

1st Tennessee Heavy Artillery

Company K

Re-enactor Clothing and Equipment Needs: Some basic guidelines, but not all that is acceptable or permissible so do some research on your own

This is by no means a complete list of acceptable things, however it is a good starting place for a person new to re-enacting

1. Shirts are plain white cotton or non-bleached muslin. Checked or colored shirts optional. Many artillerymen choose a red shirt for battle. No plastic buttons. Metal, wood, & bone buttons are appropriate.

2. Military trousers should be sky blue wool or jean cloth, dark blue (Federal), or gray (Confederate), infantry style with button fly. Plain cloth, button-down suspenders, is appropriate.

3. The kepi is the standard hat. Each unit has its' own headgear standards. Look at internet pictures, or those in books. Civil War combatants did not wear cowboy hats.

4. Shoes are "brogans". They should be black, and have leather ties. Officers often choose boots.

5. The sack coat was issued most, north (dark blue) and south (gray). It is entirely appropriate. Also, shell jackets, with red trim, are often worn by artillerymen. Look at internet pictures.

6. Rain ponchos or "gum blankets" are simple. They may be purchased. You can make one from BLACK rubberized (not shiny) cloth or even oilcloth. A 6'X6' piece with a centered head/neck hole works. Reinforce the neck hole. You can use this item as an appropriate ground cloth.

7. Rifles and pistols are not typically carried by artillerymen except officers. Many reenactments do not allow pistols except when worn by officers.

8. Tents may be shared or borrowed. The member is responsible for getting his own camping and sleeping gear. We typically choose A-frame/wedge, or wall tents. Sibley tents are also appropriate. A serviceable A-frame can be made from WHITE canvas drop cloth, and a simple 2" X 2" frame and 2"X4" cross piece. A 12' X 15' heavy duty drop cloth can be hemmed, loops sewn on for pegs, and made into an open ended tent about 6-1/2' wide, by about 9' deep, by about 6' high for around \$50.00. You can add end pieces by trimming, & purchasing a second, smaller cloth and piecing it in. No snaps/zippers. Use cloth ties. No floor. Wash & dry the material first to shrink it. Look at tents on line for exacting measurements. You want to blend in. If you want a floor, folks often put a plastic ground cloth down, and cover it with another white canvas drop cloth. No plastic pegs. Gray or blue blankets & old quilts serve double duty as bedding, and for covering 21st century gear during the day. Check with unit members for tent sizes and preferences.

9. Sutlers – those who sell clothes and gear to re-enactors – typically set up at every event. They carry everything from applique patches to Zouave gear. Stuff is available on the internet. Basic uniform packages (shirt + trousers + suspenders + belt + buckle + sack coat + choice of hat) are available for a price lower than if items were purchased separately. Seek advice.

10. A "haversack" or "possibles" bag is typically carried. This, too, can be purchased. It is a bag with shoulder strap, maybe 12" X 12" in size, and roomy enough for your wallet, sewing kit, plate, eating utensils, etc. You can make one of these from the white canvas material cited above. No zippers, no plastic. A big button, or leather buckle, is appropriate for the flap. Some spray theirs with Scotch Guard to help repel water.

11. Canteens are also appropriate and may be purchased. These are also carried on a shoulder strap. You can "make" a canteen, too. Some folks purchase (and empty one way or another) a quart beer bottle that has a wire and bail stopper. The bottle is padded, and a white canvas cover is sewn like a 'bag', and cinched with a leather lace around the top of the bottle. A cork may replace the stopper. Our medical officer likes to have men carry a canteen (of water) to the field.

12. Victorian and military courtesies prevail. A vest or jacket is worn when in public, or when camps are open to the public. However, it is only necessary to button the top one or two buttons of your vest or jacket. When first encountered, ladies are greeted courteously with acknowledgement and a lift of the hat. Officers are saluted the first time you encounter them, and your salute is held until returned by the officer, or he passes.

13. Eating: no plastic or aluminum. A tin pie pan makes a great plate, and eating utensils are old silverware (bone or wooden handles work well). Cups are tin, or copper, and hung from haversack w/ old blanket pin or leather tie. Stoneware is also appropriate. Many of these pieces (and a black skillet) can be found inexpensively in antique and junk shops. Keep your cooler in your tent, or a gunnysack, wooden box, or specially designed canvas cover if it is outside where it may be seen. If you drink a canned or bottled beverage, pour it into a cup or mug first, or keep the container in a small poke that will cover it.

14. Ear plugs are a necessity when working the big guns. Avoid brightly colored plugs, and plugs on cords. Wristwatches are not worn. An inexpensive pocket watch is fine if you need to know what time it is.

15. Chairs in camp are wooden, wood + canvas, or wood + tapestry/upholstery material. No lawn or metal chairs.

16. Cooking fires are generally dug in the company street and are shared (e.g., 1-fire pit for every 2-3 tents). The pit is filled and sod replaced at the end of the reenactment. Re-enactors are encouraged to bring some dried, split firewood with them, as sources at events are often iffy. Don't build a fire near your tent. Canvas burns.

17. NO flashlights/electric lanterns excepting inside your tent at night. Candle lanterns are correct. Candles are white or bees-wax brown.

18. Trash: don't burn plastic in your campfire. It's a health hazard for you and all those downwind of you. Place your trash in a plastic trash bag kept out of sight (e.g., like inside a gunny sack). If not picked up by event staff, dispose of at event headquarters or in proper trash receptacles away from camp sites.