



# The Tyrants' Foe

Volume XLII

Newsletter of the Texas Rifles  
Celebrating 32 Years of Excellence

April 2019



On the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, the Texas Rifles returned to the Winedale Historical Center for our annual muster. The center that holds many pleasant memories for many of our members failed to meet our expectations, and we are pursuing the possibility of holding muster at the George Ranch historical center in 2020. Therefore, Winedale will now be a part of Texas Rifles lore, consigned to the past.

At the meeting, the members voted to retain the 2018 officers in their positions for 2019. Thus, I again express my appreciation for the expression of support as I endeavor to perform this task to the satisfaction of the members. This year we established a more active schedule than we had last year, and the website has been updated to reflect this year's schedule.

As of the publication date of this edition of the newsletter, we will have participated in Jesse Jones, Washington on the Brazos and Goliad. At Jesse Jones, we once again put on a skirmish with our friends of the 13<sup>th</sup> US Infantry. Washington on the Brazos afforded the opportunity to practice Texas Revolution impressions. At Goliad, we had members attending as Mexican infantry and a New Orleans Gray. Although Goliad is in my view, the best of the Texas Revolution events, the structure of the event make sit obvious that we would benefit from having us function as a group, rather than as individuals in other units. At Goliad, it was reported to us that the San Jacinto event had been canceled.

Our next events are Ft. Blakely and Spring Creek as Federal. We are also requested to support the 13<sup>th</sup> US at the VA Cemetery in Houston for Memorial Day, also as Federal.

Some members will be attending Raymond instead of Spring Creek as Confederates in a living history event. This will bring us to the next issue of the newsletter and Ft. McKavett.

I will post the event schedule for muster shortly. I will use the opportunity of having an area oriented to meetings to bring back some of the activities we used to do such as presentations on various topics related to the time periods we portray. I hope this will be of interest to the members and help make attendance at the muster enjoyable.

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



Now would be a good time as a group to give consideration to what we see as the future of the Texas Rifles. Most of us are getting long in the tooth (or at least I am) and we have some members who can no longer do strenuous (i.e. hard core) events that we liked to attend over a decade ago. The rigor of each event needs to be discussed in more detail at the annual meeting (or during the year) to allow members and the group to gauge whether an event is appropriate as a "Max Effort", especially if numerous members would be excluded due to physical ability. I've found this to be a shortcoming in my promoting of the Fort Blakely event as a Max Effort without considering the fact that it is a hard-core 24-hour immersion. We still have members that enjoy these events (including me) and are capable of participating. I in no way want to limit participation in immersion events, but in hindsight, Fort Blakely type events should be "by individual" and not "Max Effort" so that TR members don't feel excluded from the event.

We also need to consider our direction as a group. I personally would like to see us put more of an emphasis on the Civil War, but I also understand that CW events for the most part have become repetitive and somewhat boring, except for the occasional Fort Blakely, Shenandoah or Fort McKavett. The biggest problem with these interesting

events is not necessarily member interest, but distance, cost and again, individual ability. I don't want to discourage other time period events, such as Tex-Rev; I just don't like seeing other types of group supported events conflicting with CW events of interest. Please keep in mind, I am for emphasizing interesting/novel CW events. Missing a small local event is not an issue. As a disclaimer, these are just my personal opinions and in no way reflect the opinions of the executive board or other TR members.

On to a more fun discussion. Captain Attaway is working with Cody Mobly on the Texas Rifles hosted post Civil War McKavett event on August 31-September 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. While the site is a long drive for those in Houston and Dallas/Ft. Worth, this has previously been a great event and except for possible high temperatures, is a good event for all our members. I've no doubt that there will be interesting scenarios and vignettes to enjoy and also the opportunity to help Cody improve the site. We (including me) as a group need to get in touch with our friends in other Civil War groups to talk up the event and see if we can't get a good turnout to bring the fort alive.

The next big Red River Battalion event, after Blakely will be the Shenandoah event in Virginia October 5-6<sup>th</sup>. This is a long distance to travel, but it should definitely be worth it. The event is being put on by the same people that brought us New Market Heights and On to Richmond. Both events were very well planned, included defensive works, had many interesting aspects and were a great deal of fun. These are the kind of events that you remember that we don't get to attend very often. These are also the events that can rekindle our interest in the hobby. As a bonus, we get to go as Confederate and serve in a historical Texas unit, which is always fun. If you haven't already registered, give careful consideration to going and submit the registration ASAP. Don't let any of the uniform and equipment guidelines deter you from registering. We can possibly loan gear, but no one from the RRB will be turned away with a descent Confederate impression, even if it's not within the event guidelines.

As a final thought, in addition to our local cartridge rolls (which we need to have in preparation for the fall events), we need to have more get-togethers as a group just to have fun. A number of us in the Houston area went to see the WW1 documentary "They Shall Not Grow Old" recently and had a great time. Boz also hosted his annual Christmas party. Getting together for another movie or barbeque and beer is always fun. This is also just my opinion, but I always enjoy getting together with the Texas Rifles, at or away from events.

Your Servant,  
Lt. Don L. Tucker  
Texas Rifles





Texas Rifles! Fall in!

As your First Sergeant you men are aware that I am required to instill discipline and mete out punishment in order to keep miscreants and laggards such as you men in order. Therefore I have made a list of offenses and the men who committed them. As you know I have been called a martinet. I am pleased to inform you that is true. Listen for your name, your offense, and the punishment you are to receive.

1. Private Ramirez: Has been reported to have been absent from camp without leave in order to imbibe intoxicating liquors and has been seen on numerous occasions to have been in a condition not resembling sobriety. Punishment for said infraction is that Private Ramirez shall be placed on the Black List and is to police the camp as well as digging and fitting new company sinks . Said punishment shall commence at reveille on the morrow.
2. Private Strzelecki: Has been reported to have accompanied Private Ramirez in unauthorized departures from camp and is therefore absent without leave. Punishment: Private Strzelecki is to report to the cavalry regiment attached to this command and to the Corporal of the Guard upon his arrival. The Private is then to bury a dead horse now festering in that camp. Upon completion of that task, the Private is to clean up around the picket rope where the horses are tied. He is then to return to this infantry regiment at the double-quick step and retire to the guard tent until reveille on the morrow.
3. Private Marek has been reported for drunkenness prior to reporting for picket duty. Such behavior is a disgrace to the regiment but that fact seems to have no effect on his behavior. Perhaps the punishment to follow will have a salutary effect.  
Punishment: Private Marek is to be bucked and gagged. This punishment will require that Private Marek be seated on the ground with his knees pulled up. A

stick will be placed underneath his knees and his hands and arms placed beneath the ends of the stick. His wrists will be tied together and the rope attached to his ankles. There will also be a stick placed across his mouth and tied behind his head. Private Marek is to remain in this position from reveille tomorrow until the noon hour.

4. Private Capps has been reported to have failed to salute a superior officer. Such a breach of military decorum will not be tolerated in this regiment. Punishment: Private Capps will undergo a knapsack drill. The Private is to fill his knapsack with stones and/or bricks and will walk a beat with a guardsman for two hours on and two hours off from reveille until taps tomorrow.

5. Private Bosworth has been reported to have engaged in turbulence after taps and sitting on guard duty. The following punishment will allow of no sitting. Punishment: Private Bosworth shall take a barrel, knock out both heads of the barrel, and then stand on the ends of the staves from reveille tomorrow until 12:00 postmeridian tomorrow.

6. Private Trowbridge has been reported to have been insubordinate to the company commander in that he addressed said commander insolently. Punishment: Private Trowbridge shall be lashed to a wooden horse which he is to construct and to make eight feet high. This shall be carried on from reveille until 10:00 ante meridian.

7. Private Lind has been reported to leave his beat without permission. Punishment: Private Lind shall be tied up by his thumbs from reveille on the morrow until 12:00 postmeridian.

8. Private Hall, sometimes flippantly referred to as "The Crow," has appeared before a court martial and been found guilty of desertion. Such a breach of military discipline cannot be countenanced.

Punishment: Death by shooting. Said punishment is to be carried out in the following manner:

The entire division is to be ordered out to witness the execution. The troops will be drawn up around three sides of a rectangle in two double ranks, the outer facing inward and the inner facing outward. Private Hall will then be marched between these ranks throughout the entire extent. The order of this procession will be led by the provost marshal, mounted, to be followed by the company band which will play Pleyel's Hymn. Then will follow twelve armed men who will deploy diagonally across the open end of the space after the procession completes its round. This will prevent any escape attempt by said Private Hall. These armed men are to be followed by four men who will bear the coffin, followed by the prisoner, a chaplain, and a single guard on each side. Next, a shooting detachment of twelve armed men. Eleven of these will have a musket loaded with ball, while



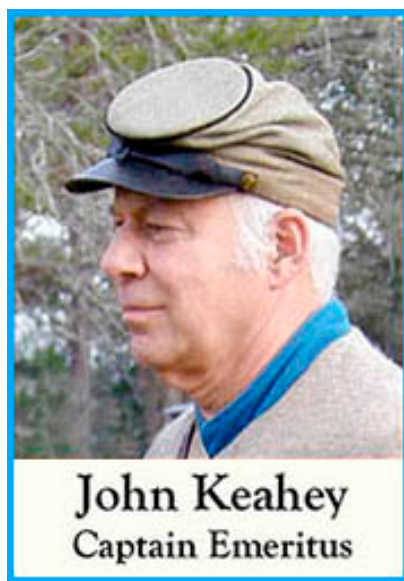
the twelfth will have a blank cartridge in his musket. These muskets will be loaded beforehand by an officer and mixed up afterwards so that no one will know who has possession of the blank cartridge. After these men will march an additional shooting force of six to act in case the twelve should fail in the execution of their duty. The prisoner will then be seated on the end of his coffin, which will be placed in the center of the open end of the rectangle near his grave. The chaplain will then say a prayer. The provost marshal will then advance, bind the prisoner's eyes with a handkerchief, and read the general order for the execution. He will then give the signal for the shooting party to execute their orders.

Requiem in Pace.

Postscript:

Many thanks to John Billings, a Union soldier who served with the Army of the Potomac and authored the book "Hard Tack and Coffee: a soldiers life in the Civil War," in which he provided eyewitness accounts of the various punishments Described.

Editor's Note: Frenchy, your punishment" shall be without mercy. Part of your suffering will be the continuous forced listening to of speeches from a certain young N.Y. politician until your mind turns to mush. CAW! You will never catch me! I'm sending a large Murder of Crows to get you. Frenchy, keep watching the sky!



**TEXAS REVOLUTION**  
**MEXICAN ARMY IMPRESSION**

The Mexican Army in the mid 1830's had just gone through another re-organization and new uniforms specified. Infantry regiments were simplified into single battalion units and named after prominent heroes of the revolution against Spain. Formerly the regiments had been numbered and some had multiple battalions. Even though fielded by a country with financial problems and an unstable central government, the Mexican Army was kept current with European military fashion and tactics. Large purchases were made from the British of Napoleonic vintage arms and accoutrements, and equally large quantities of uniforms were purchased from France in 1832 and 1834. These items were in use at the time of the Texas Revolution. Mexican infantry regiments consisted of eight companies; six companies of line infantry, one cazadores (light infantry) and one of grenadiers. The cazadores and grenadiers were considered to be elite and had more ornamented uniforms and received preferred treatment, such as priority in getting shoes.

A basic Mexican line infantry kit would consist of the following items:

- 1) Brown Bess, French, Spanish or M1795 US musket and bayonet, Brown Bess preferred
- 2) British "60 Round" Cartridge Box with white leather sling and brass regimental breastplate. French or US M1808 cartridge boxes acceptable
- 3) Cleaning tools to match weapon
- 4) Whisk and Pick, hung from the breast plate
- 5) Bayonet Carriage of white buff with bayonet scabbard
- 6) Shirt, three button style made of white cotton
- 7) Trouser, summer issue white cotton narrow fall with angular side pockets
- 8) Sash of red wool or cotton- this served as a belt to hold-up the trouser
- 9) Footwear- brogan type military shoes or period style sandals
- 10) Summer Fatigue Jacket of white cotton canvas with red standing collar and round cuffs
- 11) Dark blue wool Fatigue Cap with yellow tape trim signifying a line infantryman
- 12) Neck Stock made of black leather tied in the back
- 13) Haversack- made of cotton canvas with simple button closure
- 14) Wood drum Canteen with white leather sling, or gourd on a leather thong or cord.

#### **NICE TO HAVE STUFF**

- 15) Shako with white canvas cover, cords, cockade, brass chin scales, brass shako plate
- 16) Knapsack of hair-on cowhide with white leather straps
- 17) Dark blue burlap blanket with yellow tape trim
- 18) Winter uniform coatee of dark blue wool, either 1832 or 1834 pattern, embroidered on the collar with the initials of the regimental name
- 19) Winter trouser of sky blue wool with narrow fall and red cord on the outer seam.

#### **CROSS-OVER ITEMS WITH TEXIAN IMPRESSION**

Musket, bayonet, accoutrements set, whisk and pick, cleaning tools, canteen/gourd, haversack, shirt and footwear could all be used for a Texian impression.

Jmk, 2/8/2019



# WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

## The Jacket

We all wear jackets, period or modern. The term “jackette” is French and originally meant a small tunic. After 1821 the United States Army issued jackets to its enlisted men for fatigue wear, thus reserving the “uniform coat” for dress occasions. Jackets were much more comfortable in a fashion age of tight sleeves and tight body fit. They also protected the more expensive uniform coat from wear. Civilian workmen wore a garment named a “roundabout;” which had no standing collar. Jackets continued to be an item of issue in our army until 1855, when they were replaced by the Sack Coat with which we are all familiar. Most Confederates and many Federals wore jackets during the Civil War, particularly Federals from New York State. But where did jackets come from?

Jackets are descended from sleeved vests, or as vests were known in the 1700’s “waistcoats”, or sometimes “weskit”. Troops organized and paid for by the central government began in the English speaking world around 1660. Prior to that, monarchs generally had no soldiers in their employment beyond their own personal bodyguards. Any collection of troops larger than the king’s personal guard was composed of the soldiers in the service of nobility such as dukes, knights and barons. Each of these armed groups would have been assembled by their lord, carried his flag and owed their allegiance to him; not directly to the king. Frequently regiments were known by the name of the person who recruited, uniformed and equipped them. This old tradition was echoed in the Confederate Army centuries later with Confederate companies, regiments, brigades, divisions, corps and armies identified by the name of their commanders. For example, within Lee’s Army at Gettysburg was Longstreet’s Corps which included Hood’s Division and Robertson’s Texas Brigade. In the United States Army this tradition lapsed and the Meredith’s Iron Brigade was more correctly known as the First Brigade of the First Division of the First Corps.

With the return of Charles II to the throne of England after the failed experiment of rule by a Parliament (backed by the military), Charles reorganized the small English Army into several regiments paid by and loyal to him (smart man; his father ran out of loyal troops and had been beheaded for his mistakes). This was the beginning of the Lifeguards Regiments which still guard the British monarch today. A uniform was established, made of madder red dyed wool, and the “British Redcoat” was born. Still most British Army regiments were recruited by a wealthy lord and titled with his name. The government paid this gentleman money to uniform, equip and arm his regiment.



Within loose guidelines how this money was spent was up to the proprietor. A certain amount of graft, cheap clothing and poor quality weapons was expected as regiments still existed to make the rich owner richer and the enlisted men were peasants who deserved little. This is one reason why the King's Musket (Brown Bess) was first issued in 1715. Some regimental owners had armed their men with muskets so cheap that they would not shoot. So the British government developed its own design and required regimental owners to issue it only.

Military uniforms followed civilian fashion trends with about a ten to fifteen year lag time. By 1685 men's clothing consisted of shoes, stockings held-up by garters, knee breeches, full-cut shirt, neck cloth, waistcoat and a huge, straight cut coat; similar to a Civil War greatcoat without collar or cape. The coats came from the one-size-fits-all school of military tailoring. Cheap heavy coarse wool coats were lined with even cheaper wool. Coats were cut full and long and hung to the wearer's knees. Some clever chap noticed that if the coat lining was made of a different color than the coat (possibly a color from the colonel-in-chief's heraldic coat of arms), a pleasing color contrast resulted when the always too long sleeves were folded back up the arm. Thus regimental facings and cuffs were invented. The coat was the overcoat, raincoat and uniform coat all rolled into one. To better perceive this situation, imagine reenacting in any weather wearing your greatcoat over your normal uniform. Since the coat was heavy and uncomfortable to wear when marching, drilling, digging, sleeping, eating, lolling about, or guarding something (in short, any time except winter); beneath the coat was an equally long waistcoat made of equally heavy, scratchy, cheap wool. At this time waistcoats were sleeved and the sleeves fit inside the very wide coat sleeves when both were worn. Waistcoats had exterior pockets near the waistline, and when not on duty soldiers wore them as opposed to the heavy coat. Being thus visible, waistcoats were, like the coats, often decorated. For professional soldiers, the back pieces of this year's waistcoat were made from the fabric of last year's uniform coat. For campaigning in North America many British regiments cut their coats to waist length. French regiments in North America in the 1750's campaigned in the summer wearing the waistcoat and knee breeches.

By the time of the American Revolution, the waistcoat had shrunk in length and was rarely sleeved. Light Infantry soldiers' waistcoats did not extend below the waist, but still had the pockets. Sailors, like light infantry, needed freedom of movement. What evolved from these needs was a sleeved waistcoat, waist length with pockets. Thus the military jacket was born. Several American regiments in the Revolution were uniformed in jackets as a cheap substitute for a more expensive uniform coat. One unit's jackets were made of lavender colored cotton! Happily, that color usage never took hold. A formal Fatigue Jacket of off-white wool was issued to British soldiers after 1803. Winfield Scott's heroic brigade was issued grey wool jackets during the War of 1812 (hence the grey uniform of the West Point cadets), and Fatigue Jackets became an item of issue in US Army in 1821. That is where the jacket came from.

## Federal Sack Coat

Up until the time when weaponry had advanced so much that a battlefield became unsafe for the INDIVIDUAL soldier, what soldiers wore could be distinctive, colorful and decorative. This sea change came about during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, which of course puts the American Civil War squarely into the period of epochal change. Consider what evolutions took place within one human lifetime: the standard infantry weapon went from being a short range, inaccurate, flintlock smoothbore muzzle-loading musket to a breech-loaded rifle using self-contained brass cartridge ammunition. Repeating rifles were common. Conventional infantry soldiers could intentionally target and hit an individual soldier with rifle bullet at 400+ yards. Reloading time for his rifle was not 90 seconds, it was 10 seconds or less. Formerly on a battlefield a soldier stood shoulder-to-shoulder two or three rows deep in the Line of Battle. He could be hit by a big, round, smoothbore bullet, but rarely was he struck by an enemy intentionally singling him out as a target. Soldiers were trained to point their musket at the enemy's Line of Battle and fire all at once. Unless it was a breezy day, smoke covered the battlefield and even seeing your enemy was difficult. Artillery suffered under similar handicaps. Muzzle loaded patched-ball rifles made life precarious for officers and gunners, but the loading times were so long between shots that these weapons were only used in limited numbers.

Captain Claude Mine changed all that with his invention of the Minie Ball in 1841, which became the standard American Civil War projectile. Now a muzzle-loading rifle could be loaded and fired in the same amount of time as a smoothbore musket. Now higher value targets such as officers (well some officers) could be shot down intentionally (sometimes even by the enemy). Artillerymen (or the horses which pulled the guns) could be shot down from beyond canister range. Uniforms for soldiers began to evolve away from civilian fashion and bright colors to clothing less visible. Officers gave up wearing distinctive uniform items such as metallic epaulettes, sashes and swords. They consciously began to dress more like enlisted men to reduce their casualty rate. Shoulder boards replaced epaulettes, sashes were not worn and coats were made to more closely resemble the enlisted men's coats. Even the sword, the very symbol of being an officer and gentleman, was sometimes left behind in combat. Units that remained colorful, such as Zouaves in particular and the French Army in general, did so as a sign of bravado.

In civilian fashion around 1840 European men began to wear a loose fitting garment for less formal occasions. It was referred to as a "paletot" (French, of course). It was a very different coat from the frock coat or tailcoat of the period in that it was designed to be loose and full rather than fitted. It had no waist seam, no skirt and the coat body was

made in one piece. By 1851 this loose garment was being referred to as “sac” (French again), or as a “sack coat” in English. In 1857 this fashionable civilian garment was adopted for fatigue wear by the US Army for its mounted men. By the next year it was the fatigue coat for all enlisted men. The sack coat replaced the jacket as the fatigue coat in the US Army. It was totally un-military in appearance; it had no fit, no shoulder straps and no decoration. It was about as democratic a garment as could be found in western civilization armies at that time. Being loose it was comfortable to work in, being made of lighter fabrics in three body pieces with a one piece lining it was quick and cheap to make, and having originated in France it was fashionable. The French military never adopted it because it was so shapeless. In 1861 a sack coat cost the US Army \$2.10 to make. A Frock Coat cost \$6.56. Supposedly an enlisted man got both garments, but you can see why the dollar conscious US Army preferred the sack coat to be worn. A secondary consideration was being of a dark color and undecorated, the sack coat made the soldier less conspicuous.

Officers very quickly picked-up on the relative comfort of the sack coat, not to mention that when worn with sky blue kersey trouser an officer became difficult to single-out as a target from an enlisted man at a distance. Sack coats were not regulation wear for an officer on duty; an officer was supposed to wear a frock coat and dark blue trouser. But since officers purchase their uniforms outside of strict government control, privately purchased sack coats became very common among officers. The sack coat nicely complimented the need to be less visible.

On April 9, 1865 General Robert E. Lee (not realizing that he was politically incorrect because his wife owned slaves) surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant (who was the last officer in the US Army to free his wife’s slaves) at Appomattox, Virginia. Lee was in full dress uniform of grey frock coat, sash, polished boots and ornate sword. Grant was in a sack coat, no sash, no sword and his boots and trouser were muddy. I have observed personally both of these historic garments from less than 18 inches away. Many authors claim that Grant (the victorious man of the people and who, in his person and dress, represented the future) wore an enlisted man’s sack coat. They are wrong! The garment I saw was a custom made, officer quality garment with a black velvet collar. Non regulation, but I bet that nobody mentioned that to four star General of the Army Grant.

Jmk, 9/1/201



## Crow's News Photographs

Needless to say the superior, in depth knowledge of John Keahey, has always amazed us. The source of John's knowledge recently came to light and is revealed in this exclusive photograph.



On another topic, I received these photographs of John Keahey from Frenchy Davis. It depicts John, seen in Roman military attire, giving a presentation on what I assume is the historical development of whaling from Roman times to the present. Strange that the museum's time table, seen in the background, begins in 1700. Good thing John is correcting that fallacy. I'm told that he actually gave a presentation of "Life in Ancient Rome" at the Houston Maritime Museum on 2/23/2019. Really, how naive would I be to believe that? He is at the Maritime Museum, holding a harpoon in front of a whaling exhibit. I rest my case. You be the judge. Oh, I heard it was an outstanding presentation.

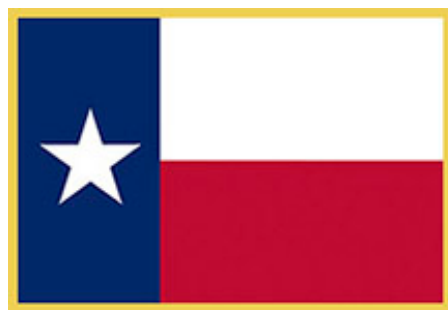
The Crow







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 scheduled for June 30, 2019.



**To Tyrants Never Yield**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Events for 2019**

Date	Event	Location	Rating	Impression
April 6/7	Ft. Blakeley	Mobile, AL	MAX	US
April 13	San Jacinto	Houston, TX	Individual	TX Rev
May 18	Spring Creek	Tomball, TX	Company	US
May 18/19	Raymond	Raymond, MS	Individual	CS
August 31/1	Ft. McKavett	Ft. McKavett, TX	MAX	US
October 5/6	Shenendoah	Richmond, VA	MAX	CS
October 26	Texian Market Days	Richmond, TX	Tentative	US
November 23/24	Plantation Liendo	Hempstead, TX	MAX	US

**Events for 2020**

Date	Event	Location	Rating	Impression
January 18	Annual Muster	TBD	MAX	CS