
The UNION STANDARD

August 2009

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The Newsletter of the 1st United States Infantry, The Regulars

From the Desk:

Members of the 1st US,

I hope this correspondence finds you well. It has been a long summer, though to me it has blown by. It is hard to believe the kids will be back in school in just a few weeks. With fall around the corner, even though it is still hot, it time to start thinking about the wool again. Our next time we will have this opportunity is the Reenactment at Fort Washita, September 25th – 27th. I am sure we will be hearing details very soon on this event.

Before Washita, we will gather is for our yearly Social. Blair and Candy Rudy have graciously offered to open up their house and host. The date is August 29th, with a start time of 6:00pm. The evening is BYOB. Bring your favorite pot-luck dish, appetizer or dessert to share. The dress is Texas summer party casual...no wool is required. If you have not RSVP'd yet, please do so very soon.

brsuv1@verizon.net

With fall approaching and more regular events scheduled I hope (hope is the key word) to start regularly sending out the Newsletter.

YMOS,

Beck R. Martin

1st U.S. Calendar

2009

August

August 29th -1st US Social (6:00pm Blair Rudy's House)

September

26th – 27th **Fort Washita Reenactment**

October

TBD

November

7th – 8th **Battle of Myer's Landing, McKinney, TX**

December

12th (TBD) **Dallas Heritage Village Candlelight Drill**

*Note: **Bold** are scheduled maximum effort events. Italicized dates are available events or recruiting activities.**See website for full event calendar***

Leather Care: NOT!

By Blair Rudy

I recently had the misfortune to have a new item of accoutrement fail due to my misunderstanding of how to care for it and me a Sergeant to boot! My recently acquired replacement early war cap box from C&D Jarnagin separated from my belt at the onset of the Prairie Grove, AR event last month. How embarrassing! I think it was a component to my dying at the top of the hill near the Borden house. The strap had separated from lateral stress, go figure! I thought it a material defect akin to those so called wardrobe malfunctions we hear about and oh well - deal with it and die. On Sunday it sent me to forage for a temporary replacement from bugler Neal's stash of extra equipment. Thank goodness for a redundantly well stocked bugler brother!

On my return from the Arkansas wilderness and the Boston Mountains I contacted David Jarnagin to seek replacement of the item. He was generous with a replacement but then followed a rather firm lecture on the appropriate care of all leather goods used for our hobby. He told me I had used far too much Neats Foot Oil in my attempt to prepare the item for the field. I learned from him that leather used for our coots should not be over oiled as I had done. His many page and well documented discourse on how to care for leather items was included with his generous replacement. I then perused his additional notes on leather care located on the C&D Jarnagin web site. He is rightly proud of his copyrighted knowledge and I am unable to include his discourse here.

I refer you to David's web site for an outstanding review and directions as to how to care for leather items. I am sure he will be happy to visit with you about what he offers and how to care for it. I have found the Jarnagin's a fantastic friendly resource for knowledgeable information on equipment and uniforms. They have a fantastic rubber blanket too. Here is the link for your review and consideration. I highly recommend you take a look and extend your investment in your hobby leather items:

<http://www.jarnaginfo.com/leather%20care%20article.htm>

As a summary he told me to only lightly oil damp leather items and not to swamp or drown the material with oil as I had done as it will decrease its tensile strength and durability. I had to learn this the hard way at the front door of the Borden house. Learn from your Sergeant and sally forth with this long lost period knowledge.

Happy reenacting

Blair Rudy, Sgt, Co A

Pards,

My wife Candy and I are honored to host the 1st US unit's social for 2009. This will be a member and spouse (guest) gathering for fellowship and a casual good time. These gatherings provide us an opportunity for relaxed social interaction and

provides our spouses the opportunity to meet the Pards we play with.

We want to keep this simple so bring your best pot-luck dish to share. This way there are no big issues with headcount or cost. I expect Candy will have a batch of fresh baked "BattleSnaps".

Summer is busy for all of us, so please arrive and depart as you desire. I have included directions below, but please contact

me should you have questions.

It would be helpful if you let us know you are coming so please RSVP to me by Wednesday, August 26 at: brsuv1@verizon.net.

Date: Saturday, August 29, 2009

Time: 6 - 9 PM

Location: 6719 Springwood Lane, Garland, TX 75044

Beverages: BYOB

Food: Bring your favorite pot-luck dish, appetizer or dessert to share

Dress: Texas summer party casual. It is the end of August!

Regards,

Blair and Candy Rudy

c: (214) 505-1452

Directions:

From the George Bush tollway (Highway 190) exit North Garland Ave. (There is no cash toll booths on the GBT tollway.)

Proceed North about a mile and turn right (East) into the IRONGATE subdivision entrance. If you go through the stop lights at Campbell you went too far.

Once in IRONGATE, turn left at the stop sign onto Springwood Lane.

Proceed around the Springwood loop and park either along the street or in one of the guest parking places provided by the subdivision.

Look for the US flag out front.

Note: This is a gated subdivision and the gates close at 7 p.m. If you arrive after 7 p.m., just dial **043** on the keypad at the entrance and we can open the gate from our telephone. (We can not open the gate if you call on your cell.)

The Texas Frontier (1840-1865)

Written by Tate Landin, Corporal 1st US
(recreated)

This is part II of an article that was published in the May 2009 Newsletter

In the years before the Civil War, the United States positioned between ten and thirty percent of its entire army in Texas. You might think that that is a large percentage, but you have to remember the size of Texas. There were still very few troops available for duty. "In March, 1853, Fort Chadbourne had five companies of the Eighth Infantry. If these outfits had filled to their maximum allowable strength, they would have composed a formidable force or more than 400 officers and men."¹ In actuality, these companies had only 15 officers and 225 enlisted men on the rosters. Even fewer men were actually available for duty, as 12 officers and 77 enlisted men were absent from Fort Chadbourne. Dozens of others were either under arrest, sick, or on extra duty. This left only 3 officers and 79 enlisted men ready for duty at Fort Chadbourne. Conditions were like this at the majority of Texas posts. In 1856, the US stationed nearly one fifth of the entire army in Texas, but by 1860, only 1,200 troops remained in Texas. This equals about 90 soldiers per post. Sickness was the usual cause of under-strengthened units on military posts in Texas. Often, "post commanders set the precise time for reveille at their own discretion, and surgeons frequently contended that the day began too early."² At Fort Richardson, assembly sounded at 3:30AM. This did not allow much time for sleep. The

early assembly usually led to more numbers of men at sick call due to the "early atmosphere loaded with moisture and malaria."³ Most commanders accepted the advice from their surgeons, and in doing so, sounded reveille between 5:00 and 6:00AM. Some soldiers, trying to escape extra duty, would often report at sick call. Surgeons responded to these "malingerers" by coming up with unorthodox measure to "cure" their patients. They were usually arrested, and sent to the brig for faking sickness.

Before 1851, an assortment of uniforms was worn by all units in Texas as uniform regulations constantly changed. This constant change usually led to confusion and waste. In 1851 however, a select board of officers revised the uniform regulations.

"The frock coat was to be of dark-blue cloth with a skirt extending to mid-thigh.

Enlisted men and company officers were to wear single-breasted jackets, with two

rows of buttons distinguishing the higher grades.

The trousers, formerly blue

gray, would be sky blue, with senior officers wearing a darker blue shade. The

cap, or more properly, shako, was of dark-blue cloth and had a leather visor with

*a pompon."*⁴

These uniform regulations would be in place up until the time of the Civil War. In Texas however, the shako came under criticism. In 1855, the "Jeff Davis" hat was substituted for the shako. "This new oval hat was made of

¹ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P49.

² Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P83.

³ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P83.

black felt and had a three-and-one-fourth-inch brim and a six-and-one-fourth-inch crown.”⁵ The right side of the brim was turned up, and an ostrich feather was allowed to be worn on the hat. This hat would later be known as the Hardee Hat. Few soldiers actually liked the new Hardee Hat so the Army introduced the Forage Cap. This hat was similar to the French kepi only the Forage Cap, often called a “Bummer Cap,” had a higher crown. If I were to describe it to you using today’s terminology, I would have to say that it somewhat resembles a baseball cap.

Several technological advancements in the mid-19th century aided the US Army in Texas. The introduction of the percussion musket in 1841 created a more reliable musket than the old flintlock musket. Based on my own experience with the weapon, a percussion musket will only misfire (not fire at all) about once every ten shots. A flintlock on the other hand will misfire about once every four or five shots. Colt revolvers in 1849 dramatically increased the firepower of the US Army and then Texas Rangers. The greatest advancement, other than the Colt revolver, was the introduction of the cavalry rifle in 1858. These rifles were made for cavalrymen so they were shorter and lighter weight, yet still able to send bullets as straight and true as an infantry rifle. After watching cavalrymen against the Indians, one observer claimed, “they usually fired at will while officers called out distances.”⁶ The final pre-Civil War advancement was the McClellan Saddle introduced in 1859. This saddle gave

cavalrymen a comfortable ride even after long hours in the saddle. It also allowed riders to carry all necessary equipment without hindering themselves. Although it is not considered an advancement, I would like to point out that the Army actually tried to use camels, in the 1850’s, to carry and transport supplies in the Texas desert-like terrain. This use of camels was not accepted as is scared many of the horsed, mules, and oxen so most of them were either sold to private buyers to the circus.⁷

Throughout the 1840’s and 50’s, the using of infantry, cavalry, and Texas Rangers on the frontier were individually criticized. In 1849, a newspaper in Texas wrote, “the idea of repelling mounted Indians, the most expert horsemen in the world, with a force of foot soldiers, is ridiculous.”⁸ The Texas State Gazette stated that “foot soldiers were almost as useless as so many lobsters.”⁹ Although many in Congress argued that cavalry cost twice as much as infantry, and that cavalry would not be helpful in the rugged Texas terrain, Congress approved the sending of more mounted units to Texas. Some cavalrymen actually rode mules in order to cover the rugged terrain better, but in the end, it was the infantryman that dominated the US Army on the frontier. Sam Houston argued that a main cause for the failure of cavalry was that they drilled in European tactics while their Indian counterparts were masters of guerilla warfare. He also stated, “how can they protect us against Indians, when the cavalry have not horses which can trot faster than active

⁴ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P125.

⁵ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P125.

⁶ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P154.

⁷ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P111.

⁸ Texas in Turmoil. P18.

⁹ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P50.

oxen, and the infantry dare not go out in any hostile manner for fear of being shot and scalped!”¹⁰ Before the Mexican War, it was the responsibility of the Texas Rangers to guard the frontier, and after the war, when Texas became a US state, the US Army assumed responsibility for protecting the Texas frontier. Many Texans however, cried out for more support from the federal government, but this cry was never fully satisfied. In stead, Texans readily relied on the service of their Texas Rangers. The use of Rangers was more costly than the use of regular troops. “In 1857, the War Department estimated that the country could have saved \$30 million over the preceding twenty years by replacing expensive volunteers with regulars.”¹¹ In the fall of 1859, the “army,” composed mostly of Texas Rangers led by Major Early Van Dorn and Sul Ross, moved north to the Red River. This army of about 250 troops and 125 friendly Indians was bent on defeating Buffalo Hump’s band of Indians somewhere across the Red River. It was on October 1st, 1858, that the Texas Rangers would make a name for themselves when they surprised the enemy camp, and killed seventy Indians. It was not the battle that gained the Rangers respect, it was the fact that Van Dorn and Ross were both critically wounded, yet they both survived. Van Dorn was back in the saddle within two weeks.¹² It was the Sul Ross who rescued the famous Cynthia Ann Parker from her Indian captives. In 1859, the Rangers were once again called to stop the raids of Juan

Cortina in the Rio Grande Valley. It was during this campaign that the Rangers were criticized for pursuing Cortina across the Mexican border.¹³ While many people were praising the Rangers for their efforts in Texas, some were also criticizing their ability. JW Light reported, “I see that there has been a Proposition...to raise Rangers again. I am of the opinion the remedy is as bad as the disease. These Ruyed assed Rangers aint worth a Huraw in Hell.”¹⁴ In 1861, all criticism of the defensive strategy on the frontier ceased as Civil War Fever swept the entire nation.

During the Civil War, 1861 to 1865, all of the US Army frontier posts were abandoned in Texas. When Texas seceded from the Union, they forced the surrender of all Federal forces in Texas, thus creating an “Exodus of Federal forces from Texas.”¹⁵ Defense of the Texas frontier was left up to the people of Texas. Since the Confederacy could not spare a single man to guard the frontier, and Texas had sent most of its men off to war, residents had to fend for themselves. The actual frontier boundary during the Civil War was moved back about 100 miles by the Indians. It would not be until after the war, with the US victory, that the Texas frontier would be protected again. By the end of the Civil War, over 2 million men had fought for the Union army, and nearly 900,000 fought for the Confederacy. After the war, Congress authorized only 54,000 men to remain in the army, and by 1870, the number was down to 30,000.

¹⁰ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P50.

¹¹ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P50.

¹² Texas in Turmoil. P24.

¹³ Texas in Turmoil. P26.

¹⁴ Soldiers, Sutlers, Settlers. P52.

¹⁵ Lone Star Blue and Gray. P29.

There were forty regiments in the Post-Civil War Army, and all forty were spread across the nation to aid in reconstruction of the South. The Army divided the country into military districts. "Texas was partitioned into districts and subdistricts which were often organized over time."¹⁶ Although the Army labeled these as military districts, their role was not entirely military. The Army participated in reconstructing not only Texas, but the entire South. For this reason, the frontier posts were once again, "thinly garrisoned." As time moved on, the United States was able to help Texas secure its frontier and its continuing push westward. Although it cost many lives, a lot of resources, and many years, Texas secured its frontier and once again earned the respect of the entire nation.

Texas' history on the frontier is not just unique, it is remarkable. The Lone Star State covers so much land, and its frontier defenses required a lot of work, but somehow, Texas persevered. People know of Texas as the Lone Star State not just because it is the only state to have been its own country, but because Texas has held its own through the thick and thin of its history.

Inspection of Arms Guideline

by George Hansen

The last few outings I've noticed some confusion during Inspection of Arms regarding fixing the bayonet first or drawing the rammer, along with presenting the rifle for inspection.

Casey's clearly states the **bayonet goes on first**

followed by the rammer being placed entirely into the barrel, head of the rammer going in first. The rifle is then returned to the order arms position until ... "The instructor will then inspect in succession the piece of each recruit, in

passing along the front of the rank. Each, as the instructor reaches him, will raise smartly his piece with his right hand, seize it with the left between the lower band and guide sight, the lock

to the front, the left hand at the height of the chin, the piece opposite the left eye; the instructor will take it with the right hand at the handle, and, after inspecting it, will return it to the recruit, who will receive it back with the right hand, and replace it in the position of ordered arms."

Now note returning the bayonet, rammer and when to do so.... "When the instructor shall have passed him, each recruit will retake the position prescribed at the command *inspection*, return the rammer, *unfix the bayonet*, and resume

the position of ordered arms." Note: If in Battalion formation then the bayonet remains fixed until ordered to "unfix bayonet."

So, as a guideline the below are simple points to remember during Inspection of Arms:

- Bayonet on first, off last.
- Present the rifle with lock to the front with the left hand between lower band and guide sight, left hand at left eye level.
- Take the rifle back with the right hand.
- Return the rammer *as soon* as the instructor passes you - bayonet only if in company formation.

The Union Standard

Newsletter of the 1st U.S. Infantry

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