

CIVIL WAR SLANG VOCABULARY BANK

The military of today has a distinctive and sometimes confusing catalog of terms, unique and all its own. The Civil War soldier had a wide variety of names for the things that they used in their daily routines. They also invented slang terms or nicknames for their equipment and experiences. Many of these expressions were based on military terms, lighthearted humor, or biblical references and can still be found in our everyday language.

<u>ACCOUTREMENTS</u> : A soldier's fighting equipments, made of leather.	<u>SHIRKER</u> : A soldier who wouldn't do his duty on the battlefield.
<u>A BEAT</u> : A lazy soldier.	<u>TOUGH AS A KNOT</u> : In good health.
<u>BOMBPROOF</u> : Officers who never went to the front (where the fighting was).	<u>VITTLES</u> : Food or rations.
<u>BONES</u> : Dice	<u>YANK</u> : Confederate soldier's term for a Union Soldier (Billy Yank).
<u>BEDROLL</u> : Rolled blankets containing personal belongings, carried by soldiers.	<u>SHEET IRON CRACKERS (HARDTACK)</u> : Very hard crackers. Coffee was used to get the bugs out of it.
<u>CARRIAGE</u> : Wooden mount for artillery.	<u>BREAD BASKET</u> : The stomach.
<u>DOGROBBER</u> : A soldier of a group who cooks for everyone.	<u>ARKANSAS TOOTHPICK</u> - A large knife.
<u>FIRST RATE</u> : Feeling good	<u>FIT TO BE TIED</u> : Angry
<u>FORAGE</u> : To search for food from nearby farms	<u>HUNKEY DOREY</u> : O.K. or good.
<u>FRESH FISH</u> : New recruits	<u>BUGGER OR SKUNK</u> : Officer
<u>GREENBACKS</u> : Money	<u>SNUG AS A BUG</u> : Comfortable
<u>GUM BLANKET</u> : Rubber-coated cloth sheet used as a rain cover.	<u>HORNETS</u> : bullets
<u>HAVERSACK</u> : Cloth for carrying rations and utensils	<u>POSSUM</u> - A buddy or friend
<u>HOUSEWIFE</u> : A sewing kit	<u>SCARCE AS A HEN'S TEETH</u> - Rare, scarce or hard to find.
<u>HORSE SENSE</u> : Smart or to use good sense	<u>HARD CASE</u> : Tough
<u>JOHNNY</u> : Union soldiers term for a Confederate soldier (Southern Soldier) (Johnny Reb)	<u>BLUFF</u> : Cheater
<u>JONAH</u> : A soldier with bad luck.	<u>JAILBIRD</u> : Criminal
<u>PICKET</u> : A guard or guard duty	<u>BEEN THROUGH THE MILL</u> : Dealt with a lot
<u>SAWBONES</u> : The surgeon of the regiment	<u>PLAYED OUT</u> : Worn out
<u>SEEING THE ELEPHANT</u> : A man's first experience in combat.	<u>TOEING THE MARK</u> : Obeying orders.
<u>REBEL</u> : Common term for a Southern soldier.	<u>KEPI</u> : A cap or hat
<u>COMRADE</u> : A close friend or companion.	<u>BUMMER</u> : A soldier who would take supplies from local townspeople.
<u>ENLIST</u> : To join the army.	<u>BATTLE/ENGAGEMENT</u> : A large-scale fight between two armies.