

Photo 1



Original Caption: Soldier on picket, Petersburg lines

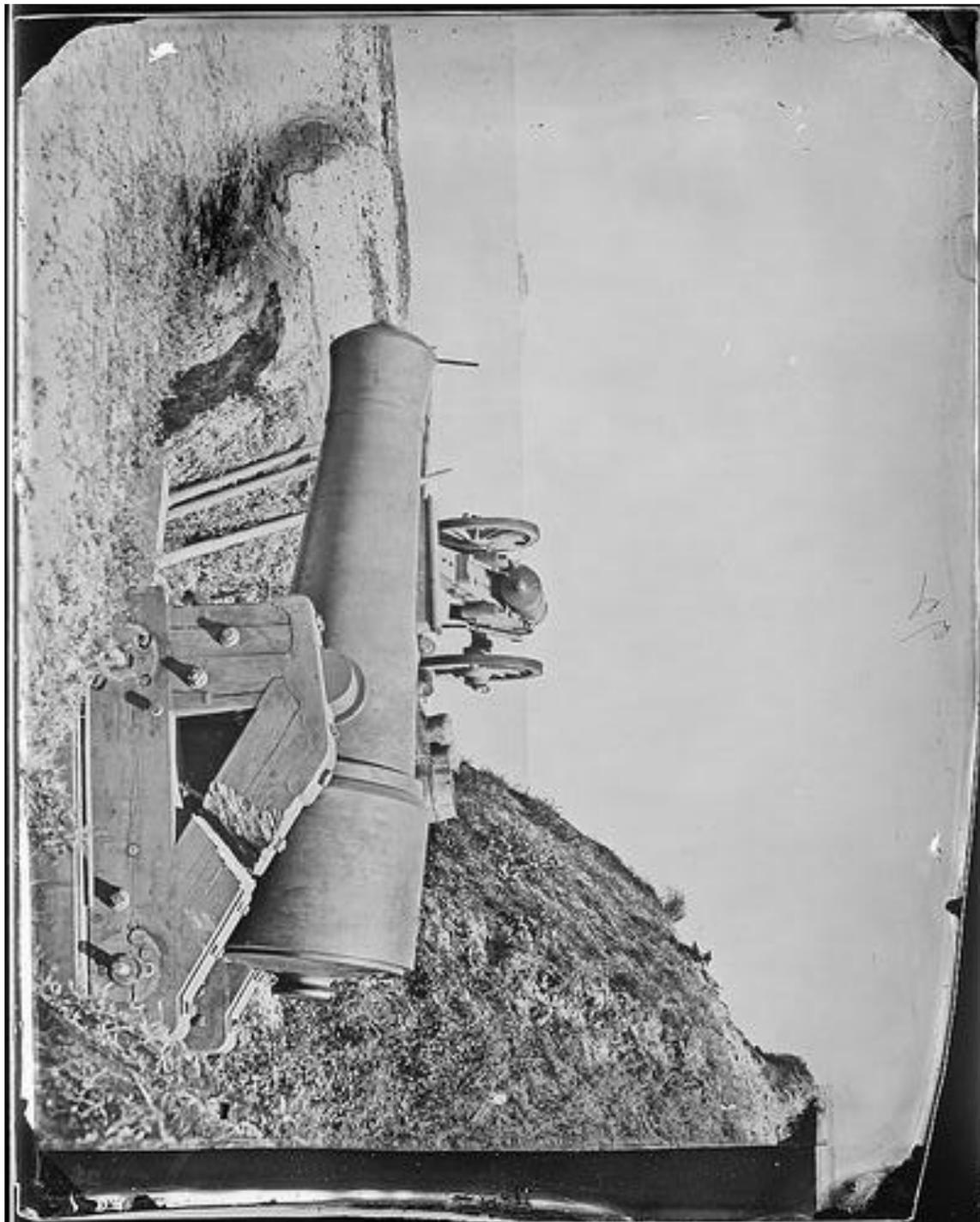
Photographer: Brady, Mathew, 1823 (ca.) - 1896

Coverage Dates: ca. 1860 - ca. 1865

Persistent URL: <http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/action/ExternalIdSearch?id=524813>

Repository: Still Picture Records Section, Special Media Archives Services Division (NWCS-S), National Archives at College Park, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD, 20740-6001.

Photo 2



Original Caption: Distant view of Fort Sumter, 1865

Photographer: Brady, Mathew, 1823 (ca.) - 1896

Coverage Dates: ca. 1860 - ca. 1865

Persistent URL: <http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/action/ExternalIdSearch?id=524491>

Repository: Still Picture Records Section, Special Media Archives Services Division (NWCS-S), National Archives at College Park, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD, 20740-6001.

Photo 3



Original Caption: Battery (squad) on drill

Photographer: Brady, Mathew, 1823 (ca.) - 1896

Coverage Dates: ca. 1860 - ca. 1865

Persistent URL: <http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/action/ExternalIdSearch?id=524696>

Repository: Still Picture Records Section, Special Media Archives Services Division (NWCS-S), National Archives at College Park, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD, 20740-6001.

Letter 1

Camp near Corinth, Oct. 18th /62

Dear Father,

...

... As at Shiloh, our guns were the first to open on the advancing enemy, and unlike some batteries who have paid reporters and get praised accordingly we never limbered to the rear without the General's orders.

Let the Newspapers go, the official report will set us all right. And now I suppose you would like to hear an account of my second battle.

My remembrance of it extends to these items. Country heavily wooded, and intersected by chains of hills, every one of which we defended as long as possible and then fell back to the next, the booming of the guns and bursting of shell, the roar of the rifles and "spat," "spat," of the bullets around us, men limping to the rear or carried by comrades, with here and there a skulker hurrying out of the reach of the musical lead. All this I remember and also that when our gun was heated it was mighty hard work to ram down the charge, which was my duty as I was No. 1. Nothing is as exciting as working a gun in real action. The sound of the discharge almost raises us off our feet with delight. Before the smoke lifts from the muzzle I dash in, dip the brush in the sponge bucket and brush out the bore using plenty of water, then seize the sponge stuff and sponge it out dry. No. 2 then inserts the cartridge which I ram home, then the shot, shell or canister, whichever it may be and it is sent home, then I spring out beside the wheel and fall flat, "Ready" shouts the Gunner, No. 3 (who has been serving vent while I loaded) now pricks the cartridge, No. 4 jumps in and inserts a friction primer, to which his lanyard is attached, in the vent, springs outside the wheel and straightens his lanyard. The Gunner gives a turn or two to the elevating screw, taps on the trail and has it carried round a little, and then, "Fire" "Take that,---- you" says No. 4 as the gun rushes back with the recoil. The other numbers run her forward at the command "By hand to the front" while I load. While you have been reading this description we would fire 3 or 4 shots, so rapidly do we work.

The sound of the gun is most exhilarating [sic], it fills us with enthusiasm, and we would die rather than desert her. However, you probably do not understand these feelings, and so think it all foolishness.

...

Hoping that ill-health [sic] is not the cause of your long silence, I remain your affectionate son,
Tom

Author: Thomas D. Christie

Date: October 18, 1862

Location: Corinth, Mississippi

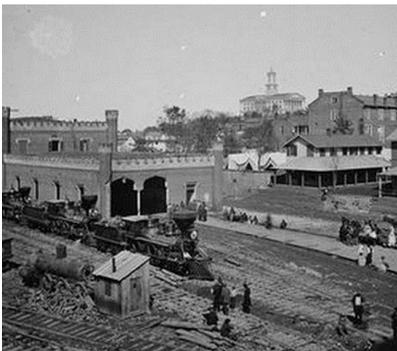
Addressee: James C. Christie

From: <http://www.mnhs.org/library/Christie/letters/transcripts/td621018.html>

Made Available by the Minnesota Historical Society

Reading 1

Railroads Critical in the Civil War



The Civil War is renowned for the introduction and employment of many new weapons, including rifled artillery, machine guns and submarines. To this list should also be added railroad weapons which were the predecessor of modern armored fighting vehicles. During the war, railroads were second only to waterways in providing logistical support for the armies. They were also vital to the economies of the divided nation. A great deal has been written about railroads in the war.

Large military forces were of course the worst danger to railroads. Because they supplied the units that were on campaign, railroads were often major objectives – an army without supplies cannot operate for long.

In special situations, railroads were used as rams. Troops might start a locomotive down a track with a full head of steam to damage an enemy train or railroad facilities or to attack troops. Freight trains might also deceive an enemy. A train might run back and forth into an area tricking scouts into reporting that the enemy was reinforcing his position, when in fact he was leaving. While trains might serve as artillery bait, they could also transport heavy guns to the battlefield. Also useful in railroad warfare were armed trains, which as their name implies, carried combat ready troops and at times artillery

Belligerents also used other vehicles on the railroads. Handcars-small but utilitarian vehicles-were used to inspect rails, transport important personnel and evacuate the wounded. They also helped troops escape superior forces and reconnoiter in fluid tactical situations. Some handcars were large enough to transport several men, including guards and were a valuable mode of transport if a locomotive was unavailable in one instance; a large hand car carried a 10 pounder Parrott gun to duel with a much larger Confederate railroad battery.

Civil War railroad operations were characterized by the widespread use of locomotives and rolling stock to support armies tactically as well as logistically. Americans set precedents for a variety of modern armored fighting vehicles, including armored railroad cars, armored trains, railroad batteries and other railroad weapons. Moreover, tanks, armored personnel carriers engineer vehicles and self-propelled artillery can also claim American railroad weapons as their conceptual ancestors.

Reading 2

Inventions and Gadgets used by Civil War Soldiers



Civil War soldiers, like their successors in the First and Second World Wars were endlessly resourceful. They had to be.

One of the first products of their genius which I recall was a combination **knife-fork- and spoon** arrangement, which was peddled through the state camping grounds in great numbers and variety. Of course every man must have one. I still have in my possession the remnants of a water filterer in which I have invested after enlistment. There was a metallic mouth-piece at one end of a small gutta-percha tube, which latter was about fifteen inches long. At the other end of the tube was a suction chamber an inch long by a half inch in diameter with the end perforated and containing a piece of backing as a filter.

There was another invention that must have been sufficiently popular to have paid the manufacturer a fair rate on his investment and that was the **steel-armor** enterprise. They were willing to go to war and fight as never man fought before if they could only be insured against bodily harm. Well, the iron tailors saw and appreciated the situation and sufferings of this class of men and came to the rescue with a vest of steel armor.

Then there were fancy **patent-leather haversacks**, with two or three compartments for the assortment of rations, which Uncle Sam was expected to furnish. But those who invested in them were somewhat disgusted at a little later stage of their service, when they were ordered to throw away all such "high toned" trappings and adopt the regulation pattern of painted cloth. This was a bag about a foot square with a broad strap from the shoulder into which soldiers soon learned to bundle all their foot and table furniture which....after a day's hard march were always found in such a delightful hodge-podge.

*Excerpt Taken from John D. Billings, whose **Hardtack and Coffee** is one of the most entertaining of all Civil War books, was a member of the 20th Massachusetts battery of light artillery.*