



The Tyrants' Foe

Newsletter of the Texas Rifles



Volume XXVIII, Number 2

June 18, 2011



The Captain's Dispatch



We are currently in the midst of the summer doldrums and there is very little to report beyond the ever increasing temperatures and lack of rain. Things are however, gearing up for Wilson's Creek August 12-14, 2011. Registrations will be made for those members who have sent their registration fee (\$20) to the Treasurer (Doug Davis) early the week of June 20th using a pre-paid credit card as suggested by Sergeant Major Marek. If you haven't sent in your registration fee to Doug, contact me immediately (dtucker84@yahoo.com) so that arrangements can be made for your registration. The deadline for registering with the Brigade for Wilson's Creek is June 25, 2011. No one will be allowed to register with Brigade after that date. I'm encouraged by the number of members planning on attending Wilson's Creek, but if you haven't already, you need to get your money to Doug! Frank has begun delivering the company over shirts for the event and they look great!

It has finally been confirmed that the Red River Battalion will not be holding a drill prior to Wilson's Creek. This cancellation of a traditional muster prior to a major event is due to high temperatures, burn bans and poor attendance at the previous muster. However, we will have opportunities to get together because we need to have at least two more Houston region cartridge rolls prior to Wilson's Creek and I assume that the situation in Austin is similar.

While it has not yet been discussed or voted upon by the Texas Rifles membership, the next 150th Anniversary event on the Red River Battalion schedule after Wilson's Creek is Shiloh on March 30-April 1, 2012. This appears to be an event that is shaping up into something special. In addition to the event itself, an opportunity to ride to the event on a steam driven train is in the works for reenactors who can take off a couple extra days. I've also seen that some reenactors are going to arrive on site in a paddle wheeler. As I currently understand, registration for the Shiloh event will be opened soon after the closing of registration for Wilson's Creek. The same method of Brigade registration will be used (telephone & credit card) for Shiloh and we will take care of the registrations the same way as is being done for Wilson's Creek.

Unfortunately, it looks like a Texas Rifles hosted Civilian Event isn't going to occur this year due to the loss of Henkel Square and the difficulty in finding a new site suitable for a civilian event. The civilian contingent and the executive board are going to look into the feasibility of using the Pioneer Farms site in Austin for a future event.

An issue of grave importance is the site for the next Texas Rifles meeting in January. I have been in contact with Winedale regarding use of their facility (our old meeting site) for the meeting. Unfortunately, communication with them has been slow and I have yet to find out what the cost would be to the group. I'm afraid we were spoiled getting to use Henkel Square for free. When we look at the Pioneer Farms site, we will also determine if it is feasible to hold the meeting at that location. If anyone has any other possible sites for the annual meeting, I would appreciate you sending me or any member of the executive board the suggestion.

I would like to make another call for recruiting. We continue to have fewer men under arms at events and if the trend continues, I fear for the stability of the organization. Talk up the Texas Rifles and the hobby with your friends and convince them to join us in the field! This is a hobby that sells itself if you can get someone interested in history into the field. We fortunately have a well stocked quartermaster as well as members with extra gear. Lets get these recruits geared up and in the field!

Finally, with great sorrow, we said goodbye to another long time member of the Texas Rifles. Steve Wolford "Wolfy" will be greatly missed by us all. Remember his family in your prayers. Wolfy joins Lucas on the Texas Rifles roster of our most honored. Thanks again to those members who attended the funeral or sent condolences.

Your Servant,
Don L. Tucker
Captain, Texas Rifles

Lieutenant's Inkwell



By the Cut of His Clothes
Proper fit of 1860s era men's clothing.

By looking at period photographs, we see not only the style of clothing we should emulate, but also the proper fit and manner of wear. Let this be a handy guide in the choice of clothing and sizing to get the correct impression for what we do in our history hobby.

Vest and Trousers:

Right



Wrong



Notice that the bottom of the vest is just below the bend of the elbow, and the trousers waist is at or slightly above the bend of the elbow.

Some notes on this frock coat:

Right



Wrong



Look at the height of the collar – half way up the neck – typical for the 1860s and half an inch to inch lower than in the 1850s. The shoulder seam has moved to the outside of the shoulder, so the sleeve falls straight down, and is full, hiding the girth of the arm. Observe that the waist seam is at about the level of the navel, just below the bend of the arm. The skirt of the coat is almost half the length of the front of the garment, halfway from the crotch to the knee.

The well tailored gentleman – notice the length of the trousers, fullness of the leg, compared to the close fitting vest, and location of the bottom of vest and waist seam of the frock coat



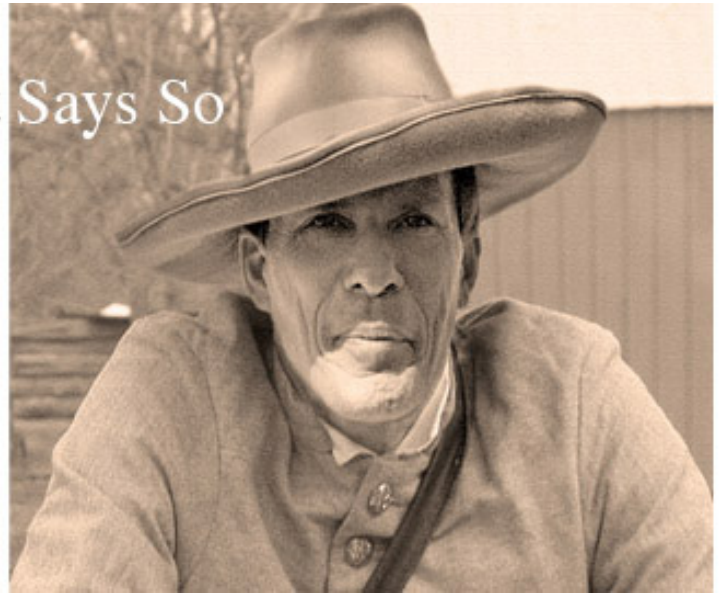
Here we have a view of several wounded in shirts and trousers: looks like drawers on the man at the far right.



This is an interesting image, as it shows the fit of trousers from the rear, and how short the sack coat had become:



Because the Sergeant Says So



FACTS ABOUT THE BATTLE OF WILSON'S CREEK AUGUST 10, 1861

BATTLE SIGNIFICANCE:

Wilson's Creek was the second major battle of the Civil War, coming two weeks after the battle of First Bull Run in Virginia, and the first major battle west of the Mississippi River. The death of General Nathaniel Lyon focused greater attention by the federal government on the war west of the Mississippi in general and Missouri in particular.

General Nathaniel Lyon was the first United States general killed in action since the War of 1812, and the first Union general officer to die in the Civil War.

While technically a Confederate victory, with Southern forces retaining possession of the field, they were not able to pursue the federal forces and conquer the state of Missouri, thus achieving General Lyon's goal of preserving Missouri for the Union.

BATTLE LEADERS:

Many of the commanding officers at Wilson's Creek had previous military experience in other wars. General Sterling Price commanded Missouri volunteers in New Mexico during the Mexican War, while General Nathaniel Lyon served in the regular army. General Ben McCulloch fought in three wars: The Texas Revolution, the Mexican War and the Civil War.

Of the thirteen graduates of the US Military Academy at West Point that fought at Wilson's Creek, five became major generals the three rose to brigadier generals. All four of the Confederate graduates would rise to the rank of Brigadier General in the Provisional Army of the Confederacy.

Sterling Price, commander of the Missouri State Guard, was a former governor and member of Congress. A popular leader among the soldiers, they nicknamed him "Old Pap".

Colonel Franz Sigel was a former German Soldier and revolutionary that left Germany during the 1843 Revolution. At the outbreak of the war he was a political leader among the German population in St. Louis. Upon Lyon's death, command of the Union army passed to Major Samuel Sturgis. Sturgis later rose to the rank of Major General.

Captain James Totten, Commander of Battery "F", Second US Artillery, was stationed in Little Rock, Arkansas before the War, and trained the men of the Pulaski Arkansas Battery, part of the Arkansas State Militia, in artillery drill. During the battle of Wilson's Creek, Totten's Battery and the Pulaski Battery would exchange fire during the battle.

The Armies:

Total Northern forces engaged at the Battle of Wilson's Creek were 5,400 men. Southern forces numbered 10,125. In comparison the population of Springfield in 1860 was 2,000.

The Union army departed Springfield at 5:00 p.m. on August 9. In 24 hours, it marched more than 20 miles and fought a pitched battle lasting more than six hours (from around 5:00 a.m. until around noon) before returning to Springfield on the evening of August 10th.

The combined southern forces camped on Wilson's Creek prior to attacking Lyon in Springfield. This area afforded water, forage and food for the army and was within striking distance along the Wire Road. Ironically, McCulloch ordered an attack on Springfield on the morning of August 10th, but a light rain the night before delayed their movement.

The First Kansas Infantry Regiment (US) is seventh on the list of Northern units suffering the largest number of killed, wounded or mortally wounded in any one engagement during the Civil War with 106 casualties taken at Wilson's Creek. The First Missouri Infantry Regiment (US) is number eight with 103 casualties.

A total of 537 men were killed at Wilson's Creek on both sides. The federals suffered 1,317 casualties (killed, wounded and missing) and the Confederates 1,222. In terms of percentage of losses, the Union Army suffered at 24.5% casualty rate and the Confederates 12%.

The lack of standardization in uniforms on both sides caused much confusion, including when Colonel Franz Sigel mistook the gray uniforms of the Third Louisiana Regiment (CS) for the 1st Iowa Infantry Regiment (US). Sigel's command was routed, and the tide of battle turned in favor of the Confederates.

The Missouri State Guard, a pro-Southern militia force, were not technically Confederate Soldiers, as they have not sworn allegiance to the Confederate government, nor had Missouri seceded from the Union. Many State Guardsmen were poorly equipped with hunting rifles, shotguns, out-of-date military weapons and farm implements, with little to no uniforms.

There were a total of 31 cannons used in the battle. The Union had 16 cannons organized in three batteries. The south had 15 guns organized in four batteries.

Many ethnic groups were involved in the battle. Germans and Irishmen made up large percentages on both sides. Records indicate that several African-Americans were present as servants on both sides. Mary Lincoln's dressmaker's son, George Washington Kirkland (a mulatto), was killed at Wilson's Creek as a member of the 1st Missouri Infantry Regiment (US). A small number of Cherokees joined the southern forces just prior to the battle and participated in it.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Confederates referred to the battle of Wilson's Creek as the Battle of "Oak Hill(s)", after the original name of Bloody Hill.

The Wire Road is named for the telegraph wire strung alongside the road that ran From Springfield to Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Five men – Nicholas Bouquet, Lorenzo Immell, John M. Schofield, William Wherry and Henry Clay Wood – earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for actions performed at Wilson's Creek.

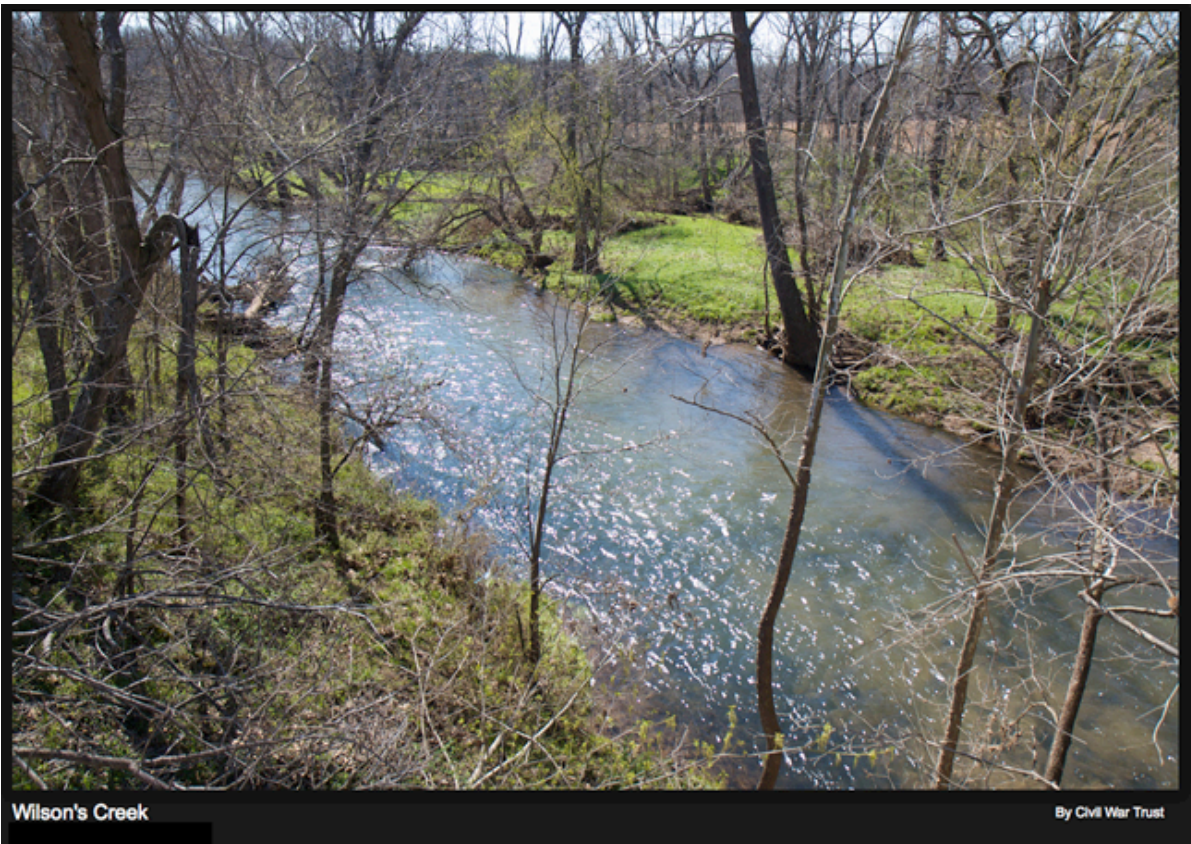
The Ray House, the only surviving structure from the time of the battle, was used as a field hospital during and after the battle by the Confederates. There were many other homes used as hospitals in the vicinity of Wilson's Creek following the battle.

...

Wilson's Creek Photographs



From their campsites around the Edward's Cabin (seen in the distance) the Southern troops under General Sterling Price drove up Bloody Hill to assault the Union troops at its crest. The soldiers at Wilson's Creek describe fighting through waist high prairie grass - much like you see here.



Wilson's Creek

By Civil War Trust

View of the Wilson Creek near the Gibson Mill. Photo: Rob Shenk, CWPT



Wilson's Creek - Edwards Cabin/Price's HQ

By Civil War Trust

A significant number of the Southern troops at the Battle of Wilson's Creek were camped around the Edwards Cabin. The cabin you see here is not an original structure although the site is where General Sterling Price did have his headquarters. Photo: Rob Shenk, CWPT



From the Home Front

Summer is upon us, what to do with our time. Since we have lost the Henkel Square site for our Texas Rifles' sponsored event(s) we are now actively looking for a new site. We looked at Millard's Crossing in Nacogdoches, but have not heard back from the site. We will be looking at Pioneer Farms in Austin, Pioneer Village in Gonzalez, and the site at Bourne as possible replacement sites. If anyone has any ideas for sites please let us know.

As a result of losing the Henkel Square site our October Civilian Event had to be cancelled, we will be using the Battle for Bourne as our civilian event this year, the plans we had for Henkel will be used at a later date. We may be down, but we are not out. Our Civilian Event will be back, bigger and better. I look forward to seeing you all at Bourne.

We will be cooking at TMD again this year. We have not planned the menu as of yet, but it should be just as good if not better than previous years. Gunny, Frank is hoping his father-in-law will be in the kitchen to help out.

At Liendo the "Sanitary Commission/Ladies Aide Society" will be out with snacks and drink after the battles. We will be camped the same area as last year. Feel free to come by and visit anytime during the weekend, we always have something to snack on.

At each event we are able the Ladies of the Texas Rifle will be working on the quilt to be raffled off, ticket are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Don't for get to buy your tickets.

HolliBeth Marek
Texas Rifles Civilian Coordinator

Houston area report



Rain, Rain, where for art thou Rain?!

It's rained here in west Liberty County a total of 1/2 inch since February. Now we have hi temps in the 100s to boot and it is only June!

Some things of note have occurred regarding the TR. We've had a couple of rolling partys at Strazaboo's house. Booski always has plenty of good food, even if his Holly makes him give it to us, and the beer is usually cold. Captain Tucker does a great job running the rolling partys there. No talking is aloud until 200 rounds are prepared. We all mind our manners and the boxes fill up quick! Sir Douglas always has interesting Navy and New Orleans stories to tell when the "talking lamp" is finally lit.

Kevin Traxler apparently "butt-dialed" me a few days ago but I can't repeat what I heard over the line. We are all still upset about the Henkel Square site. It is one thing to not have it available to us, but the rumors that the houses are being gutted and turned to shops, and that even the church has been emptied is all a little hard to take.

Captain Don, K-Trax, Holli and I went to Millard's in Nacogdoches and made a very good offer to do some living history there. The site has some promise but the lady there has not got back in touch with us so..., I'll let my Holli explain more if she wishes.

All joking aside, and with all my heart I want to say how much I am going to miss Wolfy. My first event was Red River 2 and I got to march beside him for many a mile. Soon after that, he and I completed the Ft. Towson march in Oklahoma. Such an inspiration! They should put his picture beside the word "gentleman" in the dictionary. Heaven's gain is truly our loss. I intend to set up a marker at Wilson's Creek for him. I will make a wooden marker like I did for Lucas. It will also need a pair of brogans and a plain gray kepi. Other mementoes can be added by the members as they wish. Please let me know if you'd like to contribute.

Till the next time we gather round the fire my friends, keep the corn bubblin' and your shoes well oiled!
Frank



EARLY CIVIL WAR UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

By John Keahey

The opening of the American Civil War saw a huge demand for military uniforms, weapons and equipment. Neither the Northern nor Southern governments were prepared to arm, cloth and equip the mobs of would-be soldiers which surged into the regimental training camps. For the North, with its advantages in wealth, manufacturing and larger population; it was simply a matter of time before supply balanced with demand. Simply stated, the Federal government of President Lincoln shifted its supply problems to the home states of the volunteer regiments. The biggest purchaser of military equipment prior to the Civil War was not the Federal government with its tiny Regular Army; it was the State of New York which purchased for its militia units. Other wealthy Northern states made similar pre-war purchases for their militia companies. What the various states allowed militia troops to wear resulted in a lot of variety in uniforms and equipment (including grey uniforms issued through 1863 and American Revolutionary War style coats and tricorne hats in at least two units), but no one at that stage of the war thought it would last four bloody years and no one was concerned about uniformity between regiments. America had never worried about it before and this war would be no different (wrong).

In the South with its agrarian economy, lack of manufacturing, relatively low population and little wealth outside the (few) rich plantation owners, the states could not fulfill the responsibility for supplying uniforms, weapons and equipment even for a short war. The burden of clothing the early war units fell upon the local populations from which the soldiers came. The Confederate Government did not believe that clothing and equipping volunteers from the Southern states, as opposed to regular troops in the service of the Confederate Government, was their problem at all. It never had been in the past wars and this war would be no different (wrong again).

This article will deal in general terms with the uniforms and equipment issued to the 1861-1862 infantry regiments on both sides. As the Texas Rifles does not do either an artillery or a cavalry impression, this writer's time will not be wasted on these lesser branches of the service which rarely determined the outcome of engagements (did you read that, Tommy)?

Early War Federal

The Uniform and Equipment Regulations of the United States Army as used in the Civil War period had been revised and approved in 1855. This was a standard for northern volunteer troops to strive towards. The accoutrements, knapsack, haversack, canteen, sack coat, frock coat, forage cap and hat that we are using for our mid-war eastern Federal impression were all in use for years prior to 1861. There were some major differences which should be mentioned. They are the weapons available, trouser, havelock, poncho and shelter half. The Regular Army weapon was supposed to be the M1855 Rifle or M1855 Rifle-Musket. Only 66,000 of these weapons had been made by 1861 and even the Regular Army units, which only totaled 12,000 men, often did not have them if they had been stationed in an area remote from the east coast (which was very likely). In April of 1861 the Ordnance Department approved a new weapon, the M1861 Rifle-Musket (basically a simplified M1855), with which we are all familiar, but there was not enough production capacity in the North to outfit all the early war volunteers even with this weapon. The P1853 Enfield pattern weapons did not arrive on this side of the Atlantic in quantity until the spring of 1862. What most early war volunteer units were issued both North and South was the M1816 percussion conversion, M1840 percussion conversion, M1841 Rifle or M1842 percussion muskets. Some of these guns had been rifled, but the majority still were .69 caliber smoothbore weapons. In 1861 both the Northern and Southern Governments had eight .69 caliber muskets for every one rifle. Most of the older smoothbore weapons were replaced as quickly as rifle muskets became available. This replacement process took three years in the North and was never really completed in the South.

The regulation trouser in 1861 for the US Army was dark blue, not sky blue kersey. Sky Blue kersey was chosen over dark blue when it became obvious that the war would last years and that the Federal government would have to supply hundreds of thousands of trousers to both regular and volunteer troops. Sky blue kersey fabric cost less and saved the government millions of dollars. It also had the virtue of being familiar from pre-1855 as the issue winter trouser for US troops. A non-regulation clothing item was the havelock; an early war fad. This was a loose cotton cloth cape which buttoned over the forage cap and protected the neck from the sun. It also protects the neck and face from any cooling breeze, restricts vision, and in general is a pain in the ... neck. Most quickly were converted to musket cleaning patches or dish rags.

Neither ponchos, gum blankets nor shelter halves were issued to US troops before 1862. So they do not belong to an early war Federal impression.

Early War Confederate States

With its birth being so recent, the Confederate States had no uniform or equipment regulations in place. When these regulations were developed, technically they applied only to Confederate Regular Army. Based upon Austrian troops, these regulations specified cadet grey wool coats and sky blue trousers. Thus, from the beginning the South encouraged grey uniforms, but that system rapidly broke-down as any suitable grey cloth was quickly used up. Ironically, most Southern soldiers during the war wore wool/cotton jeans jackets and trousers, a coarse, scratchy fabric considered only suitable for slaves and poor laborers in the pre-war years.

If it worked it was used. I have a reference book with photos of documented items used only by Texas troops in the Civil War. Most of the stuff looks very primitive as if it came from the 1830's, not the 1860's. Not only were Confederate early war regiments uniformed and equipped in a variety of kit, there were huge range of items used within companies. Northern newspapers of the early war period are filled with descriptions of how their various regiments were dressed and equipped. Southern newspapers are silent on the subject because of the tremendous variation in clothing and equipment within a Southern regiment. Units recruited in wealthy cities

might have some degree of uniformity, perhaps even Zouave uniforms. A rural raised unit, which was most of the Southern Army, used whatever they could get. The first uniform for volunteers was almost always made by the local ladies. Overshirts, hunting shirts, jackets, frock coats, tailcoats, tunics all were used. Accoutrements, haversacks, knapsacks were locally made; old pre-war items or captured gear from Federal arsenals taken over in the South was eagerly sought. Conditions were particular makeshift in the states west of the Mississippi River, where essentially frontier conditions prevailed. In Arkansas one in twenty recruits carried a percussion military weapon; most of the state's weapons upon the outbreak of war were .69 caliber smoothbore flintlock muskets. In many Southern regiments the men carried their own civilian hunting rifles. Two Virginia regiments marched to war with flintlock muskets, as did Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and Henry Stanley (finder of Dr. Livingston in Africa). Supplying ammunition was a nightmare because there was an astounding mix of weapons within each company. Many infantry soldiers carried pistols into early war battles. Single shot, flintlock, percussion and revolving pistols were all used. As the war dragged-on, all enlistedmen's pistols were turned over to mounted troops.

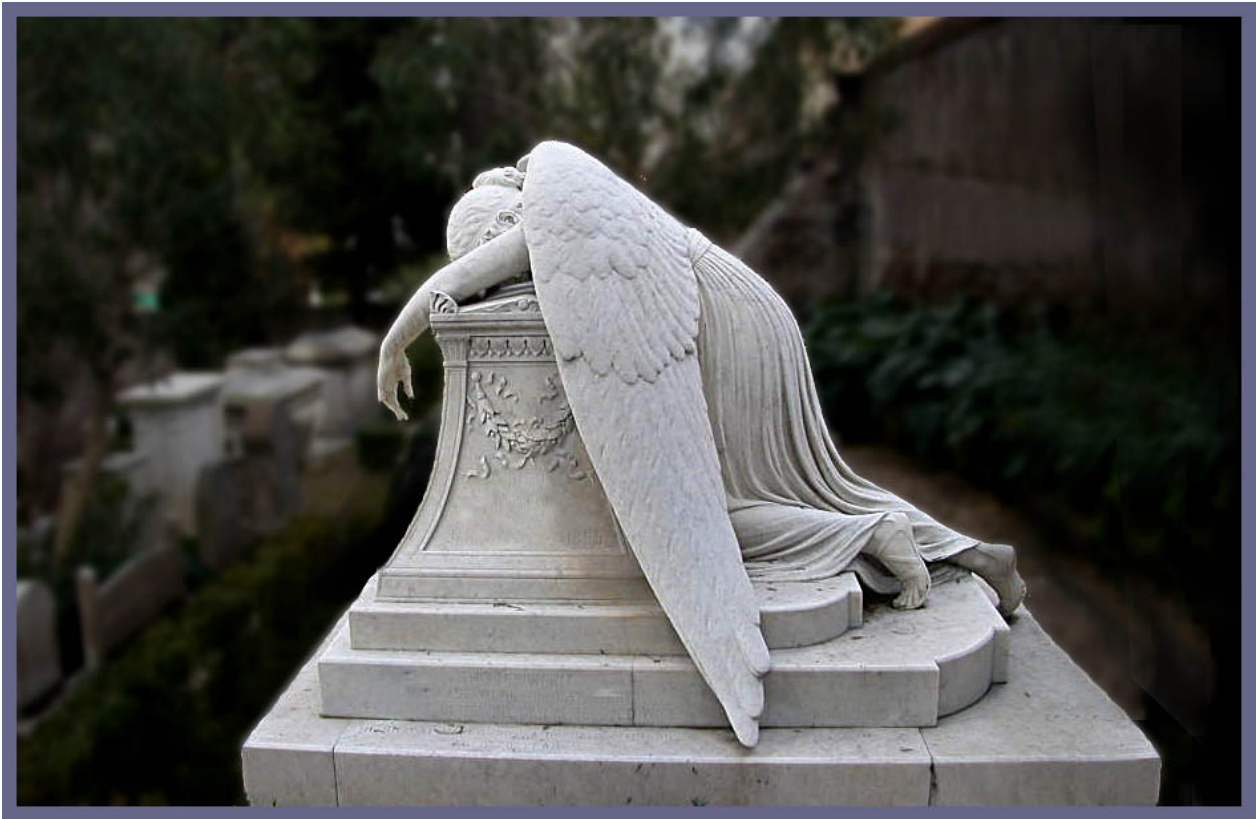
Southerners had always identified with Jim Bowie and other famous knife fighters. One of the early war slogans was, "War to the knife; knife to the hilt." Many Southern soldiers marched to war with a privately owned belt knife; the larger the better. Sugar cane knives, Bowie knives, "D" guard Bowies with blades the length of short swords, daggers were all carried.

Accoutrements ranged from captured Federal accoutrements from southern arsenals, copies of standard US equipment of various quality, imported equipment and home made. I have seen one documented set of Southern accoutrements with a cartridge pouch (no tins) and cap box made from pig skin. These crude items were worn on a belt made from a strip of poncho fabric fastened by a US oval belt plate with the missing forward hook replaced by a nail driven into the lead backing. This set was recovered near a dead Federal soldier's body at Sharpsburg. The Federal soldier's own accoutrement set was missing. Small wonder!

Southern troops did carry knapsacks, particularly in the early war period when they actually had spare clothing to put in them. Some were quite sophisticated. Private George Stovall of the 8th Georgia was killed in action at Manassas. His knapsack was a cheaper copy of the top-of-the-line National Guard Knapsack offered by Northern military outfitters. It was a frame knapsack that carried a mess tin attached to the back. Other states issued similar knapsacks. At Yorktown on the Virginia peninsula, entering Federal troops captured the abandoned knapsacks of an entire Southern regiment; they were made in the European style with hair-on cowhide.

As with Northern soldiers, early war Southerners were not issued ponchos, gum blankets or shelter halves.

In summary, unless otherwise documented, Southern early war soldiers wore and used pre-war, civilian and locally made kit; some it amazingly primitive. Large knives, pistols of all descriptions from revolvers to smoothbore flintlocks were common. Clothing was an even bigger mix than mid-war. Havelocks were used in the South as well as the North. Smoothbore muskets were probably the most common early war weapon. It is an interesting period of time for the Southern fighting man and deserves our best efforts to portray it.



**IN LOVING MEMORY OF A GOOD FRIEND
AND PARTNER IN THE HOBBY**

STEVE WOLFORD "WOLFY"





**YOU WILL BE GREATLY MISSED!
TILL WE MEET AGAIN AROUND THE CAMPFIRE.**

Meanwhile.....



...back in camp...

The deadline for submission of articles for the next Tyrants' Foe is:

September 16, 2011.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Frank, thanks for not sharing what you heard when Kevin Butt-dialed you. I'm sure I speak for all when I say how grateful we are.



To Tyrants Never Yield!