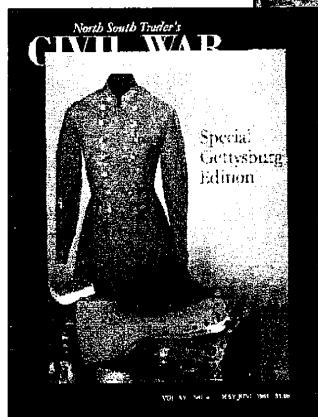
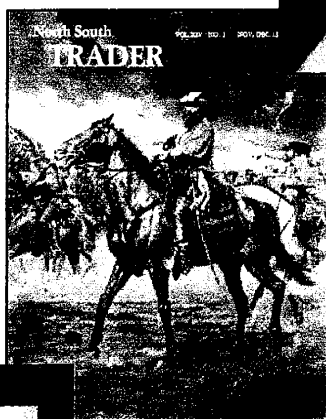
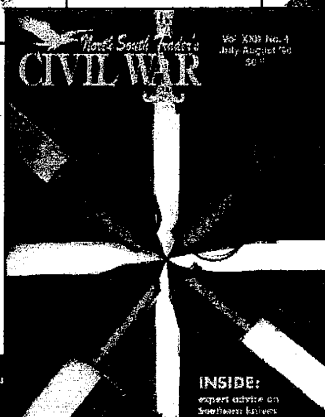
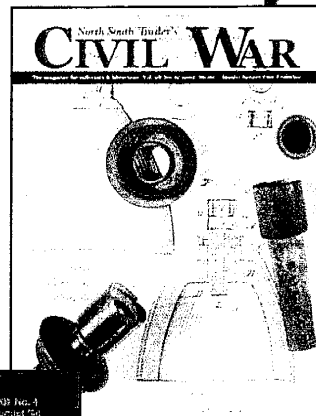
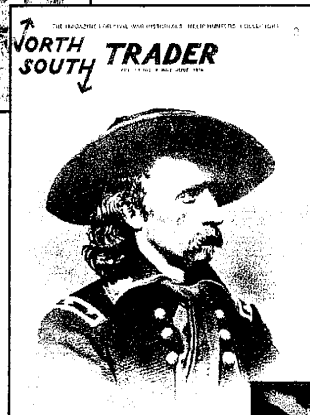
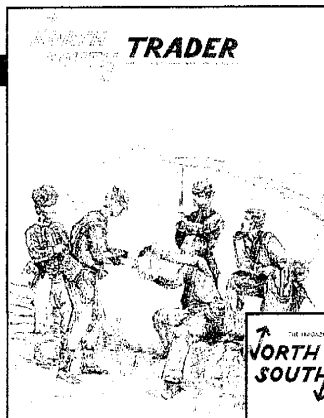


North South Trader's CIVIL WAR

The magazine for collectors & historians Vol. 29 No. 4/ 2003 \$6.00 Inside: Civil War Bugles





From 1973
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North South Trader's Civil War

North South Trader's **CIVIL WAR**

Vol. 29 No. 4, 2003

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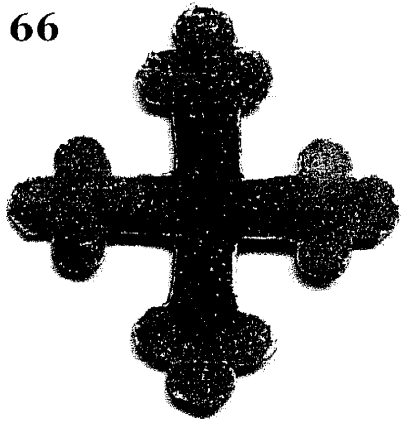
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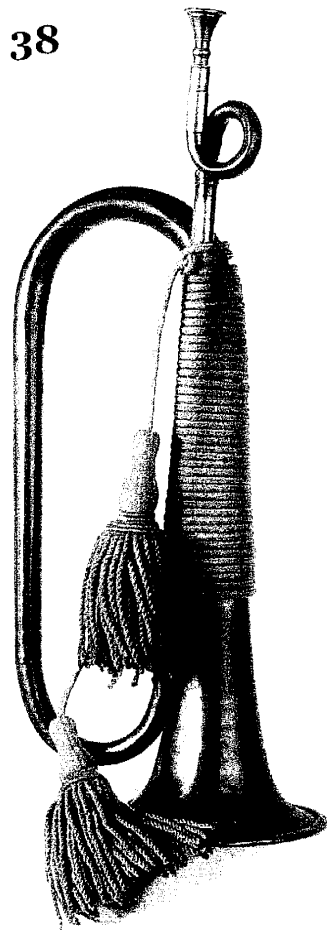
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"Civil War Bugles," photograph by Jack W. Melton, Jr., composition by Jack W. Melton, Jr., and Stephen W. Sylvia, bugles courtesy the Chris Nelson Collection. Please see the cover story on p. 38.

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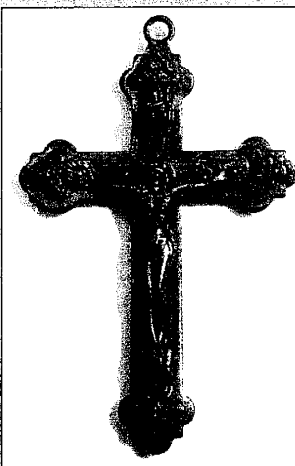
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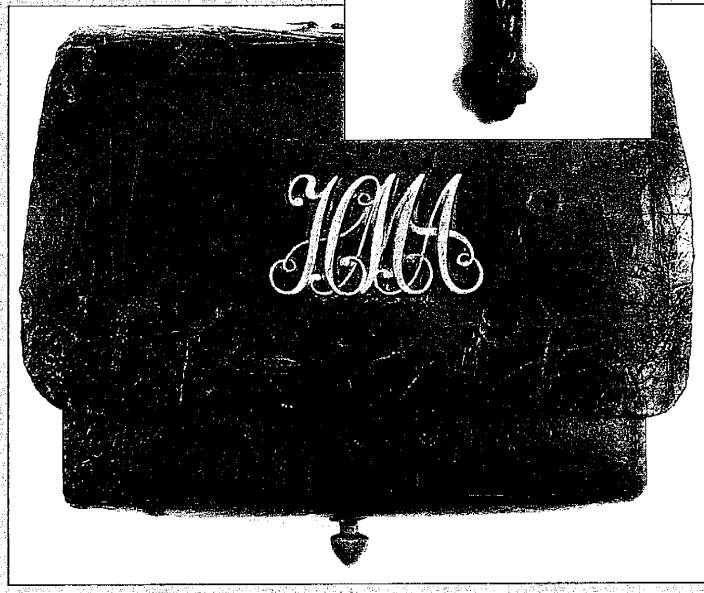
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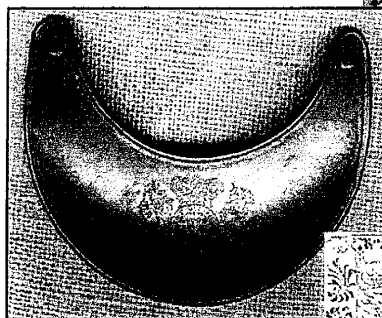
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Please let us know what it is, because we'll be taking a few walks
down memory lane as we celebrate our thirtieth year of publication.

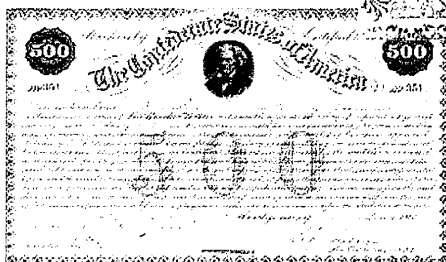
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Some Introductory Terms

The *bell* is where sound comes out of the front of the bugle, and the bell often has a brass *garland*, or reinforcement along the outside edge (see photo opposite).

Mouthpieces are sometimes augmented by *pigtail crooks* (see Figs. 1, 4, and 13), which lower the key of an instrument.

An Exploration of Bugles vs. Trumpets

When describing various aspects of the bugle (Figs. 1-5), it helps to also describe its sister instrument, the trumpet (Fig. 8). A few properties are common to both: regulation Civil War bugles and trumpets are of copper or brass, without keys or pistons.

The basic difference between bugles and trumpets is the shape and width of the tubing leading up to the bell. A true trumpet is a horn in which two thirds of the length is a cylindrical tube of a single width, which then blossoms into the bell. A bugle has a conical, tapered tube that widens toward the bell opening. The dimensions of the coil or coils and the shape of the bell, in concert with the shape of the mouthpiece, cause the instruments to produce a different quality of sound. The trumpet is known for its bright, strident, brash sound, while the bugle is known for its darker and mellower tone.

Collecting C

by Chris Nelson

photographs by Jack W. Melton, Jr., unless otherwise noted

The first Civil War bugle I ever saw for sale hung on a hook in a small antiques shop near Lewiston, Maine, where I was a camp counselor in the summer of 1962. I thought: *Umm...five dollars.* (I was making \$200 for the entire season.) No mouthpiece. Seems awfully light. *Nah.*

Fifteen years later, I finally found another one, this time at a Northern Virginia Relic Hunters Association show and for a lot more than \$5. However, it had a neat thumbscrew attachment at the lead pipe; a mouthpiece; dovetailed, or zippered, seams; and a garland reinforcing the bell. By then I had been told that these characteristics absolutely guaranteed it to be of Civil War vintage.

You can see a twin of this, my first bugle purchase, in Fig. 18. Please note that it's a WW II Imperial Japanese bugle—and a trumpet, actually. The piece is definitely collectible, but it is not related to the Civil War. Let this serve as Object Lesson One for today. Note also that the Japanese cords are nearly identical to US-issue cords.

Finding authentic period bugles is difficult. If you're at a show and you follow in the wake of indefatigable bugle hawk Mark Elrod (or me), it can seem nearly impossible. As a result, learning hands-on what to look for can pose a problem. Although the magical *Time-Life Arms & Equipment of the Civil War* has stunning photo spreads of bugles both Union and Confederate, there is no helpful discussion of the bugles shown. The reader is left to take Yogi's Berra advice and observe by looking.

First, let me do away with some misinformation and myths that have assumed the weight of Holy Writ from years of repetition. A big one: While it is true that quartermasters' specifications identify a difference between bugles for infantry and trumpets for mounted troops, it is not true that a "big bugle" is for infantry, a "medium-size bugle" is for artillery, and that "short," often double-coil, bugles are for cavalry.

Also adding, quite unintentionally, to the confusion are a few misleading examples shown in Francis Lord's ground-breaking, five-volume *Civil War Collector's Encyclopedia*. It's important to remember that Dr. Lord had no previous references to draw upon, so encountering a few accidents of this nature is wholly unsurprising. The same is true of another pioneering work I'll discuss in a bit.

Civil War Bugles

As a result of the confusion that exists in this field of collectible, *NSTCW* publisher Steve Sylvia and I have been talking about a bugle article for the last several years. Steve generously ascribes the term “expert” to my hard-won knowledge, but this knowledge is mainly courtesy of friends who *are* real experts on Civil War bugles and trumpets. Among them are Jim Frasca, Steve Rogers, Jim Stamatelos, Dave Taylor, and Bill and Brendan Synnamon, as well as Mark Elrod, Jari Villanueva, Don Hubbard, and R.J. Samp. Some of these guys can actually play these things, too.

By the way, real buglers insist that they don’t “blow” or “toot,” they “sound.” I humbly submit that I’m still at the tooting stage, and so far my efforts produce howls of laughter from my wife and kids as well as howls of anguish from my dog, Lucky. What the cats think can be inferred by their conspicuous absence during practice.

Military bugles can make beautiful music in the right hands—for instance, sounding *Taps*—but their primary purpose was to serve as military signal devices. As any war veteran or reenactor can tell you, it gets really noisy out there, and not even the most leather-lunged sergeant can overcome the din of artillery or a thousand men firing by volley.

Fortunately, with the help of many friends and knowledgeable dealers, my collecting efforts have been more successful since my Japanese bugle purchase. I’ve learned enough to risk accomodating *NSTCW*’s publisher’s request that I share tips on what to look for, along with some photos of what you may be lucky enough to find at a show or hanging from a hook in some out-of-the-way shop.

I hope you will find it encouraging that, with a couple of exceptions, the bugles shown here are not exceptional and are what you can reasonably expect to find yourself—assuming, of course, you are willing to be a monomaniacal obsessive compulsive for a few years. These examples have been vetted by the real experts and declared to be 100% correct for the Civil War period. There are

Fig. 1: Regulation copper bugle, Federal contract maker-marked “Klemm Bros., Phila.” Features brass bell garland, issue pigtail crook, and issue cavalry (yellow) carrying cord. If you want only one representative Civil War bugle, this is the one to have.

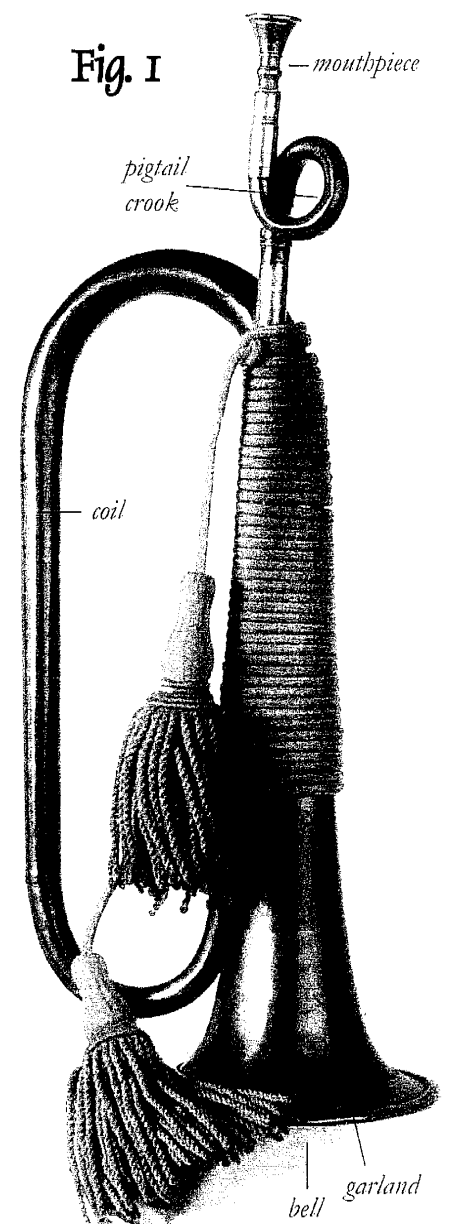


Fig. 2

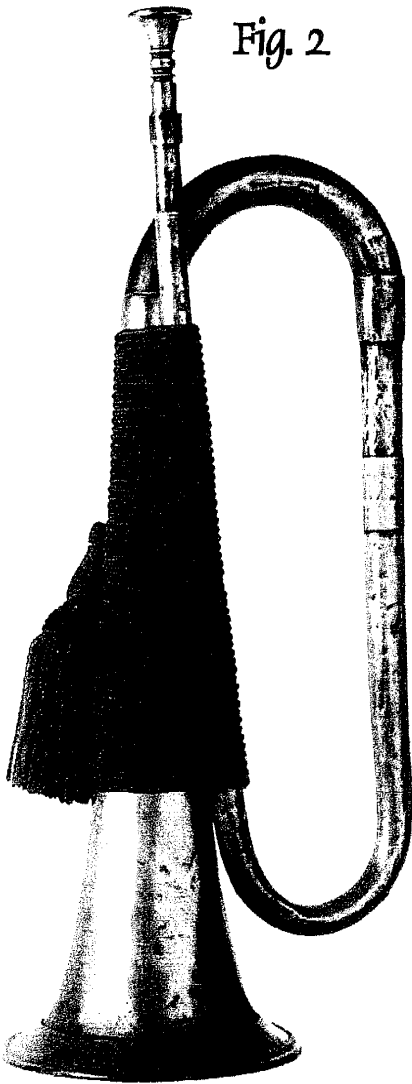


Fig. 2: Regulation brass bugle with bell garland and red artillery carrying cord but without maker's marks. This and the example shown in Fig. 1 are the two main styles of representative bugles.

Fig. 3

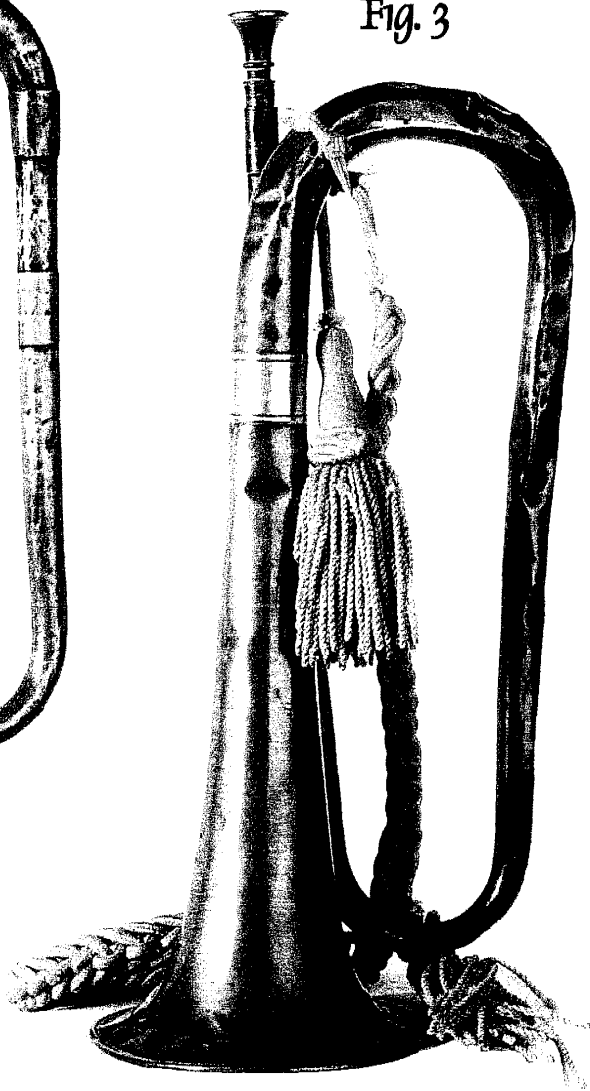


Fig. 3: Regulation copper bugle, Federal contract maker-marked "John Church, Jr., Cinn. O." It has a brass bell garland, a reinforcing ferrule, and a yellow cavalry carrying cord.

Fig. 4

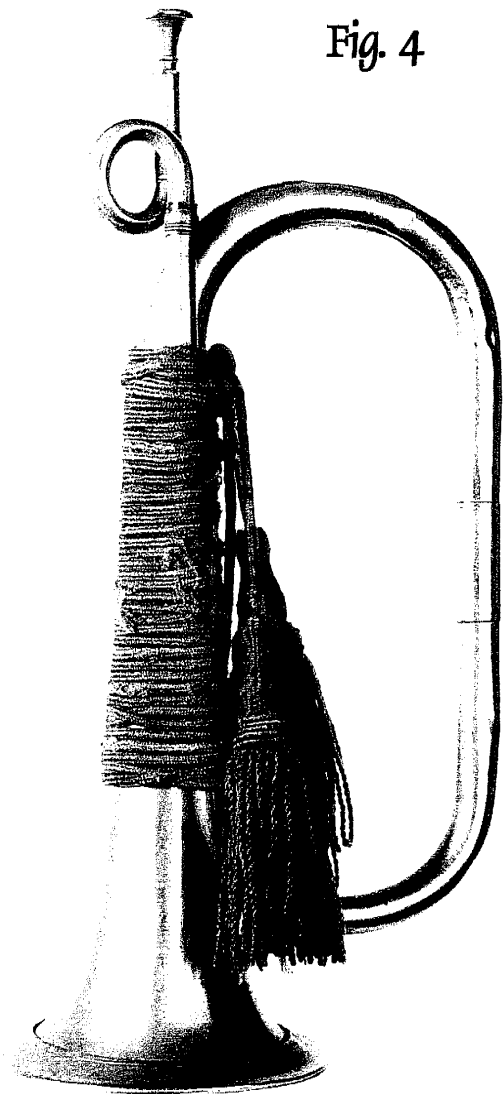


Fig. 4: Regulation brass bugle with silver wash with pigtail crook, bell garland, and blue infantry carrying cord but devoid of markings. This style is a relatively rare variant.

still a couple of models I haven't found, but I do have original photographs of them in the pictorial study that immediately follows this article (pps. 54-57).

First, a bit of background on bugles. Roman Legionnaires carried enormous circular signal horns called *cornu*, and more primitive cultures used ram's horns or conch shells to sound the charge. It was not until improvements in brass and copper bending techniques were made that recognizably "modern" bugles made their debut on the battlefields of Europe, just prior to our American

Revolution. While some Revolutionary War and War of 1812 US military use is documented, the earliest known War Department reference to bugles came in 1825, authorizing two buglers per company for light artillery, light infantry, and grenadiers.

Even so, most US military signals for field maneuvers or in-camp activities were beat on drums or played on fifes. Surviving evidence indicates that this practice prevailed through the Civil War. However, judging from surviving Army contracts and anecdotal accounts by contemporary participants and witnesses, bugles and trumpets were

definitely in widespread use by 1861.

Union Gen. Phil Sheridan got—and continues to get—mixed reviews from musicians, having once denied a furlough request by stating: “Shooters before tooters.” He later atoned for that somewhat by emulating Joshua: Using musical instruments as aural assault weapons, he massed his cavalry corps buglers to literally blow the Confederates off the field at Winchester in 1864.

Dramatics aside, bugles and buglers generally played a more conventional role in passing along signals for camp and field orders. Each branch of service had several dozen tunes, or calls, that the officers and men were expected to know by heart.

Regulation Civil War bugles are between 14" and 16" long, not including the mouthpiece, are of brass or copper, and have a single coil. The length exception for true bugles is the 10" to 12" “officer’s bugle” (Fig. 10). These neat little double-coil jobs reflect the expectation

that officers be able to sound the signal calls in a pinch, an accomplishment more common to pre-war militia officers than their rapidly and often incompletely trained Civil War brethren.

Some double-coil bugles are full-sized, such as the 15" brass example shown in Fig. 9. This one came from a barn outside Atlanta and was found mashed, covered in owl poop, and improved upon by some enterprising child who felt that a dozen awl holes through the bell would add just the right touch. Restorer/magician Bob Pallansch of Falls Church, Virginia, deftly managed to turn roadkill back into a real Civil War bugle. (A caution on collecting this model: Much heavier German versions, adorned with post-war German silver or nickel garlands, became very common later in the 19th century and remained so well into the 20th.)

For years, some claimed that there was no such thing as a “regulation” Civil War bugle, but the assiduous research of one collector in the field has proven otherwise. He has

Fig. 5

Fig. 5: Regulation copper bugle with infantry carrying cord but without garland or markings.

Fig. 6: Imported French regulation clairon d’ordonnance, dealer marked, with issue French carrying cord. Note that it has no garland and it employs thumbscrew tighteners on the telescopic tuning device, something rarely seen on US-made bugles. To qualify as a Civil War period French clairon, the bugle bell must have dovetailed seams straight to the bell opening.

Fig. 6

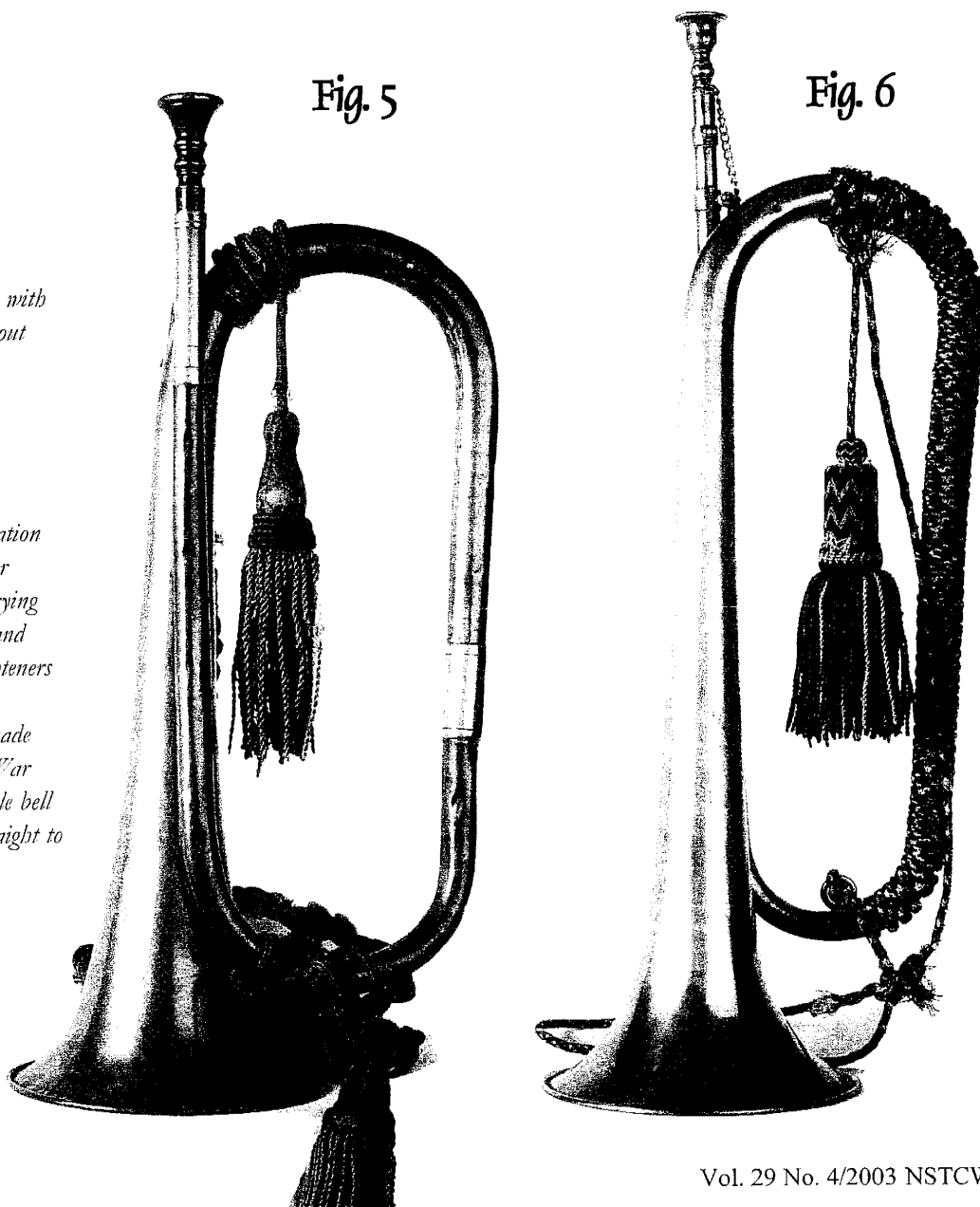
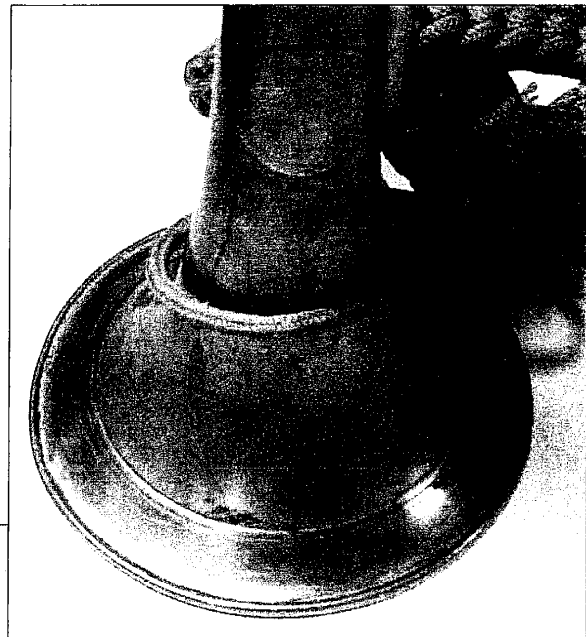
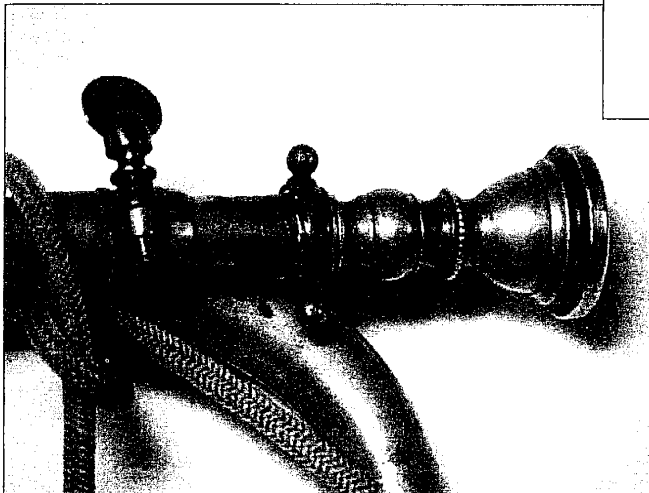


Fig. 7

Fig. 7: Brass "C" bugle made by E.G. Wright of Boston, circa 1855-'62. Although it is a bugle, most of its tubing borders on cylindrical, rendering it closer to a trumpet in appearance. It measures 16 1/2" long with a 4 3/4" bell and 3/4" bell garland.

Right, closeup of the circular stamped applied shield with the Wright maker mark. The applied circular shield dates the instrument to pre-1863 manufacture. Wright used applied thin, stamped, circular brass and German silver shields with his name on all his instruments starting about 1855. Around 1863, Wright dispensed with the applied circular shield and "signed" his instruments in script below the garland on the bell: "Made by E. G. Wright & Co. Boston." Wright's bugle production was probably very limited, but there may have been some small state contracts for limited quantities. Wright did make a number of presentation bugles in German silver and sterling silver.



Closeup of bell and bell garland of Wright instrument.

Closeup of the typical E. G. Wright-style mouthpiece and the telescopic tuning device with its split "C" clamp screw. This type of tuning arrangement is rare on American-made instruments and is usually associated with French instruments. Artifact and photographs this page courtesy Mark Elrod.

located wartime quartermaster specifications sent out as guidance for contractors. Even if we didn't know this, an examination of maker-marked examples of documented Civil War bugles makes it clear that, despite minor differences in proportions and great variations in the quality of the copper and brass, the contractors had to be working with a common set of specifications.

As a result, I do not hesitate to flatly state that the regulation Civil War bugle is what you see in Figs. 1 through 5. While many makers produced them, here we see a copper Klemm Brothers (Fig. 1) with the pigtail, a copper John Church, Jr., without the crook (Fig. 3), and an anonymous all-brass bugle with a field repair (Fig. 2). (Of that last, the prospective buyer might interpret that it must be Rebel-related. Buyer beware such assumptions or assurances.) Each example is between 14" and 16" long, is single-coil with a brass garland, and has a circular brass reinforcing ferrule about 10" up.

My theory is that while regulation bugles can be entirely of brass, copper was preferred. I deem this to be the case because of the number of contracts that specify the use of the latter. Relatively rare but wholly authentic is a brass bugle covered in thin silver wash (not a heavy plate), as in Fig. 4. It is both elegant and desirable. More difficult to authenticate for novices and experts alike is an all-brass bugle with no garland (similar to Fig. 2), as this legitimate Civil War style was made well into the 20th century. You can even find them in the Sears catalog of 1909, with pigtails. By contrast, copper bugles seem to have fallen out of favor in the US after 1865.

For the record, here's what one researcher found on p. 47 of the *Quartermaster Manual, May 1865, Camp and Garrison Equipage*, covering drum accessories, three-quarter drums, fifes, trumpets, and bugles:

Trumpets—to be made of brass; when plain, *viz* without crooks to stand in F; with tuning slide and three crooks; to stand in G; they are to be about 14-1/4 inches high; the plain trumpet to be 4-1/4 inches wide in the middle, and to weigh from 11-5/8 ounces to 14-1/4 ounces; with crooks, 5 or 5-1/4 inches wide in the middle, and to weigh, including crooks and without mouthpiece, about 1 pound 2 ounces; length of 1st crook, 3 inches; of 2nd, 6 inches; of 3rd, 8-1/2 inches; the bowl about 5-1/2 inches in diameter; mouthpiece about 3 inches long, and to weigh from 1-1/2 to 2 ounces.

Bugles—to be made of copper, and to stand in "C"; to be 15 inches high, to measure from 5 to 5-1/2 inches in breadth; diameter of bowl to be about 5-1/8 inches, and to weigh from about 13-1/4 to 14 ounces, without mouthpiece. The mouth-piece for bugles the same as for trumpets.

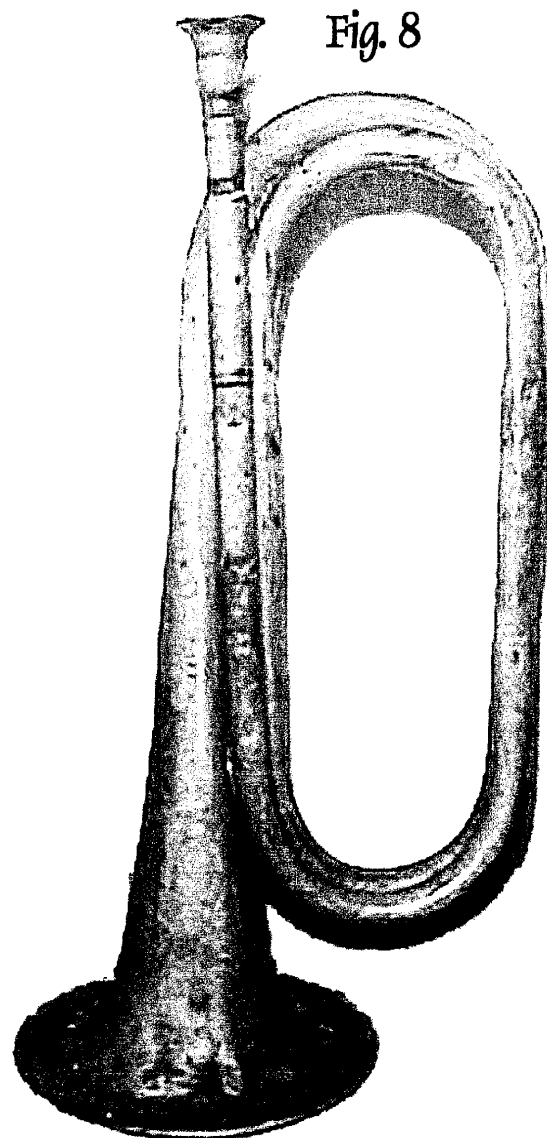


Fig. 8

Fig. 8: Regulation-style brass trumpet for mounted troops. It has a double coil, a bell garland, and, while devoid of maker marks, is identified to the 2nd Missouri Cavalry, US. Regulations indicate that this model was intended for cavalry and light artillery, but in reality they saw use in other branches of service as well. Courtesy the Jim Frasca Collection.

They may be noted in the above, but regulation trumpets fashioned to those specifications are very difficult to find (Fig. 25). If you do find one, it will likely look like the Merrill's Horse (2nd Missouri, US Volunteer Cavalry) brass trumpet recently discovered by Jim Frasca (Fig. 8).

I noted earlier that while some folks confidently talk of cavalry and infantry bugles, in fact the distinction is basically incorrect. While the army regulations do indicate that trumpets are for the mounted service, the difficulty of supply and the "take what you can get" approach to acquisition, particularly for the Confederates, make this a distinction without meaning.

In general, the only way to designate bugles or trumpets as being associated with cavalry, infantry, or artillery is any background story they may enjoy; that, or the rare occurrence that they have an original yellow (cavalry), blue (infantry), or red (artillery) bugle cord attached. I can tell you that finding original cords is *much* harder than finding original bugles, and that's hard enough. The cords shown here are all authentic US military issue, but since the same style was used into the 1930s, if you didn't find the bugle and cord together in grandma's attic, there is no guarantee that they were together since birth.

Actually, it's still not a 100% guarantee even if you *did* find them together in grandma's attic. More on that later.

And while I'm on the topic of all-original parts, a quick but important digression on mouthpieces. Most with tapered shanks are relatively interchangeable, and, as any digger can tell you, they were lost in great numbers. As a result, one often finds legitimate Civil War bugles with a fat, old, ugly mouthpiece from your local high school marching band. Don't be put off, but do dicker a bit on price. If mouthpieces are so easy to find at shows, as the seller claims, how come the seller hasn't done so?

One way to determine if a mouthpiece is of the Civil War-period is to study the photos of instruments shown here. Note that the period mouthpieces have flatter rims

than the modern mouthpieces (by modern, I mean post circa 1885). Mouthpieces of the era were made of either raw brass or German silver, never silver or nickel plated. In general, mouthpieces for the regulation *clairon* bugles tend to have thicker shanks than their later counterparts. This is because most lead pipes or mouthpiece receivers on Civil War European-made (except French) and American bugles tended to be of a greater diameter than bugle mouthpieces of the 19th century and later. Also, most—but not all—French *clairons* had a telescopic tuning device tightened by a C-clamp screw. These took smaller, shanked mouthpieces.

A word of caution: Relic hunters find Spanish-American War and WW I-period mouthpieces in areas used for camps and military maneuvers. Just because something came out of the ground doesn't necessarily date it to 1861-'65. The post-war bugles shown on p. 47 can give you more visual pointers.

Here is what to look for when seeking Civil War bugles. First, all 19th-century horns are amazingly light, and bugles are particularly so. As noted, they will be of copper, brass, sometimes silver wash over brass, and—very occasionally—solid silver for a fancy presentation officer's model. A heavily plated brass or



Fig. 9

Fig. 9: Full-size, all-brass, double-coil bugle with garland and artillery carrying cord. No maker marks. Note the clear zippered/dovetailed seams on the side, but buyer beware: This model can also be a very common post-war European import.

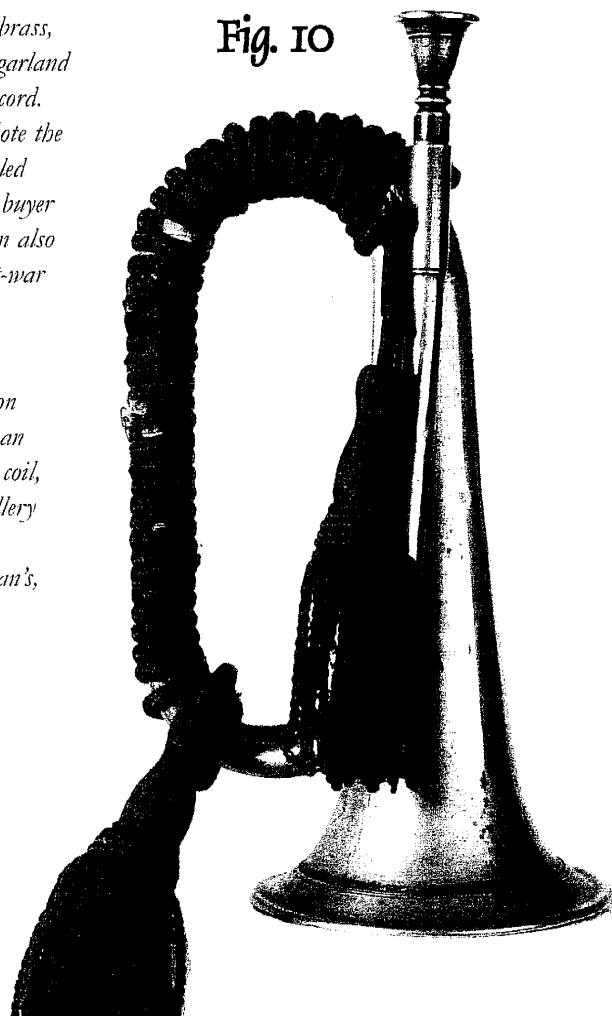


Fig. 10

Fig. 10: Nonregulation officer's bugle of German silver. It has a double coil, a bell garland, an artillery carrying cord, and is marked "J.F.M. Joerdan's, New York."

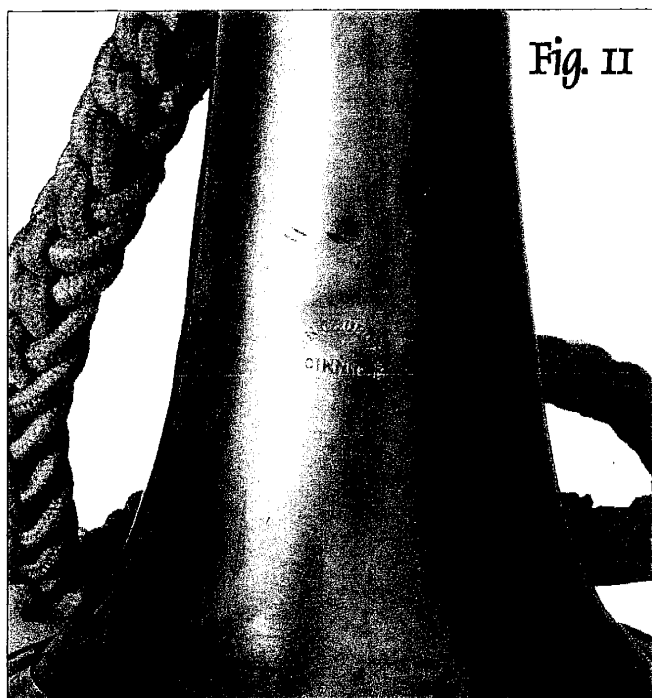


Fig. 11

Fig. 11: Closeup of a "John Church, Jr., Cinn. O" Federal contractor marking. Wear often renders these markings hard to see.

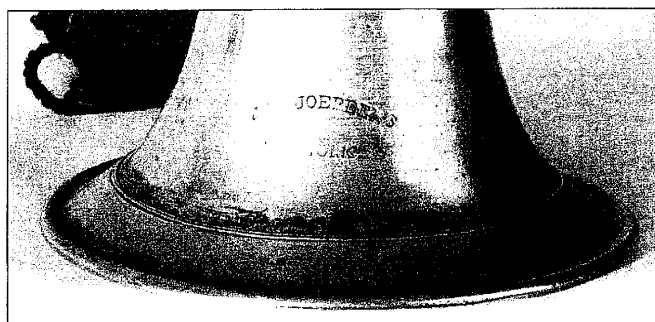


Fig. 12

Fig. 12: Closeup of the "Joerden's" marking on the bugle in Fig. 10, showing typical size, location, and style.

Fig. 13: The exception that proves the rule that plain copper British Model 1855 bugles (Fig. 16) are not representative of Civil War bugles. This is a rare silver regimentally engraved presentation British Model 1855 duty bugle marked "London 1860."



Fig. 13

German silver bugle is almost certainly not Civil War issue, although it may be the real thing, plated later. In that case, maybe you do want it and maybe you don't. That's a judgment call best left to the individual collector.

The second set of hard and fast rules: All Civil War bugles *must* have dovetailed (zippered) seams *all* the way down to the opening of the bell (Fig. 14). Some dovetails are directly interlocking, as on old wooden furniture; others may be tiny flaps 1/2" or even 1" apart. But *no* dovetails means it *can't* be Civil War. It's hard to see sometimes, but hold the bell opening toward you, with the coil or coils at six o'clock, and the seams are often at either four o'clock or seven o'clock. But be careful: German and British bugles had Civil War-style dovetails and garlands right through WW II.

Third, and this is crucial: If a bugle has the bell connected to the body of the horn by a circular seam, usually about 3" to 4" up from the opening (you'll know it

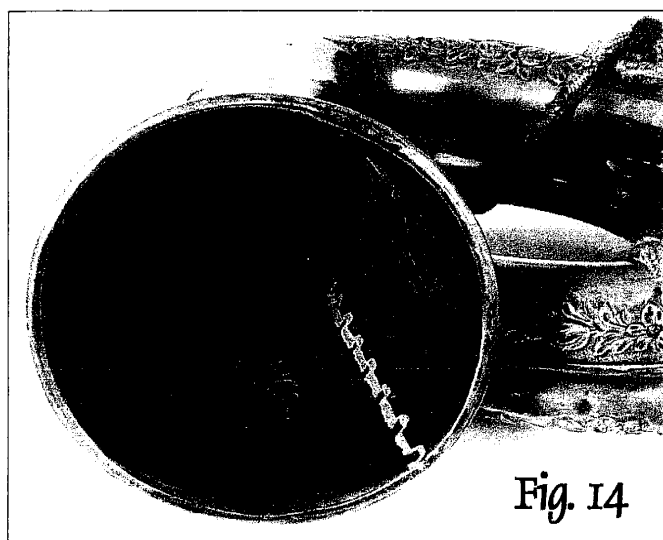


Fig. 14: Closeup of dovetailed, or zippered, seams usually found at the four o'clock or seven o'clock position. All Civil War bugles or trumpets, regardless of style or maker, must have similar seams running uninterrupted straight to the bell opening. Bugles with a circular seam connecting a one-piece bell to the body of the instrument postdate 1889, the year the process was invented by C.G. Conn.

when you see it), it is not of war vintage. That process wasn't patented until 1889 by C.G. Conn, a former Berdan's Sharpshooter and post-war instrument inventor and business magnate. (It's a name you'll also find on many high quality, modern instruments.) So even if a bugle is very light, has a garland, and has someone's grandma's documented history to beat the band—if you'll pardon the expression—if you see that circular seam, just thank the seller and move on.

Fourth, most dealers and collectors like to see a garland—mainly for aesthetic reasons—and it is true that many, perhaps a majority, of genuine Civil War bugles are garlanded. But by no means do all Civil War bugles have garlands, so don't pass one up by mistake (see Fig. 5).

Fifth, the most common Civil War bugles you'll find at shows tend to be various versions and makes of the French *clairon d'ordonnance*. (A note to you English teachers: *clairon* is the correct spelling. However, one can issue a clarion call from one's *clairon*.) The design of the *clairon d'ordonnance* dates back to at least the 1790s and it became the inspiration for the basic regulation Civil War bugle. A correct Civil War-period example can be seen in Fig. 6.

Since you know about the circular seam problem, you will note that 90% of the big-belled "Frenchies," as they are slangily called, have that seam rather than dovetailing straight to the opening of the bell. Some French makers liked to use old-style manufacturing methods. Fortunately for today's collectors, many French makers also liked to mark their bugles, so you can check the maker's name in the definitive text for all musical instrument collector's: the unfortunately difficult to obtain *Langwill Index*. There is, however, a recently released hardbound by William Waterhouse entitled *The New Langwill Index: A Dictionary of Musical Wind Instrument Makers and Inventors* and containing some 6,500 listings of makers and inventors and nearly 400 reproductions of makers' marks.

But even if there are no markings, if the French *clairon* is lightweight and has the right seams, enjoy it—no one can say *non*.

While there are always exceptions, French-made *clairons* also represent the only common Civil War use of the thumbscrew at the mouthpiece. The same is true of the attachment rings for the bugle cords. In general, cord rings showed up later in the 19th century and they were very common by the Spanish-American War period. But on any alleged Civil War bugle, excepting French-made examples, rings and thumbscrews should cause you to look for additional validation.

A note on markings: Remember that the country-of-origin stamping ("Made in ") wasn't required until the International Copyright Convention of 1896. Remember also that "Germany" didn't exist during the Civil War. Location markings on period equipment of all types, including bugles, should only have a city of origin: New York, Boston, London, Leipzig, Paris, etc. "Made in Japan" is not a good sign.

Sixth, the most popular Civil War bugle in the US today, according to eBay sellers and various souvenir and reenactor's-goods shop owners, is the British Model 1855 duty bugle shown in Fig. 16. These almost always have dovetailed seams and a garland around the bell, so all these sellers can't be wrong when they claim that these are Civil War items, right? *Wrong*.

Reenactors call these "Gunga Dins," after the classic movie hero of 19th century Imperial Britain. It's also a sarcastic allusion to the thousands of cheap copper or brass copies being cranked out today in India, many with "CSA" or "7th Cavalry" crossed sabres to tempt the unwary. To be fair, most are sold honestly as souvenirs or as movie props, but, alas, you frequently see a nicely owl-pooped example being offered with "I've been *told* this is Civil War." *Right*.

Of course, many of the duty bugles offered for sale are legitimate British military issue. Just look for the broad arrow marking and a date, as you would on a Civil War Enfield. But be aware that there is absolutely no documented example of a British Model 1855 bugle ever having been ordered by either the US government or a Northern state, and there is no photographic evidence of a Union soldier holding a bugle that is *undeniably* a British Model 1855. Jim Frasca once owned a Model 1855-like



Fig. 15

Fig. 15: Civil War—not. A WW I contract maker-marked US Model 1894 short bugle, dated 1917, with regulation-issue, 1917-patented pistol lanyard used as a bugle cord. Such bugles are often found unmarked, adding to the confusion.

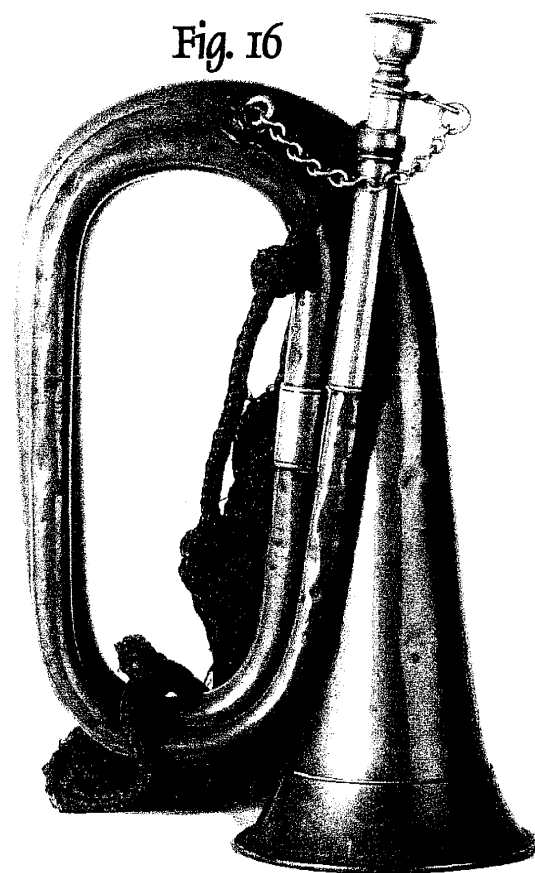


Fig. 16

Fig. 16: Another post-war puppy. This British Model 1855 duty bugle is WW I contractor marked and dated 1914. It has a regulation green infantry carrying cord.

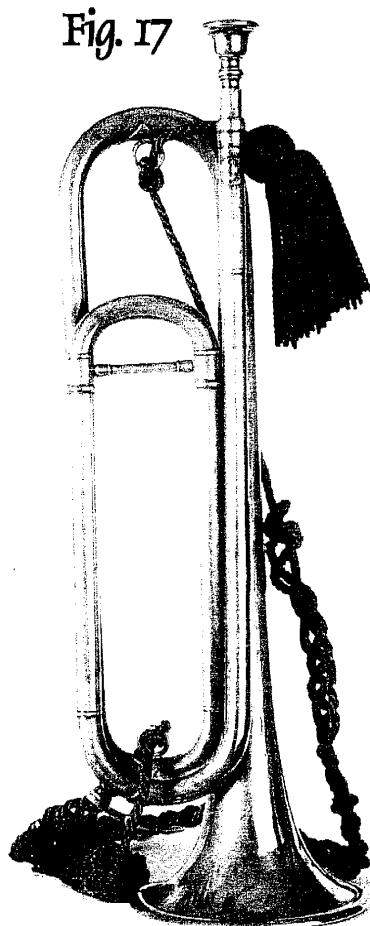


Fig. 17

Fig. 17: Not Civil War, but rather one of several variations of the US Model 1892 field trumpet. All are double coil with an adjustable tuning slide in the center. This example has a stabilizing rod but most do not. These are commonly seen for sale as "Boy Scout bugles."

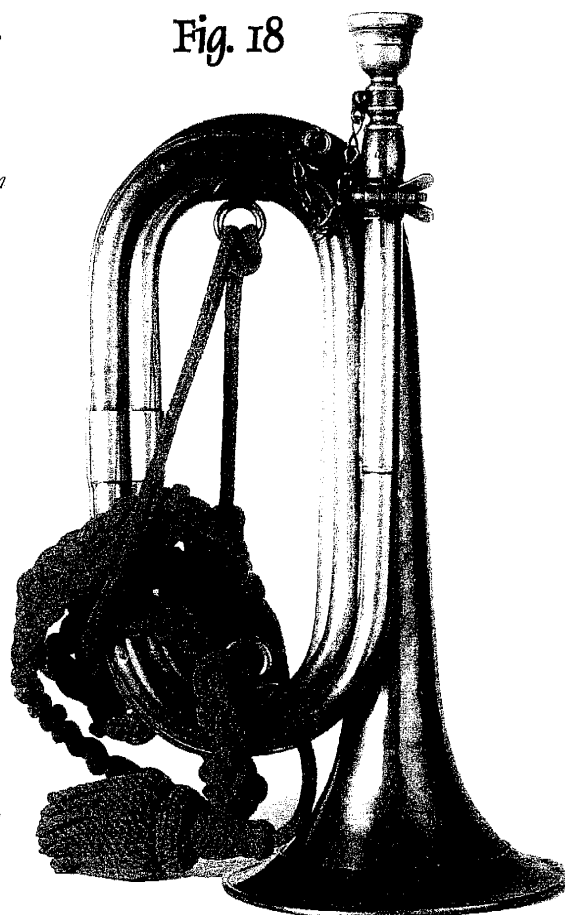


Fig. 18

Fig. 18: The author's first "Civil War" bugle purchase: one of two types of Imperial Japanese WW II-issue trumpets. Confusion stems from the facts that they are often unmarked and employ dovetailed seams that run to the bell opening. The three-coiled model shown here features a bell garland; the two-coiled models do not. Both employ a thumbscrew tightener. Note that the issue (red) cord is similar to US patterns of the Civil War through WW I.

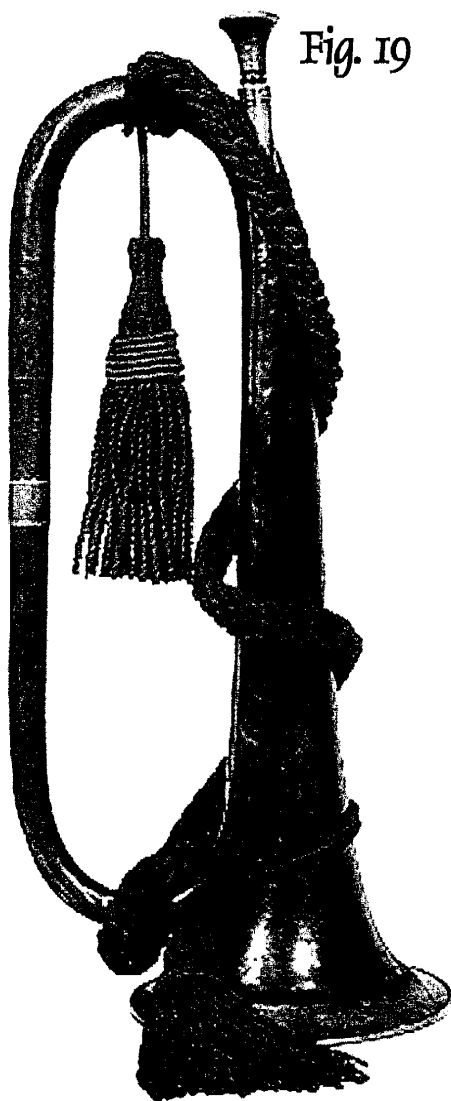


Fig. 19: Regulation single-twist copper bugle with brass trim, brass garland, and original brass mouthpiece. Made by Klemm Brothers circa 1860s and adorned with an artillery bugle cord. Courtesy the Jim Frasca Collection.

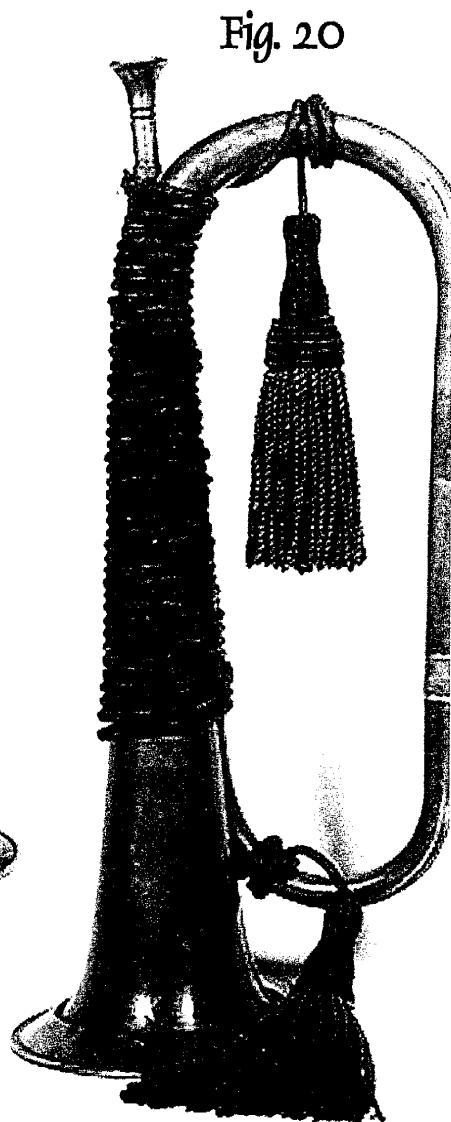


Fig. 20: Regulation single-twist copper bugle with brass trim, brass garland, and original brass mouthpiece. Made by Klemm Brothers circa 1860s and adorned with an infantry bugle cord. Courtesy the Jim Frasca Collection.

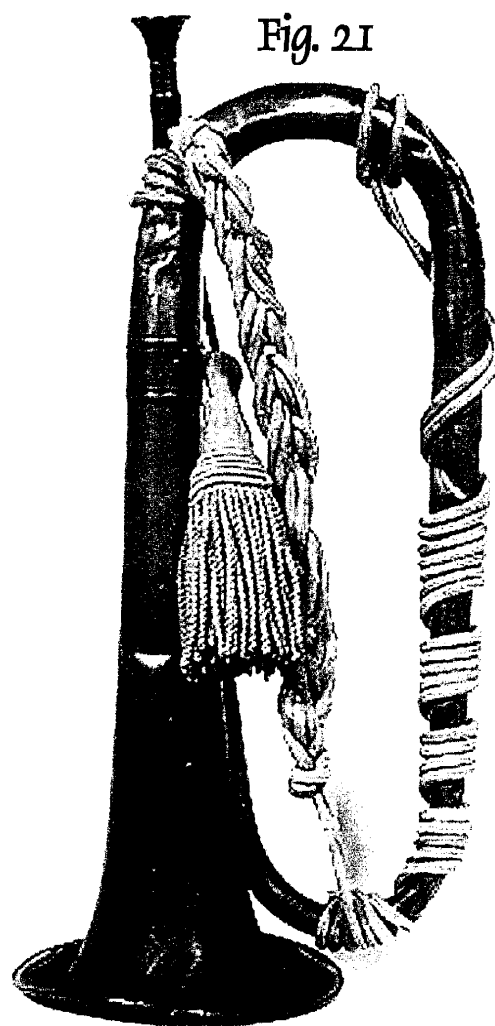


Fig. 21: Regulation single-twist copper bugle with brass trim, brass garland, and original brass mouthpiece. Made by Horstmann circa 1860s and adorned with a cavalry bugle cord. Courtesy the Jim Frasca Collection.

pigtailed bugle, and Larry Strayer found an Ohio soldier's *carte de visite* with a soldier holding an apparently identical bugle, but those bugles may also be Austrian or German. If the original bugle ever turns up, we'll let you know, and if the owner is reading this, please contact the publisher—we'd like to document it.

For me the clincher is that no digger has ever unearthed the very distinctive British mouthpiece for a Model 1855, much less one of these very sturdy, very heavy (for the period) bugles. Sorry, but that's the way it is. As a result, I

feel that British Model 1855 duty bugles are not legitimately representative items in a Civil War collection. If you're seeking a looks-like example for sheer visual appeal in your collection, a better bet is a post-war French *clairon*, which can still be had at a reasonable price.

Does this mean not *one* British duty bugle was used in the Civil War? Logic would imply no. Both sides were desperate for all kinds of military equipage, and bugles were no exception. Housed in reputable Civil War museums are reasonably well documented examples from

virtually every country in Europe, including Spain, so no doubt someone, somewhere, got their hands on a British Model 1855. For what it's worth, shown in Fig. 13 is a silver regimental presentation officer's Model 1855 with pigtail crook, hallmarked "London 1860." It came out of Richmond a couple of years ago, but no story accompanied it. Whether it arrived in 1860 and was Jeb Stuart's personal bugle or in 1998 as a souvenir from Jolly Olde England is unknown. Despite its murky history, it's a great war-era British-made bugle.

Now that you know what to look for, the next consideration is: How many Civil War bugles are out there to find? (One wonders if the quantity already gathered by a handful of serious collectors explains the rarity of genuine bugles at shows.) Let's ponder some numbers that may indicate the possible scope of opportunity.

How many buglers served both sides in the Civil War is, at best, a guess. Army regulations called for one fifer and one drummer per company for infantry, so an infantry regimental field music staff would, in theory, consist of ten fifers, ten drummers, and a drum major (sometimes a bass drummer) to train and lead them. The "field music" consisted of the soldiers—usually youngsters—sending the signal calls. "Bandsmen," often just called "musicians," were the fellows playing the valved instruments in the marching band. (Civil War-era writers often referred to "a band of music" almost as though it could be mistaken for a band of robbers.)

Under the regulations, buglers were not authorized for infantry companies—although some seem to have had them—but were authorized for cavalry troops (companies) and artillery batteries. Heavy artillery batteries had both fifers/drummers and buglers. For cavalry and mounted (light) artillery, buglers took the place of the drummers and fifers. The manuals of the times—Hardee's, Casey's, and Gilham's—all authorize a "regimental bugler." However, some noted brigades seem not to have had any buglers. For instance, some researchers note that the Iron Brigade had only drummers & fifers.

There were about 1,000 regiments in the Union army. As noted, surviving evidence indicates that some regiments had only one or two buglers, if any, while others had ten or more, particularly cavalry and light artillery regiments. It's been estimated that about 25,000 men served the Union as musicians of some kind, so it seems not unreasonable to guesstimate the number of Federal buglers to be at least 5,000. Presumably the Confederate figures would be similar, although I know of no study that has been done to verify or refute this.

Similarly, the number of bugles and trumpets produced in the US or imported from Europe by both sides is but a

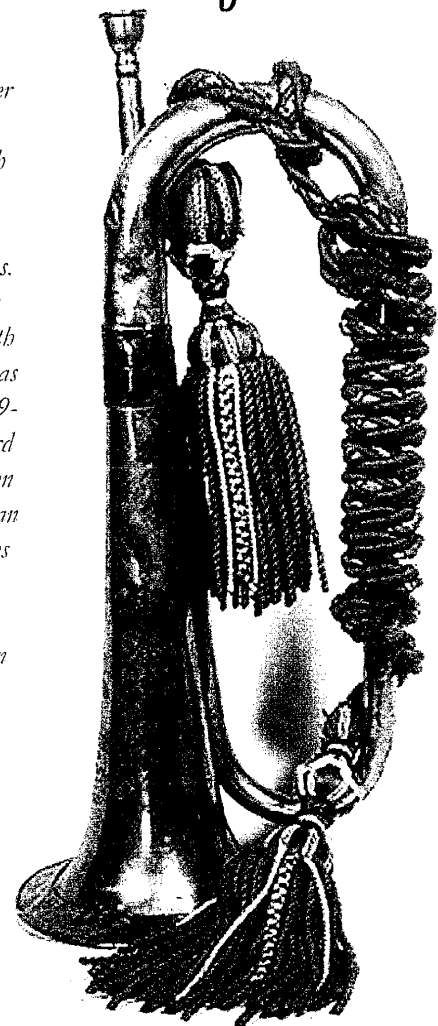
guess. The surprisingly thin, relatively soft copper and not much tougher brass used in Civil War horns meant they were easily damaged. One has only to consider how most soldiers use government-issue equipment of any kind to wager that many, if not most, of the buglers went through more than one horn during their term of service.

Some sense of the scope of bugles in existence at the time—and potentially still out there for us, less expected attrition—can be attained by a perusal of Bazelon & McGuinn's invaluable *Directory of U.S. Military Goods Dealers & Makers*. Their records of a single contractor in New York City, John F.M. Joerdans, show that on August 13, 1864, he filled an order for 5,000 "copper bugles." (Mark Elrod is of the opinion that Joerdans subcontracted to Moses Slater, also in New York, but it's Joerdans' name we find today.)

Another often encountered name is Stratton, and then, in 1864, Stratton and Foote of New York. Between August 1861 and March 1864, this firm had government contracts for 3,500 bugles and 2,700 trumpets. In 1864, Philadelphia's Klemm Brothers was contracted for 1,800 bugles. John

Fig. 22

Fig. 22: Regulation single-twist bugle inscribed to a member of the 34th Ohio, Piatt's Zouaves, with what appears to be surface gilding for presentation purposes. Presumably the body is actually copper with the same brass trim as the bugles in Figs. 19-21. The tasseled cord was on the bugle when it was purchased at an estate tag sale decades ago and may be unique to Piatt's Zouaves. Formerly in the Jim Frasca Collection.



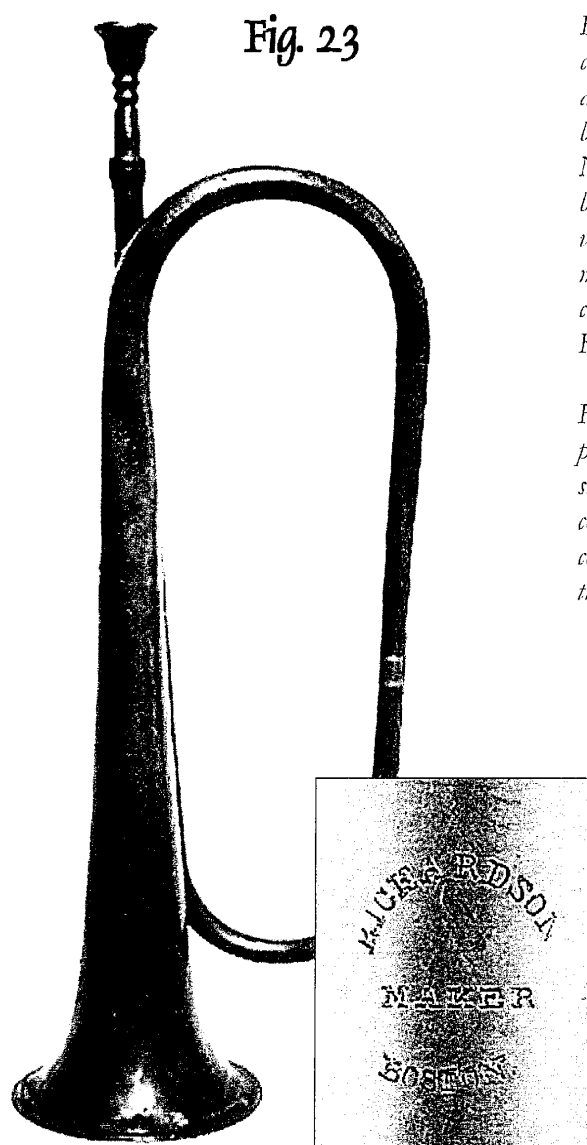


Fig. 23

Fig 23: Regulation single-twist copper bugle with brass trim and original brass mouthpiece but without brass garland. Note the thinner tubing and bell, suggesting pre-Civil War vintage. Made by Richardson, whose mark can be seen in the closeup shown. Courtesy the Jim Frasca Collection.

Fig. 24: American folk art or possibly Confederate-made single-twist bugle crudely constructed of elements of tin, copper, and brass. Formerly in the Jim Frasca Collection.



Fig. 24

Church, Jr., of Cincinnati supplied 500 bugles in 1862, 400 bugles in 1863, and 1,000 trumpets in October 1864. On July 3, 1861, Draper & Brothers of Boston was contracted for 400 bugles "with extra mouthpieces" at \$2.50 each. (I *know* I should have sprung for that bugle in Maine.) Draper & Brothers apparently defaulted on this order, and Stratton picked it up. Several other Yankee dealers and makers held smaller or quantity-unspecified bugle contracts. (Look for maker's name markings about 3" up from the bell, as in Fig. 11 and Fig. 12, or occasionally stamped on the garland, as Klemm Brothers liked to do. Often markings will be worn or hard to find, but since they add 30% or more to the value of the bugle, look closely.)

Noted above is a sampling of Federal government orders. The number of privately purchased bugles is impossible to reconstruct, as is the quantity of those that were imported from Europe. We do know that many famous military outfitters such as Horstmann & Brothers

of Philadelphia and Lyon & Healy in Chicago imported many hundreds of bugles, and probably many thousands. Mark Elrod is of the opinion that the entire Civil War production of Klemm Brothers came from its family's plants in East Prussia (remember "Germany" didn't formally exist until the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-'71).

Then there is the French *clairon d'ordonnance*. R.J. Samp notes that in 1864, Lyon & Healy supplied the Army of the Cumberland with 250 of the 21"-long French *clairons* (Fig. 6). Photographic evidence proves that this model, with French cords, was favored by many early war zouave units (see the zouave image on p. 55). In addition, 200 *clairons* were part of the 10,000 complete sets of chasseur equipments ordered in 1861 by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs and featured in Don Troiani's two-part *NSTCW* article on French uniforms of the war (Vol. XXVI, No.'s 2 and 3).

Many sutlers kept bugles in stock, and one collector

reports anecdotal accounts of frustrated buglers who “lost” their cheaply made government-contract horns, presumably to seek a private purchase item of better quality. For example, the Klemm Brothers example shown in Fig. 1 has more tin than copper in its alloy, while the one in Fig. 3, the Church copper bugle, seems very high grade. On the other hand, the Klemm mouthpiece is very easy for me to play, but that supplied by Church I found difficult. Perhaps I, too, would have visited the sutler back then.

Did the Confederacy manufacture its own bugles and trumpets? The answer seems to be, for the most part, no. The South had more pressing needs for copper and brass, and with bugles, as with muskets, the boys in gray tended to supply themselves from Uncle Abe. There are, however, one or two documented examples of legitimately Southern bugles made by an enterprising tinsmith in the Confederacy. The Union Drummer Boy in Gettysburg has one, and it plays surprisingly well, although it looks like something that might have been the brainchild of the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz*.

Despite our lack of definitive numbers relating to bugles manufactured, imported, or used by the North and the South, we do know this: The US army had so many surplus bugles and trumpets on hand after the Civil War that it didn’t order a single new one until at least 1875, and it didn’t develop a significantly different regulation model until 1892.

This seems an opportune point at which to underscore a general rule for collecting anything that is purported to be related to the Civil War. Beware the Grandma Said Syndrome and its dangerous influence on local historical societies

and even famous national collections. Yes, yes, Great-Grandpa was in the Civil War, and these were his bugle, cap, canteen, and drawers, and Grandma meant well when she donated said holy relics along with a signed letter of provenance and lots of fancy documentation.

That the precious item in question was purchased at Bannerman’s in 1895 when Great-Grandpa realized he needed a bugle, cap, etc., to be resplendent at reunions was something Grandma couldn’t be expected to recognize.

This is a particular problem with bugles. Witness the great number of unmarked US Model 1894 short bugles (Fig. 14) constantly offered on eBay accompanied by copies of p. 43 of *The Illustrated History of Civil War Relics* by a certain Sylvia and O’Donnell. I hastily add that this magnificent pioneering work is almost entirely reliable, and



Fig. 25: A perfect example of the Grandma Said Syndrome. In this photograph taken at a GAR encampment in Washington, DC, in September 1915, Nathaniel Sisson (left) holds a regulation Civil War-issue bugle with large pigtail crook and issue carrying cord. However, his comrade, S.D. Webster, holds a US Model 1892—the most common variation of the example previously shown in Fig. 17.



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you can't blame the boys for failing to challenge the expertise of the curators of the National Park Service's Gettysburg collection. But I do think the NPS curators might have grasped the odds against bugler Orange F. Berdan using a Model 1894 at Custer's headquarters in 1864-'65.

The US Model 1892 field trumpet, a.k.a. the Boy Scout bugle, generally fools fewer folks, although Lord's Vol. 5, p. 29, has a classic example of a vet who apparently belatedly wished he'd saved his original. A.B. Melton, 59th Illinois Infantry, is listed as a deserter, which may account for why a Model 1892 has been attributed to him. Another Model 1892 on the following page of the book has a Lyon & Healy marking, but nothing can justify its Grandma-said history. For reference, see Fig. 17 for a high quality version of the basic US military trumpet from 1892 through WW II. (As noted, you may find a correct Civil War-style bugle cord on a Spanish-American War

through 1920s-period Model 1892, so keep your eyes open.)

A photograph of a 1915 GAR encampment in Washington, DC, illuminates where the Grandma-said problem can originate. Fig. 25 shows Nat Sisson holding a pure regulation bugle with pigtail, garland, and even the original cords, while his pal, S.D. Webster, grasps his spanking new Model 1892, no doubt proudly displayed by some historical society today.

I should note that the Model 1892 and Model 1894 bugles that were issued in WW I should have a maker's name, a government contract specification number, and a date—but even that doesn't help some folks. A couple of years ago in a fancy shop in Leesburg, Virginia, I found a Model 1894 with a clear 1917 contract stamping from Millard, Philadelphia, offered as Confederate. Price: \$395. I think it's still there.

Well, that's about all I've learned about bugles. In fact, it may be more than I know. All US military bugles are fun to study and collect, and even to try to play, the discomfort of wives, children, and assorted furry friends notwithstanding. May you enjoy the hunt and may you find what you seek. Unless it's an example I don't have one of yet, in which case I hope I get there an hour before you do. **NSTCW**

Chris Nelson, a foreign policy analyst in Washington, DC, is a longtime member of the Northern Virginia Relic Hunters Association, a contributing editor for Military Images, a consultant to Time-Life Books' Arms & Equipment of the Civil War, a talking head on "Civil War Journal," and author of Mapping the Civil War (Fulcrum Publishing, 1992).

For additional information, on bugles of the era, please visit www.tapsbugler.com and www.acnbugler.org.

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Bugle A Pictorial



Above, a full regulation Federal infantry bugler with a regulation bugle featuring a garland and a Federal-issue carrying cord. The young soldier is Phillip Conkle, regimental bugler of the 115th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and the *carte de visite* is backmarked "Dewey & Gibson, Cincinnati." The image is also inscribed "1862."



Right, early war Federal bugler in issue musician's short jacket, carrying a regulation double-coil trumpet for mounted troops and an issue cavalry carrying cords. He's got it all: an M1860 Colt army, an M1860 light cavalry sabre, brass shoulder scales, and issue reinforced riding trousers.

Call: Study

assembled by Chris Nelson



Above, an early war Federal zouave bugler (note the US oval waist belt plate) with French-made *clairon* identical to that shown as Fig. 6 in the previous article. It includes a French-issue carrying cord. Detail of a glass slide, courtesy the Brian Pohanka Collection.

Left, West Point bugler Louis Benz holds an 1830s-style "keyed bugle" pitched in B flat in this early war *carte de visite* backmarked "Charles D. Fredericks & Co., New York." Benz's instrument was largely outmoded by 1861. He later removed the keys, but the instrument was patched and is on display at the West Point Museum.





Above, a Federal infantry bugler holds a regulation-issue bugle without garland, and he's actually using the carrying cord in its intended manner: over his shoulder. Note the crease in his trousers—a gentleman of style! (Or perhaps haste.) From an unmarked early war image.

Right, a Native American with small officer's bugle on a cord around his neck and a pistol in his belt. He is clad in a Federal-issue overcoat with the cape removed. Note the brass crossed-cannon artillery hat device. Many hundreds of bugles were presented to Plains Indian tribes during treaty ceremonies after the Civil War. *Carte de visite* courtesy the Jay Hendricks Collection.

Above, the Federal cavalryman as fashion plate: a *clairon*-style bugle is slung over his shoulder on a carrying cord, he carries an M1860 cavalry sabre, and he wears a regulation belt over an unusual, likely private purchase, *plastron* short jacket. The brass lettering on the kepi is out of focus but may indicate a New York unit. From an unmarked *carte de visite*.

Right, a retouched half-plate albumen of an early war Federal militia drum major with an 1840s militia sword, an M1860 Colt army revolver, and a Mexican War-style bugle without garland. The bugle cord is straight from Mme. Fifi's, or perhaps a flag cord pressed into service.



Left, a Federal cavalryman in regulation short jacket, carrying a nonregulation short bugle with a single coil. The issue cavalry carrying cord in this image can be confused with a second coil. From an unmarked *carte de visite* backmarked "B. Shunk, Sandy Hook, Md."

The author thanks the collectors who generously allowed the use of their images.

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RICHMOND HILL PAWN SHOP	RICHMOND HILL	912-756-2266
STONE MOUNTAIN RELICS	STONE MTN.	770-469-1425
TOMORROW ENTERTAINMENT	CALHOUN	706-629-8813

MARYLAND

BAY COUNTRY METAL DETECTORS	PRINCE FRED'CK	410-535-1974
OCEAN CITY PAWN	OCEAN CITY	410-289-6564
REBEL METAL DETECTORS	MILLERSVILLE	410-987-0502

MISSISSIPPI

ANCHOR METAL DETECTORS	BILOXI	228-435-4773
DIXIE METAL DETECTORS	JACKSON	601-952-0581
THE COMMON SOLDIER	VICKSBURG	601-638-6434
TREASURE OUTFITTERS	TUPELO	622-213-3006

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***Congratulations to
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NORTH CAROLINA

BARBEE DETECTOR SALES	BURLINGTON	888-717-6188
BATTLEGROUNDS ANTIQUES INC	NEW BERN	252-636-3039
C & A EQUIPMENT COMPANY	RALEIGH	252-237-9860
COMMON CENTS METAL DETECTORS	SHALLOTTE	910-754-6154
FINDERS c/o ERIC ARMSTRONG	WILMINGTON	910-791-0010
J & K METAL DETECTORS	WILSON	919-231-8700
MILLS' MACHINE COMPANY	CONCORD	704-782-7644
MOUNTAIN DETECTOR SALES	HENDERSONV'L	828-692-7373
TREASURE SEEKERS	RALEIGH	919-790-1172

SOUTH CAROLINA

CAROLINA METAL DETECTORS	GREENVILLE	864-232-0794
CUSTOM PLUMBING & ELECTRICAL	INMAN	864-472-8796
HUNTER'S HARDWARE	BURTON	843-525-0554
REDMOND SIGN COMPANY	CAYCE	803-796-6862
SOUTHERN PRINTING	MULLINS COVE	843-472-8796
THE OUTBOARD SHOP	N. CHARLESTON	843-747-9614
TREASURE HUNTERS	BEAUFORT	843-524-3785
YEMASSEE ENTERPRISES INC.	YEMASSEE	843-589-4010

TENNESSEE

CLASSIC COLLECTIBLES LLC	CHATTANOOGA	423-265-9366
CROWN SALES	LA VERGNE	615-414-6551
DIXIE METAL DETECTOR SALES	MADISON	615-860-4333
RED BANK SWAP SHOP	RED BANK	423-875-6522
SHILOH'S CIVIL WAR RELICS	SHILOH	901-689-4114
TENNESSEE LOST TREASURE	NASHVILLE	615-833-5266
THE PARTS HOUSE	LAWRENCEBURG	931-762-6551
TUMBLEWEED GARDEN CENTER	COWAN	931-962-4658
VOLUNTEER RELICS	SEYMOUR	865-579-6126

VIRGINIA

ANDERSON DETECTORS	LYNCHBURG	804-528-3117
BREWER ENTERPRISES	CENTREVILLE	703-830-8287
CHANDLER'S ANTIQUES & MILITARY	MECHANICSV'L	804-730-1576
DD & H DETECTOR SALES	HAMPTON	757-850-2064
DEAN'S BIKES	MARION	540-783-5760
PETE BROWN	BRANDY STN.	540-829-0452
RON'S DETECTORS 'N' RELICS	MT. JACKSON	540-984-3950
THE PICKET POST	FREDERICKSB'G	540-371-7703