

Spec/Text Sheet & Bibliographical Notes

Hand and machine stitched bed coverings. Machine embroidered text.

Duffle Bag (*U.S. Military Tent Shelter/standard ground troop pup-tent: new-old stock, olive drab green, cotton sateen, with 2 used olive drab Swedish Military Surplus Straps and 4 metal buttons*)
20" (W) x 27 1/2" (L – closed). 35 1/2" (L – with flap opened)

Antique, doll or salesman sample, folding army cot.

9 1/2" (W) x 24" (L) x 8" (H)

Pillow Case (*vintage cotton off-white mattress cover with ink jet printed image*)

7 1/2" (W) x 5 1/4" (L)

Pillow (*vintage blue and white pillowcase ticking, cotton batting stuffing*)

6 1/2" (W) x 4 1/2" (L)

Blanket rolled at end of bed (*vintage brown wool blanket, lined with vintage tan cotton blanket, with 2 used olive drab Swedish Military Surplus Straps hand-sewn to blanket*)

17" (W) x 24" (L)

Blanket (*vintage green wool army blanket with moth holes*)

20" (W) x 30" (L)

Top sheet (*vintage white cotton bed sheet*)

19 1/2" (W) x 27" (L)

Bottom sheet (*vintage off-white cotton mattress cover, 8 machine-stitched button holes, 8 metal buttons attached with used olive drab Swedish Military Surplus strap pieces*)

19 1/2" (W) x 29" (L)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Alcott, Louisa May, *"Hospital Sketches,"* 1863. The four sketches that make up this book are based on the letters Louisa sent home during the six weeks she spent volunteering as a nurse. During this time she became the superintendant of a 40 bed ward at the Union Hotel General Hospital in Georgetown. The book received critical and popular acclaim, making Louisa an overnight success. It was during this time that she met the head matron, Hannah Ropes.

Edmonds, Sara Emma, *Memoirs of a soldier, nurse, and spy: a woman's adventures in the Union Army*, 1865.

Original titled: *"Unsexed: or, the Female Soldier"* 1864, 1st edition. Reprinted 1999.

Holland, Mary, *"Our Army Nurses*, 1867.

Holstein, Mrs. Anna Morris Ellis, *Three Years in Field Hospistals of the Army of the Potomac*, 1867.

Livermore, Mary, *My Story of the War*, 1888.

Ropes, Hannah, her diary, c. 1862. Abandoned by her husband, Hannah took charge of her life and volunteered as a nurse in 1862 and was soon made head matron on the Union Hotel General Hospital in Georgetown, D.C. Before the war, Hannah was recognized as a reformer and abolitionist. It was through her reputation she was acquainted with many New England politicians who she was able to call upon for help in collecting supplies and other needed materials for the wounded during the war.

“H.T.W.E.” (...his thanks were enough...) – Crimean/Civil War cot/bed text

Taylor, Susie King, *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp with the 33rd United States Colored Troops*, 1902. Susie King Taylor was a former slave who followed her husband, Sergeant Edward King, and brother into the Union Army in South Carolina. For three years she moved with their regiments serving as an unpaid nurse and laundress while also teaching the soldiers of those units to read and write. She is the only African American woman known to have published a memoir of her wartime experiences. More information regarding Susie King Taylor can be found at <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-1097>

Woolsey, Jane Stuart, *Hospital Days: Reminiscence of a Civil War Nurse, 1862*
Union Nurse and Hospital Superintendent, 1861 to 1865.

More about Civil War nurses can be found here: <http://www.historynet.com/civil-war-nurses>

Other NOTES:

Duffle bag text: Sarah Emma Edmonds (December 1841—September 5, 1898), was a Canadian-born woman who is known for serving with the Union Army during the American Civil War as a field nurse, and later a spy – disguised as “Frank Thompson.”

She left the army after becoming sick and feared that her identity would be found out in the hospital. She then served as a female nurse at a Washington, D.C. hospital for wounded soldiers run by the U. S. Christian Commission.

In 1864 her memoirs, “*The Female Spy of the Union Army*” was published and was a huge success.

In 1867, she married L. H. Seelye, a Canadian mechanic with whom she had three children.

In 1886, she received a government pension of \$12 a month for her military service, and after some campaigning, gained an honorable discharge. In 1897, she became the only woman admitted to the Grand Army of the Republic, the Civil War Union Army veterans' organization.

Edmonds died in La Porte, Texas and is buried in Washington Cemetery in Houston, Texas.

She was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in 1992

Info sourced: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Emma_Edmonds

Pie chart images: 1858. These diagrams were created by Florence Nightingale (considered to be a pioneer of medical statistics, among her many talents) working with statistician William Farr. Now referred to as an early form of pie chart. At the time, these diagrams were called either a “Coxcomb,” or “Polar Area Diagram,” which graphically illustrated that more British troops died of disease during the Crimean War than in battle.

Specifically, these 2 diagrams showed the mortality in the British army in the east from April 1854 to March 1856.

Each diagram extends over a period of one year. The dotted line corresponds with the yearly mortality in the city of Manchester, UK around the same time (which amounted to 12.4 per thousand).

The polar area diagrams were published in the form of pamphlets and were distributed to influential politicians, eventually altering the course of medical/sanitation history. As a result of this type of information, sub-commissions were set up in order to establish new reforms to be used in the hospitals at home in England, similar to the reforms that Florence Nightingale had established in the hospitals during the Crimean War, which saved so many lives.

[more info: <http://www.datascope.be/sog/SOG-Chapter5.pdf>]

An interactive version of this pie-chart graphic can be found here:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/aug/13/florence-nightingale-graphics>

Duffel Bag

The hospital corps consists of a surgeon, an assistant surgeon, a hospital steward, a ward-master, four nurses, two cooks, and a man of all work to carry water, cut wood, and make himself generally useful. The immediate care of the sick devolves upon those four nurses, who are generally detailed from the ranks, each one being on duty six hours without intermission. The surgeons visit the patients twice very day, oftener if required; the prescriptions are filled by the hospital steward, and the medicine is administered by the nurses. The nurses are usually very kind to the sick, and when off duty in the hospital, spend much of their time in digging drains around the tents, planting evergreens, and putting up awnings, all of which add much to the coolness and comfort of the hospital. Draining the grounds is a very important part of hospital duty, for when those terrible thunderstorms come, which are so frequent in the south, it is morally impossible to keep the tent floors from being flooded, unless there are drains all around the tents. Great excitement prevails in camp during those tempests – the rain comes down in torrents, while the wind blows a hurricane –lifting the tents from the ground, and throwing everything into wild confusion. I have seen a dozen men stand for hours around one hospital, holding down the ropes and tent poles to prevent the sick from being exposed to the raging elements.

I shall notice, briefly, the manner in which the hospitals are conducted in camp. There are large tents furnished for hospital purposes, which will accommodate from twenty to twenty-five men. These tents are usually put up in the most pleasant and shady part of the camp; the inside is nicely leveled, and board floors laid, if boards can be procured, if not, rubber blankets are laid down instead. Sometimes there are straw ticks and cot bedsteads furnished, but not in sufficient quantity to supply all the hospitals. Along each side of the tent the sick are laid, on blankets or cots, leaving room to pass between the beds. In the center of the tent stands a temporary board table, on which are kept books, medicines, et cetera.

In one of those storms, I saw a tent blown down, in which one of our officers lay suffering from typhoid fever. We did our best to keep him dry until a stretcher could be procured, but all in vain. Notwithstanding we wrapped him in rubber blankets and shawls, yet the rain penetrated them all, and by the time he was carried to a house, a quarter of a mile distant, he was completely drenched. He was a noble fellow....Mrs. B and I remained with him alternately until he died, which was five days from that time. We sent for his wife, who arrived just in time to see him die.

“Frank”, Sarah E. E, 1861

Sarah Emma Edmonds, c. 1861

Bag back flap edge

H.T.W.E.

[project title “...his thanks were enough....”]

Bag inside flap

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Pillowcase front [printed image with text]

I spent my shining hours washing faces, serving rations, giving medicine, and sitting in a very hard chair, with pneumonia on one side, diphtheria on the other, two typhoids opposite and a dozen dilapidated patriots hopping, lying, and lounging about, all staring more or less at the new "nuss," who suffered untold agonies, but concealed them under as matronly an aspect as a spinster could assume, and blundered through her trying labors with a Spartan firmness, which I hope they appreciated, but am afraid they didn't. Louisa M.A., 1862

Louisa May Alcott, superintendence of a ward of forty beds. January 1863, Union Hotel Hospital, Georgetown, D.C.

Pillow front

"Gave my only straw pillow to a wounded Zouave, Sergeant Beecher, from Connecticut;

Pillowcase back [printed image with text]

There was a standing misunderstanding on the question...who was authorized to supply women nurses. An attempt was made, late in 1863, ostensibly to clear up this question.

An order No. 351 of the War Department, Clause Two says: Women – nurses will be assigned only on application to the General Superintendent, unless adds Clause Three, they are specially appointed by the Surgeon General. Jane S.W., 1868

Jane Stuart Woolsey, Civil War, 1868

Pillow back

his thanks were enough to make my sleep sweet without it."

Anna M.E.H., 1864

Mrs. Anna Morris Ellis Holstein, June 3, 1864

Brown Blanket rolled on end of bed

I have never forgotten the goodbyes of that day, as they left camp, Colonel Trowbridge said to me as he left,

"Good-by, Mrs. King, take care of yourself if you don't see us again."

I went with them as far as the landing, and watched them until they got out of sight, and then I returned to the camp. There was no one at camp but those left on picket and a few disabled soldiers, and one woman, a friend of mine, Mary Shaw, and it was lonesome and sad, now that the boys were gone, some never to return.

Mary Shaw shared my tent that night, and we went to bed, but not to sleep, for the fleas nearly ate us alive..

Brown Blanket rolled on end of bed - back side

We caught a few, but it did seem, now that the men were gone, that every flea in camp had located my tent, and caused us to vacate. Sleep being out of the question, we sat up the remainder of the night

About four o'clock, July 2, the charge was made. The firing could be plainly heard in camp. I hastened down to the landing...the wounded arrived.... Then others of our boys, some with their legs off, arm gone, foot off, and wounds of all kinds imaginable.... My work now began. I gave my assistance to try to alleviate their sufferings.... My services were given at all times for the comfort of these men. I was on hand to assist whenever needed. Susie K.T., c. 1863

Susie King Taylor

Green Blanket top side

"No woman under thirty need apply to serve in the government hospitals. All nurses are required to be plain looking women. Their dresses must be brown, or black, with no bows, no curls, no jewelry, and no hoop skirts."

Dorothy D, c. 1860

Dorothy Dix, circular/bulletin for nurse qualifications, c. 1860

I am in possession of one of your circulars, and will comply with all your requirements. I am plain looking enough to suit you and old enough. I have no near relative in the war. I have never had a husband and I am not looking for one. Will you take me? Mary H.

Reply from Mary Holland

[the reply was]

"Report at once to my house, corner of fourteenth street and New York Avenue, Washington."

Dorothy D, c. 1860

Dorothy Dix, c. 1860

Green Blanket back side

On a pillow was pinned the following note, unsealed, for sealed notes were never broken: —

My Dear Friend, — You are not my husband nor son; but you are the husband or son of some woman who undoubtedly loves you as I love mine. I have made these garments for you with a heart that aches for your sufferings and with a longing to come to you to assist in taking care of you. It is a great comfort to me that God loves and pities you, pining and lonely in a far-off hospital; and if you believe in God, it will also be a comfort to you.

There was exhumed from one box a bushel of cookies, tied in a pillow-case, with this benevolent wish tacked on the outside:

"These cookies are expressly for sick soldiers, and if any body else eats them, I hope they will choke him!"

Mary L., c. 1860

Mary Livermore, written while working at the Chicago Sanitary Commission, first year of Civil war packages sent from aid societies.

Top sheet top side

December 11, 1862

All went well, and I got to Georgetown one evening very tired. Was kindly welcomed, slept in my narrow bed with two other room-mates, and on the morrow began my new life by seeing a poor man die at dawn, and sitting all day between a boy with pneumonia and a man shot through the lungs. A strange day, but I did my best...

Louisa M.A.

Louisa May Alcott, first day at Union Hotel Hospital, Georgetown, D.C.

December 13, 1862

"We are cheered by the arrival of Miss Alcott from Concord – the prospect of a really good nurse, a gentlewoman who can do more than merely keep the patients from falling out of bed."

Hannah R.

Hannah Ropes, diary, December 13, 1862

Bottom sheet top side

Another day, running up to my room for a breath of fresh air and a five minutes rest after a disagreeable task, I found a stout young woman sitting on my bed, wearing the miserable look which I had learned to know by that time. Seeing her, reminded me that I had heard of some one's dying in the night, and his sister's arriving in the morning. This must be she, I thought. I pitied her with all my heart. What could I say or do?

Words always seem impertinent at such times; I did not know the man; the woman was neither interesting in herself nor graceful in her grief; yet, having known a sister's sorrow myself, I could have not leave her alone with her trouble in that strange place, without a word.

Top sheet back side

Till noon I trot, trot, giving out rations, cutting up food for helpless "boys," washing faces, teaching my attendants how beds are made or floors are swept, dressing wounds...dusting tables, sewing bandages, keeping my tray tidy, rushing up and down after pillows, bed-linen, sponges, books, and directions, till it seems as if I would joyfully pay down all I possess for fifteen minutes' rest. At twelve the big bell rings, and up comes dinner for the boys, who are always ready for it, and never entirely satisfied...

Supper at five sets everyone to running that can run; and when that flurry is over, all settle down for the evening....

At nine the bell rings, gas is turned down, and day nurses go to bed. Night nurses go on duty, and sleep and death have the house to themselves.

Louisa M.A., 1862

Louisa May Alcott, Union Hotel Hospital, Georgetown, D.C.

Bottom sheet back side

So, feeling heart-sick, home-sick, and not knowing what else to do, I just put my arms about her, and began to cry in a very helpless but hearty way; for, as I seldom indulge in this moist luxury, I like to enjoy it with all my might, when I do.

It so happened I could not have done a better thing; for, though not a word was spoken, each felt the other's sympathy; and, in the silence, our handkerchiefs were more eloquent than words. She soon sobbed herself quiet; and leaving her on my bed, I went back to work, feeling much refreshed by the shower, though I'd forgotten to rest, and had washed my face instead of my hands.

Louisa M.A., 1862

Louisa May Alcott, Union Hotel Hospital, Georgetown, D.C.

Antique cot w/canvas top side
(stretched and nailed onto frame)

Was the system of
Women nurses in hospitals
a failure?
There never was any system.
That the presence of
hundred of individual women
as nurses in hospitals was
neither an intrusion
nor a blunder,
let the multitude of their
unsystematized labors and
achievements testify.

Hospital nurses were of all
sorts, and came from various
sources of supply; volunteers
paid or unpaid, soldiers' wives
and sisters who had come to
see their friends, and remained
without any clear commission or duties...

These women were set adrift
in a hospital...for the most part
slightly uneducated,
without training or discipline,
without company
organization or officers.

Jane S.W., 1868

Jane Stuart Woolsey, Civil War, 1868

Antique cot back/under side
(w/lined green army surplus tent canvas)

It was a lively scene;
the long room lined
with rows of beds,
each filled by an
occupant... the clash
of busy spoons made
most inspiring music
for the charge of our
Light Brigade:

"Beds to the front of them,
Beds to the right of them,
Beds to the left of them,
Nobody blundered.
Beamed at by hungry
souls, Screamed at with
brimming bowls,
Steamed at by army rolls,
Buttered and sundered.
With coffee not cannon
plied,
Each must be satisfied,
Whether they lived or died;
All the men wondered."

Louisa M.A., 1863

Louisa May Alcott, 1863