

Civil War Arkansas Newspaper References to Quilts & Comforts

Vicki Betts, Professional Librarian at the University of Texas at Tyler, has a web site with her research on the Civil War. It includes newspaper references to blankets, quilts, and comforts. <http://www.uttyler.edu/vbetts/blankets.htm> Her homepage is: <http://www.uttyler.edu/vbetts/> The following newspaper references are from her web site.

[*Little Rock*] *Arkansas True Democrat*, July 25, 1861, p. 2, c, 3

An Appeal to the Women of Arkansas.

It has been wisely suggested by a contemporary that the patriotic women of the country should knit socks for the volunteers.

In addition to this we beg leave to call the attention of the true hearted women of the country to some other points.

There will be, if the war continues, a scarcity of blankets, woolen cloth, flannel, etc. These our soldiers will need. As regards blankets, each family can spare some. Those who stay at home can use counterpanes and comforts. The latter are easily and cheaply made, are warm and will supply the places of blankets in the house.—Let the ladies, or to use a better and nobler word, the women, set about making comforters for their beds, and be enabled to send blankets to the army. Except in cases of sickness, the use of blankets in the houses can be dispensed with. . . .

[*Little Rock*] *Arkansas True Democrat*, July 25, 1861, p. 3, c. 8 [most of right side of paper folded and torn]

Summary: An Appeal to the Ladies of Arkansas. Seems to be for blankets and socks.

Daily Chronicle & Sentinel [*Augusta, Ga.*], July 26, 1861, p. 2, c. 4

Home-Made Blanket.--We have seen a magnificent home-spun blanket, manufactured by Mrs. Frank M. David, of Jackson county, and presented to Capt. A. C. Thompson, of the "Oconee Guards" of that county. It is worth half-a-dozen common blankets. Our fair countrywomen can now do essential service to the country by reviving the industrious habits of their mothers in the fabrication of useful articles.--Athens Watchman.

Southern Confederacy [*Atlanta, Ga.*], July 26, 1861, p. 3, c. 1

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The Athens Watchman speaks of having seen a magnificent home-spun blanket, manufactured by Mrs. Frank M. David, of Jackson county, and presented to Capt. A. C. Thompson, of the "Oconee Guards" of that county. It is worth, he says, half a dozen common blankets. Our fair country women can now do essential service to the country by reviving the industrious habits of their mothers in the fabrication of useful articles.

Daily Chronicle & Sentinel [*Augusta, Ga.*], August 10, 1861, p. 2, c. 3

Gov. Moore to the Alabama Ladies.--Gov. Moore, of Alabama, has issued his proclamation recommending the women of each county, city, town, village and neighborhood, in Alabama, to

form "Soldiers' Aid Societies," and that each Society inform him by letter, as early as possible, the number of woolen uniforms, flannel shirts, and cotton-flannel drawers it can make or supply, and that each family make contributions of blankets for the use of the troops of the State, to the Judges of Probate in their respective counties, who will register the name of the contributor and the number contributed, in a book to be kept by him specially for that purpose, and who will box up and forward blankets, whenever a sufficient number is obtained, to the Governor, who will defray the expense of boxing and forwarding.

[Marshall] *Texas Republican*, August 24, 1861, p. 1, c. 5-6

Letter from Virginia.

Richmond, Va., August 6th, 1861.

R. W. Loughery, Esq.,

. . . Whatever may be our means to buy them—blankets are going to be hard to get for our soldiers next fall. Let me make a suggestion to our ladies. Every household has several blankets, cotton is plenty, and calico is comparatively cheap. Let our ladies go at once to manufacturing "comforts" for home use and send the blankets to the soldiers. If a plan like this be adopted, those of us who will be sleeping under warm cotton comforts at home next winter will feel all the better to know that our gallant defenders in the mountains of Maryland, Virginia, and Missouri have a warm and comfortable blanket voluntarily contributed by our citizens. . . . I have written you very hurriedly and hastily.

Yours truly,

W. B. Ochiltree.

[Little Rock] *Arkansas True Democrat*, September 26, 1861, p. 3, c. 1

To the Merchants of Arkansas.

We call attention to the subjoined call of Maj. Clark for clothing, and material. Those who have articles of this kind for sale would do well to inform Maj. Clark of the number and their prices. Our troops must be supplied, and those having these things for sale must furnish them.

Clothing for our Soldiers.

A. Q. M's Office, Fort Smith, Ark., }

September 12th, 1861. }

It will require the combined efforts of all patriotic citizens in aid of the quarter master's department, to supply sufficient comfortable clothing to our gallant troops during the coming winter. With the view of furnishing the troops on the Arkansas frontier, the merchants of the States are requested to inform this office, at an early day, of the quality, quantity and prices of such articles as they can supply as follows: . . .

Blanket Coats, . . .

Jeans, Blankets, . . .

Contributions of any of the above named articles from our liberal citizens will be received in the

general stock of clothing for the army, or forwarded to particular individuals. The citizens of every town and village can appoint a receiver, who will receive, pack, mark and forward to this office their contributions.

Geo. W. Clark,
Major A. Q. M.

[Little Rock] *Arkansas True Democrat*, September 26, 1861, p. 3, c. 5

Clothing for the Soldiers of the Hot Spring
Rifle Company "E." 12th Regiment Ar-
kansas Volunteers.

It is earnestly requested by the captains, lieutenants and privates of said county, that all who can do so should, at the earliest possible day, make up something like the following for their friends and relatives:

Two pair of pants, of heavy brown or gray mixed jeans, lined if though proper, with domestic. One roundabout or jacket of the same material, lined throughout, with side and vest pockets, it should be long enough to come some four inches below the waistband of the pants and large enough to be worn over the vest or outside shirt. One heavy vest of jeans, linsey or kersey, one overshirt of woolen or mixed goods; one or two pair of drawers, as the case may require, two pair of socks, one good blanket is advisable, one overcoat or a loose sack coat, or a hunting shirt with a belt.

E. C. Jones, Capt.,
of Hot Spring Rifle Co., "E." 12th A. R. V.

P. S.—These goods can all be boxed up together with each man's name upon his goods and forwarded. The proper information will be given in due time how and where they will be forwarded to.

E. C. J.

[Little Rock] *Arkansas True Democrat*, August 27, 1862, p. 1, c. 4

To the People of the Trans-Mississippi
Department, composed of the States
of Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana and
Texas.

At no period since the commencement of the contest in which we are now engaged, has there existed a more pressing necessity for active and zealous co-operation on the part of the people of these States with the military authorities, than at the present moment. The partial occupation of the Mississippi River Line by our enemies has so far impeded communication with the other States of the Confederacy, as to compel those charged with the duty of providing for her wants of our army, to seek for and develop new sources of supply. Our army is in urgent need of blankets and clothing of every description, to enable them to withstand the rigor of the approaching winter, as well as to successfully oppose the invaders of our soil, and they can be furnished with but little from the other side of the Mississippi, or by the few manufactories now established in these States.

In this emergency, Maj. Gen'l T. H. Holmes commanding in this Department, relying confidently on the patriotism of the people, directs me to make an appeal to them for that assistance which all can afford to give without much individual inconvenience, and which, if promptly furnished, will greatly promote the success of our army. Every family throughout this Department, possessed of a spinning wheel and a loom, is requested to manufacture as large a quantity of cloth (both woolen and cotton) as the raw material at its command will permit. Those who have no facilities for spinning or weaving, may assist in the good work by making up shirts, drawers, pantaloons, coats and overcoats, and by knitting stockings, making hats or caps, and shoes, while those who have looms adapted to the purpose can furnish blankets, or some other article answering the same object. . . .

Jno. D. Adams,
Capt. and Acting Chief Quartermaster,
Trans-Mississippi District.

Papers throughout the country will please copy, and call public attention to this appeal.

[Little Rock] Weekly Arkansas Gazette, August 30, 1862, p. 1, c. 1

Keep It Before the People.—That General Holmes desires all the cloth suitable for Clothing for soldiers; all the socks, blankets and bed clothes; and all of the hats, shoes and boots which can possibly be made. The highest prices will be paid. Let everything the army needs be furnished.

[Little Rock] Weekly Arkansas Gazette, August 30, 1862, p. 1, c. 5

To the People of the Trans-Mississippi Department, Composed of the States of Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas.—At no period since the commencement of the contest in which we are now engaged, has there existed a more pressing necessity for active and zealous co-operation on the part of the people of these States with the military authorities, than at the present moment. The partial occupation of the Missouri River Line by our enemies has so far impeded communication with the other States of the Confederacy, as to compel those charged with the duty of providing for the wants of our army, to seek for and develop new sources of supply. Our army is in urgent need of blankets and clothing of every description, to enable them to withstand the rigor of the approaching winter, as well as to successfully oppose the invaders of our soil, and they can be furnished with but little from the other side of the Mississippi, or by the few manufactories now established in these States.

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Jno. D. Adams,
Capt. and acting Chief Quartermaster,
Trans-Mississippi District.

Papers throughout the country will please copy, and call public attention to this appeal.

[*Little Rock*] *Arkansas True Democrat*, September 24, 1862, p. 1, c. 2

Blankets and Clothing for the Soldiers.—Imitating the self-sacrificing spirit of the Roman matrons who stripped themselves of their dearly prized jewels, and cast them into the public treasury, when the exigencies of their country required such aid, the ladies of this city have nobly resolved to surrender, for the use of the brave defenders of our homes and liberties, not merely articles of ornament, but such as have hitherto been regarded as indispensably necessary to secure domestic comfort. Not satisfied with simply devoting their time and energies to the task of fabricating clothing for the troops now in the field, they have determined to take up the fine carpets covering the floors of their dwellings, convert them into blankets and distribute them among the soldiers, who will, ere long, require such protection against the piercing winds of the winter season.

Will not the ladies throughout this State, Louisiana and Texas, emulate the example of their sisters of Little Rock? We are sure they will do so with alacrity, for women have ever been found capable of performing acts of self-devotion to the cause of God, of her native land, or of her family. Feeling assured that they will, one and all, answer promptly the demand now being made for clothing and blankets for the army, we have no appeal to make to their generosity or their patriotism, but will rest content with stating that the contributions of each neighborhood should be carefully packed together and forwarded to this city, to care of Maj. Jno. B. Burton, Chief of Army Clothing, Bureau of the Trans-Mississippi Department.

[*Little Rock*] *Weekly Arkansas Gazette*, September 27, 1862, p. 1, c. 3

| Make the Soldier Comfortable.—Major Gen. Holmes has made known to our people generally, and to the ladies particularly, the fact that, if a supply is not gotten up at home, many of our soldiers will lack blankets to make them comfortable and preserve their health, during the approaching winter. The ladies here responded promptly and patriotically, many of them giving the last carpet they have to be made into substitutes for blankets for the purpose.

We feel confident that the call will be cheerfully and fully responded to by the ladies west of the Mississippi, to whom it is addressed.

All contributions of blankets, or substitutes for blankets, or clothes, will be forwarded to Maj. Jno. B. Burton, Chief of the Clothing Bureau, Trans-Mississippi Department.

Montgomery Weekly Advertiser, October 29, 1862, p. 3, c. 4

Correspondence.

Near Robinson Springs, Autauga, Ala. }

Oct. 20, 1862. }

Judge B. Bibb—Sir:-- . . . I will send a package to the post office, directed to yourself, containing one woolen comfort and one *bed quilt*. The quilt is sent by my daughter (Sallie J. Horne) who made and partly quilted it when she was ten years old. I have no wool to knit socks, but we intend to have some heavy cotton socks ready in a short time. Please let me know by letter or through the weekly Advertiser, whether you received the package or not. My address is Wetumpka. Yours most respectfully,

Jane E. Robinson.

Montgomery, Ala., Oct. 22.

Mrs. Jane E. Robinson—Madam:--Your letter of 20th has been received, along with the bundle containing woolen comfort and quilt. I willingly become the agent for a proper disposal of your gift, and beg to thank and commend you, Madam, and your estimable daughter, for your christian efforts in the holy duty of alleviating the sufferings of our soldiery. The Ladies' Aid Association of this city are now preparing supplies to be sent to the relief of the suffering at Winchester, and your contributions shall accompany them at an early day.

Very respectfully,
Your obedient serv't,
B. S. Bibb.

[*Marshall*] *Texas Republican*, November 8, 1862, p. 1, c. 5

A lady of this place sends us the following welcome communication:

Who Will Help?

Our soldiers are sadly in need of blankets, or something to shield them from the severity of the coming winter. I can furnish material for several comforts, but need the cotton. If some of the planters will furnish this, (and a few pounds from your ten, twenty, fifty, or hundred bales would not be missed) much might be done to relieve the sufferings of our brave soldiers during the approaching winter. Everybody keeps a scrap bag, and from their contents, much could be put into use in this way. Besides this, old calico or worsted dresses, cloth, linsey, old sheets, or domestic of any kind, can be manufactured into comforts, which when quilted will last at least during one winter. In your lumber rooms and closets, being destroyed by moth, there is much which your dexterous fingers could fashion into a comfort. No matter if faded and ugly, they will do. If too light, from the wood materials for dying [sic] can be procured, and garments too much worn for other use will answer the purpose well. The work to make them is trifling—four ladies can complete three in a day; and where so much might be done, it is not our *privilege*, as well as our duty to work with willing hearts and hands.

Who will furnish the cotton? It can be left at almost any public house in town, convenient to all who are willing to aid. I will undertake to make six at east to begin with, and hope that everybody will aid in the cause, and we may soon have a supply sufficient for the comfort of our soldiers, who will be subject to almost every exposure of winter. Already the severity of the cold is telling upon the health of our thinly-clad troops in Virginia, Kentucky, and Arkansas, many of whom have not a blanket to cover them, when they seek the cold hard earth for rest, after days of marching and toil. Who will, or rather *who will not help?* Let everybody go to work with a will, and while we repose upon downy beds at home, the brave volunteer will bless us as he wraps his weary limbs our hands have furnished, and feel that though exiled he is still remembered, still cherished. All are our brothers and friends. Who would not labor to alleviate the sufferings or promote the happiness and welfare of a brother?

H. A. P.

Locust Glen, Nov. 3, 1862.