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# The UNION STANDARD

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June 2008

Vol. 16, no 6

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

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## From the desk:

Gentlemen,

The campaign season has effectively ended for the spring and we're in garrison for the remainder of the summer and into the fall. Our next fighting event will be Honey Springs in September. In the meanwhile, we have local events that will keep you in wool, some that will keep you in the shade, or in the cool air, with your wool, and I highly encourage you to come out and participate in a little living history in June. There are two events, June 14<sup>th</sup> Flag day event at the Fort Worth Civil War museum (and for those who haven't been, it's a really fine collection of gear, I won't call it 'memorabilia'). The second is an event between 10:45 and 3:00 PM on June 21<sup>st</sup>, at the Old Red Museum in Downtown Dallas (other side of the big red building that sits to the east of Dealy Plaza). 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt Mattoon has been providing details that have made the post several times. If you're unaware of this one then send a dispatch and we'll get you updated information. I believe both of these venues can find you an interior with genuine ice provided cool air flow at some point, so if the hot weather gets you down, you can still come out and take your well earned ease in the shade and cool of indoors.

And also, don't forget the unit social, scheduled for August. This won't be the last you hear about it.

I have yet to post an after action report on Westport, and in this I am remiss. Writing after action reports of "moved here, moved back to there, moved back up to here, moved back to there" I'm afraid leave little luster for me. Instead I'll give you my overall sense of our men, and our battalion as I saw it from a new position. First, let me thank all of you who made the drive, or the flight, to Missouri. I know taking the time and cost to make such a trip is not trivial. Your participation is very much appreciated and I hope you found the experience to be worth your while. As for the battalion it was my good fortune to take command of, everybody did their jobs with a minimum of grumbling in the ranks, under some, confusing,

conditions at times and I felt performed splendidly. By this, I mean they didn't allow me to make myself appear to be completely incompetent.

The company commanders all did credit to Major Gross's long hours of training, and I thought the men of the battalion performed very commendably. Despite my contention that the real Major tends to send us into places to get shot up, I can't blame him for the nutcracker position our right wing companies managed to find themselves in on Saturday morning when we were called up to relieve the campaigners of the left wing. That was an unfortunate combination of Major D. Zaster's (Brannigan being otherwise occupied, his cousin was called in to command the battalion) enthusiasm for a fight, another brigade's colonel's desire to take and hold some, well, useless ground, and the ability of the rebel cavalry (as ever) to be all round our flanks. We did manage to extract ourselves from it, but on the whole I felt I had sorely used the men and yet they didn't seem to mind (perhaps too much experience with Cpt. Brannigan). As the newly minted battalion commander I can, without taking any undue credit, say that everyone did their jobs so well that doing mine seemed quite easy. The one gripe I heard was not enough firing by file, and too much company and battalion volley work. In my defense I think I was right to withhold independent firing as I did, and Sunday's battle proved me out as we closed with probably no more than 10 rounds or fewer per man. Had I been less stingy with government powder Sunday would have found us marching without being able to lay much fire on the Rebs.

On the whole there weren't a lot of tactical opportunities for any nasty surprises for our rebel compatriots, but still the men manned picket lines, tromped through woods, annoyed Confederate pickets, and braved the tick infested (there must be a phrase that more accurately encompasses the TRUE magnitude of the tick problem, and 'infested' is miles short of the mark) woods and fields as ably as their forbears probably did. Good Captain Doughtie and I had

an opportunity to experience the period practice of 'skirmishing' with the tick vermin after we were relieved of picket postings prior to the spectator battle on Saturday. Allow me to observe hunting through your clothing for occupants other than you is an annoying, frustrating, and unfulfilling exercise and, having experienced it this once, I can say not one I'll be happy to have to repeat (although I will, at least, on second go, having already seen the elephant from the first foray be more competent at my business the second time). However, it WAS terribly period, and now goes into the 'period' mental chest of things I've managed to experience first hand (even if it was ticks and not lice).

This was tough terrain to fight and maneuver in, a great deal of tight underbrush (and the ever present thought of vermin) and only a few good paths through the woods. The Johnnies, by virtue of their start position, had a tendency to hit us right AT our lines closest to our camp, rather than the, I think, expected areas further away where there might have been terrain more suitable to actions such as we experienced at Shiloh. This place would have done the Wilderness a fair credit. Small actions, in tight spots, scattered and hard to direct from a command perspective. And if the men tend to follow the natural easy flow of trails and shun the bush stomping and breaking who can blame them?

I can say it was my honor to command the battalion and it is my hope that those of you who personally endured it won't remember it as a blessedly brief and unhappy moment in your re-enacting history. I can tell you I had a good time, and it's tragic-comedically sad that I leave you with the McFuddy like thought of saying being the senior officer in Tula's on a Saturday night is really a nice thing, even if your singing voice is totally blown from shouting battalion commands all day. And this recommendation, next time you find yourself in Tula's see if you can get a sandwich from the proprietress.

I remain,

Your most obedient servant  
and return with pride to being your company commander.

Cpt A. Prendergast  
Company D, 1<sup>st</sup> regiment of US Infantry

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

**2008**

### June

14<sup>th</sup> Flag Day at Fort Worth Civil War Museum (Living History/Recruiting Event) (10am – 3pm)

21<sup>st</sup> Big Red Museum-Dallas- Civil War Day (11am – 3pm)

### July

Nothing planned (stay cool)

### August

9<sup>th</sup> Bingham House, McKinney, Texas

### September

27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Battle of Honey Springs, Oklahoma. Battalion Event

### October

(Tentative) Drill or Camp Ford, Tyler Texas

### November

8<sup>th</sup> Veterans Day, Dallas Heritage Village (OCP) Living History, Recruiting & Battle

### December

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas. Battalion Event

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

**From Mrs. Julie's Receipt Box:**

**Vinegar Pie (attributed to the Longstreet family) from  
"Baking Recipes from the Wives & Mothers of Civil War  
Heroes, Heroines & Other Notables"**

1 pastry shell, baked

3 egg yolks, beaten

1 cup sugar

3 Tbsp flour

1/3 tsp salt

2 cups boiling water

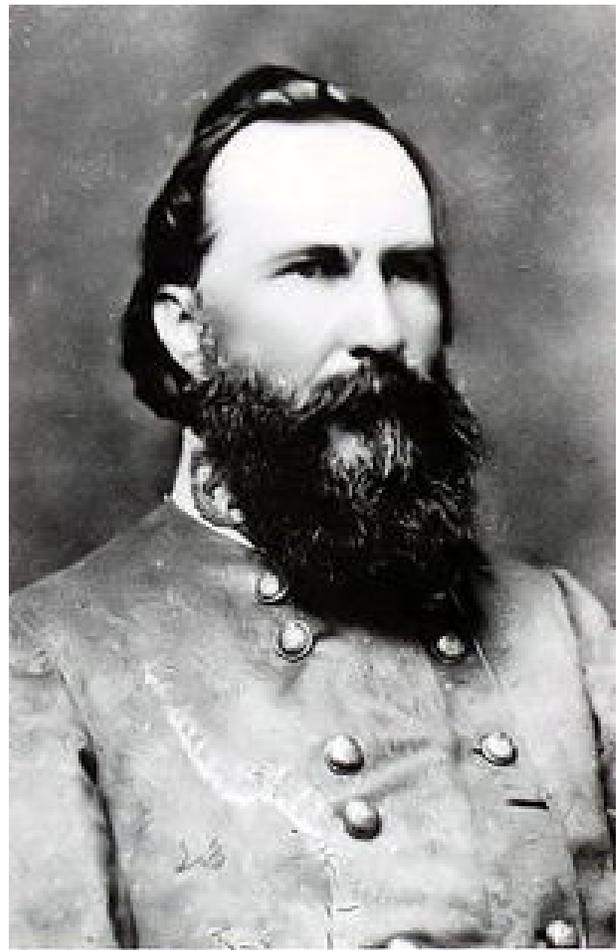
1/4 cup vinegar

1 tsp lemon juice

3 egg whites

3 Tbsp sugar

Put egg yolks in wooden mixing bowl and beat until thick. Add 1 cup sugar, flour, and salt. Mix thoroughly. Slowly add boiling water, stirring constantly. Stir in vinegar. Continue stirring mixture until thick and smooth. Lastly, stir in lemon juice. Pour into pie shell. Meringue: beat egg whites and remaining sugar until stiff. Cover pie with meringue. Bake in moderately slow oven (325 degrees) for 20 minutes



## 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Social, August 9th

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is a reminder that the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Social is scheduled for August 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. We will be enjoying each others company at the historic Bingham House in McKinney Texas. We will be enjoying a mix of 20<sup>th</sup> century and 19<sup>th</sup> century food. The menu will consist of the following (\*subject to change) (served buffet style)

<http://www.binghamhouse.com/>

Roasted chicken with rosemary & orange /sauce\*

Red Flannel Hash(corn beef, potatoes, onions and beets)(19<sup>th</sup> century)

Mix of root vegetable (19<sup>th</sup> century)

Herbal Pasta

Mixed Green Salad with cheddar, bacon and cherry tomatoes

Gingerbread (dessert)

Also, we are planning on have a cheese wheel with hard tack (crackers) for appetizer.

The Inn Keeper was kind enough to wave the bar fee and we will be BYOB. (We can work the details out on this late)

Finally, many of us think (and we have ran this past a few of the wives already) since we are at a historical place that those who want too, can wear their best dress uniform and if your wife/significant other wants to dress in a period style dress she can too. **(WEARING YOUR UNIFORM OR HAVING YOUR WIFE DRESS IN A PERIOD DRESS IS STRICTLY VOLUNTARY.)** The advantage to this is, the Innkeeper is going to have a photographer there (free) to take out pictures for advertisement of her place and this is good PR for us as well.

For this historic and special evening the cost per couple will be \$50.00. (\$25.00 single).

I do not need an RSVP yet, but please mark your calendars and we hope to see you there!

If you have any questions feel free to contact me.

YMOS,

Beck Martin (h 817-595-1558) (c 817-528-0475) (w 972-605-5046)

[Beck.martin@eds.com](mailto:Beck.martin@eds.com)

## From the Diary of David Lane...

Cedar Bottom, Va., Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1864

I walked three miles and waited until 9:00 o'clock this evening, so sure was I of tidings from home. I waited in vain. I was disappointed

but not disheartened. Surely tomorrow I will be

more fortunate. And if not tomorrow, I will still

wait patiently, trusting that all is well. I do not

know why it is, but I cannot feel downhearted of

late. Whether it is to the buoyant health I now

enjoy, the conviction the crisis has passed and

peace is about to smile on our blood-stained land; or that the time is drawing nigh when I

may return to my loved ones; whether it be either or all of these, I cannot tell, but so it

is. I

feel a lightness and buoyancy of mind and body

that I have been stranger to for years. –

David Lane, USA

# Samuel Ringgold (US Army officer)



**Samuel B. Ringgold** (1796 – May 11, 1846) was an artillery officer in the United States Army who was noted for several military innovations which caused him to be called the "Father of Modern Artillery." He was also, famously, the first U.S. officer to fall in the Mexican-American War, perishing from wounds inflicted during the Battle of Palo Alto.

## Early Life and Career

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Ringgold was the son of Samuel Ringgold, a U.S. Congressman from Maryland. A younger brother, Cadwallader Ringgold, also served in the military, becoming a rear admiral.

On July 24, 1818, Samuel Ringgold graduated 5th in a class of 23 from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Artillery.<sup>[1]</sup>

In the early 1820s, Ringgold was on the staff of General Winfield Scott. At about that time, (roughly 1825) John Vanderlyn, then working in New York City, painted Ringgold's portrait.

Ringgold's significant military innovations included the Ringgold military saddle and artillery techniques. Based on his research in

Europe, he rewrote the Army's manual for artillery, which included the tactical concept of flying artillery -- employing artillery pieces that could be moved quickly from place to place.<sup>[1]</sup> The Army adapted his manual, "Instructions for Field Artillery" on March 6, 1845, and he was promoted to the rank of Major in acknowledgement<sup>[1]</sup> of his military innovations.

## Mexican-American War

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Ringgold served in General Zachary Taylor's occupation force in Texas as a Major of Artillery. On May 8, 1846, as he and 2,400 troops were en route to Fort Texas, they were engaged at the Battle of Palo Alto by Mexican General Mariano Arista and his force of 3,800 men.

Arista's army was stretched a mile wide, making an American bayonet charge, Taylor's first option, impossible. Taylor, in an unlikely move, advanced his artillery to attack the enemy. The use of Ringgold's flying artillery tactic won the battle for the Americans. The Mexican artillery, heavy and slow, was futile in the thick steel-wool brush at Palo Alto. Arista ordered cavalry charges to flank the artillery gunners, but the American flying artillery was able to mobilize, relocate, and repel the oncoming dragoons.

During the battle, Ringgold was mortally wounded by cannon fire that mangled both his legs just below the crotch.<sup>[2]</sup> Nevertheless, he refused to leave the field during the battle. He survived three days, during which time he debriefed on the battle, before dying in Point Isabel, Texas.

# **The Union Standard**

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9091 Creede Trail

Fort Worth, Texas 76118