**[Mission](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/" \o "Go to Mission's profile)**

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374584) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374584)

William and I were talking about my role in the battle at PiP from the audience's POV and it occurred to me that it might be nice to have some mark identifying me as a surgeon on my Haunting Lily Alexander original satchel in which I carry my tools onto the battlefield so that they know why I'm just standing there in the background while everyone else fires their guns.

A quick search of the symbol indicates that the red cross and red crescent symbols didn't come into use until 1859. So I was wondering if anyone had any insight on this. Was there a medical symbol that was used on the battlefield during period? In all my reading, I haven't come across any such symbol, other than the barber's pole, with it's blood and bandages symbolism. (Which would be a difficult think to carry into battle.)

[**Iron Jon**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/5756-iron-jon/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 472 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Palm Bay, FL
* Interests:anything that keeps me busy for a while...

[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374590) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374590)

Maybe some research along the lines of the Knights Hospitaller or the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem would uncover some sort of symbol for a battlefield medic.

[**michaelsbagley**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3724-michaelsbagley/)

* Smells Like Wet Sheep
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,548 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Columbus, Ohio
* Interests:Mostly into GAoP, but starting to develop more Buccaneer era stuff for re-enacting as well. Generally I do re-enact both piratical/nautical and other impressions from the period. I am focusing on more "common" impressions from the period (i.e. average sailor/pirate, rank and file Red Coat, early Colonial huntsman, etc.)

[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374591) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374591)

 On 12/9/2009 at 9:11 AM, Iron Jon said:

Maybe some research along the lines of the Knights Hospitaller or the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem would uncover some sort of symbol for a battlefield medic.

That's what I thought as well, the order of the Knights of the Hospitaller has been around since about the 11th or 12th century, and their symbol has always been the red cross. When did the red cross make the jump from the order of knights to the symbol of medics?

[**Fox**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1019-fox/)

* Old Twillian
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,564 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374595) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374595)

As far as I know the only universal symbol for a medical pracititioner on an 18thC battlefield was that he was the guy not fighting and wearing an apron covered in other people's blood. But this is not really my subject.

The Knights of St. John had, by the GAoP, more or less ceased their hospital functions, and in any case their flag was a white cross on a red field. The red cross on a white field was the flag of the Templars, who had ceased to exist by the GAoP (pending evidence to support the ridiculous pirates-Masons-Templars hogwash) and were not a hospitaller order.

There used to be a guy who portrayed an ECW surgeon over here, who wore an embroidered sash to indicate his membership of the Guild of Barber Surgeons. I don't know what his sources were or whether it lasted 'til the end of the century...

[**Bos'n Cross**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11032-bosn-cross/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 536 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Portsmouth
* Interests:many things.......

[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374643) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374643)

I believe mr.foxe to be quite right in this opinion. A man with a bloody apron running around on a battlefield, and not fighting screams MEDIC! so yee need a bloody apron mission.....oh and a saw works better than an enema syringe...thought i like the latter.......lol

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[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374666) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374666)

The problems with the saw were that 1) it was too big for my Lily Alexander original satchel, 2)the blade was likely to tear my satchel and 3) not very funny. I considered the dismembering knife, but it is really sharp and probably too small to see from the fort wall. And so...

I do need to break down and splatter my apron with gore. It's still clean because it was sort of expensive. Yeah, I know... I actually got it out at PiP to put on and then forgot about it because I saw Michael leaving for the battle. So it's my fault.

In truth, I don't think many instruments would be useful on the field. Mostly bandages and tourniquets. And it might be a bad idea to go about put tourniquets on people. A stretcher of sorts could have been good as well.

So there seems to be no universally recognized symbol. In truth, the surgeon probably would not have been on the battlefield at all, but back away from the front lines treating those brought to him.

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* Pyrate Captain
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* Member
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* Gender:Male
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[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374685) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374685)

I was just pulling your leg a bit about the saw lol you badger poker you, a bloody apron would do fine, heck if you dont want to bloody your nice one, i can make you one and gore it up! Oh...and if you ever did the stretcher idea...twould be awsome......one idea suggested by someone during pip, is as you go about the battlefield, ask people if they are in an ok position (ex: is their a rock, cactus, black child etc. in your back?...then if so you could sort of shift the person into a better position while "fixing" them up....i though this a good idea, because then, you are actually helping funny enough)

[**Brig**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2841-brig/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 330 posts
* Gender:Female
* Location:Florida
* Interests:GAoP reenactments, lace-making, reading, writing, sewing, dancing.

[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374686) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374686)





[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

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[Posted December 9, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374688) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374688)

You're really not helping here... 

We're in the Twill forum, not the PiP forum. We need to have *some* propriety. 

[**blackjohn**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1144-blackjohn/)

* Iron Age Hero Lost at Sea
* 
* 
* Member
* 3,745 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Columbia, Md
* Interests:Stuff... and junk.

[Posted December 10, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374720) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374720)

Big fan of blood-spattered myself. I always enjoyed this series of pics of my friend Kirk digging a bullet out of one of my pirates.

<http://www.piratebrethren.com/greatmomentsinhistory/greatmoments002.html>

Ok, now I'm going back to hibernating.

[**Quartermaster James**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/4887-quartermaster-james/)

* LUNATIC
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,662 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Sailing the Islets of Langerhans
* Interests:Interests cannot be left blank, so the machine says.

[Posted December 10, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374732) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374732)

Well, now I have this image of Mission running amok in a melee,

In a blood spattered apron, holding fistfuls of bandages that

Trail like streamers in the wind.

(You could always apply the bandages without making them tourniquet tight )

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[Posted December 10, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=374740) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=374740)

Now I have to make sure and get that shot at some event. I want to be all crouched over while I'm running like I'm trying to dodge bullets.

"I'm coming to get...wait, no. I'm coming to SAVE you!"

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

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* Gender:Male
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[Posted April 11, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=382862) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=382862)

Interesting. This is from Rory W. McCreadie, *The Barber Surgeon's Mate of the 16th and 17th Century*. He has a sketch of his idea of a plaster box that might have been carried as described, although I don't know what it's based upon. If I remember, I will scan it in and add it to this thread. I do wish this man would have footnoted his quotes.

“All surgeons were treated by both parties as non-combatants, and enjoyed certain privileges by custom rather than by any positive regulations. They probably wore a distinguishing badge; an Elizabethan writer said ‘Surgeons must wear their baldric, whereby they may be known in time of slaughter.’ What or if a sign was worn at the time of the [English] Civil War [1641-51] is not known. It is probably he had a green woolen baldric with three white stripes, one running along the middle and one down each edge, with their coat of arms (a silver speculum behind a crown which is over a Tudor rose) on the front, running long-ways. The woollen baldric is very strong, so it

\_\_

is possible he carried his first aid kit or plaster box, which looks like a large powder flask, on it. Often they were allowed to enter a hostile camp to treat wounded of their own side.” (McCreadie, p. 32-3)

[**Coastie04**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/27-coastie04/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,008 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Juneau, AK
* Interests:Nautical history, sailing (especially tall ships and my own 'Sanctioned Mistress'), shooting (of all eras and calibers), and homebrewing.

[Posted April 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=findComment&comment=383295) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16233-something-like-the-red-cross/&do=reportComment&comment=383295)

Another possible symbol is the Asklepios serpent/staff design. I'm not sure if it would ever have been worn as a badge, but the symbol was around back then (albiet a different one than today). [Symbol of Modern Medicine](http://www.annals.org/content/138/8/673.full.pdf%2Bhtml)

From another site, I found this:

 Quote

From the beginning of the 17th century, the figure of Asclepius began appearing on medical medals and calling cards. The same pattern seen in antiquity emerged--the symbol was used only in a medical context, whereas the caduceus, although used by some medical organizations, was associated with other fields, especially commerce, communications, chemistry, and pharmacy.

[Source](http://pyracy.com/uchomp.bsd.uchicago.edu/documents/Asclapia.doc)

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