Dining Out In Wartime Virginia

One of the positive features of the progressive movement has been an increased focus on the commissary function within the Civil War armies. A number of events now include "period ration issues" as part of the experience, and many progressive reenactors are seeking to upgrade their personal impressions in this area. To assist in this effort, this study will examine the Confederate ration as it evolved through the war, the issue process, additional sources of food and the ways in which the troops dealt with the task of feeding themselves. The focus will be primarily on these elements in the Virginia theater.

Rations and the Issue Process.

The origins of Confederate subsistence are found in the Act of February 26, 1861, which established the General Staff of the Confederate Army. This act specified that the General Staff would consist of an Adjutant and Inspector General's Department, a Quartermaster-General's Department, the Medical Department and a Subsistence Department. [1] The act further provided for the execution of the functions of the various departments at both the regimental and departmental level. At the regimental level, commissary duties were to be carried out by a commissioned Assistant Commissary of Subsistence. Originally it had been planned that this officer would be detailed from the regiment's subalterns of the line, as had been the practice in the pre-war US Army. However, this was changed in the building of the volunteer army, and full regiments were authorized an additional captain as Assistant Commissary of Subsistence, to be appointed by the President. In battalion-sized units no separate commissary was appointed. The unit's assistant quartermaster performed the function. [2]

A commissary sergeant normally assisted the officer discharging commissary duties. The latter had immediate control of the commissary storehouse, received supplies and superintended the issues to the troops. Other duties of the commissary sergeant included the care of cattle accompanying the army and supervision of the slaughtering process. [3] Prior to the war, in the US Army the job of commissary sergeant had been a duty, not a rank, and the old army had filled it by detailing a sergeant of the line. In the Confederate service the situation was similar. An official Confederate publication noted, "Commissary sergeants are not recognized by law or regulation. A soldier detailed to act as such receives as extra duty pay the usual per diem of 25 cents." [4]

A major change was made in the regimental commissary staff in the summer of 1863. On the recommendation of General Robert E. Lee the office of regimental commissary was abolished and the duties formerly performed by that officer were assigned to the regimental quartermaster. A general order announcing this change terminated the service of regimental commissaries as of 31 July 1863. [5]

The same act of the Confederate Congress that eliminated the regimental commissary also for the first time provided a legal basis for the commissary sergeant. Commanding officers of regiments and battalions were authorized at their discretion to assign a non-commissioned officer or private to this duty under the supervision of the regimental quartermaster. The assignment carried with it the extra pay of twenty dollars a month (a remarkable provision, since that meant even a private on such duty earned more than the regimental sergeant-major and quartermaster-sergeant). [6]

In addition to the officers and sergeant, the regimental commissary function sometimes included additional personnel in the form of clerks and skilled workers. The filling of such jobs, especially as clerks, was seen by the staff officers as a form of patronage. Early in the war it was not uncommon to appoint non-military relatives, a practice that was abused to such an extent that further clerkship appointments from civilian life were forbidden by law in February 1862. Thereafter, clerks were assigned by the regimental commanding officer. Soldiers already in the army could only be given such duty if a Medical Examining Board declared them unfit for field service, and an order to conscript depots enjoined them to watch for draftees who were not equal to normal field duty but still capable of performing staff work. [7]

Some idea of the frequency of such assignments in a line unit can be found in the records of the commissary function of the Fourth Texas Infantry. For example, during the first half of 1863 the regiment had on duty an Assistant Commissary of Subsistence in the rank of captain, assisted by a full-time commissary clerk (a former commissary sergeant) and a full-time butcher (both detailed soldiers). In addition, over the six month period, the regiment also paid for fifty-eight days of work by a second butcher, who may have been a civilian, since he has not been located in unit rosters. [8]

The duties of the regimental commissary included keeping on hand the required rations, weighing them out, issuing them to the troops and maintaining the appropriate records. It is important to note that the Confederate commissary department had no responsibility for the cooking of the rations. The one known exception to this rule was during the siege of Petersburg, when cornbread was cooked by details in the rear and brought to the trenches by the commissary sergeants. [9]

The issues to be made by the regimental commissary had been carefully defined in the army regulations issued in 1861. Each soldier was to receive per day three-quarter pounds of pork or bacon or one and a quarter pounds of fresh or salt beef, and eighteen ounces of bread or flour or twelve ounces of hard bread or one and a quarter pounds of corn meal. In addition, for each one hundred rations there were to be issued: eight quarts of peas or beans, or in lieu thereof, ten pounds of rice; six pounds of coffee; twelve pounds of sugar; four quarts of vinegar; one and one-half pounds of tallow candles; four pounds of soap and two quarts of salt. On marches the bread ration was to be one pound of hard bread. [10]

Regulations provided that when fresh beef could be procured, it was to be issued at least twice a week. The Commissary Department, indeed, preferred to issue fresh beef because it saved on provisions preserved with scarce salt and

the cattle transported themselves to the army on the hoof instead of requiring rail transport. However, fresh beef was only practical when the army was stationary, as the butchering process was time-consuming. [11]

The cattle would be killed and dressed near camp by a detail of soldiers and typically the beef was issued either at night or early in the morning so that it could be cooked and eaten before it spoiled in the heat of the day. An army rule of thumb was that it required six oxen to provide the regulation one and a quarter pounds of meat for one thousand men and army butchers issued every usable bit of the animal including the neck and legs. The head, feet, liver, hooves, sweetbreads and hearts were given by custom to the butchers, who in turn often resold them to veteran troops who had learned to make use of these items to provide some variety in their meals. [12]

Salt pork or bacon was preferred by troops on the march as less bulky, more easily cooked and kept than beef. The southern Commissary Department was enjoined by regulations to purchase pork, put up in small pieces, say from four to six pounds each and not very fat, apparently because this allowed the salt to better penetrate and preserve the meat. However, a contemporary analysis of the Union ration found that their salt pork was so fatty that three-quarters of the weight of the Northern ration pork would be broiled out when cooked by soldiers on the march. A similar ratio probably applied to Confederate pork, especially since much of it had also originated in the North. [13]

A staple of the marching ration was hard bread, better known as hardtack. A contemporary study of the army ration described it as a "hard bread," which, baked without salt in the form of crackers and kiln dried, is quite imperishable if kept from moisture. The Confederacy produced hardtack in a government-owned bakery and also purchased it from contractors. Generally issued in rectangles roughly three by three inches and a half inch thick, it occasionally also found its way into the hands of army troops in the eastern theater in the form of "sea biscuits" measuring six inches in diameter and two inches thick. Memoirs from the Army of Northern Virginia speak of hard cracker issues during the campaigns of Second Manassas and Gettysburg They continued to be issued to the Virginia army as late as April 1865. [14]

The troops found difficulty in using the meal or flour they often received in the place of hardtack. It was prone to damage by rain and corn meal pones carried in the haversack were likely to mildew and sour. Occasional well-meaning attempts to issue baked flour bread were generally unsuccessful as the troops found the loaves bulky to carry and easily spoiled by the weather. [15]

In response to a resolution of the Confederate Congress in August 1861, the Commissary added to the food issue "...daily rations of fresh vegetables...whenever the same can be furnished at reasonable cost and charges to the government." Strangely, unlike the highly detailed rules for meat and breadstuffs, defined rations of vegetables were established only for a few items. Potatoes were issued in lieu of rice or beans at the rate of one pound per ration. For onions, three pecks were considered to constitute one hundred rations. Some measure of the frequency of vegetable issues can probably be inferred from the fact that few period memoirs mention them, though accounts from the Virginia army confirm the occasional issue of peas, cabbages, onions, potatoes and corn. Since materials from the Army of Tennessee tell of soldiers also receiving infrequent official supplies of tomatoes, collards, beets, turnips, squash, sweet potatoes and cress, it may well be that the troops in Virginia were issued some or all of these as well. [16] The Army made a special effort to ensure that enough vegetables were available to prevent scurvy. According to regulations, pickled onions, sour krout [sic], dried apples and dried peaches were occasionally to be included in the ration for this reason, though no direct evidence of their issue in Virginia has been found. Company commanders were also directed to gather native edible wild plants for this purpose. The plants to be sought locally included wild mustard, watercresses, wild garlic and onion, sassafras, lamb's-quarters, sorrel, pokeweed shoots, artichoke, dandelion plumes, parsley, peppergrass (also known as cress) and wild yams. Some memoirs from the Virginia army troops mention certain of these items. [17]

One of the dilemmas for the commissary was to maintain the coffee ration. At that time, coffee was imported from South America, primarily through Rio de Janeiro, and the blockade quickly made it difficult to obtain. The army succeeded in including it as part of the regular issue in the field long after it had ceased to be available to civilians. The Commissary Department continued to obtain small quantities via blockade-runners throughout the war. To sweeten the coffee, a variety of foodstuffs were issued to the troops. The white sugar envisioned by regulations was soon largely replaced by brown. This is turn gave way to molasses, and then sorghum (referred to by the soldiers as "long sweetening"). [18]

The mechanics of actually issuing the various available rations was established by experience in the prewar US army. At the regimental level, scales and measuring containers were provided to commissary officers to apportion the different ration items. However, at the company level, it was a challenge to distribute the foodstuffs fairly. A number of sources mention a method that was easily implemented in the field for items such as beans, coffee, sugar and the like. First, the food was laid out on a rubber blanket and divided as equally as possible into the number of portions required to provide one for each of the men in the company. Then the first sergeant would turn his back and another soldier would point to one of the piles. The sergeant would randomly call out the name of some soldier and the man named would take the indicated portion. [19]

Soldiers typically gathered up their dry rations (sugar, coffee, salt, pepper, flour and beans) into cloth bags that could be stowed in the haversack. One of the dilemmas was to carry the salt pork or bacon, as the grease tended to melt in the heat of the day and ruin the other rations. A solution used by some soldiers was to wrap the meat in paper and then in a piece of oilcloth or gum blanket. The oilcloth or rubberized cloth kept the grease away from the dry rations, and the paper kept any peeling rubber or paint from the cloth away from the meat. However they were wrapped, the sheer volume of the rations was a problem. Three days' allowance of hardtack alone made a stack three inches wide, six inches long and over ten inches high; while three days of salt pork formed an additional lump

three by three by seven and a half inches. [20]

Officers in the Confederate service were initially responsible for providing their own food. However, regulations did allow them to purchase stores from the commissary at cost so long as they certified the foodstuffs were for the officer's own use. For example, surviving commissary records for the Fourth Texas Infantry show its officers purchasing beef, bacon, pork, mutton, flour, sugar, corn meal, potatoes and salt from the regimental stocks. This practice continued until the spring of 1864, when the regulations were changed to allow officers to be issued the same rations as enlisted men. [21]

Problems in Providing the Official Ration.

Despite the detailed regulations and the best efforts of the commissary officers, the Virginia army began to have difficulty almost immediately in supplying the official ration. Vegetables were very scarce during the winter of 1861-62. In April 1862 the meat ration was reduced to a pound of beef or a half-pound of bacon or pork with some reductions also in the ration of flour and meal. During the retreat up the Peninsula, rations were limited to flour, meal and salt meat. Frequently, troops received only parched corn, with four ears of corn per man as the standard issue. [22]

Rations continued to be short in Virginia during the summer of 1862. One soldier mentions his pleasure at capturing beans at Second Manassas, as they had not been issued for a long time, while another was pleased to capture some coffee from a Yankee, "...the first sure enough coffee I had drank [sic] in many long weeks." During the Sharpsburg campaign the rations were beef and flour when issued, but frequently only foraged green corn and green apples were available. In General Hood's official report he notes that in the three days before Sharpsburg the Texans of his division received a half ration of beef once and only green corn the rest of the time. [23]

The wheat crop was small in Virginia in 1862 and flour was scarce during the winter of 1862-63. Vegetable issues seem to have been quite rare in Virginia after the fall of 1862. Lee ordered a temporary increase in the meat ration to make up for the other shortages in the Army of Northern Virginia, but problems in shipping meat from the deep south cropped up in January. At that time the ration in Virginia was again reduced to a quarter pound of meat a day with sugar issued as a substitute when available. At beginning of May 1863, Lee wrote that for some time his army had been subsisting on a daily ration of one and a half pounds of flour, a quarter pound of bacon and occasional issues of sugar, rice and molasses. Those fortunate members of Longstreet's Corps who participated in the Suffolk expedition found great quantities of welcome rations. The effort netted large amounts of bacon, corn, wheat, flour and "...great droves of beef..." according to one participant. Another soldier noted an army issue of salted shad. [24]

During the summer of 1863 the standard issue in the Army of Northern Virginia was a half-pound of salt bacon or one pound of fresh beef per day for troops on active duty. Memoirs speak of additional issues of hardtack and boiled roasting ears during the Gettysburg campaign. [25]

Most of Longstreet's Corps spent the fall and winter of 1863 in Georgia and Tennessee, and the experience was not remembered as one of fine dining. The commissary of the Army of Tennessee reported in August that there was no problem in securing sufficient supplies of rice, peas, soap, salt, vinegar and flour. However, meat was in very short supply. Soldiers recalled that they received beef at the rate of a quarter pound a day, and on many days, none at all. Lieutenant Colonel Winkler of the Fourth Texas wrote in October that they were almost without food for four days and then only very coarse corn meal was issued. "Occasionally we get flour, some rice, and once in a while can purchase potatoes." A private in the Fourth Texas wrote in early October, "We have eaten corn bread half done, made with un-sifted meal, accompanied with bacon raw or broiled on a stick for three weeks at a time." A First Corps soldier writing in November said he had received no bacon since Chickamauga, and beef only seven days out of ten. On the other days rice and sugar were issued in place of beef. Sweet potatoes were also provided as a substitute for meat. [26]

The army in Virginia seems to have fared somewhat better than Bragg's army for at least the first half of that winter. The Confederacy had instituted a "tax in kind," in which farmers paid taxes by turning over a percentage of their crops. It generated enough flour from the 1863 crop to feed the Army of Northern Virginia through 1 January 1864. Thereafter, only corn meal was issued. During that winter beef, bacon, peas, lard, potatoes and rice were shipped to Virginia from the Atlanta commissary, but the supply ran low in January. The Virginia army was put on a ration of a quarter of a pound of salt meat per day. By March 1864 the Army of Northern Virginia was eating only meat and corn meal, and some days the meat supply was totally exhausted. At the same time, Longstreet's men, now located in northeastern Tennessee, reported receiving sour flour, or three or four ears of corn per man per day. The latter they shelled and parched. Beef was stringy and blue, and some rice and bacon was issued occasionally. [27]

When the Overland Campaign began in May 1864, Lee's meat ration increased from a quarter to a half pound, and special issues of coffee and sugar were made in June. As soon as the field campaign ended in late June, the meat ration was reduced to one third of a pound, the new standard for stationary troops. During the summer of 1864 flour was a luxury. The troops typically received one pound of corn meal bread and a quarter pound of bacon or lean beef. Peas, beans, rice and sugar were sometimes issued, and green vegetables were plentiful for a time. On rare occasions there was an issue of thirty beans of coffee to the man. [28]

In October 1864, the official daily ration was revised again. One hundred meat rations now consisted of sixty rations of bacon at one third pound each, twenty-five rations of beef at one pound each and fifteen rations of sorghum at three gills each! A hundred bread rations comprised sixty rations of meal of one and a quarter pound each and forty rations of flour at one and an eighth pounds each. In addition, each one hundred men were to receive two quarts of salt, fifty pounds of rice, four quarts of beans, four quarts of vinegar, a pound and one half of candles and four pounds of soap. Each man also was entitled to one ounce of coffee and two ounces of sugar. No sooner had this new standard

been established than it was further reduced. A November order set the meat ration at one third of a pound of bacon and the bread ration was reduced to one pound of flour or corn meal. Each man also drew a tenth of a pound of rice. Troops in the trenches were given an additional six pounds of sugar and three pounds of coffee to the hundred men. [29]

With much of the meat for Lee's army coming through the blockade at Wilmington, the commissary tried a number of expedients to supplement the traditional Nassau bacon. During the winter of 1864-65 the commissary sometimes issued canned beef. Known as "The London Times" by soldiers, who noted its British origins, it was popular with the troops. They deemed it to be superior to any other meat ration they were receiving. Also appreciated by the men in the Richmond trenches was imported extract of beef. It came in large twelve-pound cans, and the ration was a spoonful three times a day. Combined with flour paste and cooked, the troops reported that it was "pleasant and wholesome." [30]

Unfortunately, even these innovative issues were not always available. Even before the fall of Fort Fisher closed the port of Wilmington in January 1865, transportation problems often limited the food actually received at Richmond to half the regulation amount. In January troops at Petersburg were in the field for three days without any meat issue. As the hungry Texas Brigade left Richmond on the retreat that would end at Appomattox, they carried with them only one cup of flour per man and no meat. On April 5th they were issued a little corn meal, and some received a small issue of meat and corn meal on the 6th. Some flour was issued April 8th, but when the Texans arrived at Appomattox Court House, many of the men had not eaten for three days. [31]

Overall, the Confederate authorities made strenuous efforts to the end to feed the troops in the field. The efforts, however, rarely succeeded in delivering the quantities of rations envisioned when the war began.

Foraging.

During the Gettysburg campaign General Lee reprimanded General Hood, claiming that Hood's troops were burning fence rails and raiding farms for food. Hood indignantly denied the charge and invited Lee to inspect the fences and farms in the area where his division was camped. But Lee only laughed and said, "Ah, General Hood, when you Texans come about, the chickens have to roost mighty high!" And that seems to have been the case, for by all accounts the Army of Northern Virginia, and especially its Texas Brigade, was highly creative in finding ways to supplement the meager army rations. [32]

One source of food was foraging; the art of acquiring, in usually questionable ways, whatever food was possessed by the local population. The army seems to have first turned to foraging during the Peninsula Campaign. When army rations failed to arrive during the retreat up the Peninsula, the troops gathered vegetables from gardens they passed on the march. [33]

Before long the troops became experts at this military art. The soldiers' memoirs report the collection of an amazing variety of foodstuffs, ranging from pickles and apple butter found in a deserted farmhouse to pumpkins, corn, turnips, onions, apples, peaches, pears, quinces, huckleberries and blackberries from gardens and orchards. On one occasion, a soldier recalled, he and his comrades even raided a large barnyard pot where a farmer was cooking turnips and corn to feed to his hogs. Farms also provided eggs, honey from beehives and dairy products from the milk houses. When the latter were empty, the troops were not above milking a cow in the field! [34]

To supplement the army's beef and bacon, the troops found numerous opportunities to separate farmers from their pigs, ducks, geese, chickens and even cattle. They also hunted for deer, rabbits, turtle, muskrat and even rats. In the winter of 1862 one soldier reported catching squirrels by throwing rocks at them. The troops took fish from the Rapidan River. One soldier recalled an occasion where he even captured a cat that was turned into a memorable meat pie. [35]

By all accounts the high point for foraging was the Gettysburg campaign. Texas Brigade historian J. B. Polley later indignantly claimed that the "greater part" of foraged supplies acquired in Pennsylvania were duly paid for in worthless Confederate money, but however they were obtained, the haul was staggering. Accounts mention foragers returning with pigs, chickens, turkey, ducks, geese, "...loaves of bread, chunks of corned beef, hams, sides of bacon, cheeses, crocks of apple butter, jelly, jam, pickles and preserves, bowls of yellow butter, demijohns of buttermilk." A Texan said that in one day his regiment gathered pork, mutton, butter, honey, milk, garden produce, turkeys, ducks and two to three hundred chickens. [36]

Foraging largely came to an end in 1864. Confined as they were to the Richmond and Petersburg trenches, or the lines north of the James, the troops had little opportunity to visit local farms, and those in reach were soon picked clean.

Purchase.

Of course, the soldiers were not averse to buying foodstuffs when they were offered, but the price was steep compared to a private's pay of eleven dollars a month. What is more, prices rose much faster than a private's wage. One member of the Virginia army reported paying eight dollars and thirty-three cents per pound for chicken in 1861. By contrast, chickens were six dollars each in 1863!

One source of additional food available for purchase was within the commissary itself. The practice of awarding to the butchers the heart, liver, etc., of slaughtered beeves has already been mentioned. Often troops purchased these to supplement their rations. [38]

Another source of purchased food was the local sutler. Examples of foodstuffs from this source included cider, ginger cakes, half moon pies, peas, rice and dried fruit. One soldier recalled buying from such a vendor a bottle of lemon syrup and some sugar that he turned into lemonade. [39]

The relationship between the sutlers and the troops was not always a smooth one. Some memoirs boast of stealing from the sutlers, and the sutlers themselves were of questionable honesty. While camped near Richmond in the spring of 1862, one mess purchased sausage from a sutler. The men ate it with great pleasure until one batch was found to contain claws that revealed it was made of cat! [40]

After the first winter of the war, sutlers became rare in Virginia, although they are mentioned as selling peas, rice and dried apples in the summer of 1863. Typically, however, the food available came from a "cider cart" (a barrel on wheels) or roadside civilians selling pies made of sugar and dried apples, which one soldier said "…were generally similar in appearance, size and thickness to a pale specimen of …buckwheat cakes…" [41]

After 1862, civilian households became the primary source of purchased food. William Fletcher of the Fifth Texas recalled purchasing cabbage and butter from farmers. Other soldiers bargained for apple butter, eggs, corn, turnips, onions, watermelons, pumpkins, peaches or apples, and carried milk, buttermilk, cider and sorghum back to camp in their canteens. [42]

Rising prices and declining food supplies made purchases problematical as the war continued. During the Sharpsburg campaign flour sold for twenty-four cents a pound. One soldier recalled paying two dollars a pound for bacon in Virginia in 1863, on the rare occasions when it could be found. While the First Corps were in Tennessee one of its privates recalled trading eleven dollars (a months' wages) for two chickens, two dozen apples and four canteens of molasses. At that, he was lucky. Another wrote about the same time, "When we are out of rations nothing to eat can be purchased within ten miles of us." [43]

Once Longstreet's men returned to Virginia, they found the prices had risen still more. While in Petersburg in the summer of 1864, a soldier reported that he bought the ingredients for apple dumplings for four people: apples, sugar, butter, and presumably flour. This, he wrote, cost him eighty-seven dollars! In the last harvest season of the war, the troops were briefly able to purchase vegetables and fruits in abundance. Apples were especially plentiful and sold for only five dollars a dozen. Another private even recalled meeting a black man that fall "…with a handle basket full of half moon pies, made of dried peaches…" selling for a dollar each. [44]

The soldiers' desire to purchase food was so strong that when the army was stationary they often tried to find work with nearby farmers, cutting cordwood, harvesting crops, killing pigs, etc. This earned perhaps fifty cents a day, or even payment in kind. At hog slaughtering time (late December), this could yield such delicacies as sausage, spare ribs, chine (the pork backbone) and pork liver. [45]

Civilian Contributions.

Confederate memories of the occasional furloughs tend to dwell on meals that made a welcome change from army fare. Private Stevens recalled a meal of barbecue beef and pork that he ate before leaving for Virginia in 1861. Soldiers who stayed at hotels during leaves in the winter of 1861 mention a breakfast of buckwheat cakes with butter and syrup (twenty-five cents), as well as oyster stew eaten at a hotel in Fredericksburg. For Private Fletcher cold milk was the high point of a visit to Richmond in 1862. In 1863 the Confederate capital was again notable for the availability of iced drinks. The ice came from icehouses in northern Virginia. [46]

Other soldiers' furloughs were enlivened by a pound cake served with fresh buttermilk or a mince pie. One sergeant was impressed by a supper of biscuits, sweet cakes, ham and eggs, and apple butter. Another recalled visiting friends who started him back from leave with a basket containing a ham, a turkey, a great deal of bread and a bottle of scuppernong wine. Even late in the war a furlough could net some good eating. One Confederate recalled that in the summer of 1864 he visited a family near Richmond and was served "ash cakes" and iced buttermilk, a welcome treat. [47]

One wonders at times about the motivation behind these gifts. A case in point is found in a 3 January 1862 letter from a Texan who described a party thrown for some of the boys. It occurred at the home of a widow near the camp. The writer appreciated the widow's sausages and noted that they drank Tom and Jerrys (a drink made of eggs and brandy.) There is no data on any ensuing romances. [48]

The soldiers' meals on the march were sometimes enhanced by random acts of generosity. Bill Fletcher of the Fifth Texas recorded thankfully "six big fat biscuits" he and a fellow soldier were given by a civilian family in 1862. Describing a trip that same year to rejoin his outfit after a stint in an army hospital, Fletcher mentions Virginians who gave him bread, ham, honey, Irish potatoes, two or three dozen eggs and some highly-prized soft soap. [49]

Troops on the move sometimes encountered memorable and organized meals prepared by civilians on a large scale. Kershaw's Brigade ate one en route from Virginia to Chickamauga in 1863. While changing trains at one junction, local ladies served them "Turkey, chicken, hot biscuits, coffee, sweet potato pies and puddings, fine corn bread, baked pork, and ever so many other good things…" [50]

Even in the enemy's country, the troops were sometimes the beneficiaries of open handed civilians. One Confederate recalled that he was a member of a group that feasted on light bread, cold ham, corned beef, roast mutton, sweet pickles, jam, jelly, apple butter, coffee and milk provided by a Pennsylvania family during the Gettysburg campaign. [51]

When the mail carriers and expressmen could reach the army, individual packages from home could bring a variety of treats. Soldiers' letters speak of receiving chestnuts, cakes, biscuits, butter, apple butter, honey, syrup, pepper, tomato catsup, green-pepper pickles, potatoes, fish, sausages and even a turkey. In other cases, the home communities of the various units would mount elaborate efforts to send special comforts to their troops. Rome, Georgia, for instance, made it a wartime practice to periodically send to the front entire freight cars filled with food and clothing. A local citizen accompanied the car to see to its safe arrival and the distribution of the contents. [52]

Captured Supplies.

On lucky occasions, there was even food to be captured from the enemy. Indeed, capturing food at times seemed to be a high point of the fight for many soldiers. A soldier recalling his experience at Sharpsburg commented, "We got each a Yankee haversack and a full square meal, and I saw scores of soldiers, nearly famished, eating while they fought, indeed, it used to be a saying of our foes, that a rebel soldier would charge through

hell to capture a Yankee haversack." This tendency is confirmed by another southern veteran who remarked, "Often in the thickest of the fray it was not uncommon to see the soldier grasp a haversack from the ground or displace it from a dead enemy, and quickly swing it to his shoulder, and its contents shared with others at the close of the action if he survived." [53]

Often the captured items were army rations, including such staples as hardtack, beans, bacon and pork, always a welcome addition to the meager Confederate issue. Other captures included delicacies unobtainable in the south. Among the items mentioned by the veterans were plum cake, candy, refined sugar, oranges, lemons, watermelons, bananas, baking soda, salt, rice, potatoes, ham, beef roasts and cigars. Yankee canned goods were highly prized and included potted ham, lobster, tongue, peaches, tomatoes, pickles, catsup and mustard. Captured beverages included not only coffee and milk but also bottles of wine, various liquors and a keg of lager beer. [54]

As a lover of mustard, this author's favorite story of captured rations involves a soldier in Jackson's Corps who selected from the booty captured at Second Manassas only bottles of French mustard. A comrade related that "He filled his haversack with it and was so greedy that he put one more bottle in his pocket." This was his four days' rations, but it turned out to be the best thing taken, because he traded it for meat and bread and it lasted him until we reached Frederick. [55]

The Mess.

The Confederate soldier who marched to war in 1861 expected to live rather well while in the service. As explained by artilleryman Carlton McCarthy, at the start of the war the equipment of the typical company was generous to a fault:

...each mess, generally composed of from five to ten men...had its outfit, consisting of a large camp chest containing skillet, frying pan, coffee boiler, bucket for lard, coffee box, salt box, sugar box, meal box, flour box, knives, forks, spoons, plates, cups, etc. etc. These chests were so large that eight or ten of them filled up an army wagon. In addition to the chest each mess owned an axe, water bucket, and bread tray. Then the tents of each company, and little sheet iron stoves, and stove pipe, and the trunks and valises of the company officers so that each company had a small wagon train of their own.

The soldiers' expectations of camp life were further molded by such works as John P. Curry's *Volunteers' Camp and Field Book* (Richmond, 1862), which promised new soldiers that each company would be staffed with, "One cook and two assistants...where bread or biscuit is supplied. [The cooks] make the coffee, bean soup, and cook the meat." [56]

Alas for the men in the ranks, reality turned out to be much different. The mess chest disappeared after a few changes of station, and it was a rare company where full-time cooks prepared the rations (though as late as 1864, Confederate Quartermaster regulations continued to authorize up to four black cooks per company.) Instead, the Subsistence Department declared that "...soldiers are expected to preserve, distribute and cook their own subsistence..." using a limited variety of utensils supplied by the government or scavenged from civilian sources. [57]

For cooking purposes, the troops formed small mess groups. The sizes of the mess groups varied; Texan John Stevens described messes in his unit as "...usually five men to the mess sometimes one or two more—often less than five..." Messes often adopted a name, such as the Texas brigade's "Wigfall Mess" and "Beauregard Mess." Officers and sometimes sergeants had their own messes. [58]

The sharing of duties within the mess were a matter of agreement between the members, and varied widely. Generally members took turns on the march carrying various items of mess equipment...the hatchet, the frying pan, etc. In camp, cooking duties were allocated by mess custom. In some groups particular soldiers specialized in cooking specific dishes and were called into service whenever the boys wanted that item. In other cases, particular soldiers specialized in particular tasks day after day, such as baking or cleaning up after the meal. [59]

Utensils.

The cooking resources of the mess began with the gear issued by the Quartermaster Department. The Quartermaster Regulations provided for troops to be issued personal tin cups, tin plates, knives, forks and spoons. In addition, communal cooking gear was issued at the rate of two camp kettles and five mess pans for every fifteen soldiers. In garrison camps, regulations allowed iron pots or cauldrons to be substituted for mess kettles. [60]

Since camp kettles and mess pans are undeservedly rare in today's reenacting, a brief discussion of these utensils is in order. The camp kettle was described by Curry as issued in "...nests of five, to hold not less than four gallons, and made of Russia iron..." (a hammered iron that resisted rust). According to Union private John Billings, camp kettles were from thirteen to fifteen inches high and varied in diameter from seven inches to a foot. An 1862 Army of the Potomac cookbook states their capacity at four to seven gallons. A company had a mix of sizes so that a set of four or five could be nested together for efficient transportation. The mess pan, also of iron, stood six inches high, with sloping sides that widened to twelve inches at the top. It held about six quarts. [61]

Camp kettles were manufactured in the South and issued by the CS government. Like most other things in the South, however, they were often in short supply, and captures from the enemy were welcome. The Third Arkansas, for example, was very pleased when they were able to secure "...a great quantity of [Yankee] camp kettles, which were much wanted in our army..." The kettles had been left behind on the Confederate side of the Rappahannock in front of Fredericksburg when the enemy retreated after the December 1862 battle. [62]

The troops soon learned that all one could do with a camp kettle was boil food or bake an occasional mess of beans in a bean hole. The mess pan was useful only for mixing and serving. Thus messes quickly supplemented the camp kettles and mess pans with more flexible baking and frying equipment. [63]

Probably the most mentioned cooking utensil in Confederate accounts is a baking tool, the skillet or spider. Despite the fact

that today we treat "skillet" as synonymous with "frying pan," this was not the case in the Civil War. The skillet or spider of the Civil War was akin to today's Dutch oven. Made from heavy cast iron, it had legs, a handle and a cast iron lid on which coals could be piled for even baking. McCarthy, for instance, says the average mess owned "one skillet and a couple frying pans," while Virginian John Worsham speaks of "one 'spider' of biscuits and one frying pan of meat." Texan John Stevens highlighted the difference between the frying pan and the skillet or spider when he wrote in his memoirs that his messmates mixed up a certain dish in the skillet, "...then put the lid on, then a fire both on top and under it." [64]

The spider could function as an oven, producing biscuits, cornbread or even white bread. A popular dish from a spider was a pot pie of pork or chicken. Stevens mentions "cooking fowls, baked, stewed, fried, roasted, smothered" Perhaps his most appealing spider recipe was for beef's head:

You have no idea what fine eating there is on a beef's head. We would take the head and skin it nicely and chip the meat off in pieces—two, three, or four inches in diameter and usually a half an inch thick, put it in a skillet, and fill the skillet with water, then put the lid on, then a fire both on top and under it. First it was a stew, and then a bake. It was very fine to our soldier appetites. [65]

Despite the fact that the spiders were not prescribed in regulations, several accounts mention the government issue of the skillets. Another account by a Virginia soldier speaks of buying a spider for his mess from civilians. [66]

In contrast to the cast iron skillet was the lighter wrought iron frying pan. Each mess generally owned one, and the infantrymen preferred to carry it on their person, often lashing the handle of the frying pan to the barrel of a musket. Even officers could be seen toting a frying pan, as in the case of a Lieutenant Colonel of the Fifth Texas mentioned by Polley in 1862. [67]

Of course, a variety of miscellaneous utensils were used. Half canteens became improvised frying pans, plates, corn graters and sieves. Private Fletcher of the Fifth Texas mentions a coffee boiler, given to him in 1862 by a wounded Yankee, and speaks of cooking a pumpkin in an old tin coffeepot he found dropped along the line of march in the Sharpsburg campaign. A surprising number of accounts make reference to a wooden bucket in the mess. [68]

Perhaps the best view of what a Confederate infantry company had by mid-war in the way of cooking utensils is found in the Company Book of Co. H, Fifty-fourth Virginia Volunteers. The Fifty-fourth was one of the few Virginia units to serve with the Army of Tennessee, and two of its company books are in the National Archives. An inventory of camp equipment made 8 October 1863 shows that the company of thirty-three men held seven wooden buckets, seven camp kettles, seven "skillets," three "cast skillets," one "frying pan" and two axes. Exactly what the company clerk saw as the difference between "skillets" "cast skillets" and "frying pans" is, unfortunately, not totally clear. It would appear that each mess owned a bucket, a kettle and a frying implement of some description, with the heavy baking ("cast") skillets being shared between the messes (a practice noted in several memoirs). [69]

To transport the heavier cooking gear, a company relied on the regimental "skillet wagons." Val Giles of the Fourth Texas Infantry mentions that in the fall of 1863 that each regiment of the Texas Brigade had two wagons to carry its "pots, kettles and frying pans..." These wagons accompanied the regiment on the campaign. Texas Sergeant Polley notes that even on the morning of 2 July 1863 at about 9 a.m. "...the skillet wagon drove up and unloaded each regiment's share of cooking utensils, fires were built, and skillet lids put on to heat, preparatory to cooking the flour that was to be issued." Alas for the Texans, Polley reports that before their bread was baked, they were called to fall in for the march that ended that afternoon at Little Round Top. [70] This incident makes an important point. Among the Virginia Confederates camp kettles and skillets appear to have been generally used even during active campaigns. Polley's account of baking in skillets at Gettysburg is matched by a similar account from another soldier about the morning of the Sharpsburg fight. A veteran of Law's Brigade recorded an episode involving messes of his regiment cooking in camp kettles while encamped at Greencastle, Pennsylvania, en route to Gettysburg. [71]

Cooking Practices Without Utensils.

It seems certain that the camp kettles and skillets persisted in the Army of Northern Virginia even on campaign because it was very difficult to prepare the official rations without them. Certainly there were times during the war when some troops did without the normal utensils for extended periods. But the results were not favorable. The Federal Army of the Cumberland, for example, fought the Atlanta campaign after leaving most of its cooking utensils behind in Chattanooga. The result, said its medical director, was "...cooking...of the worst character and least conducive to digestion." Cooking, in short, of the sort Union Brigadier General August Kautz was probably thinking of when he wrote in a wartime manual: "more disease and deaths are occasioned in an army by bad cooking than by any other cause." [72]

Even when utensils were lacking, the Confederates still had to eat. To prepare breadstuffs from flour or meal, a variety of improvised mixing bowls were used, including tent cloths, gum blankets and bark peeled from trees. Sometimes the flour was then fried and eaten as pancakes. On other occasions the flour dough might be baked by placing kneaded patties on foraged planks and propping them before the fire, by wrapping it around ramrods and toasting it, or by encasing it in wet corn shucks and baking it in hot embers. Cornmeal was made into pones that were likewise cooked on planks or directly in the ashes, or was eaten as gruel boiled in the soldiers' tin cups. [73]

An equal variety of methods were used to cook meat in the absence of utensils. Beef or bacon might be broiled on a bayonet, a sharp stick, or directly in the ashes. During the Maryland Campaign some soldiers built fires on the large rocks that abound at the surface there, then broiled their meat on the hot rocks. Often the result was combined with a couple of pieces of hardtack

into a very resilient sandwich. And some soldiers simply gave up on cooking entirely. Engineer W. W. Blackford, for example, commented, "For the last year or eighteen months of the war I never took the trouble to cook bacon on the march, indeed I preferred it uncooked…When hungry all there was to do was to slice off thin pieces, take out a cracker, and eat." [74]

Implications for Reenacting.

In many quarters there is a reluctance to accurately portray the commissary aspects of the Civil War. This is compounded at times by a misunderstanding of the details of the army dining experience. The result is a series of myths that discourage the inclusion of this element in our activities.

Myth 1: Civil War food was boring. The examples presented above should suggest that army food had far more variety than is usually understood. Not only was the official ration composed of a number of alternates (beef vs. pork, for example) which could be prepared in several ways, but the potential for food from non-official sources should be more than enough to supply any degree of variety desired. Unless the reenactor sets out to experience dullness as a magic moment, there is no need to for authentic food to be boring. [75]

Myth 2: Civil War soldiers were always hungry. The initial Confederate ration was large. It is no easy task to eat twenty ounces of beef and a similar amount of corn meal in a day! It was assumed in fact that a portion of the ration would be sold for the so-called "company fund," which would be used to buy other foods, additional cooking utensils, etc. Even with the reduced rations later in the war, when soldiers went hungry, it was usually due to failings by the high command, not to the smallness of the ration. Southerners besieged in Vicksburg and Union soldiers besieged in Chattanooga certainly went hungry. The Confederates who were investing Chattanooga also were hungry due to the inefficiencies of Bragg's staff. When Joe Johnston took over the Army of Tennessee, his men were once again well fed. With the exception of the last months of the war in the East, the stories of shortages of food seem to represent unusual events and excessive staff incompetence (for example, the Sharpsburg campaign) rather than a plan to have underfed soldiers. Again, unless the reenactor prefers to replicate staff incompetence, being authentic does not involve going hungry. [76]

Myth 3: Campaign style means no cooking utensils. As with so many elements of reenacting, our commissary portrayals can benefit from a return to original sources. As the examples shown above indicate, many campaign events underestimate the cooking equipment that was available to the historic troops. Period rations require period utensils to produce period results.

Replicating the Period Utensils.

We will close with some comments on sources for the utensils required to equip a period mess. These include camp kettles, mess pans, spiders and perhaps a bucket.

Excellent sheet iron camp kettles are available from Wendy Osman. They come either singly or in nesting sets of three. While authentic in design and manufacture, these hold a lot of food! Unless actually cooking for a full mess, a scaled down camp kettle may be more practical, but at some cost to authenticity. [The **DOG** recently received this update from Wendy Osman. "We still have not found a domestic source for the [camp] kettles, and are hesitant to go overseas because of the weight. However, we have a good stock again of small and large soldered and riveted cups, and the Second Minnesota tin plates (see below). We have great red wool overshirts in three sizes for $55 postage paid, are getting havelocks, we hope, for $20 postage paid, and also sergeant's sashes finally! Clothing items should be here in thirty days, and tin ware is on hand."] Village Tinsmithing Works offers a nesting set of three with roughly half the capacity of the originals. Unfortunately, they do not follow the original proportions. They also deviate from the originals in that they are made of tin and come with lids.

Osman offers what is probably the best available mess pan, crafted of sheet iron like the originals. C & D Jarnagin offers a tin mess pan that they mislabel as a "camp basin." Village Tinsmithing also describes their products as "camp basins," but offer both the common Civil War version and the broader, shallower "gold pan" version of the Mexican War that also appears in some 1860s photographs.

Excellent sheet iron frying pans are available from Frank Ellis. Avoid the one-piece pans advertised by some sources that have the handle as an integral part of the stamped body. They are not authentic for the period.

Two key elements of the period mess equipage pose difficulties. As noted above, wooden buckets were surprisingly common in wartime accounts. Cumberland General Store, Beaver Buckets and Panther Primitives offer wooden buckets, but they incorporate flat hoops. A review of period pictures reveal that virtually all woodenware in use in the field incorporated split-sapling half-round hoops. (**Jim Moffat**, P.O. Box 346, N. Grafton, MA 01536 formerly offered an excellent line of hickory-strapped wet and dry cooperage. Unfortunately, recent letters to him have been returned "addressee unknown." Can anyone suggest another source of such items?)

The most difficult task in outfitting the period mess is the spider. The author's mess uses one acquired after many months of haunting antique stores. Entrepreneurs seeking a product that would enjoy a large sale among serious reenactors should consider a proper cast iron spider.

Lee Rainey

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Village Tinsmithing Works (Bill and Judy Hoover),
PO Box 539, Hamptonville, NC 27020 and (336) 468-1190
http://csa-dixie.com/villagetinsmith
cwtinman@yadtel.net
C & D Jarnagin Co. PO Box 1860, Corinth, MS 38835
Frank Ellis, Route 1, Box 341, Greenbriar, TN 37073
Cumberland General Store, Rt. 3, Crossville, TN 38555
Beaver Buckets (Gaster, James D.), Route 1, Box 159,
Indianola, NE 69034 and (308) 364-2528
jgaster@swnebr.net
Panther Primitives, P.O. Box 32, Normantown, WV 25267

NOTES:

[1] US War Dept, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* (Washington DC), Series IV, vol. 1, p. 114.

[2] August V. Kautz, *Customs of Service for Officers* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1867), 181-2, 185, 187, 347; William Gilham, *Manual of Instruction for the Volunteers and Militia of the United States* (Philadelphia: Charles DiSilver, 1861), p. 668; *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 1, p. 115, 163-4, 416, 823; W. W. Goldsborough, *The Maryland Line in the Confederate Army* (Baltimore: Guggenheimer, Weil & Co., 1900), pp. 87-88; CS War Dept, *Regulations of the Confederate States Army for the Quartermaster's Department, Including the Pay Branch Thereof* (Richmond: J. W. Randolph, 1864), p. 182.

[3] August V. Kautz, *Customs of Service for Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1864), pp. 152-53.

[4] Kautz, *Customs of Service Non-commissioned*, p. 152; *CS Regulations Quartermaster's Department 1864*, p. 165.

[5] *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. II, pp. 447, This order seems not to have been applied to some units. For example, the parole lists of the First CS Engineers show both an AQM and an ACS present at the close of the war. "Parole List of Engineer Troops," Southern Historical Society Papers , XXXII (1904), p. 51.

[6] *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 2, pp. 571-2; CS War Dept, *Regulations for the Army of the Confederate States 1863* (Richmond: J. W. Randolph, 1863), p. 177.

[7] Arthur W. Bergeron, ed. *The Civil War Reminiscences of Major Silas T. Grisamore, C.S.A.* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1993), pp. 57, 61; E. Jay Taylor, ed. *Reluctant Rebel: The Secret Diary of Robert Patrick, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1959), p. 141; *CS Regulations Quartermaster's Department 1864*, p. 181; *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 1, pp. 940-1; B. Bloomfield, *The Quartermaster's Guide, being a Compilation from Army Regulations and Other Sources* (Richmond: West & Johnson, 1862), p. 101.

[8] National Archives, Record Group 109, Compiled Service Records for 4th Texas Infantry, ACS William H. Hamman, Private. William A. Jones (clerk), and Private F. K. Steves (butcher). Records in the Hamman file show the employment of J. H. Amdorff as a butcher, but his name was not found in the brigade rosters. Harold B. Simpson, *Hood's Texas Brigade: A Compendium* (Hillsboro, TX: Hill Junior College Press, 1977), passim.

[9] Kautz, *Customs of Service Officers*, pp. 185-86, 297; Gilham, p. xviii; J. B. Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade* (Dayton, OH: Morningside Bookshop, 1976), p. 246.

[10] Jerrold N. Moore, *Confederate Commissary General* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Pub. Co., 1996), pp. 51-64; CS War Dept, *Army Regulations Adopted . . . 1861* (Richmond: West & Johnson, 1861), p. 140.

[11] CS War Dept, *Regulations for the Subsistence Department of the Confederate States* (Richmond: Ritchie & Dunnavant, 1862), paras. 1102, 1148; *CS Regulations 1863*, p. 190; Moore, p. 105n.; Kautz, *Customs of Service Non-commissioned*, pp. 259-60; John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee* (Lincoln: U. of Nebraska Press, 1993), p. 133-34; John H. Worsham, *One of Jackson's Foot Cavalry* (Wilmington: Broadfoot Pub. Co., 1987), p. 13; Erna Rich, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps 1775-1939* (Washington, DC: Office of the Quartermaster General, 1962), p. 449; *ORWR*, Series I, vol. 32, pt. 2, p. 612.

[12] Horsford's The Army Ration of 1864, Library Bulletin, Supplement No. 1, July 1961 (Chicago: Quartermaster Food & Container Institute for the Armed Forces, 1961, republication of E. N. Horsford, *The Army Ration: How to Diminish Its Weight and Bulk* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1864), p. 19-21; E. P. Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 1989), p. 339-40; J. B. Polley, *A Soldier's Letters to Charming Nellie* (New York: Neale Pub. Co., 1908), p. 81; Jno. W. Stevens, *Reminiscences of the Civil War* (Hillsboro, TX: Hillsboro Mirror, 1902), p. 85; Robert N. Northern, "The Raw Confederate of April, 1861," SHSP, XXI (Jan-Dec 1893), pp. 348-9; John Coxe, "Chickamauga," Confederate Veteran, XXX (Aug 1922), p. 291; Frank H. Foote, "Recollections of Army Life with General Lee," SHSP, XXXI (Jan-Dec 1903), p. 242.

[13] *CS Regulations 1863* , p. 195; Kautz, *Customs of Service Non-commissioned*, p. 259; Horsford, , p. 19; Stephen R. Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy* (Columbia: U. of South Carolina, 1988), pp. 194-95; G. Moxley Sorrell, *Recollections of a Confederate Staff Officer* (Jackson, TN: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1958), p. 269; Foote, p. 242; *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 3, 900.

[14] Billings, p. 113; *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 1, pp. 877-8; Horsford, p. 5; Theophilus Noel, *Autobiography and Reminiscences of Theophilus Noel* (Chicago: Theo. Noel Co., 1904), p. 120; Polley, *Charming Nellie* , p. 63; Mary Lasswell, ed., *Rags and Hope: The Memoirs of Val C. Giles* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1961), p. 184; W. W. Blackford, *The War Years with Jeb Stuart* (Baton Rouge: University of Louisiana, 1993), p. 286; National Archives, Record Group 109, Papers of Citizens and Business Firms, J. C. H. Claussen, Carolina Steam Bakery.

The Civil War Museum of the Order of the Loyal Legion in Philadelphia holds a piece of round hardtack said to have been issued by the CS commissary in Georgia in 1864. It is approximately three inches in diameter and one half inch thick. No evidence of the issue of this variety of hardtack has been found in reference to the Virginia army.

[15] *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 1, pp. 596, 887; Foote, p. 241-2.

[16] CS Subsistence Regulations 1862, paras. 1149-1150; *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 1, p. 596; J. Tracy Power, *Lee's Miserables* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 1998), p. 73; Larry J. Daniel, *Soldiering in the Army of Tennessee* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 1991), p. 57-59, 100-101; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 115-6, 246; Polley, *Charming Nellie*, pp. 36-37; Richard D. Goff, *Confederate Supply* (Durham, NC: Duke U. Press, 1969), p 197; Lasswell, p. 184.

[17] *CS Subsistence Regulations 1862*, par. 1117; ORWR, Series IV, vol. 2, p. 467; Foote, p. 242; William A. Fletcher, *Rebel Private Front and Rear* (Austin: Univ. of Texas, 1954), p. 15. Dried fruit appears in some inventories of subsistence stores outside of Virginia, e.g., *ORWR*, Series I, vol. 35, pt. 1, p. 510. The artichokes intended were probably of the Jerusalem variety, since they are prone to naturalize in areas where they were once planted. Fearing Burr, *Field and Garden Vegetables of America* (Boston: J. E. Tilton & Co., 1865), pp. 34-35. See also p. 329 for the identity of peppergrass and cress.

[18] *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 1, pp. 830, 908-9, 960; *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 2, pp. 244, 254; John H. Claiborne, *Seventy-five Years in Old Virginia* (New York: Neale Pub. Co., 1904), p. 201; Foote, p. 240; J. H. Lane, "Glimpses of Army Life in 1864," SHSP, XVIII (Jan-Dec 1890), p. 420.

[19] *CS Subsistence Regulations 1862*, p. 43; Worsham, p. 122; Billings, p.122-23.

[20] Kautz, *Customs of Service Non-commissioned*, p. 269; Billings, pp. 113, 123-24; Blackford, p. 287; Horsford, p. 27; *Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States 1861* (Philadelphia: J.G.L. Brown, 1861) p. 243; *CS Regulations 1861*, art. 1069.

[21] *CS Regulations 1863*, p. 193; National Archives, Record Group 109, Compiled Service Records, 4th Texas Infantry, "Abstract of Provisions sold to Officers for Quarter ending Dec. 31, 1862" in file for William Hamman, 4th Texas Assistant Commissary of Subsistence; Alexander, p. 339.

[22] Fletcher, pp. 12,16; *ORWR*, Series I, vol. 11, pt. 3, p. 553; Polley, *Charming Nellie*, pp. 36-7.

[23] Worsham, p. 71; Fletcher, p. 60; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, pp. 115-6.

[24] Goff, pp. 78-80; Bell I. Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1943), p. 91; Stevens, p. 99; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 113.

[25] Goff, p. 152; Lasswell, p. 184.

[26] Daniel, pp. 57-59; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 214; A. V. Winkler, *The Confederate Capital and Hood's Texas Brigade* (Austin: Eugene von Boeckmann, 1894), p. 147; John C. West, *A Texan in Search of a Fight* (Waco, TX: Texian Press, 1969), p. 120.

[27] Goff p. 155, 197-9; Harold B. Simpson, *Hood's Texas Brigade: Lee's Grenadier Guard* (Waco, TX: Texian Press, 1970), pp. 191, 195.

[28] Goff, 199; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 237, 246; Power, p. 73; Clifford Dowdey and Louis H. Manarin, eds., *The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1961), p. 773.

[29] *ORWR*, Series IV, vol. 3, p. 777, 930-31.

[30] Foote, p. 242; Lane, p. 420.

[31] Goff, p. 213; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, pp. 261, 266, 275-6; Simpson, *Grenadier Guard*, pp. 225-6, 228.

[32] Lasswell, Rags and Hope, p. 174.

[33] Wiley, p. 92.

[34] Foote, p. 242-3; Alexander Hunter, "A High Private's Sketch of Sharpsburg," SHSP, X (Oct-Nov 1882), p. 511; Fletcher, p. 34; Lasswell, p. 195; Carlton McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life in the Army of Northern Virginia, 1861-1865* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), p. 26; Fletcher, p. 72; West, p. 91.

[35] Hunter, pp. 11-12; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 71; Stevens, p. 96; Simpson, *Grenadier Guard*, p. 129; Lasswell, p. 141; Worsham, p. 22; Polley, *Charming Nellie*, pp. 106, 197, 274.

[36] Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, pp. 147-48; W. C. Ward, "Incidents and Personal Experiences on the Battlefield of Gettysburg," CV, VIII (Aug 1900), pp. 345-46; Stevens, p. 109.

[37] Worsham, p. 14.

[38] Polley, *Charming Nellie*, p. 81; Stevens, p. 85; Foote, p. 242; Coxe, p. 291.

[39] West, p. 104; Coxe, p. 291; Fletcher, p. 8; Wiley, p. 100.

[40] Lasswell, pp. 54-56; Fletcher, p. 34.

[41] Lasswell, p. 94; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, pp. 50, 63.

[42] Granville H. Crozier, "A Private with General Hood," CV, XXV (Dec 1917),

p. 558; Polley, *Charming Nellie*, p. 120; Simpson, *Grenadier Guard*, p. 41; Wiley, p. 101; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, pp. 23, 60-61; Fletcher, pp. 12, 79.

[43] West, pp. 123, 132-33; Polley, *Charming Nellie*, p. 121; Worsham, p. xxvii.

[44] Polley, *Charming Nellie*, p. 251; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 249; Simpson, *Grenadier Guard*, p. 221; Stevens, p. 162; Claiborne, p. 201.

[45] McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 67; Worsham, p. 24.

[46] Fletcher, pp. 13, 42; Stevens, p. 12; Worsham, p. 28; Arthur J. L. Freemantle, *Three Months in the Southern States* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska Press, 1991), p. 207.

[47] Polley, *Charming Nellie*, pp. 281-2; Worsham, pp. xvii, 146; Stevens, p. 165; Lasswell, p. 267;

[48] Simpson, *Grenadier Guard*, p. 59.

[49] Fletcher, pp. 79-81.

[50] Coxe, p. 291.

[51] Polley, *Charming Nellie*, p. 127.

[52] Wiley, pp. 99, 100; Simpson, *Grenadier Guard*, p. 59; J. H. Lane, "Glimpses of Army Life in 1864," SHSP, XVIII (Jan.-Dec. 1890), pp. 419-20; W. W. Parker, "How the Southern Soldiers Kept House During the War," SHSP, XXIII (Jan.-Dec., 1895), p. 322; Worsham, p. 119; *Rome Tri-Weekly Courier*, May 24, 1862, December 31, 1863.

[53] Hunter, p. 505; Foote, p. 238.

[54] Hunter, p. 505; Worsham, pp. 71, 82, 149-50; Polley, *Charming Nellie*, p. 92; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 64; Fletcher, p. 60; Foote, p. 240.

[55] Worsham, p. 71.

[56] McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, pp. 18-19; Curry, p. 21.

[57] McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 24; *CS Subsistence Regulations 1862*, p. 14. Occasional references to hired cooks appear in the early years of the war, e.g., Northern, p. 349; ORWR, Series I, vol. 9, p. 418. The Confederate practice of highly dispersed cooking is at odds with recommended Union practice. See Kautz, *Customs of Service Officers*, p. 237.

[58] Stevens, p. 15; Grisamore, p. 11; Coxe, p. 291.

[59] Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade* , p. 77, 236; Foote, p. 243; Coxe, p. 291; Fletcher, p. 52; Parker, p. 320; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia* , p. 26; Carlton McCarthy, *Camp Fires of the Boys in Gray,* SHSP, I (Feb 1876), pp. 77-78.

[60] *CS Regulations 1863*, p. 106.

[61] Curry, p. 21; US War Dept., "Campfires and Camp Cooking or Culinary Hints for the Soldier" (Washington: GPO, 1862), pp. 1-2; Billings, pp. 126, 136.

[62] *ORWR*, Series I, vol. 2, p. 852; Stevens, p. 15; A. C. Jones, "Inaugurating the Picket Exchange," CV, XXVI (April 1918), pp. 155-56.

[63] Kautz, *Customs of Service Non-commissioned*, p. 256.

[64] McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 57; Worsham, pp. 12, 22, 28, 82; Stevens, p. 86. A close-up photo of such a utensil appears on p. 215 of *Echoes of Glory: Arms and Equipment of the Confederacy* (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1991.) The same page has a view of a Texas Brigade mess that features both a spider and a mess pan (the latter apparently in use as a washtub.)

[65] Stevens, p. ?

[66] Stevens, p. 15; National Archives, Record Group 109, Compiled Service Records for 4th Texas Infantry, receipt in file of Lt. J. Syd Spivey; Worsham, p. 28.

[67] Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 68, 236; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 26; *Arms and Equipment of the Confederacy*, p. 214.

[68] Fletcher, pp. 60, 64; Polley, *Charming Nellie*, p. 106; Wiley, p. 104; Parker, p. 320; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 24.

[69] National Archives, Record Group 109, Company Books, Co. H, 54th Virginia Infantry. CF. Stevens, p. 15; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 24; Coxe, p. 291.

[70] Worsham, p. 91; Jennings C. Wise, *The Long Arm of Lee* (Richmond, VA: Owens Pub. Co., 1988), II, p. 709; Lasswell, p. 171; Foote, p. 241; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 154.

[71] Stevens, p 74; Ward, pp. 345-46; Foote, p. 241.

[72] *ORWR*, Series I, vol. 39, pt 1, p. 178; Kautz, *Customs of Service Non-commissioned*, p. 269.

[73] Worsham, p 123; Lasswell, p. 95; Foote, pp. 240-41; McCarthy, *Detailed Minutia*, p. 24; Polley, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, p. 275-7; Coxe, p. 292; Fletcher, p. 16.

[74] Fletcher, p. 54; Stevens, pp. 36, 85;Hunter, pp. 11-12; Coxe, p. 292; Blackford, pp. 286-87.

[75] This article has intentionally focused on the Confederacy. However, lest it be assumed that Union food, at least, was boring, consider the following comprehensive list of items issued by the Union commissary during the war: pork, bacon, hams, joles [sic], beef cattle, fresh beef, salt beef, dried beef, beef tongue, roasted whole beef, mutton, pickled fish, dried fish, flour, soft bread, hard bread, corn meal, rye flour, crackers, Horsford's commercial bread ration, bean flour, pinola [a Southwestern flour of ground corn and ground beans], peas, rice, beans, hominy, desiccated (dried) potatoes, desiccated mixed vegetables, fresh potatoes, fresh onions, fresh turnips, fresh beets, fresh carrots, fresh tomatoes, fresh cabbage, fresh beans, fresh corn, green coffee, roasted coffee, and roasted and ground coffee, extract of coffee (instant coffee),tea, roasted and ground rye, dried apples, dried peaches, fresh apples, fresh peaches, fresh cranberries, molasses and sirups [sic], lime juice, pickles, kraut, curried cabbage, canned fruits, canned jellies and preserves, canned vegetables, canned concentrated milk, canned condensed milk, canned meats, canned oysters, whiskey, ale and beer, wine and brandy, brown sugar, white sugar, vinegar, salt, pepper and tobacco. US, War Dept, Subsistence Dept, *Annual Report for 1867* (Washington: GP O, 1868), pp. 8-9.

[76] *CS Regulations* 1863, p. 21; Kautz, *Customs of Service Non-commissioned*, pp. 143-44, 256; *Campfires and Camp Cooking*, p. 4.