

Notes on Uniforms, Clothing, and Arms at the Battle of Wilson's Creek

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Western Army

McCulloch's Confederate brigade

Third Louisiana Infantry

Each company wore uniforms supplied by its home community, but no sources have been found describing their color or style. The assumption that they wore gray is based on Sigel's postwar claim that he confused the Third Louisiana with the First Iowa during the battle. The Pelican Rifles company wore a brass buckle emblazoned with a Louisiana pelican. They carried the Model 1855 Springfield rifle. Some companies carried Mexican War vintage Model 1841 Mississippi Rifles. The rest were equipped with smoothbore muskets, both percussion and flintlock.

South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment

Each company wore a different style and color of uniform, supplied by its home community. Company B, the Rusk County Cavalry, wore black coats and vests, brown jeans, black hats, and black boots. One company possessed Colt's revolving rifles. Others possessed shotguns, .54 Model 1842 single-shot pistols, and presumably other types of weapons.

First and Second Arkansas Mounted Rifles

An officer in one company, the Napoleon Grays, wore pants with a stripe down the side; a fancy checked shirt with added trim worn as an over-shirt; a light colored civilian shirt; a civilian hat adorned with feathers. Other companies may have been dressed similarly, or may have worn plain civilian clothes. Some members of the regiment carried Mississippi rifles captured at Neosho on July 5, 1861.

Dandridge McRae's Arkansas Infantry

Company H of this unit wore civilian clothes, supplemented in many cases by checked shirts with added trim, worn as an over-shirt. The remaining companies probably wore civilian clothes.

Pearce's Arkansas State Troops

First through Fifth Infantry

Each company within each regiment was armed and equipped separately. Arms included military rifles (date of manufacture unknown); military muskets (probably conversions from flintlocks); shotguns; and hunting rifles. Equipment included a very uneven distribution within each regiment of knapsacks, blankets, cartridge boxes, haversacks, powder horns, tin cups, and Bowie knives. The majority of the men wore civilian clothing. Some men wore civilian shirts with added trim as over-shirts. The Davis Blues company wore frock coats with twenty-four buttons across the chest. The Frontier Guards wore dark blue frock coats and light blue trousers. The Centerpoint Rifles wore matching checked shirts with five rows of red trim across the chest, together with blue trousers bearing a red stripe down the leg. Several companies are known to have been uniformed, but no description of their uniforms survives.

First Cavalry

The unit was armed with pistols and sabers. They probably wore civilian clothing.

Carroll's Cavalry Company

According to a newspaper account they were armed with Sharp's rifles and sword bayonets, but this is difficult to credit. They probably wore civilian clothes.

Pulaski Light Battery

The unit wore gray jeans trousers with a red stripe down the leg, and matching jackets with three rows of buttons and horizontal red trim. They wore kepis and hats.

The Fort Smith Light Battery

The unit wore civilian clothes.

Missouri State Guard

Each company within each regiment was armed and equipped separately. Most men wore civilian clothing with butternut and black probably the most common colors for coats and trousers. Equipment included a very uneven distribution within each company of knapsacks, blankets, cartridge boxes, haversacks, powder horns, tin cups, and Bowie knives.

Some companies are described in newspapers as wearing uniforms, but no details are given. For others, the details are scant. Warsaw raised two companies for the State Guard, the Warsaw Blues and the Warsaw Grays, which presumably wore those colors. The Platte Rangers wore red caps and shirts with gray pants. Some of the Moniteau Rangers wore gray shirts and gray caps, with oil-cloth caps, but most wore civilian clothes. The DeKalb Rangers wore gray caps, gray hunting shirts, together with black pants with a yellow stripe down the leg. The LaGrange Guards wore gray caps and shirts trimmed in blue, together with white pants with black stripes down the leg. The Polk County Rangers wore baggy red Zouave trousers and short gray jackets.

While camped at Cowskin Prairie in July, the Missouri State Guard were issued the following types of cloth, with instructions for the soldiers to create or repair their own uniforms/clothing: jeans, calico, toweling, twills, bed ticking, hickory shirting, blue and brown drill cloth, osnaburg, striped cotton cloth, lindsey, cottonade, satinete, and cassimere.

Army of the West

First Kansas Infantry

The unit wore the government-issue four button blouses, trousers, and boots. Some companies had rifles, others had smoothbore muskets. Some men had blankets, others not. They apparently had complete accoutrements.

Second Kansas Infantry

The unit wore the government-issue four button blouse. Other clothing was civilian. Many (perhaps all) lacked canteens. At least some companies had rifles; most had smoothbore muskets. Company I, the

Kansas Rangers, was mounted and at least some men carried pistols and sabers. They apparently had complete accoutrements.

First Iowa Infantry

- All but one company of the regiment was armed with model 1829 flintlock musket converted to percussion, and had bayonets, cartridge boxes, and cap boxes. The Governor's Guards had rifles.
- Company A (Muscatine) wore, according to one source, gray pants with a green stripe down the leg, black coats (frock for officers; roundabouts for other ranks). Another source described the privates' outfit as bluish-gray roundabout jackets, matching pants with a dark blue cord down the leg seam, and dark blue caps with a brass letter A in front.
- Company B, the Washington Guards (Iowa City), wore bluish gray roundabout jackets, matching pants with a narrow black leg stripe, and soft black hats with a button on the left side.
- Company C (Muscatine) wore bluish-gray roundabout jackets, matching pants with a dark blue cord down the leg seam, and dark blue caps with a brass letter C in front.
- Company D, the Burlington Rifles (Burlington), wore a gray blouse with red trim on the collar, front, and lower sleeve; black pants with a one inch wide red stripe down the leg, and soft black hats with a tricolor cockade on the left side.
- Company E, the Burlington Zouaves (Burlington), wore azure gray hunting frocks, tight at the neck, collar, and belt. The cuff, collar, and a band up the front were trimmed in bright red flannel. They wore heavy buckskin trousers and black felt hats with a red ribbon cockade.
- Company F, the Mount Pleasant grays (Mount Pleasant), wore a gray blouse with red trim on the collar, front, and lower sleeve; black pants with a one inch wide red stripe down the leg, and soft black hats with a low crown and no cockade or button.
- Company G, the German Volunteers (Davenport), wore gray pants, a light blue blouse with green velvet collars and cuff, and a glazed hat. Another source gives the uniform as a bluish gray blouse with dark green collar and cuffs; pink trousers with a light green stripe down the leg; soft black hats with a tri-color cockade made of tin.
- Company H, the Wilson Guards (Dubuque) wore short blouses made of black and white tweed, with black collars and black trim on the cuffs and breast; gray pants with a one inch wide stripe (presumably black); and soft black hats with a green silk cockade.
- Company I, the Governor's Guards or Governor's Grays (Dubuque), wore frock coats described as gray in one source and as black and white tweed in another. They had black trim on the collar and cuff, gray pants with an inch wide black stripe down the leg, and soft black hats with a black cockade.
- Company K (Cedar Rapids) wore a gray over-shirt, gray pants with a wide black leg stripe, and soft black hats without a cockade or button.

First Missouri Infantry

The regiment wore blue, possibly the standard Federal uniform

Second Missouri Infantry

Some companies may have worn gray overs-shirts

Third Missouri Infantry

The regiment wore gray hats, shirts, and pants, all trimmed in red.

Fifth Missouri Infantry

Some companies wore gray over-shirts, dark blue pants, and dark blue kepis.

Thirteenth Illinois Infantry (one composite company)

Some or all of the companies of this regiment wore gray. Most apparently had smoothbore muskets.

Backof's Battery

Quartermaster's records state that the men were issued uniforms and hats, but do not give a more detailed description.

The Regulars

The infantry, artillery, cavalry, and dragoons wore the standard government uniform.