

The Tyrants' Foe

The Newsletter Of The Texas Rifles

Volume XIII, Number 2 *****

February/March 1999

In This Issue

An Exciting Walk through the World of the Texas Rifles! (This is what happens when the editor runs out of time!)

COMMANDERS DISPATCH

I wish to express my unending gratitude for being able to serve as Captain for a second year, and being able to lead the Rifles from the Red River to Chickamauga this year. We look forward to great events, our membership is solid and we are bringing on recruits. So our first step in the Field this new year: Company G is to meet at Crockett, Texas, on the 27th and 28th of February to Muster into service with the First Texas Brigade, there to form in the Regiment to be commanded by Col. Earl Mount. This will be our first chance to fall in with the Brigade and prepare for the impending campaign. We will finalize our NCO standings there. The Military members should be in good shape and have their gear settled by this Muster. If anyone is huffing and puffing 'round the time of the Crockett Muster they have some catching up to do to prepare for a long march. As an incentive, there is a good chance that live artillery demonstrations will take place, including those dreadful canister rounds.

All Rifles members need to send your Red River Registration to Ray Siegmund by the end of February. All Military members need to send me your Brigade Enlistment Forms and Dues to me. Civilian members will be provided with Census Forms and a fee will be established soon after Red River. The Civilian group will parallel the military as far as the Agreement to participate with the NCLHA, but the who and what of its function needs still to be worked out. The Red River Event is not to be missed. There is nothing to compare to actually doing the Real Deal, to marching all day and bivouacking, to hearing cavalry skirmishes in the distance, to marching to the sound of the guns. I encourage all the veterans of the last one to send Rob your recollections for the web page.

In May we will be attending the Bellmead event in our continuing effort to support Texas events. It is a relief to have a nice event close to home, and I hope we encourage them as much as we can. We can keep the hobby live in Texas and let our Citizens have the benefit of getting a glimpse of the 1860's like folks East of us can do with regularity.

In September we will attend Chickamauga, which is coming along nicely and a good site is picked. This was the first major event I attended 'way back in '88, the first time I saw the Elephant. The terrain up there is gorgeous, and the effect during battles, with artillery reports echoing up canyons and over nearby mountains, is something to be experienced.

So until I see you in the Field, I remain as unyielding to Tyranny as ever and still

Your Obedient Servant,

Philip Ulbrich

THE CAPTAIN'S COMMENTS

At Texian Market Days, I was given permission to act on behalf of the Rifles and begin the process of entering into General King's gentleman's agreement to form a brigade based on the historical model of how a Civil War military organization was operated. Pending the agreement of our members, the Rifles will work with the Nineteenth Century Living History Association-a non-profit organization-in order to field a "semi-professional" brigade that will look, act, and perhaps even smell like the real thing.

There has been some concern that the agreement will damage the Rifles or overwhelm our unique identity. I have spent many hours with General King, Colonel Mount, and Lieutenant Straz discussing this. The Rifles WILL

continue as we are, and I have the assurance of all concerned that our unique organization-civilian and military-will continue as it always has. A "civilian draft committee" (my deepest gratitude to Laura Fitzpatrick and Dwight Hall) has drawn up two enumerated addenda that have been sent to General King and passed on to the NCLHA that make plain that our civilian contingent is an integral part of the Rifles, and will be involved in future planning of any civilian component of the NCLHA. The brigade will have no impact on the Rifles Bylaws, and we will continue on our own string. No one will be required to join the NCLHA, and the Rifles will continue to have our own events, such as Marrow Bone Springs, and attend WHICHEVER events we see fit.

There is healthy skepticism inherent in any autonomous organization in the process of associating with a larger entity, union, or (ahem) confederation. We shall discuss this in detail at Winedale. But, the agreement will grant us many benefits: tax exempt status (something we have sought since our founding and been unable to achieve); a quartermaster system; individual insurance to cover anything we do with the Brigade; a statewide recruiting resource; hay, ice, and water at every event; and perhaps most importantly, an authentic and realistic historical experience.

Your Obedient Servant,

Philip Ulbrich

FROM THE LIEUTENANT'S INKWELL

I have been thinking about the Texas Rifles. We are unique in many ways. One thread that seems to run through our group for its entire history is commitment. We have been fortunate that our recruits and members have chosen to commit to the Texas Rifles. That means different things to different folks.

At the most basic level it means attending events. We are very fortunate to have a large percentage of members who try to stay very active. Event folks who can't attend for stretches of time keep in touch through the newsletter, phone calls, or emails. This past weekend we had a little Houston event and eleven of our boys came out for the day. It looks like we may have picked up a couple of recruits. I am very pleased with our efforts. I asked several members to bring some field rations. We dropped our bedrolls and knapsacks, and as the fire crackled away, salt pork was cooked up along with some onion. Coffee was brewed and the men fell into a rest. I looked across from our camp, and I noticed another confederate unit's recruiting booth. They had a great sign and lots of literature. The stand was "womaned" by four ladies in hooped skirts. Scattered across the table were McDonald's bags, wrappers, and drinks. The contrast was so drastic I immediately turned and looked at our bivouac area. Even the tobacco products I saw in our area at that moment were appropriate. That is commitment. That is why I am a Texas Rifle. Thanks boys and girls!

Your Obedient Servant,

Chris Strzelecki

ASK JOHN

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT FOR THE RED RIVER CAMPAIGN

The Red River Campaign is designed to give participants a taste of life in the field for Civil War era soldiers and civilians. Since infantry soldiers will walk and care their own gear, it is imperative that soldiers reduce their loads to the absolute essentials. Like the Gettysburg Event, the Red River Event will be a non-static-camp, campaign style experience. Unlike Gettysburg, this event will be late war, Trans-Mississippi theater, longer, and will have the added likelihood of cold, wet weather. Several generalizations about the Red River Campaign are as follows:

Generalization #1--Plan on cold, wet weather (and hope you will be disappointed.)

Generalization #2--Forget how you will look and smell by the end of the event. The only clean thing in your possession during the event should be your musket.

Generalization #3--If an item does not directly impact your health and fighting ability, don't bring it.

These conditions demand that you carefully plan what you bring. Below is the Texas Rifles recommended list of essentials to carry:

- Uniform

- Jacket, wool pants, cotton shirt, vest (optional), suspenders, thick wool outer socks, thin
- cotton inner socks, hat, drawers
- Knapsack (a knapsack is recommended instead of a blanket roll)
- Wool blanket, poncho/gum blanket, shelter-half (or second gum blanket). Personal medical needs (prescriptions etc.), foot care needs (blister pads. Band-Aids etc.), spare shirt (preferably wool), spare socks, overcoat/blanket coat, small towel/rag, soap, toothbrush, rope/cord to build shelter
- Weapons and Accoutrements - Musket, bayonet, tompon, musket sling, cleaning patches, cartridge box, cap box with nipple prick, waistbelt, bayonet scabbard, cartridges, caps
- Mess Gear - Haversack, canteen, tin cup, mess plate, eating knife, spoon, fork Common Items (to be shared and carried by a mess of three to four men) Hatchet, sheet metal frying pan, boiler, large knife, musket cleaning tools

That is it. Each individual will of course add or subtract to this list based upon his own needs and resources. No doubt many of the real Confederate soldiers would have laughed at even this load of gear, but they were conditioned by years of exposure to life on campaign.

John Keahey

Notice from the Editor:

Due to problems stemming from my need to complete course grades on time and also a number of incompatible newsletter submissions via email, I have been forced to finish the remainder of this issue in a rather ordinary fashion. I apologize for its lack of polish. In the future, I would greatly appreciate if all newsletter submissions were sent to me in either RTF or TXT format. I can convert both of these, but not Microsoft Word97 (I have an older version). Thanks for your patience and your dedication to this publication.

DRILL BITS

Instead of a long-winded technical discussion of The Drill, tactics, or interpretations of Hardees, and in light of the upcoming Brigade Muster, I want to take this opportunity to give my input to preparations for Red River II. In this article I won't touch on the need for getting into shape (although you should), weaning yourself of addiction to caffeine and carbonated drinks (although you should), etc., because you will hear much of this in other articles and/or from other RR veterans. However, there are two main areas of concern that I would like to discuss with you: your pack and your feet.

Do not carry more than what is necessary in your pack or blanket roll: a gum blanket, blanket, maybe a shelter half, extra socks, extra shirt, and personal toilet (including required medications, contacts paraphernalia, etc.). Don't forget the housewife, because you will probably need it! Each mess should divide up the cooking and camping gear among the members, including mucket, frying pan, coffee pot, hatchet, extra twine, etc. No tent poles or stakes; you will make-do with what you find at each camp site. There will be a backpack inspection at Brigade Muster. I expect you to come to the Muster with only the items you plan to carry on RR2. This applies even to those who don't plan to support The Cause on The Great Campaign, though they shall be few in number.

If there is anything of merit that an old veteran of the last march can pass on to you, it is to take care of your feet!! There will be plenty of food, you can modify your environment to improve comfort at camp sites, and you should carry just the necessities on your backs. But if your feet go out in the middle of the march, you will either fall out or suffer for the remainder of the week.

Socks--you should, no MUST carry three pairs of socks with you on RR2; one pair on your feet, one pair drying out an done spare pair. Change your socks at least once a day. I have ordered a new pair of custom-made brogans from Robert Serio of Missouri Boot and Shoe Company (see Sutler's Row) just for this event. If you are of like mind, it's too late for you as of this newsletter Robert handmakes each pair of shoes to order, and takes 8 to 10 weeks to deliver. However, if you need to replace those old, worn out shoes now is the time to do it. Give yourself a couple of weeks to break in the new pair, however. If you have a blow-out on the march, well, just ask Pete Evans what we had to rig in order to keep him going!

One further note on the Muster. For you NCOs, dust off your Hardees. The Sgt. Major of the Battalion has threatened to test all NCOs and I expect the NCOs of Company G to know their duties. Every sergeant must know and be able to instruct the School of the Soldier, School of the Company, and Drill for Skirmishers. Every corporal must know and be able to instruct the School of the Soldier. In addition, each corporal must be prepared to assume

the duties of sergeants on short notice; hence, all corporals are strongly urged to learn School of the Company and Drill for Skirmishers.

See you at the Brigade Muster

Bob Huey

REGIONAL REPORTS

AUSTIN:

Austin region members attending Winedale included Bob Huey, Lee Chesney, Call Hill, Ray Siegmund and yours truly. The rest were either delayed, detained or restrained. New recruits attending this year were Jay Powell, Frank Marek, and via San Antonio Brian Potter, if San Antonio fails to lay claim pretty soon consider him Austin.

Highlights were Friday night's joke circle, the arrival of the civilian ladies, coffee, business meeting, Sergeant against Sergeant, dinner, celebrating Bob's and Bob's birthdays, the new and improved slide show, Saturday night's football game, headaches, more coffee, and Mad Robert's going out of business sale. During the stacking competition, the Sergeants demonstrated that we couldn't "stack up" with the winners. Oh yeah, there was a firing competition or something. It pretty much went unnoticed, Just kidding! John French stole the day and was crowned new champion. Congratulations John....sir.

Now hear this! The runner up was Frank Marek, a new recruit from where? Austin. Thanks Frank for representing Austin and holding the line to the last. Just a word of warning, Jon, take good care of your shooting arm and your musket for they will both be tested again and this time next year, I'll drink from that cup made of copper. Local news is that it sounds like we are all walking, exercising, and getting pumped up for Red River. Let's keep up all three. So far we only have an average commitment for the up coming muster but that is sure to change.

Saturday, Feb. 13th the Rifles were asked to perform color guard duty at the Texas Military Forces Museum for the unveiling of a new diorama depicting the Battle of the Wilderness. Attending were Bob Huey, Frank Marek, myself and Jeff Hunt, that's right, Jeff Hunt. Boy, was it good to see him. Jeff and myself attended the later ceremony. It was a small but proud event for the museum and we were glad to play a part.

At this time I am trying to schedule a regional get together and a series of rolling parties. My house is always available but if someone has other ideas please let me know. With that in mind, if you do not hear from me by the time you receive this, call me. That means you, Roger and Tom. Rumor has it that Pete may make an appearance at Red River so I feel safer already.

Back to the firing competition if I may. During the firings we, self included, suffered several misfires. Over five weapons failed to answer the call. These came in the way of dropping this and losing that, mechanical problems and the over all sense of urgency. Hardee was surely rolling in his grave. We had roughly 12 men on the line; we fired roughly 4 volleys and lost 25% of our firepower. That is enough to make the difference between holding the line and stopping the enemy or being overrun and killed. I learned a valuable lesson at Winedale and hope others were watching.

Fortunately we have John Keahey--a fountain of knowledge in which we all bathe. John has covered proper gun maintenance in the past and I am sure he is willing to field any questions. Maybe he can prevent some of this at our next outing. Remember, ask John. Hope to see everyone at Crockett. Hold the line, never yield.

Mike Lucas

HOUSTON:

First things first. The "Tom Heard Memorial Cup" is once again in Houston right where it aughta be! Congratulations John "Hurly" French on bringing it back. Despite some "ramrod" issues, John performed spectacularly and deserves a big hug and kiss next time you all see him. Winedale was exciting as always and kudos go out to Strazboo for another unforgettable slide show. Way to go Lou! It was great to see everyone and to hash out the brigade contract. Now we can move forward. Jesse Jones Park was attended by several Houston members and a good time was had by all. Mark McDavid, who attended Winedale, attended Jesse Jones Park as well and is putting together his impression nicely. He will be adding a musket in the next week or two and is looking forward to being very active in the Rifles this year. We picked up a couple of potential recruits at Jesse Jones and I called Mark Richter on the phone and now that his daughter is a little older he wants to become involved as well. So, as we recruit more this year I need all that old gear donated to the quartermaster bin. A great event to bring me your old

stuff will be at the Brigade Muster which should be coming up very quickly after the mailing of this newsletter. Dennis Taylor has already donated lots of goodies so I hope others will follow his example.

If you have not started getting ready physically for Red River II you need to start right now. I tore a tendon in my knee as well as my Achilles tendon in a bad fall last Friday playing basketball at the Y and I will be on crutches for 4 to 6 weeks with possible surgery. I don't think I will be able to make the Campaign now. I feel really bad because I have been looking forward to this event for a long time. The kicker is, if I had kept myself in shape after Gettysburg, I would not have had a problem. All I would have to do is re-hab my knee. My problem is I just started exercising two weeks ago and now I will probably not be able to get in shape in time. So, don't make the same mistakes I have. Get out there and get ready!

We really need to get up to the Brigade Muster as well. This is our chance to work with our battalion and prepare for spending a week in the field with this fairly new unit. I also think this event is going to be a lot of fun. We have made a commitment to this new unit and I hope we all get out to support it. I have a feeling that much of our opinion of the new brigade will be influenced by how they respond to us and I think how they respond to us will be influenced by how greatly we support and embrace the brigade. So, in a way, I think we will only get out of this new battalion and brigade what we put into it. Did that make any sense? Forgive me, I am juiced up on percidan while I type this out.

A new phone list was handed out at Jesse Jones Park. The new phone net callers will be myself, Straz, Dennis, Mike and Rene. Thank you to John French and Lee for your services last year.

Please mark March 14th on your calendar. We have a possible recruiting event at the Confederate Memorial between 1 and 4 that day. I will get you more info later.

So, we have three "Gets" to work on. GET in shape, GET out and recruit and GET excited. I know I am. Even if I were not on percidan I would be excited.

Roberta "Gimp" Williamson

DALLAS/FORT WORTH REGIONAL REPORT:

Another Winedale and another year of campaigning to look forward to. This was my tenth year attending Winedale and beginning my tenth as a member of the Rifles. While missing others, it is always good to see old friends again and no matter how turbulent the business meeting gets, I seemingly have always come away with a renewed spirit in this hobby and in the Rifles. The Metroplex region is alive and well and has been chugging away as usual. Now that Winedale is past, the effort is on, as always, in seeking new recruits, replenishing the region cartridge box and preparing for upcoming Samuel Farms and Red River events. The best news is that I anticipate our ranks at Samuel Farms will be joined by two new fresh-faced recruits from this area, all things being equal and some work schedules allow for it. Further, and while we have not had any cartridge rolling since the first of the year, the Coffee Boilers are planning one during the week of the 21st to restore supply levels. Darla Benline has also conveyed her compliments and regrets her not being able to make it to Winedale. However, she reports she is full of fight and will be at Samuel Farms and also plans to go to Red River.

Chuck Prack,

"The Boilers"

"All I ask of Alabama is that they keep up with the Texans!" Attributed to R. E. Lee during the Gettysburg campaign

A SPECIAL CIVILIAN REPORT ON FORT MARTIN SCOTT

There were no sutlers, no crowds, no battles, no kids and no men. So what was there? There were 15 women who met at Ft. Martin Scott on the weekend of January 29th for the First Annual Ladies Weekend. Hosted by Janet Rice a fine Lady from the 173rd NYSVI, the weekend highlighted women's work of the Civil War. Attending were women of the 48th Ohio, Capital Guard, 173rd NYSVI and two independent reenactors. Attending from the Texas Rifles were Vicki Betts, Vivian Schroeder, Laura Fitzpatrick, Kimberly Scott, and Emily Rose. Friday night as everyone arrived we were greeted with bowls of hot soup and bread. We congregated in the Commander's Quarters, hugging old friends and making new ones. The evening highlight was the unveiling of Vicki Betts' stunning, exquisitely sewn wrapper. The ladies retired to their quarters, one original building and two restored. Emily Rose, myself, and Cyndi Thibodeau of the Capital Guard were fortunate enough to spend the weekend in the original

building. Was it a big spooky? YES! We made a pact quickly that no one would be left alone in the room since someone or something enjoys walking on the roof at night!

I cannot describe what it is like to open the door of your home and it is pitch black and you can't just turn and flip a switch to gain sight. Though I admit myself and my roommates were probably not the most organized of dwellers at the event; it soon became a major ordeal to find the candles and get them lit. We had two oil lamps and two candle lanterns and it became apparent that if a woman in those times needed something in the night she would have been wise to place it out in the daylight hours. It also became very apparent to us all that a woman spent an enormous time tending her fireplace. Without a fire at all times the room quickly turned cold, and the water and food tepid. Our nights were spent in shifts of waking and loading logs on the fire from a stack of kindling and wood we had placed by our bedding on the floor. There was no rest for the weary.

Saturday we all gathered for breakfast and classes in cooking, tating, and gauging. We ate the results of the cooking class (a savory, delicious soup) for lunch. Our own Vivian Schroeder is a master tatter, with Vicki Betts and Emily Rose not far behind. I, unfortunately, have been demoted to remedial tating. We had come prepared with a mostly pre-sewn apron to gauge. Vivian again helped the class with her knowledge, and a task I formerly thought I could never master has now become a joy. Though requiring precision, gauging is a relaxing and rewarding skill. I wonder how many of us went home, ripped out our dress waists and gauged them after the event. Saturday afternoon we met for tea and to view the "ladies museum." Miss Vicki Betts brought an extensive collection of original women's wear ranging from underpinnings, an original nightgown, dresses, bodices, and a piece of material used to make a man's shirt. There was also a stunning display of fans and jewelry.

Saturday evening we donned our best dresses and enjoyed a wonderful, elegant evening dining at a local restaurant. The atmosphere and conversation were delightful. We were joined by several men, including Marvin Schroeder, who looked dashing in his civilian finery. Miss Kimberly Scott was breathtaking, and turned quite a few heads, as she graced the room in her newly sewn black dress and black watermark spoon bonnet. Sunday we attended an Episcopal church service given by Steve Von Roeder of the Capital Guard and continued our sewing projects. We also made plans to visit at upcoming events and an Irish evening may take place at Samuel Farms. Before heading for home we gathered for a "Class of '99" picture. As we stood in front of the blacksmith's shop thanking Janet Rice for giving us so many helpful and meaningful memories, we all wished aloud to make this an annual event. Would I go again? In a heartbeat. Ladies, if you missed it and it comes along next year, MAKE SURE YOU ATTEND. If you attended this year well, wasn't it just the neatest thing you ever attended?

See you all at Samuel,

Laura Fitzpatrick

***A LETTER OF APPRECIATION (submitted by the LT.)**

Dear Texas Riflemen:

On behalf of Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center, I would like to thank the members of the Texas Rifles for their help with the Civil War skirmish at the park. We had 506 spectators, over 60 reenactors, and many more Volunteer guests. I spoke with several visitors and family members alike who expressed their appreciation of an event like this, so close to home. Your efforts to bring history alive for the local community are exceptional and greatly appreciated. I personally wish to extend my sincere gratitude for your leadership in this event. Year after year, your core group returns to make this annual event the success it has become. As this program has evolved, I have seen your Regiment refine their skills while maintaining a professional level of historical accuracy. It was an excellent performance and all should be commended for their continued progress. We hope to see you at our Heritage Day Celebration on Saturday, March 6th. And again we look forward to next year.

Sincerely,

Dennis Johnston, Park Director

Cool Huh!!

Also, these are the events for the year so far:

February 27-28, Brigade Muster, Near Crockett, Texas *Max Effort

MARCH 6TH, JESSE JONES PARK TEXAS HERITAGE DAY THIS IS A NEW EVENT

March 13-14, Samuel Farms, Mesquite, Texas: This event is not a max effort, it appears that neither Phil or I can attend. I think we might do better with a company muster in Hempstead sometime in March?? More on this.

April 10th-17th (Saturday to Saturday) Pleasant Hill, Louisiana *By God Max Effort

May 15-16, Bellmead, Near Hillsboro, Texas *Max effort
September 17-19, Chickamauga, Georgia *Max Effort
October 23-24, Texian Market Days, Richmond, Texas *Max Effort
November--date not fixed: Possible events, Camp Ford, Brigade Muster, Marrow Bone Springs Muster
December--Dickens on the Strand, date to be announced
Later dudes, Lt. Boo

An Advertisement for STUFF!

For sale at 1990s prices: C & D Jarnagin #204 M1855 Early War Cartridge Box - \$50.00 (current catalog price - \$71.95), & #235 CS Waistbelt w/ Georgia frame buckle - \$25.00 (current catalog price - \$29.95). These items have been well cared for, & are in excellent condition. Just ask a TR veteran! See Mike Lucas, who currently has the items in his possession, or contact Cal Hill at 512-478-3237, or e-mail at chill3@mail.utexas.edu.

The next newsletter submission deadline will be March 30, 1999! Please have them delivered before this date.
Thanks again--the Editor.

Submission of articles, letters, reports, etc. from members of the Texas Rifles are welcome for publication in The Tyrant's Foe, as space allows. Articles MUST be submitted no later than February 15 to be included in the next exciting issue of The Tyrant's Foe. Please follow this simple guideline.
