was to move the top sling swivel to the middle barrel band in order to utilize a shorter sling. If you try a thirty-four inch CS cloth sling on your standard three-band P-53 Enfield, you will find it difficult to fit through the swivels and impossible to carry on your shoulder. The majority of cloth slings (that fit) currently found on CW Enfields were probably made after the war. Cloth slings simply wore out much more quickly than leather and few specimens survive intact and unaltered from the era. Most of the very few surviving specimens are the shorter (thirty-four inch) variety.

Were extra-long slings in use? Yes, Federal as well as CS contractors made elongated leather slings. For example, consider the “doubled-over” long slings on mounted infantry Sharps and Spencer rifles (which were carried slung across the back); these could easily fit on a three band P-53 Enfield rifle-musket with room to spare. Were these common? They are not rare, according to photographs. While long leather slings were found on P-53 Enfields, period photographic evidence *does not* support that a preponderance of these “long leather” slings were tied by a thong at the bottom or utilized sliding keepers. Rather, the common attachment was a leather loop at the bottom, with a hook and a sliding leather loop at the top. See page 36-37 of *Echoes of Glory: Arms and Armament of the Confederacy*. [9] Look closely at the sling on the P-53 Enfield rifle-musket. Do you see any loose leather tying thong? Does the sling look like the “long leather” variety or more like a shorter US Springfield sling? [10] This is just one easily found example of the “long leather” sling on the P-53 Enfield. There are many other examples of this type sling in period photographs, and some “long leather” slings with confirmed CW heritage survived intact to the modern age. They were often made by a variety

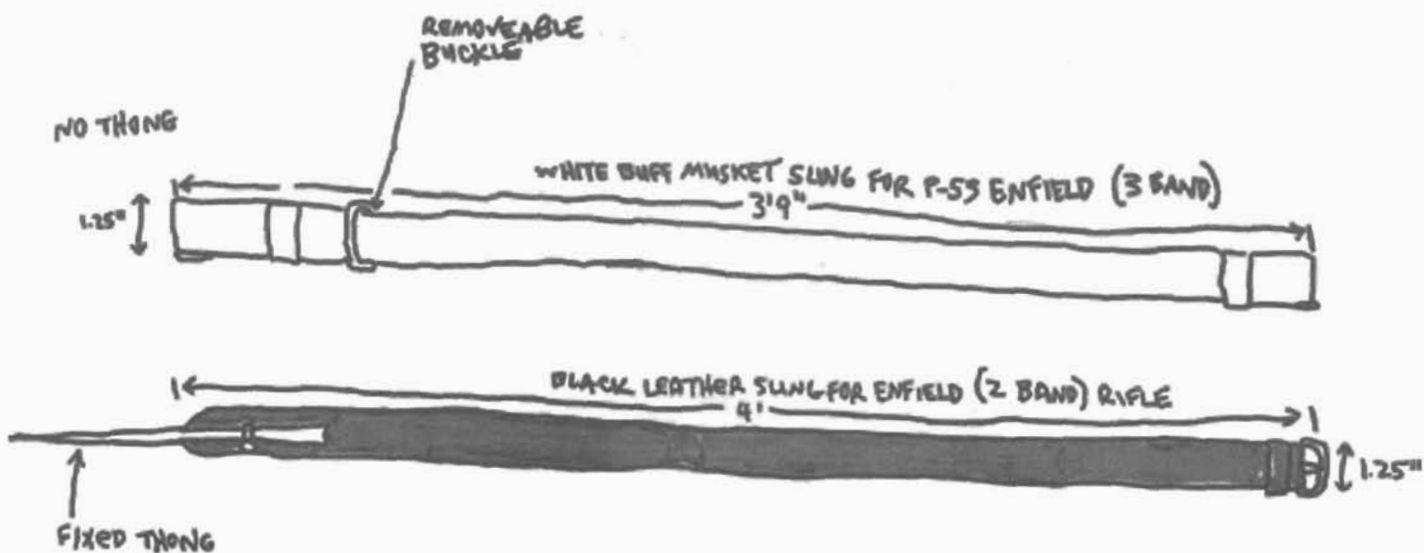


FIG 2. British Enfield Slings (1860s). [Redrawn and labeled by Craig L. Barry from *Equipment of Infantry*, London, 1865 (illustrated by Petrie) Plates XV, XVI]

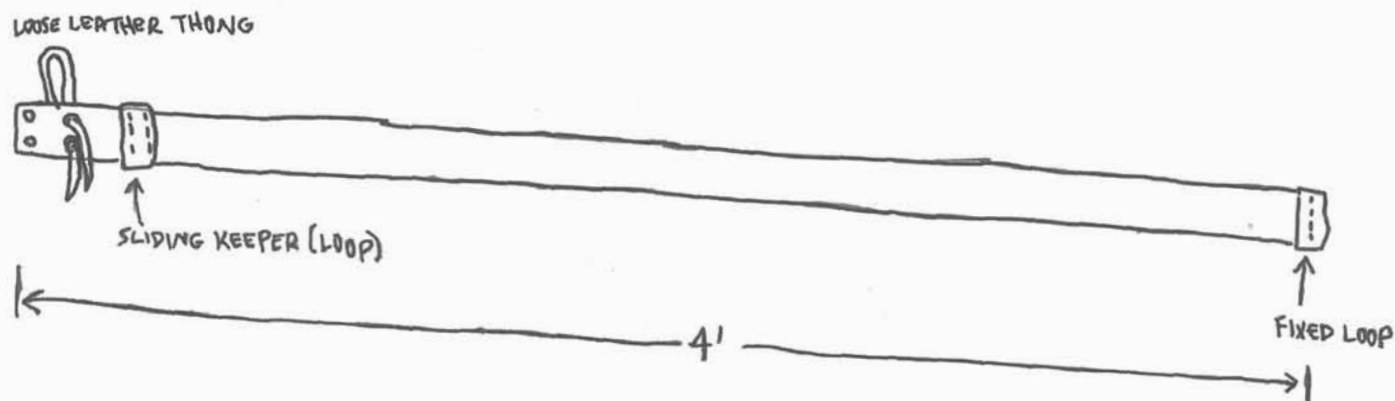


FIG 3. Common sling, which is incorrectly used by enactors with the P-53 Enfield. This is actually the sling for the 1903-1904 Lee-Enfield SMLE MK I. [Redrawn and labeled by Craig L. Barry from *Equipment of Infantry*, London, 1865 (illustrated by Petrie) Plates XV, XVI]

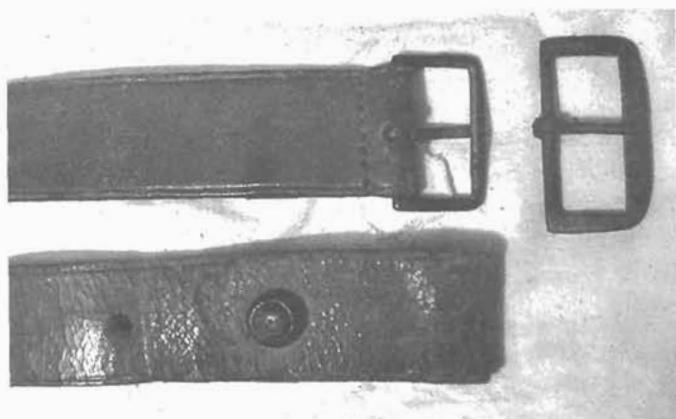


FIG 4. Original Enfield sling showing brown bridle leather with button and buckle. The other buckle (right) is commonly found with the rifle-musket sling. [Rick Simmons Collection]



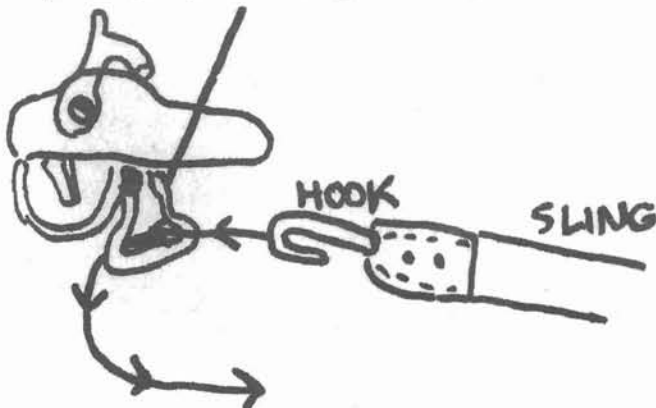
FIG 5. Reverse side of the original sling and buckle in FIG 4. This other buckle was a dug sample that still retains some of the original gilding. [Rick Simmons Collection]

of domestic private contractors, and usually stamped as such.

To attach the proper sling, either leather or cloth, to your musket; follow these instructions:

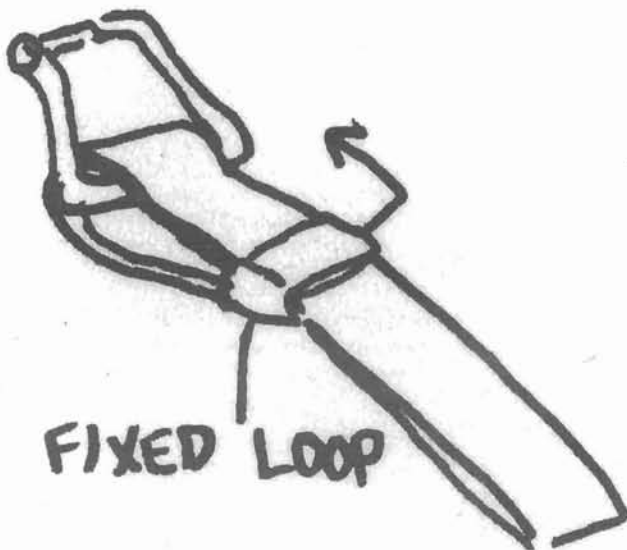
1. Remove the sliding leather loop from the sling. Place the musket with the lock plate side facing you. From the right of the rear barrel band on the trigger guard, with the curved end of the hook down, run the sling through the sling swivel pulling from right to left.

### BACK SLING SWIVEL



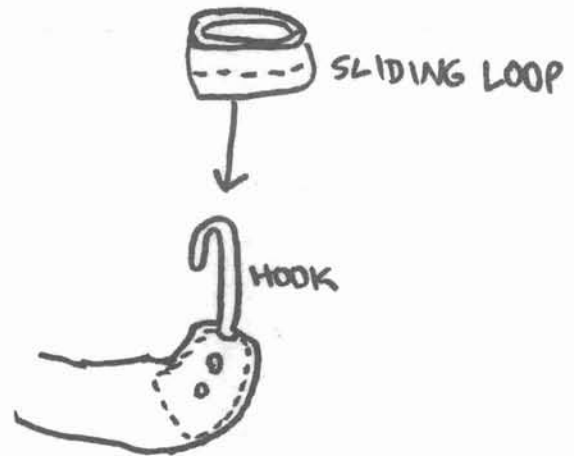
STEP 1 ILLUSTRATION.

2. The remaining end of the sling has an attached leather loop. Put the hook through the attached leather loop and slide the attached loop left toward the trigger guard.



STEP 2 ILLUSTRATION.

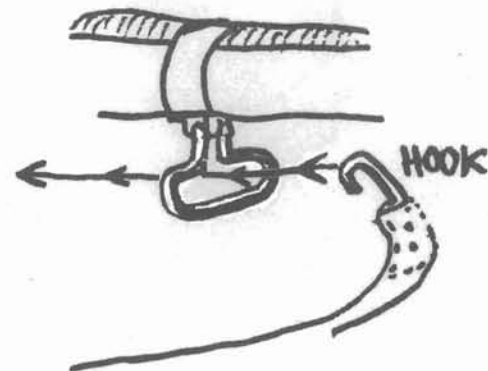
3. Put the sliding loop back on the hook end of the sling. I prefer smooth side of the loop up/stitched side down, but either way is fine. Slide the loop down to the bottom of the sling.



STEP 3 ILLUSTRATION.

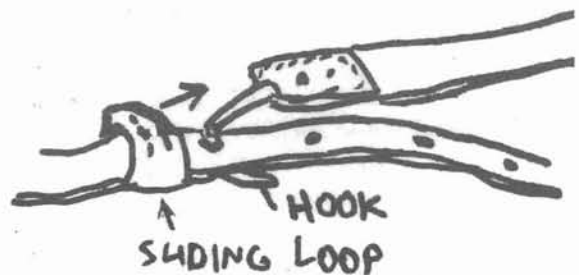
4. From the right of the front sling swivel (on the middle band for a US Springfield, or the top band for a P-53 Enfield) run the hook with the curved end down through the front sling swivel. Run the sling to the left towards the trigger guard.

### FRONT SLING SWIVEL



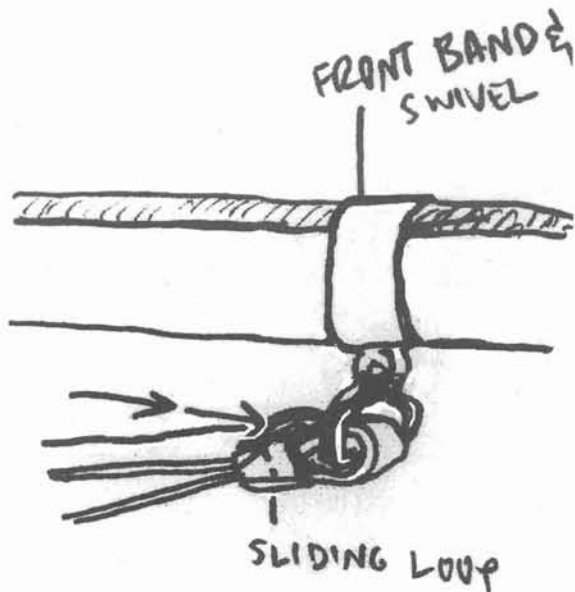
STEP 4 ILLUSTRATION.

5. With the sliding loop to the left of the hook, place the hook into one of the holes in the sling, preferably toward the bottom so the sling is semi-taut. Move the sliding leather loop over the hook and all the way to the front sling swivel until snug.



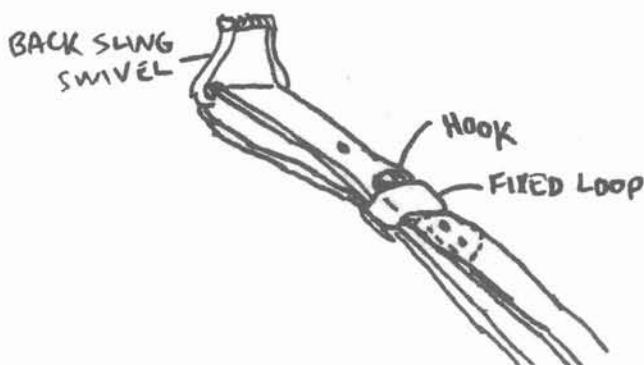
STEP 5A ILLUSTRATION.





STEP 5B ILLUSTRATION.

6. Slide the fixed lower loop (the one closest to the rear swivel) to the right until the sling is taut against the gun. If the sling is long enough, slide the fixed loop over the protruding curved end of the hook to hold it in place.



STEP 6 ILLUSTRATION.

In summary, to have a musket sling accurate for the Civil War period you have several recommended options.

First, you can elect to use *no sling at all*. There is ample evidence in support of line unit CS and US infantry muskets with empty (or in some cases missing) sling swivels. No sling is preferred to an incorrect sling. If you are not sure if your sling is correct for the scenario portrayed, leave it off the musket.

Next, if you decide to use a sling on your Enfield, be sure it is a correct sling for the CW time period. There is no correctly made reproduction CW era British sling in either style (rifle or rifle-musket) currently being made, to the best of my knowledge. The leather "tied with a thong at the bottom" sling, with one fixed and one sliding, leather loop is *not recommended*. This sling is anachronistic to 1861-65 usage and not an accurate representation of either style 1860s British slings.

The correct regulation US Springfield sling should be

forty-six inches long with a fixed leather loop at the bottom, a sliding leather loop at the top and a flat brass hook. The color should be a medium brown and not the commonly found orange hue. It is acceptable to put this sling on a P-53 Enfield, as well as any US Springfield, CS Richmond or US 1842 musket. It is acceptable to use a cotton sling for a generic late war CS-impersonation, primarily the shorter version (thirty-four inches) made for the US Springfield/CS Richmond. Certainly, there are historical exceptions such as battlefield pick-ups and captured shipments that would make the use of a cloth sling appropriate for a specific scenario. However, we generally seek to recommend what was *commonly found* during the time period and the majority of CS-short version cotton slings were not found on Federal P-53 Enfields.

Last, a "long leather" sling is conditionally recommended for the P-53 Enfield. Most examples appear darker in coloration than the medium brown US Springfield sling. They were made primarily by private contractors, and had a fixed leather loop at the bottom, a sliding leather loop at the top and a flat brass hook. These are widely available, though you may need to darken the leather to a more appropriate shade. These slings are typically lighter in color when purchased. The "long leather" slings are conditionally recommended as later CS or US "replacement slings". These slings should *not* be marked with *S. Isaacs, Campbell & Company*, or any other British import markings. They are *not* British style slings, nor are they British in origin.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of William Adams and fellow editor, Mr. Simmons, in preparation of this article. Access to original weapons and slings in their collections as well as their subject matter knowledge was invaluable.

Mr. Barry

NOTES:

[1] William Adams found in his private research that in the 1930s a previously unopened crate of P-53 Enfields intended for the US Army was discovered and examined. There were *no slings* in the crate. However, captured Confederate blockade runners and period CS documents often list a sling with each weapon as packed in the crate. The type sling is not identified. We will never know for certain what sort(s) of slings these were. Presumably, if coming from England, they were the common British style sling.

[2] Slings were technically "accoutrements," like cartridge boxes, leather waist belts or cap pouches. As such they were an item of ordnance and not considered "normal equipage" for procurement through the regimental quartermaster, like tents, clothes, food or axes. Given the well documented supply-line challenges of the time, my best guess is that replacement slings of any type were received on less than a regular basis.

[3] "SLING, ARMS!" *The Watchdog*, SUMMER 1995, Vol. 3, No. 3, page 6. [Back issues available]

[4] The Enfield short rifle ironically took a longer sling (forty-eight inches) than the P-53 rifle-musket (forty-five inches) because there was a greater distance between the swivels. This is not true of two-band reproduction Enfield Rifles, which have the rear sling swivel placed on the trigger guard. This is what would have been called a "Navy Rifle" at the time. The correct location for the rear swivel on the two-band Enfield "Rifle" is on the bottom of the stock a short distance from the butt plate. These rifles were designed to be carried cross-slung by mounted infantry.

[5] See the Royal Engineers "Clothing, Necessaries, Accoutrements and Appointments" at [www.royalengineers.ca/RE](http://www.royalengineers.ca/RE).

[6] US Army Ordnance Manual, 1861 edition.

[7] Were Federal issue US Springfield slings ever used on the P-53 Enfield? Assuredly yes, of course they were. Let's do the math. If the British buff rifle-musket sling made for the P-53 Enfield is forty-five inches and the "regulation" US Springfield sling is an inch longer at forty-six, why not? How could it not fit? Holes for the hook are easy to re-locate.

[8] Often the CS cloth slings are referred to as "linen." In fact, most were made from heavier cotton canvas and reinforced with leather for the hook holes and loops.

[9] Most of us are probably familiar with the well known *Echoes of Glory* Time-Life books. These books are common in most libraries, public and private. Access to obscure, hard-to-find British Infantry texts that are no longer in print is helpful, but not necessary.

[10] There are many photographic examples of "hook and loop" musket slings from the CW period and there are examples of fixed loop and buckle British slings, but I have trouble finding *any* evidence for the use of loose leather thong-laced, tied at the bottom, sliding keeper rough end out "British" slings. There is a good reason for this. If anyone knows of a photo of a CW soldier (either CS or US) with a loose laced thong tied leather sling with sliding leather keepers, as described in "Sling Arms!" please share it. There are examples of the tied leather thong slings that were actually made for the 1903-04 Lee-Enfield Mk I, not for the CW P-53 Enfield. Also there was a whitened buff version of the same pattern for the Snider and the Martini Henry rifles. Please note the photo from the British rifle slings web site, [www.rifleslings.com/british\\_slings\\_overview\\_page.htm](http://www.rifleslings.com/british_slings_overview_page.htm). It shows a clear photo of the loose laced, tied at the bottom, thong type leather sling which looks similar to the drawings of the Enfield sling recommended in the Walden "SLING, ARMS!" article. It is identified on the British rifle slings web site as an "early SMLE (short magazine Lee-Enfield) Mk I." This was a twentieth-century British leather sling made just before the advent of the Colonel Mills "web" sling (i.e.: pre-WW I). This sling was probably common to the

Boer War era. Unscrupulous collectors have been known to obscure the date on existing stocks of these loose thong Lee-Enfield leather slings and then attach them to CW P-53 Enfields. They are not, however, CW era British slings.

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## FROM THE ARMORY

### The Most Neglected Piece of Equipment (Part Two)

As a result of my article in the previous issue, SPRING 2004 (12.2), on the critical role played by the "cone" in the successful firing of black powder muskets, a more comprehensive list of thread sizes for various models has been compiled. The list in the appendix of David T.T. Smith's excellent *The Civil War Re-enactor's Black Powder Guide* has become dated and manufacturers are somewhat notorious for changing thread sizes without notice (see *The Watchdog*, SPRING 1998, (6.2)). George Lomas, proprietor of the Regimental Quartermaster, has long been involved with improving the performance of the reproduction cone. George designed, and had made, an improved *stainless steel* cone in the most common thread sizes. George correctly noted that the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) part that accompanies the firearm from the factory is not as good as it could be, and it ends up the weakest link in the chain of events required for successful ignition of a blank black powder round. The stainless steel cone that he makes is different in several distinct ways.

First, the stainless steel replacement cone is offered with several different sized vent holes in the base, in other words, with vent holes appropriate for both "live fire" and enactment (blank firing) purposes. Getting a cone with the correct vent opening for the intended usage is important both as a safety issue, and to ensure the best firing

performance.

Second, the stainless steel cone is broader above the shoulder. The part of the cone above the shoulder is the part called the "nipple." The thicker nipple design plus the double taper design allows percussion caps to fit more snugly, and thus eliminate the need for pinching the sides so they will not fall off during loading. In addition the "square" where the wrench is placed to tighten and loosen the cone from the bolster is higher, making it easier to remove for necessary cleaning.

Finally, the stainless steel cone, because of the interior conical design, delivers a slightly "hotter" flash from the fulminate in the percussion cap. This assists in ignition and leaves less clogging residue behind. In short, it is just a better mousetrap. Many finicky firing US 1861 Springfield (and twin sister CS-Richmond) models can be improved merely by the addition of the correct stainless steel cone versus the OEM factory part. The cost is five to six dollars for a stainless steel replacement cone. For those concerned with "absolute authenticity," the OEM part is no more historically correct in its current design than the stainless replacement. What follows is a current thread chart, compiled by George Lomas, based on years of actual "in the field results" (as opposed to OEM provided data). OEM data can be unreliable, as suggested by my recent

experience getting a replacement cone for an 1816/22 Pedersoli Springfield reproduction. Pedersoli insisted it was a metric size, but none of the replacements they sent "fit." Flintlocks, Etc. of Massachusetts (ironically, a Pedersoli distributor) finally solved the puzzle between reality and OEM specs, and got me the right size cone (5/16 x 24). That particular adventure had my musket out of commission for about three months, ridiculous as that may sound. In other words, a five dollar part can sideline an \$850 musket. Thread sizes are subject to change, and the best advice is to bring your musket (or at least your old cone) when you purchase a stainless steel replacement. And always carry a spare cone to an event.

### Mr. Barry

<u>MODEL</u>	<u>MANUFACTURER</u>	<u>SIZE</u>
Enfield	Gibbs [1]	5/16 x 20
Enfield	Parker-Hale [2]	5/16 x 18
Enfield	Euroarms	5/16 x 20
Enfield	Armi-Sport	8 x 1 mm
1842 Springfield	Armi-Sport	8 x 1 mm
1855 Springfield	Armi-Sport	5/16 x 24
1855 Springfield	Euroarms	8 x 1 mm
1861 Colt Special Model	Colt	5/16 x 24
1861 Springfield	Miroku	8 x 1mm
1861 Springfield	Euroarms	8 x 1 mm
1861 Springfield	Armi-Sport	8 x 1 mm
1861 Springfield	Pedersoli	5/16 x 24
1863 Amoskeag	Colt	5/16 x 24
1863 Springfield	Miroku	8 x 1 mm
1863 Zouave	Armi-Sport	5/16 x 24
1863 Zouave*	Euroarms	8 x 1 mm
JP Murray carbine*	Euroarms	8 x 1 mm
CS Richmond	Euroarms	8 x 1 mm
CS Richmond	Armi-Sport	[3]
Cook & Bros carbine*	Euroarms	8 x 1 mm
1841 Mississippi*	Euroarms	8 x 1 mm
Sharps carbine	IAB	5/16 x 20
Sharps	Pedersoli	5/16 x 24
Sharps	Armi-Sport	[4]
Smith carbine	Pietta	5/16 x 24
1816 Springfield [5]	Pedersoli	5/16 x 24
Maynard carbine	Ramshorn Mfg	[6]

### SELECTED HANDGUN NIPPLE THREADS

Colt & Remington mm	Uberti	5.5 x .9
	Pietta	6 x .75 mm
	Euroarms	12 x 28 TPI

#### NOTES:

(\*) If purchased from Dixie Gun Works, thread is 5/16 x 20 on this model.

[1] Poat-1986.

[2] Pre-1986.

[3] Serial No. R 854 and up are 8 x 1 mm, earlier models are 5/16 x 24.

[4] Serial No. SH 0902 and up are 8 x 1 mm, earlier models are 5/16 x 24.

[5] Conversion.

[6] Original thread.

## QUERIES, FEEDBACK AND FOLLOW-UP

### Subject: Need the Source for "To Fold the Blanket" Instructions.

Fred Gaede (subscriber, contributor and blanket merchant) has provided the **DOG** a sheet of instructions from an unknown cavalry manual. The source is unidentified and in the interest of proper documentation I present it here for your review in hope that one of you can provide him with a source. Please contact me if you know from where it comes. **Mr. Christen**

CAVALRY MANUAL.

5

### TO FOLD THE BLANKET.

Seize the blanket by both corners, bring the hands together so that the fold will come between the U. and the S., placing both corners in the left hand, and take hold of the folded corner with the right hand, slide the left hand down two-thirds of the folded edge of the blanket, bring the right hand in to the left and seize the corner with the left hand, take the double fold with the right hand, turn the corner in and seize it with the right hand, raise the blanket with both hands and place it under the chin, seize it with both hands halfway between the corners, let the part under the chin fall forward, throw the outside of the blanket over the right arm, keeping hold of the middle of the blanket with both hands, stand opposite the left shoulder of the horse, lay the blanket on the horse's back by placing the left hand on the withers and carry the right hand smartly on the loins, draw the blanket back once or twice so as to smooth the hair, being careful to raise the blanket in bringing it forward settle the blanket on the horse's back well forward, the edges to the left side.

### Subject: More on the Stainless Steel Cone.

If someone were to insist on absolute authenticity, there is another possible solution. I do not know if anybody would want to go through the trouble for a non-appearance part, but here goes.

First, the factory cone is no more authentic than the stainless steel replacement for the reason pointed out in the article (the vent is not shaped the same). Drilling it out is not the answer, for the reasons stated in the article (safety issues). The only way to a truly accurate cone is to have the bolster re-threaded to 5/16 x 24, and get the D. Pedersoli & Co. replacement cone, which is accurate in design and has a "figure-eight" vent. It is no more expensive (five to six dollars) than the stainless steel replacements. The key is having a gunsmith re-thread the bolster since you cannot just crank it on to a 8mm x 1 thread without cross-threading the thing and creating a substantial safety hazard there too. Hence, I do not recommend this option. **Mr. Barry**



## Recent Graduate Theses and Dissertations of Interest (part one)

Graduate masters theses and doctoral dissertations are singularly useful, but still very much underused, "unpublished" sources of information for Civil War living historians. While many *Watchdog* readers are undoubtedly aware of these important sources, many more are likely not aware they exist and can be accessed either online, commercially purchased, or obtained through interlibrary loan for nominal costs or even *gratis*.

To illustrate the wide variety of theses and dissertations available to researchers, this writer has assembled a listing (shown below in "alpha by year" order) he compiled after performing a simple key word and date search, using "Confederate" and the dates 2002-2003, in the online Proquest Information and Learning Digital Dissertations database. [1] Works listed by Proquest are, as a rule, available for access or purchase in either Adobe pdf (the least expensive route), microform, or in hard copy although a few have been withheld from the general public, for a variety of personal or academic reasons. They are noted accordingly. The Proquest catalog numbers have also been included below for additional ease in searching by readers.

Allen, John Owen. "Tobacco, slaves, and secession: Southside Virginia on the brink of the Great Rebellion." PhD, The Catholic University of America, 2003 (424 pages), AAT 3084397

Baker, Bruce E. "Devastated by passion and belief: Remembering Reconstruction in the twentieth-century South (South Carolina)." PhD, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2003 (380 pages) AAT 3111969

Borucki, Wesley Brian. "Yankees in King Cotton's court: Northerners in antebellum and wartime Alabama." PhD, The University Of Alabama, 2002 (323 pages), AAT 3075112

Coffey, Michael William. "Bryan Grimes: Power and patronage among the nineteenth-century planters of eastern North Carolina." PhD, The University of Southern Mississippi, 2002 (539 pages), AAT 3067216

Downhour, James G. "Thomas C. Reynolds: Missouri's forgotten governor." PhD, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 2002 (222 pages) AAT 3065351

Emerson, William Eric. "Sons of privilege: The Charleston Light Dragoons and the Civil War (South Carolina)." PhD, The University of Alabama, 2002 (280 pages) AAT 3067275

Gaughan, Anthony James. "The origins of militant patriotism in the New South, 1865—1919." PhD, The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 2002 (312 pages), AAT 3060423

Grammer, Timothy Glenn. "Wellington and Lee: Anglo-American images of the Victorian hero (Robert E. Lee, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington)." PhD, The University of Texas at Arlington, 2002 (336 pages), AAT 3079056

Hamilton, Daniel Wilson. "The limits of sovereignty: Legislative property confiscation in the Union and the Confederacy." PhD, Harvard University, 2003 (316 pages), AAT 3076890

Heidicker, Roy William. "Yankee workers and rebel gentlemen: The triumph of free labor soldiers in the American Civil War." PhD, University of Southern California, 2002 (364 pages), AAT 3093770

Joyce, Dee Dee. "White, worker, Irish, and Confederate: Irish workers' constructed identity in late antebellum Charleston, South Carolina." PhD, State University of New York at Binghamton, 2002 (387 pages), AAT 3047680

Laskin, Elisabeth Lauterbach. "Good old rebels: Soldiering in the Army of Northern Virginia, 1862—1865." PhD, Harvard University, 2003 (592 pages), AAT 3091608

Mallard, Michael Shannon. "'Faithful found among the faithless': Popular opposition to the confederacy in Civil War Mississippi" MA; Mississippi State University, 2002 (120 pages), AAT 1411410

Manning, Chandra Miller. "What this cruel war was over: Why Union and Confederate soldiers thought they were fighting the Civil War." PhD, Harvard University, 2002 (614 pages), AAT 3051232

McClurken, Jeffrey Warren. "After the battle: Reconstructing the confederate veteran family in Pittsylvania County and Danville, Virginia, 1860—1900." PhD, The Johns Hopkins University, 2003 (350 pages), AAT 3068186

McMichael, Dana Williams. "Construction of ethnicity in the Civil War diaries of southern women." PhD, Oklahoma State University, 2002 (305 pages), AAT 3066185

McWhite, Sally Leigh. "Echoes of the lost cause: Civil War reverberations in Mississippi from 1865 to 2001." PhD, The University of Mississippi, 2002 (458 pages), AAT 3072947

Mendoza, Alexander. "Struggle for command: General James Longstreet and the First Corps in the West, 1863—1864." PhD, Texas Tech University, 2002 (531 pages), AAT 3056103

Morrissey, William Edward. "Self-government and the American founding: Chief executives of revolution and Civil War." PhD, New School University, 2002 (407 pages) AAT 3075258

Ott, George Edward, Jr. "Antebellum social characteristics of the officers and men in the First Texas Infantry, Confederate States Army." PhD, California State University, Fullerton, 2003 (266 pages) AAT 1417008

Phillips, Jason Kyle. "Peculiar defeat: Warfare and the Confederate culture of invincibility." PhD, Rice University, 2003 (327 pages), AAT 3090177

Savell, John Paul. "Protecting her gateways: The biography of Fort Morgan (Alabama)." MA, University Of South Alabama, 2002 (149 pages), AAT 1409699

Schultz, Kirsten Marelle. "Secessia's song books: The history of Confederate songsters." PhD; University of Toronto (Canada), 2002 (372 pages), AAT NQ69211

Sheehan-Dean, Aaron Charles. "The family war: Motivation and commitment in the American Civil War." PhD, University Of Virginia, 2003 (311 pages), AAT 3091175

Severance, Benjamin Horton. "Tennessee's radical army: The State Guard and its role in Reconstruction." PhD, The University of Tennessee, 2002 (370 pages), AAT 3054141

Spielvogel, John Christian. "Interpreting 'sacred ground': The rhetoric of National Park Service Civil War historical battlefields and parks." PhD, The Pennsylvania State University, 2003 (233 pages) AAT 3111475

Terry, Clinton Ward. "'The most commercial of people': Cincinnati, the Civil War, and the rise of industrial capitalism, 1861—1865 (Ohio)." PhD, University of Cincinnati, 2002 (317 pages), AAT 3053853

Wahlstrom, Todd William. "Defeated and colonized: The psychology of the planter and ex-Confederate class in the postwar South." MA, Michigan State University, 2003 (143 pages) AAT 1416132

Weddle, Kevin John. "The Navy must be made efficient': Samuel Francis Du Pont, reformer and strategist, 1851—1863." PhD, Princeton University, 2003 (372 pages), AAT 3068805

Youngblood, Norman Edgar. "The development of landmine warfare." PhD, Texas Tech University, 2002 (283 pages), AAT 3069154

Theses and dissertations are available in a variety of formats, including Adobe pdf, for reasonable prices. However, in some cases, they are also made available as *free downloads*. An excellent example of such a free download dissertation is:

Wilson, Mark Russell. "The Business of Civil War: Military Enterprise, the State, and Political Economy in the United States, 1850—1880." PhD, The University of Chicago, 2002 (965 pages), AAT 3060280

Dr. Russell's massive, and seminal, work appears to be the first comprehensive examination of mid-Nineteenth Century Federal and state military contracting policies. As such, it incorporates useful chapters providing readers excellent insight into antebellum and wartime Federal military purchasing as well as into early-war state military procurement efforts. Russell even incorporates a fascinating section discussing the plight of those uncounted thousands of "sewing women" employed by state and Federal authorities to assemble uniforms for the troops. Please be warned that the aforementioned free download is also a *very large one*: thirty-seven megabytes to be exact! Needless to say, researchers should ensure their computers are up to the task.

*Watchdog* readers are cordially invited to conduct their own searches for online theses and dissertations. Given the increased attention by academic institutions on making these heretofore often obscure works available to researchers and the general public, readers will be amply rewarded for their efforts.

In Part Two, which will appear in the FALL 2004 (12.4) issue, Master's Theses Directories are discussed along with a corresponding list of search results.

**Mr. Jaeger**

NOTE:

[1] The Proquest Digital Dissertations Database can be accessed at [www.lib.umi.com/dissertations/search](http://www.lib.umi.com/dissertations/search). Proquest primarily offers Ph.D. dissertations along with a smaller collection of masters theses. The searchable database provides title and abstract information as well as a helpful (and free) twenty-four page "preview," downloadable as an Adobe pdf document, permitting individuals to obtain a better idea of the applicability of works towards their own project or interest.

#### QUERIES, FEEDBACK AND FOLLOW-UP

I neglected to mention the assistance of David Jarnagin in preparation of the "Observations on Leather Belts" article in the last issue. **Mr. Christen**

## Swallowtails and Dog Ears

Fashion is like a babbling brook. It meanders here and there, taking the wearer to different ports of experience. When we research fashion, one must look at the clothing through three different pairs of glasses. One that sees the glitz of "haute couture" in fashion plates, one that examines the photographic evidence of what was being worn on the day the photo was taken, and one that scrutinizes an actual extant garment. This article introduces all aspects of fashion research: the fashion plate, period photographs and an original garment.

This fashion plate (FIG 1) is dated September 1858 and was in the *Home* magazine. As I purchased just the fashion plate, I have no idea what the fabric of the dress was. We can see that the dress has full pagoda sleeves, a tight fitting bodice with what has been referred to as "Swallowtail Basque" trimmed out with tassels.

Upon closer inspection (FIG 2), we can determine that the illustrator has drawn the fabric of the dress in a plaid fashion, and trimmed it out with black ribbon-like diamonds stitched to the bodice and skirt. It also has an embroidered collar and ribbon and lace trimmed undersleeves. We can use our imagination a little bit and assume that the garment is made of a silk taffeta, cotton or silk voile or a wool challis. The garment is probably intended to be used for a semi-formal affair. This is definitely not a dress to be worn while doing the housework. The reason for this assumption is the amount of trim used.



FIG 1. Fashion Plate from the *Home* Magazine dated September 1858.



FIG 2. Detail of the Fashion Plate.

Now let us take a look at some photos of the era and see just how the dressmaker changed the design of the dress so that it would be different for every lady.

The first two views are details from dresses (FIG 3) that are very similar in that they both have a closed or bishop sleeve, a small stand up collar and a ribbon necktie. They both have the swallowtail detail on the bodice and button up the front. The dullness of the fabric would indicate that they might be made of wool or silk and wool blend.



FIG 3. Details of CDVs A and B.



In the next two photographs (FIG 4) we have the swallowtail detailed bodice, but the sleeves are very different. The dress on the right has a tight upper arm with fullness at the lower sleeve that is caught into a cuff. The other dress is a little more difficult to describe, but it appears to have a coat style sleeve that may have some gathering at the elbow seam. Both dresses have collars. The dress on the left has buttons up the front and the other has hooks and eyes with a cockade embellishment. The dress on the left seems to have been possibly made of wool challis or a silk and wool blend. The dress on the right appears to have been made of silk taffeta.



FIG 4. Details of CDVs C and D.

The ladies in these CDVs (FIG 5) have chosen a closed sleeve for their garment, but they are both very different. The one on the left has what looks like a turned up cuff or false cuff trimming. The dress on the right has a full sleeve that has been gathered up at the shoulder and the cuff to give a dramatic effect. Both dresses have the swallowtail bodice detailing, one trimmed with ribbon the other trimmed with ruching.



FIG 5. Details of CDVs E and F.

These two dresses (FIG 6) have the swallowtail detailing. They are probably made of silk taffeta and have full pagoda sleeves. The dress on the left, which is dated 1863, looks as though it has hooks and eyes as a closure and the dress on the right closes with buttons. The dress on the right is trimmed out with ruffles and fringe on the skirt and sleeves.



FIG 6. Details of CDVs G and H.

In the last set of photographs (FIG 7) the lady on the left has taken the idea of the swallowtail bodice and changed it ever so much to create a dog-ear look at the waist. The sleeves are slightly open and gathered or shirred vertically. The dress has been trimmed out with a ribbon trim on the sleeves and bodice. The woman on the right is wearing a bodice with another type of modification to the swallowtail.

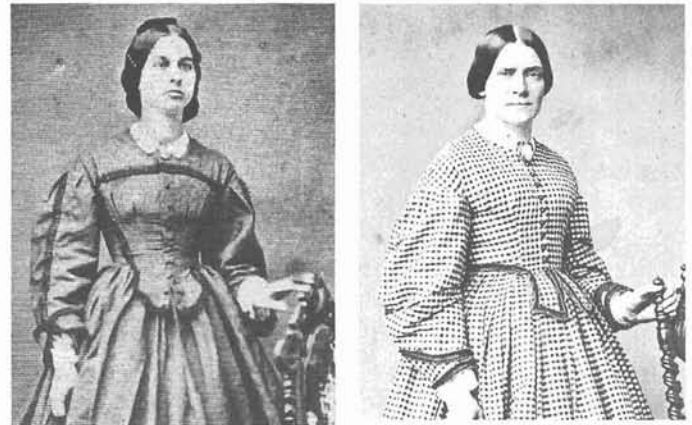


FIG 7. Details of CDV I and J.

Now we will examine an original garment (FIGS 8, 9, 10 and 11). This dress is made of floral printed silk chiffon. It is lined with a silk organza in the skirt. The bodice is lined with white polished cotton and the sleeves are lined with the silk organza. The lining is loose from the fashion fabric and closes with hooks and eyes. The fashion fabric closes with tiny brown Faille covered buttons. The sleeve had been slightly modified to make it somewhat shorter in the front for the wearer.

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