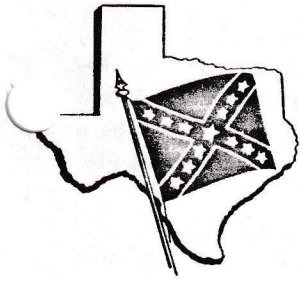


# THE TEXAS RIFLES

"To The Tyrants Never Yield!"

Hqtrs. P.O. Box 23344, Waco, Texas 76702



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## COMMANDER'S DISPATCH

I'm glad to hear that Wilderness went well and that everyone had a good time. Congratulations to Gill for a job well done. I was very proud to hear from Mike Moore, who complemented the Texas Rifles company. I am sorry I was unable to attend, but business obligations were unavoidable. It was a very difficult time for me as I was constantly imagining what you were all doing in Virginia.

Vicksburg is just around the corner, and it appears we will have an excellent turnout of the Texas Rifles. I will definitely be there. Gill and I will arrive Friday. The ladies will be making the official presentation of our new flag sometime during the weekend. For more information on Vicksburg, see the section enclosed. Break out your entrenching tools, and I'll see you all on the Vicksburg bluffs!

For God and Texas!!!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Scott".

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**SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:** It is with a deep sense of loss that we must advise you that Steve Bell died June 4th. As stated in the previous newsletter, Steve was a member of Cleburne's Brigade and was known by many members of the Texas Rifles. Our sympathy is extended to Steve's family and to our many friends in Cleburne's Brigade -- Scott Swenson/Editor.

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

[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.]

**NANCY GRAY'S WEDDING:** On Saturday, June 24, 1989, Nancy Gray and Karl Pretzer will be married at the Westway Baptist Church located at FM 3179 at Highway 30 in Huntsville, Texas. The wedding ceremony will begin at 2:00 p.m. For more information, see the Letters section.

**SIEGE OF VICKSBURG:** June 30-July 2 in Vicksburg, Mississippi. This a battalion event sponsored by Cleburne's Brigade. We will be on a portion of the actual battlefield. Bring period picks and shovels. Digging is allowed, and you can keep what you find! The reenactment will include assaults and artillery duels. One meal will be provided. For more information see the Vicksburg section.

**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: before August 1 - \$5 and before August 15 - \$10. No registrations accepted after August 15. Details will be forthcoming. This will be a brigade event, but, as indicated by Capt. Swenson, not an "official" Texas Rifles event. Texas Rifles members who wish to attend will fall in with Cleburne's Brigade. Contact Scott Swenson to register.

**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. Steve Abolt and Scott Swenson are recruiting Texas Rifles members to portray U.S. Regulars or Mississippi Rifles at Mexican War events. This event a Ft. Scott Kansas offers a great location and an chance to do something different. More information on Mexican War impressions will be included in the next newsletter. Contact Steve Abolt (817-535-2359) for more information about the event or the impressions.

**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 (817) 535-2359.

**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.

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## S I E G E   O F   V I C K S B U R G

[The following are excerpts from the sponsor's information package -- Editor]

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

#### Friday, June 30:

Noon Registration and camps open

#### Saturday, July 1:

- 10 a.m. Registration closes. No vehicles allowed in or out till 5 p.m.
- 10 a.m. Living history trench warfare begins.
- 11 a.m. Artillery firing demonstration.
- 1 p.m. Artillery firing demonstration.
- 3 p.m. Artillery firing demonstration.
- 5 p.m. Living history trench warfare ends for the day. Vehicles allowed in and out.
- 6-8 p.m. Free meal at armory (short drive or walk from event site).
- 8 p.m. There may be a dance



quite well-known eating places (indoor, sit down, waiter type), and at least two decent watering holes which are offering discount priced beverages to uniformed participants who are legal and want to get wet! But drive carefully.

[Included in this edition is a map provided by the sponsors showing the location of the battle site in Vicksburg. I have not included a road map because I assume that most of you have highway maps showing the way to Vicksburg from Texas -- Editor].

\* \* \* \* \*

Captain Swenson advises that it will be HOT, so every Texas Rifles member must bring a good canteen (that doesn't leak!) and leave the heavy clothing, like vests, at home. Please bring period-looking picks and shovels (no obviously modern tools). Shelter halves and rain flies are the required tentage. No wall tents. A-frames are discouraged. Travel light! No camp furniture. Come early or stay late to see the National Park and original battlefield. The Texas Rifles will compose Company B of the 3rd Missouri Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Members of the Tarrant Rifles under Bruce Winders may fall in with us.

Vince Draa advised me that the ladies will not be able to cook meals for the company at Vicksburg due to logistical problems, so make plans to provide your own food. The free meal Saturday night will certainly help -- Editor.

\* \* \* \* \*

[The following information was prepared by Mike Moore, our battalion commander.]

VICKSBURG EVENT INFORMATION: Dates: June 30-July 2, 1989. Location: Vicksburg, Mississippi, on a portion of the original siege lines that is now private property. Battalion staff: Colonel -- Mike Moore; Lt. Col. -- Gary Pierce; Major -- Clive Siegle; Sgt. Major -- John Keahey.

EVENT INFORMATION: This event promises to be a very good living history experience of siege life. Response to the 1988 event was so good that many people are planning to attend. Bring your tree-cutting tools and shovels as digging is permitted to find artifacts or construct bombproofs. From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday this will be a living history event. Trench warfare will run both days, including artillery firing demonstrations and a recreation of the May 22 assault on Stockade Redan will be on Sunday afternoon. A meal will be provided Saturday evening.

Most of the Confederate infantry will be organized into one battalion composed of ten companies each having a minimum of twenty muskets, portraying the 3rd Missouri Infantry. The physical appearance of the Confederate troops should accurately reflect that of his 1863 counterpart. Two artillery pieces will be supporting the infantry. While drill will not be stressed -- except to ensure participants' safety -- living history activities will be. Please bring items to build trenches as well as items for leisure such as cards, games, letters and newspapers, musical instruments, etc. The focus will be to accurately portray the boredom as well as the fighting of siege life. Also bring plenty of rolled ammunition.

Activities are planned for civilians, including a period civilian camp that is located between one and two miles from the military reenactment sight. Period civilians are encouraged to bring wall and wedge tents and all their camp gear. They are portraying a civilian refugee camp, and can lug along the cot, sofa, and fine china. A civilian coordinator is in charge of the civilian activities. Civilians should contact Helene Shurden, 311 Nanney Drive, Tupelo, MS 38801, (601) 844-2197. Federals are needed, either for the whole weekend or for just the Sunday afternoon assault.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: No registration fee is required. [Captain Swenson advised that a number of slots have been pre-reserved for Texas Rifles members, and that we may have a strong 35-man company due to the good response. The camaraderie should be outstanding since many members are planning to attend. DON'T MISS OUT!!! -- Ed.]

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

**CONFEDERATE CANTEEN:** If you are tired of rust in your canteen, and you would like to have the best Confederate canteen on the market, Rapidan River Canteen Company has maple, cherry, or cedar canteens. Cost is \$65.00 post paid. Write to Don Polifka, Rt. 2, Box 5-B, Beaver Dam, Virginia 23015. (By Scott Swenson)

Sunday, July 2:

- 10 a.m. Living history trench warfare begins. No vehicles allowed in or out till after 3 p.m.
- 10 a.m. Religious services.
- 11 a.m. Artillery firing demonstration.
- 1:30 p.m. Artillery bombardment begins and lasts thirty minutes.
- 2 p.m. Assault on Stockade Redan begins and lasts 30-45 minutes.
- 3 p.m. Event over. Vehicles allowed in and out.

TENTS: For military participants, no wall tents. Wedge tents are discouraged. Dog tents and flies are recommended. You will be camping on the exact spot used by the real soldiers in 1863, and for the most part these spots offer little more room than a postage stamp. Space will be at a premium and you may want to bring a shovel to re-excavate an original dugout. Leave all but your necessary camp equipment at home. (you know -- the cot, sofa and fine china). Period civilians are encouraged to bring wall tents and wedge tents, and all their camp gear. They are portraying a civilian refugee camp, and can lug along the cot, sofa, and fine China.

VEHICLES: There are three parking areas for participants: (1) Union troops; (2) Confederate troops; and (3) period civilians. Basically each participant will park in his respective area, but if you want to mix it up that's okay with us. You decide once you've read the following. The period civilian camp and its parking area is located one or two miles from the battle reenactment site with its camps and parking areas. Thus the period civilian area and the battle area are NOT, in any form or reason, within walking distance of each other. The Union parking area is about a half mile from the Union camps. Vehicles using this parking area MAY NOT be moved at all from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, or from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday. The only way for vehicles to leave this parking area is to pass through the battle area, and thus cannot be allowed in or out during the event's living history warfare hours. The Confederate parking area is about a half mile from the Confederate camps. Vehicles using this parking area may come and go as is necessary. There are no restrictions to who uses this area for parking or when. Transportation, within reason, will be provided for participants (not their gear) between the camps and respective parking areas. Parking and equipment unloading is the bane of every event, and this is no exception. YOU MUST have your vehicles in their parking areas by 10 a.m. each day, though you may be drunk, hungover, broke-legged, or dull-witted. It doesn't matter if your dog just died -- please have your darn car/truck/tank moved! These things could be towed at your expense.

DIGGING HOLES: It is quite alright to cut trees for tent poles and logs for breastworks and huts. We do not recommend that you cut the big stuff, though, as you will find their shade very much appreciated as is. As to firewood, find it where it lies in the woods. We anticipate no shortage this July.

PASSING BETWEEN THE LINES: From 10 a.m. till 5 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10 a.m. till 3 p.m. on Sunday, this is a living history event. Spectators will be kept in areas roped off from participants in the battle reenactment area. Ideally, you the soldier, will ignore them (we did say IDEALLY!) and go about your life and death battle with boredom, the heat and the Godless foe. We realize, though, that some of you will have a desire flung upon you to pass through the lines to visit friends, sutlers, historic sites, bars, etc. Within reason we can do nothing to avert this, and do not desire to hobble anyone's good time. What we do require is this: If you plan to leave your camp/trench line and go visit in the opposing camp/trench line, sutler's areas, or parking area (or wherever!) leave your Union/Confederate coat and insignia behind so that you will not look out of place. Also, do not be too darned obvious about passing through the lines. Give us a break. We recommend that if you want to tour the historic sites in the area, plan to do so before or after the weekend or the event, not during the event.

BEER, BOOZE, AND GATORADE: Drink a lot of Gatorade. Don't bring a lot of beer and booze. In either case, bring your own, and keep it all out of sight at least during the day. Some free ice will be provided. FOOD: Only one meal is provided. Saturday night a supper will be furnished free at a site within short walking or driving distance from the battle area. some transportation will be available. You will be on your own hook for your other eats. Only period cooking is allowed in the camps and trenches during the living history hours. Free sandwiches and soft drinks will be available to participants arriving between Noon Friday, June 30, and 10 a.m. Saturday, July 1.

CONCLUSION: Now, we do want you to know that Vicksburg is not just another small Mississippi town like Itta Bena, Nitta Yuma, or Panther Burn. It has gas stations, big name-brand food stores, both McDonalds and KFCs, about nine dozen motels, some

**CHARLES CHILDS:** Charles Childs of Country Cloth, the primary supplier of jean material (a period wool-cotton blend) has a new phone number. If you want to order cloth, dial (216) 482-5131.

**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)

**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)

**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.

**CIVIL WAR SHIRTS:** Most Confederate troops wore civilian style shirts instead of regulation white. These would include plain cotton shirts. If you are interested in one of these civilian style shirts, remember that plaids were woven and not printed. Unfortunately, many sutlers are selling printed shirts. While these may be cheaper, they are not correct, and they won't last as long or be as comfortable as woven cotton. If you are looking for a source for hand-woven cottons, contact Charles Childs or some of your local fabric stores. Another good source are quilting supply shops. You can expect to spend \$5-to-\$12 per yard. Patterns are readily available from different sources found in the Camp Chase Gazette or other Civil War magazines or periodicals. If you still can't find the material, there is a quilting shop in Waco that has many different patterns of hand-woven cotton plaid. Contact me, and I will buy it for you and mail it to you. (By Scott Swenson)

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:** New members include **Dwight & Rhonda Hall** of Lindale, Texas, and **Robert Bernard** of San Antonio, Texas. WELCOME, Y'ALL!!!!

**ADDITIONS TO THE MUSTER ROLL:** The following past members will be added to the 1989 muster roll since they have paid their 1989 dues: Joe Walker of Waco and Jeff Boutwell of Whitney. A revised muster roll will appear in another edition so you will have a complete list of phone numbers and addresses.

**EMERGENCY NUMBER:** Those of you attending the Vicksburg reenactment may want to leave the phone number for the Vicksburg Police Department with friends or family members in case they need to get in contact with you if there is an emergency. The VPD number is (601) 656-2511. They will relay an emergency message to the reenactment sponsors. Tell your friends or family members to say you are with Mike Moore's Confederate battalion at the reenactment taking place near the Parkside Playhouse near I-20. To obtain other Vicksburg numbers, call directory assistance 1-601-555-1212.

**EDITOR'S NOTES:** Vince Draa's telephone number was incorrect in the masthead of the last edition, but it was correct in the muster roll that accompanied that edition. The error has been corrected. Speaking of the masthead, have you noticed how it has grown? This illustrates the growth of the Texas Rifles, which is something we can all be very proud of.

## L O S T   &   F O U N D ,   F O R   S A L E   O R   W A N T E D

**Gloves for Sale:** 1st. Sgt. Jeff Hunt has ten pairs of period white cotton gloves he'll sell for \$1 a pair. Jeff said these will be very useful at Franklin where the sutlers will be charging much more. If you want a pair, see Jeff at the next reenactment or give him a call (see masthead for phone number).

\* \* R E P O R T S \* \*

[Reprinted below for your reading pleasure is Lt. Gill Eastland's report on the Wilderness reenactment that took place near Louisa, Virginia, in May.]

For those of you who missed the Wilderness event, you missed a really good event. The terrain we fought over was different everyday, the weather was good (no rain), and the food (Oh, let me tell you boys!). The company did an outstanding job in every respect! If you wanted to do some marching (in good weather), we did it. If you wanted to flank the Yankees (one more time), we did it. If you wanted to bivouac (under the stars), we did it. If you wanted to build breastworks (real breastworks), we did it. If you wanted to go "on the right, by file into line", we did it. And if you ever wanted to be in a desperate situation, and be in the battalion which saved the army from being cut in half . . . we were there, and we did it! A special hats off to Bruce Winders and the Tarrant Rifles who fell in with us. I look forward to seeing everyone at Vicksburg. Your most obedient servant, Gill Eastland.

\* \* \* \* \*

[On the way back from Virginia, as his plane flew over the heartland of the South, Vince Draa penned this personal account of his experiences at the Wilderness reenactment.]

It is my distinct honor to chronicle the heroic efforts of our company during the period 26-28 ult. when we met and bested the enemy in three separate engagements in central Virginia.

The company joined the rest of our army at its camp southeast of Louisa Court House during the night of the 25th and the morning of the 26th. Swelling our ranks were members of the Tarrant Rifles, who, because of the many casualties sustained by both companies during recent campaigns, were consolidated with our company by order of our battalion commander, Col. Michael Moore. Lt. Gill Eastland commanded the consolidated companies while Lt. Bruce Winders served as his second-in-command.

The morning of May 26 was spent participating with the other troops in our brigade in a demonstration of drill and tactics for members of the Richmond press which was attended by General Lee himself. Such staged events are distasteful to most soldiers as they take up valuable time that would be more prudently devoted to activities befitting of fighting men (such as sleeping, eating, or drilling). It is hoped that the publication by the reporters witnessing these contrived demonstrations will bring cheer to our citizenry at large and shall ultimately benefit our cause; however, it has been my experience that it is primarily the soldiers participating in such demonstrations who, in vain attempts to catch a fleeting mention of themselves, end up pursuing the reporter's accounts thereof to the almost total exclusion of the public at large, thus lending an air of ornamentation to the entire odious matter. Preparation for, participating in, and recovery from company drill under Lt. Eastland, Lt. Winders, and 1st. Sgt. Hunt filled several hours both before and after the demonstration for the gentlemen of the press.

The brigade was assembled late in the day upon receipt of the distressing intelligence that a large Federal force had been discovered near our encampment. Following a short march, our company deployed as skirmishers to cover the advance of the battalion into a thickly wooded and hilly region over which the enemy was expected to be encountered. Due to the nature of the terrain, and I am loathe to report, the apparent lack of discipline of members of battalions other than our own, the advance of our troops quickly became disorganized, with skirmish lines overlapping and in some places extending in front of each other. The unfortunate result of this combination of events was that more than a few casualties were inflicted by our own men mistakenly firing at each other in the gloom of the woods. Soon, however, the opposing forces collided headlong, as heavy musketry to our front revealed. Lt. Eastland, despite the attempts of other officers outside his direct chain of command to encourage him to deviate from the tasks assigned our company by Col. Moore, continued to lead us in a deliberate advance toward the now raging battle. This approach proved wise, as other commanders more excitable than Lt. Eastland, subjected their troops to unnecessary casualties as they rushed hurly-burly into what now resembled more a mob scene than a conflict between veteran armies. Once at the main line of battle, our company's participation was short-lived but intense with the front ranks firing a series of muskets loaded by the rear rank, due to restricted lines of fire. The remnant of the Federal forces either fled or surrendered within a few minutes of our direct involvement in the contest. Due to the disorganization of our forces, and fatigue induced by the severe heat of the day, an effective pursuit of the Yankees could not be sustained, and they retired virtually unmolested from the field. I shall long remember the hellish nightmare of this battle in the thick Virginia woods -- the cacophony of noise, the intense heat, and the premature dusk caused by the clouds of black powder smoke that combined to sorely test our troops.

Following the engagement of the 26th, our company returned to the camp to lick its wounds (caused more by the weather than by the Federals) and to seek nourishment provided by a gracious contingent of ladies -- Mrs. Ana Draa, Mrs. Jo McMahan, and Mrs. Rhonda Hall who travelled to Virginia from Texas to cook for our company in the field. The failure of our forces to destroy the enemy's army on the previous day resulted in a general engagement on May 27th. Following breakfast, prepared by the ladies, the company participated once again in its favorite pastime -- drill under the command of Lt. Winders and 2nd Sgt. Larry McMahan. In the mid afternoon, the army was once again assembled for combat. This time our brigade was posted on the far left of the army, covering the flank from possible attack. From our vantage point in a clump of woods along a small creek, we watched as the enemy's legions deployed and began to push back first the skirmishers and then the main body of our army. However, in their haste to annihilate our forces, the Yankees neglected to adequately protect their right flank which was exposed "in the air" directly in front of our brigade. Sensing that the moment was right, General King ordered the brigade to advance and assault the dangling flank of the enemy. Our attack was over marshy ground that at points was extremely difficult to negotiate. Several soldiers of our company received injuries as a result of this terrain -- among which I was almost included when Lt. Eastland attempted to force me to dress left while my feet were held fast in place by ankle-deep Virginia mud.

We rapidly closed with the Federals delivering repeated volleys into their flank and rear. However, the casualties that would ordinarily result from such a display of firepower did not occur. Given the unknown marksmanship of the Confederate troops, the only explanation for this irregularity must be substandard ammunition supplied by the Richmond government, as no body armor was observed in use by the Federals, nor recovered from the dead and wounded after the battle. The enemy was unable to resist our overwhelming pressure for long, however, and they fell back to form a line of battle along a fence line near where their attack began. Our army continued to press them, and they retreated again to a ridge line, where enfilading fire from enemy batteries forced our counterattack to a halt. Minor wounds were suffered from enemy gunfire in this engagement by General King. Lt. Winders, Corporal Kevin Stork (acting left general guide of our battalion), and the undersigned, as well as other members of our company, were also wounded.

After only a short respite, our brigade was ordered to improve and occupy a partially constructed line of entrenchments as the enemy was expected to renew his attack on the 28th. We arrived at the trenches approximately one hour prior to dusk. First Sergeant Hunt immediately formed work gangs to place logs on top of the earthworks and to prepare obstacles in front of our company's sector of the line. Scarcely an hour had expired before we had constructed an apparently impregnable position behind which we could almost assuredly repel even the most determined enemy attack without receiving significant casualties to ourselves. The ladies once again prepared an excellent meal, and Mrs. Draa even braved sniper fire to accompany the food to the trenches. At approximately 10:30 p.m., I was given the signal honor by 1st. Sgt. Hunt to command a detail of pickets (consisting of Pvts. Lindsey Buss, Chris Strzelecki, and Ray Siegmond) that were to be deployed in advance of our position as a prophylaxis to a surprise attack by the enemy. This proved to be an expedient measure on our part, as enemy patrols and snipers were active during most of the night, and our presence served to deter their infiltration of our position. Special mention must be given to Pvt. Buss, whose devotion to duty and alertness resulted in his capture of an enemy soldier from a New Hampshire regiment, the interrogation of whom revealed important details of the Federal's plans.

Following the withdrawal of the pickets at approximately 5:00 a.m., the sounds of an army forming for an attack were heard emanating from the woods some several hundred yards in front of our works. Shortly thereafter, the enemy hurled its full weight against us. Despite the strength of our improved position, our comrades on the right of our lines shamefully broke and abandoned the works within moments after the initiation of the Federal attack, before we could scarcely fire a volley in the Yankee's direction. The collapse of our right forced us to reform our lines to face in that direction and the enemy's advance, emboldened by the precipitous flight of so many of our troops, proceeded virtually unchecked toward us. Our efforts slowed, but could not stop, the Federal assault, and we were pushed out of the main entrenchments, then into, and beyond, a secondary line of works. We fired our muskets so fast that we could not touch the barrels without burning our hands and still the enemy came on. Our stubborn stand paid great dividends, however, as we prevented the penetration of the Yankees into the rear of our army and thereby its almost certain destruction, until General Lee could personally form our reserves for a counterattack which eventually pushed the enemy beyond our first line of entrenchments. Losses on both sides were appalling -- killed outright or mortally wounded were Col. Moore, Lt. Eastland, and Pvt. Siegmond, among others, in our battalion and company, and I was rendered senseless for several hours by a spent Minie ball, although many members of our company could not discern any appreciable difference from my usual demeanor.

The enemy once again withdrew from the field, but due to the grievous losses inflicted upon our army, we were unable to pursue them. We now are occupied with the grim task of burying our dead and collecting discarded equipment from the field of battle, while we await intelligence concerning the enemy's future intentions.

Respectfully submitted, Cpl. H. V. Draa,  
Near Louisa Court House, Virginia.

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If Idle hands are the devil's workshop, he was out of business at Pleasant Hill as far as the ladies of the Texas Rifles are concerned. From sausage gravy to peach cobbler, Kate Payne and myself did our best to send you men off to battle with full bellies. We received considerable help from several of the gentlemen in our company including Chris Payne (David Payne's son), Jeff Watson (James Watson's son), Steven Strakos (Ben Strakos' son) and others too numerous to mention. Our own illustrious leader, Scott Swenson, even ended up stirring eggs when an extra pair of hands was needed. Looking in the faces of the men and seeing how much they appreciated our efforts gave us such a good feeling. That's what made it worthwhile. We made a small profit and will begin to acquire more utensils in an effort to better our camp kitchen. In addition, I think it should be noted the excellent showing that our new members David Hall, Kate Payne, and Christopher Payne made at Pleasant Hill since it was their first event. Submitted by Ana Draa of the Ladies of the Texas Rifles.

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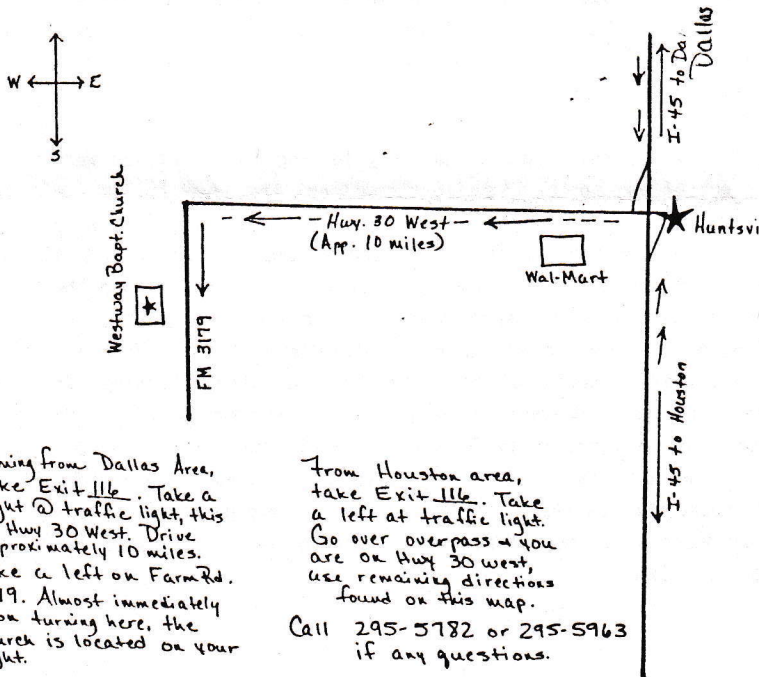
**LETTERS TO OR FROM THE MEMBERSHIP**

"Dear Texas Rifles Members:

As most of you know, June 24, 1989, I will be getting married at 2:00 p.m. This is a very special day for Karl and I, and we want to share it with all our friends and family. I have worked hard to prepare for this day and to have a much, as possible, a 19th Century atmosphere (since Karl isn't as much into history as I am, I had to compromise in some places, but you'll get the idea). I have arranged with a relative to borrow his restored 19th Century carriage to ride away from the church in, which is the thing I wanted most. Also, my gown is late 1865 reproduction. Enclosed is a map directing you to the church. I hope to see as many of you that can attend out there in the pews. If not, I'll see you at the next TR event.

Sincerely, Nancy & Karl."

[Nancy is a long-time member of the Ladies of the Texas Rifles, and she will become Mrs. Karl Vaughn Pretzer at a wedding ceremony on Saturday, June 24, beginning at 2:00 p.m. at Westway Baptist Church, located at FM 3179 and HHY 30 West in Huntsville (see map). Many of you may have met Karl at the Winedale Muster. All members of the Texas Rifles are invited. Nancy included a note with the invitation and in said, "The tuxes are the old fashioned style with tails, the church is a small country church, my gown is a late 1865 reproduction, a quartet will provide some of the music, and a relative has arranged for his restored 19th century carriage to carry us from the church. I can hardly wait to see that everything goes as planned." Nancy's wedding will be a very memorable ceremony. I don't know if it is acceptable for members to wear uniforms or period clothing, so if you desire to do so, please contact Nancy and inquire (409) 295-5782 or (409) 295-5963 -- Editor].



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[Reprinted below is General Order No. 8, issued by Brigade Headquarters in Galveston, Texas, on June 5, 1862 -- Editor]

Gentlemen: I. We are again called to mourn. The death of Captain Steve Doyle Bell commanding Cleburne's Company of Moore's Battalion has come as a shock to all his friends, especially so now that preparations are being made for the 125 year Anniversary of the Battle of Franklin, so near at hand. A star has been removed from the galaxy of men who have made this Brigade so successful, and he has answered the last roll-call of the Supreme Commander. To his comrades in the First Confederate Brigade, we extend our sympathies in this their loss. To his family we can only say, your sorrow is our sorrow, your bereavement is our bereavement; we mourn with you. Let his memory be cherished by you, and let each unit hold such services in his honor as may be meet and proper. By order of J. H. King, Brigadier General Commanding.

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

[The following article was provided by Dennis Hubbard, a member of the Texas Rifles who lives in San Antonio. Due to its length, it will be presented in two parts. By way of introduction, Dennis made the following comments: "I have researched the 14th Mississippi Regiment and their engagements match this accounting. I came by this article through a friend of mine whose family came from Mississippi. She also has a last will and testament that lists the slaves by name and which surviving relative they were to be given to. The date is 1851. Very interesting to say the least. This article was written by Mr. M. A. Ryan 50 years after the war (1915) and covers the period June 2, 1861 to June 26, 1865. He was captured first at Ft. Donaldson and again at the Battle of Nashville. He survived the Battle of Franklin." -- Editor]

### Experience of a Confederate Soldier in Camp and Prison in the Civil War, 1861-1865

I have often thought before I answered to the last roll and passed over the River to join the Silent Host that fell before the roaring cannon and rattling musket that I would give my experiences as a Confederate soldier and as a prisoner of war. I have been often asked by my children and grandchildren for my experiences or war record. After fifty years have passed, I have consented to do this, though they are so harrowing (especially my prison experience) that it seems incredible except to those who were there and experienced the same, terrible suffering. I can only from a clouded memory give a brief outline, for to do otherwise would make a large volume.

Chapter One. I left my home and loved ones with three other companions on the second day of June, 1861 and went to Corinth, Mississippi, where the Miss. troops were rendezvoused and being drilled for the conflict. I was so afraid that the Yankees would be whipped before I could get there I would not wait for a company to be formed at home. After looking around a day or two, we decided to join the Enterprise Guard, which was designated as Company B, and was one of the ten companies composing the Fourteenth Mississippi Regiment. I was small for my age, not weighing over a hundred pounds, and tender looking, with not a sign of a beard on my face.

R. S. Weir was Captain of Company B when I made application to join his company. He looked at me as though he doubted the propriety of receiving me. He doubtless would have rejected me had it not been for my companions who were with me and were older than I. They testified that my parents were willing for me to join the army. However, it was not long before he found that I was made of good, tough stuff. I was often detailed to perform some difficult tasks because I did not give out as some did who were much stouter than I. I suppose we remained at Corinth for two or three months drilling every day. Finally to our great joy we received orders to go to Russellville in East Tennessee.

The Union men and Southern sympathizers were having a hot time. The Southern sympathizers were in the minority and were being terribly persecuted by the Union men. We soon restored order and gave all who wanted to join the Confederate Army a chance to do so. We were next ordered to Bowling Green, Kentucky, where we thought we were going into winter quarters. Some time in January 1862, we were ordered to Fort Donaldson, Kentucky. On our arrival there, we were ordered in the breastworks surrounding the fort. I will describe the battle of Fort Donaldson, more minutely than any other in which I was engaged from the fact that it was my first baptism of shot and shell and was a land and naval battle all in one. Fort Donaldson consisted of two batteries on the Cumberland River, protected by breastworks surrounding it. On the 12th day of February, 1862, the battle opened with sharp shooting all along the line on both sides. The first day's battle closed with no perceptible gain

by either side. Day broke on the 13th to find two armies looking each other in the face. The cannonading and sharp shooting commenced as the day before had. The Yankees brought up one gun boat near the fort and fired about one hundred and fifty shots. Then one of our 128 lb. balls went crashing through her damaging her so that she went drifting out of sight and was seen no more. All along the fortifications the infantry kept a continual firing on both sides all day, killing and wounding a great many on both sides. The dead and wounded were left on the battlefield to take a terrible snow storm which fell that night several inches deep. Some of the wounded scratched around to save their lives from the burning woods that had caught on fire from the guns during the day's battle (which was a beautiful fair day) and remained there to perish in the snow.

Day broke on the 14th to find everything covered in snow. We were without shelter, food, or fire to warm by, except a few small sticks. Up until this time, we had scored a victory at every point. The enemy attacked our works at every point and was always repulsed with heavy loss. While we were rejoicing over victories they were being greatly reinforced. At the break of day on the 15th, we were far outside of the lines of our breastworks works, attacking, firing volley after volley into them as they were huddled around their camp fires. Having taken them by surprise, with less than 3,000 men, we waded through the snow and routed 30,000, capturing over 3,000 stands of small arms, six pieces of artillery, and a great many prisoners. Twice that day the 14th Miss. Regt. to which I belonged was ordered to a bayonet charge, but the Yankees would not stand. Gen. Buckner had opened the way for our escape, but instead of that he was ordered by our Chief Commanders, Floyd and Pillow, back to the trenches which we had left the day before.

General Grant had been receiving reinforcements every day, until now his forces numbered over four to one of our worn out, frozen soldiers. During the night of the 15th a council of war was held. The same was communicated to General Grant, who proposed surrender. General Forest was in the council and refused to surrender. He contended that the way was open for us to march out and he marched his command (which was cavalry) all along our lines of works. This was the first intimation we had that we were prisoners of war. So we had nothing to do but to stand around our fires and talk of our experiences and narrow escapes during the four days carnage.

Chapter 2. The next morning after our surrender we were marched to the river where there were several old hulks of steam boats that appeared to be rotten from bottom to top. We were crowded on the lower decks one thousand to the boat. We were in much more danger on the decks of these old boats than we were when we were facing the Yankee bullets. We had no idea of where we were going. We were carried to Cairo Illinois, then up the Mississippi River by way of St. Louis to Alton, Ill. We were landed there after spending eight days on the lower decks of those old boats, eating and sleeping on stone coal scattered all over the bottoms almost knee deep. We were crowded into cattle cars like so many cattle and horses and after twelve hours ride, through a terrible blizzard, we were landed at Chicago, a motley looking set.

We had all our cooking utensils with us, camp kettles, skillets, ovens, frying pans, coffee pots, tin pans, tin cups, and plates. We had them on our heads, on our backs, swinging to our sides, and in our hands. Some of our boys were bareheaded, having their hats blown off on the way; some had hats and caps with no brims, and some with no crowns. As we were the first batch of prisoners we were quite a show. The people had to see us so we were marched out in double line and headed for the city. We were marched from square to square and from street to street with thousands of people running over each other to see us. Some would curse us and call us poor, ignorant devils, some would curse Jeff Davis for getting us "poor, ignorant creatures" into such a trap. I suppose the children had been told that we had horns and tails, for they crowded near us and kept saying, "Where are their horns and where are their tails, I don't see them."

After we were almost frozen, we were marched two miles to Camp Douglas Prison. Every step of the way was through ice cold mud. Our pants legs up to our knees were frozen as stiff as raw hides. The people by hundreds followed us to the very gates of the prison, and from that day on, it seemed that they never grew tired of looking at us. They visited the prison every day in great crowds until an order was issued prohibiting it. Then some enterprising Yankee built an observatory just outside the prison wall. It was crowded with people from morning until night. Camp Douglas had been erected for a rendezvous and drilling ground for Ill. troops. Everything looked new and clean. I think that we were the first arrival of prisoners. Each barracks had a capacity of 125 prisoners. On each side of the barracks there were three tiers of bunks, one above another, with a narrow hall between and a heater in the center. The prison was laid out in squares and had the appearance of a little town. It had a plank wall around it 15 ft. height with a 3 ft. walk on top for the guards to walk on. There was a commissary in the center where our rations were kept and issued every morning. There were 8,000 of us. They fed us very well on provisions they would not issue to their own soldiers.

The guards, or Hospital Rats, as we called them, had never been to the front and seen any service and they were overbearing and cruel in the extreme. We had some boys who would not take anything from them. We all got water from Lake Michigan by hydrant, the guards as well as the prisoners. At first when they came for water and found one of our buckets under the pump they would kick it over and place theirs in its place. They never failed to get knocked down when they did this and before they could recover the one who had done it would be hidden in some barracks and we would never give each other away. However, they were not long in learning that it was a risky business.

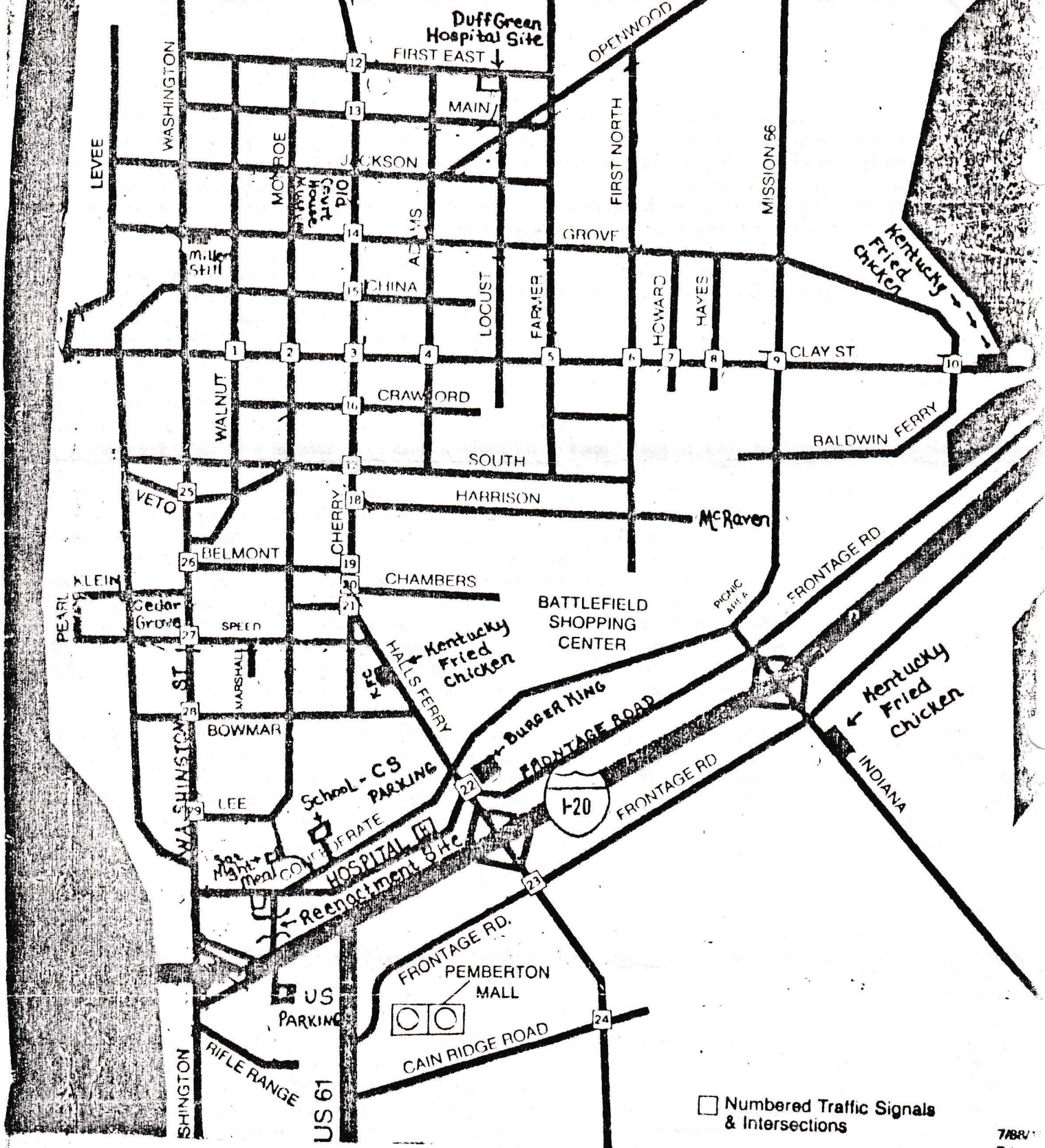
Sometimes our boys, for some trivial offense, would be punished by putting them in the White Oak, as they called it. It was a guard house made of white oak logs twelve or fourteen inches in diameter, notched down close with one small window in the end. Inside the wall was a dungeon eight or ten feet deep. It was entered by a trap door, a pair of steps led down into this dark and foul hole. It was pitch dark in there. One could not see his hand before him when the door was closed. One who has never been in such a place cannot have the least conception of it. I was thrown in this terrible place for a trivial offense, for attempting to get a bucket of water at a hospital well while our hydrant was out of fix. I spent four of the most wretched hours of my life in that terrible place. I was taken out by the same guard who put me in there, and the cursing he gave me when he let me out would be a sin for me to repeat. I opened not my mouth; I knew better. I received one more genteel cursing while wounded and in the prisoners' hospital at Nashville, which I will speak of later on. There were some of our poor boys, for some little infraction of the prison rules, riding what they called Morgan's Mule every day. That was one mule that did the worst standing stockstill. He was built after the pattern of those used by the carpenters. He was about fifteen feet high; the legs were nailed to a scantling so one of the sharp edges was turned up, which made it very painful and uncomfortable to the poor fellow, especially when he had to be ridden bareback, sometimes with heavy weights fastened to his feet and sometimes with at large beef bone in each hand. This performance was carried out under the eyes of the guard with loaded gun, and was kept up for several days; each ride lasting two hours each day unless the poor fellow fainted and fell off from pain and exhaustion. Very few were able to walk after this hellish Yankee torture but had to be supported to their barracks. There was another diabolical device invented; that was the ball and chain route. However, that was seldom used unless some of the prisoners attempted to escape and was caught. The chain was riveted around th ankle and the ball at the other end of the chain. It was almost as much as the poor fellow could carry. That was one thing that stuck closer than a brother. It went with him by day and by night, and even lay by his side in his cold naked bunk at night.

Sometime in September after our capture in February we, to our unspeakable joy, received notice that we would soon be exchanged and sent back to dear old Mississippi. We were this time marched to the railroad and packed in horse and cattle cars which were filthy in the extreme, but that was alright. It was a joyride for us. We laughed, sang and shed tears of joy at our release from prison. We made a bee-line for Cairo, over three hundred miles through the finest corn region in the world. Form Cairo, we were sent down the Miss. River to Vicksburg and from there to Clinton, Miss. where we went into camp, electing officers, and re-enlisting for three years of the war. We were there furnished our necessary equipment, for the Yankees had stripped us of everything except what we had on.

[Thus ends Chapter 2. Chapter's 3, 4 and 5 will appear in the next edition. A special thanks is due Dennis Hubbard for provided this very interesting account.]

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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 interpretation and preservation of the history of the War Between the States through living history. Annual dues are \$12 per year, pro-rated 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.



Take I 20 to Halls ferry road. Turn North on Halls Ferry 1 block to Frontage road. Turn West on Frontage road, across from BURGER KING, passing Hospital on right, continue on for appx. 300 yards to reenactment site along the road beside the PARKSIDE PLAYHOUSE.

Period civilian campsite will be at the OLD COURT HOUSE MUSEUM.

KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN will be giving a discount to reenactors with passes.

## Texas Rifles to take part in April 22 Lindale Homecoming

By DWIGHT HALL

Members of the Texas Rifles will be in Lindale, April 22, for the Lindale Homecoming celebration sponsored each year by the Lindale Historical Society and held at Pool Park.

The Texas Rifles is a dedicated group of men, including several from East Texas who take part in Civil War reenactments across the country. Authenticity is the key word with this group. Everything from their uniforms and weapons to the food they eat is just like it would have been for a soldier during the Civil War.

The group takes what it does very seriously. When a participant goes into character for a reenactment event, they become

the character. If asked a question about the civil War or the character they are portraying, they will probably answer. However, if you ask them a question about the 20th Century of anything out of the correct time period, then all you will get is a funny look.

The Texas Rifles have participated in a great many battle reenactments including the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

More recently they were instrumental in the Camp Ford, prisoner of war camp reenactment near Tyler.

This weekend, April 8-9, they

will be taking part in activities in Pleasant Hill, Louisiana. And on Memorial Day, they will be in Virginia at the battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse.

Fortunately, Lindale residents do not have to go to Virginia or even Louisiana to see the Texas Rifles in action. The reenactment group will be in Pool Park from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on April 22. They will be holding drills and will have a recruiting station set up so anyone that might be interested in joining can be interviewed.

Of course, the reenactors are just one part of the fun that starts that day. At 11 a.m. there will be a band concert, wacky wheel parade, and games of all sorts. There will be a balloon toss, frog races, and a greased pig race.

Food and drinks will be available at the park, however, those who prefer may bring their own picnic.

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THE TEXAS RIFLES attend Civil War reenactments.