

A new clothing case for the soldier / by W. Thornton Parker.

Contributors

Parker, William Thornton, 1849-1925.
Royal College of Surgeons of England

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A NEW

CLOTHING

FOR THE SOLDIER

BY

W. THORNTON PARKER,

Newport, R. I.

Law A. A. Surgeon U. S. A.

PATENT APPLIED FOR

NEWPORT, R. I.:
Dunn & PIERCE, PRINTERS.
1896.

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A NEW

CLOTHING CASE

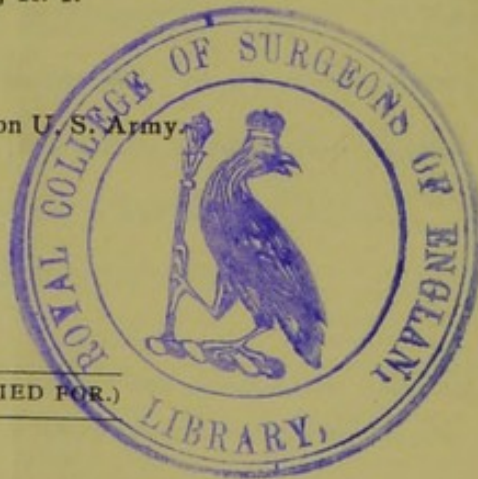
FOR THE SOLDIER,

BY

W. THORNTON PARKER, M. D.

NEWPORT, R. I.

Late A. A. Surgeon U. S. Army.



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NEWPORT, R. I.:
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A NEW CLOTHING CASE FOR THE SOLDIER.

The description of a new Clothing Case for the soldier published for the first time in the Army and Navy Register and subsequently in a more complete form in the Journal of the American Medical Association of March 6th, 1886, has attracted so much favorable attention from military men both in this country and in Europe that I have been obliged to publish reprints of the article referred to and these becoming exhausted, it has become necessary to prepare still another little pamphlet more fully explaining the invention.

The importance of this subject cannot be overestimated and as Surgeon Woodhull, U. S. A., has stated "*The mobility of an army is an important factor in military success.*" "*The less weight a soldier carries and the better it is distributed, the more effective he is.*"* These important essentials, many competent military officers claim have been furnished in the "Clothing Case for the soldier" about to be described.

W. THORNTON PARKER, M. D.

Late A. A. Surgeon, U. S. Army

Newport, R. I., March 8, '87.

*Reference Handbook of the Med. Sciences Vol. III p. 702 Article on Military Hygiene, Dr. Woodhull, U. S. A.

[Army and Navy Register, Washington, D. C., August 15th, 1885.]

SOLDIER'S CLOTHING CASE.

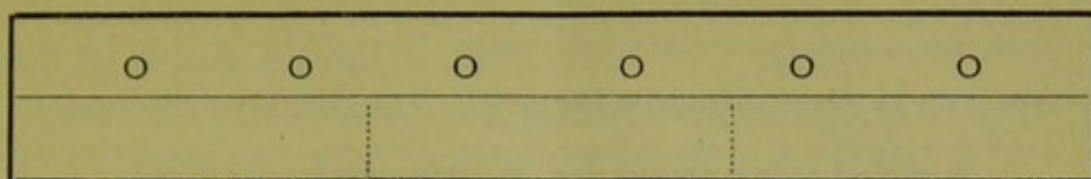
We publish with pleasure the following description of a Clothing Case for soldiers, to be worn inside the folded blanket, by W. Thornton Parker, M. D., late Act. Asst. Surgeon, U. S. Army :

It was the experience of many Army officers during the war of the Rebellion, that soldiers invariably on long marches, threw away their knapsacks, together with the clothing contained in them. Or else if determined to save some clothing, did so by wrapping it up in the folded blanket which they wore over the left shoulder.

During the Franco-Prussian war, many regiments transported their clothing wrapped in blankets and worn suspended from the left shoulder. The ends of the blanket were secured by straps or cords at the right side. The right shoulder remained free for the carrying of the rifle and an easy movement of the right arm. The different forms of knapsacks which I have examined, in use in the German, Austrian, French, Italian, Swiss, English and American Armies, are clumsy, heavy and too fatiguing for the soldier's use. The German government recognizes these defects, in the present system of transporting clothing, and a prize has been accordingly offered for the best mode of carrying the soldier's extra clothing while in the field.

The American knapsack and clothing bag are exceedingly faulty, and must necessarily weary and lame the soldier and be thrown away whenever an opportunity offers.

Undoubtedly a good plan is needed for carrying the extra clothing when in the field. To remedy some of the defects which I have mentioned, I have devised and applied for letters patent for a Clothing Case which many officers of the Regular Army have kindly examined and approved of. The Case is made of light canvas rubber cloth, or waterproof cloth. It weighs seven and one-half ounces. A strip of cloth four feet six inches long, and six-



teen inches or eighteen inches wide, is folded (longitudinally) to make a pocket six or eight inches deep with a covering flap. The ends are sewed up, and some stiches at a third of its length, make three equal divisions. Six buttons hold the flap in place (when filled). Loops at either end enable the soldier to wear it secured at the ends over the left shoulder without blanket or overcoat if desired.

For inspection it can be spread out on top of the blankets, on the mattress, or folded one-third of its length. The Case will hold one pair of drawers, two shirts, two pairs of stockings, towels and extra pieces of clothing.

It is useful in that it can be worn for days without giving fatigue and the weight is so evenly distributed that the soldier is not fatigued or disposed to throw it away.

Upon reaching camp, the blanket can be unrolled and the Case hung up or thrown in a corner the clothing remaining in the Case clean and undisturbed.

If the clothing were simply rolled in the blanket, it would be likely to get scattered about the tent, and soiled or wet with mud and rain. The Case does away with the necessity of knapsack and clothing bag and can be furnished at slight expense, and rapidly and easily manufactured. No clothing case could be more easily carried than one suspended from the shoulder.

It is intended that this Case be worn in the folded blanket or overcoat, from the left shoulder, giving the right arm full play and allowing the right shoulder to be free for carrying the rifle. It is respectfully submitted to the officers of the Army and Navy for their consideration.

Newport, R. I., August, 1885.

[Journal of the American Medical Association, March 6th, 1886.]

A NEW CLOTHING CASE FOR THE SOLDIER.

The science of medicine has for its purpose not only the cure of disease, but, infinitely more important, the prevention of sickness and of suffering. Students of the medical profession—and, as long as we are faithful to our calling, we who are known as medical doctors must also be students—investigate matters pertaining to prevention and cure in every direction. To one the ability is given to contribute books of instruction; to another records for reference; to others instruments for operative surgery, instruments for diagnosis, appliances for deformities, apparatus for the relief of the injured, appliances to protect against deadly pestilence, and the simpler articles to aid in general hygiene. There are many workers, and much material offered for inspection which must prove worthless and useless. From the great gathering of the efforts of thousands some things prove of value and are accepted and are permitted to do useful and honorable service. All can not be utilized. Some things must be rejected, but the faithful worker brings his offering to the profession and patiently waits the verdict of his peers and of his seniors.

The experience which was won by the dreadful War of the Rebellion in this country, has had its good effects all over the world. The lessons learned by our medical officers and sanitarians have been made use of in every war since, and the valuable records are stored ready for future instruction. The study of military hygiene is of the utmost importance. The preservation of the health of the soldier, with a view to increasing its effectiveness and diminish the causes which weaken, injure and invalid him, are worthy of the most careful study, investigation and experiment. The poetical and romantic in uniform and ceremony must fall before the searching analysis of the practical question. All that relates to the soldier, his food, clothing, camp, arms, recreations, duties, physical condition, morality, all these and many more must interest those who have the soldier's real and lasting

welfare at heart. The soldier, to be effective as a fighting man, must be able to go on the battle-field in a condition of strength and general "smartness." The valuable property of the soldier, called "*esprit de corps*", must suffer very decidedly when the body is exhausted and when the "mob action" is seen on every side.

It is the purpose of this paper to treat of only one detail in the soldier's make-up, and although that may seem to the general observer unimportant, a more important subject could hardly be considered. It was the experience of many army officers, during the War of the Rebellion in the United States, that soldiers, although provided with the best knapsacks which could be manufactured, invariably threw them away upon long marches, together with the clothing contained in them, rather than endure the fearful physical suffering which resulted from carrying them. Those who were determined to save some extra clothing did so by wrapping it up in the rolled blanket or overcoat, which they wore over the left shoulder. During the Franco-Prussian war many regiments transported their extras wrapped in blankets or overcoats and worn swung over the left shoulder. The ends of the overcoat or blanket were secured by straps or cords at the right side. The right arm and shoulder would therefore remain free for the carrying of the rifle, and easy movement for loading, aiming, firing, charging, and other exercises of the soldier could all be promptly executed. The different forms of knapsacks which I have examined, although remarkably similar in appearance in the German, Austrian, French, English, Dutch, Italian, Swiss and American armies, are clumsy, heavy and too fatiguing for the soldier's use in peace, even, much less useful in time of war. The necessity for the easy transportation of the soldier's kit by the soldier is often of the greatest importance when in actual warfare and liable to long marches, especially when the quartermaster's train has failed, or when the rapid movement of armies is necessary, without the aid of wagons and horses.

The knapsack is especially undesirable because its straps draw heavily against the muscles used in respiration. The tugging of the "pack" impedes the act of respiration very greatly, especially when the body is fatigued. The oppression caused by the weight

of the knapsack, and its interference with normal breathing, is so great that I have seen soldiers faint away and even fall in ranks at Sunday morning inspection, after carrying the knapsack only a short time. The distress from the weight of the knapsack often causes a large per cent. of stragglers and sick men before the troops even reach the battle-field. An army is thereby deprived of many men of excellent courage and intelligence who would, by their presence, have aided much in action towards the general success, but whose physical resources were not equal to the dreadful "pack" on their backs. The pressure and contact of the knapsack heats and weakens that portion of the body against which it rests, and after reaching camp or a halt, its removal exposes the soldier to additional chances of taking cold.

Any one who has witnessed the departure of troops for the war, in what is called *heavy* marching order, must have noticed countless men already nearly tired out, struggling to keep up appearances and bear, in a soldierly way their "pack." It was an easy matter to estimate how many, from the weight of the knapsack, must soon break down and become useless as fighting men.

To remedy some of the defects and dangers which we have been considering, I have devised an "Army Clothing Case," which very many of the officers of the United States Army, and also officers of the Army of the Union during the war, have examined and highly approved of. The Newport Medical Society, at the regular monthly meeting held December 2d, formally approved of this Case, and have recommended it to all army boards for use, instead of the knapsack.

The Case is made of light canvas or waterproof cloth, and when completed it weighs but a fraction of the weight of the average knapsack. It is manufactured as follows:

A strip of cloth four feet long, or four feet six inches is a better length, by sixteen inches wide, is folded to make a pocket six or eight inches deep. This is done by making the covering flap lengthwise, and dividing it into three pockets by a few stitches across at a third of its length, making three equal divisions. Six buttons hold the flap in place. Loops at either end enable the soldier to wear it secured at the ends without its being rolled in blanket or overcoat. This Case will hold two pairs of drawers,

two flannel shirts, two pairs of stockings, towels and other extra pieces of clothing, and the "soldier's book."

It is useful in that it can be worn for days without giving fatigue, and the weight is so evenly distributed that the soldier does not suffer from carrying it or feel disposed to throw it away. Upon reaching camp the blanket can be unrolled and the Case hung up or thrown in the corner, the clothing remaining in the Case clean and undisturbed. The Case will be found useful as a pillow when folded. When the clothing is rolled loosely in the blanket only, upon reaching camp the blanket is needed and the contents are likely to be scattered about the tent and soiled or ruined with mud and rain.

This Clothing Case does away with the necessity for knapsack or clothing bag, and can be manufactured easily and quickly, and at a trifling expense compared with the cost for the manufacture of knapsacks. The expense saved by the use of this Case would be very great indeed in the equipment of even one regiment. No clothing case could be more easily carried than one suspended from the shoulder. It can be used at all times, even in action, and would then offer considerable protection of the vital organs against musket balls.

It is intended that this Case be worn in the rolled blanket suspended from the left shoulder, giving the right arm full play and allowing, as we have seen, the utmost freedom in the performance of the most important exercises of the manual of arms. It weighs from seven and one-half to eight and one-half ounces.

Newport, R. I., March, 1886,

[Article of Surgeon Woodhull, U. S. Army, in the Reference Handbook of the Medical Sciences, page 722, vol. 3.]

SOLDIER'S CLOTHING CASE.

The weight of the blanket bag with the straps is a little over two pounds. The remainder of the equipment consists of a haversack to hold three day's rations, and a canteen of three pints capacity with three straps, a tin cup, a meat can that can be used as two independent dishes, and knife, fork and spoon. These weigh nearly four and one-half pounds. The accoutrements consist of a cartridge belt, gun sling, knife scabbard and bayonet scabbard and weigh a little more than two pounds. The carrying apparatus alone therefore weighs nearly nine pounds. To this must be added a rifle and bayonet weighing nearly nine and one-half pounds, and fifty cartridges weighing a little more than five and one-half pounds, and a hunting knife weighing nearly ten ounces. Hence without reckoning food or clothing, the soldier in time of battle carries about his person nearly twenty-four pounds. The utmost reduction by discarding the blanket bag, straps and knife, leaves the soldier with twenty-one pounds of apparatus of various kinds. To this must be added three pounds of water in his canteen, and five pounds of bread and meat for two days in his haversack. In his blanket bag which in theory he carries, he would have one blanket, towel, comb, brush, soap, socks and two shirts, weighing in all nine pounds.

The overcoat is supposed to be rolled on top and weighs six pounds ten ounces and two pounds must be added for the shelter tent if carried. This would make the weight of the clothing and kindred articles besides what he is wearing seventeen and one-half pounds. The clothing actually on his person weighs about ten and one-half pounds. Add the weight previously noted, and we have the soldier as he advances in heavy marching towards the enemy, carrying sixty pounds. Practically he would not carry as much day by day, by about ten or fifteen pounds having sacrificed a part of his clothing. The official weights of the

British soldier, whose coat and blanket are lighter are about fifty-five pounds; the French, seventy-two and one-half pounds; the German, about seventy pounds; the Russian, about seventy pounds; the Austrian, sixty pounds; the Italian, seventy-five pounds. The mean of the European armies is sixty-six pounds.

But in fact the American soldier will roll his blanket into a long cylinder and tying the ends together carry it "*en écharpe*." Within this roll he sometimes carries extra under-clothing. He may roll his overcoat and shelter tent and carry them also but at the best these are cumbersome. * * * *

A very recent suggestion by Dr. W. Thornton Parker, of Newport, R. I., for a Clothing Case to contain spare articles for the march, and to be carried either rolled within the blanket or independently over the shoulder, seems practicable and useful. This is a piece of light waterproof material four feet six inches long by sixteen inches wide. It is folded longitudinally so that a margin of two inches is left along one edge for a flap. It is divided transversely into three equal compartments by two sets of stitches. The two inch margin is buttoned over on six buttons, the button holes being in the flap and the buttons on the farther edge and reverse side of the case. * * * This will hold shirts, drawers, stockings, towels and small articles for easy transportation on the march and for convenient disposal in camp. (Figure 1 represents the Case ready to receive its contents.)

The less weight a soldier carries and the better it is distributed the more effective he is.

For small columns clothing can generally be carried in wagons—in large armies each man must carry his own.

It is probable that the judicious use of pack animals may make this problem of transporting personal necessities less embarrassing but this has never been attempted on a large scale.

The mobility of an army is an important factor in military success.

Marching infantry is generally fighting infantry but neither marching or fighting can be well done when the soldier is borne down by heavy weights badly distributed.

Every superfluous article carried, weakens the aggregate strength, for the men who do the fighting must keep well up in the ranks.

The following is the minimum weight for a soldier in the field :

Clothing on the person,	10 lbs.
Arms, ammunition, etc., fifty rounds,	19 "
Carrying apparatus <i>exclusive</i> of blanket bag,	6 "
Water and one day's rations,	3½ "
Blanket,	5 "
Shelter tent,	2 "
Undershirt,	1 "
Overshirt,	1 "
Drawers and stockings,	1 "
Small articles,	1 "
Total,	49½ lbs.

Or less the ordinary clothing about thirty-eight or thirty-nine pounds. Every additional article is additional dead weight.

For convenience of reference these tests of weights that men are liable to carry in the field, collected from various official sources, are presented.

EQUIPMENT.

<i>Blanket bag and straps</i> ,	2 lbs. 1¾ oz.
Haversack and strap,	1 " 4 "
Canteen and strap,	1 " 5½ "
Tin cup,	8½ "
Block tin meat can,	15½ "
Knife,	2 "
Fork,	1½ "
Spoon,	1½ "
Total,	6 lbs. 8½ oz.

ARMS.

Springfield rifle,	8 lbs. 10 oz.
Bayonet,	12 "
Fifty cartridges,	5 " 5 "

ACCOUTREMENTS.

Cartridge belt,	lbs. 7½ oz.
Cartridge plate,	6½ “
Gun sling,	3½ “
Bayonet scabbard,	9 “
Hunting knife and scabbard,	1 7½ “
Total,	2 lbs. 2 oz.

EQUIPAGE.

Shelter tent piece,	2 lbs. 1 oz.
Pouch, rubber,	2 “ 12 “
Ax and sling,	7 “ 2½ “
Hatchet and sling,	1 “ 13½ “
Spade,	5 “
Shovel,	5 “
Pickax, complete,	7 “ 12 “

Dr. Parker's Clothing Case, 7½ to 8½ ounces.

[From the Army and Navy Journal April, 1886.]

W. Thornton Parker M. D. of Newport, R. I., formerly an A. A. Surgeon U. S. Army, is the inventor of a new Clothing Case for the soldier, of which report speaks highly and concerning which the Journal of the American Medical Association of March 6th last, had an interesting report.

The Case is made of light canvas or waterproof cloth and weighs complete but a fraction of the weight of the average knapsack. It will hold two pairs of drawers, two flannel shirts, two pairs of stockings, towels and other extra pieces of clothing. It can be worn for days without giving fatigue and the weight is so evenly distributed that the soldier does not suffer from carrying it. Upon reaching camp the blanket can be unrolled and the Case hung up or thrown “in the corner,” the clothing remaining in the Case clean and undisturbed. The Case will be found useful as a pillow when folded. When the clothing is rolled loosely in the blanket, only upon reaching camp the blanket is needed and the contents are likely to be scattered about the tent and soiled or ruined with mud and rain.

FORT ADAMS, R. I., Feb. 7, 1887.

DR. W. THORNTON PARKER,

Newport, R. I.

SIR:—We the undersigned, officers of the Fourth Regiment of Artillery, take pleasure in informing you that after a careful examination of the bag for soldiers clothing designed by you to replace the knapsack and clothing bag now issued, we are of the opinion that for service the “Parker Clothing Bag” is far superior to anything we have seen thus far.

It reduces the weight to be carried by the soldier to a minimum, it distributes that weight more satisfactorily, it is easier to pack and unpack, and is cheaper than any other contrivance.

Signed, JOHN EAGAN,
Capt. 4th Artillery.

Signed, WM. ENNIS,
1st Lieut. 4th Artillery.

Signed, A. B. DYER,
Adjutant 4th Artillery.

Signed, EDWARD FIELD,
Capt. 4th Artillery.

Signed, J. M. RODER,
Capt. 4th Artillery.

U. S. S. “NEW HAMPSHIRE,”

Newport, R. I., Jan. 24, 1887.

DR. W. THORNTON PARKER,

Newport, R. I.

DEAR SIR:—Your Clothing Case for the soldier has been carefully examined by the officers of the ship and myself and we are very favorably impressed with its usefulness and deem it worthy the consideration of the Department with a view to its adoption by landing parties.

Very truly yours,

Signed, A. R. YATES,
Capt. U. S. Navy.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington D. C., Feb. 3, 1887.

DR. W. THORNTON PARKER,
Newport, R. I.

SIR :—I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 11 ultimo., covering pamphlet on the subject of your invention of a new Clothing Case for the soldier and to inform you that I have recommended that a Board be convened to inquire into its merits.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

Signed, A. BAIRD,
Brig. and Inspector General,
Bv't. Major General, U. S. A.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1911

TO THE HONORABLE THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

AND THE FACULTY OF THE PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

IN CONNECTION WITH THE

RESEARCHES OF THE PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

ON THE SUBJECT OF

THE THEORY OF

THE ELECTRICITY OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



