Ragged Soldier Sutlery is the only vendor that specializes in historically correct toys and games for persons trying to accurately re-live the pleasures of the past, individuals who participate in living history, for museums and historical sites, and for those who just want to have fun. It is important to include children in the experience of history and this is an excellent way to do so. Play is usually a part of childhood and there is no reason why children should not be offered toys from the past that are fun to play with and are as similar to toys from the nineteenth century as is reasonably possible to obtain today.

Documentation with primary sources is a crucial tool in any study of history and toys are no exception. There are a great deal of "old timey" toys and games on the market but many are not appropriate for the nineteenth century. It is the goal of Ragged Soldier to offer documented toys so that when someone purchases a toy from us, they may be assured that the item they purchased has been fully researched and documented to the time period. If we have not been able to provide a specific citation to the years prior to 1865, we have still included citations for later years for those customers who work with historic sites that portray a later time period or those who are involved in later living history impressions.

At first we had compiled a Documentation Book which we brought to events when we set up our booth but since many of our sales are on the internet now, customers do not have access to the Documentation Book. This is an ongoing project but eventually each toy, game or item that we stock and have been able to document will have a link in the details section to the documentation. Wherever possible, we have identified the source of the information. Each source quoted will be found in the bibliography below.

Our toys may not have the same name as the ones in the primary sources but we are using the most commonly known name at this time. Otherwise, the customer may not know what a toy or game was called. The period name is noted in the documentation.

BUT... toys are not just for children. As the December 22, 1866, issue of The Round Table quoted:

"Toys, we say, have improved; improved to the degree indeed that they often seem better suited to maturity, and when we see a room-full of grown folks industriously engaged with 'persistent soap-bubbles' and 'fly-tops' and 'parlor fire-works,' this then gains confirmation."

If you have questions, please feel free to contact us.

NOTE: All of these files are pdf files which will not maintain the menu to the left with links to other categories or items. Click the "back" arrow to return to this page.

Toys that are documented, so far, on the website are:
- Ball & Cup
- Bilbo Catcher
- Blocks
- Buzz Saw
- Clutch Ball
- Drums
- Endless Landscape
- Flapjack
- Flipperdinger
- Flying Machine
- Jacob's Ladder
- Jaw Harp
- Jump Rope
- Dolls that are documented, so far, on the website are:
- Rolled Fabric Dolls


Volume 1. Cutlery. Background. Eating or serving with utensils made of silver, silver-plated metals or stainless steel is relatively recent. Silver needed to be discovered in sufficient quantities, the smelting processes necessary to hand-craft silver needed to be refined, and in Northern Europe it took several centuries before the more civilized Latin table manners replaced the cruder Anglo-Saxon ones. Henry VIII, the most famous of England's Tudors, used his hands to tear off large pieces of beef from an entire roast set before him, throw the meat on his trencher board, chop of... The knife, used by hunters and soldiers for cutting and spearing the meat, was first made of flint, then of metal. Its main characteristic was a sharp edge.