**17th South Carolina Infantry**

**Military Re-enactor Handbook**



***THE REBEL YELL***

***None of us have ever heard it.   
None of us ever will.   
There's no one left who can give it.   
Tho you may hear its echo still.***

***You may hear it up near Manassas,   
and down around Gaines Mill.   
In December it echoes in Fredricksburg,   
in May around Chancellorsville.***

***It's the "pibroch of Southern fealty".   
It's a Comanche brave's battle cry.   
It's an English huntsman's call to the hounds.   
It's a pig farmer's call to the sty.***

***It's a high-pitched trilling falsetto.   
It's the yip of a dog in flight.   
It's the scream of a wounded panther.   
It's the shriek of the wind in the night.***

***It was yelled when the boys flushed a rabbit.   
It was passed man to man in the ranks.   
It was cheered when they saw their leaders.   
It was screamed when they whipped the Yanks.***

***But none of us will ever hear it.   
Tho some folks mimic it well.   
No soul alive can truly describe   
the sound of the Rebel Yell.***

Welcome to the 17th South Carolina Infantry! We are glad you decided to join up with us and are interested in learning about the American Civil War! You are either new to re-enacting or joining us from another unit, either way, this handbook will serve to guide you on your journey to becoming fully outfitted as a Confederate Infantryman!

First off- quick note- We are portraying the American Civil War, not the wild west or some other period in history. The American Civil War occurred from 1861-1865, although clothing and equipment can pre-date the Civil War as early as the 1820's, as long as it does not post-date the war. The Civil War occurred during a period known as the Victorian Era (1837-1901). A unit member will be happy to guide you in purchasing/making period-correct equipment, uniforms, and items of the Civil War era. You should consult the Unit Coordinator before making purchases to make sure you are not getting the wrong item for a South Carolina unit, and are also not over-paying for your gear. The Unit Coordinator will make sure you are accurate at an affordable price.

HISTORY: 17th South Carolina Infantry, Company C- Broad River Light Infantry

Under the Command of General Evan's and the Tramp Brigade

**Evan's Tramp Brigade**

In Civil War fighting the basic tactical formation on the battlefield was the brigade. Made up of three or more regiments, the brigade was the formation without the tactical plan that attacked and defended required positions.

Evans’ or the “Tramp” Brigade — Evans, from the name of its most famous commander, the controversial Nathan “Shanks” Evans, and “Tramp” from the fact that this unit saw service in no less than three major theaters during the Civil War (they "tramped" or marched everywhere!)

The brigade saw service in the South Carolina/North Carolina coast at two different times in service with the Army of Northern Virginia twice, and even service in Mississippi as part of the Army of Tennessee during the Vicksburg Campaign.

8,300 men, 10 percent of South Carolina’s contribution to the Confederate cause, served in Evans’ Brigade. Moreover, that service was often in some of the most critical parts of the war.

The 17th South Carolina Infantry was mustered in early 1862 for the Defense of Charleston Harbor . The unit is one of only a few units to make it through the entire Civil War without being disbanded or re-organized under new command. The 17th SC saw many battles throughout Maryland, Virginia, North & South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The Unit surrendered its command to the Federal Army, along with General Robert E. Lee on April 9th, 1865 at Appomatox Court House in Virginia. See the Unit Website for a complete list of battles the 17th SC participated in.

The majority of the 17th South Carolina Infantry were men and boys from nearby Plantations, Charleston businesses, law firms, political offices, banks, blockade runners, etc. We are portraying Well-To-Do families from the Charleston area in South Carolina. The majority of this unit (and most of the Brigade) had or were currently serving in the United States military and had or was attending The Citadel (the South's version of West Point military academy) in Charleston. Keeping in mind that men in the 1800's DID NOT attend college without first having recommendations from well-to-do families, politicians, and military acquaintances. You had to "know somebody" to go to college during the Civil War. This meant only the finest, smartest, most upstanding, well-off men were granted admission to The Citadel. College was not like today, where anyone can go to college just by paying tuition. Thus, the 17th South Carolina Infantry was comprised of very talented military officers from the Citadel, and very competant enlisted men from the Charleston surreounding country side. Our men were not just "yeoman farmers or sharecroppers"; our men were true patriotic soldiers.

Since we are not a "rag-tag band of rebels" (like units in Texas and Florida were considered), Men are expected to behave as they are portraying Southern Gentry. In other words, you are to be a Gentleman at all times, especially in the presence of ladies.

**Basic Gentlemen Etiquette:**

1) Always tip your hat when you pass a lady. This is a polite way of saying hello. You can say hello, good morning, good evening, or comment on the ladie's dress or hat. If you want to see girls smile and swoon, comment on how pretty she looks.

2) Always offer the lady your elbow when walking. If you are walking around with our unit and you do not have a wife or girlfriend with you, then you need to offer your elbow to one of our ladie's that do not have a man. The reason you give the lady your elbow is to prevent her from tripping and ruining her very expensive dress. Also, a woman was considered a whore if she was not escorted by a man (even if that man was not her husband or boyfriend, she needs to be escorted).

3) Give the lady your hand. If she is stepping up or down a step, or from a chair, give her a hand to make sure she does not trip and ruin that dress!

4) Watch the swearing and vulgarities in front of women and children. Watch the drinking too!

5) If you are not wearing you wool jacket, then you NEED to be wearing your Vest! A man's shirt was considered his underwear (what he wore to bed) and needed to be covered with a Vest or Jacket in the prescense of ladies so as not to be vulgar and show her your underwear. Since women are in our camp at all times, you should have your vest on at all times if you don't have your jacket on.

6) Men- you should be hauling water and firewood for the ladies! They should not be lifting anything heavy. You should also be chopping the firewood so the ladies can cook you dinner! (You want to eat, don't you?) The Officer's and NCO's will delegate water and wood chores among enlisted men.

Remember, if you take care of the ladies, they will take care of you by cooking for you, washing your dishes, sewing you clothes/buttons, and bandaging you when you are hurt.

**General Rules for the Unit:**

1) You must be 16 years or older to carry a black powder gun (Michigan & Federal Law)

2) If you do not have a rifle, you may be asked to carry a flag, a drum, a fife, or act as medical corps for the unit, in order to have a bigger prescense on the field. Women may also dress as male soldiers and go on the field to increase our unit field size. If you have problems with women on the field, then this is the wrong unit for you. We do not discriminate in any way.

3) The Unit Coordinator, having been to medical school, gets the FINAL CALL on all sickness and injuries. If Sarah says you are not going out on the field due to sickness or injury, then you must obey. Failure to listen to the Unit Coordinator will result in expulsion from the unit. We also have 2 nurses and 2 EMT's in the unit. So arguing over an injury is not an option. Your safety and health at an event is our primary concern and we will take care of you as best as we can. Please report any and all medical conditions (however minor) to the Unit Coordinator.

4) We all help each other put tents up and tear down camp. If we all work together, the faster we can set-up camp and tear-down camp. We work as a unit. You may be asked to help with random tasks, please be curteous and lend a hand.

5) ONLY Officer's and NCO's should have pistols or swords. All Corporals and Privates are only to carry a rifle.

6) Only Civil War period correct items shall be carried. No cowboys, Wild West, SASS, pirates, renassiance, WW2, etc. items will be tolerated. (Exception: modern military black leather combat boots/jungle boots worn under the pants in place of the crappy leather brogans because they are more comfortable and are safer to wear) If you are unsure about an item, consult the Unit Coordinator.

7) Visit the unit website often for info updates: http://17thscinfantry.tripod.com

8) Meals: The website under Company Mess will tell you whether you need to bring your own food to events, if Sarah is cooking, or if food vendors are on site. If Sarah is cooking, you need to pitch in at least $5 dollars to cover her cost of feeding you at the event. Most events though are Fend-for-Yourself or there will be a dinner provided by the hosting units or food vendors on site at the event, look for the info in the unit newsletter or on the website.

9) Cameras: If you have a LCD (liquid crystal display) on your camera or cell phone, you may want to leave it at home, or keep it in camp away from the battlefield. During the battle, the concussion from the canons can ruin your LCD screen and make the camera worthless.

**Commands- These are a few commands you may want to familiarize yourself with before attending an event to make yourself more comfortable in the ranks.**

**Assembling the Company:**

Ten minutes before the company is to fall in, the drummer will play first call at the head of the company street.  “First Call” may also be yelled byt the 1st Sergeant,as many of the men are not familiar with the beat. First Call means you have about 10 minutes (sometimes less) and need to get your uniform on, your gear on, fill your canteen, and be ready to Fall In. Second Call will be given, meaning you have less than 2 minutes to Fall In. As we say in the unit, move your butt!

When the company is ready with gear on, these commands are given by the 1st Sgt and Captain :

1) Fall in

2) Attention COMPANY

3) Right, DRESS

4) In each rank, COUNT TWOS

5) In place, REST

6) To the rear open order- MARCH (for weapon inspection)

7) Close order- MARCH (for weapons inspection)

**Roll Call:**

1) The men fall in, right dress, are counted off, then IN PLACE, REST

2) Attention to Roll

3) Roll is taken and then dismissal

**Close Order Drill Commands (you will hear these on the field**

1) By Company into line, MARCH

2) To the right by files into line, MARCH

3) Right (Left) wheel, MARCH

4) At the right (left) oblique, MARCH

5) In two ranks form company, MARCH

6) In four ranks form company, MARCH

WHEN ON THE FIELD:

1) The Viveandiere (and sometimes her Ice Angels) will come around with water and ice in a bucket. You should always take a drink or at least a piece of ice when she comes by, since it is very easy to dehydrate when wearing a wool uniform. The Vive is medically trained and will tend to you should you suffer heat exhustion or other injuries.

2) Always listen for orders from the Captain/Lieutenant and the First Sergeant. The Viveandiere may also give orders to ensure your safety, so please listen to all orders given.

3) If you run out of powder or caps, the Viveandiere will bring your more powder or caps if you yell for more.

4) Always keep your rifle pointed in a safe direction. Make sure your half-cock works. Should you have a firearm problem on the field, give your rifle to one of the officer's or to the Vive, and they will properly clear your weapon and ensure it is safe for you to return to the ranks.

5) Pay attention to where you are firing. You should shoot straight when the enemy is far away, but once the enemy gets within 50 feet of our ranks, you need to fire on an elevation so you do not give the enemy powder burns and injury anyone.

6) As with real firearms, always assume your rifle is loaded. Do not look down the barrel, do not point it at anyone, do not drop the rifle, do not horse around.

7) Most of all, have fun! This is a hobby, we are trying to educate the general public about the Southern perspective of the Civil War. We are also providing a Live Outdoor Theatre performance...so do not be shy, ham it up! Hoop and hollar! Give the Rebel Yell! Call out Billy Yank and taunt him! Have fun and enjoy yourself in camp and on the field. If you have any questions, please ask the Unit Coordinator or the Captain.

**TOOLS OF THE TRADE: OUTFITTING A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER**

**Outfitting the Civil War Soldier**

(1Y) = 1st year purchase

(2Y) = 2nd year purchase

(Optional) = Not necessary to purchase,

but can improve your impression

\*\* Need to purchase for every event

**Items for the**

**Confederate Soldier**

**Shell Jacket (1Y) Kepi/Slouch Hat (1Y)**

-Richmond Depot Type II -Richmond Gray Kepi or

-Block "I" or Black, Gray, Straw or Dark Brown

South Carolina State Seal Slouch Hat

or CSA buttons South Carolina HatPin (Optional)

**Confederate Trousers (1Y) Civilian Shirt (1Y)**

-Richmond Depot Pattern -3 or 4-button (wood, tin, bone,

-Confederate Gray, Richmond Gray galvanized rubber)

-Jean Wool or Cotton (if allergic to wool) -Pull-over with placket

-Or- Yankee Sky Blue Pants -Cotton, solid, thin-stripe, or -Period Bracers (suspenders) plaid/check in color

**Vest (1Y) Waist Belt (1Y)**

-Military or Civilian style -Lead buckle CSA, SC, or Palmetto

-Cotton or Wool -black leather belt to fit over uniform

**Boots/Brogans (1Y) Socks (1Y)**

-US 1851 Jefferson Bootees -Gray Wool or Cotton

-heel plates (optional) -regular socks fine, as long as

-Or- Modern Black Leather they will come up over your boot

Military Combat Boots- Lace up so your feet don't rub (extra pair)

**Rifle (1Y) Bayonet (1Y)**

- .58 Caliber 3-Banded - Enfield

- British Enfield Rifled-Musket -British Pattern Leather Scabbard

-Rifle Strap/Sling russet color or canvas with Frog

**Cartridge Box (1Y) Cap Pouch (1Y)**

-1855 .58 Caliber Pattern -1850 Pattern

-black leather -black leather

**Cartridge Box Sling (1Y) \*\*Black Powder**

-Black with rough side turned out -2F (FF) Black Powder

-US Eagle Breast Plate -Goex or Black Elephant Brand

-SC or Palmetto Tree Breast Plate -NO smokeless or pyrodex (bad!!!)

-Most gun stores carry (have to ask)

**Canteen (1Y) \*\*Musket Caps (NOT pistol caps)**

-1858 US regulation Pattern -German Dynamite Nobel

-Gray or Brown jean wool -or Remington

-Hemp rope or Cotton string -Size #11 or #1081

-or Canvas strap - NO CCI Brand (bad!!!)

-Avoid "bulls-eye" pattern - Dixie Gun Works item (#IA0105)

**Haversack (Optional)**

-Black or canvas colored

-Painted with oil based paint

-Early or Mid War Pattern If you are unsure of an item or its price or whether our unit had that item, then please consult with the Unit Coordinator before purchasing an item. We do not wear cavalry or artillery items as we are an infantry unit. We are portraying veterans of the Citadel and thus our uniforms are specific to our unit. Ask before you buy!

**Tent (2Y)**

-A-Frame

-Max size= 9'x7'x7'

-or Shelter/Dog tent

**Plate & Cup (2Y) Knapsack (Optional)**

-Tin -Single bag for Confederate

-Lead-free soldering -Double bag for Federal

-US Army regulation

**Silverware (2Y)**

-19th Century knife, spoon, and fork

-3-tined fork

**Blankets (2Y)**

-Wool or quilted (any color)

-Gray, Black, Brown kersey or jean wool

**Poncho (2Y)**

-Black galvanized rubber

-no zippers or snaps

SUTLER ROW: Where to purchase your gear (Our favorites marked with \*\*\*)



C & D JARNAGIN CO. \*\*\*CEDAR CREEK SUTLER

<http://www.jarnaginco.com/> <http://www.cedarcreeksupplydepot.com/>

CLEARWATER HATS \*\*\*FALL CREEK SUTLERY

<http://www.clearwaterhats.com/> <http://www.fcsutler.com/>

QUARTERMASTER SHOP S & S SUTLER

<http://www.quartermastershop.com/> <http://www.ss-sutler.com/>

ZIMMERMAN ALLEN’S LAUREL HILL SUTLERY

<http://www.edsmart.com/jz/index.htm> <http://www.civilwarsutlery.com/>

BATTLEDRUM SUTLER \*\*\*BLOCKADE RUNNER

<http://mgsutlers.1hwy.com/> <http://www.blockaderunner.com/>

BRIGADE SUTLERY C & C SUTLERY

<http://brigadesutler.com/> <http://www.ccsutlery.com/>

\*\*\*COON RIVER MERCANTILE DIRTY BILLY HATS

<http://www.coonriver.com/index.htm> <http://www.dirtybillyshats.com/>

\*\*\*DIXIE GUN WORKS DIXIE LEATHER WORKS

<http://www.dixiegun.com/> <http://www.dlwleather.com/>

FAIR OAKS SUTLER FUGAWEE BOOTS

<http://www.fairoakssutler.com/> <http://www.fugawee.com/>

JAMES COUNTRY MERCANTILE MERCURY SUPPLY COMPANY

<http://www.jamescountry.com/> <http://www.mercurysutler.com/>

OLD SUTLER JOHN R & K SUTLER

<http://www.oldsutlerjohn.com/> <http://www.sutlery.com/perlstore/html/>

RIVER JUNCTION TRADE CO. SUTLER.NET

<http://www.riverjunction.com/> <http://www.sutler.net/>