

WEAPONS OF WAR



THE .58 CALIBER SPRINGFIELD RIFLE was the predominate weapon used by Union troops.

Weapons on either side of the Civil War had slight differences, but similar purposes within the same structure: **INFANTRY**, **ARTILLERY**, and **CALVARY**. Each of these branches had their own weapons and roles to play.



THE .577 CALIBER ENFIELD RIFLE was a British import mostly used by the Confederates.



CAVALRY

These soldiers were on horses and the eyes and ears of the army. In the Atlanta campaign, fast moving cavalry usually screened the movements of the infantry, held the flanks or vulnerable ends of the main lines, and served as advance elements or rearguard.

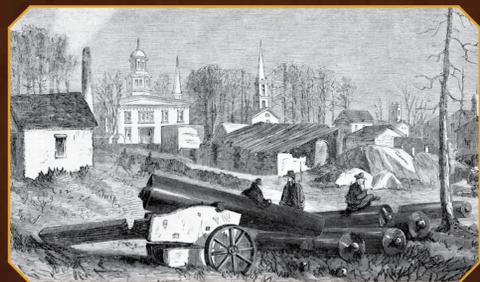
Cavalry generally had newly developed breechloading carbines, easier to reload on horseback. Many used self-contained brass cartridges; these were weatherproof and could be rapidly fired.

Sabers were used in close fighting.

Sometimes cavalry protected the end of the line.



ARTILLERY



Artillery soldiers manned the large cannon.

These soldiers shot the cannon – much larger weapons with longer range. They were on high ground during the battles, protected by infantry. They shelled enemy fortifications and broke up enemy attacks with

solid shot ammunition. They fired case shot, which was designed to explode over enemies' heads to cause maximum damage. Tin canisters full of smaller shot were used for close range shooting. Sharpshooters often targeted them because of their effectiveness.

Field artillery consisted of two primary gun types, 12 pounder smoothbore Napoleons and 3-inch rifled artillery.

The bronze smoothbore Napoleons were the primary defensive and close-range artillery in both armies. They lobbed 4.62-inch exploding spherical shot over entrenchments and obstructions, and tin canisters full of smaller shot at close quarters.

The wrought iron rifled artillery “was a dead shot at any distance under a mile,” reported one gunner, and “could hit a flour barrel more often than not.”

INFANTRY



These soldiers skirmished and fought with the enemy in close combat.

These were the men in the trenches, skirmishing, and combatting. All jobs were filled with danger, but this was the most dangerous job, as they were doing the main fighting. Skilled infantrymen could fire their

muzzleloading rifles twice a minute and were accurate to 300 yards.

The primary infantry weapon used by both sides during the Atlanta campaign was the muzzleloading rifled musket.

The .58 caliber Springfield rifle was the predominate weapon used by Union troops, and the imported British .577 caliber Enfield rifle (and locally made copies) was mostly used by the Confederates.

Both of these weapons were of the highest quality and captured rifles were prized and used by both sides. The ammunition was interchangeable. Cartridges were manufactured in arsenals by wrapping bullet and gunpowder together in brown paper.

Bayonets were used in close combat, though many soldiers preferred to use clubbed muskets.