



The Tyrants' Foe



Volume XLVIII

Newsletter of the Texas Rifles
Celebrating 33 Years of Excellence

November 2020



Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you all know, very little has been happening in the hobby and most of what has happened is not encouraging. It continues to be a trying and stressful year, with reenacting almost non-existent since the Covid19 restrictions began in March.

Item 1: We continue to try attending events and unfortunately, almost all of them have been canceled by the sponsors/hosts; this includes our unit planned Fort McKavett event in September. It was with great regret that the Executive Board decided that discretion was the better part of valor and canceled the event. This was not an easy or desired decision, but deemed necessary due to the conditions we would have encountered trying to have a garrison style event in period buildings and with the planned living history.

There have also been two separate events planned and subsequently canceled for the weekend of December 5-6th. The original event, Prairie Grove in Arkansas, was canceled by Arkansas State Parks due to Covid19. Following that cancellation, The Red River Battalion attempted to organize a campout/drill event for the same weekend. Due to Covid19 and liability concerns, that event was also canceled.

The Executive Board is hoping the 3rd time is the charm and has begun arranging with Monte Parks and Katrina Yordy to have a small unit hosted event at Jesse Jones Park, December 5-6th. The event would be for Saturday, December 5th and include camp set-up (if not completed Friday night), distanced Manual of Arms, skirmish drill, distanced interacting with the public, and possibly a small skirmish if numbers permit. Camping is

allowed both Friday and Saturday night. Alternatively, for those that do not want to camp, arrival Saturday morning is permitted. Anyone wanting to arrive & camp on Friday needs to let me know and provide their approximate time of arrival. The park closes at 6pm, but Monte has been nice enough to offer to let us arrive later. However, Monte & Katrina NEED to know arrival times to insure someone is there to open the gate and we don't want to make them stay too late.

Please note that while this is being hosted by our unit, it is considered an individual event for all members. Anyone that would like to attend is welcome, but the decision not to attend due to concerns about COVID is completely understood and respected. You will be missed, but life and health always come before a hobby, even one we love as much as reenacting. Our friends in the Red River Battalion and the Texas Brigade will also be invited to the event in the hopes of increasing numbers and allowing us to see our reenacting pals.

We have contacted Katrina to determine the current site restrictions for Jesse Jones Park. This includes any Covid19 restrictions for volunteers on site (masking, distancing, etc.) as well as volunteer interactions with the public. Any restrictions or guidelines received will be immediately provided to the group. We will also set our own unit restrictions for the event. These restrictions can be modified or added to as members see fit, but at a minimum, I suggest the following should be adhered to for all attending:

- 1) Distanced camp set-up with only one individual to a tent (unless they are a family). Tents and ground clothes will be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- 2) No communal cooking or sharing of food. Cooking over the same fire will be allowed.
- 3) No sharing of liquids, i.e. canteens, cups or bottles.
- 4) Conscious effort should be made to maintain 6 ft. social distancing unless required by circumstances (i.e. weapon inspections, cooking, etc.).
- 5) Group question: should we have everyone attending sign a simple release holding the unit and the site harmless for any issues that occur due to attending the event? Any thoughts on this would be appreciated, especially from our unit lawyers.

Item 2: It has been brought to my attention that some members of the Texas Rifles are concerned with the use of the unofficial unit designation "The Texas Rifles/13th US United Company". Admittedly, I have been using this nomenclature in my communications with the group without Executive Board or unit authorization as a courtesy to the 13th US to acknowledge their historical identity.

I have reviewed the actions taken at the Texas Rifles 2020 Muster/Annual Meeting with the Executive Board and Howard Rose of the 13th US. At the meeting, The Texas Rifles voted to have our Federal impression officially changed to the 13th US Infantry. No name change was addressed as this would require a change to The Texas Rifles bylaws and could also impact business matters like our unit checking account. During the meeting some members of the 13th US officially joined the Texas Rifles (i.e. paid dues).

However, this was not a merger in the technical sense at that time. The 13th US continued as a separate entity until February at the Jesse Jones Park event. There, the members of the 13th US voted to officially unite with the Texas Rifles and cease operating independently as the 13th US. This was with the understanding that the Texas Rifles would keep the traditions of the 13th US alive as our Federal impression and more importantly, that both units would continue their proud, unbroken histories.

The members of the Executive Board feel the name I have been utilizing (The Texas Rifles/13th US United Company) is appropriate. To not acknowledge the history of the 13th in our communications within the group and with other reenacting groups (i.e. not legal entities) would be an unacceptable slight. However, as Lt. Attaway pointed out, with the 2020 reenacting woes, we may be one of the strongest units left in Texas. Because of our reputations (The Texas Rifles and 13th US), we may be able to pick up members from other units. With that in mind, we cannot consider adding additional identities to our unit designation. Doing this would quickly create an unwieldy and ridiculous name. With all of this in mind, the official (i.e. legal) name of our unit will remain "The Texas Rifles" for the business reasons outlined above, but communication within our unit and between other reenacting groups will be "The Texas Rifles/13th US United Company". Many thanks to the Executive Board and Howard Rose for assisting with this clarification.

Finally, I again hope that everyone is staying safe and doing well. I greatly miss being in the field and spending time with my pards. At this time, it is unclear what the future of Civil War reenacting will look like, but it appears more & more that the future of the hobby is in our hands. When the Covid19 situation improves, we need to get together for small drills, live fires or movie nights.

Your Servant,
Capt. Don L. Tucker
The Texas Rifles/13th U.S. Combined Company





2020 will be the year that wasn't for the living history hobby. Event cancelations and restriction on personal interaction have essentially shut us down for most of the year.

Normally, we would have an exciting series of events on the horizon with the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. It was the Bicentennial of this event that helped to propel living history into a popular hobby and greatly improved the hobby with research and a commitment to more accurately portray events of the past. The same techniques were then applied to other time periods, and portrayals greatly improved in quality.

To some extent we are subject to the vicissitudes of the current political climate which finds certain events to be beyond the ability of part of the public to contemplate. How horrible was that past? Apparently, so horrible we can't even talk about it, lest people think wrong things. In this sense the Revolution used to be one of the key events in our country, fundamentally making it what it is that was a popular topic for study. How the 250th anniversary events are commemorated and celebrated, will tell us much about our future for the living history movement, and our country.

Testing is almost complete on the dedicated internet circuit, so I expect to have our internet presence back online shortly. Along with that will be a self managed mail list that will be accessible via <http://mail.ta2t.org/mailman/> which will allow you manage how you want to interact with the mail list. That web interface will let you subscribe and quit, and also specify how you want messages delivered to you from each individually, to one bulk message This will be our replacement for the Yahoo Groups which will be deactivated in mid December.

The Texas Rifles
Keeping History Alive
Lt. Tommy Attaway



Tommy Attaway

Gear Review Army Issue Bootees

Recently, a set of pre war issue Bootees arrived from Robert Serio. These are made with the sewn welt, generally discontinued during the war in favor of the pegged sole. Let's have a look at the pair:



Additionally, we see lacing running through the tongue in order to keep a gap from forming after hard wear that creates a gap where the front and back are joined. Here is the side profile:



We can contrast this with a well worn Serio contract type shoe (well it was new in 1985):



The pegs expand when wet and then shrink when dry – this presents a major problem when fording – and would be the reason for soldiers to remove shoes and socks before fording streams.

For this reason, I had these shoes resoled and new pegs set in about 15 years ago.

More on the Richmond Clothing Bureau

As the piece good system of clothing the Army was pioneered by the Schuylkill Arsenal in the early 1800s, the same system was adopted by the Confederacy in 1861 as it became obvious that the commutation system was an unworkable long term solution. Thus, clothing depots were established through the Confederacy, for the purpose of clothing and equipping Confederates. The operations were limited to local production until quantities of goods came through the blockade from late 1862 onwards. The Richmond operation is a classic study in the challenges faced in supplying the largest body of Confederate forces, the Army of Northern Virginia.

1860 data reveals there were 153 woolen mills in the South, 45 of them in Virginia. Texas, Tennessee, and Georgia, accounted for much of the remainder. All of the mills cumulatively produced about 1 million yards in the year before the war. The two largest mills, James River and Crenshaw were in the Richmond area. This allowed the Richmond operation to get into operation with a local supply of woollens in short order. The Richmond Clothing Bureau started contracting with local producers in June of 1861. Records indicate that purchases were of materials available, not production specifically for military purposes. An October 17, 1861 newspaper article indicates that Crenshaw is now engaged in the manufacture of cloth for the Army. Thus, we can conclude that by the end of 1861, uniforms are being produced from locally sourced cloth. We would then speculate that by the end of March 1862, as the first uniforms reach their projected replacement dates, this production is being issued to the troops and would match our earliest known documented RDII type jackets. However, by June of 1862, wool is reported to be scarce, as there was difficulty in transporting raw wool from Texas to Virginia.

By April of 1863, steps are being taken to deal with the supply disruptions, such as the government buying wool directly, and then supplying the wool to the mill to meet the government contract. Then disaster struck that May when the Crenshaw mill burned down. This meant the loss of some 2000 yards of cloth per week of production. Richmond reported that they were producing between 3000 and 4000 garments per day. At this point the Bureau reported some 28,000 "suits" on hand and some 50,000 undergarments. The 1863 campaigns would quickly use up the supplies on hand. The first small shipments of English Army cloth had arrived in December of 1861. Further purchases were made in 1862. Four weeks after the loss of the Crenshaw mill, a blockade runner delivered over 56,000 yards of cloth from England (just over 30,000 yards of gray for jackets and just over 26,000 yards of blue for trousers). By 1864, the amount of cloth received from England would exceed domestic sources. For the last 18 months of the war, an average of 80,000 yards per month of cloth arrived from England. Given the strength of the ANV, the Richmond Bureau was clearly able to meet the needs of the ANV. Again, the quantities of gray English cloth imported were sufficient to produce all the jackets made by the Richmond Bureau from the fourth quarter of 1863 onward. This would explain why the vast majority of the ANV jackets we have are made of this cloth.



Union Shelling of (Port) Lavaca

The cannonballs smashed into houses, sending bits of broken boards and roof shingles everywhere while the Union guns continued to boom from the water .

The Civil War had been raging for more than a year when two federal ships steamed into sight just off the coast of Port Lavaca on October 31, 1862.

The town was known as Lavaca then, a small port town two days sail from Galveston that might have been left entirely unprotected if it were not a hub for shipping cotton, the export that fueled the entire Confederate economy.

The U.S. Navy had started a blockade of Southern ports in 1861, but it was not until October 1862 that federal ships began to reach the Texas coast. Federal troops had already captured Galveston and then moved into Matagorda Bay to attempt to take Lavaca as well.

Robert Rhodes, XO (that's executive officer for you landlubbers not lucky enough to have served in the Navy) of the U.S. steamer Clifton, wrote what they saw as they moved through the waters of the bay in a letter reprinted in the New York Daily Tribune: "It is a beautiful bay, and it is full of oysters, and very nice ones at that." Rhodes allowed his men to go oystering and sent a contingent of men ashore on a small boat to bring in some beef. They had just sailed from Indianola, then a bustling port town whose populace promptly surrendered to the federal force. The Clifton later closed with and took a schooner loaded with 18 bales of cotton. When the Clifton anchored in the waters off Lavaca, an officer went ashore under a flag of truce and demanded the town

surrender within an hour and a half.

The town was defended by Captain Daniel Shea's company of Texas Light Artillery, a small outfit which had been decimated by yellow fever. Shea, flanked by four residents of the town, met the Union officer as he came ashore to deliver his surrender demand. Shea replied he would defend the town to the best of his ability and by whatever means he had, according to a report filed by Lieutenant George Conklin of the Confederate Army. Shea requested that he be given time to evacuate townspeople still in the grip of yellow fever and was granted an hour and a half.

When the time expired, the Union ships commenced firing. There were still women and children lingering in the town as the cannonballs began to wreak devastation on homes and shops, Shea's men, many still weakened by the yellow fever, returned fire and the battle lasted until nightfall. While the artillerymen labored to defend the town, women served them coffee, bread and meat according to Lieutenant Conklin.

The Union sailors could not see any Confederate soldiers on the battlements, but could see a Confederate flag and watched it hopefully, anticipating that it would be lowered in surrender as the two sides exchanged fire and structures in the town were being reduced to rubble. The following day however, Union shelling was resumed as Rhodes recorded that the Confederate flag was defiantly flying but there was little he could do as his ammunition was exhausted. Unable to continue the fight, the Union ships weighed anchor and steamed away, ending the battle. The town was heavily damaged but the only casualty reported was the death of a St. Bernard dog according to one newspaper account.

Rhodes, the Union XO of the Clifton, later became the commanding officer of the ship until his death at the Battle of Sabine Pass on September 8, 1863. Union troops had captured Galveston, but it was recaptured soon after the Battle of Lavaca, the only major Confederate port reclaimed during the war. Repelling the Union Navy kept Lavaca out of Union hands until 1863.

Postscript:

As an aside, the statue of Dick Dowling, the Irish born commander of Confederate troops at Sabine Pass, is still standing in Hermann Park in Houston. That's as miraculous as Dowling fending off the Union gunboats those many years ago.

Best regards,
First Sergeant Frenchy



From the Home Front



It is uncontested that the American Civil War was a conflict over public opinion(s) of the North and South. However, regardless of what region you hail from, when it comes to Thanksgiving dinner there is still one battle of the Civil War that goes on in celebration every year come the third week of November. And do take note that I mention “week” with the reference that most battles of the Civil War were fought over the span of several days... This Battle of Thanksgiving comes in the name of “Stuffing” vs. “Dressing”.

According to Merriam Webster’s 10th Edition College Dictionary, Stuffing is dry seasoned breaded mixture stuffed inside the cavity of poultry. Likewise, Dressing is a wet seasoned mixture of sorts cooked in a pan with the intention of being poured over a main dish or entrée. Historians agree that although the tradition of Thanksgiving began with the Puritans in the early 17th century, it wasn’t until Lincoln’s making it a national holiday that this great debate took place at American’s dinner table. The battle lines of this epic debate coincide with where it is fought in terms of the gathering family’s roots. Now, whether it is because of a region’s climate or taste preferences, no one can deny that Thanksgiving just wouldn’t be the same without either of these staples of the Thanksgiving feast!

When looking at Thanksgiving from a regional aspect we find that those states in New England due to custom as well as more than likely climate during late November, where more inept to hosting turkey stuffing. This was probably due to the cooking styles of the region or perhaps that with the upcoming snow(s) that frequent the New England states, the last thing they would want is a “wet” seasoned mix to savor. Whereas on the contrary in the more southern states such as that of the Carolinas and the gulf coast to Texas, not only was it more likely to find a pig in a 19th century smokehouse but also just as likely to find some sort of pan-creamed gravy made ready for a piece of cornbread. Cornbread and a gravy.... Might have something here! Well, whistle me back to

Virginia, seems that the rumor is true that Southerners prefer a smothered dish rich in some sort of gravy or, wait for it.... Dressing!

So long story short there's a lot that may be said about you if based alone by the Thanksgiving table. So give it some thought next time you sit at the table and ask for someone to pass the turkey or dressing!

Maw-Maw's Cornbread Dressing Recipe

Ingredients

- 1½ sticks unsalted butter and one for the pan
- 1 pound yesterday's bread, torn into bite size pieces
- 2 chopped yellow onions
- 3 stalks diced up celery
- chopped flat-leaf parsley (about ½ cup)
- 2 good spoons chopped fresh sage (good spoon = tablespoon)
- 1 good spoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 good spoon chopped fresh thyme
- 2 baby spoons kosher salt (baby spoon = teaspoon)
- 1 baby spoon freshly ground black pepper
- Pint & jigger of chicken broth (Pint & jigger = 2 ½ cups)
- 2 eggs

Prep

1. Heat oven to 250°F. Butter a baking dish and set aside. Scatter bread in a single layer in an uncovered cast iron skillet. Bake, stirring occasionally, until dried out, about 1 hour. Cool then move to a big bowl.
2. Meanwhile, melt big jigger of butter in a large skillet over heat; add onions and celery. Stir often until just beginning to brown, about 10 minutes. Put into bowl with bread; stir in herbs, salt, and pepper. Drizzle in ½ pint broth and toss gently. Let cool.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Whisk ½ pint or so of broth and eggs in a small bowl. Add to bread mixture; mix until mixed. Move to prepared dish, cover with lid, and bake about 40 minutes.

Aunt Danni's Turkey Stuffing

Ingredients

- 13-15 cups dry bread cubes* (We like to use a heavier bread so it soaks up more juice)
- 1 cup chopped celery

- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 1/2 cups butter
- 2 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 tablespoons poultry seasoning
- 2 large eggs

Prep

1. In a frying pan, saute the onion and celery in the butter for 10-12 minutes, or until the onion and celery are tender.
2. Place the bread cubes in a large bowl. Pour the butter, onion and celery mixture over the breadcrumbs and mix. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well.
3. Season cavity of turkey with salt, black and cayenne pepper. Stuff turkey with mix and using twine tie legs together to secure the cavity.
4. In a preheated oven, cook turkey as instructed.

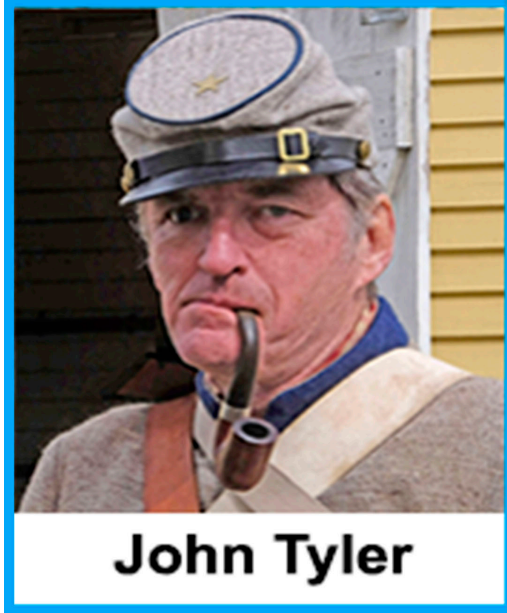
Trisha Akers,
Civilian Coordinator



FOR SALE TWO SEATER outhouse

In good condition, well maintained and free of Black Widow spiders under the seat. Contact CROW Enterprises via telegraph. Best offer accepted, however, the more cases of Irish whiskey offered the better your chance of owning this two seat masterpiece! Note, people in photograph used for advertisement purposes only and do not come with the outhouse.





John Tyler

A LETTER FROM 1863

I recently rediscovered an 1863 letter I had purchased many years ago at a paper antique shop in Austin. With my wife Susan's genealogy expertise, we were able to provide more dimension to the person of Cyrus G. Drew from the village of Strafford, New Hampshire.

On August 12, 1862, Cyrus enlisted as a private in Co. B, 13th New Hampshire Volunteer Regiment. He was 27 years old. In four months, he would fight in the Battle of Fredericksburg with his regiment attacking Marye's Heights having horrendous losses. The letter places him now in regimental headquarters as a mounted member.

He mustered out on June 21, 1865, in Richmond, Virginia and returned to Strafford where he resumed his trade in shoe making. According to the 1880 Federal Census, Cyrus was married to Mary Susan Hartford and they had a son, Sydney M. Drew, born in 1868. By 1900, Cyrus would be a farmer and live until 1914.

The letter was addressed to Abram and Susan Clark, neighbors of his parents. His friend, Alonzo Nute, also survived the war and was elected to Congress in 1889.

It is my intention to donate the letter either to the local county library or historical society in Strafford.

“Head Quarters 13th” Regt. N. H. Vols
Camp near Falmouth opposite Fredericksburg Va - Jan.21.1863-

Friends Abram & Sarah,

Having a few leisure moments this evening thought I would devote a few of them in trying to write you a few lines thinking you would like to hear from me - I am well as usual with the exception of a little cold which cannot be helped here in a Soldiers life - We have had very pleasant weather thus far untill within a few day past when it commenced to rain and when it rains here it makes a business of it I can tell you - the mud is about knee deep here now - when it is fair weather and dry it is quite a pleasant place in Virginia or at least might have been before the war - We are now encamped on the side of a hill about one mile from the City of Fredericksburg - when we came here it was about as pleasant a place as it would be down to the “Gulf of Mexico” woods - but now we have cleared the growth all off and now we have to go about one mile after our wood to burn - The 21st Connecticut Regt. lays on the same side hill that we do and but a few rods distant - just in front of us is a little brook and rising from the other side of the brook is another side hill and on that is encamped the 4th R. I. Regt so we have plenty of neighbors such as they are - but for myself I would prefer good old Strafford - within one mile in circumference from us there is no doubt twenty five thousand men- and as far as the eye can see is nothing but camps.

I see Alonzo Nute quite often - his regt. lays but a few rods from ours. Joe Simpson is in his regiment. He has been to see me a number of times - thinks he had rather work for the Doctor's folks - as you are a military character I will give you our position as we are Brigaded now - when we first came here and untill after the Battle we were in “Hawkins” Brigade with the “Hawkins Zouaves” but now we are the 1st Regt. in the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Division, 9th Army Corp and Sumner's Grand Division - wish you could be here a few days and look us over- I think it would interest you much. Gen. Sumner is a very good looking man and so is Burnside's but I think that Gen. Sickles is the smartest looking man I have seen - We have been under marching orders for two days past but have not moved yet - think we should have left this morning if it had not rained so hard - I suppose we have got to pay the Rebs another visit over to Fredericksburg - have no great desire to pay them a second visit as they did not give us the right kind of a reception to suit me - however I suppose it will be all for the best and I hope we shall meet with better success next time - it is reported that our folks are laying the Pontoon Bridge for us to cross now - I suppose my position will not be so dangerous next time for I shall not have to take a gun now but go in the rear with a Horse - have nothing to do now but write so I get along much easier than some of the Boys that have to drill and do guard duty - I have stood the hardships much better than I expected - but I must confess it comes a little hard this style of living - the last rainy night we had before this I woke up in the night and found my feet sloshing about in the water like a fish in a pan -

You must know such as that comes a little hard to me - I could but think of old Strafford that I had left so far behind - we have not had a particle of straw to lay upon since we left Camp Casey the first day of December - I go in for putting down rebellion but I must confess my patriotism is about played out - I think the most of folks will not feel half so patriotic - take them out here and give them our feed and lay on the ground for a month or two and have as hard a brush with the Rebs as we did getting the worst of it besides as they do in N. H. but we have no reason to complain to what old soldiers have - Perhaps "Frank & Kim" would like to know something about our camp here so I will give them a brief description of our little hut - Thomas Tobias and I have one tent we build up with logs about two feet high and I should think about five feet square - then we have some Shelter tents called pieces of Cloth about five feet square - "Every man has one of those" that we put on top of our logs for a roof to shed the rain off - and one piece over one end leaving the other end open - so you can judge something of our quarters - this constitutes our Parlor, Dining room & Kitchen upstairs and down cellar - should like for you to see them - The drum is beating for roll call so I shall have to close for tonight - you must excuse me for so short and I fear uninteresting letter and I will give you a longer one next time - I am in hopes to get some time to write now but thus far I have been very busy and have not had time to write to my folks - Give my regards to all - tell our folks I am well - Please write to me and write all the news - what I don't write I hope I shall be able to tell you one of these days - regards to "Frank & Kim" and the rest of your family -

Yours in haste -
Cyrus G. Drew

On the following page is a sample of the original. I was impressed by the penmanship and how straight he kept his lines. My old grade school teacher who taught me penmanship would have been very pleased by this. - The Editor



Head Quarters 13th Regt. N.A. Vols.
Camp near Palmyra opposite Fredericksburg Va. Jan. 21. 1863.

Friends Abram & Sarah

Having a few leisure moments this evening thought I would devote a few of them in trying to write you a few lines thinking you would like to hear from me. I am well as usual with the exception of a little cold which cannot be helped here in a Soldiers life - We have had very pleasant weather thus far untill within a few days past when it commenced to rain and when it rains here it makes a business of it & can tell you - the mud is about knee deep here now - when it is fair weather and dry it is quite a pleasant place in Virginia or at least might have been before the war - We are now encamped on the side of a hill about one mile from the City of Fredericksburg - when we came here it was about as pleasant a place as it would be down to the "Gulf of Mexico" woods - but now we have cleared the growth all off - and now we have to go about one mile after our wood to burn - The 21st Connecticut Regt. camp on the same side hill that we do and but a few rods distant - just in front of us is a little brook and rising from the other side of the brook is another side hill and on that is encamped the 4th R. I. Regt. so we have plenty of neighbours such as they are - but for myself I would prefer good old Stratford - within one mile in circumference from us there is no doubt twenty five thousand men - and as far as the eye can see is nothing but camps.



Joseph Akers

There are three things most Americans know President Lincoln for doing during his time as President of the United States;

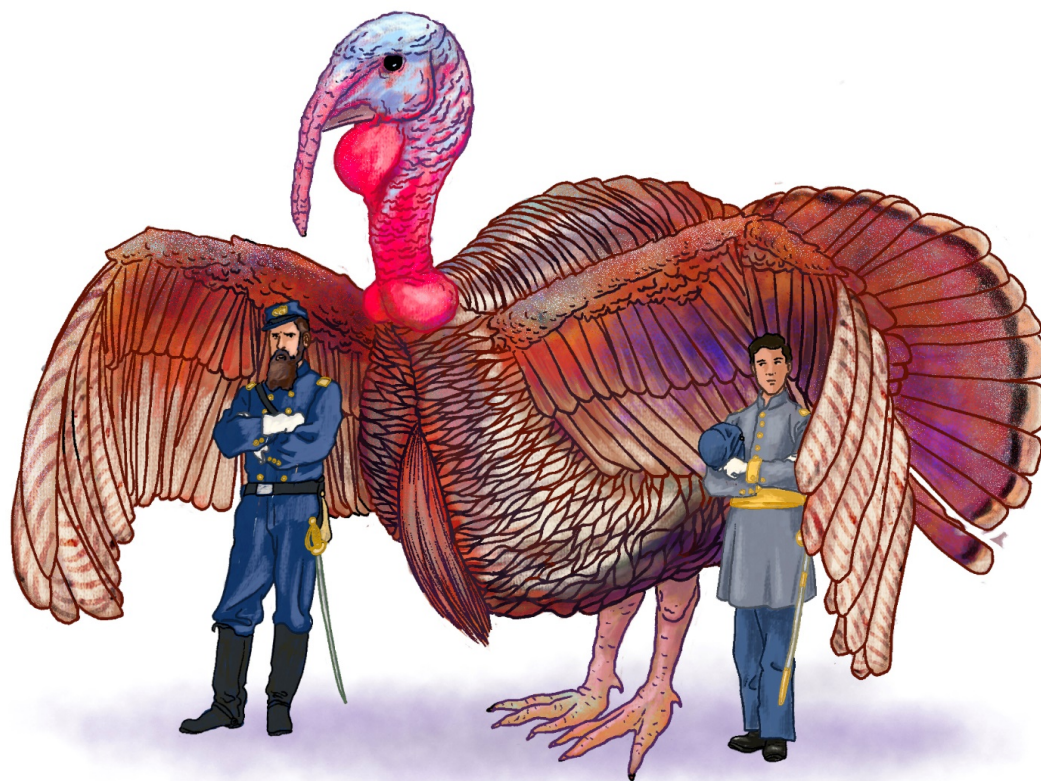
- His assassination from John Wilkes Booth
- The Gettysburg Address
- The Emancipation Proclamation
- The Thanksgiving Proclamation...

Wait, wait, wait a second... That's four? Now, before you get your drawers all in a bunch, sit yourself down and let me teach you something!

By the Fall of 1863, the American Civil War took a dramatic turn in favor of the Union led by President Lincoln and his Commanding General, "Unconditional Surrender" Ulysses S. Grant. This was due to the Union victories over Vicksburg, Mississippi which was a major blow to the Confederate war effort by cutting off the Mississippi River and split the Confederacy in half while at the same time Confederate General Robert E. Lee was all but annihilated in and around the small northern town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. This crushing defeat not only took the lives of thousands of Confederate soldiers that the Army of Northern Virginia could not afford but more importantly crushed the morale of the Confederacy to win this war. If these defeats had been more spread apart the Confederacy could recover. However, losing both the means to wage war

along with the will to fight at the same time was too much of a blow to the Confederate war effort.

Where Confederate President, Jefferson Davis and General Robert E. Lee saw an opportunity to break the will of the Union to continue the war, President Lincoln now had the momentum sway in his favor to break that of the Confederacy to wage war. Up until now the Southern States engaged in “second war for independence” with hopes of preserving what they knew as a way of life, the Union wanted to reunite all of the states under one flag and called the United States. In doing so the northern Union states had become an invader on what they deemed as their own soil whereas the southern Confederate states sought only to make their northern invaders linger until they tire of waging war and ultimately return to their home states. With the Confederate defeats of Vicksburg and Gettysburg it is here where I think begins the foundation for terms of peace that were later offered by Grant at Appomattox Courthouse in April 1865. However, there were still nearly two more years of fighting between the Union and Confederacy that had to occur before the Confederacy would finally yield the will to wage war.



In weighing out how to use these two Union victories to their full advantage and with hopes of reuniting the nation on October 3rd, 1863 President Lincoln with the

support of his Secretary of State, William Seward devised a plan to help ease the tensions of the American Civil War. Now, historical recollections of the time say that Abraham Lincoln was always one for a good comical yet moral story or anecdote... I think Lincoln would have enjoyed Aesop's fables! It's important to remember that the administration of Lincoln was to reunite the nation and not destroy it. To this end Lincoln and Seward went back to those early settlers of the continent and the historical story of first Thanksgiving. Today, this is a national holiday filled with food indulged coma and the struggle on the grid iron we all call football! Ironic are the parallels between Thanksgiving of 1863 and the way we think of Thanksgiving today;

THANKSGIVING 1863

Struggle for victory on the battlefield
Family gathering with thanks
Turkey Feast
Family & Friends separated

THANKSGIVING TODAY

Struggle for victory on the football field
Family gathering with thanks
Turkey Feast
Family & Friends separated

For Lincoln's administration the Thanksgiving Proclamation couldn't come soon enough. In Lincoln's words (taken from the last paragraph of his Thanksgiving Proclamation);

"It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American people. I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens." – Lincoln, Thanksgiving Proclamation, 3 October 1863

History records 2.7 million Americans fought in the Civil War from 1861 – 1865 and best estimates state that between 785,000 – 1,000,000 Americans died either on the battlefield or from disease during this time frame. Today, we are faced with not just a national pandemic but a global one. Yet unlike the American Civil War we have the technology to help bridge the gap between friends & family who are separated. As we reenactors, we pride ourselves on teaching history through a "living history" or impressionism model however today, may I suggest we take a moment to not only think about our hobby and the times of those who we represent, but contextualize our thoughts to be thankful for all of us! Happy Thanksgiving...



Reflections In Time

Celebrating 20 years (1987 to 2007), this photograph displays the Texas Rifles' captains over the years. The photograph was taken at a reunion in Round Rock, Texas.



It goes without saying that we need to remain strong and well trained, as we should never have to depend on the Home Guard.



Well-Trained Infantry



Home Guard

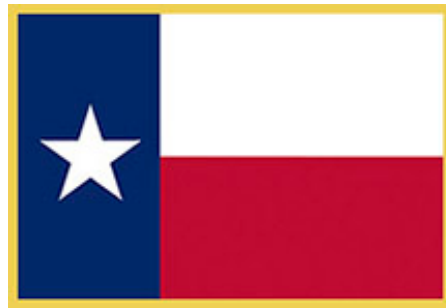
UPCOMING EVENTS

Events for 2020

Date	Event	Location	Rating	Impression
Fluid due to pandemic. Check company emails for events and updates.				

Events for 2021

Date	Event	Location	Rating	Impression
January 16	Annual Muster	George Ranch	MAX	CS



To Tyrants Never Yield!



Thanks to everyone who contributed to the making of this edition of the Tyrants' Foe Newsletter. Without you it could not exist. Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is scheduled for midnight January 3, 2021. – The Editor