Important historical research notes:

GENERAL STATEMENT: Accuracy is my intent. I am human and make mistakes. If I have mis-identified an item I want to correct it. I have researched this subject for 40 years and handled thousands of artifacts, but, the material culture of the 1860s is a vast universe. I am solution oriented and willing to discuss matters with anyone who is like minded. My reputation as an honest and ethical gentlemen has been earned through hard work and my aim is to continue to protect it. Having said that, there is a lot of dogma and erroneous information which has found it's way into conventional wisdom on many CW subjects, especially amongst re-enactor collectors. My experience has proven that being willing to challenge such things with a more open mind can produce some surprising revelations. Conventional wisdom has long held, rather erroneously, that the more examples of an item survive to present day, the more popular or prevalent it was in the Civil War and pre-war culture. This is a narrow view and is not the result of empirical study. It is akin to ancient archaeologists finding a piece of something and extrapolating it's presence over an entire culture or period and then spouting at nauseam on the so call"history" channel what they now "know"about a particular culture or time period. Would you take a medication that was vetted through a study involving half a dozen patients? It simply belies logic. There are many reasons that items may be found in quantity in the antique market, or missing for that matter. First one must ask if it was a durable good or a consumable. What was the reasonable lifespan of the materials used? Are examples found prolifically in unused condition or do they predominantly show wear and use? How strong was the marketing and advertising of the item during the period and was the industry successful beyond a short period of time? Are examples found concentrated in one area or widespread during the period. By definition all CW era artifacts can be considered rare. Consumable perishable, and durable yet highly practical items are the most rare, not because they were less prevalent in CW culture but because they were either used up immediately, or found other applications after their wartime function and perished over time. The 1850-60s Steamboat excavations have proven many mistaken in quite a few areas, especially since the Arabia was specifically bound for the frontier market, a group of decidedly no nonsense consumers. These are seen before sale, in quantities that frontier business men had reasonable expectations of distributing and often by specific merchant orders for inventory. It seems with some subjects, the more I study the less I realize I know.

Remember though, rarity is but one aspect of value, and, depending on the item, may have varying effect on price when weighed against demand. A relatively new aspect of the market we have seen with the advent of technology and the media in antique collecting, is, that sometimes even with little general demand outside of very finite markets, some products can skyrocket in value merely based on what ever that market will bear or is promoted by the media. I do not find this development particularly helpful to the *average* collector or dealer.

Pricing and Inventory - We use multiple reliable and knowledgeable sources in the industry coupled with our own continued 50+ plus years of dealing in and collecting Civil War period items for our artifact pricing guidelines. Often times the markets changes and or is varied in different geographic regions and dealers personal experience. Some price guide authors have not been updated and some have been dealing with other dealers in specific areas for so long they are simply out of touch with the wider retail market. To find such a diverse array for you I must look everywhere, and often shop in the retail market myself. This is where knowledge and experience offer an edge for your benefit. The area of CW material culture, of which soldiers personal items are a part, is vast. Sometimes I must go with my gut. Certain items ,with demand outside of purely CW collectors, the overall market must be factored in, although, please understand my primary calculation is always with what the CW market values something at. My intention has always been to inventory that which I can offer below established market values. My goal is pricing at 25% below that of accepted value as a minimum. In most cases we are well below that. Often I can offer it to you at less than that, but, with some special or exceptional items I must go higher in order to include it for you. I do look at other dealer websites and internet sales occasionally to find pricing information. While occasional real finds and reputable sources may be located there we DO NOT generally reference nor rely on such sources as Etsy or Ebay for quality or value.

HAVERSACK STRAPS - we have received multiple inquiries concerning the length of haversack straps during the Civil War period and our patterns for the same. The correct and authentic *position* of the haversack when worn is the key question in our mind as it relates to Living History and authenticity. This relates directly to the average height and weight of the Civil War Soldier as opposed to the average height and weight of the contemporary Living Historian, *even when properly historically proportioned for the soldier's vocation*. The average size of the Civil War Soldier 1861-65 was 5"7" and 143 lbs. The average height of the military age American Male today is 5'10" and 195-200 lbs. (Above average heights also seem to statistically have above average height to weight ratios today as

opposed to the CW period) This significantly increased height and girth simply requires a significantly longer strap in order for the accoutrement to hang in the proper position when compared to the original specifications. Some vendors and dogma purveyors who claim to cater to the authentic minded completely ignore these facts when proudly proclaiming they endorse or manufacture their product only with the original specified strap length - even going so far as disparaging any who may vary from it. (I suppose they would also prefer to torture a modern horse with a saddle tree made to the original specs without a few more humane modifications as well) The original specifications provide little variance for height within the regulation. Most references indicate 41-45" in length. Originals examined average 42-48" with a very few in either extreme. This was a military issue item and just like the uniforms of the period, modification was a personal preference and issue. There is no data on private purchase haversack straps, often patterned after the "military issue" - We do not sell haversacks made to represent military issued products, only private purchase or citizen available bags. Some private purchase and many officers haversacks had adjustable and/or buckled straps for the convenience of the purchaser. Later military issued models actually copied this improvement. With the increase in size of the average American male, using the average of actual original haversacks examined as a base, we have calculated that a strap of between appr. 52" and 60" is required for an authentically positioned haversack. (With the same few extremes on either end not included) With straps being much more easily shortened then lengthened, and multiple period and documented methods for doing so available, from the simple to the advanced, we have chosen to make most of our average haversack strap 58" in length. (Our button closure vulcanized haversacks may be as long as 60") *Put on your big boy drawers and shorten it if you desire just like the CW soldier did. We actually recommend that you do so.* As a lifetime infantryman, the position of the haversack and canteen are very important to the overall comfort and utility of these items when on the march. We do not do any custom work.

TINWARE - I have dealt with many reputable dealers, studied many artifacts, and have had many museum contacts from the Smithsonian on down. There has been considerable confusion concerning the exact periods of certain construction methods and technology in tinware. I hope to clear up a few here.
A] Crimped and *unsoldered* construction is definitively a post war technology. It should not be represented in collections or living history. However, the soldered and crimped method was a technology available during the war so it does not necessarily preclude an item if other post war characteristics are not present. They were made by larger manufacturers with the latest equipment and made generally with thinner gauge tin and thus the method was not in significant use for more durable goods such as cups, boilers, large vessels, etc.
B.] Drawn seamless bottom vessels were made during the war and documented in identified soldier's effects, such as plates, pie plates, some basins, and in a very few deeper vessels. The deeper the vessel the thicker the gauge metal was required, making most other items impractical for field use unless made with brass or softer materials. There is one documented drawn cup I know of and it is very rare. The load of drawn stainless cookware seen at re-enactments these days, fueled by the scare on non-stainless tinware is an abomination.
C.] Stainless steel is a post war innovation. In authentic re-enacting it has no place save maybe the inside of a covered canteen. It is simply not necessary, if tinware is maintained properly, with the advent of lead-free solder.
D.] The primary manufacturing method of Civil War era tinware was a flat hammered over edge to the bottom soldered in place. Side seams can be folded or flat crimped over but must be soldered. The rims of period tinware, on the mouth or handle was either folded or rolled. Contrary to popular belief, the edges were not exclusively rolled over wire, although it is a desired feature. In fact, my experience is the wire is not present more often than it is found. Handles on lids were knobs of various materials, folded and rolled edge tin loops or pulls, and wire bail pulls. The bails on vessels were attached by riveted tab, soldered tab, holes in the vessel, sometimes re-enforced based on size or looped through the wire the edge was rolled on. Side handles were soldered or riveted and soldered and also wire looped. They could i*nclude* cooling grip inserts soldered in place even in the pre-war period, especially for larger cooking vessels and coffee pots and soldered tube cool handles with caps and rings as seen in the Arabia collection.

A method of attaching the bottom where the bottom is flat and the edge is folded back completely over the bottom edge of the side which is folded out at a 90% angle and then soldered is documented to the Civil War and especially the pre-war period. As can be imagined this is usually seen on smaller vessels and items made of a thinner gauge tin than the mandrel pounded over method. Vessels of the period are also occasionally seen with the mandrel pounded over edge, inserted into the cylinder, and soldered on the bottom. Some of these include the bottom edge of the vessel being rolled. This configuration somewhat resembles the crimped type at first glance depending how far the base was inserted.

ELECTROPLATING - Again, dogma abounds. Hand dipped tinware is nice and a feature found in vessels made

by small and local tinsmiths, or very early tinware. The electroplating process was developed in 1840 and in widespread use among tinsmith firms before and throughout the war.

JAPPANNING - a process using various varnish mixtures and methods used to inhibit rust on tinware. Pre dates the CW by decades and was in use during the period on lots of kitchen and field use items. It took gold paint well and many were stenciled including many military items and lanterns.

GALVANIZING - the word, although not necessarily meaning what we see in modern times, is described as used on a very limited list of metal products exposed to constant weather during the CW period. It's widespread use in other applications was not realized until the postwar period. Never cookware. Heating a galvanized metal can be toxic.

CAST IRON COOKWARE - in widespread use but only where baggage transport was available. Contrary to conventional wisdom, cast iron cookware was found on the Steamboat Arabia , c. 1856, *with* porcelain enamel linings. Long term camp and civilian photographs pre-war and during indicate the common use of this type of cookware.

SILVERWARE - Came in a myriad of styles. Handles in wood, steel, gutta percha, composite, hard rubber, bone, and ivory. Two, three, four, and five tyne forks are period correct for CW and pre-CW era. The more tynes, the more expensive the utensil generally was in the period marketplace. The dogma concerning 2 and 3 tyne forks is simply uninformed. In later years as such items became cheaper the use of 2-3 tyne forks did wane in general.

CELLULOID - Developed during the war with several other ivory alternatives in the worldwide search for a replacement. Only a few items made it into the CW market before the end of the war., but are documented none the less. Among them are razor handles and a few others.

ALUMINUM - First introduced in 1851 at the Great Exhibition in London. Very expensive and used in jewelry and like items. Some fancy mens accessories. True CW era aluminum is very, very rare. Actually most of the jewelry was overlooked in the 20th century and discarded as junk. Absolutely no aluminum cookware until decades later.

HARD RUBBER/GUTTA PERCHA/COMPOSITES - Pre-war and wartime technology available in droves on anything you can imagine. Rare but available and highly collectible with prices soaring. I recommend Woshners India Rubber and Gutta Percha In the Civil War, rather than try to tell you anything myself. It is the best reference on the subject overall and it's development. The research was exhaustive. Having said that, it is not absolute - but very close. There is always a surprise here and there around the corner for everyone.

Hope these notes helped.

Steve