



# The Tyrant's Foe

Newsletter of the Texas Rifles

Volume 55

Celebrating 36 Years of Excellence

September 2023



## Captain's Post

**This is an indication that we are now getting our newsletter back on schedule, as you should be reading this sometime early in September.**

**The weather has been brutally hot, keeping everyone inside as much as possible. If there is any good news in that, there is an opportunity to work on kit improvements for our future events. Elsewhere in the newsletter will be more detail about what has been planned for Ft. McKavett. Depending on the poll of members, this information may be held for next time – and more about that follows.**

The park staff at McKavett contacted me about us participating in an event at the fort the weekend of March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This weekend they have planned as a “soldier’s recreation” weekend. The idea is to do pay call and then watch as the soldiers try to cause inflation in the local economy after being paid. Should we decide to place this on our schedule next year, the event will be further developed.

Next item for consideration is we have been invited to Castroville for us to participate in their Pioneer Days program (1840s to 1940s) which was the time the Landmark Inn was in operation. The dates are 20 and 21 October, which makes this event a nice substitute for Texian Market Days. Hopefully, Castroville will not be too much of a drive. This will be an opportunity for living history programs, and not a “re-enactment”. I will have more information in our next newsletter about this event.

Please check if you are on the newsletter list by checking here <https://www.texasrifles.org/lists/>

Another reminder to subscribe to the listserv in order to engage in the email conversations like we used to do with the Yahoo! Group. From the email address you want to get the messages sent to, send an email to [listserv@texasrifles.org](mailto:listserv@texasrifles.org) and put the following in the body of the message:

Subscribe TXRIFLES-L your name

Your name as first and last, which is how the list matches a person to an email address.

Example –

To: [listserv@texasrifles.org](mailto:listserv@texasrifles.org)

Subject:

subscribe TXRIFLES-L Tommy Attaway

Keeping History Alive





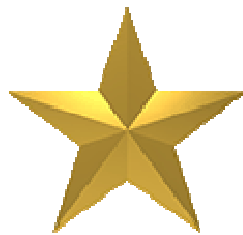
## Lieutenant's Inkwell

Why do we participate in our hobby? This is such a simple yet complicated question. The answers changed over time. When I joined the hobby in 1988, I was thirty one and not as fat 😊 All that I was interested in was burning powder and taking in the scope and flow of Civil War battles from the firing line. My first event was the 125<sup>th</sup> Gettysburg! I was never at an event that large again. Over time I have figured out that it isn't always the fighting that makes a good event. I have talked to many of you about the Prisoner on the Frontier event at Ft. McKavett. This was a very small event, but I would rate it in the top ten of my time in the hobby. Some of us are lucky to join the hobby as young men, and others of us arrive when our joints ache and we can't march 15 miles anymore. What has kept me in the hobby for all of these years boils down to a couple of things. The first is the chance to meet up with long time and newly made friends a few times a year. These are the real magic moments for me. A second reason was the realization that living history gives many more magic moments than the actual fighting on the line. Luckily I have had a quite a few over the years. I hope to continue to have more of these experiences.

However, here is the kicker. We are an aging organization. Most of us have become too old for physically challenging events. At Perryville last fall, I was unable to keep up as the line moved through the tanglefoot. I went down hard more than a few times. What really bothered me was the effect that my inability to keep up helped cause a gap in our line of battle. During the past year I have thought about my inability to keep up at Perryville. If I want to continue in the hobby, there are a few things I need to accomplish. I have to get my weight down and see if I can strengthen my body. You see I want to keep having magic moments as long as possible.

Many of us are a metaphor for the hobby. If we want to continue to have events in which to participate, we have to commit to the company. We all know our limits, and know what we can and cannot do. When events come along that allow us to sleep in buildings, and on beds... we should attend. Attendance at our events has been bad for years. It is not unusual for there to be two, three, or four at an event. Often with one, two, or three of the command staff present. So I am making the request that we look over our calendar, and talk to our families about the upcoming year. Two of our events are ceremonial, and they are worth doing. However, the more significant events, those with great living history are often poorly attended. Let's all see what we can do about getting ourselves to Ft. McKavett for Columbus Day weekend. Let's strengthen ourselves and our friendships, and make some magic moments.

Lt. Chris Strzelecki





## **1SG's Rants**

Happy Summer everyone. Hope everyone is staying as cool as possible this summer. With the (hopeful) end of summer coming up on the horizon our thoughts are turning to some vents in the fall. Our first event coming up is our garrison event at Fort McKavett with the dates of September 3 and 4th. This event is always a good time and the fort is a beautiful place to hold an event and still have some more period correct (modern) comforts. Please sound off if you'd like to attend or need any gear for the event. Tommy as usual, will have some great scenarios out together and our cookstaff will keep us well fed.

The next event is our annual Veterans Day Ceremony and Parade on November 11th in downtown Houson. More details will come out as we get closer but it's a good ceremony.

With that, I'd like to thank Jim Richardson for taking over the newsletter and many thanks to Rick Hall, aka The Crow for his many years of prime newsletter duties. Jim, looking forward to your newsletters.

Final thought, I have recently come into a large collection of civilian gear (mostly for females). I didn't want it to get thrown out and if anyone would like to take ownership I would appreciate it.

If you're not on it, please check out our Texas Rifles Facebook page.

Best regards,  
Joey Alamia 1st Sergeant



## **Recruiting Duty**

**Let's make Ft.McKavett a great event this year! We need to make a good effort to invite someone to come with us. The unit does have loaner gear. This is a really good first timer's event. This is also a good event for the ladies.**

**There are a few opportunities for recruiting assistance coming up as well.**

**Saturday, 14 October- Boonsville Days in College Station, TX- table/ camp display**

**Saturday, 21 October-Texan Frontier Days- George Ranch, Richmond, TX- Tex Rev event display**

**Saturday, 11 November- Veterans Day Parade, TBA**

**If anyone has a referral interested in the Texas Riffls, contact:**

**Jim Richardson @ 832-673-8393, Houston**



# **Ft. McKavett September 2 and 3, 2023**

## **Schedule**

### **Friday, 1 September**

**Post 3 PM arrival and setup**

### **Saturday, 2 September**

**0700 Reveille**

**0730 Mess Call**

**0830 Honors to the National Standard**

**0900 Muster for Pay**

**1200 Mess Call**

**0100 Fatigue Call**

**0500 Recall**

**0530 Retreat**

**0600 Mess Call**

**0800 Tattoo**

**1000 Taps**

### **Sunday, 3 September**

**0700 Reveille**

**0730 Mess Call**

**0830 Honors to the National Standard**

**0900 Barracks Police**

**1030 Chapel Call**

**1200 Mess Call**

**0100 March Out**

## **Building Utilization**

### **Qrts**

**Captain's Qrts for Compnay Commander**

**1 Set Lt.'s Row for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.**

**Barracks for Enlisted NCOs and Soldiers**

### **Post HQ**

**Bakery utilized as Commissary warehouse and issue point**

**School for instruction of children and illiterate soldiers, and as Chapel on Sunday**

**Post NCO Qrts as married NCO or Post Trader location**

### **Impression Guidelines**

#### **US Army 1865 Period Uniform and Equipment**

**Issue 4 button Sack Coat and sky blue trousers. Plain white issue shirt and bootees. Forage cap and braces complete the basic clothing impression**

**Individual gear to bring includes waistbelt with US buckle and bayonet scabbard, 1855 cap and cartridge box with US plate. Smoothside canteen and painted haversack. Double bag knapsack, gray issue blanket, and shelter half complete the ensemble.**

**Musket must be .58 cal. US pattern (1855, 1861, or 1863) with bayonet.**

**If you do not have any of these items, that is fine, missing items are part of the scenario for the weekend.**

**Individuals portraying officers, family members, to bring items used in the quarters environment and relating to their occupations.**

### **Post Civil War Regular Army**

**Scenario: Post Headquarters**

**Activities: Portray the daily routine in the HQ building such as receiving reports, preparing reports for department of Texas, dispatch of messages. Guardmount.**

**Participants:**



1. Officer of the Day
2. Sergeant of the Guard
3. Corporal of the Guard
4. Orderly
5. Post Commander (Optional)
6. Regimental Adjutant (Optional)
7. Regimental Sergeant Major (optional)

**Interpretive Points:**

- A. Show the role of the fort system of frontier defense for western settlement and expansion
- B. Explain the staffing of an Army installation – regiment and company assigned number of soldiers assigned, and civil establishment

**Items Required:**

1. Desk
2. Chairs
3. Paper
4. Forms
5. Writing materials

**Scenario: Officer Quarters**

**Activities :** Meal Preparation, sewing, writing letters, social interaction with other officer families

**Participants:**

1. Lady
2. Children (Optional)
3. Laundress (Optional)
4. Striker (Optional)

**Interpretive Points:**

- A. Show space allocation for families – Lieutenant has one room, Captain has two rooms in a quarters, etc.
- B. Social stratification of regular Army between ranks – officer class as ladies and gentlemen, NCOs, and the private soldiers
- C. Isolation of families from a lifestyle to which ladies married to officers were accustomed

### **Items Required:**

1. Furniture such as bed, table & chairs, table ware, clothing, trunks

### **Scenario: Raise National Standard**

**Activities :** Flag is raised to begin the day's activities

### **Participants:**

1. Corporal
2. 4 Soldiers

### **Interpretive Points:**

2. Show daily activity in an established military post
3. Time required 15 minutes

### **Scenario: Retreat Ceremony**

**Activities :** Lower the national standard at the end of the day, with company parade

### **Participants:**

1. Company Commander
2. 1st Sgt.
3. 2 Corporals
4. 14 Privates

### **Interpretive Points:**

- A. Demonstrate the end of the day activity – respect shown to the flag
- B. Time duration of less than 30 minutes

### **Items Required:**

1. Music playing “To the Color” and “Star Spangled Banner”

### **Scenario: Soldier's Mess**

## **Activities : Cooking of Rations**

### **Participants :**

- 1. Soldier designated as company cook**

### **Interpretive Points:**

- A. Show what soldiers ate**
- B. Illustrate the mess concept**

## **Scenario: Laundry**

**Activities : scrubbing, hanging, returning laundry**

### **Participants:**

- 1. Laundress**
- 2. Soldier (optional)**

### **Interpretive Points:**

- 2. Laundress authorized for 20 soldiers**
- 3. Provided official sanction for a soldier to have a wife, being officially discouraged**

### **Items Required:**

- 1. Wash tub**
- 2. soap**
- 3. Water pail**
- 4. Scrub board**
- 5. Stick**
- 6. twine**
- 7. line**
- 8. clothes pins**

## **Scenario: School**

**Activities : lessons, recitation, older ones helping younger ones**

### **Participants:**

1. Teacher
2. Any number of children

**Interpretive Points:**

4. Illustrate community aspect of a military post
5. One hour sessions interspersed by play

**Items Required**

1. Readers
2. Slates
3. Chalk
4. tables
5. chairs
6. books

**Scenario: Fatigue Detail**

**Activities: Contruuction**

**Participants :**

1. NCO (could be park personnel)
2. as many as 8 soldiers

**Interpretive Points:**

- A. Forts were built by the soldiers themselves
- B. NCO in charge of work detail does not do labor
- C. Soldiers wear jackets inside out to protect them for service

**Items Required:**

1. hand tools
2. lumber
3. nails
4. whitewash
5. brushes

**Scenario: Forage Party**

**Activities: Gather Firewood**

**Participants :**

1. Corporal
2. as many as 4 soldiers

**Interpretive Points:**

- D. Firewood was source of heat for warmth, cooking, and washing
- E. NCO in charge of work detail does not do labor
- F. Soldiers wear jackets inside out to protect them for service

**Items Required:**

6. axes
7. chopping block

**Scenario: Company Tailor**

**Activities: Repair and alteration of uniforms**

**Participants:**

1. Private as tailor
2. soldiers as customers (optional)

**Interpretive Points:**

- A. Uniforms were a source of pride for NCOs
- B. Uniforms were patched consistently for longest possible use on campaign
- C. Soldiers provided much of their labor and talent for the necessities of life
- D. Tailor used his skill to trade for services (excused from other duties)
- E. NCOs had their uniforms custom fit for best appearance

**Items Required:**

1. Uniforms in need of repair
2. needle & thread
3. Scissors
4. pins
5. chalk

**Scenario: Baseball**

## **Activities: Sunday afternoon entertainment**

### **Participants:**

- 1. 18 players**
- 2. Spectators**

### **Interpretive Points:**

- A. Sunday was the only non work day on post**
- B. Demonstrate popular recreation**
- C. Similarity between baseball of the 1860s to today's game**

### **Items Required:**

- 1. Bat**
- 2. Baseballs**
- 3. Bases (sack with dirt)**

## **Scenario: Croquet**

### **Activities: Game played in "officer's country"**

### **Participants:**

- 1. Up to 6 ladies and gentlemen or children**
- 2. Spectators**

### **Interpretive Points:**

- A. Show class differences**
- B. Ladies did not engage in many "strenuous activities"**
- C. Family recreation**

### **Items Required:**

- 1. Croquet Set**
- 2. Rule book**

## **Scenario: Saturday Social**

### **Activities: NCO social to which selected post personnel are invited**

**Participants:**

1. All NCOs
2. Post Commander
3. Selected Officers
4. Privates as serving personnel (officially)

**Interpretive Points:**

- A. Learn social customs such as dance steps
- B. Illustrate the social aspects of post life

**Items Required:**

1. Recorded music
2. Dance guide (instruction)
3. Area
4. Lighting

**Scenario : Post Trader**

**Activity : Outlet for non government issued items**

**Participants:**

1. Trader
2. Customers (any number)

**Interpretive Points:**

- A. Method to obtain items needed by soldiers and families not provided by Army
- B. Only official source for alcohol
- C. Relationship between Trader and post commander very important factor
- D. Only source of credit for soldiers

**Items Required:**

1. Can goods
2. Dry goods
3. Beverages
4. Barrels
5. Tin ware
6. Glass ware

## **7. Ready made clothing**

**Scenario: Music**

**Activities: Play musical instruments and sing**

**Participants:**

- 1. Musicians**
- 2. Audience**

**Interpretive points:**

- A. Self made music as an integral part of lifestyle**
- B. Period popular music**

**Items Required:**

- 1. Instruments**
- 2. Sheet music**

**Scenario: Games of Chance**

**Activities: Card and Dice games at sutlers**

**Participants:**

- 1. Soldiers**
- 2. Civil Card Shark (optional)**

**Interpretive Points**

- A. Common activity for soldier was gambling and card play**
- B. Gambling taking place in barracks was subject to punishment  
“maintaining gaming tables”**
- C. Soldiers were frequently in debt due to low pay and forms of  
entertainment enjoyed**

**Items Required:**

- 1. Card decks**
- 2. Dice**
- 3. Various games**



4. Certain beverages
5. Sutler area

**Scenario: Pay Call**

**Activities: Monthly Pay for enlisted men**

**Participants:**

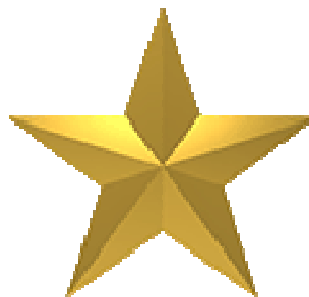
1. Pay officer
2. 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant
3. NCOs
4. Privates

**Interpretive Points:**

- A. Illustrate pay scale for soldiers
- B. Show effects of various deductions for trader, uniform overdraw, laundress
- C. Show “purchasing power” of 1860s economy

**Items Required:**

1. Pay book for the company
2. Accounts for trader at risk of trader and laundress
3. Currency



Lets shoot for a September 30th deadline for the next newsletters articles so we can get one published for October 01th and get back on a quarterly schedule.

Please email me at [joseph.a.alamia@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.a.alamia@gmail.com) with any and all articles. I'd love to start a book review/recommendation section if someone would like to contribute (preferably Civil War or Texas Revolution related).

Joey

