



The Tyrants' Foe



Newsletter of the Texas Rifles

Volume XXIV, Number 2 ***** December 18, 2010



The Home Front

2010 has been an eventful year for the Texas Rifles Civilians. Not only have our numbers grown, but our civilians have been working hard to expand on their impressions. The development of the Sanitary Commission/Ladies Aide Society impression gives the civilians the chance to interact with the military side of our group during events.

We experienced a lot this year at living history events and reenactments. At Livingston a few of the ladies learned to put up tents and keep a fire going in the cold, wind, and rain. Sometimes the best way to learn is to jump in with both feet. At Liendo we took advantage of the chance to show off our Sanitary Commission impression. We civilians had a good time and we really enjoyed the interaction with the military.

The living history events are my personal favorite. At Fort McKavett we braved the heat and learned that life in a frontier fort can be stark and miserable, but you make due with what you have and you appreciate the people who go through the hard times with you. It is easy to see how life was so hard on the early pioneers. Fort McKavett showed us the hard side of life and our Henkel Square "Oktoberfest" showed us that even when you have little you can still have

wealth in friends, family, love, and fun. The fun, food, and the chance to visit with friends gave us a look at how a small community comes together in a big way. We have had a good year and look forward to another great year in 2011.



HolliBeth Marek

Lieutenant's Inkwell



As we approach the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War, it is important that we consider not only what happened 150 years ago, but also what is currently occurring in the hobby. Both are of great importance, but sometimes they are easily forgotten or ignored as we hurry through our busy lives.

I believe it is only fitting that we remember and honor all of those who sacrificed almost 150 years ago, both men and women, for what each side believed was right. I'm not going to delve into their motivations; I was not present and my opinions are based upon my readings, my long discussions with other living historians (like those in the Texas Rifles) and my own prejudices of how I would like things to have been. I will only note that these were a young people, many recent immigrants or the

descendents of recent immigrants. They were also a people with much in common, with many of the same heroes, like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.

It is important to remember that this was a pivotal time in our country's history and as such, was instrumental in shaping who we are now as a people. As with most wars, it was a war started by extremists on both sides, but fought mostly by the common man. The soldiers were not only fighting for what they believed in, but more importantly, they were fighting for their comrades, the men sweating and bleeding beside them. It is this comradeship that we attempt to emulate in our hobby and what makes the Texas Rifles so special.

Unfortunately, we now live in a society of political correctness. So much so, that our mere possession of firearms is enough to brand us as radicals. It doesn't even matter that the weapons are obsolete by any rational standards. The fact that our chosen impression is Confederate makes us all the more evil in many people's eyes (to some extent, even to people we are close to). Because of this, I think it is our responsibility and duty to continue to try to educate as many people as possible as to why we are in our hobby.

Slavery is indefensible and it was a great evil in our country, but we should endeavor to help people to understand that as Confederate (or very often Federal) reenactors, we are trying to honor our ancestor's sacrifices that shape who we are today. Unfortunately, the extremists are often the only ones heard, very similar to how it was 150 years ago. Because of this and the widespread belief in political correctness (i.e. don't say anything that might offend anyone), the history that we portray is being suppressed or even worse, rewritten. Much to my chagrin, but not surprise, many politicians, both at the Federal and state level would prefer that the Civil War Sesquicentennial not be recognized. This is mind-boggling to me personally. How can we ignore such sacrifice?

It is also important to consider that as living historians, we are often the only accurate exposure that the general public, albeit a small portion of the general public, will ever get into what life was like during the tumultuous years of the Civil War. From personal experience, I know that there are high school students that don't know anything about the Civil War other than the South wanted slavery and were therefore inherently evil. These same students probably don't know which side wore blue and which side wore grey and couldn't tell you when the war occurred.

Another important consideration as we approach the Sesquicentennial is the steady decline in Civil War reenacting. Numbers continue to decline due to many factors, including the advancing age of most reenactors, time or financial considerations. Without something to increase awareness and interest in the hobby, we may see Civil War reenacting degenerate into nothing more than yahoos playing shoot-em-up against each other. Unfortunately, I don't see another movie like Gettysburg ever being made to excite public interest. The Sesquicentennial may be the last gasp of a withering hobby. I don't say these things to be depressing, but to try to encourage all the Texas Rifles to take advantage of the Sesquicentennial events to encourage yourself and others to be active and take advantage of major events that we may not see again.

Beginning next year with 1861, we will have the opportunity to attend the 150th of Twiggs Surrender in San Antonio (February) and the Sesquicentennial of Wilson's Creek in August (hopefully in our new Marek battleshirts). I hope that both events draw strong numbers from the Texas Rifles. These anniversaries will not occur again.

I'll climb down off of my soap box after leaving you with one final thought. The Civil War Sesquicentennial can be what we make of it... the beginning of a new era in the Texas Rifles or the last whimper of what was.

Your Humble Servant,
Don L. Tucker,
Lt., Texas Rifles

The following articles are on holiday leave and will return early next year

Captain's Dispatch Because the Sergeant Says So!

The Crow's Corner

Crow Bounce – A Holiday Drink!

By: The Crow
December 2010

Great for any holiday, reenacting event, or for those with Reenacting Separation Anxiety Syndrome (RSAS)!

PREPARATION:

To a cooled and well-stirred solution of 10 lbs sugar, 5 lbs crushed walnuts, and 20 gal of rum add 25 quarts Sloe Gin, stirring for 10 minutes. Next remove the solids by filtration, washing lightly with Moonshine, and return to the reaction vat with an additional 25 quarts of Irish whiskey. To this add a

solution of 8.5 pints Moonshine, which clears the red color. Stirring for an additional one half hour, after which remove the solids by filtration.

Next, in a separate vat, add 2 lbs of cinnamon, stirring into a 20 gal solution of distilled mint leaves. Filter this solution.

Finally, add the cinnamon/mint solution to the Rum-Shine-Gin-Whiskey solution. Stir for 5 minutes and let age for 15 minutes. Serve on the rocks or straight. Enjoy!

DOSAGE:

4 oz, I felt it in a minute ~ really light headed, the head feels close to the ground ~ knees weak ~ distinct shakes. It was quite intense, no sensory contribution, no intellectual contribution. It's greatest contribution might be to provide a subject with the vocabulary of an altered state of consciousness, such as, "By the left flank...into line...march!"

8 oz - all of the above plus: I was blown away, far away I might add. During this episode mental activity was almost absent. I can't say I wasn't 'impressed' in some way, though it wasn't exactly what I expected. I came upon a sudden urge to participate in a Civil War reenactment!

16 oz - all of the above plus: I felt like all of my blood had turned to molasses. There were no noticeable visual effects, but my hearing was slightly diminished. I remember starting to fall over from my sitting position. My normal physical perceptions dissolved away from my awareness. I started to float off. I was simultaneously losing contact with my body while practicing Hardees's Manual of Arms!

32 oz- all of the above plus: I beheld every thought that was going on everywhere in the universe and all possible realities! I came upon a sudden urge to command a Civil War battalion! It scared the hell out of me. When I could see again (15 minutes later) it was almost as if there was an echo of a thought in my head saying that I was given an extremely rare look at the true consciousness of it all!

64 oz - all of the above plus: This is a very strong experience. It began with a fast-rising sense of excitement and wonder, with an undertone of "Now you've done it," but dominated by a sense of, "WOW!" These feelings built to an intensity I had never experienced before. This was simply the most intense experience possible: a singularity, a white-out (as opposed to a black out). I have little memory of the state itself except waking up three days later with sore feet and the taste of black powder in my mouth!

The Crow



Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year
From the Crow and his loyal dog Rocky!