
The UNION STANDARD

August 2003

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

Dispatch from the Board

Have you ever tried to describe this hobby to someone who is not a family member and hasn't seen you drag in after a hot weekend looking like roadkill, or after a wet one looking like wet roadkill, still wearing an smile on your face? I hear myself telling people what we do sometimes – “Well, it rained... heavily!” or “it was unbelievably dusty...” “Man was it HOT!, the cheese in my haversack was sweating. Still tasted pretty good when I ate it for supper though...”, “...so cold the water froze in the buckets, and pushed the cork up out of the canteen hanging on the tent pole overnight...”.

Certainly some of you remember Shiloh, down by the “Hornet’s Nest” after the rain started, thinking it would blow over? I recall sitting with my poncho on, and that silly “shako” rain hat, leaning against a tree with John and Andrew Schultz, Sean and Kevin watching the rain drop from the bill of my cap and thinking, “this is sorta fun”.

“Fun...” If you describe a good deal of what we do, it doesn't *sound* like fun. Yet, I come back again and again, and again! Even when I'm sure the weather will be cold, or hot, or wet. *Why?* in the name of the great horn spoon do I, do we, do it?

Yes, part of it is because I want to feel for myself what I know to be an infinitely *small* sample of what the men who fought to preserve the Union experienced on a daily basis. In some strange sense suffering through this I have to admit I find it to be fun. Yet, the kind of fun I can't explain to someone who's never done it.

But if it's being wet, or hot is such “fun”, why don't I pitch my A-tent or shelter in the backyard and do it all the time – plenty of chances right? All winter, all summer, anytime I want to I can have “fun”. Wear my wool around while I'm at it. My neighbors know me well, it wouldn't surprise them. I think we all know it wouldn't be the same, which

has nothing to do with the venue being my backyard either. Actually it has much to commend itself when compared to the dusty slope at Chickamauga, the muddy hill at Shiloh, or the end of the line at Gettysburg. So, WHY?

Every time I look at it, every time I try to explain, I keep coming back to one, inescapable aspect that can only be experienced and can never be explained.

It's the ‘other guys’ that keep me coming back. It's listening to various recollections around the campfire at night. Listening to the light hearted grouching in line. Learning some history. Gregg Benefiel taking a hit at Palestine long before the Cornfeds were in sight. Rear rankers doing impressions of Major “bubble and squeak” Irwin issuing commands in the field. Tom Finger spooning peach cobbler onto the bottom of his cup at Old Washington because he didn't realize he had it upside down. Sgt. Major Beard and 1st Sgt Doughtie “dueling” after Sunday breakfast at Fort Washita. Cpl. Bowen dragging his son out of Tula's by the ear yelling “how many times have I told you NOT to come in here! How am I going to explain this to your mother!”

It's all you OTHER guys who make it fun to be there, who make the rain nearly tolerable, the cold survivable, the heat endurable. YOU guys are what makes the hobby FUN. I hope for myself that I manage to provide some fun for some of you when we're out in the field as well.

So... when I thought of what the other members of the board might want me to say, what “profound” thing they'd want to share with you, I know it would be safe to say we really DO want you to have FUN out there.

And if *you ain't havin fun*, by God, let us know!

I remain , your most humble and obedient servant,
Alan Prendergast

1st U.S. Calendar

2003

AUGUST

30 Live Fire, 200 yd range, Mansfield

SEPTEMBER

26-28 Battle of Middle Boggy (Atoka, Oklahoma)

OCTOBER

18 Drill at Granbury Re-enactment -
CANCELLED BY GRANBURY

NOVEMBER

7-9 Battle of Bentonville (formally Cane Hill)

DECEMBER

6-7 Drill, Fort Washita

Conway Barton, Art Ogle, Blair Rudy and myself worked the May 10th Boy Scout Show at Dallas' Market Hall. William Ray has plans for a recruiting opportunity at the Ft. Worth Stockyards, so contact him for further details.

Don Gross organized a 1st U.S. appearance at Old City Park on July 4th. Alan Prendergast cooked lamb on an open fire, the 1st marched in a parade, living history talks were performed, and of course, the recruiting booth was active. Not a bad way to spend the 4th.

How th' game iz played

A Small Incident

Oftentimes it's th' little things that "make" an event. Take th' followin' fer example: We wuz in Missouri et th' time. It wuz jest after we'd traded-in our howitzers fer rifle muskets ... We usta shoot cannons fer th' Mudsills so we wuz integrated into their ranks fer a sharp fight over by Jefferson Barracks. Now our mixed skirmish line wuz pushin' back th' Rebs whin I caught lead an' dropped. Th' range had opened up t' 500 yards or so, an' I'd taken a leetle too long standin' still t' perfect m' aim. Some passin' Samaritan tossed m' cap over m' features so m' peepers wouldn't broil, I'd a thanked 'im if I coulda. Now I cuddn't see nuthin' but this is whut I heard "We're drivin' 'em right handily first sergeant." said th' Mudsill Capt. "Yessir!" snapped th'Mudsill Sgt. "Who'd we loose here?" th' Capt. asked, givin' m' brogan a leetle kick. "Dunno sir!" "Whuddaya mean, ya dunno?! Doncha know yer own men!" With thet, th' embattled N.C.O. briefly raised m' cap an' replied, "Hiz face is gone." "My Gawd!" th' Capt. sez. Then off they both went t' keep up wid th' advance. Now neither one o' them fellers knew me from Adam, but thet didn't stop 'em frum comin' down right where they wuz s'posed t' be. Th' war iz real an' it iz now. So o' course they'd know ever' man in th' company. They kum up wid th' only reason they cuddn't recognize one, thet there wuddn't enough left t' recognize.

Corrections:

Robert Burrage's correct Email Address is union.street@verizon.net (McFuddy claims he run short of periods in Times Roman Font type and figured no one would notice the difference. However, I must admit to having given him the wrong info in the first place)

The Recruiting Post

by George Hansen

The Scottish Festival proved to be a most successful recruiting venture. Manned by Don Gross, Art Ogle, Blair Rudy and William Ray. Our 79th NY Highlanders impression was appreciated by the event organizers as the 1st was invited to participate in the opening parade. The prospects from the festival attending the Samuell Farm drill were **Ron Hagan, Chris Baker, Harold Rudd, and Brian & Alex Elliott**. Another new prospect at the drill was **Scott Fullerton** as well as new recruit **Robert Burrage**. There are several other interested prospects who came to the July 19th cartridge party.

Now thet, children, iz how this game shuld be played.

Hargis, G. 5 A-1

a.k.a. Deacon o' th' Rakensacker Mess

LIVE FIRE DIRECTIONS

The Johnson County Shooting Sports Club

WHEN: August 30, 2002 starting at 0900, gates open at 0730.

WHO: Anyone in the 1st US or others who are associated with the 1st.

Also Span-Am reenactors are welcome.

DIRECTIONS:

From Dallas-- take Highway 67 toward Cleburne. At the intersection of 67 and I-35W, go another 3.9 miles west (toward Keene) and turn left (south) on County Road 318. Go south on CR 318 one mile (it's only 1 mile long) and turn right. The range entrance is 100 yards on the right. Look for the orange 1st US signs.

From Ft Worth: Go south on I-35W to Highway 67 (towards Cleburne and Keene). Go west on 67 3.9miles and then south on 318 until it ends, then turn right 100 yards, range on the right.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Gentlemen:

The Fall Campaign is rapidly approaching and now is the time to make those necessary preparations.

The Live Fire is August 30 and for the second year we will meet at the Johnson County Shooting Sports Club near Cleburne, which allows us to test our rifles at 225 yds. See above for directions. If you are a new recruit and have not yet purchased a rifle, then contact Capt. Don Gross for a loaner. Kip Bassett is coordinating this event so contact him for additional information. Hamburgers, hot dogs & soft drinks available onsite for a nominal fee.

The Middle Boggy Reenactment in

Atoka, OK, September 26-28, is less than a two-hour drive from Plano. *Atoka is our main 2003 reenactment and it is a Frontier Brigade maximum effort event.* Even if you can only attend one day you are highly encouraged to participate in Saturday's battle. We need your presence. A lot of units are coming because they didn't go to Gettysburg. The 1st might get to do skirmish detail if front of the whole Brigade. For new people this is an excellent first-time reenactment. The location has great campsites and campaign-style camping is mandated as per Regimental orders; i.e., dog tents or shebangs, but A-tents are permissible. Contact Sgt. Fett should you need tentage. Bring 100 rounds. \$10 per person covers all weekend meals as prepared by Cpl. Don Gates, the Unit cook. More info later regarding Atoka and the meals fee. Contact me should you have any questions.

Battle of Benton County, Bentonville,

Arkansas, takes place November 7-9. Registration fee is \$5. It is an invitation only event and the Frontier Brigade is attending. More details to come next month.

The above are 1st US maximum effort events.

Since the October Granbury Reenactment was cancelled, a replacement activity will soon be announced. And, don't forget drill in December. Yes, this is a busy schedule, but we had an extended layoff and cool weather is when we don the Blue coats. Try to attend what you can and contact me should you have any questions.

By the way, those who need a Unit roster should immediately contact me - bowen01@attg.net or call (972) 539-6167.

Your Obedient Servant,

Lt. John Bowen
D Company
1st Regiment, U.S. Infantry

Memorial Day Service

(delivered to George Hansen)

June 5, 2003

Dear George,

“That They Shall Never Be Forgotten”

This is just a short note of appreciation for the 1st U.S.’ contribution to making the Pecan Grove Memorial Day Celebration the most successful year yet. Your participation and support was most appreciated.

Thank you from all the Board Members at Pecan Grove.

Sincerely,

Harry McKillop
President, Pecan Grove Cemetery
Board of Trustees

(Footnote: Attending the Memorial Day ceremony were - John Bowen, Don Gross, Tim Inserra, Terry Quigley, Blair Rudy, and Sons of Union Veterans participant Mark Backus.)

From “*Everyday Life in the 1800’s, A Guide for Writers, Students & Historians*”

SLANG & EVERYDAY SPEECH
By John Bowen

Continued from June/July issue....

Sabbaday, Sabberday: the Sabbath day
Sakes alive: the equivalent of good heavens or for God’s sake
Salt River: to row someone up Salt River is to beat him up or give him hell
Sam Hill: euphemism for the devil
Saratoga Chips: invented in 1853 at Saratoga Spgs, NY, the original potato chip
Savage as a meat axe: extremely savage
Savagerous: savage

Sawyer: one who sawed trees or wood by hand at a lumber mill

School ma’am, school’ marm: a woman teacher

Seed: often used for saw or seen

Set by, set much by: to regard, to esteem

[to] Set store by: to set value upon, to appreciate

Seven to nine: something or someone of inferior or common quality, originating from common windowpanes of that size

[great] Shakes: of great consequence

Shaw, pshaw: an expression of contempt or incredulity

Shecoonery: a corruption of chicanery

[to cut] Shines: to pull practical jokes or tricks

Shoddies: shoddy uniforms made from wool scraps that fell apart in bad weather

Shucks: worthless people or things (from corn or pea shucks)

Shut pan: shut up, shut your mouth

Sin to Moses, sin to Crockett: something that would shame either Moses or Crockett

Skedaddle: to flee

Skeery: to be afraid or cautious

Skillegalee: hard tack soaked in water and fried in pork grease, a Union specialty

Slantindicular: slanting

Slick: to fix or dress up

[right] Smart: a large quantity

Smart as a steel trap: particularly intelligent and quick

Smile: a drink, to take a drink

Sockdologer: a powerful punch or blow

Some pumpkins: someone or something impressive

Sorghum: sorghum syrup and sugar served as a substitute for cane sugar in the South throughout the Civil War

Sot: a corruption of set or sat

Sour on: to get sick of someone or something, to give up something out of disgust

Sparking/ spark it: courting; to court

Spree: to go out and carouse, to party and get drunk

Squire: a justice of the peace or magistrate

Steady habits: the land of steady habits was New England

Streaked: frightened or annoyed

Suspicion: to suspect

Tinker: one who repaired or made tinware

Tomatoes: widely believed to be poisonous and generally not eaten until the early 1880s

Tote: to carry

Trace: a trail or path

Truck, spun truck: garden produce intended for market. Later, it came to mean any quantity of 'stuff.'

Tuckered out: exhausted

Vamose: to leave quickly

Virginia fence: a staggering drunk was said to make this (a zig-zagging fence) when he walked. Anyone or anything that meanders.

Wake snakes: to raise a ruckus

Wheelwright: one who made or repaired wagon wheels

Whip one's weight in wild cats: to defeat a powerful opponent

Whitewash: to gloss over or hide one's faults or shortcomings

Wrathy: angry

Yankee notions: things made in New England, made widely known by traveling Yankee

MONEY & CURRENCY

Bit: one-eighth of a dollar, therefore a quarter is 2 bits

Bungtown coppers: worthless copper coins

Civil War tokens: also **Hard Times tokens:** frequently called **Copperheads**, issued by private individuals and businesses to make up for the severe coin shortage due to hoarding.

Coppers: slang for cents

Double eagle: a 20 dollar gold piece

Eagle: a 10 dollar gold piece

Fractional currency: from 1863 to 1876, small notes of 3, 5, 10, 25, and 50 cents were issued by the gov't. to help alleviate the coin shortage and to be used in lieu of postal currency

Green backs or **United States notes:** the legal tender notes issued by the gov't. in 1862. They were the dominant form of money used by the North, depreciating to 35 cents per dollar in 1864 and rising to 75 cents as the North began to win the war.

Actual face value per dollar was finally achieved 14 years after the war.

Large cents: minted 1793-1857. Replaced in 1857 by a smaller cent. Other uses:

housewives tossed them in their pickling crocks to give their pickles a rich green color, which it was learned, poisoned people. Were also tacked to the ridgepoles of new houses in New England to insure good luck. The eyes of corpses were also kept shut

by these coins. Some people made necklaces of the cents as a cure for arthritis.

National Bank Notes: issued by Nat'l banks in 1863 to replace those issued by state banks.

Pocket full of rocks: slang for having plenty of money

Postal currency: in July 1862 the gov't. allowed the use of postage stamps to help alleviate the massive coin shortage.

Shinplasters: paper currency issued in denominations as low as 5 cents by businesses and individuals in the 1830s and again in the 1860s to help offset the shortage of coins.

Slug: a 50 dollar gold piece issued in 1851 and 1852

Small cents: made from copper and nickel and actually called nickels by the public from 1859-1864.

Spondulicks: slang for money

Vs and Xs: 5 and 10-dollar bills

Other coins in circulation: gold dollar, half cent, half dime, half dollar, half eagle, quarter, quarter eagle, silver dollar, 3 cent piece, 2 cent piece.

For Sale: (Recruits take note!)

Contact Wes Hanson at

Wes.Hanson@weblinkwireless.com, or (972) 223-8502:

Daley Sack Coat 48" (brand new) - \$165

Jarnagin 1857/61 Cartridge Box, w/sling, plates, tins (never used) - \$120

Trousers (Frazer's) about 42" - \$40

Sack Coat (Frazer's) 50" - \$40

Brogans 10 ½ - \$20 or best offer!

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Newsletter contributions - E-Mail/Mailing

submissions to **The Union Standard** -

d1stus@gte.net or C/O Alan Prendergast, 1403 Barclay Drive, Carrollton Texas, 75007

(please help out by using Times New Roman)

Newsletter - contact George Hansen if you did not receive your newsletter,

beast1st@attbi.com or (972) 529-5349.

Address/Telephone changes - any mailing/e-mail address changes or telephone number changes should be submitted to John Bowen, bowen01@attg.net or (972) 539-6167.

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