



The Tyrants' Foe



Newsletter of the Texas Rifles

Volume XXXIII

Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence

January 2017



It seems the first of the year always have people promising to resolve this or that, change with habits and lifestyles with great hopes and expectations of better rewards in life.

I myself have made a few of these of the years and have kept a few, forgotten most of them after a few months and mentally kicked myself the following year for not following through to begin with.

My point being is this year I thought how could I improve myself as your commander of such a diverse group of individuals. They come from all backgrounds, walks of life, ages, and other factors, which make them unique from one another.

Then the light bulb actually came on, I should not look to the future but remember the past. Recently a friend of mine posted a picture of me 11 years ago in the hobby. I reflected back on what I was like then, what I have learned and how I have changed.

The Texas Rifles themselves have such a wealth of knowledge within the ranks. Past Texas Rifle Commanders, former NCOs', civilians with unique skills you can't find anywhere else. Plus just the common knowledge of the average member of the Texas Rifles who has been a loyal member throughout the years. It is kind of humbling for me actually and a daunting task to lead you all. The advice and input you have provided me in my first year as captain has been top notch. They have helped me tremendously in selecting the path to follow. However the final choices are mine.

We are now embarking on a new journey into 2017 with the Texas Rifles. There will be bumps, disagreements, hurt egos, maybe even an unsavory word said behind someone's back. However the Texas Rifles remain, strong still after 30 years. I ask for input, ideas, suggestions, and your comments for the upcoming year. As other former Commanders have wished for I also wish that my final year I can serve you well and ensure the foundation of the group remains strong. We are one of the oldest and I still say best in the hobby.

I have heard your comments about not wanting to travel across the country for smaller events wanting to stay closer to the hearth of home. I have also heard them about wanting to be more involved in Texas Rev. events. Bring your ideas and suggestions to the annual meeting. Tell us about events you would like the Texas Rifles to attend. Tell us any directions you would like to see us head off to. Offer suggestions on how we can improve our impressions, or maybe things we have been doing that we need to change to revert back to. I also would love to see new folks step up and throw their hat into the ring for positions of leadership within the group.

I guess I have made a few resolutions after all.

I Remain Your Humble and Obedient Servant.....Captain Dusty Lind



Article not submitted due to the Lieutenant's undercover activity behind enemy lines. Perhaps he will be safely home in time to write for us next time. God speed Lieutenant!



First Sergeant Says So

Once again we greet a new year and in a few short days our annual muster will be here and the Texas Rifles will take the field for a series of events commemorating the valor of our ancestors.

These words are as true today as they would have been had they been written for our first muster 30 years ago. This thirtieth anniversary of the Texas Rifles marks another milestone in our existence as an organization. Very few living history organizations last as long as has the Texas Rifles. Most units have a ten to fifteen year run and they are done. The reason is very simple. Few living history organizations can last longer than the interest of their founders.

We have many members with experience in living history that precedes the Texas Rifles, and those members gave us an organization a sense of purpose and perspective that makes us one of those few organizations that has been able to carry on and maintain a legacy to pass on to the members who came to the Texas Rifles over the past 30 years.

Quite simply, the legacy of the Texas Rifles is that we want to do it right. Doing it right is more than the correct appearance of clothing and physical artifacts. It is the research to discover previously unknown evidence and sources of information. It is the willingness to not only create an impression of past appearance, but also the understanding of how people of the past thought and acted the way they did.

While we were initially only a Confederate based impression, that has expanded over time.

We have refined the Confederate impression to Army of the Tennessee, while also portraying Trans – Mississippi troops, and also on occasion the Texas Brigade of the Army of Northern Virginia. Additionally we have added a generic US impression of the period and expanded our horizons to the Texas Revolution, and ancillary events such as War of 1812 militia, and there is also interest in the War with Mexico. In these endeavors, we can partner with other organizations with which we share a common interest.

With a limited field of interest it is easier to “do it right” This is now the challenge we face for the future. This is the challenge we face in our future. Are we prepared to put the same effort into our impressions as we did when we started and had that desire to take a Confederate impression and “do it right”. The temptation is always there to think that while our impression is not as good as it could be, that it is good enough. Those are the organizations that have over time, failed to distinguish themselves. Only those living history organization that have that sense of commitment to being the best there is in the hobby have the longevity to bring in generations of living historians.

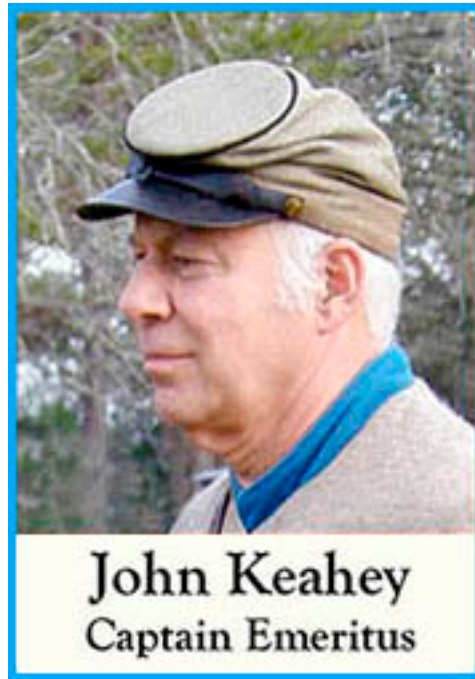
Let us have that degree of commitment, so that thirty years from now, a future First Sergeant of the Texas Rifles will write such a column, expressing his appreciation for those who went before him, determined to “do it right!” .

Tommy Attaway,
1st SGT



Our Civilians, a wonderful group of people with great works and a fine impression!

- The editor



PRODUCT REVIEW:

C. & D. Jarnagin's "Enfield" Accoutrements

For those of you who actually read my Tyrant's Foe articles, you may recall that I recently authored one on the weapons and equipment imported from England into the Northern and Southern states during the War. In particular, that article mentioned the accoutrements imported for the use of Confederate troops. This article deals with the "Enfield" pattern accoutrements for the use of infantry soldiers as reproduced by a renowned maker of Civil War era reproductions, C. and D. Jarnagin of Corinth, Mississippi.

I wanted to see what the Enfield accoutrements were like being an owner/operator of an Enfield three band musket. I have generally recommended Jarnagin leather goods as well and accurately made equipment. Jarnagin advertises their Enfield gear as being accurate to the stitch, so it seemed a good choice. I had seen Pakistani equipment made in the Enfield style both in person and in online catalogs. Even in pictures it looked wrong, and so I spent several times more money with C. & D. This article concerns the result.

Purchased was the infantry .577 Cartridge Box, Bayonet Frog, Waist Belt, Ball Bag and a CS style linen sling for the cartridge box. The order (and my money) went out in October and the goods were delivered just before Christmas. So, with the decline in history interest and reenacting, another decline is being able to purchase good stuff off the shelf. Many retailers I deal with simply do not carry much inventory anymore.

The cartridge box was well made with an excellent tin liner. The Paki stuff tends to be made of inferior leather whose tanning chemicals tend to pre-rust the already thin tin liners. Score 1 for Jarnagin. The outer flap was rough-out waxed leather and the closing tab was white rough-out buff leather as in the originals. The closing tab was blind stitched to the outer flap meaning the stitching is not visible on the outside. The box seems small by American standards, yet it was intended to hold 50 rounds on one level, not 40 in two tiers as in US and CS made boxes. I will have to make-up some .577 cartridges and see if they will all fit. One of Jarnagin's employees is a giant of a man with herculean strength. I know this because I could not re-latch the white buff closing tab after initially tugging it off the box finial. The hole had been punch too short of the finial position with the flap closed. I had to re-punch another hole in order to latch the box at all. Score -1 to Jarnagin. The leather was very dry, but shaped-up nicely after oiling and saddle soap. Jarnagin strongly recommends Crown Soap for leather (and will happily sell you some). They also recommend wetting the leather before cleaning and oiling it, as per a 1916 military manual. I am not ready to do that yet and still rely on saddle soap and neetsfoot oil applied directly to dry leather.

In spite of being a custom order and providing Jarnagin with my measurements, the linen cartridge box sling I received was sized to fit an obese gorilla. I had to cut-off nine inches of linen to get a proper fit. Many collectors report that original Enfield Cartridge boxes with known CS usage had their leather slings replaced by CS authorities with linen ones. The South re-purposed that very long strip of leather for harness or other more important items. Remember, Enfield style boxes cannot be carried on a waistbelt; they lack the vertical loops. They must have a shoulder sling.

The Bayonet Frog was made from heavy smooth-out black dyed leather. It is almost a duplicate for a 1750's era British frog; some things REALLY do not change in the British Army. The frog has the correct hole and slit for the brass bayonet scabbard finial. The frogs with the small horizontal belt and buckle are intended for the sword bayonet scabbards, not the angular bayonet scabbards used with the three band musket bayonets.

The Waist belt was made of rough-out black waxed leather. Surprisingly, the length adjustment buckle was stitched onto its strap, which means that the belt cannot be disassembled for cleaning, or for putting on or removing the bayonet frog.

I also ordered a Ball Bag. This item in the British service hung from the waist belt where an American would put his cap box. Caps in the British Regular Army were carried in a cap box on the cartridge box sling. British Volunteer Units (militia) often carried their caps in a small pocket stitched inside the Ball Bag. My ball bag proved to be of the Volunteer design with a cap pouch and tool loop stitched inside. The ball bag is of rough-out black waxed leather and surprisingly has no internal divisions to prevent the ten paper cartridges it was expected to hold from being bounced around and potentially damaged. Very few ball bags

were used in CS service and many were cut-up and recycled into more conventional American style cap boxes.

All in all, the C. and D. Jarnagin made British style accoutrements are authentic and well made. However, given their expense I would have expected them to not have some of the nuisance level flaws that the average reenactor might have difficulty fixing.

Jmk, 12/27/16



From the Editor

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the making of this edition of the Tyrants' Foe Newsletter. Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is tentatively scheduled for April 2, 2017.



To Tyrants Never Yield