



The Tyrants' Foe



Volume XXXVIII

Newsletter of the Texas Rifles
Celebrating 31 Years of Excellence

April 2018



At our muster this year, I was once again accorded the honor of being the Captain of the Texas Rifles. We are now a good way into our modest schedule for the year. This gives us the opportunity to improve our impressions and prepare for future events. We can also work on giving members experience in new roles in as low stress environment. In my view one of the strengths of this organization is the culture of not keeping people in the same roles for an extended period of time that prevents new members from having the opportunity to take on more responsibility as they gain experience.

The 155th Anniversary of Port Hudson is now behind us. The weather was excellent, with a group of participants representing the 4th Wisconsin falling in with the RRB. We combined with the 1st TX, and others in the RRB to form a 28 man company of western Federals. As always, the State Park was very accommodating and wholly supportive of what we do. We have been invited to return to the park as a company, at any time we wish for the rest of the year.

Our next scheduled event as a unit is Spring Creek Park in Tomball on May 20th. This will be a one day event similar to Jesse Jones, with the extra benefit of a promise of one pound of powder for every two participants we provide. This will help stretch our budget and provide powder for the events later in the year. We will combine forces with the 13th US, and possibly the 1st TX as a fair sized Federal company.

As we take it easy this year in terms of long distance travel to events, we should consider how we are doing as an organization and what we want to be in the future. While re-enacting has been a core activity, there may be other activities that also align with our

goals as an organization. This might take the form of closer working relationships with certain historic sites, and education programs.

The Texas Rifles – keeping history alive.
Capt. T. Attaway



I would first like to express my sincere appreciation for the confidence shown by the membership of the Texas Rifles in electing me to serve on the executive board and as Lieutenant. I shall endeavor to live up to that confidence. I will continue to serve as Adjutant of the Red River Battalion, but will fall in as company Lieutenant when required at events. Based on the previous few years and the numbers we have attending events, I don't foresee many conflicts.

In regards to events, this will be a slow year for Civil War reenacting, with Port Hudson likely being the big event for the year. Thanks to all those that were able to attend. I unfortunately had to miss the event due to health (I think I had the flu), but it looked like a good event from the posted pictures. We will have to think a little outside the box this year for events. We are planning on doing Fort McKavett September 22-23 and that should be a great event. For those that haven't gone in the past, it's a great site and we get to bring the place alive for a post-war frontier event.

In addition to TMD, Liendo and McKavett, we should try to have some other get-togethers at least in our regions. We've done movies, sporting events and live fire shoots in the Houston area in the past and they have always been fun. These day trips are a great way to get together during the dog days of summer. Additionally, as we've discussed, we are going to need to branch out into other timelines like Tex-Rev to maintain group interest and to have additional events to attend. As with recruiting, everyone should hold some responsibility in finding interesting events we can attend as a group. If you come across

something that might be interesting, post it to the Yahoo group, Facebook or the Newsletter.

We few, we happy few, we band of Brothers (& Sisters).

Your Servant,
Lieutenant Don L. Tucker
Texas Rifles



Notes on the Texas Rifles Confederate Impressions

As we have added a Texas Revolution impression to our activities, it is appropriate to review what items our members need for various impression we portray and our other activities based on current research and material availability.

In many ways, an authentic Confederate impression is the most problematic. Unlike the US system, it was impossible for the Confederacy to approach anything like uniformity for its soldiers. Therefore there can't be an accurate "generic" Confederate impression, but time and place portrayed dictate what is correct. However, it is possible to create a good impression without obtaining an infinite amount of uniforms and gear.

The most distinctive item of the impression will be the uniform jacket. As our primary Confederate impression is the Army of Tennessee, this determines what jacket members should obtain as first priority. What is referred to as the "Columbus Depot" jacket, a light brown gray jeans cloth jacket with blue collar and cuffs, is known to be in use from late 1862 until probably the end of the war. For an impression prior to late 1862, some type of "commutation" jacket would be appropriate, meaning locally made from materials obtained locally where the unit was raised. The depot system is functioning by mid 1862, but the materials for construction were initially obtained locally, English gray cloth starting to arrive

in quantity by late 1862 makes this the dominant material used by Richmond and Houston (possibly other east coast depots) until the end of the war. Thus, if you do an ANV impression, a gray RDII is advisable, or the 7 button gray Houston Depot of Texas and Red River wear.

The next most distinctive item in the impression is the weapon carried. The closest item to could be anywhere at anytime, would be the 1842, 1855, or 1861 Springfield. However, the production totals make this an unusual circumstance if not in Federal service. As Enfields are used by both sides, this makes a good choice for 1863 to end of the war impressions, combined with a backup arm being an 1816 in flint for Tex Rev or percussion for early war and AoT use.

Other item can be more generic. Confederate issue trousers will tend to be jean cloth of various shades. Recent years have revealed massive quantities of English gear shipped to the Confederacy, so items of English manufacture are a good choice for completing the Confederate kit.

Capt. T. Attaway



OLD CLEANING METHODS WITH NEW MATERIALS

At the Jesse Jones Event it never actually rained, but the humidity levels were very high. Just the kind of conditions which, when mixed with black powder fouling, produce a corrosive combination with the capacity to turn your valued muzzleloader into a prime habitat for iron-oxide accumulation (rust). I could not clean my M1861 Springfield and

bayonet until Monday afternoon and cringed mentally at the thought of what I might find when I removed my weapon from its gun case. Turns out, it wasn't bad at all. The reason my cleaning job wasn't overwhelming was synthetic whale oil.

Our ancestors in times past enjoyed an advantage we no longer have in maintaining iron based metals in a corrosive environment; whale oil. Whale products were a major ingredient of 19th century life. It provided light, lubricants, stiffeners for clothing and preservatives for iron products. This resulted in a slaughter of any whale within reach of a harpoon, particularly Sperm Whales. Remember having to read "Moby Dick" in high school? Whale oil has the ability to penetrate metal on the microscopic level and seal it off from water or other corrosives. So the men involved in the American Civil War had an easier time of maintaining their weapons and keeping them nice and shiny. With the exception of a few muskets and most rifles, most US military weapons were issued "armory bright", which meant polished bare iron and steel. These weapons were kept bright by the use of abrasives. Look at many Civil War photographs and notice that the musket barrels are brightly reflecting sunlight into the camera lens even on campaign. Many colonels who wanted to adhere to army regulations had their men remove the bluing from such weapons as the P1853 Enfield in order to make them nice and shiny. According to the M1863 Springfield Ordnance Manual, the bright parts were to be kept bright by rubbing with oil and "flour of emery cloth." I suspect that your wife, girlfriend or mother owns one or more emery boards; these are flat pointed stiff little thin cardboards with the same shape and function as a nail file; shaping and smoothing the fingernails. Flour of emery was a finer grit, presumably stuck to a cloth. Combined with whale oil, flour of emery cloth would have produced a shine that lasted.

Whale products have been made illegal in the United States in an effort to protect the few remaining whales in the oceans of the world. Countries like Japan still slaughter them. So, to clean your 19th century musket in the approved style you will have to break Federal law (not a difficult concept for a Confederate), or use synthetic whale oil. Synthetic whale oil can be purchased from Dixie Gun Works online. Probably not as good as the original, but it works. Flour of emery cloth maybe out there somewhere as well, but 1000 or 1200 grit wet or dry sandpaper makes a good substitute. My stuff is 3M brand and is available in a hardware store. Steel wool also makes a good polishing abrasive in the #00 Fine grade. To clean metal in the old way with new materials, fold your sand paper sheet twice into quadrants and tear one piece off along the fold lines. Fold it four times again and coat the surface with oil rendered from the blubber of a recently slaughtered synthetic whale. You can also wrap the sandpaper around a soft object, like small sponge or rolled piece of cloth, to more closely follow the contours of the curved surfaces you will be cleaning. Rubbing the surface will remove rust, seal the pores of the metal, polish it and help prevent future moisture damage by penetrating the metal's surface. I would do this with the metal parts dismounted from the stock to prevent damage to the wood. Don't try this method on a blued or browned surface unless your intention is to remove that finish. With a blued/browned weapon simply apply the synthetic whale oil with cloth. Your sandpaper and hands will become blackened from contact with dirt, dirty oil, and sandpaper grit. That

is all part of the fun. Replace the sandpaper piece frequently or you are rubbing dirt into your metal parts. **WARNING!** Do not approach mothers, girlfriends, boyfriends, pets, wives, children or valued furniture with your hands black and oily. Your attentions will not be tolerated or welcome (some people simply have no sense of humor). Of course, some jerk is going to go and wear protective gloves to keep his/her hands clean, but such dilettantes should be shunned. I follow-up 1000 grit sandpaper with #00 steel wool for a nice polish. Wipe-off excess oil with a clean cloth and you are done. This process is for exterior parts only and unless a really wet event has occurred, is a once-a-year-take-the-gun-apart process. A cleaned musket bore can be wiped with conventional cloth cleaning patches saturated in synthetic whale oil. You Enfield owners can still use this method on unblued parts such as the bayonet and ramrod.

Old methods proven by time and war, with new materials

Jmk, 2/13/2018



THE CASE FOR THE MODEL 1816 US MUSKET

The Model 1816 (M1816) US flintlock smoothbore musket was an improvement over previous US musket patterns such as the M1812. The designation "M1816" indicates the year in which the weapon was approved for manufacture. **The M1816 was the first shoulder arm produced for any country with interchangeable parts.** Not all the parts on any M1816 would interchange with every other M1816; only the muskets made by any one contract manufacturer or US arsenal would do so. Interchangeable parts was the gift of US inventor Eli Whitney. Our military had to wait until the US M1842 musket for total interchangeable parts for any gun from any source. Like all previous US muskets. It was made in .69 caliber and like all previous US muskets it was copied from a French design, principally the French M1777. Production of the M1816 began in the year 1817 and continued until 1844. **Over 1 million were made.** It was a standard issue infantry weapon in the Seminole Indian Wars, Mexican War and the beginning of the Civil War. It was supplied by the crate full to the Texians from US sources, both legal and covert, during the Texas Revolution. When the Republic of Texas purchased muskets from US contractors for its defense, one of the weapons purchased were Texas marked M1816 muskets. While originally manufactured in flintlock, many were converted to percussion using four different methods. In 1841 (after the Texas Revolution) all flintlock weapons in US arsenals were inspected for suitability for conversion to the newer and more reliable percussion ignition system. Any musket made before the M1816 for sold-off because the parts did not interchange. That still left 600,000 M1816 muskets in store considered suitable for conversion. This huge task was still going on in 1861. Many southern regiments received the M1816 in the original flintlock form and many more got percussion conversion

weapons, such as the 1st Texas Infantry. After 1865 the remaining M1816's were disposed of by the US Government and sold as a cheap substitute for a shotgun.

What makes the M1816 attractive to us as reenactors? It is the one US issue infantry weapon in common use both during the Texas Revolution, Mexican War and the Civil War. If you want one musket that does these periods, this is the gun for you. Good reproductions are made by Pedersoli. Providentially, Pedersoli makes both M1816 flintlock and percussion conversion guns. **The difference between a flintlock and a percussion conversion M1816 is three (3) external parts; a percussion hammer, brass pan insert, and the drum/nipple assembly.** That is it. The internal lock parts, stock and barrel are the same. For Tex Rev carry the musket in its flintlock form. For Civil War remove the flint hammer (one screw), remove the frizzen (one screw), remove the pan (one screw), remove the vent plug (it is a flat screw with a hole in it), and remove the frizzen spring (one screw). We are talking a total of five (5) screws here. Put on the percussion hammer (one screw), the pan insert (one screw), screw in the drum/nipple and you are done. Purist like me would have a Civil War pattern sling and fill in the open frizzen and frizzen spring holes with headless screws cut to length.

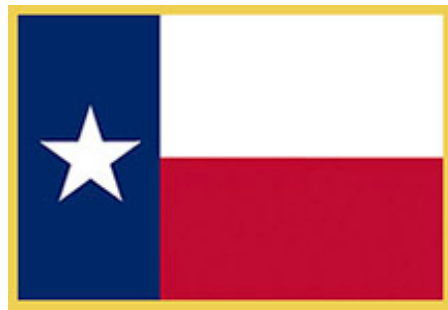
I searched the internet this morning and both the Flintlock and percussion versions of the M1816 are for sale. Price is \$1,495.00 without any accessories such as sling, cleaning tools or bayonet. This is frankly more money than a M1861 Springfield or P1853 Enfield, but neither of those weapons can be authentically used in a Texas Revolution context. So, now you are talking owning two muzzle loaders at approximately \$1,000 each should you wish to participate in both periods. Suddenly the logic of buying a more expensive M1816 as a first gun becomes apparent. If you go this route, I recommend buying the flintlock version; there are fewer additional parts to acquire.

Accessories for a M1816 would include a .69 caliber worm, period screw driver, spring vice, tompion, sling(s) and bayonet. An 1830's sling for the M1816 would be of white buff leather. The post 1839 version is russet leather. The reproduction bayonet cost \$150, while some original bayonets cost only \$100. Go figure. Pedersoli was ahead of the game on this concept and I failed to find the Pedersoli-made drum/nipple, pan insert or percussion hammer for sale separately. He will sell you a complete percussion lock for \$220.00; that means you only need the drum/nipple set. Drum/nipple sets and pan inserts are for sale by other sources as are original percussion conversion hammers, flintlock hammers, frizzens, pans, screws and springs. You just need to make sure you get the right style as the four different types of conversion each used a different shape of hammer. Pedersoli went with the Colt style conversion.

Jmk, 2/27/2018



Thanks to everyone who contributed to the making of this edition of the Tyrants' Foe Newsletter. Without you it would be nothing. Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is tentatively scheduled for, July 1, 2018.



To Tyrants Never Yield

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location	Rating	Impression
May 20	Spring Creek	Tomball, TX	Company	US
September 22/23	Ft. McKavett	Ft. McKavett, TX	MAX	US
October 20	Texian Market Days	Richmond, TX	Company	Tex Rev
November 17/18	Plantation Liendo	Hempstead, TX	MAX	US
January 19, 2019	Annual Muster	Winedale, TX	MAX	CS