

First Confederate Division

Uniform Guidelines Western Confederate Impression

Shell Jackets. The most common garment of the AOT:

**Note: Grey wool or "Mix Grey" wool was not commonly used for construction of military jackets in the AOT and should be avoided. Most uniforms were made of Jean in the AOT and therefore a proper reproduction should be made of Jean as well. Satinet and Cassimere are two acceptable variants.*

1. Columbus depot types II and I. These jackets represent the most common Depot manufactured uniform coat used by the AOT. These jackets were manufacture in general for the AOT and issued regardless of state affiliation. They must be constructed using the proper natural or gray jean material with the proper medium blue wool collars and cuffs. Osnaburg was most commonly used for the lining and thus should be used for reproductions. Buttons: You can use Confederate issue Block Federal Eagle, Wooden two hole $\frac{3}{4}$, or "I" (Script or Block) buttons or a combination of the three on this jacket. *State buttons were rare at best and should therefore be avoided.
2. Atlanta depot, this is a good mid war jacket. This jacket was made of plain gray jean material without a blue color of cuff. They had six buttons and an osnaburg lining. Buttons seen on the surviving examples are of the block I variety.
3. Department of Alabama, Jackets of this pattern are similar in construction and material to the Columbus pattern but do not have the cuff trim but do have a colored collar of dark blue cotton/wool jean. The surviving examples have 5-6 buttons and are usually found with wood, 2 hole $\frac{3}{4}$ " buttons. They are lined with cotton osnaburg. This jacket was issued after November 1864 to the surviving members of the Army of Tennessee in the Department of Alabama, Mississippi and East Louisiana. This jacket should be limited in use.
4. Plain "Commutation" Jacket or any pattern jean jacket that can be documented from a reliable source. These too were made of jean material.

Frock Coats, these knee length jackets were issued whenever possible up until early 1863. They were always constructed of jean material with an osnaburg lining sometimes having blue wool collar and cuffs. However, there were many plain jean coats and a few that simply had a blue collar. Normally these jackets had seven buttons. Buttons were usually federal eagles. However, there are some surviving jackets with Block or script I buttons. * State buttons should not be used for this jacket.

Hand stitched button holes, as a rule all visible button holes should be hand stitched. This is a simple process that is not only authentic but practical for a jean jacket. Although there was quite a bit of machine stitching in the 1860's it was very different than the machines of today. In many cases (compared to today's machines) machine stitching looks hand sewn. Therefore it is necessary to hand stitch. Beyond that however, hand stitching reinforces the button hole and prevents fraying and excessive wear.

Trousers. Trousers should be the correct military or civilian pattern made of cotton/wool jean cloth. For early war events, the use of an appropriate civilian material is accurate. The use of Federal Sky Blue Kersey trousers or white cotton duck material is very highly discouraged. These trousers were either rare or non-existent in the AOT.

Shirts. Shirts should be of the proper pullover pattern and should be made of the correct material, preferably homespun cotton. Buttons should be calico, milk glass, antique metal or shell (Mother-of-Pearl). Of course plastic should never be used. The wearing of bright red shirts or large plastron front shirts is not accurate.

Under Drawers. It is highly recommended, both for authenticity and comfort, that each man wear light weight muslin/cotton under drawers correct for the 1860's. These are full length drawers that usually button down the fly. Remarkably, wearing of these drawers help greatly in keeping cool during warm days.

Hats. The most common hats worn by AOT soldiers were civilian slouch hats. This would be a good choice of any FCD member. The actual historic ration of slouch hats to kepis was closer to 50/50. Good kepis are hard to come by though. These were usually made of jean material and normally did not have a blue band. Straw hats did not last more than 5 months in civilian life and therefore were quite rare in the army. These should be avoided. Captured federal headgear should be very limited. Hat blanks, cowboy hats or hilly-billy hats should be strictly avoided. A quality hat from Clearwater or Dirty Billy's will run \$80.00 to \$100.00 but it will be well worth it! They are not only correct but last for years in all kinds of weather. Cheap hats look bad and tend to have a short life span.

Shoes. Shoes should be of the Jefferson brogan type commercially available. Boots are not at all common in the infantry and thus should be strictly avoided. The wearing of period canvas/cloth "camp" shoes is discouraged as they were mainly an item of private purchase in the Federal Army. There is written documentation of Confederate "ersatz" canvas and leather booties but there is neither photographic evidence nor surviving examples of these types of shoes. Your impression as a Confederate soldier in the AOT is better served by purchasing a pair of straight last natural brogans or a pair of Federal issue "Jefferson" pattern brogan. No Cowboy, Wellington or East German army boots. Work, combat, or hiking boots are not to be used. Absolutely no moccasins, please.

Equipment Authenticity Guidelines

Belts. Belts should be leather or painted canvass with the proper belt plates. Oval C.S. plate similar to the U.S. plates should not be worn. Georgia frame, forked tongue, roller buckles, Rectangle CSA, plain brass or brass Star buckles are all excellent choices. White buff is appropriate for early war impressions, such as Shiloh.

Cartridge Box and Sling. The following models are recommended for the Army of Tennessee: US Model 1839 .69 caliber box, US Model 1857 .69 caliber box, British Enfield box, Shelbyville .69 caliber box, .58 caliber Baton Rouge Belt suspension box. Strap should be leather or painted canvas. Brass breast plates or box plates should be avoided as they were not common.

Cap Pouch. The following are models recommended for the Army of Tennessee: US early war shield front, US 1850 model, British Enfield cap pouch, CS single back strap and Baton Rouge shield front.

Canteens. There are a variety of period canteens that are appropriate. Wooden, tin drum, federal smooth side and CS stamped tin drums are all appropriate. All canteen covers on federal smooth or bulls-eye canteens should be brown/gray jean. Sky blue was not very often used by either the federals or the Confederates as a canteen cover. Therefore it is best to NOT use sky blue. Straps should be worn so that the canteen rests at the top of the hip.

Haversacks. These should be made of plain white or off-white cotton canvas. Federal issue haversacks should be used in limited quantity. Straps should be worn so that the canteen rests at the top of the hip. Note: CS haversacks were generally closed by means of a button while US haversacks were closed by a strap and buckle.

Knapsacks / Bedrolls. A good mid-war AOT impression should have 7 of 10 men carrying Knapsacks as a general rule (according to some period QM reports). Men of the MVB should, as a general practice, wear these into battle as did many veterans on campaign. Bedrolls are self-explanatory. As for knapsacks a some good choices would be an early war (Mexican war) soft pack, CS Single bag, Issac Cambell's import bag or a hard pack.

Blankets. A good quality (preferable light) 100% wool civilian blanket is the best choice. There are a few manufactures of authentic reproductions that are expensive but well worth the money. These make a good impression look fantastic. Quilts are another option so long as they are made of natural material and are period in style. Wool coverlets or jean blankets are also appropriate.

Gum or Tarred “Blankets”. In the world of reenacting the common Gum blanket is the Federal issued rubberized pattern. These should be used about 30% of the time however. The better choice for Confederate troops is the painted canvas blanket which is a canvas section painted with a black paint and lint seed oil mixture. These were more common.

Cups. A cup or a boiler are appropriate so long as they are made of tin. A soldier needs only one or the other.

Plates & Skillets. The idea of a soldier on campaign (which is what we portray when we recreate battles...i.e. Campaigns) is to travel light and with only what you need. Therefore forget about the iron skillet or the idea of having both a plate and a frying pan. Have one or the other. Canteen halves are recommended as they can be used for both (as can a plate for that matter). A canteen half is just that...half of a smooth side canteen that one can fry with or eat out of. Which was a common practice.

The four man mess: this was the way of the CS soldier. Company cooks were very rare (if they even existed) so men usually shared cooking items and responsibilities. It is recommended that four men share a small coffee pot, skillet and broiler. Actually, you can scrap the coffee pot and just boil coffee grounds in a tin cup. The point is to forget about a massive cooking set up. Men cooked their rations in messes. If you need something more substantial, then see the non period food vendors.

Weapons. Only three band rifles should be used in the FCD. A report in April 1863 revealed that 44% of the arms in the AOT were .69 percussion smoothbores. Most likely 1842 Springfields. 37% were Enfields and 14% were rifled Springfields. The rest varied. It was not until spring 1864 that Enfields began to take prominence. At that time 55% were Enfields, 32% Austrian and 11% had smoothbores. Ideally one should have a .69 smoothbore and an Enfield (or a rifled Springfield) to use depending upon the scenario.

Appropriate Personal Effects. The following articles are some of the personnel belongings which could have been found in the knapsack (*note: the haversack was for food and utensils only) of a CS soldier: Newspaper, Bible, period night cap, tin or glass photo, wood or bone toothbrush, toothpowder {a tin of baking soda works very well and is accurate}, lye soap, folding knife, bone or wood comb, period pipe, tin or brass tobacco box, match safe, housewife, course paper, period nib pen, wood pencil (no eraser), small bottle of ink, extra socks and/or a shirt (only one extra set is needed). These should be homemade, purchased from an antique store or carefully selected from a sutler. Eyewear. Spectacles were rare among civilians or soldiers who had poor eye sight. So the best idea is to do without them if you can. If not, try contacts. Otherwise it is important to buy period frames (Modern frames makes an impression look silly), which are relatively cheap. It is not unusual to find frames at antique stores for \$10 to \$20. There is a supplier on our approved sutler list who sells these frames for around \$25. Small oval or rectangle frames are period. Round frames are not. Do not use tinted lenses as these were only for men with STDS and even this was extremely rare.

Food Rations Authenticity Guidelines

First, all members of the FCD should read the article entitled Rations, The Reenactor's Dilemma posted on the home page. This will give tremendous insight into the world of period rations. One will quickly find that a period diet is much better than the common practice of using modern canned meat and other products.

Second, the haversack is for food and cooking utensils only.

Third, coolers and modern cooking equipment is not necessary and should be strictly avoided. Only cooked or cured meat should be carried thus a cooler is unnecessary. Non period drinks may be stored at your vehicle or obtained by the event vendors. Our camps should be kept free of these anachronisms that always kill a good impression and tend to be seen even when a great effort is taken to keep them concealed.

Fourth, let us establish a simple rule. No plastic or modern containers, ever. These are not necessary and they can ruin an impression for you or your file mate who is trying to “get lost” in the time period. Even if you choose not to carry period food items, remove what you have from its plastic container and put it into a period one. The following are some ideas:

Cotton draw-string Polk sack – simple inexpensive bags that can be adapted to carry anything.

Brown Wax Paper or Plain Brown Paper – perfect for cooked or greasy meat. Brown wax paper is now being manufactured and carried in many grocery stores.

Small tin or glass containers – good for small herb, salt or pepper. Glass containers should have cork tops or screw zinc lids.

Food: The following is a list of foods appropriate to the Army of Tennessee:

Meat: Salt Pork, Cured Ham, boiled Beef, Slab Bacon

Bread: Cornbread, biscuits or corn fritters (hoe-cakes). Hard tack should be limited.

Drinks: Coffee (beans or course ground) or tea.

Grains: Cornmeal, grits, and rice.

Vegetables: Sweet potatoes, potatoes, turnips, corn on the husk, black-eyed peas, carrots, beans, and hominy. And of course peanuts (although this is not actually a vegetable). Plain corn nuts are a good reproduction of “parched corn” a staple of the CSA.

Herbs: Garlic, rosemary, coriander, basil, Tabasco pepper and bay leaves

Sweets: The best idea for a sweat tooth is ginger snap cookies which were very common and easy to find in today’s markets. The most correct sugar to carry is the “Mexican” cone sugar often found for \$1.00 per 7oz in the Spanish foods section of your market. The other alternative is raw or brown sugar. Molasses is another very good Southern alternative. ***Sugar...the sugar you carry should never be white processed sugar.*

Military Camp Authenticity Guidelines

Camps for CS troops should consist mainly of canvas flys and shelter halves. A tents should be avoided. Why? Because these men were on campaign and often, as we read historical accounts, we find that they moved well ahead of the baggage trains. Thus, the men had to camp with what they had on their backs. However, if A-tents must be used, it would be more correct if three men shared a tent. The thing to avoid is having one man per tent. This was not at all correct.

Camp furniture should be virtually non-existent. This means no chairs, stools or tables except perhaps for the battalion staff. Men should use logs or their ground cloths for sitting round the fire.

Coolers, Air mattresses, cots and anything else 20th century should be strictly avoided. The Division will stop short of banning these items for the time being. So what are some alternatives? First carry non perishable (period) food items as listed in the food section. Second, use straw or hay for a bed (if you absolutely have to). Third, go back to the car for a cold drink or visit the sutlers. Lastly, simply follow the authenticity guidelines. The General assures the men in this Division that it is possible to rid ourselves of all modern anachronisms and still camp in comfort. It merely takes being creative with the natural items a CS soldier had to work with.

Note: Bug spray, first aid items or medication are exceptions, of course. These can be carried indiscreetly in a cloth bag (Polk Sack) inside a knap sack or haversack.