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# The UNION STANDARD

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August 2008

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

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## From the desk:

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/Brownies w/caramel sauce.

The Inn Keeper was kind enough to wave the bar fee and we will be BYOB.

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 \$57.00 (\$28.50 single).

If you not have already RSVP'd please do so ASAP.

YMOS,

Beck Martin

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*\*see article on John H. Bingham in this newsletter*

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

2008

### 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

25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Raid on 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\*\****

## **A Brief History of the American Civil War in Indian Territory (Oklahoma)**

**C**ivil War came early in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). Disputes within the Cherokee Nation, which had been “removed” from the tribe's Eastern land in the 1830s, fractured the tribe into warring factions well before 1860. Other tribes also were suffering from internal friction. Slavery was not an issue, however, since many prosperous Indian families on all sides of the disputes owned slaves.

When the Civil War came to the rest of the country and the Southern states began succeeding, the Confederate States of America exploited the fractures within the tribes and multiple broken promises of the Federal government, signing treaties with sympathetic Indian leaders. Others in the tribes cast their lot with the Union government.

Meanwhile, militias sympathetic to the Confederacy occupied frontier forts, putting much of the Territory under Southern influence.

Indians supporting the Confederacy organized under several leaders, including Stand Watie, leaving their home turf

briefly to fight at Pea Ridge in Arkansas in early 1862.

Indian Territory quickly became a Confederate-controlled

backwater as fighting heated up east of the Mississippi River. By mid-1863, though, Union soldiers had reoccupied Forts Gibson and Smith and resumed military operations. Raids on the forts’ supply lines bedeviled the Federals but the Union forces, augmented by black troops, hung on to their tenuous bases and continued raids of their own.

In July 1863, Union soldiers — black, white and Indian — marched out of Fort Gibson to attack a Confederate stronghold at Honey Springs on the Texas Road. The battle that resulted, July 17, 1863, was a decisive Union victory and was the end of any real organized Confederate military activity in the Territory.

Yet Watie and his Indian troops held on, raiding supply lines when they saw opportunities.

Too far removed from the Civil War’s final death throes in the East, it took time for Watie to learn of Confederate capitulations. On June 23, 1865, more than three months after Lee’s army stacked arms at Appomattox, Watie became the last Confederate general to surrender.

**From the Webmaster's Computer:  
By: Bob Zebian**

Subscribe to 1<sup>st</sup> US Web Site Updates

Did you know that you can set up your Internet browser to alert you whenever the 1<sup>st</sup> US Web site is updated? The RSS Feed feature of our site lets you do this. Here's how:

1. Get an RSS newsreader for your Internet browser. If you use Internet Explorer 7 or Firefox, your browser already has one. If you use a different browser, there are plenty of free newsreaders that you can download. Search on the Internet for newsreaders or RSS readers to find one.
2. After you've installed a newsreader, go to the 1st US home page at [http://www.1stusinfantry.org/about\\_us.html](http://www.1stusinfantry.org/about_us.html). Click the **RSS** button on the left side of the page to open the feed page.
3. If you're using Internet Explorer 7, click the  button in your browser to add the feed. (Other newsreaders and browser may have different procedures to add a feed. See your newsreader's instructions in those cases. Or click the

*What's this?* link below the **RSS** button for more information.)

That's it! Your browser will receive notifications of changes to the 1st US Web site as they're made.



## Beer in the Civil War

The annals of military history are filled with reference to beer drinking and reverence among professional soldiers. Indeed it was held in such esteem in military Prussia that Frederick the Great issued orders to encourage his troops to take beer. "Many battles have been fought and won by soldiers nourished on beer." and his highness was convinced it was more prudent than the debilitating effects of coffee.

In America the Continental Congress approved ale as part of each soldiers daily ration. Although the official portions were discontinued in the mid eighteen hundreds, it continued to be held in high regard throughout the ranks. During World War One, despite the spreading prohibition at home, the doughboys' exploits in the Brasseries of France were legendary. And, in World War Two the U.S. armed forces virtually took over breweries, such as Brand, to provide for the needs of thirsty GI's. More recently the Gulf War caused special maneuvers, in locations where drinking is illegal, so troops could be cycled out of country for a little R&R and cold beer.

With abundant passages like these in other major conflicts why is there such little reference to beer during the Civil War? Unlike most works, the recent PBS series by Ken Burns did have a short mention of imbibing. But at first glance it would seem as though the only person responsible for consuming the entire country's output of alcohol was Ulysses S. Grant.

Did each side, and their proponents thinly disguised as historians, consider the events such a "noble cause" that they were compelled to clean up history? As with any cleaning job there is always some corners that get missed, and poking into these provides some insight. Despite some commonly held beliefs, the war was not a series of calvary dashes, brilliant maneuvers and continuous fighting. In fact, this first war of modern weapons was encumbered with old tactics of laying siege; thus, a majority of time was spent in encampments. The daily life of a soldier in camp was less than exciting, causing Lt. Oliver Wendell Holmes to write..."War is an organized bore." and a private to complain that camp was just 'Drill, Drill, Drill'. It's no wonder that in the hours not filled with the military's "make work" these men looked for other diversions. Distractions from camp routine were often found in playing cards, baseball, clubs and, of course, drinking beer. Not surprisingly drinking was readily seen in units made up of ethnic groups strongly tied to the beverage. The journal of one Union soldier revealed "...among the German troops, especially beer...is consumed in great quantities". However, beer was so prevalent overall that one soldier wrote home..."Almost everyone (I do not know of an exception) drink their beer".

What were the sources of this beer? Most common was the Sutlers, a name for entrepreneurs who reaped profits following the armies and providing services to the troops. Edward K. Wrightman, of the Ninth New York, (the Hawkin's Zouaves unit) wrote home, "You see I am well clad and lodged...and the Regimental sutler gives us credit for such little extras as we may desire...and have every reason to be satisfied with our condition. Bye the bye, I have just been (9PM), by pressing invitation, eating Clams and drinking lager...smooth the anxious minds of the good ladies who trouble themselves so much about my welfare. My health is very good indeed." Another testimony to the supply provided by sutlers was given by Samuel Clear of the 16th Pennsylvania who wrote "Still nice weather but very hot. McCafferty (our Sutler) treated the Regt. to Ale...the boys very noisy to night[SIC]". This was a similar experience for John W. Jacques of the Ninth New York State Militia who described how "On the road outside of camp was a wagon with lager bier...as long as the money lasted, comfort was taken...". Another source noted that, "Cider stocked by Sutlers sometimes had sufficient potency to make imbibers of a few glasses limber and joyful". No doubt the wagon or tent of a Sutler was always a welcome sight.

Officers had a much easier time securing the civil war equivalent of a six pack to go and even General "Uncle Billy" Sherman was known to take a smile. Those with a commission could, when supplies were available, draw and pay for allotments from the commissary. The common foot soldiers were not as fortunate, but were able to obtain supplies when signed for by an officer. While in Camp Smith, John

Jacques noted his pleasure about "Captain Greene's tent, from which the 'Lager' flowed freely...".

Another official source of beer were the military hospitals. One of the best known was Chimarazo, located in Richmond. It not only boasted a large bakery, but it also helped recuperation of the wounded by means of its 400 keg brewery.

Still another means of obtaining beer was, through the process that became an art, called foraging. Tales abound of inventive troops that secured a supply. Units in transit were particularly apt to engage in various techniques of general misappropriation. Indeed one unit paused while marching through a small town and noticed barrels stacked in front of a store. Some proceeded to divert the merchant's attention by a bit of a circus act. The troops were long gone when the proprietor discovered an empty keg had been substituted for a full one. On another occasion a Pennsylvania regiment heading for Baltimore stole a keg of beer and with subterfuge brought it aboard their troop train. Once underway they faced a dilemma of how to open the barrel. Finally, one brusque soldier beat in the head with a musket butt. The results were "The beer shot up into the air 15 feet like a fountain & fell foaming on everything & person...very little of the beer was left."

For every disappointment the universe maintains a balance through serendipity. The life of a civil war soldier had many instances where "Organizations distinguished for sobriety might under unusual temptation, go on a roaring spree". The Forty-Eighth New York was stationed on Tybee Island in June 1862 when a storm sank a ship and resulted in a large number of kegs washing ashore. The commander of the Forty-Eighth was a well known minister and it was much to his chagrin and disgust when his troops "...proceeded to get gloriously drunk." But the beer was not restricted to kegs; there are references such as "...Company B was having a game of ten pins with cannon balls and beer bottles in the company street..." Obviously this was well before the time of nickel deposits.

Finally, if the encampment was long enough, the soldiers would take to the production of home brew and other liquors. The slang for these included 'Oh be Joyful', 'How come you so', 'Bust Head', and 'Oil of Gladness'. Most of the references to these come from Northern troops, not necessarily because Southern chivalry eliminated partaking, but from the Northern army's greater access to raw materials, transportation, and the number of brewers that naturally settled in the cooler regions of the north. Still, the south did have their own recipe for home-brew. They were inclined to add "...raw meat and let the mixture ferment for a month or so to add what one veteran remembered as an old and mellow taste".

The efforts of the people involved should be neither diminished, nor forgotten, their struggle made an imprint that still affect us. However, it's good to remind ourselves that all these noble causes were carried out by average american beer drinkers.

*Article from Realbeer.com*

## JOHN H. BINGHAM

### **Pioneer Editor Drops Dead. Capt. John H. Bingham Died of Heart Failure Monday at Noon.**

Capt. John H. Bingham is dead. The summons came Monday at noon and without warning. Heart failure is given as the cause of his death. Capt. Bingham had not been complaining of feeling unwell, so we understand, and was able to attend to his usual business. He was at his home on South Chestnut street at the time and was out on the porch playing with one of the little children. He complained of a hurting in his left side and in a few moments thereafter was stricken. The news of his sudden death was received with much sadness by many friends throughout the city. It was a shock to everyone, for the Captain was down town nearly every day.

To this writer, the death of Captain Bingham brings much sadness. We had known him for 37 years. It was in his office we learned much of the printers' trade. He was for many years, editor of the Enquirer, one of the oldest papers in the State, and we can truthfully say he was a good employer. We thought much of him. He was a skillful printer and he required us to do our work right or not at all. ....The captain was a man of few words. He was honest and sincere in his views. He was a finely educated man, a deep thinker, a splendid writer. As brave a man as ever walked our streets. He was a democrat and always worked for and voted the democratic ticket. He was for years editor of the McKinney Enquirer which he edited until 1895, when without a moment's notice he ceased its publication. That was the Captain's way. He never consulted others about what was his business.....No man every knew John H. Bingham to 'ride the fence' on any question.

....he retired to his home, where he spent much of his time reading and looking after his big alfalfa farm. He owned several hundred acres at the time of his death. He took much interest in outdoor life. He was 74 years of age. He came here about 60 years ago from Tennessee. He was an ex-Confederate soldier, serving throughout the war. He was a member of Goode's Battery, and Texas Ranger. During the latter part of the war, he was elected Captain of a Company to succeed Capt. Douglass.

In 1867 Capt. Bingham was married to Miss Eliza V. Graves, daughter of the late Isaac F. Graves. Six children were born to this union, all living except two, Nathaniel, who died several years ago, and Margaret Gains who died when about one year of age. Those living are Mrs. J. T. Couch of this city; Mrs. Wat Morelock of Dallas, Isaac Bingham of Bakersfield, Cal., and Good Bingham at home. The funeral service was held at the home Wednesday afternoon...by Bishop Garrett of Dallas,

assisted by Rev. Carrington, Rector All Saints Church of Dallas, and Rev. Jamison, Rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church of this city. Many old time friends and neighbors had gathered to pay a last tribute of respect to the deceased and mingle their tears in sympathy for the grief stricken wife and children. At conclusion of the service the body was conveyed to Pecan Grove cemetery where it was lowered to its eternal rest. Thus passes from the busy walks of man, another familiar figure of the early days of Collin. Peace to his ashes.[*The McKinney Examiner, McKinney, Texas, Sept. 11, 1913.*]

## **From the Pecan Grove Cemetery (McKinney, TX)**

Bingham, John Henry 1839 – 1913  
Lt, and Commander of the Bingham's  
Battery" Georgia.  
Promoted to Captain, but refused.  
Buried: Block 27



## **The Union Standard**

*Newsletter of the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Infantry*

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