

WAR,

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That alone was a tricky prospect because patients could only ingest so much without becoming poisoned. A smaller tool, developed by a Confederate surgeon, was inserted into the nostrils and would have allowed for longer sedation because the patient could still draw oxygen through the mouth.

"But it was discarded after the war because it was assumed that the Confederate surgeon didn't know the job well enough," Cross said.

Given the nature of the tools available and the horrific injuries suffered on the battlefield, Civil War surgeons have a bad rap as "butchers" who didn't care. Reading the diary of a surgeon returning home from the battlefield changed Cross' mind.

"He was going home from Gettysburg after spending such a long time in the field that he couldn't open and close his

hands anymore. His assistant had to put tools in his hand and close his fist around them," Cross said. "He said he did it because he wasn't sure who would do it if he wasn't in the field. This was someone who really cared."

Many re-enactors are encouraged to read letters from the time period, but Cross finds diaries to be much more illuminating because the authors never expected them to be read by family members.

Cross said he spends a lot of time in libraries researching the time period, but he was greatly helped by reproductions of actual surgeon manuals given to Union and Confederate troops.

"They're written in such a way that even if the surgeon hadn't performed the procedure before, an assistant could read it to him while he was working," Cross said.

Corporal Tim O'Neal, with the 116th Pennsylvania Volunteers, also found his calling off the battlefield. After starting as infantry in 2013, he and wife KathyJo are now artificers in the engineering corp.

"Basically, it means we can

go out and tell 100 other people what to do," Tim said.

Tim and KathyJo are working on a Cumberland pontoon, a folding bridge capable of spanning a large divide such as a river. Tim made his way to the engineering corps because he could put his carpentry and metalworking skills to use.

"I just kind of got tired of shooting at each other. I prefer to build than anything else, so I busted myself down from sergeant to artificer," Tim said.

Artificers were the skilled workers with specialties like carpentry or blacksmithing who worked closely with officers that were frequently graduates of West Point. Tim joined the 116th Pennsylvania because his family hails from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Tim's third great grandfather served with the 15th New Jersey during the Civil War.

"Re-enacting gives you a real sense of what they went through," Tim said. "Even the tools we use to make things are the same ones I remember seeing and working with alongside my grandfather."

KathyJo started as part of the cooking unit with some of the other wives in the troop, but found she liked working alongside her husband better. Tim handles the woodworking and cutting while KathyJo coats the wood in linseed oil and paints. During the past five years, they've built everything in their campsite from tables and chairs to the metal stoves.

"We built it all, we don't buy anything," KathyJo said. She wants Tim's next project to be a wagon to haul it all into camp.



A: Andrew Heely, William Coito and Spencer Mueller muster for a photograph.
B: Union officers inspect their troops.
C: Karen Bell, of Corvallis, shelters from the heat under a parasol.

D: Confederate soldiers fire a cannon.
E: Confederate soldiers are shot while making a charge on the field.
F: A Union regiment lost several soldiers while capturing a Confederate post.



Photos by Eric A. Howald and Random Pendragon

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