

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

Civil War Camp Life

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Union and Confederate recruits who rushed to the colors in 1861 may have envisioned defending their cause on the battlefield, but the vast majority of their military service was spent in army encampments waging a daily struggle to fend off boredom, sickness, and the “mind-harrowing sameness” of camp life.¹ Statistically, army camps were more deadly than the battlefield as disease killed approximately two-thirds of all soldiers who died in the conflict. Even for those who survived the unsanitary living conditions and poor diets endemic to camp life, many contracted long-term illnesses, intestinal problems, and addictions that plagued them into postwar old age.² However, camp life also had its bright spots of comradeship, relaxation, humor, and raucous fun enabling men exposed to myriad dangers opportunities to decompress and regenerate for weeks or months as the armies ceased maneuvering and settled into fixed winter quarters.

Civil War soldiers’ first experience with army camp life occurred soon after enlistment and many men looked back at the time spent at their initial training camps as a halcyon interlude of playing at being a soldier. Members of the 40th New York ‘Mozart’ infantry fondly recalled their rendezvous camp admirably located on a plateau overlooking the Hudson River with local farmers supplying fresh vegetables, frequent visits by speech-making dignitaries, and women bearing baskets of delicacies for boys in bright uniforms.³ These recruits marched off to war loaded down with ‘necessities’ from

¹ “From the Sixty-Sixth,” *New Albany Daily Ledger*, April 4, 1863, 2.

² J. David Hacker, “A Census-Based Count of the Civil War Dead,” in *Civil War History*, 57, no. 4 (2011): 307-48.

³ Robert Knox Sneden, *Eye of the Storm: A Civil War Odyssey*, ed. Charles E. Bryan, Jr., and Nelson D. Lankford, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), xv-xvi; John L. Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, (Boston, MA: Press of Rand Avery, Co., 1887), 3; Mason Whiting Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, William S. Tyler, ed, (New York and London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1912), 27; John G. B. Adams, *Reminiscences of the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment*, (Boston, MA: Wright & Potter Printing Company, 1899), 62.

home to make camp life bearable, but as units transitioned from the hinterland to the front, the gritty reality of army camp life began to emerge: bad food, crowded quarters, illness, and an utter lack of privacy or alone time even for short snatches.⁴ Civilians-turned-soldiers soon groused that army camps had a prison-like feel tempting men to find ways to sneak away for a few hours or days, accepting the risks of being called to account for it.⁵

The young men who joined Union and Confederate armies brought into camp with them the traits, habits, and attitudes—good and bad—prevalent in mid-nineteenth century American society. Their camp experience would likewise impact soldiers' health, morale, training, and possibly even determine whether or not they survived the war. Roughly half of each army was made up of country boys who had never been far from home and men who had been their own masters in civilian life now had to accept subordination, obey orders, and endure regimentation. Southern slave-holding elites found this aspect of army life particularly irksome complaining that it made them subjects of a military despotism with no rights to think or act independently. Volunteers on both sides in units commanded by West Point trained professionals were especially critical of being compelled to keep everything 'in Apple-pie order' with boots and button shined, even if mud were knee deep.⁶

Camp life in the field during the active campaign season differed in length of stay and levels of attainable comfort from longer static winter camps, but they shared the same fundamental characteristics of men seeking rest, food, and shelter. There were also differences in how the army service branches of infantry, artillery, and cavalry each experienced camp life as their duties and opportunities for comfort varied. While the

⁴ The Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment, 118th Pennsylvania Volunteers*, (Philadelphia, PA: J. L. Smith Publisher, 1888), 14-15; Carlton McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life in the Army of Northern Virginia, 1861-1865*, (Richmond, VA: Carlton McCarthy and Company, 1882), 17-19; Leander Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier of Army Life in the Civil War, 1861-1865*, (n.p.: Franklin Hudson Publishing, Co., 1920), 20; Peter Carmichael, *The War for the Common Soldier: How Men Thought, Fought, and Survived in Civil War Armies*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 37.

⁵ John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, ed. Richard Harwell, (Boston, MA: George M. Smith & Co., 1887), 227.

⁶ Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 29, 124-125; Carmichael, *The War for the Common Soldier*, 37, 41; Michael Barton and Larry M. Logue, eds., *The Civil War Soldier: A Historical Reader*, (New York and London: New York University Press, 2002), 333; Bell I. Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 43; Katherine M. Aldridge, ed., *No Freedom Shrieker: The Civil War Letters of Union Soldier Charles Freeman Biddlecom*, (Ithaca, NY: Paramount Publishing, Inc., 2011), 94.

Civil War field campaigning season differed depending on geographic location (and with notable exceptions), it usually ran from April until November, although units were sometimes not formally stationed in winter quarters until January. Whenever the end of active operations occurred, soldiers felt a sense of relief that they survived the fighting season and looked forward to a few months of respite and relaxation.

Whenever a unit went into camp, each company had individuals known for particular talents, like lighting fires or finding water and men whose civilian professions that now had military application, such as hog butchering, were especially valued.⁷ Shelter was always a camp prerequisite; by 1863 Union armies had dispensed with field use of the large conical Sibley tents warmed by portable stoves initially issued early in the war. They had been replaced by walled tents for officers and enlisted men making do with either 'A' frame tents (also called wedge tents) which had closure flaps at one or both ends to protect men and gear. Even more widespread was use of the minimal 'dog' or 'pup' tents designed to accommodate two men with each carrying half a rolled-up canvas section which could be buttoned-together and then held up by sticks or slung between two muskets with fixed bayonets stabbed into the ground.⁸ These tents offered some protection from sun and rain, but they could not be winterized and when temperatures dropped men either had to get up several times per night to seek warmth or sit next to smoldering fires all night.⁹

When an army halted for a few days, weeks, or months, unit commanders sought suitable campsite locations, preferably on elevated and undulating topography to aid drainage, provide some form of natural shelter, with fuel and a reliable water sources nearby and with access to road or rail supply routes.¹⁰ Although both Union and

⁷ McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 67, 197-8.

⁸ Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 23; David Madden, ed., *Beyond the Battlefield: The Ordinary Life and Extraordinary Times of the Civil War Soldier*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 48-49; Lawrence Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, (New Haven, CT: The Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Company, 1910), 37-38.

⁹ Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 19, 246.

¹⁰ Abner R. Small, *The Road to Richmond*, ed. Harold Adams Small (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1957), 76; Parker, *Henry Wilson's Regiment*, 239, 498; Thomas A. McParlin to Seth Williams, November, 28, 1864, in United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 70 vols. in 128 parts (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series I, volume 36, part 1, p. 210-11 (hereafter cited as *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 1, 210-11); Joseph R. C. Ward, *History of the 106th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers*, (Philadelphia, PA: F. McManus, Jr. & Company, 1906), 230; Robert Hunt Rhodes, ed., *All for the Union: The Civil War Diary and Letters of Elisha Hunt Rhodes*, (New York: Orion Books, 1985), 111.

Confederate army regulations had guidelines for how camps were to be set up and arranged, volunteer units often went in go-as-you-please fashion unless commanded by strict disciplinarians. Camping in wooded areas meant even more deviation from textbook layouts on account of the trees, and post war accounts offer conflicting claims as to whether Confederates preferred camping in wooded areas versus Union troops preferring open fields.¹¹ As tents went up and soldiers settled in, observers noted subtle differences separating inexperienced troops from veterans, such as the latter digging small trenches with lateral extensions around their tents to prevent water from flooding them during rainstorms.¹²

Aside from their weapons, men brought with them into camp only the meager possessions needed for field service, so that all other needs either had to be supplied by army, scrounged from localities, purchased from sutlers or sent from home. Building substantial winter quarters was usually delayed until soldiers were sure the campaign season was over dreading the “army bugaboo” of surprise orders forcing abandonment of half-built shelters. In cases where evacuated enemy camps were occupied, there was a soldier scramble to lay claim to the best huts and sift through the scattered personal effects and trash left behind.¹³ Once it was clear that the army had settled into winter quarters, the surrounding forests echoed with the sound of axes and falling trees with an average infantry regiment able to strip fifteen acres of heavy timber in just a few days. Axes, hatchets, and knives were always much in demand, but the lack of grindstones to sharpen blades dulled by overuse forced men to expend three or four times the time and labor than would otherwise have been necessary. Artillery and cavalry units required even larger amounts of lumber to build stabling sheds or windbreaks but the latter mounted regiments were usually the last to settle into fixed quarters due to scouting and picketing duties that kept them often on the move.¹⁴

¹¹ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 68-69, 84-85, 204; General Order No. 40, May 22, 1863, *O.R.* I, 14, 458-9; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 204; Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 251; M. & N. Hanhart, *Confederate Camp during the Late American War*.1871, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/pga.07025/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

¹² Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 19, 246.

¹³ Small, *The Road to Richmond*, 120.

¹⁴ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 64-65; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 140; Parker, *Henry Wilson's Regiment*, 239; Judkin Browning and Timothy Silver, *An Environmental History of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 177, 179-80; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 84-85.

Winter camps were normally laid out with each regimental company having two rows of huts separated by a street terminating on a road or a railroad line.¹⁵ The building efforts varied widely according to available building supplies, talent, and construction skill with few units able to match the decorative bent of Massachusetts regiments who often ornamented their campgrounds with arches made of intertwined pine boughs or the building genius of the 50th New York Engineers who late in the war assembled a gothic wooden church called Popular Grove that astounded visitors.¹⁶ Ranking officers naturally could obtain the best accommodations available, such as requisitioning local houses and staff officers, such as William Brooke Rawle, also secured fine quarters with he and another officer sharing a 10' X 12' log hut that sported a double canvas roof, wooden floor, and a grated stove rented for commissary provisions in lieu of money from a local citizen.¹⁷ Major Charles Mills had an even more elaborate multi-room establishment consisting of his large wall tent fitted out as an office with a carpeted wooden floor and heated by an open fireplace supplemented at the rear by a shingled log cabin bedroom replete with a window and sash taken from a deserted house and adorned with an old headquarters flag as a curtain.¹⁸

Enlisted men, left to their own devices, constructed notched-log winter 'shebangs' which often looked like they had grown stunted and twisted out of the earth. Soldiers admitted such structures seemingly exhibited less workmanship than hog pens or child-

¹⁵ Ibid., 84-85; George N. Barnard, *Winter Quarters of the Rebel Army, at Manassas, Va.* 1862, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2011647083/>, accessed June 25, 2025; *Camp of 18th Pennsylvania Cavalry, 3d Division, Cavalry Corps.* 1863-1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cwpb.04084/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

¹⁶ Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 76, 325; Billings, *Hard Tack and Coffee*, 440-1; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 141; Timothy H. O'Sullivan, *Poplar Grove Church.* 1864-1865, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.12595/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

¹⁷ Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander*, (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 188; J. Gregory Acken, ed., *Blue-Blooded Cavalryman: Captain William Brooke Rawle in the Army of the Potomac, May 1863-August 1865*, (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2019), 118.

¹⁸ Acken, *Through Blood and Fire: The Civil War Letters of Major Charles J. Mills, 1862-1865* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2023), 248, 259-60; Gallagher, *Fighting for the Confederacy*, 507; *Headquarters, Army of Potomac - Brandy Station. Officers Quarters.* 1863-1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/cwp/item/2003690141/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

built playhouses back home, but added they were the best outcome that could be achieved when the only tool available was a small hatchet.¹⁹ Hut construction improved with experience throughout the war and each edifice varied in structural design, interior arrangements, and number of inhabitants. Smaller structures housing two or four men often had low 4 foot “barricaded” or “stockaded” log walls, puncheon floors partially dug down into the earth, and were topped by pitched ‘A’ frame tents. These averaged about 8 feet square with larger versions measuring 12 feet long and 7 feet wide. Chinks and cracks between the logs were sealed with daubed mud to eliminate drafts with the most skilled carpenter adding the door. More substantial cabins had roofs consisting of rough split boards, hewn wooden shingles, or shelter tent sections strapped or nailed into place, although the latter were vulnerable to leaks and high winds or heavy snows which often shredded them.²⁰

Fireplaces were the universal source of heat and light although some men experimented with sutler purchased metal box stoves, but these smoked so badly they were rapidly discarded. Building the fireplace chimney of stones, notched sticks, or discarded commissary barrels stuccoed in clay was one of the more difficult tasks. Men renowned for that skill were highly sought after as poorly constructed renditions tended to collapse or catch fire in the middle of the night sending shivering occupants scrambling to effect repairs.²¹ Other interior sources of light consisted of candles with bayonets used as holders or slush lamps made from tin cans suspended from ceiling poles

¹⁹ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 59, 64-65; Judkin Browning and Timothy Silver, *An Environmental History of the Civil War*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 177, 179-80; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 214.

²⁰ Thomas A. McParlin to Seth Williams, November 28, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 1, 210-11; Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 25-29; Billings, *Hard Tack and Coffee*, 59; Adams, *Reminiscences of the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment*, 17; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 377; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 66; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 84-85; James Huffman, *Ups and Downs of a Confederate Soldier*, (New York: William E. Rudge’s Sons, 1940), 40; George N. Barnard, *Winter Quarters of the Rebel Army, at Manassas*. 1862, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/stereo.1s02504/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025; Edwin Forbes, *Winter Camp of the 16th Michigan*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.20677/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025; *General view of 6th New York Artillery encampment*. 1863-1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cwpb.03933/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

²¹ Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 319, 334; Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 64-65; Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 25-29; Billings, *Hard Tack and Coffee*, 59; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 61; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 131.

by wires and filled with grease and a wick made from a strip of cloth.²² The need for endless cords of wood for cooking and heating meant any fence rails in the vicinity rapidly disappeared and nearby woods were rapidly denuded even down to the stumps which were chipped away at until nothing was left. As winter progressed, army wagon teams and work parties had to trek ever greater distances to haul necessary fuel back to camp.²³

Cabin interiors ranged from good, tolerable or indifferent according to the needs and number of inhabitants, but all became miniature homesteads with accompanying bric-a-brac acquired by ingenuity or pilfering. Uninhabited buildings between the lines were rapidly dismantled for lumber, windows, door jams, bricks or any creature comfort.²⁴ Some huts featured a truncated second story sleeping loft, but most had two-tiered four-man bunks located opposite the fireplace, built with logs or barrel staves with cross-slats covered with pine boughs or padded with hay, straw, or leaves as mattresses. Lower bunks also doubled as daytime lounging chaises with knapsacks serving as both pillows and personal storage lockers and army blankets or discarded grain sacks serving as bed linens. In a few instances individuals preferred stitching the sacks into makeshift hammocks.²⁵ After describing such rudimentary sleeping arrangements in a letter home one Union soldier added that while “this bed is not as suggestive of ease as some I have slept on. Still, I must say that I can do some fast sleeping on it and wake up in the morning as fresh as a daisy.”²⁶

At the cabin’s center, on one side, there was usually a table fashioned from cracker boxes with bench seats made of logs and additional chairs or stools fashioned from a variety of materials. Items, such as canteens or weapons, were hung from pegs sometimes sharing wall space with tacked-up pictures torn from illustrated magazines. A hardtack box nailed to the wall sufficed as a kitchen closet and a proper mantel over the fireplace indicated a ‘high-toned’ establishment. Soldiers chided family at home for the number of utensils and pots they used instead pointing with pride to the myriad purposes

²² Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 72-73.

²³ Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 77; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 191.

²⁴ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 369, 371; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 49; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 142.

²⁵ Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 130-1, 329; Small, *The Road to Richmond*, 76; 81; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 70; Huffman, *Ups and Downs of a Confederate Soldier*, 40; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 98.

²⁶ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 249.

the few they possessed satisfactorily fulfilled. A scooped-out log served as a basin to wash tin plates, or they were cleaned after meals using a bit of bread or a splash of hot coffee; knives and forks were scrubbed with earth when needed.²⁷

Food remained a soldier's main concern, and the war cured men of being finicky eaters; they were soon accustomed to food "that we would hardly look at were we at home...(and) have got so that hairs and dirt don't scare us a bit. In fact we hardly notice them."²⁸ Enlisted men usually divided up into messes of four, eight, or twelve men who took turns cooking—an activity few knew anything about resulting in pernicious effects. Veterans later claimed that many boys died in camp due to poorly cooked food or shoddy contractor supplied rations.²⁹ While the Union Army produced a cookbook of sorts, distribution was limited and no one appears to have taken much notice of it so in most units men had to fend for themselves.³⁰ However, by 1863 Union officials urged that two men from each company be detailed as official cooks, but implementation of the policy appears to have been uneven. Even then soldiers complained that those assigned to the post knew less about cooking than anyone in the unit and merely sought to dodge picket, guard, and police duties.³¹

In the Confederate Army, many officers and well-to-do enlisted men initially brought body servants from home to complete menial tasks like cooking.³² Once Union armies occupied enemy territory, ever larger numbers of runaway enslaved contrabands, as they were called, flooded into federal camps and were employed as teamsters, laborers, and cooks. Some Union soldiers took advantage of the opportunity to pool their money to hire contrabands and relieve themselves of the task. The experience was not always a

²⁷ Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 202; Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 120; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 70-72, 173.

²⁸ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 36.

²⁹ Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 18; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 101; Mathew B. Brady, *Preparing the Mess. 1861-1865*, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/stereo.1s02758/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

³⁰ James M. Sanderson, *Camp Fires and Camp Cooking or Culinary Hints for the Soldier* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1862), 3-14.

³¹ Adams, *Reminiscences of the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment*, 26-27; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 381; Parker, *Henry Wilson's Regiment*, 50; Jonathan Letterman to Seth Williams, May 12, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 25, pt. 2, 491-2; Jonathan Letterman to Seth Williams, March 1, 1863, *O.R.* I, 11, pt. 1, 211-2.

³² McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 18-19.

success as members of the 14th Wisconsin Infantry found out when they took turns overseeing the operation of their company cookhouse and discovered that, like themselves, many male contrabands did not know any more about cooking “than a child would.” Such an experience was not universal as other federal soldiers had better luck and were delighted with the culinary skills and foraging prowess exhibited by newly hired contraband cooks.³³

When rail or water supply routes were unhindered, Union troops received a variety of food supplies considered generous for the era, such as fresh beef, beans, rice, tea, salt, vinegar, molasses, desiccated vegetables, fresh potatoes, and sometimes flour. The Army of the Potomac’s commissary alone issued between January and April 1864 issued 7,356,200 rations of soft bread, 2,229,551 pounds of potatoes, 399,623 onions, 80,170 pounds of turnips; 11,795 gallons of curried cabbage, and 4,820 gallons of pickles.³⁴ Confederate troops dealt with less reliably regular deliveries and far less diversity of supply, but men of both armies sought to supplement their monotonous diets by local foraging for chickens, hogs, sheep, vegetables, butter, and milk with honey being particularly prized. If these could not be paid for or farmers refused to sell, they were then stolen with the tacit approval of judiciously short-sighted officers regarding their men’s visits to the chicken coops, smokehouses, gardens, and orchards of enemy civilians.³⁵

Throughout the war the Confederacy was compelled to issue cornmeal as an army food staple whereas Union troops received hardtack. This shelf-stable three-inch square cracker made of wheat flour, water, and salt was both beloved and bemoaned by soldiers who referred to it by a variety of unappetizing nicknames such as teeth-dullers or sheet iron crackers. It was eaten in various ways; sometimes softened by dunking in coffee or

³³ Stephen E. Ambrose, ed., *A Wisconsin Boy in Dixie: Civil War Letters of James K. Newton*, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), 28, 35; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 193, 202, 214; *Civil War Camp Scene showing Company Kitchen*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.33113/?co=civwar>, Accessed June 25, 2025; Timothy H. O’Sullivan, *Non-commissioned Officers’ Mess, Co. “D”, 93d New York Infantry*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/stereo.ls02738/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

³⁴ Thomas A. McParlin to Seth Williams, November 28, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 1, 210-1; General Order No. 9, February 7, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 35, pt. 2, 57.

³⁵ “General Stoneman’s Command,” *The Philadelphia Press*, December 3, 1862, 4; Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 23; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 115-6; Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier*, 103; Cecil D. Eby, Jr., ed., *A Virginia Yankee in the Civil War: The Diaries of David Hunter Strother*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 6, 17; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 159.

crumbled and fried in the grease of army-issued salt pork or pickled beef (wryly called ‘salt horse’) or topped with sugar, stewed apples or condensed milk.³⁶ The federal army also made efforts to provide soft bread to troops in the field with the most famous example being the army bakery established at City Point, Virginia, during the Siege of Petersburg. Consisting of an office, yeast house, two large bakeries, and storehouse with special railroad siding, it was completed in October 1864 and operated by civilian bakers who churned out 100,000 rations of “most excellent bread” in a 24-hour period.³⁷ On a smaller scale, some units learned to construct field ovens from stone, bricks, or sticks daubed with mud and acquired the knack for baking bread; the Union Army developed such an excellent portable bake oven that Robert E. Lee asked that a captured model be copied by the Confederacy.³⁸

Union forces also benefited most from advances in industrial food preservation technology, for example, the ability to compress vegetables, such as string beans, turnips, carrots, beets, and onions into a desiccated rectangular bricks. Initially created to combat scurvy aboard ship or on distant frontier posts, the congealed substance was referred to by soldiers as ‘desecrated vegetables’ or ‘baled hay’. Resembling a large cheese, it swelled enormously when chunks were added to hot water, creating a soup that was unappetizingly described as a dirty brook with dead leaves floating in it. The mixture was not universally appreciated except by units with a large number of German recruits, although desiccated potatoes mixed with water and fried in salted bacon grease won generally favorable reviews.³⁹ While soldiers complained the dried apple ration consisted mainly of cores and skins, it could be stewed into a palatable sauce for hardtack and some New England units used their regional cooking knowledge to bake beans in buried kettles surrounded by hot coals overnight.⁴⁰

As soon as military operations ceased for any expected length of time, soldiers sought to alleviate their monotonous army diet by requesting family to send a plethora of items from home without delay. Among the most demanded items were stationery,

³⁶ Ibid., 109, 137, 118; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 160-1.

³⁷ Marsena Rudolph Patrick, *Inside Lincoln's Army: The Diary of Marsena Rudolph Patrick, Provost Marshall General, Army of the Potomac*, ed. David S. Sparks (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1964), 432-3.

³⁸ Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 35; Ambrose, *A Wisconsin Boy in Dixie*, 118; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 122; Robert E. Lee to W. E. Jones, March 23, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 25, pt. 2, 682-3.

³⁹ Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 258, 266-267; Small, *The Road to Richmond*, 197. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 111, 141-2.

⁴⁰ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 139, 141.

thread, shirts, socks, towels and of course foodstuffs such as butter, cheese, pepper, canned goods and tinned or smoked meats. The most skilled packers wasted no space but filled every box crevice with edible items, such as handfuls of peanuts, and a soldier's great fear was that too long a postal delay enroute might mold the contents. It was a 'Red Letter Day' when Christmas boxes arrived in camp as they always contained something extra special like cakes, preserved fruits, pickles, or sweets made by family or local ladies.⁴¹ Garments and other practical items were not overlooked in the form of socks, gloves, underwear, combs, brushes, and personal comforts. Soldiers unhappy with government-issued footwear often requested local cobbler-made boots with thick leather, double-soles, and iron heel plates along with tallow boot grease to resist the incessant wet of camp life.⁴²

Knowing that soldiers sought alcohol to relieve the boredom and monotony of camp life, army leaders tried to interdict the flow of intoxicating spirits by mandating all boxes first be opened at brigade or regimental headquarters to remove forbidden items, such as civilian clothing to aid desertion. Ingenious tactics were employed to foil inspectors by labeling containers as hairdressing tonic, secreting booze in tinned goods, hiding bottles in hollowed-out cakes or imbedding them in the breast cavities of smoked turkeys.⁴³ When enlisted men could not import or surreptitiously purchase alcohol from rule-evading sutlers, they attempted to brew their own beer or distill camp moonshine bearing colorful names like 'Pop-Skull,' 'Oh! Be Joyful,' and 'Rifle Knock-Knee'.⁴⁴ While commanders on both sides decried the detrimental impact of spirits on the troops, yet officers could matter-of-factly write home directing that demijohns of whiskey be sent directly by express delivery.⁴⁵ Abstemious men noted that officers and men could routinely be seen drunk in camp despite orders against it and that drinking bouts,

⁴¹ Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 69; Huffman, *Ups and Downs of a Confederate Soldier*, 40; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 234-5, 238; Adams, *Reminiscences of the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment*, 57-58; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 157-8.

⁴² Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 67; Parker, *Henry Wilson's Regiment*, 251.

⁴³ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 234-5, 238; Ward, *History of the 106th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers*, 20-21; Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 112; Seth Williams to Adams Express Company, February 13, 1863, *O.R.* 1 25, pt. 2, 73-74.

⁴⁴ Madden, *Beyond the Battlefield*, 143, 214-5.

⁴⁵ George N. Bliss, *'Don't Tell Father I Have Been Shot At': The Civil War Letters of Captain George N. Bliss, First Rhode Island Cavalry*, ed., William C. Emerson with Elisabeth C. Stevens, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2018), 111; Gallagher, *Fighting for the Confederacy*, 189-90.

especially around holidays, led to fights resulting in “swelled heads, black eyes or smashed noses” sometimes resulting in near fatalities and court-martials, aside from the long-term health impacts caused by cirrhosis.⁴⁶

All armies sought campsites near abundant freshwater sources to supply the men’s drinking needs, but in an age without knowledge or testing for harmful waterborne bacteria truly clean water sources were rare. Those that were relatively safe often did not long remain so with large numbers of men and animals camped nearby as soldiers tended to relieve themselves everywhere and use their drinking water sources for bathing and washing clothes. In addition, numerous dead animals, manure, offal, and badly sited latrines often ended up polluting shallow underground springs. It is therefore perhaps fortunate that boiled coffee not plain water was usually the soldier’s favorite beverage. Roasted coffee beans were regularly issued to Union armies whereas tea rarely appeared outside officers’ messes or hospital tents.⁴⁷

America’s conflict caused global coffee prices to spike as Union quartermasters between 1863 and 1865 purchased 58,474,967 pounds of coffee beans. While Richmond encouraged its troops to concoct substitute beverages out of parched corn or roasted barley, Washington spent \$34,400 per day to provide one million rations of caffeinated beverages its soldiers demanded. Coffee was the one food item each man normally insisted on preparing himself. Whether in camp or on the march, it was often brewed in discarded metal cans with improvised wire handles as army issued tin cups speedily burned through on the bottom. The majority of soldiers drank their coffee black and unfiltered, some added sugar or milk if available, and there remained the rarified luxury of using condensed milk for those who could afford to purchase it from the camp sutler.⁴⁸

Much maligned as an unscrupulous price gouger, the army sutler—a civilian merchant granted special military license to accompany the army and sell approved wares—filled a need recognized by the U.S. War Department. Sutler inventory largely

⁴⁶ “Our Army Correspondence,” *Muscatine Weekly Journal*, January 22, 1864, 3; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 136; Ward, *History of the 106th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers*, 231; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 246.

⁴⁷ Madden, *Beyond the Battlefield*, 142, 242-3; “Army Beverages,” *Hillsborough Recorder*, July 17, 1861, 7; “Soldiers Coffee,” *Waynesboro Village Recorder*, January 2, 1863, 1; “Honorable Plunder of the Soldiers,” *The Tri-Weekly Yeoman*, October 29, 1861, 2.

⁴⁸ Abstract of Reports of Purchases of Coffee by the Department of Subsistence of the United States Army, September 1865; Amos B. Eaton to Joseph P. Taylor, February 2, 1863, National Archives, Record Group 92, Entry 225, Box 375; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 83, 123-5, 129; Winslow Homer, *Campaign Sketches. The Coffee Call*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2013650297/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

consisted of dry goods and foodstuffs not provided by the quartermaster or commissary departments: delicacies like Lewis or Borden's Condensed Milk, canned tomatoes or peaches, cheese, butter, plug tobacco, and items like baking powder or packets of self-rising flour which the men used to make pancakes or fritters. Enterprising sutlers also sold baked goods of varying quality, such as gingerbread and pies that were described as "moist and indigestible below, tough and indestructible above, with untold horrors within."⁴⁹ Tobacco was the sutler's most popular product with any shortage in supply being keenly felt by troops addicted to its pick-me-up qualities. Sale of other stimulants, like liquor, was banned but profit-motivated sutlers surreptitiously evaded the rule dispensing it from a secreted stash at inflated prices risking banishment and prosecution if caught.⁵⁰

Once men settled in sedentary winter camps, the routine of military life resumed with daily reveille, roll call, drill, sick call, policing the grounds, guard mounting, afternoon drill, preparation for inspection or parade, retreat, tattoo, and lights out. Later in the war veterans tended to treat the day's first roll call with disregard, usually arising in various states of undress and then absconding to the unit's lavatory sinks despite orders to fall-in for roll call. Differing branches of military service also necessitated differing types of camp drill and routine. Infantrymen largely had only to care of themselves whereas artillery and cavalry units had to attend to animals which meant feeding, watering, grooming and the added burden of removing manure and burying dead animals. The latter onerous duty was often assigned as disciplinary punishment that men desired to avoid even more than corduroying muddy roads as the animal corpses had to wait to be buried until the ground had thawed. In the meanwhile, carnivorous varmints made depredations on the equine corpses making them distasteful objects to handle and army camps were easily identifiable from a distance by the number of carrion-seeking buzzards seen circling in the skies overhead.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 242-3, 244, 246; Parker, *Henry Wilson's Regiment*, 73; Reports, Receipts, and Invoices, and Shipping Notes Relating to Sutlers, 1863-1865, National Archives, Record Group 92, Entry 470, Box 1.

⁵⁰ "A Soldier's Letter, No. 34," *The Green Mountain Freeman*, August 18, 1863, 2; Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 132; Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 53, 110; Billings, *Hard Tack and Coffee*, 126, 243; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 157; Seth Williams to Marsena R. Patrick, February 13, 1863, *O.R.* I, 25, pt. 2, 74; Edwin Forbes, *The Sutler's Tent in Camp*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.20604/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁵¹ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 174, 101; Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 72.

Rainy weather in camp meant discomfort and inconvenience but it also provided an impromptu holiday as formal drills were suspended leaving soldiers free to present “a combined picture of social enjoyment and industrial occupation” song singing, speech-making, clothes mending, letter writing, gun cleaning, card playing, cooking, and sleeping.⁵² Sundays in good weather, however, meant general inspections of unit personnel and equipment (sometimes referred to as “knapsack drill), camp grounds and sanitation, and even administrative record keeping.⁵³ While an annoyance to the men because of the extra work entailed, such inspections provided valuable information to army leaders. One 1864 report on the condition of the 5th Illinois Cavalry listed a string of common faults inspectors typically found: the unit’s military bearing, appearance, and discipline to be bad, officers not properly instructed in drill and the men dirty and not wearing prescribed uniform. Additionally, regimental records were incomplete, orders went unpublished, accommodations for the sick were indifferently arranged, and the chaplain failed to make quarterly reports as ordered.⁵⁴

Men could be kept relatively clean in camp, certainly far better than on active field service when soldiers unsentimentally described themselves as being “as dirty a man as can be found.”⁵⁵ The sweat and grime of army marches and the dirt of camp life initially shocked new recruits as did the discovery that fellow soldiers had differing levels of personal cleanliness. While some men behaved as fastidiously as at home and carried well used razors, others could not be forced to tidy themselves or groom their unkempt hair and beards. If most men stripped down to their flannels when retiring, others never took anything off to sleep. The majority of soldiers, however, found an extended stay in camp a welcome opportunity to resume a more civilized appearance by visiting camp barbers whose makeshift chairs offered shaves, haircuts, and shoeshines even though some customers left unenthused about the shingled haircuts sometimes received.⁵⁶

⁵² “Camp Life in Muddy Weather,” *The Hillsdale Standard*, February 11, 1862, 3.

⁵³ Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 39-41; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 100.

⁵⁴ James H. Wilson to Edwin M. Stanton, March 1, 1864, National Archives, Record Group 108, Entry 65, Letters Sent by Captain Robert N. Scott, Aide de Camp and Assistant Adjutant General at Headquarters.

⁵⁵ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 114-5.

⁵⁶ Jonathan Letterman to Seth Williams, May 12, 1863, *O.R.*, I 25, pt. 2, 491-2; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 75, 79, 85; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 134-5, 155; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 85, 89; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 204; Timothy O’ Sullivan, *Soldiers Bathing, North Anna River*. May 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/96513479/>, accessed June 25, 2025; E. & H.T. Anthony, *The Amateur Barber*. 1861-1865, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division,

Officers were repeatedly reminded they bore responsibility for the cleanliness of their men and that soldiers' inexperience in taking care of themselves was a cause of disease. Daily ablutions were therefore not to be omitted, "especially of the face, neck, chest, and arms," and bathing was to be encouraged whenever the opportunity permitted.⁵⁷ Encampments near rivers and streams provided men the chance to swim and bathe, yet there was no enforceable system to mandate that they did so.⁵⁸ Medical officers recommended soldiers be encouraged to bathe twice a week by being marched to the bank by regiment or brigades, leaving their clothing and weapons on the shore, and remaining in the water at least fifteen minutes.⁵⁹ On a lesser scale, squads of ten men under reliable sergeants were to be given passes to bathe with the admonition they stay away from steamer landings and view of public highways to avoid complaints of public indecency. While there were reports of Union and Confederate troops bathing sociably together in the same stream, dangers also existed of being captured or killed by enemy forces, although some commanders found the idea of attacking nude bathers abhorrently unchivalrous.⁶⁰

Camp life also allowed for washing, mending, and replacing garments frayed or worn-out in active service. Washing clothes on campaign was not practicable as cold water did not eliminate vermin and woolen vestments shrank when drying making them

Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2022631767/>, accessed June 25, 2025; Edwin Forbes, *The Camp Barber--Taking a Shave*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2004661847/>, accessed June 25, 2025; Winslow Homer, *Life in Camp, part 2*. 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2003674123/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁵⁷ S. P. Moore to Judah P. Benjamin, October 18, 1861, *O.R.* IV, II, 693.

⁵⁸ Jonathan Letterman to Seth Williams, May 12, 1863, *O.R.*, I 25, pt. 2, 491-2; Timothy O' Sullivan, *Soldiers Bathing, North Anna River*. May 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/96513479/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁵⁹ Jonathan Letterman to Seth Williams, March 1, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 11, pt. 1, 213.

⁶⁰ General Order No. 32, May 24, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 3, 181; W. H. Jackson to William T. Sherman, August 30, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 30, pt. 3, 229; "Rendezvous of Distribution, Va.," *The Soldier's Journal*, June 15, 1864, 139; "About Bathing," *The Daily Telegraph*, July 23, 1863, 3; "Our Nashville Correspondent," *New York Herald*, August 4, 1862, 8; "A Visit to Rosecrans Army," *Gazette and Free Press*, August 21, 1863, 4; "Editors' Ink Drops," *The Rolla Express*, May 24, 1862, 3; "The March Through Georgia," *Cincinnati Daily Commercial*, January 3, 1865, 1.

hard to put on again.⁶¹ In winter camp, soldiers could fumigate their clothing although this required boiling them in the same eight-gallon kettles used for cooking, and those who shipped clothing back home advised family to first scald or hang them outdoors for extended periods. Soldiers who could afford it hired out their washing to other willing company members, local civilians, or contraband camp followers. While no veteran recalled any ironing being attempted, clean clothing next had to be mended as government-issued socks tended to wear out rapidly and tying knots around the holes only added to their discomfort. Men, whose prewar sewing needs had been delegated to female family members or servants, soon found it was a valuable wartime skill and appreciated the ‘housewife’ packets of pins and thread tucked into their pockets when leaving home. Letters from the front soon contained requests for additional sewing or darning needles, yarn, linen thread, or buttons with which some men even demonstrated a surprising flair for fixing holes and tears with artistically fanciful or symbolic patches that evoked mirth or admiration.⁶²

One unheralded olfactory component of Civil War camp life was the prevailing stench of human waste, especially if the site had been previously occupied. One of the first tasks officers were supposed to oversee when establishing a campsite was construction of designated latrines, usually on the lee side, referred to in military parlance as ‘sinks’. Although official army camp regulations were drawn up with troop hygiene and health in mind—and despite their obvious utilitarian need—many enlisted men remained unconvinced that such labor redounded to their martial credit and southerners chafed at being assigned menial labor tasks. Therefore, it is not surprising that medical officers constantly complained that men’s careless habit of relieving themselves of “bodily emanations” needlessly contaminated water supplies and caused sickness. Entreating officers to force men to use the sinks had limited effect and the sanitary

⁶¹ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 37; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 73, 134-5, 155; Edwin Forbes, *Washing Day--Column on the March*. 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.20691/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025 .

⁶² Ambrose, *A Wisconsin Boy in Dixie*, 145; Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 67, 72, 250; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 77-78, 81-83; Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier*, 40-41; Acken, *Through Blood and Fire*, 29; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 115; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 90, 149; E. & H. T. Anthony, *War views. No. 1501, Camp life, Army of the Potomac*. 1861, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2012649696/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

problem was never fully solved resulting in the smell of “excreta” near army camps wily being referred to as a “patriotic odor.”⁶³

Disease was an inescapable concomitant of camp life that claimed more lives than combat. Even as the first recruits crowded into training camps, contagious diseases like measles spread with devastating effect among farm boys raised in relative isolation who had little immunity. Urban recruits enduring camp hardships better than those from country districts was a phenomena noted at the time but unscientifically credited to the former being unaccustomed to breathing noxious air.⁶⁴ Inurement to camp life therefore usually meant passing through a variety of sicknesses with colds and rheumatism the most common maladies sometimes self-treated by stripping bark off hickory trees to brew a seemingly restorative bitter tea.⁶⁵ Men wrote home using a variety of phonetic spellings and inventive terms to describe the illnesses that plagued them: scurvy, malaria (‘the Shakes’), pneumonia, erysipelas, septicemia, blood poisoning, jaundice, Typhoid Fever, and diarrhea—the latter two being the biggest killers that medical science could do little to prevent.⁶⁶

Ignorance of bacteriology attributed malaria and other illnesses to bad vapors or miasmas and scant attention was paid to soldier diets lacking fruits, vegetables, and milk and poor camp sanitation attracting flies, mosquitoes, fleas, and lice.⁶⁷ When numerous members of a New York regiment fell sick with muscle cramps, diarrhea, vomiting, and severe back pains, the only explanation appeared to be sullied food rations.⁶⁸ Early in the

⁶³ Small, *The Road to Richmond*, 198; Carmichael, *The War for the Common Soldier*, 38, 42; Madden, *Beyond the Battlefield*, 241; T. B. Roy to M. G. Walker, July 26, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 24, pt. 3, 1032; Jonathan Letterman to Seth Williams, May 12, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 25, pt. 2, 491-2; Thomas A. McParlin to George G. Meade, June 6, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 1, 247; “General Order No. 4,” December 7, 1861, *O.R.*, I, 6, 339; “General Order No. 40,” May 22, 1863, *O.R.*, I, 14, 458; “General Order No. 5,” January 8, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 32, pt. 2, 532-3.

⁶⁴ “General Stoneman’s Command,” *The Philadelphia Press*, December 3, 1862, 4; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 70.

⁶⁵ “Health of the Army,” *The Philadelphia Press*, December 3, 1862, 4; Madden, *Beyond the Battlefield*, 238; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 72, 74; Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 19.

⁶⁶ Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 75, 120.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁶⁸ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 101; Margaret Humphreys, *Marrow of Tragedy: The Health Crisis of the American Civil War*, (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2013), 27, 33.

war Confederate authorities believed soldiers suffered chiefly from three diseases: diarrhea caused by bad water to be cured by eating only boiled rice; rheumatism due to remaining in wet clothes able to be cured by wearing more flannel; and fevers caught at night in open air treated by a change of air.⁶⁹ Two years later Union medical officials noted that the majority of their sick cases were catarrhal affections, malarial fevers, and sporadic cases of varioloid, a mild form of smallpox, the spread of which was contained by inoculating the entire army as fast as vaccine could be procured.⁷⁰

Those requiring more complex medical attention were first treated in regimental camp hospitals with more acute cases shifted to division establishments or even sent to urban military hospitals for better care. Those enlisted men who died in camp were usually buried in nearby makeshift cemeteries unless families or unit contributions enabled the remains to be sent home.⁷¹ Seeking to reduce soldier mortality rates, Northern and Southern civilians organized soldier-aid societies, but Union forces benefited most due to the national reach of the U. S. Sanitary Commission and the Christian Commission. Sanitary Commission inspectors were especially active keeping watch over camp and hospital conditions and its surgeons and wagons loaded with stores followed the army from camp into the field. On the homefront, its claim and pension agencies supplied soldiers' families free of charge with the forms to procure back-pay, pensions, and bounty payments.⁷²

Along with battling unseen camp viruses and diseases, soldiers also had to combat more observable afflictions in the form of vermin. No army camp was without rodents to the degree that one Pennsylvania unit organized a rat extermination campaign.⁷³ Life in the open inevitably lead to encounters with blood-seeking parasites like ticks, chiggers,

⁶⁹ "Camp Diseases," *Milledgeville Southern Recorder*, March 4, 1862, 3.

⁷⁰ Thomas A. McParlin to Seth Williams, November 28, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 1, 210-1.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 95; Edwin Forbes, *An Army Graveyard, Winter camp near Stoneman's Switch, Falmouth, Va.* 1862-1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.20527/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁷² Mary C. Gillet, *The Army Medical Department, 1818-1865*, (Washington: United States Army Center of Military History, 1987), 161; Joseph Hooker to Edwin M. Stanton, April 21, 1863, *O.R.* I, 25, pt. 2, 239; "U.S. Sanitary Commission," *The Soldiers' Journal*, June 29, 1864, 8; "Sanitary," *The Linn County Patriot*, May 26, 1864, 2; "The United States Sanitary Commission," *The Chicago Tribune*, May 13, 1864, 1; "Third Anniversary of the Christian Commission," *Washington Evening Star*, January 30, 1865, 3.

⁷³ Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 382.

and bedbugs, yet the soldier's greatest scourge was lice. Even the most fastidious individuals eventually had to accept their presence with hardened resolution, and it was no disgrace to have "a few of these gray-backed gentry" aboard. In the field men made daily efforts to combat them and marveled at their ability to withstand the infestation even when describing to family lice in such numbers they that could be observed crawling on the ground of evacuated camps. When men received new clothes, most carefully segregated and then burned their old garments, but within a week the invasion had reoccurred. On sunny days year-round if the army was inactive, soldiers could be seen in stages of undress sitting alone or in groups unabashedly engaged in louse hunts. The task was treated on par with weapon cleaning and any man who failed to do so became a target of derision and avoidance.⁷⁴

Men were usually most tightly bonded to bunkmates or 'chums' with whom they slept, walked, talked, and shared hardships. Every company had their resident 'General' who endlessly held forth on strategy or 'old Augers' who incessantly bored listeners with obscure subjects. There was also the 'Argument man' for whom every topic was a source of contrarian disagreement as well as those who were inclined to be jokesters.⁷⁵ Soldiers who tended to be inattentive or accident prone were collectively referred to as 'Jonahs' whereas 'Beats' were shirkers who avoided duty assignments, sought food or money loans, and disappeared when combat was imminent.⁷⁶ All soldiers longed for furloughs home or the consolation of having family members visit the army.⁷⁷ A man sauntering through camp with female relatives or visiting parents was to be envied, but such visits did not always end well. While Confederate soldier James Huffman heartily welcomed a box of comestibles personally delivered by his father, he soon regretted it when the old man contracted pneumonia in camp and died shortly thereafter with his grieving son unable to attend the funeral.⁷⁸

While army leaders busied themselves securing the equipment, sustenance, and medical care their men needed, morale-building, amusement, or diversions were left up to the men's own devices. Boredom was an army experience both sides shared in equal

⁷⁴ Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 72, 114-5; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 77-78; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 155.

⁷⁵ McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life in the Army of Northern Virginia*, 89, 197-8, 201-3.

⁷⁶ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 90, 92-93, 99-100.

⁷⁷ Thomas A. McParlin to Seth Williams, November 28, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 1, 210-1.

⁷⁸ Billings, *Hard Tack and Coffee*, 227-8; Huffman, *Ups and Downs of a Confederate Soldier*, 40.

measure and each developed similar means of combating it. Sunday afternoons, following parade and inspection were usually the most relaxed period for indoor or outdoor amusements of wholesome or sinful varieties.⁷⁹ Soldiers organized camp sporting events and entertainments often literally making their own fun by carving chess and checkers pieces or manufacturing playing cards for poker, euchre, whist, cribbage or keno. Revived childhood games provided diversion such as marbles, hop-scotch, sack-races, blanket-tossing, footraces, broad-jumping or wheelbarrow racing.⁸⁰ Some units constructed gymnastics apparatus or engaged in physical activities like wrestling or boxing with contenders squaring off against regimental members or challengers from neighboring units.⁸¹

Wagering added extra layers of excitement and soldiers bet on everything from horse or louse races, pitching quoits (horseshoes), climbing greased poles as well as faro and ‘chuck-a-luck’ with cash, coffee, or tobacco used as winning stakes. Warm weather usually meant every company street was alive with baseball players as the game was “all the rage” with regimental teams of officers and men squaring off against each other.⁸²

⁷⁹ “From the Sixty-Sixth,” *New Albany Daily Ledger*, April 4, 1863, 2; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 102; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 135.

⁸⁰ Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 52-53; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 142-3; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 92; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 50; “From Gen. Halleck’s Division,” *The Press*, June 5, 1862, 1; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 127; John Carbutt, *Soldiers from the 134th Illinois Volunteer Infantry playing cards at Columbus, Kentucky*. 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2012649133/>, accessed June 25, 2025; Winslow Homer, *Life in Camp, part 1*. 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.35359/?co=civwar> accessed June 25, 2025.

⁸¹ Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier*, 24; E. & H.T. Anthony, *Sparring in Camp*,” 1861-1865, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.80248/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025; John Carbutt, *Soldiers from the 134th Illinois Volunteer Infantry boxing at Columbus, Kentucky*. 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/stereo.1s09730/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁸² Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 78, 125; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 188, 238-9; Adams, *Reminiscences of the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment*, 60-61; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 511; “From the Sixty-Sixth,” *New Albany Daily Ledger*, April 4, 1863, 2; *Playing Ball. Camp of 13th New York Heavy Artillery*. 1864-1865, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2018670780/>, accessed June 25, 2025;

Even cold weather did not deter both Union and Confederate soldiers from harnessing their competitive spirit. When heavy snow blanketed the camps, some men built sleds while others engaged in large-scale snowball fights replete with military maneuvers, fortifications, and energetic participant ferocity that resulted in real injuries. Training could also be incorporated into the fun; a Wisconsin unit held sharp-shooter contests to judge and hone marksmanship skills firing at targets from both ground and tree top positions.⁸³ Such were the means, one newspaper reporter commented after witnessing soldier off-duty antics, by which “the ennui of camp life is alleviated”.⁸⁴

If not engaged in physical activities, men indulged their creativity by using camp detritus to fashion an array of trinkets like pipes and rings for their own use or to send home as mementos from the front. Elaborate meerschaum pipes ornamented horn mouthpieces bearing relief or inlaid badges of regimental or corps insignia were produced when mountain-laurel roots were obtainable. Rings sporting patriotic or war-like emblems were whittled from bone or dried horn or hooves or were sometimes fashioned out of large gutta-percha buttons.⁸⁵

Some men tried to domesticate feral animals lurking about the camps, such as raccoons, or in the case of a group of Union soldiers in Tennessee, a wild ‘Muscovy Duck’ who victoriously trounced any ‘gaff’ armed fighting cock put up against him.⁸⁶ Performances of amateur camp quartets or minstrels made up of soldier or contraband participants were heartily applauded as were more professional entertainments by traveling theatrical or music troupes, such as the Hutchinson Family Singers.⁸⁷ While

Edwin Forbes, *St. Patrick's Day in the Army--The Grand Stand*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.,

<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.20518/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁸³ Bell I. Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy*, (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Publishers, 1943), 63-64; Parker, *Henry Wilson's Regiment*, 63; “Army Correspondence,” *Richland County Observer*, April 30, 1863, 3.

⁸⁴ “The Army of the Potomac,” *The Chicago Tribune*, November 18, 1861, 2.

⁸⁵ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 61; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 86; Acken, *Blue-Blooded Cavalryman*, 118.

⁸⁶ “Correspondence of the Register,” *The Sandusky Register*, August 26, 1862, 2.

⁸⁷ Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 59; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 213; J. F. Coonley, *Elmira Cornet Band, Thirty-third Regiment of the New York State Volunteers*. 1861, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/cwp/item/2013648631/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

officers with wives visiting camp could socialize at large formal events, such as a ball given by the Third Corps in 1864, enlisted men engaged in ‘stag’ or ‘gander’ dances with ‘ladies’ denoted by handkerchiefs tied around the left arm. Both sides enjoyed musical performances by enlisted regimental bands, but these organizations were largely reduced, phased out, or abolished after mid-1862 passing the responsibility for musical entertainment on to individuals in each Company who played the fiddle, banjo, or harmonica.⁸⁸

Civil War armies were highly literate for the era with Union armies having higher overall literacy rates making reading a major source of camp diversion. Soldiers read anything they could get their hands on, penned by authors ranging from William Shakespeare to homespun humorists Artemus Ward or Bill Arp. Long out of date magazines and newspapers were frequently passed from hand to hand until in tatters. Writing letters was another universal activity, although soldiers complained they never received a sufficient quota compared to the number they sent. Mail from home was eagerly awaited no matter how mundane, even about family pets, and bad news was preferred to none at all.⁸⁹ Predictably, with household heads away at war, soldiers’ letters included advice on managing farm, financial, or family affairs and discussed topics such as local politics, news from other battlefronts, boredom, and illness. Discussion of combat’s true horrors was usually avoided except with select intimates and soldiers often instinctively filtered what they said so as to sustain civilian morale knowing not all family members supported the cause or their decision to enlist.⁹⁰

From the start of the war, family members and religious leaders had grave concerns about what army camp life would do to the morals of young men removed from the civilizing home influences of books, art, and women. An overriding fear was that they

⁸⁸ Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 125; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 74, 100; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 22, 204; “Grand Ball in the Third Corps,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 30, 1864, 2; “A Grand Ball in Camp,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 18, 1864, 1; “The Stag Dance,” *Harper’s Weekly*, February 6, 1864, 93; “The Ganders,” *Harper’s Weekly*, February 20, 1864, 116; 122; Edwin Forbes, *Ball of the 5th Corps, 1st Div. (Gen. Bartlett). Near Beverly Ford, Va. 1864*, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2009631007/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁸⁹ James McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 11; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 78.

⁹⁰ Eben Allison, *The Civil War Letters of Eben Allison, 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry, 1862-1865*. Gilder-Lehrman Institute of American History Collection, <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/collection/glc0352324>, accessed June 25, 2025; Carmichael, *The War for the Common Soldier*, 105; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 89.

would “smoke, drink, recite and listen to coarse stories, and indulge in badinage and games” and return home “as wild as Cossacks.”⁹¹ Such qualms were not unfounded as devout men found military life filled with vice and every army followed by “a promiscuous crowd of camp followers, speculators, [and] sharpers” with social leprosy “flaunting its gaudy, tawdry rags everywhere.”⁹² Orders against gambling might be published but soldiers noted “that’s all the good it does” as within days of being paid many men had nothing left from several months wages.⁹³ Both armies were afflicted by venereal disease with infection rates highest among troops returning from furlough. If unavailable in the flesh, pornographic photos with coyly suggestive titles such as “New Pictures for Bachelors” or “Mermaids wearing only mist and foam” circulated among soldiers in camp. Only a few men openly confessed enjoying throwing off the moral restraints of home such as one Wisconsin officer whose frequent brothel visits resulted not only in a syphilis infection but also in testimony that was considered so lewdly vulgar it was barred from being written down as part of his official court-martial record.⁹⁴

Military chaplains sought to combat the moral degradations of army life by preaching and proselytizing amongst the troops and distributing religious tracts like *Why Do You Swear?*, *The Temperance Letter*, *A Mother’s Last Words to Her Soldier Boy*, and *The Gambler’s Balance Sheet*. They also organized the building of camp chapels lit by chandeliers made of old tin cans and furnished with wooden benches or seating from abandoned buildings. When not used for godly purposes, these structures served as schoolrooms and meeting places for spelling bees, debating clubs, and amateur theatricals and plays.⁹⁵ In addition to informal gatherings featuring prayers, testimonials, and songs

⁹¹ “The Army of the Potomac,” *The Chicago Tribune*, November 18, 1861, 2.

⁹² “Life in the Army,” *The St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*, March 6, 1863, 8; Alfred Waud, *General Patrick’s Punishment for Gamblers*. 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.21212/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁹³ Ambrose, *A Wisconsin Boy in Dixie*, 77; “Gambling Among the Soldiers,” *The Caledonian Record*, February 28, 1862, 2; “Original Matters,” *The Yorkville Enquirer*, May 21, 1861, 1.

⁹⁴ Madden, *Beyond the Battlefield*, 85; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 122-3; Case #LL-2860, National Archives, Record Group 153, Entry 15A, Court-Martial Case Files; Thomas A. McParlin to Seth Williams, November 28, 1864, *O.R.*, I, 36, pt. 1, 210-1.

⁹⁵ James I. Robertson, Jr., “Chaplain William E. Wiatt: Soldier of the Cloth,” in *Rank and File: Essays in Honor of Bell I. Wiley*, eds. James I. Robertson, Jr., and Richard M. McMurry, (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1976), 118; Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 133; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 139, 141; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 377-8; Alfred Waud, *Sunday at McClellan’s headquarters, Religious Services*. 1862, Library of Congress,

held throughout the week in winter camp, ceremonial religious services and sermons by regimental chaplains or visiting ministers usually occurred on Sunday afternoons or evenings. Religious revivals periodically swept through the camps of both combatants, most notably in the winter of 1863-1864, sparked in part by the brutal combat and continual loss of friends that had been a feature of the previous summer's bloody fighting.⁹⁶

Despite the chaplaincy's best efforts, military life remained a school of vice and every camp had its provost marshal's stockade confining offenders as the wheels of military justice turned.⁹⁷ Regular officers often punished military transgressions with physical correctives, such as bucking and gagging, tying up by thumbs or riding the wooden horse, while volunteer commanders opted for 'Black Lists' of frequent offenders to be assigned disagreeable camp chores, such as burying dead animals. Punishments also differed according to branch of service with artillerymen being strapped to spare wheels on caissons or cavalrymen forced to carry packed saddles for set lengths of time.⁹⁸ Winter camp also allowed armies to attend to backlogged court-martials with those found guilty of desertion, murder, or spying facing hanging or shooting with entire brigades drawn up to witness the event as a deterrent.⁹⁹ Veterans viewed such events with grim satisfaction

Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.,

<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.22449/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁹⁶ "Christian Duties," *Milledgeville Southern Federal Union*, March 25, 1862, 2; "Army Chaplains," *Pittsburgh Presbyterian Banner*, June 28, 1862, 2; "Chapels in the Army," *Philadelphia American Presbyterian*, March 3, 1864, 4; "Unwise Economy—Army Chaplains," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 4, 1862, 4; Steven E. Woodworth, *While God is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 230; Wiley, *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*, 69-70; *Ibid.*; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 90-91; Barton, *The Civil War Soldier*, 331; William Waud, *Chaplain Chapman of the 169th N.Y. performing divine service at Gen. W.F. Smith's Head Quarters in front of Petersburg*. 1864, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2004661220/>, accessed June 25, 2025; *Sunday morning mass in camp of 69th N.Y.S.M.* 1861, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/00652518/>, accessed June 25, 2025.

⁹⁷ "Official Dismissals," *The Washington Evening Star*, December 11, 1863, 2; "Life in the Army," *The St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*, March 6, 1863, 8; Carmichael, *The War for the Common Soldier*, 194; *Provost Marshal's Guard House, Vicksburg, Miss.* 1863-1865, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2013649017/>, accessed June 25, 2025 .

⁹⁸ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 106, 149-50, 153; Ward, *History of the 106th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers*, 19; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 531.

⁹⁹ Frank Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier in the Army of the Potomac*, (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1887), 5, 28, 32, 34-35; Billings, *Hard Tack and Coffee*, 153, 160, 163-4, 169; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 206-7; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 308; Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*, 102; Timothy H. O'Sullivan,

and explained to family correspondents that they endured the loss of close friends with equanimity because “death is so common [here] that little sentiment is wasted. It is not like death at home.”¹⁰⁰

Soldiers considered it a doleful day when marching orders arrived to break camp—often when least expected or desired—heralding renewed military operations. A kerfuffle resembling a move from home then began as men rushed to decide what accumulated comforts to keep, what keepsakes or clothing could be sent home, and what was superfluous to be thrown onto the bonfires that soon burned in every company street.¹⁰¹ Treasured photographs were tucked into haversacks along with select letters while remaining correspondence and reading materials were burned alongside playing cards and dice. Improvised or stolen household utensils were destroyed or tossed out oftentimes to be claimed by others, and a few wily individuals chose to bury their surplus items instead just in case the unit returned to the campsite should the move be cancelled.¹⁰²

The night before the first march was one of little rest due to packing and destroying, the drawing of rations and the greasing of equipment accompanied by merry-

Execution of a Deserter, Alexandria, Va. 1864, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2015647566/>, accessed June 25, 2025; Edwin Forbes, *Procession for the execution of five deserters from the 118th Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1st Division, 5th Corps, Beverly Ford, Va.* 1863, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/item/2004661835/>, accessed June 25, 2025; Alfred R. Waud, *Execution of five deserters in the 5th Corps.* 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.21035/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

¹⁰⁰ Acken, *Through Blood and Fire*, 116, 209; Van Alstyne, *Diary of an Enlisted Man*, 98; Rhodes, *All for the Union*, 84.

¹⁰¹ McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 43, 79; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 371-2, 374; Aldridge, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 187-8; Ambrose, *A Wisconsin Boy in Dixie*, 145.

¹⁰² McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 43, 79; Small, *The Road to Richmond*, 77-78; Arthur Lumley, *Breaking up the Camps, of the Army of the Potomac.* 1863, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.20800/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025 ; Alexander Gardner, *Breaking camp, Brandy Station, Virginia.* 1864, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.12584/?co=civwar>, accessed June 25, 2025.

making and speculating about the coming campaign.¹⁰³ Items to be jointly used by the entire company, such as an oil cloth used for dough mixing or light wrought iron skillets, (sometimes called ‘creepers’), were parceled out to those who would trade-off carrying them.¹⁰⁴ Veterans inspected new recruit knapsacks advising from experience what was needed and what could be tossed out—weighty items, such as books, should be discarded as it was difficult enough to transport the necessities of life.¹⁰⁵ Food was always to be given precedence; canteens should be topped-off at every stream; only comfortable clothing suited to marching should be worn as lugging extra garments was pointless; stragglers was to be avoided, and weapons were always to be kept handy.¹⁰⁶

On the first morning of the new campaign when ‘The General’ sounded, any remaining tents disappeared as regiments, brigades, and divisions, each led by their commander and staff, joined the army’s moving columns.¹⁰⁷ Suggestions by greenhorn recruits that the winter huts be torched as they marched away were usually negated by a veteran’s terse response that “we may need them [again] before snow flies.”¹⁰⁸ Only a few miles on the march and men unconditioned by camp life began casting off additional items even if it meant being charged for lost government property. Overcoats, extra blankets, and other paraphernalia soon littered the roadsides as soldiers stripped down to the fighting essentials of a blanket, a gum-blanket, a single piece of shelter-tent, and their haversack and weapons. The boredom, routines, and pleasures of static camp life were over once again and active field service resumed.¹⁰⁹ Many of the men who marched out of winter camps to again face the enemy in a new campaign were grimly aware they might not live to experience another.

¹⁰³ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 374.

¹⁰⁴ McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 21-22, 24; Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier*, 43; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 135.

¹⁰⁵ Bliss, ‘*Don’t Tell Father I Have Been Shot At*’, 196.

¹⁰⁶ Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier*, 40-41. Acken, *Through Blood and Fire*, 29.

¹⁰⁷ Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 374, 377.

¹⁰⁸ Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier*, 40-41. Acken, *Through Blood and Fire*, 29; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 394.

¹⁰⁹ McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life*, 21-22, 24; Wilkeson, *Recollections of a Private Soldier*, 43; Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee*, 135, 384; Parker, *Henry Wilson’s Regiment*, 70, 250, 284; Survivors Association, *History of the Corn Exchange Regiment*, 168.

