

MILITARY UNIFORMS, WEAPONS, ACCOUTREMENTS, AND EQUIPMENT

GUIDELINES

for

Company G, 2nd Infantry Regiment, California Volunteers

February 3rd-5th, 2023 Living History Event

at

Fort Tejon State Historic Park

Note: Please remember that we are trying to recreate the original soldiers of Company G. We can and shall strive to have the best material authenticity possible and conduct ourselves in a manner respectful of the original soldiers we are portraying for public education. If everyone does their best you might be surprised at how well we do.

Please see below for a listing of uniforms, weapons, accoutrements and equipment recommended for the event. In the case where multiple items can be used, they have been ranked in order of preference, “A,” “B,” “C,” etc.

Uniform wool color. No faded “purple” fatigue blouse, forage cap, or uniform coat wool. The indigo dye used to dye the original wool does not fade purple. If your fatigue blouse, forage cap, or uniform coat is fading purple, please look into purchasing a new one. Also, no bright “teal” colored fatigue blouses, forage caps, or uniform coats. Indigo does not dye cloth a bright greenish blue “teal” color either. It is just as incorrect for your uniform to be dyed this color as it is for it to be purple. We are not interested in what excuses vendors offer for this, or unsupported claims of authenticity. If you have questions regarding the “correctness” of your uniform color, please contact the event coordinator and authenticity officer.

1. Uniform

1-1. Shirt

Shirts can be of the following:

A: U.S. Army Issue M1851 Domet Flannel, hand sewn.

B: Wartime Contract type shirt, wool flannel machine or hand sewn in solid colors, gray, blue, red, tan or natural.

C: Private Purchase wool flannel shirt, either hand sewn or period machine sewn.

1-2. Drawers

A: U.S. Army Issue, Canton Flannel hand sewn or period contract machine sewn. Marked with appropriate size in dots and inspector mark where appropriate.

B: Private Purchase/Civilian, of period correct pattern and construction.

1-3. M1858 Uniform Coat (aka Frock Coat)

Finding accurate reproductions of these coats is very difficult, plenty of fraudster vendors are offering what they call “historically accurate” reproductions, but they fall well short of the originals. It does not matter what the “reputation” of a vendor is, what matters is how well their reproduction compares to the original uniform they claim to be copying. If volunteer’s need assistance in finding an accurate reproduction, they are strongly encouraged to reach out to the authenticity officer. We don’t want you wasting your hard earned money on inaccurate and inferior garments. A good indication of the quality/accuracy of a reproduction M1858 uniform coat is the price. This is something volunteers have to accept, good reproductions are not cheap, and in trying to find the cheapest option available you end up cheating yourself instead.

A: Government Contract model such as John T. Martin or John Boylan, with both hand and machine sewn construction.

B: Schuylkill Arsenal, all visible stitching by hand.

1-4. Fatigue Blouse

Fatigue Blouses are to be documented to original examples, and should exhibit, as close as possible, the same patterning and construction details of that original. Fabric should resemble the original as well. Flannel used on original fatigue blouses is lightly napped with a noticeable 2/2 twill weave. The color should reflect the use of pure indigo dye and should fall within the acceptable range of variation encountered on them. Blues with a purplish tint or greenish tint are not acceptable, neither is dark sky blue.

A: Government Contract lined or unlined such as John T. Martin, with hand and machine sewn construction.

B: Schuylkill Arsenal, lined or unlined, all hand sewn or all visible stitching by hand.

1-5. Trousers

A: Government Contract John T. Martin trousers, hand and machine sewn construction.

B: Schuylkill Arsenal Trousers, foot pattern, visible stitching hand sewn.

1-6. Neck Stock

In keeping with the spirit of the Revised Regulations of 1861, as well as the original clothing account books of California Volunteer Infantry Regiments, all enlisted soldiers should have a regulation leather neck stock.

1-7. Braces (Suspenders)

Braces/Suspenders shall be of correct materials and construction documented to surviving original

examples. “Sutler Row” style mainstream braces/suspenders are strongly discouraged. If you have questions about the correctness of your braces/suspenders please contact the event organizers for information on original examples and where correct reproductions can be obtained.

1-8. Overcoat

A: Government Contract Overcoat, foot pattern, hand and machine sewn construction.

B: Schuylkill Arsenal Overcoat, foot pattern, all visible stitching hand sewn.

1-9. Socks

A: Military issue, wool, hand, or period machine knit.

B: Private Purchase, hand or period machine knit wool or cotton.

1-10. Issue Brogans

No modern work or combat boots. If you do not own period shoes, **ASK** to borrow a set of loaner shoes!

A: U.S. Army Issue "Jefferson" Bootee, with sewn or pegged soles.

B: Private Purchase, documented to original examples, shoes or boots with sewn or pegged soles.

1-11. Forage Cap

No civilian “slouch hats” for soldiers! All headwear should be U.S. Army issue forage caps or uniform hats. All forage caps should have a private purchase false embroidered infantry horn, 5/8” stamped brass regimental number 2 placed within the loop of the horn, and a 1” stamped brass company letter G placed just above the loop of the horn. Please contact the authenticity officer for where to purchase correct brass insignia for your forage cap.

A: U.S. Army Issue Forage Cap, Type I or II.

B: Private Purchase “McDowell” style.

C: Private Purchase square bill style.

1-12. M1858 Uniform Hat (aka “Hardee Hat”)

No civilian “slouch hats” for soldiers! All headwear should be U.S. Army issue model or private purchase forage caps or issue fully trimmed uniform hats.

A: U.S. Issue Hat, Uniform, Model 1858. Fully Trimmed with regulation brass infantry horn, 5/8” stamped brass regimental number 2 placed within the loop of the horn, 1” stamped brass company letter G placed just above the loop of the horn, black ostrich plume at least one foot in length placed on the left side, worsted tassels in infantry blue with the tassels arranged on the side opposite the plume, and the brim of the hat looped on the right per the revised regulations of 1861, are required at this event.

2. Weapons

All weapons will be inspected during the parade inspection on Sunday morning. There will be no excuses whatsoever for dirty weapons. They must be in a safe and functional condition. All weapons are to be clear of any non-period markings and are to have the correct arsenal marks on them if applicable.

2-1. Rifle-Musket

A: M1861 Rifle-Musket

If you do not have one of these arms, please reach out and ask about loaners before bringing another type of arm. We wish, to the greatest extent possible, to have only those arms which can be documented to California Volunteers during the War. Enfield rifle-muskets, for instance, were never imported to California at any time during the War.

2-2. Bayonet

For safety, the bayonet will be able to correctly mount and match the weapon being carried.

2-3. Scabbard, Bayonet

A: U.S. M1857 Scabbard, with blackened white buff leather frog, sewn with no rivets.

B: U.S. M1857 Scabbard, with blackened wax or bridal leather frog, sewn with no rivets.

C: U.S. M1861 Scabbard, with blackened wax or bridal leather frog, sewn with two rivets reinforcing the frog.

2-4. Weapon Tools

Examination of the original clothing account books for California Volunteers Infantry shows the following tools were issued and should be found in the implement pouch of your cartridge box:

- M1855 or M1863 Musket Tool
- .58 cal worm
- .58 cal ball puller
- .58 cal tompinon

3. Accoutrements

All accoutrements and equipage are to be of the proper type, pattern, made of the correct materials, and have the correct hardware.

3-1. Cartridge Box

A: U.S. M1857 .58 cal box.

B: U.S. M1861 .58 cal box.

3-2. Cartridge Box Belt

A: U.S. Cartridge Box Belt 2.25" wide, 64" long made of blackened white buff with "Breast Plate."

B: U.S. Cartridge Box Belt 2.25" wide, 64" long made of black waxed flesh leather with "Breast Plate."

C: U.S. Cartridge Box Belt 2.25" wide, 64" long made of black bridal leather with "Breast Plate."

3-3. Cap Box (Cap boxes should have wool on the interior and vent pick.)

A: U.S. M1850 Cap Box, Sewn, without rivets on the belt loops.

B: U.S. M1850 Cap Box, Shield Front Variant, sewn, without rivets on the belt loops.

3-4. Waist Belt

Waist Belts should have a U.S. with a "Puppy Paw" back, "Wire Back", or a "Wide Set Arrow" back.

A: U.S. M1839 Waist Belt 1.9" wide with standing leather loop on end, made of blackened white buff leather.

B: U.S. M1850 Waist Belt 1.9" wide with standing leather loop on end, made of black waxed flesh leather.

C: U.S. M1850 Waist Belt 1.9" wide with standing leather loop on end, made of black bridal leather.

4. Equipment

4-1. Haversack

A: U.S. M1851 Haversack with removable liner bag copied from documented original examples.

4-2. Canteen

Records show that when the 2nd California Volunteer Infantry Regiment mustered out of service at the end of 1864, among the surplus items were "canteens with cloth straps." Bearing that in mind the following canteens are most correct for Jan. 1864:

A: U.S. M1858 "Smooth Side" New York Depot canteen with cover of appropriate material, chain hanger, and sewn cotton cloth strap.

B: U.S. M1858 "Corrugated" Philadelphia Depot canteen with dark blue or skyblue wool kersey cover, hemp cork cord, and correct herringbone webbing sling.

4-3. Tin Cup

A: Issue-type tin cup made of tined sheet iron copied from documented original examples.

4-4. Tin Plate

A: Tin plate of documented period pattern should be able to fit in haversack.

4-5. Utensils (To be carried in your haversack)

A: Original fork and stamped tined sheet iron spoon (tablespoon size).

B: Reproduction fork and stamped tined sheet iron spoon (tablespoon size).

C: Pocket knife combination knife, fork, and spoon copied from original example.

4-6. Knapsack

The official regulation style with sewn rivet covers and scalloped harness straps.

A: U.S. M1853/55 "Double Bag" knapsack.

4-7. Blanket

Records show the blanket supply for the Quartermaster Department in the Department of the Pacific was supplied entirely by the Pioneer Woolen Mill and Mission Woolen Mill in San Francisco. These were the regulation gray wool blankets weighing 5 pounds. Such was the quality of these blankets that in the 1870s the U.S. Quartermaster Department would make the "California Blanket" the standard bearer of quality for which all blankets manufactured for the U.S. Army and Navy would be measured.

A: U.S. Issue M1851 gray wool blanket with black end stripes and "US" stitched in center. County Cloth blankets come the closest to matching the gray regulation blankets that would have been issued to California Volunteers.

B: Wartime contract blanket of tan/brown wool with dark brown end stripes and "US" stitched in center.

4-8. Rubber Blanket

There is no evidence of these being issued to California Volunteers that we have yet found. Please leave your rubber blankets/ponchos at home.

4-9. Personal Items

All personal items are to be made of the correct materials. Items suggested to carry are: pocketknife, wallet or change purse, tobacco pouch and pipe, and period matches.

4-10. Camp Equipage

ALL camp equipment is to be of correct make and materials. It is strongly suggested and encouraged that they be made according to existing originals and research. Shelter halves were not issued to California Volunteers, so leave your shelter halves at home.

4-11. Eyewear

ALL eyewear is to be of correct style and pattern, ABSOLUTELY NO MODERN EYEWEAR IS PERMITTED!!!

A: Original frames with prescription. B: Contact lenses.

C: Do without for a weekend.

4-12. Mobile Phone, Medication, Car Keys, etc.

Keep your phone on silent or just turn it off. If you have to have any modern items keep them in a "Farb Bag." This bag is to be a poke or ration bag. Use for any medications, car keys, disposable camera, etc. It is suggested for medications that each member invest in a small pocket tin to act as a "pill box" to keep any pills or tablets in. It is a period alternative to the Farb Bag.

Thanks to Sean Malis, Don Smith, Ian McWherter, et.al. for their help in putting this list together.