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# The UNION STANDARD

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March/April 2011

Vol.19, no 1

*The Newsletter of the 1<sup>st</sup> United States Infantry, The Regulars*

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## From the Desk:

Headquarters, Infantry Battalion, 3rd (Frontier) Brigade  
February 26, 2011

GENERAL ORDER: 2011 #1

*Information received by this headquarters Thursday last indicates that Gen'l Twiggs has surrendered all forces in the department of Texas to the Texas state Authorities.*

As such, companies of the First Battalion are ordered to proceed from their current locations to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, prior to further movement by the battalion as directed. It is desired that all companies should be in place at Fort Gibson on March 18<sup>th</sup> but in no case later than Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Company commanders are authorized to procure such transport at government expense as may be required to move their supplies and baggage.

Each company must be prepared to sustain itself while at Fort Gibson. Additionally, troops should provide their own shelter for the duration, as quarters are deemed unsuitable. All troops should arrive in heavy marching orders. For those without knapsacks a suitable bedroll should be used.

It is reported that a shortage of fuel exists at Gibson. As such, commanders are urged to forage enroute to the fort such fuel as may be found. Once established at the fort fuel supplies will be consolidated.

Battalion headquarters will be established in the dog-trot house between the upper and lower fortifications. Companies should bivouac in company order near HQ. Specific locations will be provided upon arrival. Officers may be billeted but should be prepared to sleep in the field near HQ.

I fully expect this battalion to be directed to support the Army of the Frontier in the near future. In this regard, every company's attendance at Fort Gibson is critical.

By command of Donald Gross

Maj 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Infantry  
Commanding Frontier Brigade

## Battalion Muster Ft Gibson, Indian Territory March 18-20, 2011

*The infantry, from it's powers of endurance, it's capabilities for battle in all kinds of ground, and it's independence of those casualties by which other arms may be completely paralyzed, is placed as the first arm; and upon it is based the strength of all others. - Mahan*

### Billeting arrangements are as follows:

- Enlisted men will form company streets in the vicinity of the dog-trot house where directed.
- Officers will place their tents behind the dog-trot house.
  - One fire is authorized in each company street.

### Rations:

- Companies must provide their own rations for the weekend. Fires are permitted on the company streets but no pits may be dug.

### Federal Enlisted Uniform guidelines:

- Since we will portray Plummer's Battalion at Wilson's Creek this summer first choice for uniforms is a regular impression of dark blue trousers and frock coats, followed by dark trousers and fatigue jacket.
- For those without dark trousers standard western federal impression is fine.

### The following guidelines will be followed with respect to gear brought to the muster:

- Period items befitting the status/rank of the individual soldier.
  - Physical room in the soldier's "wagon."
- Anachronistic items will not be displayed on the post from 7:00 am Saturday until noon Sunday.

### Personal actions

*Remember, we are portraying (and playing at) soldiers of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. I trust we will all act the part.*

*Please consider your fellow enactor and Do Not make obvious use of modern items. Cell phones especially can be annoying.*

**Battalion Muster  
Ft Gibson, Indian Territory  
March 18-20, 2011**

**Schedule:**

Friday

Arrival/Barracks Set-up  
Dinner on your own  
8:00 Officer/Sr NCO Meeting/Training Session

Saturday

7:00 Reveille  
7:30 Breakfast Call  
8:45 Parade (assemble the battalion)  
9:00 Morning Drill Call  
Squad/Platoon level instruction by senior NCOs  
Company Drill  
Battalion Evolutions  
12:00 Dinner call/ Soldier's time  
1:30 Classroom Instruction  
Officer/NCO Instruction  
3:00 Afternoon Drill Call  
Battalion Commander's Time  
5:45 Supper Call  
Battalion Meeting  
7:00 Soldiers time  
10:30 Tattoo  
11:00 Lights Out

Sunday

8:00 Reveille  
8:30 Breakfast Call  
9:30 Church Call  
10:00 Battalion evolutions  
12:00 Final Formation/Dismissal

**Tactics**

Company  
Arms positions  
Facings  
Stacking  
Marching, left and right  
Wheels (fixed and moving)  
By company into line  
On the right (left) by file into line

Battalion  
Form a line of battle in front to right and to left  
Passing through obstacles  
Retire into columns  
Closed in mass  
Counter march  
Changing fronts  
Double columns  
Colonel's surprise

# 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Calendar

## 2011

March

**19<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> Brigade Muster & BOD Elections, Ft. Gibson , OK.**

26<sup>th</sup> Farmers Branch Historical Park 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Rally for park staff and civic leaders

April

**29<sup>th</sup> - May 1<sup>st</sup> Honey Springs Sesquicentennial Reenactment, Checotah, OK.**

May

14<sup>th</sup> . Texas Forts Muster, Fort Worth

Stockyards.

21<sup>st</sup>. Plano Heritage Farm. Rally for military families. Recruiting and demonstration.

27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> . Liberty Fest; Farmers Branch Historical Park.

30<sup>th</sup>. Memorial Day Ceremony – Pecan Grove Cemetery , McKinney , TX

June

**11<sup>th</sup> Drill. Farmers Branch, TX.**

July

**Unit Drill, Location and date TBD.**

August

**11<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>. Wilson's Creek Sesquicentennial Reenactment, Springfield, MO. National Event.**

September

Unit social. Location TBD.

October

Date TBD. Army Days Muster, Fort Sill, OK.

November

19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>. Bentonville Reenactment, Bentonville, AR

December

Date TBD. Dallas Heritage Village Candlelight.

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

### WILSON'S CREEK

Pre-registration is now up for the Wilson's Creek reenactment, and can be done online at:

<http://www.wilsonscreek.com/content/involved/Anniversary.aspx>

# Fort Gibson

Fort Gibson, located in Oklahoma and designated Fort Gibson Historical Site, guarded the American frontier in Indian Territory from 1824 until 1890. The fort at its inception lay farther west than any other military post in the United States of America and formed part of the north–south chain of forts intended to maintain peace on the frontier of the American West and to protect the southwestern border of the Louisiana Purchase. The fort succeeded in its peacekeeping mission, and no massacres or battles occurred there.

## **Building the Fort**

Colonel Matthew Arbuckle commanded the 39th Infantry Regiment (United States) from Fort Smith. He moved some of his troops to establish Cantonment Gibson on 21 April 1824 on the Grand River (Oklahoma) just above its junction with the Arkansas River. The United States Army named it for Colonel (later General) George Gibson, Commissary General of Subsistence. The post surgeon began taking meteorological observations in 1824, and the fort provides the earliest known weather records in Oklahoma. Colonel Arbuckle also established Fort Towson in southern Indian Territory. In the early years, troops constructed a stockade, barracks, other facilities, and roads. They also settled strife between the indigenous Osage Nation and the earliest bands of western Cherokee settlers.

## **Indian removal**

Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830, giving Cantonment Gibson a new mission. The Army designated the cantonment as Fort Gibson in 1832, reflecting its change from a temporary outpost to a semi-permanent garrison. Soldiers at Fort Gibson increasingly dealt with Indians removed from the eastern states to Indian Territory. These newcomers complained about hostility from the Osage Nation and other Plains Indian tribes indigenous to the region. Montfort Stokes, former governor of North Carolina, convened a commission at Fort Gibson to address these integration problems, and troops at the fort supported its work. American author Washington Irving accompanied troops exploring the southern Plains west of Fort Gibson in 1832. This excursion and another journey in 1833 both failed to find any significant nomadic Indian tribes, but Washington Irving wrote "A Tour of the Prairies" in 1835 from his experiences.

General Henry Leavenworth in 1834 led First Dragoon Expedition on a peace mission to the west, finally established contact with those nomadic Indian tribes. American traveling artist George Catlin traveled with the dragoons. General Leavenworth died during the march, and Colonel Henry Dodge replaced him in command. The expedition finally established contact and negotiated the first treaty with the Indian tribes. Debilitating fevers struck and killed many men on this expedition. Some men considered expeditions to the Plains a veritable death sentence. During the 1830s, soldiers at Fort Gibson built roads, provisioned incoming American Indians removed from the eastern states, and maintained peace among antagonistic tribes and factions. They also kept peace between the indigenous Osage Nation and the Cherokee Nation, a people removed from the American South to the Indian Territory.

During the Texas Revolution against the weak Mexican government, the Army sent most of the troops stationed at Fort Gibson to the Texas border region. Their absence weakened the military power and pacification capacity at

Fort Gibson, but the reduced garrison nevertheless maintained stability in the region.

At the height of Indian removal in the 1830s, the garrison at Fort Gibson ranked as the largest in the nation. Notable American soldiers stationed at (or at least visiting) Fort Gibson include Stephen W. Kearny, Robert E. Lee, and Zachary Taylor. The Army stationed Jefferson Davis, later president of the Confederate States of America, and more than one hundred other West Point cadets at the fort. The Army also sent Nathan Boone, son of the famous explorer Daniel Boone, to Fort Gibson. After leaving Tennessee, Sam Houston owned a trading post in the area; he later moved to Texas.

At a bitterly contentious meeting at Fort Gibson in 1836, the majority faction of the Muscogee (Creek) reluctantly accepted the existing tribal government under the leadership of Chilly McIntosh, son of William McIntosh, and his faction. Colonel Arbuckle also tried to prevent intertribal strife within the Cherokee, but Chief John Ross and his followers refused to acknowledge the government that earlier "Old Settlers" established in Indian Territory. After waging and losing Seminole Wars against the United States Army in Florida, the Seminole arrived in Indian Territory bitter and dispirited, but officials at Fort Gibson successfully prevented bloodshed and disunity among them. Big Foot was a member of this fort.

## **Pacification and First Abandonment**

When Colonel Arbuckle left Fort Gibson in 1841, reported that despite the arrival of forty thousand eastern Indians of decidedly unfriendly disposition, "I have maintained peace on this frontier and at no period have the Whites on our border or the Red people of this frontier been in a more perfect state of quiet and Security than they enjoy now." The removed Indian nations gradually lost their desire for American military protection.

In the 1850s, the Cherokee complained about the liquor and brothels at Fort Gibson. The Cherokee ultimately urged Congress to close Fort Gibson, and the War Department heeded their request. In June 1857, the Army abandoned Fort Gibson for the first time. The Cherokee nation received the deed to the property and improvements and established the village of Kee-too-wah on the site.

## **American Civil War**

During the American Civil War, however, Union troops occasionally occupied the post and called it Fort Blunt. During the summer of 1862, Union soldiers repulsed a Confederate invasion of Indian Territory. They left the fort and withdrew to Kansas. In April 1863, Colonel William A. Phillips of the Indian Home Guard (American Civil War) (Union Indian Brigade) reoccupied Fort Gibson and kept it in Union hands throughout the remainder of the war. The Army briefly renamed the post Fort Blunt in honor of Brigadier General James G. Blunt, commander of the Department of Kansas. The fort dominated the junction between the Arkansas River and Texas Road, but Confederates never attacked the fort. Its troops under General Blunt marched southward in July 1863 and won the Battle of Honey Springs, the most important in Indian Territory.

After the American Civil War, the Army retained Fort Gibson. American soldiers ultimately established enduring peace with the Indian tribes of the southern Plains only after 1870, but forts farther west increasingly took on the duties of securing that peace. The Army transferred most

troops elsewhere in 1871, leaving only a detachment responsible for provisions in a quartermaster depot.

#### **Cavalry Mission**

Ft. Gibson in the 1870's.

In 1872 the Tenth Cavalry reoccupied Fort Gibson. Workers built the Missouri–Kansas–Texas Railroad from Baxter Springs, Kansas, to the Red River crossing at Colbert's Ferry, Indian Territory, along the Texas border; the cavalry from Fort Gibson policed local workers' camps. Soldiers also managed threats from outlaws, white encroachment on Indian lands, intratribal disputes, and other issues. The size of the garrison varied with the workload.

Kansas and Arkansas Valley Railway built track through the area in 1888, and the town of Fort Gibson, Oklahoma began to develop. In the summer of 1890, the Army abandoned Fort Gibson. Thereafter, troops occasionally camped at the site whenever civil unrest brought them to the town of Fort Gibson, Oklahoma. After the military permanently departed, the civilian town expanded into the former military grounds of the fort.

#### **Historic site**

Works Project Administration in the 1930s rebuilt some or all buildings at the fort. National Park Service designated Fort Gibson a National Historic Landmark in 1960.

**It is time to register for Honey Springs.**  
**Please do this ASAP and let Captain**  
**Brook Thomas when you have done so.**  
[bnjt33@tx.rr.com](mailto:bnjt33@tx.rr.com)

<http://www.okhistory.org/outreach/military/hsregistration.php>

Please register individually with 1st US Regiment of Infantry and Brook Thomas as CO. Enter NA where it calls for his phone number. We can use his address though: 3517 Ridgedale Drive, Garland, TX, 75041. No need to list other people attending, just yourself.



## History of the Term “Rackensacker”

The term “Rackensacker” was a 19th Century nickname utilized to identify a person from Arkansas. Exactly, how this term originated is not documented. Evidence points towards a switching of the letters in the name ARKANSAS to produce RACKANSACK that became RACKENSACK. Another possible origin is linked to a possible Osage Indian pronunciation of the area now known as Arkansas which was included in their hunting grounds.

During the early and mid-1800’s Arkansas was a state with few improvements or towns. The majorities of settlers were poor, self-sufficient, and had little trust in outsiders. Any travelers passing through on the way west would encounter rugged terrain with few roads, and locals who were as rough as the land they called home. When writing about traveling through “Rackensack” there would almost always be some mention of the character of the inhabitants, usually revolving around their rough demeanor and appearance.

The first reference to the fighting men of Arkansas as “Rackensackers” can be traced to the War with Mexico in 1846-47. A regiment of Arkansas troops, the 1st Arkansas Mounted Volunteers led by former Governor and US Congressman, Colonel Archibald Yell served under General Wool’s, Army of Chihuahua, in northern Mexico. These hardy Arkansas soldiers fought in the Battle of Buena Vista and traveled extensively throughout Mexico with the Army. They were seen by the Regulars and many militia units from other states as rough and uneducated, but a formidable fighting force whether engaged with the enemy or each other. Many carried the Bowie Knife which originated in Arkansas and most were able to use it well. In one soldier’s recollection he wrote “You should see these boys from Arkansas. They can ‘rack and sack’ a Mexican town faster than any troops.” The best example comes from a member of the US Dragoons present at Buena Vista who wrote of the capture of the Arkansas guidon by Mexican forces. The guidon, red with gold fringe and a white inscription that read “Rackensack is in the Field”, was drawn in his diary and the original drawing is visible below. Fifteen years later, many of these same soldiers, (still carrying the huge Bowie knives early in the war) were in active service during the Civil War. Once again, soldiers from Arkansas were often referred to by their former nickname, “Rackensackers”. Throughout the war, Arkansas soldiers would serve with distinction in all theaters of the conflict. On many fields of battle their fighting prowess would turn the tide or win the day, and as a group, they were well respected by their commanders, fellow soldiers, and enemy.

Today, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-151 Cavalry Regiment, 39th BCT continues the tradition, utilizing “RACKENSACKER” as its official call sign. The historical significances are found in that the 39th

BDE is referred to as “The Bowie Team” utilizing the Bowie Knife as its key emblem. Prior to the modular transformation, 1-151 Cavalry was the 3-153rd Infantry. The 153rd Infantry traces its official lineage to the 1st Arkansas Infantry of the Spanish American War, 1898 and unofficially through the 1st Arkansas Infantry State Troops (redesignated the 15th Arkansas Infantry CSA) 1861-65; 1st Arkansas Mounted Volunteers, 1846-47; 1st Arkansas Mounted Gunmen, 1836 Indian Wars; and the 1st Arkansas Volunteer Militia, 1821. As part of TASK FORCE SABER, Operation Iraqi Freedom, the RACKENSACKERS “Lead the Way”, “To Hell and Back!”

## 1<sup>st</sup> US Background on the Rackensacker

In 1997 “The Glen Hargis Rakensacker Award was created and presented to the soldier or soldiers who have made continuing and substantial contributions of their time to the Unit (1<sup>st</sup> US Recreated) over the years.

The award itself is the white Maltese Cross, the emblem of the 2nd Division, 5th Corps. Company G of the 1st U.S. served in this Corps during the war.

Afterward, the White Cross came to represent all Regulars, regardless of where they served, at various reunions.

The Cross is to be worn during formal or social occasions and those wearing it are to be recognized as ‘First Among Equals.’”

Award recipients are in the below order:

Glen Hargis\*  
Gregg Benefiel\*  
George Hansen\*  
Mark Dolive  
Rick Brockman  
Don Gates  
Don Gross

\* All awarded simultaneously

*The NTRS BOD met on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011 and past the following proposal.*

*“All dues paid recipients of the NTRS Rackensacker Award will be granted the permanent status of “Regular Member” with all rights and privileges thereof.”*

## From the 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant:

Pards of the 1st US,  
Next week at Fort Gibson and the Brigade Muster we will rally once again under the colors for fellowship, training, drill and that most wonderful of traditions: voting for rank and the Board of Directors.

It has been an honor to have served our Regiment as one of your Sergeants for the past six years. Thank you all for the opportunity to have played this roll alongside you as we enjoy our hobby.

I am humbled to now have a small taste of what those men of yore including Neal's and my Great Father, Sergeant Albert M. Glenn of the 26th Indiana Infantry must have endured with stripes on their sleeves. From the bottom of my heart and center of my soul please accept my most sincerest thank you for this honor to have served you. It is time for me to fall out and allow another of our Pards to take morning roll call and lead you to the field. I have every confidence our next set of NCO's will confidently and steadfastly step into this responsibility and do well for us all. Our tradition continues. Thank you.

See you in the Ranks,  
Blair G. Rudy, Orderly Sergeant  
1st US Regiment of Infantry



## \*\*\*2011 Year Membership Dues\*\*\*

Yes, it is that time again for everyone to pay their yearly membership fee. The annual \$25.00 cost is applicable to individuals/families and is now due. Please make your check payable to NTRS, not the 1st US.

Make check payable to NTRS and mail to:  
Don Gates  
1205 Balboa Circle, Plano, Texas 75075  
Or bring to Muster

## Farmer Brach Historical Park. Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011

25th Anniversary Celebration of Farmer Brach Historical Park.

Please contact Captain Brook Thomas at [bnjt33@tx.rr.com](mailto:bnjt33@tx.rr.com) on your participation in this opportunity to pay forward and express our thanks to them.

Besides, it looks to be a good time for fellowship and sharing the hobby. Not to mention expand public awareness of the Civil War Sesquicentennial and engage with some recruiting efforts.

**The Union Standard**  
***Newsletter of the 1st U.S. Infantry***  
**9091 Creede Trail**  
**Fort Worth, Texas 76118**