



The Union Eagle

Journal of the U.S Frontier Brigade

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Greetings!

You may notice our new masthead this issue. I “borrowed” this from a catalog put out by a seller who deals in original Civil War artifacts. The scroll is blank, but really needs to say “Frontier” on the left, and “Brigade” on the right-hand side. Unfortunately, my poor computer will not allow me to manage this; so, if anyone can copy this image and re-work it, I would be most appreciative.

I saw Whit Edwards recently at a local event, and he said that preparations for the fall event at Fort Washita are coming along nicely. The OHS crews have been working to clear more of the brush from the Federal camping area, and it is going to be an outstanding campsite! Although separated from the fort by only a creek and some woods, it still seems very remote and free of modern intrusions. The members of the Brigade will be very pleased with the set-up.

Major Jim Morris, of the 1st Arkansas Battalion, sends the following announcing that the Bentonville, Arkansas event is back on for the weekend of October 31-November 1.

“Kind Sirs,

The Mayor and the City of Bentonville have decided to go ahead with the Bentonville, Arkansas, Civil War reenactment. It is to be sponsored by the City and a group of volunteers headed by Dr. Don Cohagan, a prominent physician in town for decades. His correspondence from the Mayor I am forwarding to you. The Mayor says to proceed with the plans and get the show on the road! I know this is a late time in the year to announce the plans but defer to you all in your decisions to proceed or not. It would be a timely announcement for the Jefferson, Texas, reenactment this next weekend.

All in all, I hope you are as excited as I am in participating in the 5th bi-annual Bentonville

reenactment that started back in 2001.

*Your humble and o'bt servant,
Steve Bailey
Bentonville, Arkansas "*

The colonel believes that it is important that we follow protocol and take a formal vote of the unit representatives before officially making this a Brigade event, and that process is ongoing at this time.

We are pleased to announce that the 1st Arkansas Infantry (U.S.) has formally applied for Brigade membership. Based in the Oklahoma City area, the unit currently has four members and is commanded by Captain John Schwarz. Its members are all veteran reenactors, and the group brings with it a lot of practical campaigning experience. One of the chief goals of the First will be to research and portray the role of Southern Unionists in the war.

From the Colonel's Tent

By Don Gross

Men, I've managed to get out in the field as a private recently both with the 1st US and the 8th KS. This is something I really enjoy. You have no idea how much fun it is to be a private in the ranks with no meetings, no politics, and no responsibility. But more importantly, it gives me the opportunity to see individual units on their own turf and get to know the men better.

For those who didn't make it to muster, the Battalion has a permanent Sgt. Major. Thanks to Mark Vlahos for stepping up and taking on this role. Mark brings real world military experience with him (Air Force) and more importantly a wealth of experience reenacting across the country. And, man he just looks like a Sgt Major who you wouldn't want to mess with!

This has been a rough year for scheduled events and I'm glad we have two events to look forward to in the fall. The Oklahoma Historical Society is sponsoring an event at Ft Washita at the end of September. We should have a really good time at this one. There is only one spectator battle on Saturday and the rest of the weekend we get to do what we want. While the Confederates have the fort, I can only describe our camping spot on the top of the hill as sweet (if I'm not dating myself).

As I write this the Brigade members are in the process of voting to make Bentonville an official Brigade event. This is another event where we've always had a good time and I expect it to be the same this year. Look for more information on this event in the next issue.

See you in the field,
Don Gross

From the Desk of the Sergeant Major

By Mark Vlahos

Getting to Know your Weapon

The most important piece of equipment every infantryman carries is his weapon. For most of us in the Frontier Brigade, the weapon of choice is either the M1861 Springfield or the M1853 Enfield rifled musket. Every soldier should be well versed in the care, cleaning, and operation of their musket. Remember, the infantryman of the civil war spent the majority of his time in camp drilling and could recite load in nine times in their sleep!

In April, myself and my good pard, 1st Sgt Steve shore from the 37IL/6 AR, put together a live musket shoot at a local range. If you have never live-fired your musket, I encourage you to do this sometime. Live firing, especially under timed and graded conditions, will give you the chance to prove your mettle and see how you stack up against the 3 shots per minute of the well-trained infantryman of the civil war.

I know some of you old soldiers' eyes might be popping out right now because I even brought up the subject of live-firing, so I am going to put in a couple of safety points. **First**, remember, any live musket firing must be done in the proper setting under controlled conditions—range safety observers are a must. **Second**, before attempting any live firing, go over a refresher of load in nine times with your men—have the book out when you teach this. **Third**, and most important, remember the only time in reenacting we ever draw rammers is for inspection arms and musket cleaning; have a thorough discussion about this during any live firing training. **Finally**, consider the experience level of your unit before having a live musket shoot. I can tell you that setting up a controlled live musket shoot is a great team building event for a unit looking for something fresh to do when you have an open calendar.

In between reenacting events, take your musket out in the backyard and practice your manual of arms and loading in nine times. Repetition is the key to learning and getting comfortable with your weapon. For corporals and sergeants, this where we make our bread and butter; getting the men ready for before we all fall in for company or battalion drill.

I'm now going to share a little history on the British Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifled Musket that Steve put together. Hope to see you in the field soon!

Enfield Pattern 1853

Rifle-Musket

British Contract from 1853-1867



GENERAL INFORMATION

-Originally produced at the Royal Arms Factory, the P53 Enfield Rifle-Musket was the standard British Infantry weapon from 1853-1867.

-Percussion cap ignition system, weighing 9.5 lb, 53" in length, manually loaded, air cooled, muzzle loading, shoulder fired weapon that can be fired three times per minute by a well practiced soldier.

-A seventeen inch bayonet can be attached to the muzzle for offensive or defensive protection.

-The long barrel was necessary, to allow the muzzles of the second rank of soldiers to extend beyond the faces of the front rank man.

-The 39" barrel had three grooves, with a 1:78 rifling twist, and was fastened to the stock with three metal barrel bands.

-The rifle's cartridges contained sixty-eight grains of black powder. The lead bullet was typically a 530-grain Prichett or a Burton-Minié ball that exited the muzzle at 850-950 feet per second.

-The Enfield's adjustable rear sight ladder had steps for 100, 200, 300, and 400 yards. Targets beyond that distance were sighted with an adjustable flip-up blade graduated (depending on the model and date of manufacture) from 900 to 1250 yards.

-The maximum effective range was 200-300 yards.

American Civil War

- The P53 Enfield Rifle-Musket was also used by both the North and the South in the American Civil War. It was the second most widely used infantry weapon in the war, surpassed only by the 1861 Springfield.

- The Confederate States imported more P-53 Enfield muskets during the course of the Civil War than any other small arm from another country. When the British government refused to sell the CSA weapons, private British contractors and gun runners producing the P-53's then shipped their manufactured muskets to the South.

- It has been estimated that over 900,000 P-53 Enfields were exported to America and saw service in every major battle from 1862 to 1865.

Lock, Stock and Barrel

- There are three main groups to the P-53 rifle-musket. They are the lock, the stock and the barrel.

- The barrel will be clean as a whistle every time it is inspected.

- The lock will not be disassembled by anyone less than a sergeant or armorer.

- The stock will be inspected for cracks, chips or other problems which could injure the soldier when firing.

Company Drill

--or a One Company Battalion

By Don Gross

You're at your company's monthly drill (you all do this right?) or at a local event and its time to drill the men. What do you do when your men are so proficient that the school of the soldier and company takes less than a half hour? The ability to move quickly and correctly into and out of was the mark of a quality regiment, regular or volunteer. They were soldiering full time and drilled every day – if not twice a day ‘till they had it down – both officers and men. Once you get through the school of the soldier and school of the company I believe that the best thing you can do is to work on battalion maneuvers.

“But we're only one company. How can we do battalion maneuvers when by definition a battalion is two or more companies?” you may ask.

Easy, each of the battalion maneuvers is made up of successive company maneuvers. If each company knows what it is supposed to do in any given battalion evolution then when all of us get together battalion drill all of a sudden becomes easy.

By practicing the battalion evolutions at the company level, we can accomplish two things. First, you as the company commander learn the battalion commands. You all know that it's easier to execute a command than give it. (One of these days, I'm going to take an early hit and leave the battalion to the 1st company commander.) Secondly, the men become familiar with the commands and know how to execute what is required.

If I were conducting company drill here is what I would work on in simulated battalion drill:

- By company into line, marching by both the right and left flanks.
- On the left into line wheel – don't forget it's a fixed pivot.
- On the right into line – this one is a turn.
- By the right (and left) of companies to the front.
- By the right (and left) of companies to the rear.
- By the right (and left) of companies to the rear into column.
- Countermarch. (This is from a column of companies not the reenactorism to head a column of fours the opposite direction).
- On the right (left) by file into line (you need to know it but it's my last choice to form a line of battle).

All these evolutions are covered briefly in the *Battalion Evolutions* Handout and of course in *Casey's*.

With these basics down, the battalion can spend time on the really fun stuff – like double columns, moving closed in mass, and maybe even forming a square for the times when that pesky cavalry just don't get the picture.

Camp Etiquette

By Cal Kinzer

Here are some general rules of camp etiquette with which all reenactors should become familiar. Observance of these not only shows good manners, but helps promote everyone's enjoyment of the events.

Modern vehicles should never be driven into or within sight of the camp after an event has started, nor before it has officially ended. The usual times are from first light or *Reveille* on Saturday morning (or Friday morning if the event is a three-day one) until after the last battle or other activity on Sunday afternoon. Even at other times, they should never be left in camp any longer than is absolutely necessary to load or unload equipment. Those arriving after dark should avoid driving into camp as this might endanger comrades who are sleeping on the ground without tents. If necessary, simply bivouac for the night and wait until morning to set up.

Those arriving after an event has begun should change into their period clothing before entering camp. It is always a temptation to stroll in and greet friends as soon as one arrives, but this should be resisted so as not to disrupt the authentic atmosphere.

First person conversation is difficult to maintain for an entire weekend, but one should never inject a modern topic into a group when it is obvious that a period discussion is going on. In such cases, simply stopping to think twice before talking will usually serve to avoid this.

Modern devices such as flashlights, televisions and radios have no business being in an "authentic" military camp. Cell phones should never be used openly. It is best to leave them in one's car; but, if it is absolutely necessary that they be carried, they should remain muted and used only out of sight and hearing of other soldiers. Just think, for a moment, of the negative impression it must make on spectators and the media – even in the vendor/sutler area or parking

lot – when they see period-dressed soldiers or civilians “yakking” on their cell phones!

Regardless of whether it be by squad or company, each mess should have its own fire. Non-members of that mess should not use a fire unless they first ask permission or are invited to do so by its owners. There is only so much room around a fire, and it is rude to take up a space around one that has been built by a mess for their own use. When starting one’s own fire, it is considered bad manners to take coals or burning wood from another without first asking permission.

Remember, tent canvas does not insulate sound! Getting some sleep at night is not only nice, it is a safety issue – especially for those who have long drives home. Nothing is more annoying than a few “night owls” who stay up talking all night, or “early birds” who get up early and start a loud conversation, seemingly without any concern for the needs of others. This is why the real armies had bugle calls and enforced silence in the camps during certain hours. *Tattoo* normally comes around 11:00-12:00 p.m. When it sounds, troops should begin getting ready for bed. Once *Taps* has sounded, the camp should remain quiet until *Reveille*. Avoid playing music, setting up or taking down camp, loading or unloading equipment or pounding tent pegs. Those who find it necessary to talk should do so in a whisper. Moving about camp, jostling equipment, &c. should be kept to a minimum. Those who get up early should continue to observe quiet. Do not begin fixing breakfast - especially do not begin chopping wood or pounding coffee beans! - until after *Reveille* has sounded. Although one may not be able to see them, there are usually scores of people right around him who are trying to get some badly-needed sleep. Therefore, be considerate! If there are no bugle calls, assume the quiet time to run from 12:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

In most cases, civilians are not permitted to camp with the military, and should leave camp between *Tattoo* and *Reveille*. In our unit, those employed as cooks or washerwomen are permitted to camp in rear of the officers’ tents, or to the side of the camp, but never actually on the company street. Surgeons, nurses and hospital stewards were rarely seen on the front lines while the actual fighting was going on. They normally worked in field or permanent hospitals located to the rear. Civilians should never be seen on the battlefield unless specifically called for by the battle scenario.

Camp etiquette is mostly a matter of observing good manners and placing the needs of others, and of the company, before one’s own. In most cases, the “Golden Rule” will suffice as a guide to correct behavior towards fellow reenactors.

Brigade Events

September 26-27, 2009 – Fort Washita, OK. Campaign-style camping is recommended. Public battle on Saturday afternoon, non-spectator tactical situation from Saturday night until noon Sunday. Contact Whit Edwards at: wedwards@okhistory.org.

Other Events of Interest

June 13-14, 2009 – Baldwin, MS. Battles of Tupelo and Brice’s Crossroads reenactment. Contact Terry Crowder at colcav@charter.net.

July 18, 2009 - Reintsville, OK. Battle of Honey Springs commemorative ceremony. Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Contact: Howard McKinnis at howardmck@okhistory.org.

August 1-2, 2009 – Brulington, KS. Battle reenactment.

September 5-6, 2009 - Atlanta, GA. 145th Anniversary Battle of Atlanta reenactment.

September 5-6, 2009 – Lamon, IA. Battle reenactment, MCWRA sanctioned.

September 12-13, 2009 – Laclede, MO. Battle reenactment.

September 19, 2009 (Saturday only) – Beggs, OK. Family Frontier Days.

September 19-20, 2009 - Holden, MO. Battle reenactment. MCWRA sanctioned.

October 3-4, 2009 - Perryville, KY. – Battle of Perryville reenactment.

October 10-11, 2009 - O'Fallon, MO. Battle reenactment.

October 24-25, 2009 - Tyler, TX. Battle reenactment.

October 24-25, 2009 – St. Louis, MO. Jefferson Barracks Civil War reenactment.
(CANCELLED)

October 31-November 1, 2009. Bentonville, AR. Battles of Bentonville and Pea Ridge reenactment. Fall encampment, with more formal company streets, dress parades and other formations, and other activities. More information will follow in future issues of this newsletter. [Note: This event has been officially proposed as a Brigade event, and the unit representatives are in the process of voting on it as such.]

November 7, 2009 (Saturday only) – Fort Gibson, OK. Fall bake day living history.

November 7-8, 2009 – McKinney, TX. The Battle of Myers' Landing. For more information, go to: <http://www.co.collin.tx.us/living/MyersLanding.pdf>. This will be a recruiting event for the 1st U.S. Contact: Alan Prendergast.

November 7-8, 2009 – Old Washington, AR. Living history and battle reenactments in the oldest town in Arkansas, and the site of the Confederate capital after the fall of Little Rock.

Organization of the U.S. Frontier Brigade

Brigade Headquarters

Lieutenant Colonel Don Gross
Brigade Commander
Ft. Worth, TX

Captain Cal Kinzer
Adjutant
Beggs, OK

Sergeant Major Mark Vlahos
Senior NCO

Neal Rudy
Chief of Musicians

Major Doug Kidd
Chief of Cavalry

Major Pete Stoddard
Chief of Artillery

1st Infantry Battalion
Eighth Kansas Volunteer Infantry

Captain Jonathan Goering
Wichita, KS
www.8thKansas.org

First United States Regular Infantry

Captain Alan Prendergast
Dallas, TX

Second Colorado Volunteer Infantry

Captain Jim Trent
Stillwater, OK

Seventy-Seventh Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry

Captain Rex Griffin
Jenks, OK

Tenth Kansas Volunteer Infantry

Captain Mike Kirk
Oklahoma City, OK

Thirteenth United States Regular Infantry

Tom Whitesides
Houston, TX

Thirty-Seventh Illinois Volunteer Infantry

Captain Tom Ezell
North Little Rock, AR

This Newsletter is Written and Edited By
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