

Marking your stuff...

## *How the soldiers did it.*

by Archibald Neill

You've had a tough drill, it was hot, it was humid... now you're back in camp stripping off your accoutrements and dropping them in a pile with your pards. Later you're called to fall in for your next detail so you and your pards sort through the pile looking for your own stuff. What a pain! Why isn't "my stuff" marked? Why not, indeed!

In the Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1861, there are some instructions for marking arms and equipment, but they're not real specific. A little more detail is found in Kautz's Customs of Service, but again, he's not specific.

Starting with the 1861 Revised Regulations, Article XII, Section 85 states, "Every article, excepting arms and accoutrements, belonging to the regiment, is to be marked with the number and name of the regiment." Section 86 goes on to say, "Such articles as belong to companies are to be marked with the letter of the company, and the number and name of the regiment; and such as belong to men, with their individual numbers, and the letter of the company." Article XIII, Section 90 states, "The captain will cause the men of the company to be numbered, in a regular series, including the non-commissioned officers, and divided into four squads, each to be put under the charge of a non-commissioned officer."

From reading these sections we know everyone in the company is supposed to have a number which will not be changed during their term in service. In "Customs of Service," under duties of the First Sergeant, Section 441 says, "These duties are materially facilitated by

numbering the men in the company as nearly as possible in alphabetical order; and a man should not be permitted to change his number as long as he remains with the company. (Reg. 90.)"

Now we know our equipment is supposed to be identified, but where do we put the information? Article XIII, Section 110 tells about knapsacks. "All knapsacks will be painted black. Those for the artillery will be marked in the centre of the cover with the number of the regiment only, in figures on one inch and one half in length, of the character called full face, with yellow paint. Those for the infantry will be marked in the same way, in white paint. Those for the ordnance will be marked with two cannon, crossing; the cannon to be seven and a half inches in length, in yellow paint, to resemble those on the cap. The knapsack straps will be black." "Section 111. The knapsacks will also be marked upon the inner side with the letter of the company and the number of the soldier, on such part as may be readily observed at inspections."

Section 112. Haversacks will be marked upon the flap with the number and name of the regiment, the letter of the company, and the number of the soldier, in black letters and figures. (This section apparently refers to the early war issue cloth or canvas haversacks which were white. Black letters and figures would be very difficult to read on black oilcloth.)

W. Horn, of the 19th Indiana, put together a sheet for his pards showing locations for the identification marks on most of the equipment. His list was put together after talking with several collectors who had relics with ID marks on

them. As Mr. Horn wrote, "They commonly listed their name, usually first initial and full surname, company letter, and their company number. For example W. HORN A-7. This is read W. Horn, company A, seventh man.

Although the regs don't say anything about putting the men's name on the equipment it stands to reason the men would personalize anything they could with their names as well as the regimental and company designations.

On the larger pieces of equipment where regimental designation was listed, such as the knapsack, you might want to leave identification off so you can fit into almost any company at any event.

The drawings shown are based on sketches provided by Mr. Horn. The sizes and positions of the lettering were provided by a number of collectors, as mentioned earlier.

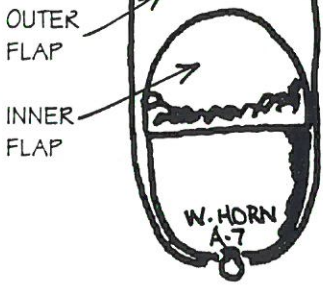
The markings are painted in black, on the back side of your poncho or gum blanket, and on white haversacks. Other markings are painted in white, or yellow for artillery. Any non-gloss hobby paint or ink will work according to Mr. Horn.\*

Marking your equipment in this fashion will make it easily distinguishable from your pards, and during the war, it also helped discourage theft.

*\*Tandy Leather Crafts, a more-or-less nationwide crafts company, has special paints formulated to adhere to leather goods. Check your Yellow Pages for a shop near you. They are also a good source for leather for use in making goods for our hobby. -ED.*

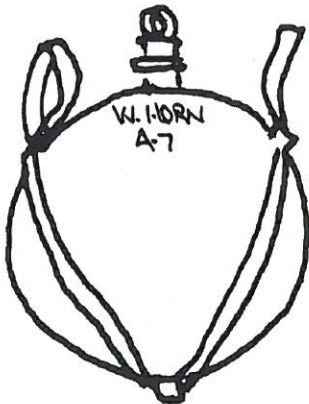
LOCATIONS PROVIDED BY  
MANUALS AND VARIOUS  
COLLECTORS

CAP  
POUCH



LETTERS APPROX. 1/4 INCH

CANTEEN



LETTERS APPROX. 3/4 INCH

KNAPSACK



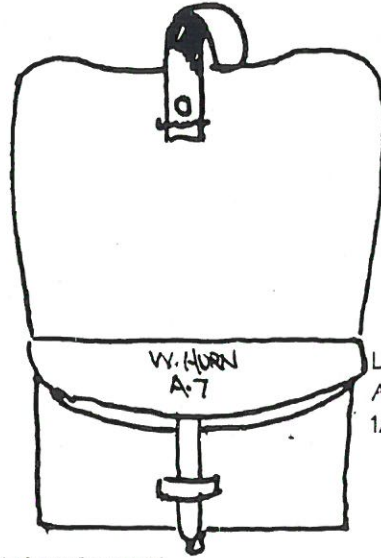
LETTERING ON BACK OF KNAPSACK  
1-1/2 INCHES HIGH - REG. DESIGNATION  
NAME AND COMPANY LETTER & NUMBER  
GO INSIDE OUTER FLAP.

CARTRIDGE BOX  
SLING

MARK ON  
BACK  
(ROUGH  
LEATHER  
SIDE)  
LETTERS  
APPROX.  
3/4 INCH

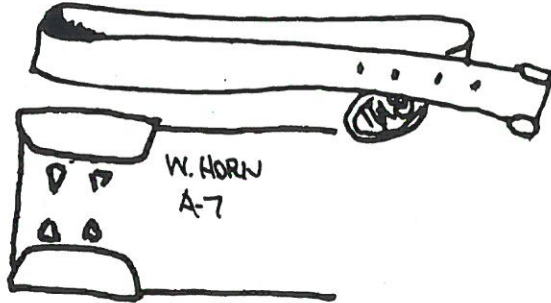


CARTRIDGE BOX



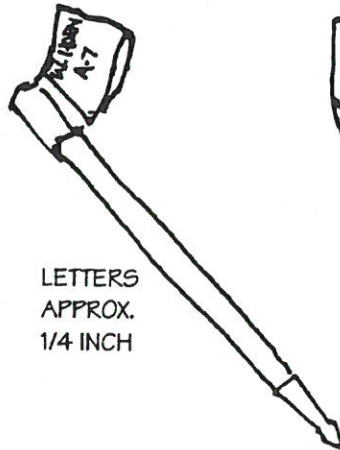
LETTERS  
APPROX.  
1/2 INCH

WAIST BELT



LETTERS APROX. 1/2 INCH

SPRINGFIELD PATTERN



LETTERS  
APPROX.  
1/4 INCH

ENFIELD FROG



LETTERS  
APPROX.  
1/4 INCH

GUM BLANKET -  
1 INCH BLACK  
LETTERS IN CORNER  
OF CANVAS SIDE

RIFLE SLING - 1/2  
INCH LETTERS ON  
ROUGH LEATHER SIDE