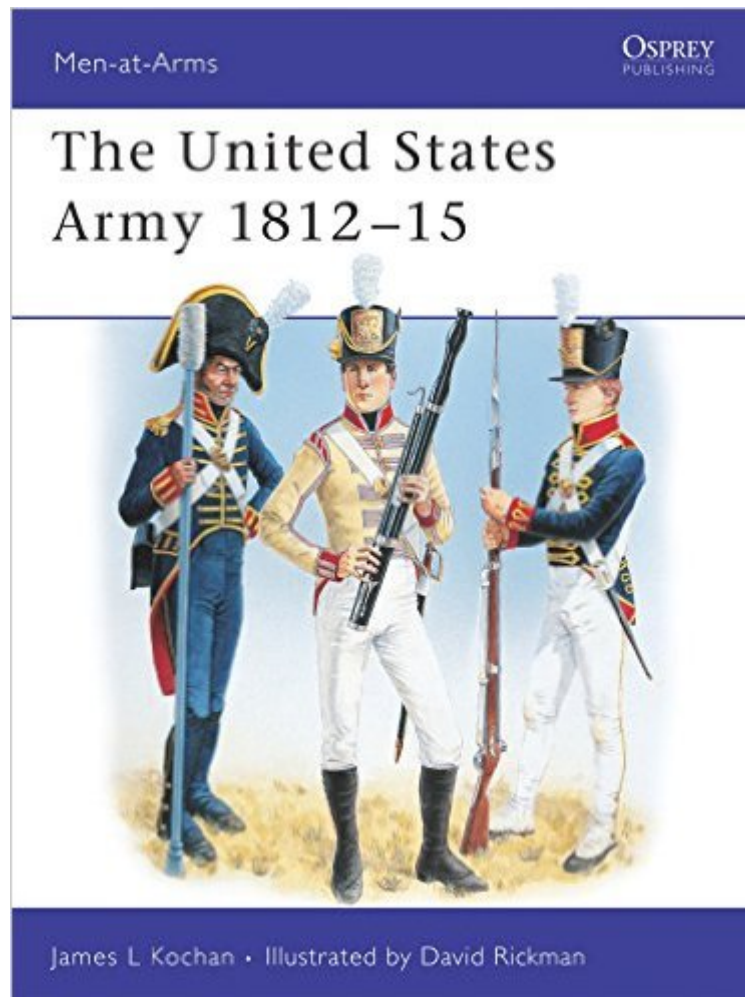


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The United States Army : 1812-1815 (Men-At-Arms Series, 345)



Synopsis

The War of 1812 was the true making of the regular regiments and corps of the US Army. Three years' fighting against Britain saw the White House burned down, but also the bloody repulse of the redcoats, then the best infantry in the world, on a number of battlefields. The small constabulary force which entered the war - ill-led, ill-supported, and with an uncertain system of supply - ended it as a professional army with a system of command and services equal to any. This meticulous history of the uniforms of the American regulars is illustrated with many previously unseen paintings and photographs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If it wasn't for the Star-Spangled Banner, most Americans would probably lump the War of 1812 into the same bin of forgotten wars with the Mexican War and Spanish-American War. Even then, I'm sure they wouldn't be able to tell you a darn thing about any of the details. This book gives a through overview to the United States Army as it progressed from 1812 through 1815. America had this horrible habit in its early years (and even up until World War II) of cutting its military in peace time and then getting itself into wars unprepared. What starts out as a slightly disorganized army in 1812 turns into an army that would route troops that served with Wellington in Europe. Probably the strength of this book is that the author doesn't try to be all things to all people. Instead of giving an overview of all the branches or even both sides of the conflict as was done in Osprey's earlier work on the subject, it is very specific and therefore a good reference for such a short book. The prints

are interesting to look at and the photos of extant uniforms and equipment are priceless.

This is an excellent book and reference for the American Army in the War of 1812, America's true 'forgotten war.' The author, a recognized uniform authority and historian, has done an excellent job within the guidelines of the Osprey series and has produced a volume that should be owned by anyone with an interest in the War of 1812. The color illustrations are excellently done, as well as accurate, chronicling an army of amateurs, both on the enlisted and the officer level, that, through defeat and hardship, grew into a professional force that held at bay, and defeated, 'Wellington's Invincibles', and saved the United States as an independent nation. All of the combat arms are covered, rifle dress, summer and fatigue dress, as well as winter uniform and the various differences in uniform of the Regular infantry, due both to lack of regulation colored cloth and the various changes in uniform during the war. The black and white illustrations, mostly of original uniform items, greatly aid the historian and researcher, and the text definitely shows that the author has done his homework. Both primary and secondary sources are listed on the last page, demonstrating the depth of research that has gone into this valuable volume. It is definitely a work of historic scholarship and not just a 'picture book.' It should be noted that this book covers the Regulars, and not the militia or the better trained, uniformed, and disciplined volunteer militia. Hopefully, the author will also do another Osprey covering these troops to round out the study. This work is highly recommended and is both solid uniformology and military history.

This book fills many gaps in the literature on this rather narrow but nonetheless important topic in American military history. While many will utilize this book only for the extremely well-drawn plates and uniform descriptions, the narrative is actually quite interesting. The author chronicles the efforts by the federal government to outfit and equip its expanding armies at a time when budgets were small and resources were inadequate to meet the challenges.

This is a good basic book for getting an idea of the range of uniforms worn during the War of 1812. It contains some basic information, but for a reenactor there will not be sufficient information to properly duplicate a uniform.

Forget the Korean War, it was the War of 1812 that is America's Forgotten war. This book tries in the limited space available to cover the rebirth of the Regular Army of the American Republic.

A good choice if you are primarily interested in uniforms of the period. Short of good organization information for the army during this period.

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