



## March 4th

The Multi Lakes Association for Civil War Studies Monthly Newsletter

April 2015

### **Captains Report**

Spring Drill at Historic Fort Wayne: 2015

Co. E turned out in strong numbers for our annual company spring drill on the last weekend of March this year; a weekend that started cool and sunny, but then ended up cold and windy. We Texans persevered, and much was accomplished. From informative classes on improving one's impression to some serious company drill (I hope the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sergeant has recovered from his head-first dive into the parade ground), our company enjoyed a weekend of morale boosting comradery while we shook out the winter cob-webs and prepared for the upcoming campaign season. We began on Saturday as numbers of us pitched in to help Josh Coleman with demolition work to make way for his Eagle Project. We Texans showed up in good numbers and the old walls came tumbling down around the old Commandant's quarters. The Colemans then treated all the workers to a good lunch, followed by the longest hand-to-hand unloading of a trailer, board by board, that you could ever imagine. A superb example of teamwork in action! This was followed by the Captain

and the past Captain/Major/private Allgaier taking on all comers in ping-pong and devastating the field triumphantly. Were we leaders taking from the men? No, we were demonstrating the skill and prowess that all good leaders should have by overwhelming all opposition!

We headed to the 1850's barracks; the 13 of us staying picked out our bunks, stacked our muskets and then headed off to another fine meal, again courtesy of the Coleman family (I lost no weight this weekend!). Saturday night saw intense poker games (believe me, your Captain takes nothing from the men in this sport), some exploring of the fort's grounds and some serious ghost hunting on the forbidden third floor by some of the braver young soldiers. All were asleep by mid-night from all the fresh air and fun, except for those too long for their bunks!

Sunday brought coffee over the campfire, Ted's hardboiled eggs and the arrival of another group of men, bringing our totals to up around 30 for the coming drill. We formed the company on the parade ground of the fort; a place where thousands of soldiers of the past have drilled and toiled as we were about to do. Our Corporals then took their platoons and, with the advice and assistance of the senior non-coms, proceeded to put them through their paces. The company reformed and then I worked on company movements, formations and firings. Appomattox is coming quickly and, as first company in a new battalion, we need to be ready to lead by example. After drill we had class instruction from Jim Celmer, John Difatta, Paul Wikarski and Tim Puzella on everything from camping to storing food to packing backpacks to first person impression improvement. I spoke on the season's events, final prep for Appomattox and the First Sergeant asked each man to sign up for the events he intended to attend this year. Another fine meal was offered, thanks to our cook Jim Celmer who opened our two dozen cans of chili, cooked and turned them into a fine meal, assisted by a superb ham foraged by our new soldier Dylan Comsa. We gathered for more drill and were shortly blown off the parade ground by gale force winds.

A big thanks to all those who made this drill happen; from the constant communication from First Sergeant Fross, to the cooking of the Colemans and Celmer, to the excellent classes taught by our members, to the Historic Fort Wayne Coalition who allowed us to operate and bunk in this great old setting. It was good to see new recruits, from Canadians to high school students, and to re-connect with past veterans and friends. A fine start to the season was had; now it is off to Appomattox 150<sup>th</sup>!

Respectfully Submitted,

## 1st Sgt's Report

### 150th Appomattox Information

Boy's,

The Medich Battalion Spring Drill set for May 2-3, 2015 at Huddleston Farm has been '**cancelled**'. The reason given is the expected low numbers of soldiers that would have been attending. As of this writing there are no plans to reschedule the drill.

Company Drill, Really good drill till the hurricane force winds came through and cut the day short for us. I'm confident we had a good start on the basics for the new guys and great opportunity for our new NCO's to step out in front of the men and run their squads. The 2nd Sergeant, adjutant, and Corporal's lectures were superb. Also, thanks to John Difatta for his lecture on period foods and glassware. I had planned on a talk about uniforms but ran out of time due to some 'long-winded' lectures before me. We'll save that for a future event then. Also, thanks to Jim for standing out in the hurricane corridor and cooking up our chili we had for lunch.

Hope y'all had a good time. I know I did, even though I gave up \$5 to the cause on Saturday night.

This part is for those attending the 150th Appomattox.

The event is coming up next weekend. Sounds like everyone is squared away for rides. If not let me know. I know of a few open seats in cars heading out.

I know we've all done this before and it has been covered in previous postings but I want to make sure you remember the following items;

- When you get to registration remember to sign in as 4th Texas Co.E/MLACWS, so that you're covered under our liability insurance. We are falling in with the Southern Cross Battalion (SBC). The Lt.Colonel commanding is Ben Cwayna. We will be camping in the PACS area in the Confederate Camp. This should be near the Florida Brigade.
- All general orders that have been issued by Lt. Col. Cwayna are listed on

the company website with the schedule and maps for the event. [Link Here](#)

- The address to the reenactor registration tent is, 7571 Richmond Highway, Appomattox, VA 24522.
- This is the event website, <http://www.appomattoxhistoricalsociety.org/events.htm>
- A shell jacket, RDII or III, is the preferred tunic worn by men of the 4th Texas. Period military or civilian trousers are acceptable.
- Only period glasses and brogans must be worn. No modern items on you during the event.
- The Lt. Col commanding requests each soldier have at least 100 rounds. For our unit we ask that you bring some extra rounds, maybe 10, for our two friends coming from Vegas. They, obviously, cannot bring gunpowder on the airplane.
- You'll need to have your own food for the event. No rations are being issued.
- If you haven't secured a spot under Jim's Fly, you may want to bring some shelter. Looks like some rain on Saturday.
- Weather report- Friday, high of 77- low of 59, Mostly cloudy--- Saturday, high of 76- low of 47, Cloudy and a chance of showers--- Sunday, high of 71-Low of 48, partly sunny

Any questions, give me a call at 313-717-1264. I plan on arriving there sometime Thursday evening before 8pm.

This one is going to be great. Safe travels,  
John,  
1st Sgt. Sam Fossett

## **What Rations: The Texas Brigade at Appomattox**

**By John Difatta**

For many Confederate soldiers at Appomattox, Virginia the sound of their growling stomachs might have been as loud as the fading rifle shots. The plight of the men in the Texas Brigade reflected this hunger. Encamped around Richmond on April 1<sup>st</sup>, the men of the brigade boarded trains and were carried south. By April 2<sup>nd</sup> the Texas Brigade was acting as the rear guard of Gen. Lee's army as it slowly wound

its way towards Appomattox. Along the way the resolve of the Texas Brigade was tested by the weather, the enemy, and the strain of its labors. One of its biggest challenges though was undergoing all of these hardships with little to no food.

The Confederates were on short rations from the time they left Richmond until the day they surrendered. Sergeant D. H. Hamilton, the only remaining non-commissioned officer in Company M, of the 1<sup>st</sup> Texas Infantry regiment, wrote that as they marched in the direction of Lynchburg on April 2<sup>nd</sup> he and his men had “only one cup of flour for each man and no meat.” [1] Things were little better for the other men in the brigade. O.T. Hanks, a sergeant in Company K, of the 1<sup>st</sup> Texas noted that cooking what little food they had was difficult since “we had no way of cooking as the wagons could not be with us with utensils”. With necessity as the mother of invention Hanks recalled that there “was always a way. We kneaded our dough on a piece of oil cloth or in a piece of bark peeled from a tree; baked it on an iron ramrod, or a green stick, or a spade, [or] anything that would answer the purpose”. [2] As they neared Amelia Court House the Texans mood brightened as they were told rations would be waiting for them. Disappointment was their lot as they “found great piles of corn that had been collected for our use burnt or burning”, destroyed by ranging Federal cavalry forays. [3] Their only comfort was “a little corn meal to help appease their appetites.” [4] As the men plodded along it was difficult to supplement their rations with foraging even though some time on April 3<sup>rd</sup> was devoted to the task around Amelia Court House. Hanks wrote that finding food was hard because rations were not “obtainable in the surrounding country”. [5] Foraging was made even more hazardous by the near constant presence of the enemy pressing in on the Texans flanks and rear.

Across April 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> the Texans continued their trek Southwest towards Appomattox. They fought several skirmishes during this time and survived for several days on nothing more than small handfuls of parched corn and flour/cornmeal that they turned into small johnnycakes or biscuits. Many of the men did not even get that and survived for three days with no food at all. Upon reaching Farmville the Texas Brigade fought another skirmish and settled down for the night. April 8<sup>th</sup> saw the Texans march to within two miles of Appomattox Court House. It was here O.T. Hanks was fortunate enough to get “a piece of raw beef without salt. We held it over the fire, parched and ate it”. [6] It was here he also heard that some Texans “scratched shattered corn out of the dirt where the officers fed their horses and ate it. I would have been glad of such an opportunity myself”. [7]

The morning of April 9<sup>th</sup> the Texas brigade marched about one mile and “assumed a defensive position on the outskirts of the village just north of the stream...” They “built breastworks across the old stage road leading in from the northeast”. [8] The men were famished as silence and peace settled across the

Appomattox countryside. The men of the Texas Brigade had fought long and hard. They had endured much for cause and comrades. Hunger was one of those strains they were willing to endure for what they believed in. D. H. Hamilton probably spoke for the majority of Texans when he recalled that he “was so hungry that I could have eaten a piece of a rubber boot” since “we had been on short rations, just enough to keep us alive, for eleven days. [9] One of his final thoughts rang true for both his nation, and his stomach when he wrote that at the end of the war we were simply “ragged, starved, and exhausted”. [10]

For Additional information about [period correct food click on this link](#)

For resources to make [period appropriate container labels click on this link](#)

---

[1] D.H. Hamilton. History of Company M: First Texas Volunteer Infantry, Hood's Brigade, Longstreet's Corps, Army of the Confederate States of America. Waco, TX: W.M. Morrison. 1962. Pg. 68

[2] O.T. Hanks. History of Captain B.F. Benton's Company, Hood's Texas Brigade, 1861-1865. Waco, TX: W.M. Morrison. 1984. Pgs. 41-42.

[3] Ibid., 42.

[4] Harold B. Simpson. Gaines' Mill To Appomattox: Waco and McLennan County In Hood's Texas Brigade. Waco, TX: Texian Press. 1963. Pg. 227. Quote originally found in Official Minutes of Hood's Texas Brigade Monument Dedication edited by Frank B. Chilton (Houston, Texas 1911) Pg. 182.

[5] Hanks., 41.

[6] Hanks., 44.

[7] Ibid., 44.

[8] Harold B. Simpson. Hood's Texas Brigade at Appomattox. Texana Vol. III, No. 1. Waco, TX: Texian Press, 1965. Pg. 2

[9] D. H. Hamilton, 70.

[10] Ibid., 69.

## **Improving Your Impression**

In order for we soldiers to improve our 1st person impression the following list is of members who have selected a 1st person name. Some of the names are of soldiers who served in the 4th Texas Co. E, while others originate from other sources. Attempt to remember the names of your pards and use them often until the closure of the event in order to build our 1st person mentality and impression.

**Original 4th Texas Soldiers.** (with the current member's name next to them)

Noah Bible-- Mike Martin

Phil Bible-- Dave Difatta

Sam Billingsley-- Dave Prince

Billy Burton- Fred Burdine

Sam Chambers-- Ereik Wikarski

G.N.Chenault-- Mark Hubanks

Bill Duncan-- Bill Muenzen-maier

William Dunklin- Will Muenzen-maier

Champe Fitzhugh-- Nate Domke

Sam Fossett-- John Fross

H.K. Hicks-- Ted Cates

J.W.Holden-- Chris Merrill

Durham Holloway-- Ken Chrysler

John Johnson-- Johnny Fross

Joe Majors-- Joe Frost

Green McGee-- Carson Bauer

Beauregard Morgan-- Richard Gondek

F. Mullens-- Paul Gondek

J.B. Ragsdale-- John Difatta

J.C. Reed-- Kallan Kriewall

Paul Ripley-- Alan Rothenberg

James Robinson-- Alan Allgaier

J.H. Robinson-- Conrad Allgaier

W.T. Rotan-- Josh Sexton

Eldard Sharp-- Tyler Vetter

James Smith-- Jim Celmer

G.M. Taylor-- Patrick Kopyek

Rufus Umberson-- Jake Celmer

T.D. Williams-- Rob Van Sile

Sherwood Young-- Rick Higgins

**First Person names chosen by present day members** (with current members names next to them)

Beauchampe-- Dylan Comsa

Luke Bradshaw-- Tim Puzella

Jesse Darnell-- Roger Cope

Raoul Dupre'-- Bob Schoof

John Ewing-- Tim Zuccherro  
Elisha Salyer-- Brian Coleman  
Joshua Salyer-- Josh Coleman  
Jethro Yates-- Steve Domke

Copyright © \*!2015!\*, All rights reserved.

**Our mailing address is:**

1130 Parker St. Apt 511 Detroit MI 48214

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---

This email was sent to [<< Test Email Address >>](#)  
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)  
4th Texas Co. E · 1130 Parker Apt 511 · Detroit, Mi 49214 · USA

MailChimp.