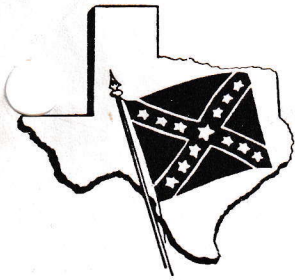


THE TEXAS RIFLES

"To The Tyrants Never Yield!"

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COMMANDER'S DISPATCH

This edition is devoted primarily to the Wilderness-Spotsylvania event. The Texas Rifles and the Tarrant Rifles (the group that was with us a Pleasant Hill which is commanded by Bruce Winders) will field Company A of Michael Moore's battalion. All Texas Rifles members are URGED to attend. This should prove to be an exciting event with many different things planned. If you haven't paid your registration fee, do so immediately (see report in this edition).

Well, another Pleasant Hill has come and gone. I had a good time as I do every time I am in the field with my friends. My hat is off to the ladies of the Texas Rifles for their tireless efforts to give us a beautiful flag. We were able to see it Sunday at Pleasant Hill and it looks great! The official presentation will be at the Wilderness. You may have noticed that the Texas Rifles treasury has purchased a wall tent and fly for the ladies to use at events. This was done to help compensate them for their work on the flag. Also, a special thanks goes out to Kate and Ana for their fine cooking at Pleasant Hill. There will also be a Texas Rifles company mess at the Wilderness.

Most of the other points that I would like to touch on are already enclosed in the newsletter, so I will close for now. I look forward to seeing you in the field at the Wilderness!

For God and Texas!!!

SPECIAL URGENT NOTICE

Steve Bell, a member of Cleburne's Brigade, needs TYPE A NEGATIVE blood. Steve has cancer and needs a blood transfusion. He needs Type A Negative, which is very rare. If you have Type A Negative, please give as much as you can. Have it sent to Steve Bell, care of the Red Cross in Nashville, Tennessee. Any Red Cross agency will know how to get the blood to Steve in Nashville. If you know someone who has Type A Negative, please ask them to donate blood, too. Please do what you can to help. Above all, remember Steve in your prayers.

C A L E N D A R O F E V E N T S

[Notice: Most of the members, officers, and NCOs should be present at events in **bold type**, but you may be on your own at events in regular type. See muster roll for phone numbers of anyone listed as an event contact.]

MUSEUM OF THE GREAT PLAINS: May 19-21, Lawton, Oklahoma. Pre-1860 event. Weekend dedicated to the role of the U.S. military in opening the West in the 1830's. Stay in log stockade on museum grounds. Excellent reconstruction of far-flung trading post of the time. Meal provided. Need tents. Opportunity to demonstrate to the public that the West began long before the cowboy! Contact Steve Abolt.

BATTLE OF WILDERNESS/SPOTSYLVANIA: May 26-28 in Virginia. The 125th Anniversary reenactment. This is a **MAXIMUM EFFORT TEXAS RIFLES AND BRIGADE EVENT**. See Scott Swenson's report and Mike Moore's report.

GATESVILLE SHIVAREE : June 3 in Gatesville, Texas. This will be a living history program, drill, etc. A free meal will be provided. We will start around 9 a.m. Saturday morning and conclude around 4 p.m. Saturday afternoon. The location is the new Gatesville Community Center next to the baseball fields east of Gatesville on U.S. 84. If you like, come and stay Friday night, or you can just come Saturday. Contact David Waters for more information.

SIEGE OF VICKSBURG: June 30-July 2 near Vicksburg, Mississippi. This will be a battalion event. Sponsored by Cleburne's Brigade (members of our battalion). We will be just a short distance from the national park in the actual trenches. Bring picks and shovels. Digging is allowed, and you can keep what you find! We will reenact assaults on the earthworks! One meal provided. Looks like another outstanding event. More information to come.

BATTLE OF ATLANTA: August 31-September 4 (Labor Day weekend). To be held on a 1,200 acre plantation known as "Woodlands" located in Adairsville, Georgia, near I-75 between Chattanooga and Atlanta. The event will include scenarios for New Hope Church, Kennesaw Mountain, Varnell Station, and the Battle of Atlanta. Registration fees per participant: Before May 31 - \$3, before August 1 - \$5, before August 15 - \$10. No registrations accepted after August 15. Members of the Texas Rifles should send their fee to Gill Eastland. Details will be forthcoming. This will be a brigade event.

MEXICAN WAR ENCAMPMENT: September 8-10, Fort Scott, Kansas. Excellent event at the restored Crack Outpost of the western frontier. Garrison duty and tactical demonstrations, dress ball, courts-marshal reenactment, first-person impressions. Lectures on the Mexican War. Meals provided. Contact Steve Abolt.

BATTLE OF FRANKLIN. November 30-December 3 near Franklin, Tennessee. This will be a **MAXIMUM EFFORT BRIGADE EVENT** and the maximum effort Texas Rifles event of the year. This reenactment is put on by reenactors for reenactors. Scott Swenson has seen the site and said it's the best he's ever seen, and that we need to put more members in the field at this event than any other event in the past. There will be three battles on Saturday and Sunday. More information to come.

DADE'S MASSACRE: December 29-31, Bushnell, Florida. Pre-1860 event. For those seeking the action of a full-fledged battle in the 1830's. Two full-scale battles on Saturday and Sunday with military campsite on the actual massacre site. In 1835 the massacre of Bvt. Maj. F. L. Dade shocked Jacksonian America and plunged it into the longest Indian war in its history. Over 10,000 spectators attended last year! Contact Steve Abolt.

BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS: January 5-7, 1990. New Orleans, Louisiana. The 175th Anniversary of the 1815 battle. A week-long celebration is scheduled with an encampment on the original site. Mileage and some meals provided by the National Park Service. Contact Steve Abolt for more information and if you wish to portray U.S. Regulars.

BENTONVILLE: In Georgia third weekend of March 1990. Surrender of the Confederates will mark the end of the 125th Anniversary. This will be a Brigade event. Details to come.

CALENDAR NOTES: Capt. Swenson advises that Franklin is the most important event with the Wilderness a close second. If you can only attend a couple of events this year, these are the two you should put at the top of your list! The non-Texas Rifles events are listed as a service to the membership, but members should give the Texas Rifles events their highest priority. If you want to list an event in the Texas Rifles newsletter, send your notice to Scott Swenson (see masthead for address.)

* * * W I L D E R N E S S - S P O T S Y L V A N I A * * *

By Captain Swenson

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, this is going to be a very exciting event that is different from most of the events we've seen. There will be three battles: Friday evening, the Wilderness with the famous "Lee to the Rear" incident; Saturday afternoon, the "fight for the crossroads"; and Sunday morning, Spotsylvania. Friday night after the battle we will march back to camp with candles in the barrels of our muskets. Saturday night, we will leave our fixed camp and march to the "Mule Shoe" trenches where we will sleep on our arms, and Sunday morning at dawn, the Yankees will attack! Our brigade will counterattack and stop the breakthrough!

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: (1) Everyone should arrive in camp by Noon Friday. (2) Bring plenty of ammo (at least 100 rounds). (3) Bring haversack rations that are non-perishable. The company mess will not serve lunch, but will probably serve breakfast and supper. (4) Do not bring a lot of ice chests. Share one among at least 6 or more men. Don't put anything else in the cooler except ice to put in your drinks. Without a lot of drinks in the chest, you will have more room for ice and the chest can service more men. Remember that the ice chests should be the ONLY anachronism in camp, and they must be hidden at all times or concealed in a period-style camp box. (5) Tentage: Light as possible! Tent flies and shelter halves are encouraged! No wall tents allowed. A-frame tents are discouraged. There should be enough tent flies to house everyone. (6) Camp Furniture: Only small crates or ammo boxes allowed. No cots, tables, chairs, foot lockers, camp stools, etc. (except camp boxes concealing an ice chest, and those must be few in number). This includes the officers and NCOs. Remember, we are portraying an army on the march. As for me, except for tentage, I will carry everything on my back. (7) Be sure to bring your poncho or gum blanket. (8) Saturday night, we will leave our fixed camps and march to our position in the trenches at the Mule Shoe. There we will sleep on our arms. Plan to carry bedrolls (gum blanket or poncho wrapped around blanket) or knapsacks. The Yankees will attack our position at dawn on Sunday. Saturday night we will make arrangements to send a few men back to the company mess to pick up a pot of stew or something and bring it to us in the trenches. Saturday night should prove to be one of the most fun (and different) parts of the event. (9) Company Mess: Ana Draa and Jo McMahan plan to cook three meals (Friday supper, Saturday lunch and supper) if the necessary cooking gear can be ferried to the event. Cost: \$5 per man. (10) The event will be over by 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning, so we will have a head start coming home if we want. (11) At the event, we will vote and make our final decision if we will go to Richmond Sunday after the battle and march with the army through the heart of Richmond. Please advise your Regional Director of your preference.

OTHER THOUGHTS ON WILDERNESS: The emphasis on this event is to cut down on tentage and camp gear, etc., and experience some things that are rare for us in the hobby. For example, Friday night our brigade will march back to camp with candles in the barrels of our muskets! This should be an amazing site! Saturday night, we will sleep on our arms in the trenches and wait for the Yankee assault at dawn! With this, we will experience more of a taste of what the Confederate soldier's life was like, and we'll have fun doing it.



STAGOLING FOR THE WORKS AT THE "BLOODY ANGLE"

As for me, I am looking forward to the opportunity to travel light and rid myself of the hassles of toting a bunch of "stuff" with me, and not having to worry about carrying perishable foodstuff for the main meals, hiding it, etc., is a relief. The company mess has relieved us of those problems, and now all we have to carry is our haversack rations to tide us over at lunch time. The company mess also provides us with the chance to share in the camaraderie of eating together.

TRANSPORTATION: Gill Eastland is renting a Suburban from San Antonio which will be going north. It will hold eight people. If you would like to ride with him, let him know as soon as possible as seats will go fast. There

may be a van or RV going from Houston. Contact Vince Draa if you are interested in a ride from Houston. (Vince and Ana plan to fly, but as Southeast Regional Director, Vince will take the names of interested persons).

Unfortunately, there are a number of Texas Rifles members who will not be able to attend Wilderness. We will miss them, and they will miss a good event. I hope everyone else who is going is as excited as I am!

The Wilderness - Spotsylvania Event

By Col. Mike Moore

Dates: May 26-28, 1989. Location: Louisa, Virginia, located on Route 64 between Richmond and Charlottesville. Sponsor: ACWCC (Napoleonic Tactics is not involved in this event). Confederate Army Organization: General Patterson will be in charge of the Confederate Troops. The 1st Brigade will be led by our own Jack King; the 2nd Brigade by Dave Seay; 3rd Brigade by Thomas Jesse; 4th Brigade by John Weaver.

Battle Scenarios/Impressions: The first day's battle will be Friday evening, and will represent the Battle of the Wilderness, including the famous "Lee to the Rear" episode. The brigade will portray Hood's Texas Brigade. Our battalion will portray the First Texas Infantry, Nick Medich's battalion the 5th Texas; and the North Carolina troops the 3rd Arkansas. The battle will begin about 5 p.m. and last until dark. Following the battle will be a short night-time march back to camp (bring candles for your musket barrels).

On Saturday morning, we will be used by Classic Images for filming the segment of Ramseur's Brigade's breakthrough at the Muleshoe Salient at Spotsylvania. Saturday afternoon (ca. 3-5 p.m.) will be the recreation of the "Fight for the Crossroads" in which we will portray the 1st Tennessee Inf. (Medich: 10th Louisiana; North Carolinians: a South Carolina unit). This battle over, we will march to the trenches of Spotsylvania and camp in the trenches on our arms. The third day's battle will portray the defense of the Muleshoe Salient at Spotsylvania. The battle will begin at dawn, and last until about 8:30 or 9 a.m. Our battalion will portray the 2nd North Carolina of Ramseur's brigade (Medich: 13th North Carolina; North Carolinians: 14th North Carolina). Following the battle, there is an optional parade in Richmond beginning at 2 p.m. at Battle Abbey. The parade will go down Monument Avenue to Hollowed Cemetery for a brief ceremony. Prior to the parade, the Museum of the Confederacy will be open special hours for reenactors from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Weekend Schedule:

Thursday, May 25: 6:00 a.m. - Registration opens

Friday, May 26: 12:00 Noon - Battalion muster

5:00 p.m. - Battle of the Wilderness, followed by march to camp by candlelight if late enough

Saturday, May 27: 10:00 a.m. - Registration closes

10:00 a.m. - Battle of Trevilian Station (Cavalry only)

3:30 p.m. - Battle of Laurel Hill, followed by march to the trenches and encamping

6:00 p.m. - Formal dance and barn dance

Sunday, May 28: 6:00 a.m. - Battle of Spotsylvania

8:45 a.m. - Church services

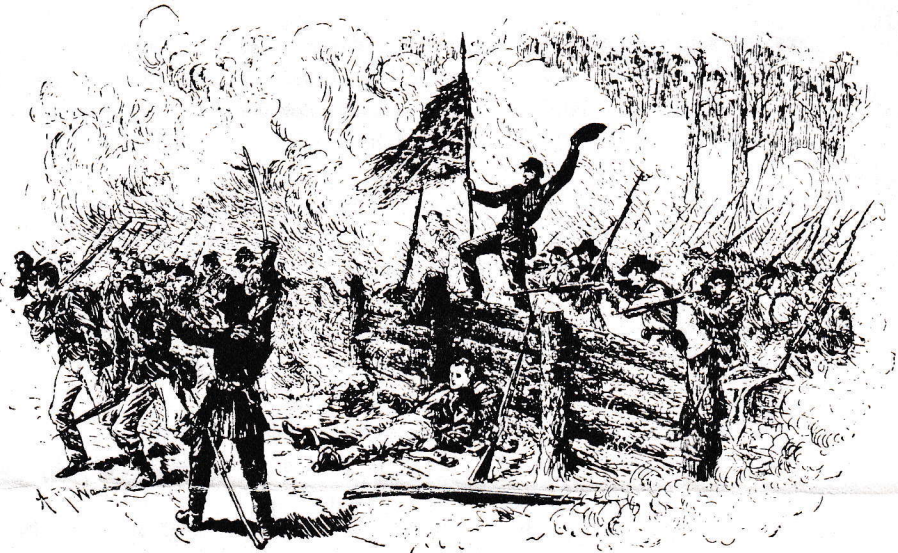
2:00 p.m. - Parade in Richmond begins (optional)

Camping: Though there will be an established military camp, especially for Friday evening, everyone will be encouraged to spend Saturday night in the trenches, placing us in position for the dawn battle. Come prepared with gum blankets, shelter halves, etc., to construct crude coverings in the trenches. Those that opt to stay in the formal camp Saturday night will have to get up and be in position in the trenches before dawn, so I hope you see the benefit in sleeping in the trenches Saturday night.

Presently, our battalion has about 160 men registered: Confederate Rifles - George Otott (37); Confederate Guard - Danny Sessums - (16); Tarrant Rifles - Bruce Winders (11); 59th TN - Carl Jenkins (6); 1st TN - Sam Greene (17); Cheatham's - Joseph Lorentzen (18); Texas Rifles - Scott Swenson (22); 4th TX Mounted Vol. - Wess Rodgers (12); 11th MS - Layne Chartrand (6). Those units below company strength of 20-25 will be consolidated, with attention to compatibility.

Registration: All registration should be sent directly to ACWCC (8620 Varina Rd. Richmond, VA 23231). Cost is now \$10 per person. An additional \$2 per person for battalion and brigade costs should be sent to Fred Prouty (5635 Scenic Ridge, Old Hickory, TN 37138). All registration closes on May 19 for all participants. There will be no walk-up or on-site registration, though substitutions will be allowed. Be sure your registration fee is mailed in time to reach the ACWCC **BEFORE MAY 19**. If you haven't registered, please do so **IMMEDIATELY!**

Directions: From Charlottesville, take I-64 East to Exit 28 North, State Route 208 to Louisa. Follow State Route 208 to State Road 646. Take right on 646 to State Road 604. Follow signs to property approximately 2 miles.



CAPTURE OF A PART OF THE BURNING UNION BREASTWORKS ON THE BROCK ROAD ON THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 6. FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.

* * * **T R I D B I T S** * * *

[Comments are by the Editor unless otherwise noted.]

PARTICIPATION ENCOURAGED: Members are invited to voice their opinions and publish information or research applicable to our hobby in the newsletter. Also, if you're interested in organizing our participation in an event, or if you're interested in serving as an NCO, advise me or Gill Eastland. (By Scott Swenson)

NCO APPOINTMENTS THROUGH AT LEAST THE WILDERNESS CAMPAIGN: Second Sergeant -- Larry McMahan. Third Sergeant -- David Agee. Fourth Sergeant -- Bob Fletcher. Corporals -- Brian Bosworth, Mike Powell, Kevin Stork, Pal Tigert. (By Scott Swenson)

NEW REGIONAL DIRECTOR APPOINTED FOR SOUTHEASTERN REGION: Vince Draa is the new Houston and Southeast Texas Regional Director effective April 8, 1989. Vince and his wife, Ana, are knowledgeable veterans of many events. Vince is very enthusiastic about his new position, and his eagerness to assist members in the Southeastern Region will be a real asset to the Texas Rifles. [I enjoyed being the Southeastern Regional Director and thank those who assisted me -- Editor].

THE 1989 MUSTER ROLL is included in this edition. This encompasses dues-paid members as of the end of April 1989. However, the muster roll is always subject to change. If your name, address, or phone number is incorrect, or you're not on the roll but you've paid your 1989 dues, advise Scott Swenson or Gill Eastland.

NO DUES; NO NEWS: If you hear someone complain that they didn't get a newsletter, ask them if they paid their 1989 dues. If not, please remind them that Issue No. 15 was the last edition they were entitled to receive. If they want to continue enjoying the benefits of membership, they must pay their dues. The following past members haven't paid their 1989 dues: Bill Barr, David and Jeff Boutwell, Larry Bridges, Dennis Bridwell, Bill Elkins, Scott Curran, Gordon Gentry, Randy Gilbert, Kent Hargett, Marty Hinski, Alan Hutton, Kevin Hutton, Mike Powell, Ben Strakos, Keith Waldrop, Buddy Walker, and Joe Walker.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: The beef jerky recipe in the last edition of the newsletter was submitted by Vince Draa, not James Nash. If you choke on the stuff, Vince, not James, is the one you want to settle your score with!

EMERGENCY NUMBERS: For the benefit of those going to the Wilderness event, here are some phone numbers to give to friends or family in case they need to get in contact with you due to an emergency. Louisa police (804) 967-1400 or County Sheriff (804) 967-1234. These agencies should be able to get a message to the sponsors at the event. Make sure your friends or family members know to say that you are in the 1st Confederate Brigade, 1st Battalion, Mike Moore, commander.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS: New members are **Kevin Young** (San Antonio), **Jay Love** (Houston), **Kate Payne** (Houston), **Chris Payne** (Houston), **David Hall** (Houston), **Mike Daley** (Nacogdoches), **Darrell Windham** (Austin), **Jo McMahan** (Tyler), **Paul Smyth** (?), **Lindsey Buss** (Austin), **Whitney Milam** (Austin), **Bob Benard** (San Antonio), **Diana Andriola** (Houston), **Charles Prack** (Arlington), **Chris Strzelecki** (Houston), **Philip Ulbrich** (San Antonio), and **James Jones** (Kountze). WELCOME Y'ALL!!!!

TAILOR FOR HIRE: If you need someone to sew uniforms such as shell jackets, pants, vests, shirts, etc., Steve Abolt is now making his services available. His work is guaranteed and high quality. His address is 1856 Carl, Fort Worth, Texas 76103 and his phone number is (817) 535-2359 -- By Scott Swenson

RECRUITING PACKAGES AND NEW MEMBER PACKAGES: An updated Recruiting Package and a New Member Package are available. Contact Scott Swenson, Gill Eastland, or Jeff Hunt if you need copies.

REGISTRATION FEES FOR 1989 EVENTS: Registration fees are due immediately. Send a check to Gill Eastland for Franklin (still \$7). For Wilderness send check for \$10 to the ACWCC, 8620 Varina Road, Richmond, Virginia 23231. State that you're registering as a member of the First Confederate Brigade, First Battalion, First Texas, Mike Moore Commanding. Your check must arrive BEFORE MAY 19. Also send \$2 to Fred Prouty, 5653 Scenic Ridge, Old Hickory, TN 37138.

STAR & CRESCENT BADGES: The star & crescent has been adopted by our Brigade as its unit symbol. Brass badges are available for \$7 each. Contact Gill Eastland if you want to order a battalion badge. This is limited to paid up members only.

HARDEE'S SIMPLIFIED TACTS AND TEXAS RIFLES SONG BOOKS: Gill Eastland advises that anyone who wants to purchase a copy of Hardee's Simplified Tacts and/or the song book should send him a note or post card stating the quantity of each. When enough requests are received, Gill will send off an order.

JOHN PERRY, who was the first 1st. Sgt. of the Texas Rifles, will be serving with the Texas Rifles for one day during the Wilderness reenactment. Many of us "old timers" will be looking forward to seeing John again.

EDITOR'S NOTES: Jeff Hunt contributed a copy of Tom Stevens' excellent article on the Texas Rifles at Pleasant Hill. The article appears in this edition, but Jeff has originals for members who wish to purchase them since the photos are much better than Xerox copies. A special thanks to Jeff for thoughtfully providing the article. Don Drachenburg provided the photos taken at Pleasant Hill. Thanks, Don. For future editions, John Keahey contributed an informative article on the Mexican soldado of 1835, and Dennis Hubbard contributed an article by M. A. Ryan of the 14th Mississippi. Membership contributions make our newsletter interesting. Please keep sending your comments, articles, opinions!

LOST & FOUND, FOR SALE OR WANTED

Several items were found at Pleasant Hill: A shelter half, two large canvas bags, and a canteen. If you lost such an item at Pleasant Hill, contact Jeff Hunt (see muster roll). If you can correctly describe the canteen, it's yours.

If you are interested in purchasing any of the items listed below, contact John Keahey, 2810 West Pebble Beach, Missouri City, Texas 77459 (713) 261-0665,

- 1 pair CWP/IWP federal infantry corporal's chevrons \$5.00
- 1 pair CWP/IWP federal infantry corporal's trouser stripes \$4.00
- 1 pair CWP/IWP federal infantry corporal's service stripes \$2.00
- 1 Arkansas toothpick knife sheath. \$2.00
- 1 Scottish dirk knife kit, all metal parts to complete a dirk and scabbard \$20.00
- 1 pair white cotton duck drop-front trousers, hole in one knee, great for U.S. or soldado use; inseam 26 inches, waist 31 inches . . \$20.00
- 1 pair stockings, white cotton for lady or man with correct back seam. . \$5.00
- 1 pair stockings, white for lady or man. \$4.00
- Miscellaneous original brass letters, assorted sized from closed saddle shop. \$1.00 each



GOING AFTER WATER.



CONFEDERATE VIDEITE.

- 1 Cartridge box, .75 cal. with white buff strap, correct box for British Napoleonic Wars or Mexican 1830's use. \$50.00
- 1 White buff leather scrap \$5.00
- Linen, beautiful fine white linen suitable for shirts, linings, etc., from discarded linen maps. Wash the fabric map and save the linen base, one or more yards per map. \$1.00 each

* * R E P O R T S * *

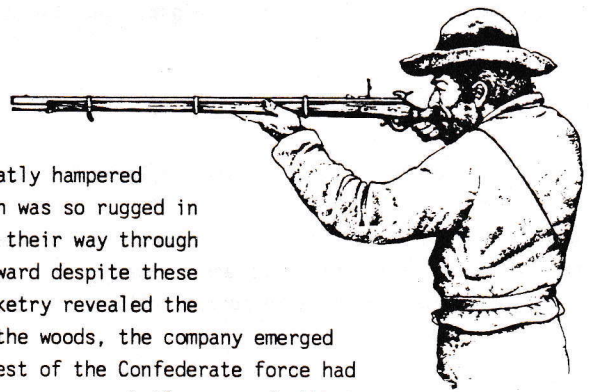
On March 18, 1989, Tricia Watson, Ana Draa and Vince Draa along with new members David Hall, Kate Payne, and Chris Payne, met at the Draa's home in Houston. While the ladies began work on the long-awaited official Texas Rifles flag, the gentlemen rolled cartridges and viewed several reenactment videos. Everyone enjoyed the cake made by Kate (Robert E. Lee's favorite recipe). Several pizzas were consumed (unknown if General Lee liked anchovies on his pies) and approximately 250 cartridges were rolled. Follow-up sessions were held on March 25 at the Draa's and on April 1 at Kate and David's during which more cartridges were rolled and the flag neared completion. [Submitted by Vince Draa.]

On a sunny, but extremely windy, April 1, 1989, Texas Rifles members Larry Richardson, Bo Richardson, Ben Strakos, David Waters, Joe Walker, Tom Kerly, Ana Draa, and Vince Draa (I hope I didn't leave anyone out) participated with approximately 20 other reenactors in an infantry and artillery tactics demonstration at the 10th Annual Confederate History Symposium in Hillsboro, Texas. After Joe (the infantry commander) put the troops through their paces in a drill demonstration (including a "near flawless" by files right into line), a skirmish with a four-gun artillery battery commanded by Butch Frank took place. The infantry company advanced up the hill upon which the battery was situated, behind a platoon of dismounted cavalry deployed as skirmishers. A well-placed canister round wiped out the cavalymen who had rallied on the reserves. The infantry hit the dirt to avoid the next blast, then rose and continued their advance, suffering heavy casualties as another round of canister swept their ranks. Finally, the order "charge bayonets" was given and the battery was overrun. The crowd of spectators was appreciative, indeed, as were the reenactors who received \$5 each from the symposium for their efforts. [submitted by Vince Draa.]

[In an effort to preserve some sort of company history, here is a report on Pleasant Hill.]

FOR THE RECORD: On the weekend of April 8-9, the Texas Rifles participated in the 125th anniversary reenactment of the Battle of Pleasant Hill in Louisiana. The company was composed of approximately 30 members under the command of Capt. Scott Swenson, Lt. Gill Eastland, and 1st. Sgt. Jeff Hunt. Col. Roger Johnson commanded our battalion (two Confederate battalions were present), and Lt. Col. Mike Moore commanded our wing of the battalion. Also present were Ana Draa and Kate Payne of the Texas Rifles Ladies, who won many fine compliments for their good cook'n at the company mess. The Tarrant Rifles (commanded by Bruce Winders of Dallas) joined our ranks to form a strong 40-man unit, which was designated as the skirmish company of Col. Johnson's battalion.

Saturday morning our battalion drilled on the open expanse of the battlefield, and the Texas Rifles displayed proficiency in deploying and rallying as skirmishers. That afternoon, both Confederate battalions advanced through a forest east of the Rebel camp to attack the federal camp in the rear. Our progress was greatly hampered by dense forests, thick undergrowth, and deep ravines. The terrain was so rugged in places that the companies had to advance in single file, threading their way through the briars. The Texas Rifles, deployed as skirmishers, pushed forward despite these difficulties trying to locate the enemy. The sound of distant musketry revealed the enemy's location, and after moving as quickly as possible through the woods, the company emerged from the forest and pushed into the rear of the enemy camp. The rest of the Confederate force had already driven the federals to their last line of defense, and these men were hotly engaged with



federal infantry supporting a battery of two 6 pdrs. After several valiant but futile attempts to rush the guns, the battle ended with heavy casualties on both sides. After the skirmish, the companies under Capt. Swenson and Sessums were the only troops to march back to camp as organized units. That night, the sponsors provided a sumptuous supper, but thunderstorms spoiled the night bombardment, and it rained most of the night.

Sunday morning before the battle, Ana Draa and Kate Payne displayed a beautiful flag that the ladies of the Texas Rifles had sewn for the company (see photo section.) This was a momentous occasion for the Texas Rifles, because after the flag is completed, it will be carried into battle or at parades as a symbol of the Texas Rifles. The finished flag, bearing our motto "To the Tyrants Never Yield" will be officially presented to the company at the Wilderness.

The main battle commenced soon after lunch. The federal forces were positioned behind breastworks and supported by artillery. The Rebel assault (composed of two infantry battalions supported by artillery, mounted cavalry, and some dismounted cavalry) had to attack across open ground to the crest of a hill and then across a depression immediately in front of the enemy position. The Rebel force, including the Texas Rifles, marched from the Confederate camp in columns, and after a bombardment by a Confederate battery and a cavalry engagement, our battalion led the first attack. Marching to the beat of massed drums, our battalion formed line of battle and crested the hill in front of the Federal positions. Despite intense enemy fire, our battalion delivered several devastating volleys and fired by file until heavy casualties, mainly from canister at close range, forced us to retire just behind the crest of the hill. While our attack was in progress, the second battalion, which had followed our advance, moved up on our right and commenced firing. During another advance in the face of intense enemy fire, we incurred very heavy casualties (including Capt. Swenson, Lt. Eastland, First Sgt. Hunt, Col. Johnson, Lt. Col. Moore, and many others) forcing the survivors "to ground." The battle raged on as other units tried to overrun the prepared federal positions, but to no avail. The battle ended, and the field was soon dotted with women anxiously searching for their loved ones among the dead and wounded. True to history, the loss of life on the Confederate side was appalling.

In the closing ceremony, James Watson won the award for best impression. Overall, the reenactment was enjoyed by everyone, and the men greatly appreciated the company mess provided by the ladies and the display of the new flag. Once again, the Texas Rifles made its mark in Louisiana. (See article by Tom Stevens) -- Editor.

* * * * *

On April 16, 1989, Houston & Southeast Texas Region members John Blackmon, Earl Hutton, Mike Click, Chris Strzelecki, and Vince Draa served as the color guard at the chartering ceremony of the Magnolia Rangers Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in Humble, Texas (north Houston). Ana Draa was also present to capture the event on video tape. The Magnolia Rangers, a unit of the 1st. Brigade, Texas Militia, was organized on January 17, 1861 in the north Harris County/Clear Creek area, and numbered 54 privates, 10 NCOs, and 4 officers. Displayed at the ceremony was the original unit flag of the Magnolia Rangers, which is very similar in design to our own Texas Rifles flag. [Submitted by Vince Draa.]

* * * * *

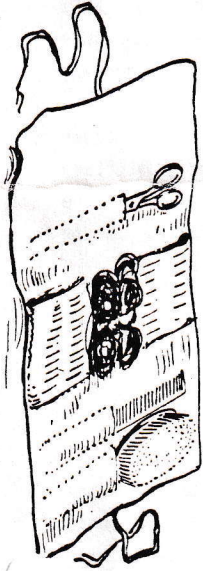
On May 6, 1989, Vince and Ana Draa hosted a cartridge rolling party for the Southeastern Region. The guests included David Agee, Jay Love, Diana Andriola, David Hall, Kate Payne, Chris Payne, Mark Bryan (recruit), Jim Rice (recruit), and Jerry Keller (recruit). Video tapes of Pleasant Hill and Sharpsburg were viewed, and 250 cartridges were rolled (Vince and Mark provided the powder). According to Vince, everyone had a good time. [Editor]

L E T T E R S T O O R F R O M T H E M E M B E R S H I P

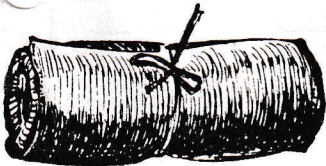
[Here's a letter of advice from James Nash, a Texas Rifles' veteran of many campaigns from Leona, Texas.]

"I was just sitting here waiting for spring and contemplating that I am coming up on my 9th year of reenacting. Also since time and physical condition is easing me out of really active participation, I wanted to pass on a little hard won knowledge before I go. I'm going to address this to the new recruit, and maybe save him a pain or two in the process.

Dear New Recruit: Well, now you got your uniform and gun and you are all ready to go burn powder and be a civil war soldier. I'm sure you have all your authentic stuff and are raring to be a real "hard core" reenactor. Now you can be as authentic as you want to be, but let and old veteran of some hellish campaigns give you a little bit of advice. Nobody is as tough as they think they are. One item you need to add to your kit is a little cloth or canvas bag about 8 X 10 inches with a button-closed flap. I call this my 'body bag' which gives you a hint of what goes in it. Let's face facts, Old Sport, we are 20th-century people, and we are not used to living like mid-19th century people, and we can't get used to it over a long weekend. So get yourself a body bag to make life bearable at least. Now you can probably make up your own list of what to stick in your authentic body bag, so just use the following list as a guide. But from long and, at times, extremely painful experience, this is what is in mine:



(1) A pocket-size pack of Kleenex. The porta-potties will run out of paper; count on it. (2) A pair of undersocks. Sure does save feet to put on a fresh pair of socks in the morning. Warm and dry ones. (3) A ski mask or toboggan. If it is at all cool, you will freeze to death wrapped up in a blanket because all your body heat escapes out your head, and you stink too bad to cover up completely. The ski mask will keep your head warm and help prevent loss of body warmth. (4) A mini Bic lighter. When all the wood is wet or green, it will get a fire going about 100 times better than matches. (5) A small bottle of hand lotion. I like Corn Huskers. It is hard to be enthusiastic when your chapped hands split open like oven-cooked hot dogs. (6) A mini map light. Sure is handy in a tent at night to find something with, and it is no fun to suddenly get up because you set the hay you are sleeping on on fire with a match or candle. (7) Insect repellent. Especially in the spring and summer. Some of the mosquitos around encampments are four motored. Maybe the smell draws them. I like Ben's or DEET. (8) One of those space blankets. If you get an unexpected norther, it will absolutely save your life! Ask someone about Shiloh! (9) One good solid meal. The new rations the Army puts out that you can find in surplus stores is good. You can starve to death on salt pork and crackers not to mention scurvy, and if concession food is available, it is two miles away and way over priced. (10) Small ball of heavy twine. Something will always break or tear. Twine will fix shoes, shoe laces, gun slings, haversack straps, canteen straps, tent flies. You name it. If worse comes to worse, you can even use it to hang yourself and get out of the misery!



Surely you have enough sense to take care of personal items like medicine and eye care so there is no need to go into that. The above stuff will let you exist on a little higher plain and from bitter experience, a body bag like the one here will become indispensable. Just make sure it is the first thing that goes in your kit, always. Yours for Campaign Comfort, James Nash."

* * * * *

A HOUSEWIFE.

[A complimentary letter to the membership from Texas Rifles member Dennis Hubbard of San Antonio, Texas (Dennis' photograph appears in the photo section -- Editor.)]

"It was my pleasure to act as left guide for our battalion during the Pleasant Hill engagement. I enjoyed functioning in an area new to me, but I missed being involved with the Rifles on the other end of the line. Especially since I haven't been active with our group for such a long while. However, it was a source of pride to see how our group performed compared to the others, and I would like to pass on that feeling for others to share.

As you recall, on Saturday before our little lark in the woods, our battalion drilled on the open ground. As already mentioned, I was stationed on the left end of the line next to a unit from Dallas, I believe. The Texas Rifles were deployed as skirmishers and performed that task in a text-book fashion. When Mr. Butcher tooted 'Recall at the Rally,' the Rifles reformed with the battalion. As you were reforming, the left end of the line was in awe. 'That's the way it's supposed to be done!' 'Look at that group. They're great!' were two comments I especially remember. Most groups can struggle with throwing out a skirmish formation, but forget about reforming in order. The sight was most impressive, and everyone took note of it.

I know we often complain of drilling, and I'm probably the loudest, but that moment of pride really makes the drilling a small price to pay. Hats off to the Texas Rifles for an outstanding job. I'm proud to be a member of such a distinguished unit! Respectfully, Dennis Hubbard."

* * * * *



A couple of inquisitive members asked me to explain the bugle calls that were sounded at Pleasant Hill, so here's a note regarding battalion camp calls. Since I must be brief, I'll only mention four calls. If things go right, the first call you should hear in the morning is **First Call**, not Reveille. It commands the musicians to fall in to sound Reveille, and it warns you to get ready for morning roll call. When **Reveille** sounds, the authentic and historically accurate thing to do is to curse the bugler and fall in on your company street without weapons or accouterments so the first sergeant can call the roll. If trained fifers and drummers are present, traditional compositions will be performed. Let me also mention the three-call sequence for battalion formation, which is **First Call**, **Assembly**, and **To The Color**. As at Reveille, First Call tells the musicians to form and it warns you that an assembly is near. Now's the time to get your gear on. The next call is Assembly, which means to fall in on your company street with weapons and accouterments. It's sounded slowly ("Andante") to give you time to fall in, but when the call ceases, your company should be formed and your officers or NCOs should conduct an inspection. Assembly also tells the color guard and left and right guides to take their places on the battalion color line. The last call is To The Color, which is a salute honoring the colors and a command for the companies to march to their proper places on the color line. If trained drummers and fifers are present, an appropriate fife & drum composition will be performed so the companies can march in step. The music ceases when the last company has halted on line. Done correctly, this sequence produces a very impressive and orderly military ceremony that is fascinating to watch. But more importantly, when we conduct this procedure, we reenact a vital part of the soldier's daily life in both the American and European armies. If you have any questions about the other calls, please contact me -- Editor.

ARTICLES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP

Disease -- the Nemesis of Soldier Life

By Vincent Draa

It is a well-known and well-publicized fact that more soldiers in the war died from illness than from wounds inflicted on the battlefield (approximately 3-1 ratio, see Those Who Fought Here, by Wiley & Milhollen, p. 210). I have been impressed, however, with the number of references in the letters and journals of Confederate soldiers to repeated bouts with non-fatal but nonetheless debilitating illnesses or conditions referred to by their authors. I reviewed Journey To Pleasant Hill - The Civil War Letters of Captain Elijah P. Petty; The Civil War Journal and Letters of Washington Ives, Fourth Florida CSA, and Make Me a Map, Journal of Stonewall Jackson's Topographer (Jedidiah Hotchkiss), and compiled the following table of illnesses or other conditions reported therein:

Type of Disease - Occurrences: *Unspecified - 9; "Set fast" - 1; Boil - 2; Coughs & Cold - 2; Fever and Chills - 1; Typhoid Pneumonia - 1; "Arkansaw Tingo" - 1; Fever - 1; "Arkansaw Chill" - 1; Diarrhea - 3; Headache - 1; Sty - 1; Heartburn - 1; Violent Headache - 1; Bad Cold - 1; Severe Headache - 1; Dysentery - 1.

* Apparently, according to the introduction of the Hotchkiss book, one of Jedidiah's unspecified illnesses was Typhoid.

The frequency of ailments experienced by Captain Petty, Sgt. Maj. Ives, and "Major" Hotchkiss would not appear atypical. For example, according to American Heritage Magazine, during one year of the war, 995 out of every 1000 federal troops suffered from dysentery, diarrhea, or both. Given the disparity of food, living conditions, and medical treatment between the Union and Confederate Armies, it would be safe to assume that CSA troops would have suffered from these maladies at least as much as the federals did. (See Those Who Fought Here, p. 223.) How can this information be incorporated into an impression? It is obvious from examining first-person reports that the health of the authors and those around them was a constant source of interest and discussion. Thus, conversation concerning these matters would be right at home in first-person impressions. Also, as if we weren't already aware of it, campaigning during the war was an arduous experience, often unpleasant at best. Adding to this unpleasantness was the fact that Civil War era soldiers suffered frequently from one disease after another, circumstances that would hardly give rise to a general aura of good humor and well-being. Finally, a well-timed bout with "John Brown's Revenge" could be the perfect excuse to avoid that unwanted fire wood or water detail. However, I leave it to you to determine how accurate a portrayal of a dysentery attack is called for! [Submitted by Vince Draa.]



* * * * *

[Here is an excerpt from First Sergeant Jeff Hunt's excellent article "The Edge of Victory" which appeared in the last edition. His closing paragraph was so appropriate, I decided to repeat it for those who may have missed it -- Editor].

"In short, you should remember that you are representing men who were scared and excited, and who realized that the faster they fired, the greater their chances were of staying alive. They moved in haste, with cold efficiency, and we should do the same. The best way to get good at this [loading and firing] is to go out with fellow members or by yourself and practice, practice, practice! The same can be said for the manual of arms, and if you can get four or six people together, practice the basic maneuvers of doubling, stacking, and wheeling. We don't have the time at the big events any more to keep working on such basics. Each of us needs to make up the difference at home on our own time. Such dedication and hard work are the difference between being simply good and being the BEST! In combat, this could be the edge that gives our battalion victory rather than defeat."

"UNPLEASANT HILL: AN UNEXPECTED LESSON IN COMBAT REALITY

By Vince Draa

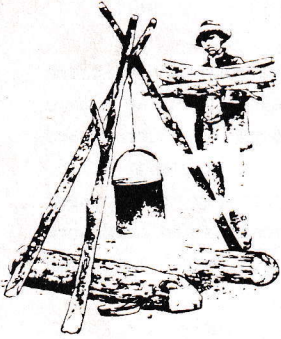
The "tactical" event held on Saturday at the Pleasant Hill reenactment proved to be a little more realistic than everyone (at least me) expected. Following an extended drill session in the morning, our company (the Texas Rifles consolidated with the Tarrant Rifles) marched with the battalion north on the highway from the camp and then east along a dirt road where we were halted. The battalion and company officers reconnoitered the dense woods to the south hoping to find an accessible route to our objective: a federal battery supported by infantry somewhere to the east and south of the Confederate camp.

The battalion finally penetrated the woods down a narrow path, with our company deployed to the front and left flank of the main body as skirmishers. The weather, unseasonably warm to begin with, became oppressive upon our entering the woods. The terrain, in addition to the numerous trees, featured heavy underbrush, briars, holes in the ground, steep hills, ravines and small creeks. Stumbling and falling was commonplace. (I wound up knee-deep in an old stump hole!) Maintaining even a semblance of skirmish order was difficult to say the least.

After marching up and down several hills, straggling became a reality. I began to notice that I was getting farther and farther to the rear of my platoon (proceeding in single file when in the dense woods), and the halts seemed not long enough to suit me. My canteen was getting lighter, while my Enfield seemed to weigh a hundred pounds. Although a few Yankee pickets were spotted, we had not yet made contact with the enemy when the sound of heavy gun fire erupted to our right. Our pace increased as we struggled through the underbrush to reach the sound of the guns with expected results -- some troops, exhausted by the forced march, dropped out. After cresting yet another hill, the company, in skirmish formation, joined the battalion in the final stages of its assault on the Union artillery. Frustrated with our arduous march and failure to come in contact with the enemy sooner, we were loathe to disengage our attack; a fact which seemed to piss-off the Yankee commander. We were finally ordered to cease fire; then we formed up for the march back to camp. I have seen a video tape of us taken at the time: we looked as tired as we felt.

After I chugged about a quart of lemonade and took nap, I began to ponder the lessons learned in our tactical. (1) While the march was unpleasant at times and physically demanding, it resulted in our increased awe of and awareness of what the soldiers who had actually fought at Pleasant Hill endured. I can't imagine having to march from Mansfield to Pleasant Hill and then fight across the difficult terrain upon which the tactical was held. (2) In "non-scripted" scenarios, things don't always go as expected. As the skirmish company, we anticipated making the first contact with the enemy; as it turned out, we were groping our way around when our main force stumbled into the federals. This unexpectedness certainly lends an appreciation of the part luck and surprise must have played in Civil War combat. In short, the fatigue, torn clothing, and scratches from briars and barbed wire inflicted during the tactical was a fair trade off for the additional insight gained thereby. Hopefully, however, the Wilderness tactical will not be as demanding!

FIELD RATION RECIPES

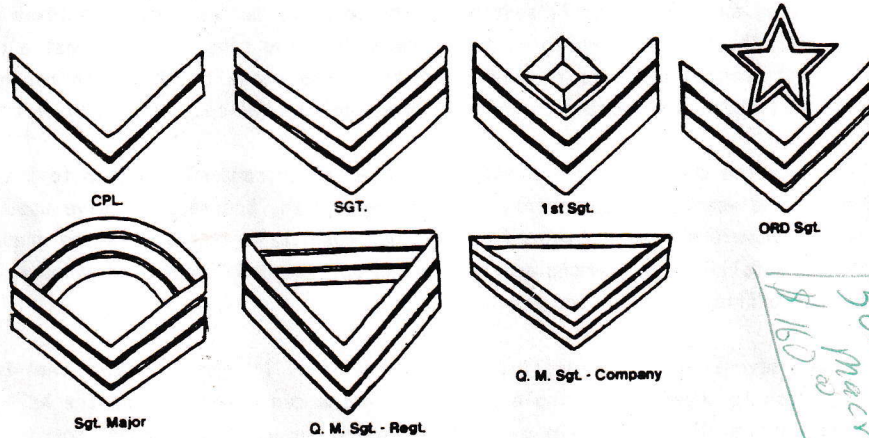


[From James Nash, the "Haversack Gourmet"] This probably ain't original, but it is old, old camp fare from the days before playmate coolers. That sort of thing is what we need and it provides a change from Jerky or going out for a Big Mac. All the stuff will keep in a haversack for three or four days if wrapped in a newspaper or something. Ingredients: 1 hard-boiled egg. 1 onion (small). 1 sour pickle. 1 can of Tuna fish. Vinegar. Directions: Chop all this up together and you have a nice Tuna salad. You can carry the vinegar (apple cider or wine vinegar is better) in a little bottle. Need about 1/4 cup or less. Some of the boys won't like it because it is sour, but it is different and a very old concoction.

SCHOOL OF THE SOLDIER

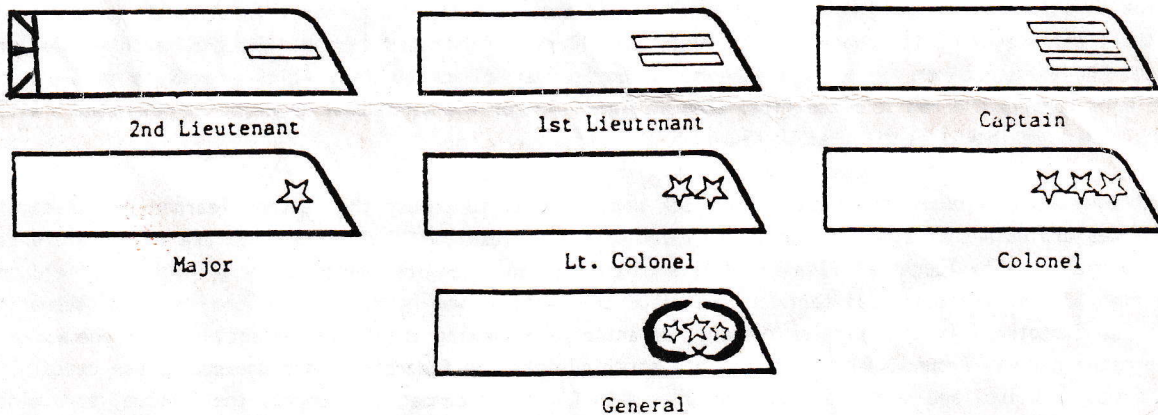
From William J. Hardee's Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics, "School of the Soldier"

Here's a departure from quoting the manual. For the sake of our new members, here's a little help with rank recognition.



50mm
A 160
a

Close up lens set
50mm
A 160
a



The Texas Rifle's newsletter is published on an as-needed basis, but usually appears bi-monthly. The Texas Rifles is a non-profit organization devoted primarily to the preservation of the history of the War Between the States through living history. Annual dues are \$12 per year, prorated monthly. For more information about the Texas Rifles, contact Scott Swenson whose address and phone number appear in the newsletter masthead. Members must promptly notify the unit commander of any address changes so the muster roll and newsletter mailing list can be updated -- Editor.

Doug Aber

548-2255

TEXAS RIFLES 1989 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER (Continued)

As of May 1, 1989

<u>Name</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Home Phone</u>	<u>Work Phone</u>
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McMahan, Larry	2219 Heather La., Tyler, Tx. 75703	214 561-0857	214 561-4050
McMahan, Jo	2219 Heather La., Tyler, Tx. 75703	214 561-8857	
Milam, Whitney	1816 Ashby, Austin, Tx. 78704	512 442-1646	
Moore, Michael	402 N. 2nd, Richmond, Tx. 77469	713 341-6030	713 342-6478 <i>342-1256</i>
Nash, James	Rt. 1, Box 8, Leona, Tx. 75850	214 344-2506	
Oglesbee, Ron	7927 Green Lawn Dr., Houston, Tx. 77088	713 591-2209	
Oravetz, Ashton	6006 Foxcroft Rd., Tyler, Tx. 75703	214 581-3753	214 597-2330
Payne, Christopher	9830 Pine Lake Dr., Houston, Tx. 77055	713 932-1084	
Payne, Kate	9830 Pine Lake Dr., Houston, Tx. 77055	713 932-1084	
Perry, John	1310 E. Ave., Apt. W, Elyria, OH. 44035		
Prack, Charles	1411 Summer Brook, #151, Alrington, Tx. 76011	817 861-8352	817 878-7578
Quade, Trent	902 West Archer Dr., Baytown, Tx. 77511	(Call Earl Hutton)	
Richardson, Bo	Rt. 5, Box 272, Caldwell, Tx. 77836	409 567-7375	
Richardson, Larry	Rt. 5, Box 272, Caldwell, Tx. 77836	409 567-7375	512 446-8650
Siegmund, Ray	3521 Breckenridge, Austin, Tx. 78705	512 495-5563	
Smyth, Paul	(Unknown address and phone number)		
Snell, Daniel	Rt. 5, Box 5039, Boerne, Tx. 78006		
Strzelecki, Chris	19819 Misty Pines Rd., Humble, Tx. 77346	713 852-7413	
Stork, Kevin	10706 Brodie La., Austin, Tx. 78748	512 282-1081	
Swenson, Scott	P.O. Box 23344, Waco, Tx. 76702	817 751-0568	817 848-4487
Taylor, Rob	P.O. Box 5476, College Station, Tx. 77844	409 260-5730	
Tigert, Pal	Rt. 2, Box 111, Omaha, Tx. 75571	214 844-2103	
Tigert, Tammy	Rt. 3, Box 59-A, Atlanta, Tx. 75551		
Ulbrich, Philip	9122 Valley Bend, San Antonio, Tx. 78250		
Waters, David	Rt. 3, Box 369, Gatesville, Tx. 76528	817 865-5459	
Watson, James	1307 Arlington, Houston, TX. 77008	713 862-7987 *	
Watson, Tricia	1307 Alrington, Houston, Tx. 77008	713 862-7987	713 280-1500 Ext. 3330
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Williams, Robert	4342 Lovers Lane, Dallas, Tx. 75225		
Windham, Darrell	2708 Silverway Dr., Austin, Tx., 78757	512 451-4569	
Young, Kevin	414 Kings Court, #A, San Antonio, Tx. 78212		512 225-6605

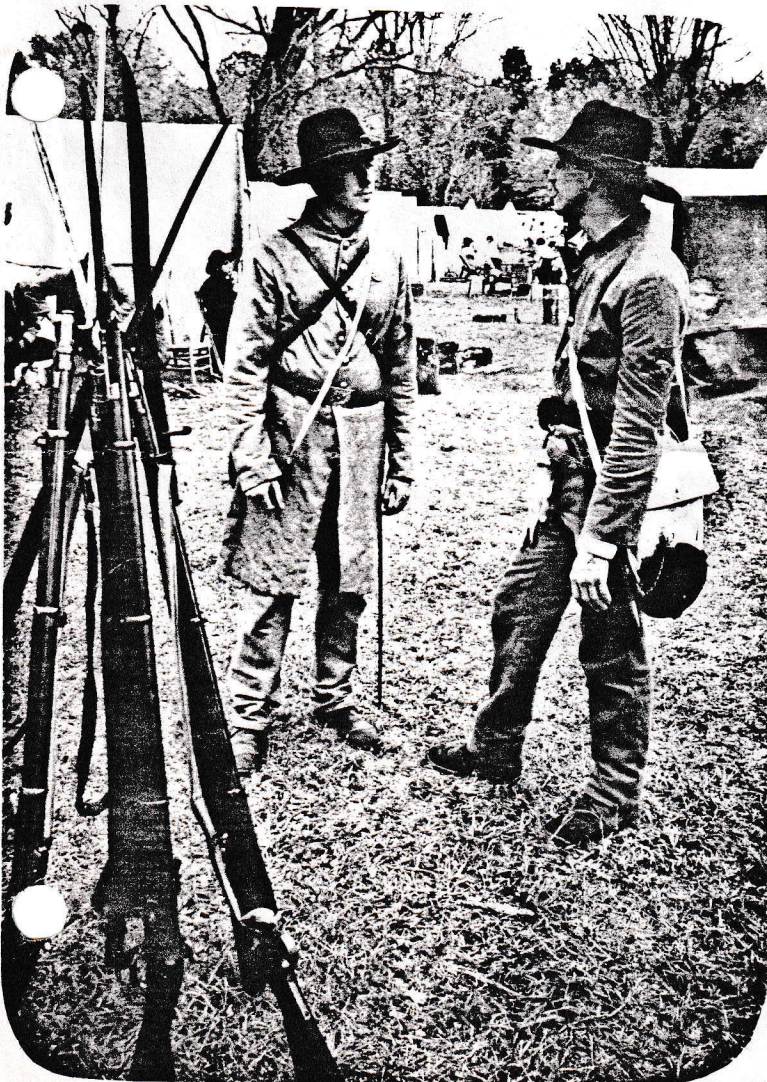
Notes: **Notify Scott Swenson or Gill Eastland of any corrections or additions.**



PHOTOS TAKEN AT
PLEASANT HILL
LOUISIANA
APRIL 8-9, 1989
Courtesy of
Don Drachenberg

The Texas Rifles during battalion drill on April 8, 1989, at Pleasant Hill.

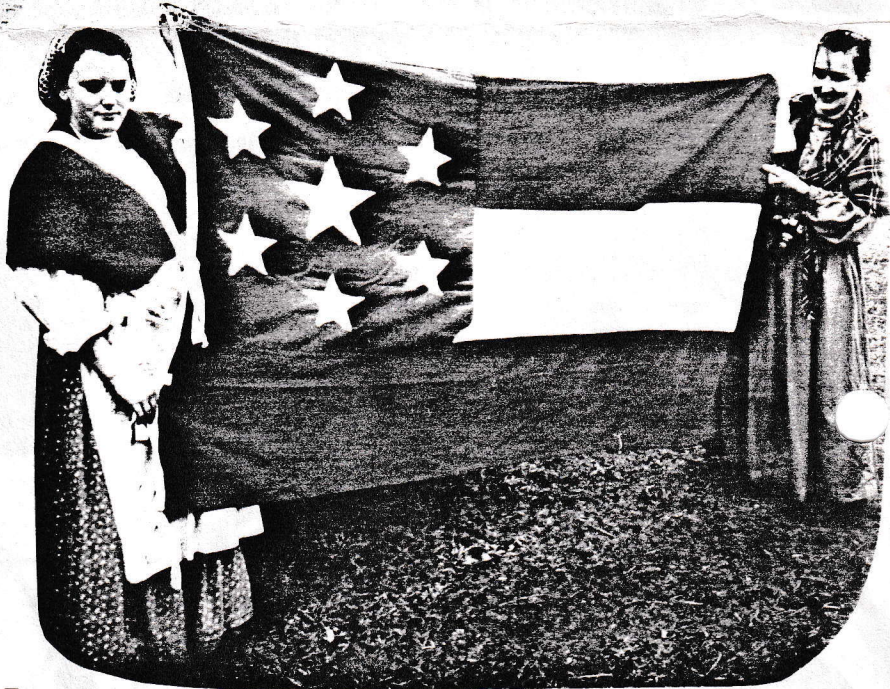
Capt. Swenson (left) and 1st. Sgt. Jeff Hunt
by stack of muskets in the Confederate camp.



Left to right:
Pvt. Don Drachenberg, Lt. Gill Eastland,
Sgt. Maj. John Keahey, and Col. Mike Moore.



The Texas Rifles prepare for combat on Sunday. Nearest to the camera at left is Lt. Gi Eastland. Mike "Doc" Enger is in the federal uniform with "MS" (Medical Service) armband. Capt. Swenson at right facing the camera.



PHOTOS TAKEN AT
PLEASANT HILL
LOUISIANA
APRIL 8-9, 1989



Ana Draa (left) and Kate Payne hold the new hand-sewn Texas Rifle's flag which was shown to a grateful company. The flag is being made by the ladies of the Texas Rifles, and when it is finished, it will bear our motto "To the Tyrants Never Yield."

Left to right: Earl Hutton, Alan Hutton, Jon Butcher, Edward Jablonski, Ron Oglesbee.



Don Gipson of Tyler just before the Sunday battle.



The battalion right and left guides complete with potatoes!
Dennis Hubbard (left) and Bob Fletcher.

PHOTOS TAKEN AT
PLEASANT HILL
LOUISIANA
APRIL 8-9, 1989
Courtesy of
Don Drachenberg

Kate Payne (left) and
Ana Draa serve breakfast
to members of the Texas
Rifles. The company
mess relieves the men
of bringing and cooking
their own food. This
leaves more time for
more fun things like
(oh, no!) DRILL!!!



The company rests in the Confederate camp while Capt. Swenson gives final instructions before the battle.



Two battle scenes taken during the Sunday battle. In the top photo, the Confederates have withdrawn, leaving the dead and wounded on the field. In the bottom photo, the Confederate battle line advances to fire a battalion volley.

PHOTOS TAKEN AT
PLEASANT HILL
LOUISIANA
APRIL 8-9, 1863



When the guns don't kill or maim, it makes for A VERY CIVIL WAR

General Taylor has been pursuing the Yankee invaders under General Banks since the Confederates counterattacked south of Shreveport, La. Part of his force comprises eight Texas volunteer regiments. Taylor hopes to finish off his opponents at Pleasant Hill, La. The date is April 9, 1864.

Exactly 125 years later, a group of seven University students and alumni set out in a borrowed van, heading east to fight once again the battle of Pleasant Hill. They are the Austin delegation of a statewide group of Civil War re-enactors known as the Texas Rifles.

The small town of Pleasant Hill re-enacts the battle every year on the anniversary of the engagement, usually attracting between 500 and 1,000 participants from across the nation in addition to hundreds of spectators. Pleasant Hill is considered a small event compared with last year's record-setting re-enactment at Gettysburg, which attracted 13,000 participants.

Like most re-enactments, Pleasant Hill includes two scenarios, each offering hobbyists a chance to relive the Civil War and walk away. On the day before the anniversary of the battle, the players fight in a tactical, an unscripted scenario based on the situation present at the time of the original battle. The results are open-ended and offer re-enactors a chance to test their military savvy by attempting to outwit and outmaneuver one another — a war game on a one-to-one scale.

On the day of the actual battle a scripted engagement, mimicking the sequence of events of the actual battle, is played out for the crowd, who pay \$2 each to witness the fighting. The outcome is predetermined by history.

Most re-enactments are still a spectacle, even if everyone knows how they are going to turn out. They often include real cavalry, remotely detonated charges placed throughout the field and always feature loads of black powder for realistic

musket fire and full-scale artillery batteries. On occasion, fairly realistic hand-to-hand combat breaks out.

The participants go to great lengths to make sure everything they wear, carry and do is authentic. Re-enactors spend hundreds of dollars on reproduction muskets, clothing, equipment and tents that are as close as possible to those of their predecessors. Items such as wristwatches, flashlights, modern eyeglasses, radios, camp stoves and artificial clothing fibers are strictly prohibited from the camp and battlefield as distracting signs of the 20th century. Period underwear, although not required, is very popular.

Extensive research is done and great care taken to get the details perfect. Jeff Hunt, a UT Ph.D. candidate in history specializing in the military history of the Civil War, said, "If you don't immerse yourself in the period, what you are trying to do collapses."

'When the first volley hit, everyone around me dispersed. I knew then that I was dead.'
— Re-enactor Lindsey Buss

In addition to having fun and trying to educate the public about history, veteran re-enactors talk about experiencing "special moments." Scott Swanson, commander of the company of Texas Rifles, said "you go back in time, when you experience that moment, that feeling of getting into their minds."

Hunt likes to tell the story of an 85-mile, four-day march re-enacting the march of troops to reinforce General Taylor at Pleasant Hill. Afterwards he read a Confederate soldier's diary and was able to say, "I understand every word, because I've done this."

More common are stories about how realistic the re-enacted combat can become. In the smoke, noise and confusion it is easy for a re-enactor's adrenalin to get the best of him.

Gill Eastland, a 1983 marketing graduate of the University, described the terror of "the first time you see someone turn and point their musket at you. You know you're dead."

In his first battle experience, Hunt said it was so realistic he was convinced he had killed someone.

"We had to advance over the body. I stopped to look for blood," he said.

This was the first Pleasant Hill battle for novice warrior Lindsey Buss, a Plan II history senior. He was determined to last at least until the second cannon volley on the advancing confederate lines.

"But when the first volley hit, everyone around me dispersed. I knew then I must be dead," he said.

If the re-enactors feel the battle itself is extremely realistic, does it bother them that the South stood for slavery?

Eastland points out that most re-enactors understand the difference between "representing and supporting what they were fighting for." He said although a few of the confederate "soldiers" see it as a way of continuing the Civil War, most re-enactors are thankful the Union won.

In fact, most re-enactors will play a soldier from either side of the conflict.

However, Darrell Windham, a 1970 history graduate and sales manager for University of Texas Press, said, "I could never imagine myself in blue."

Windham is an avid Civil War buff and participates because he "just wanted to see what it would be like to 'see the elephant' after reading about it for 30 years," he said, referring to an antique phrase meaning to face something frightening and disillusioning.

A shortage of federal soldiers for the Pleasant Hill re-enactment forced some Confederates to don blue uniforms. One of the new Union soldiers said while walking over to the Confederate camp, "My worst nightmare! I woke up hung over and a Yankee!"

But, Eastland said that for most soldiers, "which side you fight on depends on where you live," just as it did in 1861.

"You will choose to fight with, rather than against, your family and friends," he said.

Story and photos
by Tom Stevens



Cpl. Brian Bosworth and Pvt. Lindsey Buss charge uphill with guns loaded toward a Union battery during the tactical.



Capt. Scott Swanson, wounded early on, lies dying while the battle rages on.



1st Lt. Jeff Hunt, wounded while trying to carry wounded Capt. Scott Swanson out of the line of fire, watches the action progress without fighting. Behind him, the Confederate line rallies around the flag.



Pvt. Robert Chiles checks his cartridge pouch before heading into battle.