

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

Civil War Reenacting

By **Clint Johnson Resources**

If you can read only one book

| Author | <i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year. |
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| R. Lee Hadden | <i>Reliving the Civil War: A Re-enactors Handbook</i> . Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1999. |

Books and Articles

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|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Civil War News</i> | <i>Civil War News</i> is a monthly newspaper that covers news about battlefield preservation, and reenacting. It is particularly valuable for its calendar of upcoming events, and book reviews. Their website is: www.CivilWarNews.com |
| <i>Camp Chase Gazette</i> | <i>Camp Chase Gazette</i> is a how-to magazine for authentic reenactors. It publishes articles such as how to cut and pack rations of raw pork, how to properly do bayonet drill, calendars of events, and how to contact different reenactment units. Their website is: www.campchase.com) |
| <i>The Citizen's Companion</i> | <i>The Citizens' Companion</i> focuses on civilian reenacting and is also published by the same company that publishes Camp Chase Gazette. Their website is: http://www.citizenscompanion.com/ |

Sutlers

There are scores of sutlers who operate regionally and nationally. The ones below have been in business for years and may be considered the mainstays of the hobby. Still, the best plan for new reenactors is to join a unit and ask for help from the old hands in selecting uniforms and equipment. Do not buy from sutlers on-line then select which unit you want to join. Most units have a list of acceptable gear and approved sutlers. Buy at a reenactment or with the help of an experience unit member.

| Sutler | Website and description |
|------------------------------|---|
| Fall Creek Sutlery | http://www.fcsutler.com/ A general sutler. |
| The Regimental Quartermaster | http://www.regtqm.com/ A general sutler. |
| North State Haberdashery | http://www.nshaberdashery.com/ A general sutler. |
| Blockade Runner | http://www.blockaderunner.com/ A general sutler. |
| C&D Jarnigan | http://www.jarnaginco.com/ The granddaddy of all Civil War sutlers started outfitting reenactors in the mid-1970s. |
| B. & B. Tart | http://www.bnbtart.com Specializes in fabric and uniforms. |
| C. J. Dailey | http://www.cjdaley.com Specializes in very authentic uniforms. |
| Dirty Billy's Hats | http://www.dirtybillyshats.com/ Fine handmade hats. |
| Clearwater Hats | http://www.clearwaterhats.com Another fine hat maker. |

Web Resources

| URL | Name and description |
|---|---|
| http://www.authentic-campaigner.com/ | Authentic Campaigner is a blog dedicated to events, impressions, goods, etc. that appeal to campaigners. Reenactors wanting to get as close as possible to how the soldiers lived will use this resource. |
| http://www.civilwartraveler.com/ | Civil War Traveler lists a variety of events, including reenactments, searchable by state so newcomers can see some reenactments in person and talk to unit members. |
| www.civilwar-reenacting.com/ | Civil War Reenacting makes an effort to list |

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| | the websites of reenacting units, but, as might be expected, many units are not listed here. The website also lists a number of sutler websites. |
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Other Sources

Scholars

| Name | Email |
|---------------|--|
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Précis

While military reenacting is popular in many countries and covering many wars, Civil War Reenacting has been a growing hobby since it began in the 1960's spurred on by the Centennial. The 125th anniversary of the start of the war in 1986 saw reenacting turn into a serious hobby. A love of history, a desire to better understand what Civil War era soldiers and civilians experienced, the pleasure of camping with friends and cooking over an open fire all explain why reenactors follow this hobby. Reenacting units are organized in companies and regiments by reenactors from the same geographic area, much as Civil War companies and regiments were organized. New reenactors start as privates and promotion to non commissioned officer or officer status depends on passing tests and demonstrating an ability to command larger bodies of men in maneuvers on the field. Reenacting gear includes the uniform, accoutrements, a musket, shoes, hat and more, all purchased from sutlers, merchants specializing in reproduction products for reenactors. Muskets are real guns and fire a full powder charge but no bullet. The basic costs of outfitting an infantryman are between \$1,500 and \$2,000 which rises to \$2,500 to \$3,000 with the purchase of tents, ponchos, cooking gear, overcoats and other additional gear. Most reenacting units are equipped to act as either Federal or Confederate troops in order to be able to balance numbers at reenacting events. There are three types of reenactors; mainstreamers who do not fit the Civil War image of young thin soldiers and bring extra gear for comfort, campaigners who pride themselves in living rough in the open and achieving authenticity and stitch counters who pay attention to details of the history of uniforms and equipment and who generally maneuver with either mainstreamers or campaigners. Reenacting events come in varying categories. Mega events involve thousands of reenactors. The largest event was the 135th Gettysburg reenactment which involved 15,000 reenactors. Invitation events are smaller with limited numbers of participants making them easier to manage. Immersion events are small reenactments where reenactors carry everything with them with no resupply from vehicles. Focused events try to recreate parts of battles. Living histories take place at the actual battlefield by

invitation from the National Park Service. The hobby of Civil War reenacting continues to attract participants and spectators who care about Civil War history and the 19th century people who lived it.
