

BASIC FIELD GEAR OF A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER

CARTRIDGE BOX

The cartridge box was a leather pouch and contained a tin inner framework. It could typically hold 40 cartridges. The cartridge box had a leather strap to hang over the shoulder so that the box was accessible on the opposite side. Most right-handed soldiers wore it on the right side.

It was also sometimes attached to a Cartridge Belt.



CANTEEN

A soldier was issued a canteen for carrying water. The Union canteen was tin, giving the appearance of two saucers pressed together. The Confederate canteen was often made of wood. Either style would be carried over the shoulder with a cloth or canvas strap.



Mess Kit

A soldier was issued a tin cup, usually 12 ounces, a tin plate and a knife, fork, and spoon. The plate and utensils would be carried in the haversack and the tin cup was frequently tethered to the outside of the haversack or to the pack strap with a piece



KNAPSACK and BLANKET ROLL

The knapsack, often called a pack, came in two varieties, the hard pack and the soft pack. The hard pack was a leather or canvas bag with shoulder straps and a wooden frame interior, often lined with ticking or canvas. The soft pack was a tarred canvas bag with no interior frame.

The pack would contain a soldier's shaving and hygiene materials, spare socks and maybe a shirt, and other items too large to carry in the haversack.

It would also contain personal items such as a New Testament, writing materials, and perhaps a deck of cards, dice cup, or other games to pass the time in camp.

Affixed to the outside of the knapsack was the blanket roll. The blanket was usually rolled, and then a poncho or "gum blanket" was rolled on the outside of it. Both were then attached to the top of the knapsack with straps.

It became a common practice for soldiers going into the line to leave the knapsack behind and carry the bedroll across their back secured by a leather strap.

CAP POUCH

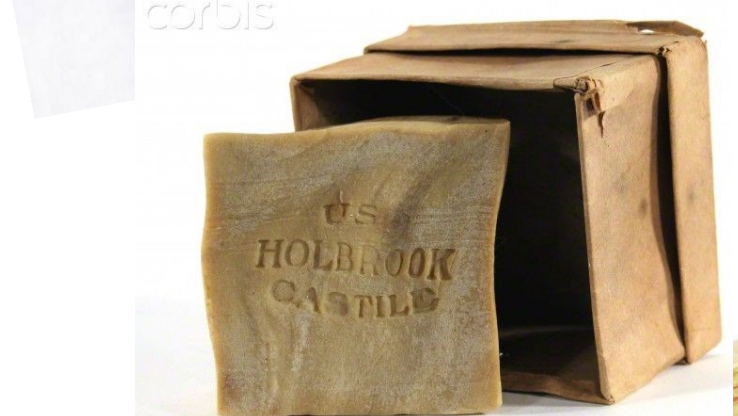
The cap pouch was leather and usually contained 40 percussion caps, that were necessary to ignite the cartridge.

The Cap pouch was usually worn on the cartridge belt.



CARTRIDGE BELT

The cartridge belt was made of leather and usually had a brass buckle adorned with US or CSA, or sometimes a unit crest. It was worn around the waist and carried the cap pouch and a bayonet and scabbard.



HAVERSACK

The haversack was usually made of tarred canvas, although some leather ones could be found. The haversack carried a soldier's rations as well as his eating utensils. Additionally, a soldier might carry a small knife, a sewing kit, known as the "housewife", tobacco and matches, and a few personal items. The haversack was equipped with a shoulder strap and worn on the opposite side of the cartridge box.

