

Remembering
John Hill

ISSUE #6

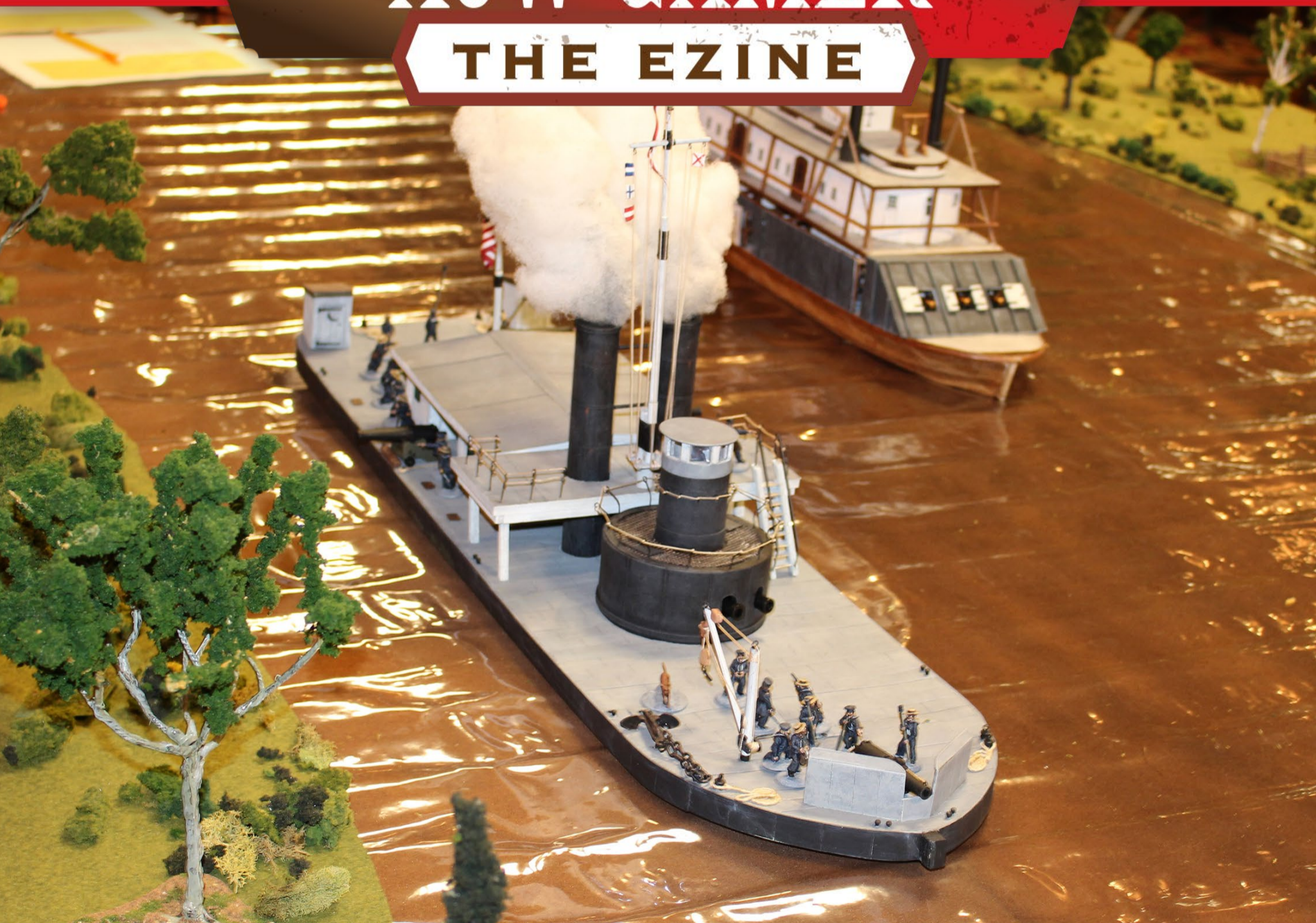
Painting Ironclads
with ACW Bill, Part II

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ACW GAMER

THE EZINE



**SCENARIOS! TUTORIALS! RULES!
REVIEWS! AND LOTS OF ACW ACTION**



Winter 2015

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Cover photo: A photo from Fall-In 2014: **Fort DeRussy, Louisiana, 14 March 1864**, by John McConnell and John Wilk

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Welcome to the ACW Gamer, the Ezine, Terrain Special

The Electronic Magazine dedicated to wargaming the American Civil War on the tabletop.

This week the wargaming world received the very sad news that John Hill, creator of "**Squad Leader**", "**Johnny Reb**" and "**Across a Deadly Field**" passed away

Despite having games by John on my book shelves most my life, I just met John for the first time last May at **NashCon**. In the short time I knew him, John was a big supporter of the Ezine and sent me encouraging words that helped me push forward.

I was introduced to his games like most wargamers - through **Squad Leader**. I had a lot of fun attempting to take "the Tractor Factory."

Johnny Reb gave me and my friends hours of ACW action when I first entered the miniature side of wargaming and helped began my life long passion of recreating the Civil War. This Ezine was intended as a successor to "**Charge!**" which was itself the official journal of the Johnny Reb gaming society. Without John, there probably wouldn't be an **ACW Gamer**.

John submitted an article for this issue and sent me updates last week; you will see that article this issue. You will also see tributes from our authors.

Ours prayers go out to his family and we thank him for the hours of gaming he gave us.

In this issue of **ACW Gamer** we bring you a couple of new ACW gaming goodies. First, are some pictures of our trip to **HMGS' Fall-In** convention where ACW gaming was as strong as ever. We also have a review of a new rule set **The Devil to Pay**, along with a scenario to modified to play with the rules.

"ACW" Bill Moreno brings us part II of the *Iron Clads & River Boats* tutorial. This time Bill takes us step by step through a painting your ironclads.

You will also get to peek at **Historic Imagination's** newest scenario book, **The Road to Atlanta**, and one of it's scenarios, "Bald Knob."

We also have something really special for you; the first in a series of articles on Confederate uniforms, and equipment. Uniform researcher and author Fred Adolphus talks gray and butternut and every shade in between. ACW minature painters should find this series especially useful as they paint up their Confederate armies for the table top.

We hope you enjoy this issue and you will find it helpful as you bring your ACW games to the table top.

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The silent guns of Manassas.

Photo by Virginia Historical society

Colors of Confederate Clothing

By Fred Adolphus

Fred Adolphus offers an insight into the many authentic colors of Southern uniforms, accoutrements, equipment, arms, and even horses. Miniature painters will find this a well-documented reference to use in painting their model soldiers accurately.

If there is one topic that interests scale figure modelers, it is painting uniforms in their authentic colors. Having painted model soldiers as a teenager, I know this first hand. To that end, I have written this article to provide the authentic colors and shades for painting Confederate uniforms. There are several correct colors for the Confederate uniform: not just a generic “gray” or “butternut.”

The best color to start with is cadet gray, the Confederacy’s official regulation uniform color. Cadet gray was actually more of a blue than a gray: a grayish-blue. The South’s selection of cadet gray as its uniform color has its roots in gray being the standard American, state militia color. As such, gray (usually cadet gray) came to embody the “sovereign state” uniform color versus the dark blue of the “national government.” Thus cadet gray was the logical choice based on its connotation of state sovereignty. Furthermore, the designer of the Confederate uniform, Nicola Marschall, used the gray, Austrian sharpshooter’s tunic as a model for the regulation uniform. British Lieutenant Colonel James Fremantle noted this during his travels through the Confederacy, remarking, “Most of the officers were dressed in a uniform that is neat and serviceable - a bluish-gray frock coat of a color similar to Austrian yagers.” The pre-war American shade of cadet gray was intended for the Confederate uniform, a light to medium

blue gray, no darker than the American army sky blue. But American cadet gray was not to become “Confederate” gray. It was too difficult to make in the South, given the limitations of color fast dyes, mordants and manufacturing capacity.

Instead, the standard British army, darker blue-gray became Confederate gray due to its availability through the blockade.

The dark blue-gray kersey was still referred to as cadet gray (also frequently spelled “grey”). Contemporaries also called it Confederate gray, English army cloth, “gray cloth,” kersey, or any combination of these terms to distinguish it from domestic weaves and other shades of gray. Therefore, a darker shade of cadet gray became the norm for the Confederate army. Union Naval Lieutenant Charles H. Brown described the color from a cargo seized aboard a British blockade runner near the Rio Grande on 5 November 1863, saying the woolen cloth was, “...of a color between blue and grey. That is just the Confederate uniform color,” and that the ship’s captain stated that it was, “... neither blue nor grey, but a shade between these two colors... the Confederate uniform color.”¹ The Confederate depots routinely made jackets, pants and caps from this color from the fall of 1862 until the end of the war.

Mordant: a substance, typically an inorganic oxide, that combines with a dye or stain and thereby fixes it in a material.

Soldiers used imported cadet gray cloth throughout the Confederacy. Army of Northern Virginia troops wore cadet gray uniforms starting in 1863, and by the end of the war, the cadet gray uniform was nearly universal. The States of North Carolina and Alabama issued cadet gray uniforms in 1864 and 1865. The troops in Charleston used it from 1863 onwards and Confederate troops in Mobile received cadet gray uniforms late in the war. The Department of the Trans-Mississippi clothed its soldiers in this color from the fall of 1862 until the very end. Army of Tennessee soldiers were the exception: they were not issued cadet gray uniforms. Furthermore, officers everywhere typically wore cadet gray uniforms. It must be conceded, however, that officers in the Army of Tennessee were the exception. Among them, the cadet gray, double-breasted frock coat was not universal. These officers frequently wore enlisted depot uniforms, or they had their double-breasted frock coats made of domestic jeans or satinet in shades of butternut, steel gray and sheep's gray.



The use of gray as the American army fatigue uniform color, seen here, began before the War of 1812. Many states

adopted gray as their uniform color, which had been largely changed to cadet gray by the 1830s. Image courtesy of Don Troiani, Historic Art Prints.



Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth's frock coat reflects the pre-war use of cadet gray by state forces and its light shade. Artifact and image courtesy of the New York State Military Museum, Saratoga Springs, New York.



This cadet gray Richmond Depot jacket, taken as a souvenir by a 5th Maine Infantry at the Battle of the Wilderness, is typical of the dark shade of blue-gray kersey imported during the war into the Confederacy. The wartime cadet gray contrasts sharply with the lighter American shade. Artifact

and image courtesy of the Fifth Maine Museum, Peak's Island, Maine.



Archduke Rainer von Österreich wears a typical Austrian, blue-gray tunic with its short skirt, double-breasted front, and stars on the collar. This uniform inspired the regulation Confederate uniform. Lithograph by Eduard Kaiser, 1860.

Cadet gray was not the only shade of gray common to Confederate uniforms. Steel gray, sheep's gray, brownish-gray, and "Crenshaw's" gray were also common. Of these, steel gray was one of the most common of the domestic, Southern factory produced colors fabricated for Confederate uniform fabric. The color itself is a medium gray shade, midway between white and black. It was named in contracts, both for foreign made satinets and for domestically made uniform cloth.² The chief problem with the domestically produced steel gray color was its dye was not colorfast. Unlike the fairly colorfast, European dyes, Southern dye techniques were not as sophisticated, and consequently, less stable. Southern dye recipes were susceptible to fading in sunlight, resulting in a change of color from a bold, medium gray to a tight tan or even oatmeal, whitish-gray. Chemist and dye specialist Ben Tart of North Carolina has proven that it took about a month in the sun to fade the dye color from gray to tan. Sometimes, inconsistencies in the dye process resulted in the steel gray becoming a brownish-gray. Given the use of logwood, that rendered a dark brown color

without a mordant to alter the color, a brownish hue might result.



An early war, enlisted frock coat, recovered from the Confederate trenches at Little Rock, September 1863, is made of steel (medium) gray jeans. Artifact courtesy of Steve Osman.



A close-up of the Little Rock coat's fabric gives a better view of its color. The mordant must have been resilient, as it has retained the bold, steel gray color. Artifact courtesy of Steve

Osman.

The other most common, domestically produced color was a light bluish-gray, that many manufacturer's called "cadet gray."³ As with steel gray, this dye was not colorfast and relied on many of the same vegetable-based ingredients used to make steel gray. It too faded to a light tan or whitish-gray after a month or so in the sun. In any case, this domestic cadet gray was almost a sky blue color with a gray cast to it. The most famous example is "Crenshaw's" gray, named for the Richmond, Virginia cloth mill that supplied the Richmond clothing depot with cadet gray and light blue cloth for the first two years of the war. The factory burned down in May 1863, but fortunately, four original jackets made from this cloth have survived.⁴ These jackets provide insights into Crenshaw's cloth and its blue-gray color.



A "Crenshaw's gray" jacket, worn by Captain Louis A. Cormier, 6th Louisiana Infantry. Cormier was mortally wounded at Gettysburg. This is one of four surviving "Crenshaw" jackets, and its light shade, cadet gray cloth is probably typical of how most domestic cadet gray appeared before faded to butternut. Artifact courtesy of Richard Ferry.

The last shade of gray, sheep's gray, required no dyestuffs or cumbersome manufacturing processes, yet rendered the fabric a colorfast light gray. Sheep's gray was the natural gray color of the raw wool, and it could be attained by simply not bleaching to wool during the cleaning process. While sheep's gray was not as desirable as the dyed fabrics, it was practical and easier to manufacture than dyed fabrics, which made it a viable alternative to steel and cadet gray.



Joseph Stone, of Buck's Escort Company, Mississippi Cavalry, wore this Montgomery Depot jacket. Its woolen weft (the fill yarn in the fabric) is a light sheep's gray color. The overall fabric color has a striped appearance due to heterogeneous-colored fill yarn used at distinct intervals. Artifact courtesy of Samuel P. Higginbotham II.

Somewhat akin to sheep's gray is the natural white, colorless woolen cloth used by the Confederate army. The white cloth was undyed, but cleaned and bleached to a natural, bone-white shade. Surprisingly, white uniforms were issued throughout the Confederacy, to varying degrees,

throughout the war. The small manufacturing depot at Wytheville, Virginia made white woolen uniforms, and the most famous incidence of their use was at the Battle of New Market. The Virginia Military Institute cadets purportedly wore these uniforms. Many of the factories in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi made white woolen uniforms, many of which survive, and soldiers fighting in the Western armies frequently dressed in them. Earlier in the war, the entire Army of Mississippi wore these uniforms through the Vicksburg campaign, and to a lesser extent thereafter. One of the most famous incidents documenting the white woolen uniforms in Mississippi comes from the Battle of Shiloh. There a Union soldier described the 2nd Texas Infantry as, "...them hell-cats that went into battle dressed in their grave clothes."⁵ Finally, the Huntsville Penitentiary Mill in Texas made white woolens exclusively after 1861, most of which were used for Confederate uniforms. White woolen cloth was easier to produce than colored cloth because its yarns required no dying. The wool still had to be cleaned and bleached, however, which added to the fabric's comfort by removing excess lanolin. It carried a stigma, however, since white woolens had traditionally been purchased for of slave clothing. For this reason, many Confederates deeply resented drawing white woolen uniforms, but as the war progressed, they got used them.



John Britten Lewis Grizzard of Hanleiter's Company, Georgia Light Artillery wore this white woolen jacket in 1864. The jacket is typical of the white uniforms used by all Confederate armies throughout the South. Artifact courtesy of the Texas Civil War Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.

About the Author

Fred Adolphus has been a Confederate uniform buff since early childhood. He got hooked on them by playing with Marx, Britain and ring-hand plastic figures. His passion for uniforms grew to researching and writing about them, to include the book, "Imported Confederate Uniforms of Peter Tait & Company, Limerick, Ireland." Readers may visit the author's website, www.adolphusconfederateuniforms.com, and read the numerous research articles available there. They can also purchase his book through the website, Amazon or Ebay.

Foot Notes:

- ¹ *Official Records, War of the Rebellion, Navy Series I, Volume 20*, pp. 658-661, Seizures of 4 and 5 November 1863, reports of 6 November 1863.
- ² National Archives, Record Group 109, *Confederate Citizens and Business file for the firm Young, Winston & Orr*: This firm manufactured for the military "Cadet" and "Steel mix" jeans and cassimere from 1861 to 1863, and they made jackets from both colors and fabrics. See also Lipman & Koppel Contract, 6 Oct 1862, specifications required 20,000 yards of imported "good steel grey colored satinet cloth."
- ³ See the files of Young, Winston & Orr in Note ii.
- ⁴ Jones, J.B., *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate Capital, Volume I*, J.B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1866: Jones notes that "Crenshaw's gray" woolen was selling for \$28.00 per yard on 1 Feb 1863 compared to "coarse jeans" woolen at \$4.00 per yard, p. 252; Crenshaw's woolen factory destroyed by fire, p. 324.
- ⁵ Chance, Joseph E., *The Second Texas Infantry: From Shiloh to Vicksburg*, Eakin Press, Austin, Texas, 1984, p. 24, note 4.

Next Issue: Butternut!

Next Issue

Issue 7 of ACW Gamer
will be published on 15 April 2015.

Featuring:

- Part II of *Colors of Confederate Clothing*
- Company D Miniatures - *an overview of a small but enthusiastic business*
- Tutorial: *How to create a JEB Stuart custom conversion figure in 15mm*



Union soldiers in camp by Sören Christensen.

See his blog at <http://www.blackpowdergames.blogspot.se>

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