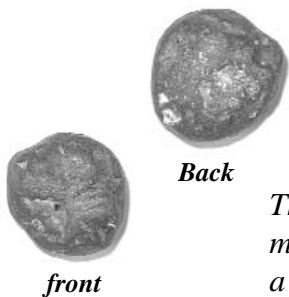
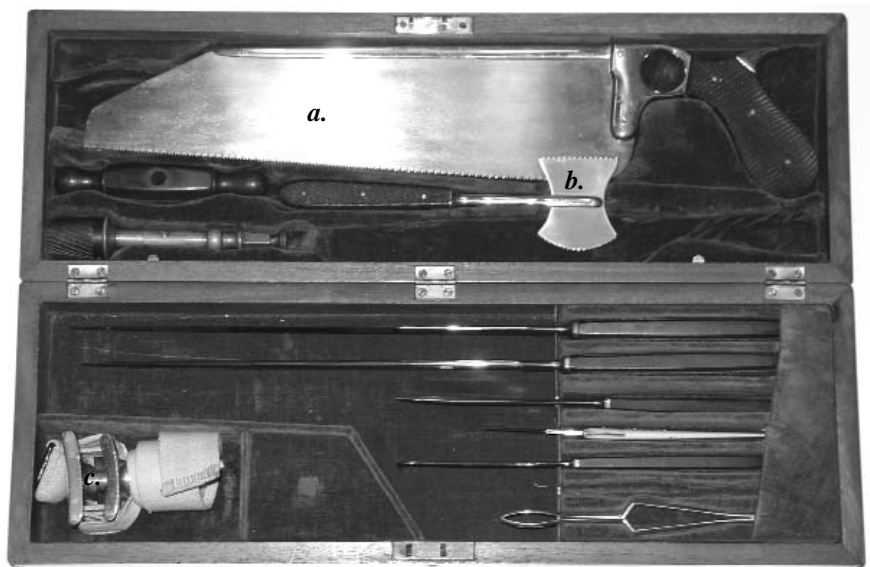


# THE CIVIL WAR SURGOEN

During the Civil War, every effort was made by doctors to treat the wounded within 48 hours, which is the length of time it took most infections to set in. The soldiers were separated into three groups: the mortally wounded, the slightly wounded, and those requiring surgery. The mortally wounded were made as comfortable as possible and left alone. The slightly wounded were treated with dressings and given opiates or liquor. Those that needed surgery had to wait their turn for the operating table. The surgeon's main concern was to stop the hemorrhaging, remove any bullets or foreign objects, and if necessary, perform an amputation. Three out of four operations on the battlefield were amputations, so the surgeon had to be adequately prepared with proper saws and tools. Using the tools in his surgeon's kit, a doctor could remove a limb in 15 minutes. The tourniquet was used to cut the blood flow from the wounded areas. The scalpels and knives were used to cut away skin and tissue. The saws were used to cut through the bone. Then the blood vessels were tied off with silk thread and the wound was sewn together with the needle and thread.

*This Surgeon's Kit, on display at the Marietta Museum of History, is an example of the typical tools used by doctors during this time.*

- a. Large Bone Saw*
- b. Small Bone Saw*
- c. Tourniquet*



*This bullet, seen from the front and back, is misshapen and marred by many teeth marks. Late in the war, many doctors did not have medicine for pain. They often gave a bullet to the patient and told them to bite it while they performed surgery or amputated a limb. This is where the phrase "bite the bullet" first originated.*