



“DEVELOPING A FIRST-PERSON IMPRESSION”

A SIMPLE WORKBOOK TO AID REENACTORS IN  
DEVELOPING A QUALITY FIRST-PERSON IMPRESSION

# " DEVELOPING YOUR FIRST- PERSON IMPRESSION "

## *A WORKBOOK FOR BUILDING A GOOD IMPRESSION*

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The following booklet is intended to be a guide for starting or improving your first-person impression. In the end this will make you a more effective reenactor and can boost the enjoyment level of any event 100%. I hope that you will study it carefully and use it many times in the future. Hopefully, it will also open up new areas of thought and understanding. However, in order for this workbook to be of any use to you, you must put some effort and thought into what it is asking you to do, hence the name "workbook". I believe, however, that you will find this kind of activity enjoyable.

Before delving into the heart of the matter, I believe that it is necessary to explore what a first-person impression means. In short, it is becoming, in every way, shape, and form, a person from the time period in which you reenact. The memories and experiences you possess are those that would have been experienced by a person from that time. Your attitudes are their attitudes, your speech is their speech, and your life is their life. All of your modern-day experiences are unknown to this person which you portray. If you are able to adapt yourself to this frame of mind then reenacting takes on a whole new dimension. The more you know and understand about this person and their time, the more convincing you will be in portraying them and the more fun you can have in the experience.

It was with this idea in mind that this workbook was created. Before you begin to answer the questions, give some thought about what type of person you might want to portray. You may think at first that this is a simple task. You might answer that I want to portray a Confederate Soldier. This is fine, but it is only the tip of the iceberg. You must also consider such things as: is this soldier rich or poor?, is he educated or not?, is he an recent immigrant or native born?, what is his occupation?, does he have any previous military experience?, and so on. It might prove helpful to look at the partial list of occupations common to mid-nineteenth century America to aid you in your search. In the end when you settle on what form your impression is to take, be specific when answering the questions and try to enter the mind of the person you are going to portray. Good luck.

## COMMON OCCUPATIONS OF MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICA

Farmer	Novelist
Shopkeeper	Poet
Actor	Tailor
Undertaker	Doctor
Sutler	Mason
Missionary	Miner
Preacher	Postal worker
Priest	Politician
Cobbler	Teamster
Carpenter	Planter
Blacksmith	Tenant farmer
Woodwright	Sheriff
Wheelwright	Lawyer
Cabinet maker	Judge
Livery stable owner	Teacher
Miller	Student
Photographer	College professor
Saw mill operator	Musician
Cheesemaker	Ship captain
Store clerk	Sailor
Railroad engineer	Fisherman
Railroad conductor	Architect
Railroad brakeman	Career soldier
Railroad worker	Surveyor
Telegraph operator	Factory owner
Government worker	Factory worker
Insurance agent	Sculptor
Traveling salesman	Printer
Horse breeder	Riverboat pilot
Tanner	Ship builder
Cattle breeder	Drover's stop operator
Newspaper editor	Barkeeper
Newspaper journalist	Hotel/Inn manager
Magazine editor	Land speculator
Magazine journalist	Butcher
Magazine/Newspaper artist	Farm Laborer
Restaurant manager	etc...

**FAMILY & INDIVIDUAL HISTORY**

FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

(If you wish to remain your present age then you must adjust your year of birth at each event)

PLACE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

(Did this town, city, or county exist in the year you were born?)

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS' NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S BIRTHDATE: \_\_\_\_\_ MOTHER'S BIRTHDATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS' OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

BROTHERS AND SISTERS? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

( Give full names and ages - also if living or dead)

ARE YOU MARRIED? \_\_\_\_\_ WIFE'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME AND AGES OF CHILDREN: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

HAVE ANY OF YOUR CHILDREN DIED? \_\_\_\_\_ HOW? \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE IS YOUR HOME? \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE IS YOUR FAMILY NOW? \_\_\_\_\_

**WORK HISTORY**

WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION? \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE YOUR WORK \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PAST TRAINING/ APPRENTICESHIPS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PRE-WAR MILITARY EXPERIENCES**

MILITARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED (WEST POINT, VMI, ETC...) \_\_\_\_\_

GRADUATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE IN CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

ANY SERVICE BEFORE THE WAR? \_\_\_\_\_ MEXICAN WAR? \_\_\_\_\_

RANK: \_\_\_\_\_ REGIMENT? \_\_\_\_\_

COMMANDING OFFICER: \_\_\_\_\_ BRANCH: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW LONG WERE YOU IN THE ARMY BEFORE THE WAR? \_\_\_\_\_

WERE YOU IN THE MILITIA? \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF UNIT: \_\_\_\_\_

**WARTIME MILITARY EXPERIENCES**

WHERE DID YOU ENLIST? \_\_\_\_\_ DATE ENLISTED: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE YOUR JOURNEY TO THE MUSTER AREA: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN THE ARMY? \_\_\_\_\_

IF YOU HAVE FAMILY IN THE ARMY LIST THEIR NAMES? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT BATTLES HAVE YOU BEEN IN? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF CLOSE COMRADES LOST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

RANK WITHIN REGIMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ WHEN PROMOTED? \_\_\_\_\_

WARTIME COLONEL'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

WARTIME LT. COLONEL'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

WARTIME MAJOR'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

BRIGADE: \_\_\_\_\_ DIVISION: \_\_\_\_\_ CORPS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW MUCH DO YOU GET PAID? \_\_\_\_\_ HOW OFTEN? \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL OPINIONS AND POINTS OF VIEW**

WHO DID YOU VOTE FOR IN THE ELECTION OF 1860? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON SLAVERY? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU OWN ANY SLAVES? \_\_\_\_\_ HOW MANY? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT ARE YOUR MOTIVES FOR FIGHTING?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

HOW MUCH EDUCATION DO YOU HAVE? \_\_\_\_\_

CAN YOU READ AND WRITE? \_\_\_\_\_

HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED DUE TO THE WAR? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT IS YOUR RELIGION? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN THE WAR IS OVER? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**STATE YOUR OPINION ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS AND SUBJECTS:**

LINCOLN: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

MUSIC: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TEMPERANCE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ROLES OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FACTORY PRODUCED GOODS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

NORTHERN FACTORIES: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

NORTHERNERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

AGRICULTURE VS. INDUSTRY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

THE PLANTATION OWNERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHO WILL WIN THE WAR: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SOCIAL REFORMS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

STATES RIGHTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

THE ARMY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

THE FUTURE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_