

The Sentinel



Vol. 8, No. 1 – The Newsletter of the 6th Arkansas Infantry, Company A, C.S.A. – January, 2004
Living Historians

“A Fair Trial & a Fine Hangin’” Marks 140th Dodd Memorial

The Capitol Guards and their pards of the 37th Illinois got off to a whopping good start for the new 2004 campaign season on January 10, with the return and dedication of the original David O. Dodd memorial stained glass window to the MacArthur Museum of Military History, where it will hang in the Civil War gallery, along with the authentic reenactment of Dodd's trial by a military commission during the New Year's holiday of 1864.

As promised, the 140th anniversary observance of the trial and execution of David Dodd was different than it has been in previous years, not only with the return of the UDC's stained glass memorial window to the MacArthur Museum in Little Rock, but with a reenactment of Dodd's trial, based upon the official records.

A whole lot of legend and ladies' poetry has grown up around Dodd's story over the past 140 years, extolling the virtues of the "boy martyr of the Confederacy" and with each telling it gets tougher to separate fact from fiction. One of the objectives of the this reenactment was to cut through some of the moonlight and romance to portray just what happened during the New Year's holiday of 1864 as a historical account, and I think we did just that. From the comments I've received so far, the public believes that we succeeded as well. Attendance at the event was more than 250 persons, a banner day for the MacArthur Museum.

The event was opened with a welcome by Museum director Stephan McAteer, and the unveiling of the original window by Museum board director Ron Fuller and Arkansas UDC president Susan Railsback. Following the unveiling, the Museum formally opened its fundraising campaign to repair and restore the Capital Guards monument that stands in front of the Arsenal building in MacArthur Park.

Erected in 1911 in memory of the "Flower of Little Rock", the Capital Guards pre-War militia company, the monument has deteriorated significantly over the past 90 years from the ravages of weather and

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The Capitol Guards and the 37th Illinois re-created the trial of David O. Dodd, Arkansas' "boy hero of the Confederacy," before an audience of more than 200 on January 10, marking the 140th anniversary of Dodd's death, and the return of the original Dodd memorial window to the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History. Here, "Capt. Rice," the judge advocate, (Tom Ezell) summarizes his case before the court (Steve Shore, Chuck Durnette, Harvey Moore, Jim Brigg, and Mike Loum). The Dodd memorial window is at the right of the photo. (Photo by Ken Nations.)

Capitol Guards hold 2004 Annual Planning Meeting on January 11

Following the close of the Dodd Memorial service on January 11, the Capitol Guards and their friends met at the Pizza Hut on 9th and McMATH for a pizza lunch, and to hold their annual business meeting. 26 members and friends were present, a significant improvement in our strength over the past year... especially since we were still missing a few folks with these numbers.

Captain Ezell opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to our first event of the year, and expressing his thanks for everyone's hard work over the past year. As a more tangible

expression of thanks, he paid for the pizza!

The Captain's report on the State of the Company brought welcome news. 2003 was an outstanding year, and the 6th Arkansas is doing very well... we can boast of a net gain of seven active members (defined as those new guys attending at least two events with the Company) and we voted Matt Bond and Jerry Simpson into full membership, upon their having completed three scheduled events within a calendar year. Active membership stands at 19 members, plus two men who are nearing their third event. We have two members on excused absence due to active military service, one on the sick list, and

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The Trial of David O. Dodd (Continued from Page 1)



After an absence of 7 years, the Dodd memorial window is back where it belongs... in an Arkansas museum. It will go on display in the MacArthur Museum's Civil War gallery on January 20.



Private Daniel Goldberg (Robert Giles of the Capitol Guards) tells the court (Chuck Durnette, Harvey Moore, Jim Brigg, and Mike Loum) why he tore up Dodd's pass.

Dodd Memorial (Continued from Page 1)

vandalism. The MacArthur Museum has contracted with a conservator in Missouri to repair and restore the bronze statue, and in the next few weeks the statue will be taken down and sent to Missouri for restoration. The amount needed to professionally clean, repair, and restore the statue is \$35,000. The Museum has raised \$20,000 of this amount through grants and large donations, and is now actively soliciting to raise the remainder of the funds to complete the restoration. During the museum program, the UDC fund for Confederate Sculptures in Arkansas presented the MacArthur Museum with a check for \$5,000 toward the restoration of the Capital Guards monument.

A short recess followed as we got our stuff in place for the trial reenactment, and from the moment we convened the court, the audience appeared to be riveted.

The Dodd reenactment was a team effort, featuring not only members of the Capitol Guards, but also significant efforts from the 37th Illinois, the 9th Arkansas, and

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Reenactment of trial caps Dodd event.

By Jill Zeman, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette p. 1B, January 11, 2004

The boring part about historical reenactments, quipped Stephan McAteer of the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History, is that the outcome never changes.

That didn't hold back more than 200 people from attending a ceremony honoring David O. Dodd, often called the "Boy Martyr of the Confederacy," who was executed by Union forces in Little Rock for being a Confederate spy.

Union forces occupying Little Rock in 1863 arrested the 17-year-old Dodd for carrying coded messages alleged to have contained specifics about federal military strengths. A court convicted Dodd, and he was hanged Jan. 8, 1864, on the grounds of the former St. John's College, east of what is now MacArthur Park. He was buried in Mount Holly Cemetery in Little Rock.

Saturday's ceremony commemorated the 140th anniversary of Dodd's death and was marked by the unveiling of the stained-glass Dodd Window, featuring the boy's likeness.

McAteer, executive director of the museum, arranged to bring the window back to Little Rock after he discovered that it was stored, rather than displayed, at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, VA.

The window, on a one-year loan from the Richmond museum, was displayed at the Arkansas Museum of Science and History, now the Museum of Discovery, from 1990 to 1998.

"It's a beautiful piece of art, and we love to have it on display for Arkansans who couldn't make it to Richmond," McAteer said.

The much-told story of Dodd's role in Arkansas history was presented in an unprecedented way this year—through a historical reenactment of the boy's trial, presented by the Central Arkansas Civil War Preservation Association, and the 6th

Arkansas and 37th Illinois reenactors.

In December, 2002, the group looked up Dodd's original trial transcripts from 1864 and crafted them into a script, said Tom Ezell of Scott, who spearheaded the effort.

The 90-minute performance recreated the entirety of Dodd's trial, from the opening statements to the boy's plea for mercy.

It culminated with a five-member commission unanimously sentencing Dodd to death by hanging.

Those involved in the reenactment participate because of a passion for history, Ezell said.

"Most people who get into this are looking for something more than what's in the books," he said of the group, which has members throughout the state.

Although the tedious process of accurately recreating Dodd's trial took more than a year to complete, Ezell said the work was well worth it.

"It's that feeling you get from sharing that experience with the old boys that did it in '61 and '65," he said. "You can really appreciate what they did. It's not like what you see in the movies."

On Saturday the museum also launched a drive to conserve the Capitol Guard, the statue that has stood in MacArthur Park since 1911.

Weather and vandalism have damaged the statue, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Members of the Arkansas Military Heritage Foundation estimate that \$35,000 is needed to conserve the statue.

Already, \$23,000 has been raised, including a \$5,000 donation from the Arkansas Division, United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Raising money to repair the Capitol Guard is the group's second project to preserve Confederate art, said chairman Jean Rutherford-Crouch. The first project came in 1997, after a tornado in Arkadelphia decapitated a Confederate soldier statue outside the Clark County Courthouse.

The statue was repaired, head and all, in 2002.



Jerry Simpson portrays a Union army soldier during a reenactment Saturday at the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History of the trial of David O. Dodd, a 17-year-old boy tried and convicted of being a Confederate spy 140 years ago.

140th David O. Dodd Memorial Service - January 10, 2004



Above and below: The Confederate honor guard at Mount Holly Cemetery. Dodd's grave marker is the white obelisk at left.



Larry Hulsey, Mike Loum, and Bob Black.



The Yankees came to Mt. Holly this year to pay their respects: Bob Black, Larry Hulsey, Steve Shore, George Davis, Harvey Moore, Jim Brigg, Tyson Savell, W.J. Monagle, and Jerry Simpson.



Civil War reenactors fire their guns Saturday during a ceremony at the grave of David O. Dodd in Mount Holly Cemetery in Little Rock. Reenactors from around the state participated in several events to commemorate the 140th anniversary of the death of Dodd, who was convicted and executed by Union forces for being a Confederate spy.



Sheldon Gately, Mike Loum, and Robert Giles in gray before the ceremony at Mt. Holly. In the rear, Tyson Savell, Steve Shore, Larry Hulsey, Harvey Moore, Jim Brigg, and W.J. Monagle in blue.



Mike Loum, Larry Hulsey, and Robert Giles. Way off in the background at right, David Sesser, Ken Nations, Jason Massey, and Matt Bond.

This year's event marked the 140th anniversary of David Dodd's arrest, trial and execution. 253 people attended the unveiling and trial reenactment at the MacArthur Museum; at the memorial service at Mt. Holly we had 2 officers, 40 rifles, a color guard, and approximately 70 spectators and uniformed guests.

9th Arkansas elects New Officers

The 9th Arkansas had its annual business meeting last Saturday (Jan. 11) after the David O. Dodd event. The 9th brought 17 men to the memorial service, a great showing after a tough season this past year. The unit elected officers, and discussed its planned events for 2004. New officers for the 9th are Will Hardage, Captain; 1st Sgt. Mark Hannibal, 2nd Sgt. Scott Sherfy, and Corporal/chaplain David Stanphill.

The 9th Arkansas has also re-established its web site at <http://www.9tharkansas.org>

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Visitor Center Burglarized

A burglary occurred at the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield's visitor center around 4 a.m. on Sunday, January 11th. NPS Rangers Robert Randall and John Sutton responded along with officers from the local sheriff's office and police department. Entry was made by breaking a large plate glass window near the front door with a brick. A display case was broken into and four pistols were taken; one was dropped outside the visitor center and recovered. Cash was also taken from the park's donation box, which was forcibly entered. When they arrived at the visitor center, rangers and officers thought that they heard an ATV nearby, but a search for the vehicle proved fruitless. The cost of the damage and value of lost artifacts have together been placed at \$13,000. One of the pistols taken was a presentation revolver which belonged to Col. Elkanah Greer, who commanded a Texas cavalry regiment during the battle at Wilson's Creek. An investigation is underway.

A reward of \$1,000 is being offered by the National Park Service for information leading to the recovery of stolen Civil War firearms and the arrest of the persons involved. A burglary occurred on January 11, 2004 at 4 a.m. at the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Visitor Center. The following firearms were taken:

- Model 1849 Colt Pocket Revolver, Serial Number 106402. Caliber .36. Engraving on backstrap reads: "Presented to

Col. E.B. Greer 3rd Texas Cav. by Knights Of The Golden Circle, 1861." Scroll engraving on frame and barrel. On barrel reads "Address Samuel Colt, New York City." Overall length 8 7/8 inches.

- U.S. Model 1842 Percussion Pistol Caliber .54. Manufactured By H. Aston, Middleton, Conn., 1853, U.S. proofmarks (SKP) on top of barrel, two inspector cartouches on left side of stock.

- Model 1851 Colt Navy Revolver, Serial Number 14841. Caliber .36 "Address Col. Saml. Colt New York U S America" stamped on top of barrel. .36 cal stamped on left side of trigger guard. Above trigger guard on left side, "Colts" stamped. Number also stamped on butt plate and twice forward of trigger guard. Pictures of sailing craft etched on chamber as well as "Colts Patent No. 7903." Overall length 10 1/4 inches.

If you have any information, please contact the Greene County (MO) Sheriff's Office at (417) 868-4040 or Wilson's Creek National Battlefield at (417) 732-2662, ext. 225 or ext. 274. Information can also be left with the F.B.I., Springfield Office at (417) 882-3303 or with Crimestoppers at (417) 869-TIPS.

Planning Meeting (Continued from Page 1)

one detached for duty to the Battalion field & staff section, for an aggregate active strength of 23. Three recruits have approached us about membership, but have not yet mustered in or attended an event.

The Company met or exceeded all goals set at the beginning of last year. We achieved the goal of fielding 20+ rifles in the field at Old Washington, and came close to that on several other occasions. Active strength, e.g. those who regularly attend Company events, is as summarized immediately above. There is little doubt that the Capitol Guards are continuing as a strong company within the TMVI battalion's structure.

We worked hard to form and strengthen partnerships with our neighboring units, and have completed several successful joint events with the 37th Illinois, helping to improve the field strength and visibility of both groups. We applied to join and have been accepted as members of the Central Arkansas Civil War Preservation Association, which will ultimately give us status as a 501(c)(3)

nonprofit organization under the federal tax code. Working partnerships have been established with the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History and the Old State House Museum; and the Company has been invited by name to participate in living history programs at a National Park Service site. Through these activities in 2003 our public visibility has greatly increased, and we have a strongly positive public image and a good reputation among the state and national museums and parks. The one missed goal here has been a deteriorating relationship with the regional SCV camps, partly due to the increasingly radical politics of the national organization and some local camps. We will try to restore at least a civil relationship with these folks over the coming year.

The Company has improved its appearance in the field, and we've even got George in jeans now. Furthermore, we achieved our authenticity milestones not only in a Confederate impression, but in a Federal impression as well, at Mark's Mill, the Old State House, and the Battalion's galvanizing at Old Washington, as well as the Dodd reenactment.

Comments so far indicate that we have definitely increased the "fun" level at our events, and the growth in our field strength is a key indicator.

In summary, and looking toward the coming year, these are still some big, hairy goals, and we'll keep these in sight and continue working to sustain them in the coming year. We have a strong, growing organization that we should all be very proud of, and that hopefully is a credit and an honor to the boys of '61-'65.

Finishing the report, the floor was opened for nominations for officers for 2004. After some discussion, Tom Ezell and Steve Shore were re-appointed as Captain and Orderly Sergeant, respectively. We discussed electing some additional field officers, specifically a 2nd Sgt./quartermaster and a corporal, but the vote went 1 for, 4 against, and 10 abstentions. We tabled that idea for now, and the captain will continue to appoint these additional positions on a rotating, event-by-event basis this year.

The 2004 event schedule was next on the agenda. A list and brief description of upcoming events had been provided the week before the meeting, and folks were primed to vote. We voted to support all four TMVI Battalion maximum events; at Mansfield/Pleasant Hill, Jefferson, 140th Franklin, and Prairie Grove. At M/PH, we will be serving under the TMVI's structure rather than the "15th Texas" marchers.

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Planning Meeting (Continued from Page 1)

We also selected a number of "maximum effort" events, which are the ones where the Company will focus on putting as many rifles into the field as possible. A number of other events are listed on the "official" schedule for information purposes where members have expressed an interest in that event, however as they are not noted as "max effort" events, attendance at these is strictly up to the desire and interest of the individual, and the 6th will probably support some sort of reduced presence.

Here is the 2004 schedule, with a few notes and updates:

- **February 28-29, 2004 - Company Camp of Instruction**, Reed's Bridge Battlefield Park, Jacksonville, AR. This will be our early get-together to work back through the drill manual and safety procedures for the benefit of our new folks, as well as our forgetful old ones. Overnight encampment, garrison-style.

- March 13, 2004 - Little Rock St. Patrick's Day Parade, MacArthur Park to the RiverMarket, details to follow. This is a new event to which we have been invited in the past week, and is mentioned here for informational and deconfliction purposes. I'll pass out more information as soon as I receive the event info packet.

- **March 20, 2004 - MG Patrick Cleburne Memorial Service**, Maple Hill Cemetery, Helena, Arkansas. 6th Arkansas Max effort event (LH/memorial). This year's event will feature the traditional memorial services with all of its speeches and what-not, but will also feature the funeral and burial of the remains of five Arkansas Confederate soldiers who were killed in the attack on Battery D in the July, 1863 battle of Helena. This will be a full-up military funeral in Confederate impression. An honor guard will be mounted on the remains as they are brought to the cemetery, and will continue up to commencement of the funeral service. The SCV will conduct their normal Cleburne memorial, and upon the conclusion of that service, we will form the troops and conduct the military funeral for the five soldiers. There will be no military formation during the Cleburne service this time, so you won't have to stand in formation for that, then do it again for the funeral service. The service will be conducted IAW the Confederate Army regulations (Article XXIX, paragraphs 262-289 if you want to read ahead). There will be a detail of six studly young men to serve as pallbearers, all other men under arms will be in the honor guard, however many troops we have there. We will fire three volleys from

the entire honor guard. After honors have been paid, the troops will be marched a short distance away from the grave and dismissed; after that each man will have the opportunity to pass individually by the graveside to pay his personal respects.

This event will be Arkansas's equivalent to the funeral of the Hunley crew - if you can't, or aren't planning to go to Charleston, SC, I urge you to support this event. I repeat, this isn't a reenactment or a living history, this will be a real funeral for real Confederate soldiers who died on this same field.

- **April 2-4, 2004 - 140th Anniversary Reenactment, The Red River Campaign (Mansfield/Pleasant Hill, LA)** 6th Arkansas & TMVI Battalion maximum effort event. (Battle reenactment) Mansfield/Pleasant Hill will be the first big powder-burning reenactment of the year, and the Battalion's first max effort event for 2004. Registration, fixed camps, and the sutlers will be at Pleasant Hill; Saturday's battle will be at Mansfield. Camp dance at Pleasant Hill Saturday night, and Sunday's battle will be on the field at Pleasant Hill. This has the potential to be the largest Pleasant Hill battle ever, with some 1500 (or more) troops expected. Event details and registration info will be in next month's *Sentinel*.

- April 17, Funeral for the *Hunley* Crew, Charleston, SC. Several expressed an interest in getting a small group together and attending this event.

- **May 1-2, 2004 - Civil War Days, Jefferson, TX.** 6th Arkansas and TMVI Battalion Maximum effort event. (battle demonstrations) This is the TMVI's Texas event for the year, and will feature battle demonstrations on Saturday and Sunday, and the ever-popular "Soldiers' Rest" free bar on Saturday night. Anticipate having to galvanize for at least one day's fight.

- **May 15, 2004 - Rededication of the Capital Guards Monument**, MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History, MacArthur Park, Little Rock. (living history) The Capital Guards monument is due to be refurbished and re-installed by this date, and the Museum will unveil it in a recreation of the original dedication in 1911. See our web site at www.geocities.com/capitalguards/



The Capitol Guards hold their 2004 business meeting at Pizza Hut following the Dodd memorial service on January 11. L to R: Harvey Moore, W.J. Monagle, Jerry Simpson, Jim Brigg, George Davis, Larry Hulse, Mike Loum, Sheldon Gately, Steve Shore, Tom Ezell, and Tyson Savell.

Cgmonument.html.

- May 21, 2004 - Cabot School System Living History, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Cabot Middle School (North), Cabot, Ark. (living history) Annual living history presentation to some 300 5th graders at Cabot. See Tom or Harvey for details.

- May 28-30, 2004 - 140th Anniversary Living History, Battle of Pickett's Mill, Pickett's Mill Battlefield State Park, Paulding County, GA. Hosted by the Western Independent Grays. This will be bloody-cutting-edge hardcore living history and reenactment. Tom will be organizing a road trip if anyone is interested in walking on the wild side.

- July 10-11, 2004 - Midwest Civilian Camp of Instruction. Mahaffie Stage Coach Stop Park, Olathe, KS. (a "how to" seminar) So you say you were a farmer or a merchant before the War? Here's where learn how it was done...

- July 31, 2004 - N/SA Annual Business meeting, Nashville, TN. This will be the annual Division and Brigade business meetings, and will focus on the upcoming event at Franklin as well as planning for future events over the next five years.

- August 7-8, 2004 - Wilson's Creek Living History, Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. (immersive living history. Missouri State Guard impression.) Anniversary date program on the battlefield at Wilson's Creek, focusing on the Confederates on the eve of battle. The weather will be hot, but this will be a very cool event.

- September 18-19, 2004 - Arkansas Post National Memorial, Gillett, AR. Semi-immersive living history, Confederate impression. We've been invited by name by the National Park service to come and

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play in their sandbox. This will be a semi-immersive event, focusing on the 19th Arkansas Infantry manning the outposts during the establishment of the garrison at the post of Arkansas.

• **September 24-26, 2004 - 140th Anniversary Reenactment, Battle of Pilot Knob.** Pilot Knob & Iron County, MO. This is the long-awaited turn to go back to Ken Nations' home town and show our colors. We will be going in Federal impression to quash the invaders and save Iron County for the Union...

• **October 1-3, 2004 - 140th Anniversary reenactment, Battles of Franklin and Spring Hill,** Spring Hill, TN. *1st Confederate Division/TMVI/6th Arkansas Maximum effort event.* This is the Division's max effort event for 2003, and over Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday will seek to re-create the 1864 Tennessee campaign and battle scenarios at Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville. BG Mike Moore, Commander of the 1st Confederate Division, announced this past week that Saturday's scenario for Franklin will commence shortly before sunset, and continue as a night battle:

"I have spoken with General Dolive, commander of the Federals, he and I both have decided to allow the battle of Franklin to last until 11:00 PM that Sat. night. As you are aware the battle will start at 4:00 PM that afternoon, the CSA troops will march a little over a mile to the Federal works at Carter house and cotton gin, the field is wide enough that I feel all will be in one large front moving forward toward the works. We will have all the musicians play as loud as they can in front of the CSA troops, before we move forward, as they did 140 years ago.

For safety all troops will move off the fields as to allow the spectators to leave say around 5:30 to 6:00 p.m., at that time we will start back the fighting, which we will have posted some lines that we can not cross over as to allow no one to get hurt, but at the same time allow you the chance to fight as they did that night. We will work all the details out later in the year.

I will go on and make this statement to all CSA troops, that the safety of you and all others rest on each man, there will be no throwing of any object at anyone, if you think by doing that it is fun, then get ready to be taken off the field and placed in jail. I will not and can not allow a few people to mess up a grand event that night for so many. We will be allowing battalions and brigades to travel to the front and face the Federals at night.

There will be some very hard rules that will and must be obeyed to make this night time fight a 100% safe and successful experience, and with all that attend and all of us working to make it safe, we will be able to have great event. We are not going to allow an all-out

attack with everyone at one time. There will be a line (somewhere before the works that is considered a safe distance) that the CSA troops can not pass in front of. Also if anyone is caught throwing an object, he is going to jail. We will have hard rules that all we have to understand if they plan on doing the night fight. The fighting will be done by single brigades or maybe single battalions as to not allow to many at one time in there. Also battalions that are waiting its turn to go in will be required to insure that men from the camps do not try to run in and fight. There will be many more details on this as we move forward, we are wanting to do something a little different than we have ever done at any Franklin event.

The ground that you will be on is a very good plowed field, that will have its last bean cutting done in early Sept. Again this is in the planning stages, I do not think it is fair to allow only one group of people to fire at night and others not be able to.

Those that do not want to do a night firing are not required to and will stay in camp, but they will not be allowed into the area of firing for safety. You have the choice not to do this if we push forward on this movement. But I feel that we can do this and be safe if all are willing and act like grown-ups."

• **October 9-10, 2004 - "Ambush at Jacksonport"** reenactment/living history, Jacksonport State Park, near Newport, AR. Hosted by the Wretched Mess.

• **November 6-7, 2004: Civil War Days at Old Washington.** Old Washington Historic State Park, Washington, AR. Most folks were disappointed at the Park's end of this event last year... this might be one we want to throw in with the fellows in the 37th and go Federal, to see if we can get a better deal, or just to hang out with the pards...

• **December 3-5, 2004 - Battle of Prairie Grove reenactment,** Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park, Prairie Grove, Ark. 6th Arkansas/TMVI Maximum effort event. I've never been to a "bad" event at Prairie Grove. This will be an election year for the TMVI, so come on out, burn some powder, freeze your hiney, vote early, and vote often!!

Other business: We voted to re-establish a company fund, and commence again with the assessment and collection of annual company dues (\$15/year; family or individual alike). These funds will be used to help build up the stock of loaner gear for the Company members and recruits. 1st Sergeant Shore will be collecting these, with a due date of February 29 (our first event at Reed's Bridge, as it turns out).

There being no further business, we adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

The Trusty Bayonet...

The trusty bayonet can either be a useful tool, or dead weight. Reproductions are inexpensive, and easy to find, but the originals are so much better in look and function that it is worth seeking out originals. "The Horse Soldier" relic shop in Gettysburg, for example, usually has several hundred original bayonets on hand. eBay is another useful source for originals

Its obvious use is for stacking arms, but beyond that it can be a:

- dandy coffee grinder in the old tin cup. (A pard showed me a useful trick using two canteen halves to grind coffee. This takes almost no time to do, and it results in a much better grind... if and when two halves are available.)

- fine pick or mattock for grubbing out roots and rocks prior to bedding down.

- useful measuring device for squaring up a fire pit or castramentation.

- fast shebang pin when none other can be had simply by pressing it into the ground. In this same light, two muskets with fixed bayonets and proper issue tent ropes can be used to erect a dog tent, but there are several reasons not to do this, even on soft soil.

- risky candle holder...with special attention paid to the "drop through" factor when the stub burns down to a nub and slips to the ground or bedding. This was a problem in their day, as you'll notice the little brass inserts found as dug relics which were made just for this purpose.

- nifty forage totter by sticking your proudly found food on the end of a fixed bayonet whilst on the march. (This is a good way to lose food, though.)

- handy fire spit for cooking chunks of meat.

- quick-grab fire stick when dragging things out of the fire

- slow cooking rotisserie when used as a pair or even with four bayonets and a rammer or ironwood (type of Beech) crossbar

- small grubbing hoe when heated and bent over to 90 degrees or a quick fire pit

- a mattock or pick for loosening soil when digging hasty entrenchment

- big mess kettle hook when heated and formed into a "J" shape.

- very light duty hammer (not really recommended).

Don't just think of the bayonet as dead weight, but as a useful tool.

From the 1st Fed Commander:

December 4, 2003

Headquarters
1st Federal Division

Gentlemen:

The Christmas season is now upon us and I want to wish every officer and soldier of the Division, along with their families a most wonderful time. We have much to be thankful for, and sharing a sense of history through reenacting is one of them. I hope many of you receive that long wanted hand-sewn commercial sack coat or that new Henry Rifle under the tree this year.

On to business. Stan Prater is the new commander of the Frontier Brigade. As everyone who has commanded a Brigade will tell him, Stan has quite a challenge before him. I have every confidence the Frontier Brigade will move forward under Stan's quiet and thoughtful leadership.

Don Kessler has been appointed to the thankless duties of Provost Marshal, First Federal Division. Don has been in the hobby since 1994. Captain Kessler has already been of service in helping coordinate the 2004 NSA meeting and contacting the eastern establishment in regard to attending the 2004 Franklin/Nashville campaign. He has already begun the task of organizing the Provost's department. I invite you to take a look at the new Provost's Page under Don's profile.

As noted above, the 2004 NSA meeting will take place July 31 - Aug 1 in Nashville, TN. Please see the announcement under North/South Alliance elsewhere in these pages. Every Brigade is encouraged to send representatives. Any member of the NSA is invited to attend. This year the meeting will discuss a new 5 year plan, enhanced communication, and the 140th Franklin anniversary event. A site visit to the Franklin reenactment site will take place on Sunday.

Planning has begun in earnest on the 2004 Franklin event to be held October 1 - 3rd. The *Civil War Courier* is hosting this event and has already committed a large sum to this event. Registration has begun and I encourage everyone to register early (see their site under Upcoming Events). We are looking at making this the largest Western event possible. To date I can tell you that:

- The planners have 900 acres at this time, and looking to

acquire a further 2,000

• The Federal Camp is placed away from the modern vendors, battlefields, and other distractions. Campaign opportunities are being planned for those that desire it

• There will be two battles fought on Saturday, Spring Hill and Franklin.

• The Spring Hill scenario is on the original site of the battle

• The current plan is to march out of camp on Saturday morning and engage the Confederate forces at Spring Hill. The Federal army will then march to the Franklin lines and work on entrenching. The Franklin battle will take place late Saturday afternoon with the Confederates advancing over 1 mile of open terrain.

• There may be camping on the battlefield and in the trenches Saturday night, with those that wish returning to camp

• Sunday will be the battle of Nashville

That said, remember the above is tentative. I have asked the Brigade Commanders and Division staff for their comments and concerns. While the Division does try to be inclusive in much of what we do, there are standards to maintain. Safety and enjoyment will take priority, as will basic tenants of authenticity. Other projects being considered are:

- Future reenactment proposals
- 2005 Spring Tactical (NSA), being organized and developed



37th Illinois Christmas Party

Members of the 37th Illinois gathered at the Lone Star Steakhouse on Rodney Parham Road in Little Rock on Monday evening, December 22, to close out a successful year, and to welcome Sergeant Jeffery Stewart home on Christmas leave. Jeffery is currently mobilized with the 39th Infantry Brigade at Fort Hood, TX, training for a year's deployment to the combat zone in Iraq.

In token of our appreciation for Jeffery and his leadership in the 37th over the past several years, the members of the 37th pitched in, and presented him with an original copy of the 1861 U.S. Army regulations for his Civil War collection.

Attendees included Mike Loum, W.J. Monagle and his wife, Keith Peterson and his wife, Tom Ezell, Jeffery Stewart, Sheldon Gately, John Malloy and his wife and Harvey Moore and his wife.

by Chad Greene

- the Western War College - a special school for the Western reenactor

- 1st Federal Division Department web pages for the QM, Provost, Artillery, Engineers, and other departments.

Gentlemen, I am glad to see 2003 come to a close. With the Gettysburg debacle and recent health issues the year has not been one of my best. And to be honest, it's frustrating having that General's coat sitting in the closet and no place to go! I look to 2004 with much excitement and anticipation. The Division will reunite in the field on October 1st. It will be time to bring friends together, share old memories, and not only relive history, but make new history! Until that time, I remain...

YOS,

Mark Dolive
Commanding,
First Federal Division

A Coat For All Seasons

The Enlisted Frock Coat

Increasing emphasis on centralized authenticity standards published by our parent brigade and division have generated a lot of discussion on how we can best meet these. In our own experiences over the past couple of years with event impressions ranging from the very early days (Wilson's Creek) to the very late (Franklin), what's a poor Reb to do, especially when tough times and a limited budget prevent you from stocking your closet with every model of jacket known to the Confederate quartermaster system?¹ Why can't there be one uniform item that would fit all scenarios, or at least most of them?

Actually, there is such a garment which was common to every theater of the war, during the entire span of the war – the enlisted frock coat.

The single-breasted frock coat is by far the most versatile Confederate garment you can add to your kit. It can be found in the ranks of the Confederate army from the pre-war militia, to Fort Sumter, to Shiloh and Perryville, to Chickamauga and on through the Atlanta campaign, all the way to the surrenders at Appomattox and Greensboro. It was used in every army in both the eastern, western, and trans-Mississippi theaters. For the living historian to portray the Confederate soldier accurately, he usually must make a huge investment and purchase numerous jacket styles to cover all campaigns and theaters. However, the one garment that spans the entire history and experience of the Southern soldier is the single-breasted frock coat.

The Confederate frock coat has its history rooted in civilian fashions of the time, as well as in the standard uniform of the U.S. Army in the years immediately before the Civil War. So, this month's *Sentinel* will take a look at this trail, and maybe in the process we can present something a little useful for all sides of the hobby...

Frock Coats in Civilian Life

The all-important contribution of the 1850s to menswear was the matched suit. This consisted of a coat, waistcoat or vest, and trousers. Called "ditto" suits at first, they remained the novelty of the day, but gained popularity through the rest of the 19th century. Their characteristics included the fitted waistlines and long skirts of the frock. The coat is boxy in outline and the



James M. May, of the 23rd Arkansas Infantry is shown with his brother George, a member of the 2nd Arkansas Mounted Rifles in late 1861. Both brothers wear the gray jean-cloth frock coat manufactured by the Arkansas State Penitentiary, indicating this uniform was issued to both units. Note the dark blue trim on the collars and cuffs. Source: Roberts & Moneyhon, "Portraits of Conflict: A Photographic History of Arkansas in the Civil War."

sleeves are widened. A single issue of *Gazette of Fashion* shows two "ditto" suits with semi-fitted waistlines, flared skirts, and sleeves with the same increased proportions. The fashion trend of the day was decreased size in collars and lapels and the accompanying high closings. Often, only the upper buttons were fastened, allowing the rest of the coat to swing backward. During the 1860's and 1870's, the collar and lapel shrank even more.

The frock coat was a formal, dressy garment. Following trends of single-buttoned closings, cutaways started to slant well above the waistline revealing much of the waistcoat. Frock coats and tail coats were still worn with contrasting trousers either striped, plaid, or in plain colors. With the sack coats and cutaways apparent, there was a bit of dash among them. Brocades, striped satin with floral patterns, dotted velvets, and paisley printed pique fabrics were used. All these styles can be found in the Brooklyn Museum collection today.

The fashion trend setters of the period were Prince Albert, Napoleon III, or Count D'Orsay. No matter what period of history you want to observe, there was a panache or style in everyday life. Businessmen or military officers usually adopted these styles before the country farmer in rural America.

The frock coat was the standard business attire for men of any means appearing in public through the first half of the 19th century, its ubiquity being similar to that of today's suit coat or jacket. It was the expected mode of attire, much as many offices today require, or at least expect you to wear a jacket and tie. Civilian frock coats came in several varieties for different uses, and different types of events: the standard frock coat, the morning coat for more formal daytime use, and the dress, or tail coat, for formal evening wear.

The classic frock coat of the midwestern US was made of black wool broadcloth. It shows up over and over again in period images and in collections. Lighter colors and other fabrics certainly existed, but if you're going for the most typical, these were the exception, not the rule. Style does not appear to have been different in the deep South, as formal photos of southern politicians and businessmen still usually show dark, presumably black, broadcloth frock coats.

For all intents and purposes, Frock, Morning, and Dress coats are all the same coats; the difference being the manner in which the skirts are cut. Tailoring manuals from the era indicate that the body and sleeve portions of these garments are constructed from the same patterns. Frock coat skirts are cut squarely across the bottom front; Morning coats are cut with a gradual curve down the front; and Dress coats with a cut-away front, with only the long tails that give the coat its nickname. Frock coats by far were the most common of these for daily usage in the 1850s and 1860s era. Given the frequency of appearing in images, it is safe to say that period sources indicate that all men had access to at least one frock coat. Morning coats did not come into popularity until the late 1850s, and did not achieve widespread wear until the last quarter of the 19th century and the early 20th. Dress coats had been popular for daily usage through the 1840's until the early 1850's, at which point they were generally relegated to use as evening wear. The possibility, if not likelihood, exists that lower classes continued wearing cast-off dress coats throughout the period.

Characteristics which are typical of these coats during this era are:

- Fine woolen broadcloth material of a suiting weight.

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TMVI Battalion Meeting (Continued from Page 2)

Summer weight frocks are typically made of linen or cotton seersucker. Questionable is the usage of jean cloth, corduroy, denim, and other fabrics falling out of the realm of woolen broadcloth. While conceivable, most evidence would indicate it unlikely.

- Typically black, dark blue, and brown were the preferred colors, although others were known to exist. There is no concrete evidence indicating any usage of a patterned material (i.e. pinstripes, plaids, &c.) for these types of garments.

- Sleeves either straight or, "balloon" style. Earlier styled coats (1840's-late 1850's) have straight and moderately close fitting sleeves, whereas the "balloon" style sleeves become popular in the late 1850's. Sleeve linings were typically of white muslin but those with thin stripes and symmetrical patterns are known to exist.

- With the exception of an exterior access breast pocket on the left side, breast pockets on the inside of the coat, and pockets in the skirts, coats of this type do not as a rule have pockets. Particularly, original examples of frock coats do not have the "flap" style pockets so popular on typical reenactor coats.

- It is safe to say that all woolen coats in these categories have some degree of quilted padding in the chest area.

- Collars should come well upon the neck and average around 2" tall in this era. Earlier coats tend to have higher collars, while coats from the late 1850's-1860's have lower ones. Wide lapels are not unusual, nor are those covered in velvet or velveteen (on woolen coats).

- Coats of this type were tailored and fitted to the individual wearer, and bulky, slovenly hanging coats of this variety are inappropriate. The body of these coats should be well shaped to the torso, and the skirts should demonstrate a degree of flaring from the hips.

- Buttons on these types of coats generally consist of ones covered with silk thread woven into patterns. Occasionally

buttons covered with the same fabric from which the coat is made were used. On summer weight frock coats, mother-of-pearl buttons tend to be the norm.

The U.S. Army Issue Dress Coat

The U.S. Army replaced its Mexican War uniforms in 1851, and began issuing its soldiers a militarized version of the civilian frock coat. This garment, issued as the army's dress or duty uniform, was typical of the male fashions at that time. Fashion called for a manly, "bird-breasted" chest, a tight waist, high collar, and tightly fitted cuffs. During the later part of the decade and during the Civil War, the latest men's fashion called for belled, or ballooned sleeves, which had a diameter of as much as 20 inches at the elbow. Officers' uniforms, which were privately tailored, followed this fashion (as did many Confederate coats, as we shall see), but Billy Yank's dress coat was conservative and a little old-fashioned, and kept the narrower sleeves, only 14 inches' circumference at the elbows. In daily use, the frock coat was expected to last a soldier 7 ½ months before replacement. It cost Uncle Sam \$4.08 apiece in 1861, and \$14.67 by 1865.²

Like other coats and jackets for the U.S. Army, frocks were issued in four sizes: Size one had a 36-inch chest, size two was a 38, size three was 40, and size four was 42 inches around the chest. Early-war coats were marked with one to four dots to indicate size, but later coats were marked with arabic numbers.

Unlike other garments, the coat was



A reenactor shown in a repro frock coat shows the rich blue color of the uniform. (Image courtesy of C.J. Daley Historical Reproductions)

fitted closely to the body, especially around the shoulders and waist. Large or tall soldiers often had trouble getting a coat that would fit, and such men often could not wear the regulation sizes at all without extensive tailoring. A six-foot, two-inch soldier in the 150th New York wrote to his family: "My reason for getting a coat from Green [probably a merchant] was because the regulation will give boys all a coat with a skirt, and from my particular difficulty in getting a fit, I thought it would be better to order one."³

Construction Notes

Body: The body of a size two coat was in six pieces out of "1¾ yards of 6/4 (1½ yards wide) dark blue woolen cloth, weighing 21 ounces per yard, 56 threads of fillings (woof) each square inch, 60 threads in chain (warp) each square inch." The body portion was 18¼ inches long, and the skirts were 16¾ inches. The skirt was made of two front panels and two rear panels, with pleats and pockets in the tail. The skirt was left raw-edged on the bottom, without a hem. This was possible with the extremely tight-woven woolen cloth used; many modern woolens are much too loosely woven to last long without fraying. The original cloth was also dyed with indigo, which did not create the purplish color that modern aniline dyes produce. The body is closed with nine buttons, and should have a vertical row of stitching behind the line of buttons, about 1½" from the edge.

The seam between the skirts and the body was covered with a strip of cloth between 1 3/8 and 1½ inches wide.

Tail Pockets: One pocket was inset into each side of the split of the tails, normally made of black or brown polished cotton, unbleached muslin, or even heavier fabrics like cotton drill. On the side of the pocket that faced the wearer, the mouth of the pocket was edged with a strip of wool about an inch wide. Access to these pockets was through the skirt slit.

Although access to these tail pockets may seem awkward, they were used by the troops, as frock coats had no other pockets. To keep the form fit of a frock coat, the best place to keep personal items is the tails. If you were to put outside pockets or even more than one inside pocket, this would distort the shape of the coat. Tailors designed these pockets into military coats to avoid unsightly bulges in the garments. A soldier of the 150th New York wrote: "...I usually carried a towel, soap, comb and glass in the skirt pocket of my coat all through the marches last summer..."

Skirt Hooks: The skirts could be turned back, much like the overcoats worn

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Interior of an original Federal dress coat, showing the lining and quilting in the chest and side panel areas; the strip covering the skirt seam, and the interior tail pockets. (Image courtesy of John Wedeward.)

by World War I French soldiers. Hooks and eyes were sewn into the front corner and the rear skirt slit, four to eight inches from the bottom edge.

Collar: Piped with the branch-of-service color and lined with buckram to give it some stiffness, most frock collars were between 1 ¼ and 2 1/8 inches tall. Some of the later-war issue coats have a short collar, perhaps 1" tall, without and piping. The color of this piping is also important: indigo dyed like the rest, the infantry trim should be a dark Saxony blue and not the 'sky blue' of many reproductions. It should also be quite small, only about 1/16" wide.

The piping could be made in the form of a sewn-in tube of wool, or a twisted cord. To close the collar, there was a hook on the left side, and an eye on the right. Army regulations often mention that in formation or on dress parade, the coat was to be worn "hooked and buttoned."

Some original dress coats exist with much lower collars, between ¾" and 1" tall, sometimes without the branch piping at all. It is not clear at the present whether this was an official pattern, manufacturer's variation, or the result of modifications conducted by the soldier.

Cuffs: The cuffs were slit, and closed with two "vest sized" cuff buttons. The cuffs themselves consisted of an additional layer of cloth, about 4" from cuff opening to point, and 2 ½" tall in the rear. The cuff was also piped with the branch-of-service color, like the collar. Cuffs can be one- or two-piece. The one-piece cuffs consist of a single band that goes all the way around the cuff, thus covering the front sleeve seam. The shape of the scallop is also important. Rather than a point formed by straight lines like an inverted "V", or two "C" shapes, the actual curve of the piping is shaped in a reverse curve, like two "S"

connected at the point.

Body Lining: The chest of the coat actually consisted of four layers of cloth. On the outside was the blue wool broadcloth, backed by "¾ yard of 24-inch canvas." Behind this was a layer of some soft material like cotton batting or tow, between ¼ and ½" thick. The innermost layer was supposed to be "5/

8 yard of black alpaca 80 inches wide", but plain black or brown polished cotton is often seen in originals. This lining extended to the side seams, up to the shoulder seams, and down to the top of the skirts. Some linings curve under the armpit, extend to the outer back-seams which they follow for about four to six inches, then heads back toward the side seams which it runs along for two or three inches. The overall effect of this style lining when the coat is opened up flat is a strip with a large 'point' that protrudes between the armseye and the waist seam. The back panels of the coat body and the skirts were not lined.

Sleeves: Of moderate 'balloon' as stated earlier, they were lined with unbleached muslin, although at least one surviving original coat has sleeve linings made of checked cotton or linen.

Pockets: Besides the two in the tails, there shouldn't be any! Also some otherwise excellent reproduction coats include internal breast pockets, no originals studied had this feature.

Field Use & Alteration

The frock coat is often assumed to be a dress item, however 46% of the Army of the Potomac, and a higher percent of the Army of the Cumberland chose to wear their frock coats into the field. Dress coats were issued throughout the war, and many officers preferred their units to be attired in them because they had a more military look than the fatigue blouse. They show up frequently in the Mississippi Valley as the preferred uniform of the Iowa and Wisconsin troops. Brigade and Division commanders often made efforts to entirely clothe their troops in them. For example, units of Birney's (First) Division, III Army Corps, were ordered by General Orders No. 76 on

Sept. 1, 1863: "State Jackets be drawn for all those Regiments whose states furnish such jackets, and for all the rest the regulation dress coat. This will be done without delay, and if any Regts. have such coats or jackets stored in Washington they should at once write for them to be sent down."⁴

For units that did not wear the frock coat to the field, many have left photographs that show privates in blouses, and the NCOs in frocks. The records of still other regiments record a mix of frocks, sacks, and stateshell jackets. For reenactors, the importance of researching the specific styles of clothing applicable to the portrayed unit is obvious.

Troops were also prone to altering their frock coats. John Mead Gould wrote that he ripped out the padded front of his jacket in June of 1861; not too difficult to understand, given the discomfort caused by wearing a quilt on one's chest in 90-degree heat.

Other "improvements" seen on surviving coats include the removal of the hooks and eyes at the collar, and less commonly, a reduction in the height of the collar.

Frock Coats in Confederate Service

The Army of the Confederate States was born in the midst of preparations for war, and made some initial efforts at designing and providing a regulation uniform for its soldiers. While the C.S. army regulations specified a "double-breasted frock coat of gray cloth, known as cadet gray, with the skirt extending half way between the hip and the knee," none of these uniforms were ever procured by the Confederate government, and when the C.S. Quartermaster Department got its clothing depots operational in the fall of 1862, production focused exclusively on "roundabouts," or shell jackets, which were more economical in terms of cloth and construction efforts.

When Johnny Reb mustered to the colors in the spring and summer of 1861, it was his home state that typically outfitted him in military uniform, as such was available. Many of the Southern states chose the frock coat for their standard uniform. This followed the tradition of the pre-war state militias, which often based their official uniforms on those of the U.S. Army, and the frock coat was readily seen to have that special martial, war-like look, all the better to outfit the flower of Southern manhood in the defense of their natural rights.

The Arkansas Military Board took note that the pre-war Arkansas State Militia had adopted the U.S. Army uniform coat,

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Louisiana state-issue frock coat in the collection of artist Don Troiani, documented to a soldier in the 5th Louisiana Infantry.

and ordered gray jean frock coats (with matching caps and trowsers) to be produced for its volunteers. Louisiana took a similar step, providing gray frock coats for the volunteers gathering at Camp Moore. Tennessee prescribed a blue frock coat similar to the U.S. Army's pattern, while the Kentucky State Guard outfitted itself in gray woolen frocks with blue cuffs and collars. Texas issued frock coats at least to its troops deployed to the "seat of the War" in Virginia, and Georgia state troops received gray frock coats with trimmed collars and cuffs.

Because the individual southern states issued frock coats to their soldiers at the outset of the War, these garments are usually considered to be "early war" with respect to reenactor impressions. And while Arkansas apparently continued to issue at least some frock coats to its state troops through the summer of 1863, constraints on the availability of material and tailors led to more focus on the economical, cloth-saving shell jackets. However Southern soldiers continued to receive a fair supply of clothing sent from home by their families, and many of these garments were frock coats; three examples of surviving frocks from the Chickamauga and Atlanta campaigns were homemade garments sent by the soldier's family.

Other images from the series *Images of the War* show Texas soldiers recruiting in 1864, and each man is wearing a trimmed dress coat, and, surprisingly, a light-colored hat of some sort. More proof is given by period images of Confederate prisoners taken at Cold Harbor, Chattanooga, and Atlanta, showing the Rebels to be well- and uniformly clad,

with a fair number of individuals wearing untrimmed frock coats.

Confederate frock coats were all individually made in different communities under differing patterns standards. Nearly all surviving examples are completely handsewn, with a few distinct exceptions. No two surviving coats are exactly alike; but these variances highlight that you can never really say "always" or "never" with reference to Confederate military clothing. These garments were not stamped out and assembled on some assembly line, but were hand-crafted, each and every one... in other words you don't have 1000 copies of a master garment pattern, but the master pattern was followed individually 1000 times.

By going through contemporary soldiers' accounts, contemporary photographs, and comparing the surviving coats with their provenance, we can come up with some fairly good generalizations about these garments.

Most Confederate frock coats follow the current men's fashions from the early 1860s, unlike the Federal frock, which was cut to the fashion of the early 1850s. The vast majority of these garments are single-breasted, although a number of double-breasted enlisted coats survive.

Confederate frocks are typically made of a wool/cotton blended cloth known as "jeans," the same as many depot-issued jackets. The body of the coat is typically made of six pieces: the front; a smaller side piece; and a back piece that has a long extension that forms the tail and vent of the coat.



The "Arkansas frock coat," typical of the uniform issued by the Arkansas Military Board in 1863.

The skirts are made of a single panel of cloth for each side, joined to the coat body at the waist seam, and to the forward edges of the tails. In keeping with fashion, the skirts were cut broad, and eased into the waist seam so that they would flare fashionably around the hips. In many cases, the skirts were so wide that they exceeded the width of the available material; and a small triangle of cloth was pieced into the lower back corner of the tails in order to make things fit.

Because the more loosely-woven jeans is given to fraying, the skirt edges of Confederate frocks were nearly always hemmed, being turned and stitched in one of four ways: hand topstitching; the edge was double rolled to the inside and hand-felled; machine topstitching; or the edge was rolled to the outside and covered with tape trim.

In all cases, that edge was sewn in place somehow. If the skirt is lined, the edge needs to be tacked down by either felling or topstitching to keep the lining from pulling that pressed seam open. If the skirt is unlined, just pressing would not hold it in place – causing the seam to come open and the raw edge to unravel.

An interesting example is the 5th Louisiana frock in Don Troiani's collection. On that coat – whose skirts are unlined – the skirt edge is pressed to the outside ¼ inch and then covered with ½" black tape trim to cover and protect the raw edge. On that coat, the trim is affixed via two lines of machine sewing.

Also in keeping with civilian fashion, Confederate frock coats rarely have breast pockets. Instead, two pockets were placed in the tails, one on each side of the vent, where they could be accessed from outside, with the pocket opening concealed in the tail/skirt seam or underneath a scalloped flap; or they were placed inside the skirt where you have to reach through the tail vent to get to the pocket.

The sleeves of Confederate coats also follow civilian fashion in that they are often ballooned, whether made of two pieces, or a single piece of material. Cuffs in the coats that I have seen are typically nonfunctional (e.g., not vented) and are usually turned down and top stitched in the same manner as depot-made shell jackets.

Trim seems to be a function of time. State-issue and many privately made coats dated early in the war typically display colored collar and/or cuff trim and often tape trimming around the edges; but this becomes less and less common as the war goes on and trim material becomes less available in the South. Late war garments

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Soldiers of the 1st Texas Infantry in winter quarters in Virginia show the frock coats issued to Texas troops sent to the seat of the War in the summer of 1861.

such as those surviving from the Atlanta campaign and those in the Cold Harbor and Chattanooga images are plain and untrimmed save for the buttons; photographs of frock coated Rebels from late 1863 to the end of the war support this concept.

Since frock coats are so individualized, I'll close by discussing a set of coats specific to the states represented in our battalion, since they are more relevant, to our impressions.

The Arkansas Frock Coat

In late 1998 when researching Arkansas regiments and their gear, I noticed a distinct pattern of uniforms issued to Arkansas soldiers early in the war, gray, apparently jean frock coats of a distinctive pattern. In the summer of 1999, our mess group obtained photographs showing the details of an original coat which had been taken as a souvenir by an officer of the 3rd Minnesota when Little Rock fell to the Union forces in September 1863. This coat matched closely with the set of images of the Arkansas troops, and has come to be known as the "Arkansas frock" or "Little Rock frock" over the past several years.

The "Arkansas frock" is made of dyed-in-the-wool gray wool woven over a natural unbleached cotton warp. It is a single-breasted frock coat of gray jean-wool, with an 8 or 9-button closure. The surviving coat is fully lined in unbleached osnaburg, the skirts made of a single piece on each side, and hemmed by being turned back and

stitched to the lining.

Trim on the Arkansas coats seems to have varied, varying maybe by whom and when the coat was made.⁵ Most contemporary images of the coats show either an 8-button or 9-button front, with straight cuff and collar trim in a dark color. A contemporary painting in the collection of the Arkansas History Commission in Little Rock shows a member of the 2nd Arkansas Cavalry in one of these coats, with straight blue cuffs and collar, plus the fellow is wearing white buff (or webbing) cross belts and a waist belt with one of the elusive Arkansas belt plates. (This picture is reproduced on the cover and frontispiece of Roberts & Moneyhon, *Portraits of Conflict: A Photographic History of Arkansas in the Civil War*. The surviving coat pictured on the Capitol Guards' web page (1863 issue) has indigo blue collar trim only. Another late 1861 or early 1862 image shows a member of the 7th Arkansas in one of these coats with pointed cuff trim. Philip Dangerfield Stevenson of the 13th Arkansas was issued one of these coats at Columbus, KY, in October 1861 and described his coat as having black trim on the cuffs and collar: "I was about the last recruit for the regiment, at least for a season. When they fitted me out in soldier clothes, it was rare work. All the uniform shoes, hats, etc., had been picked over and only odds and ends were left. Lieutenant Bartlett roared as I tried on one thing after another. I finally emerged - and was a sight! I had on a long frock coat of coarse brown cloth, butternut color, very tight, buttoned up to the chin on my long rail-like body. My pants, of the same stuff, were



This image of the back side of the "Arkansas frock coat" shows the tails and vent, as well as the openings of the tail pockets.



Private John E. Johnston of the 29th Alabama Infantry was wearing this homemade frock coat when he was killed at Peachtree Creek during the battle of Atlanta in July, 1864. (Note the fatal bullet hole in the upper left chest.) This coat is typical of homemade uniforms in the Army of Tennessee. It also allows us to see how the skirt is eased into the body of the coat, allowing the skirt to hang fashionably over the hips and fall more naturally.

a mile too big, baggy as sacks, legs rolled up at the bottom. Our uniforms were mostly the same dirt color, the coats having brass buttons and black cuffs and collars. My hat, a common light colored wool, was passable to fit, but my shoes, coarse brogans, were a No. 9 and a No. 8! I laughed it off and was proud of being in uniform."⁶

The Louisiana Frock Coat

The "Louisiana frock coat" in artist Don Troiani's personal collection is believed to have been worn by a soldier in the 5th Louisiana during the 1861-1862 timeframe. It is made of gray jean material, whose original gray dye has oxidized somewhat to a "butternut" color, is trimmed with black vertical-ribbed braid, and finished with brass Louisiana buttons.

Examination of the details of the Louisiana coat shows a distinct resemblance to the construction of the U.S. Army-issue dress coat. The body of the coat is lined and quilted only in the chest and side panel area,

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and the skirts are unlined, with the tail pockets located inside the skirts in the same manner as the Federal dress coat. This particular coat features shoulder epaulettes, and black mohair tape trim around the edges of the epaulettes, collar, and the button edge of the coat front. The cuffs are nonfunctional, but feature three cuff buttons and a strip of black trim to give the appearance of a buttoning cuff. While the 5th Louisiana coat has black trim, other Louisiana frocks survive with blue and yellow trim.

This coat would be typical of the state issue to Louisiana troops through at least the spring of 1862, when New Orleans and Baton Rouge were taken by Union forces and the Confederate state government moved its operations to Shreveport.

Texas Frock Coats

Even Texas, with its limited textile and tailoring facilities, provided gray jean frocks and caps with black trim to the 1st, 4th and 5th Texas regiments which deployed to Virginia, becoming what would be known as the Texas Brigade in the Army of Northern Virginia. While I'm not aware of a surviving example of one of the Texas coats, 1861 images of the 1st



A Confederate prisoner, taken at Cold Harbor in June 1864, shows several men in frock coats like this one, typical of uniforms "sent from home" during the War.

Texas at Dumfries show several wearing dress coats with what is probably black colors and cuffs. These may be dark blue, but Val Giles of the 4th Texas reports that his company's coats were trimmed with black, and an image of him wearing the coat shows it to remarkably resemble the 1st Texas images. Other Texas troops were issued at least a limited number of frock coats through at least 1864, based upon surviving images.

Frock You!!

The single-breasted frock coat is probably the most useful, and most versatile garment that you can have in your closet; if your budget can include only one quality jacket, this one will get you the most use and mileage. That being said; these are complex and sometimes frustrating garments to assemble, and they need to be tailored for a good fashionable (or military) fit.

Prices for quality garments therefore tend to be high – with the range starting around \$250 at the cheapest, and more likely ranging between \$350 to \$450 for the quilted versions with handsewing in the visible areas. Expensive, yes!! – but consider that your frock would replace two or three other \$180 jackets that would otherwise be recommended, and the economics will make more sense. Having sewn several of these coats myself and seen what goes into their construction, I don't begrudge a good tailor his asking price, at least within the above range.

Aside from the quality tailors, a reasonable representation of one of the State-issue frocks can be had less expensively by working from a documented pattern, or County Cloth can make you a "kit" tailored to your measurements, which you can then assemble yourself, or have a seamstress assemble it for you. This is the best way to go; the second best, once you're confident in your sewing skills, is to assemble one using the Homespun Patterns M-021, "Confederate Single-Breasted Frock Coat." Either of these paths will get you a good coat that would be typical of the uniform "sent from home" that is so often mentioned in period letters and accounts. For those interested in one of the Louisiana coats, you would want to start with a copy of the pattern for a



This image of the interior of the Louisiana frock coat shows its similarity to the construction of the U.S. issue dress coat. Note the quilting in the chest panels, the unlined back panels, the covered skirt seam, and the tail pockets. (Photo courtesy of John Stillwagon)

Federal dress coat, and make the appropriate modifications to match the details of this Confederate derivative.

Where the Capitol Guards have the Columbus Depot style jackets as their preferred, standard uniform, the second choice and our preferred get-up for a Trans-Mississippi impression is the frock coat. Hopefully, this little summary has stirred your interest in these fascinating garments, and given you some new ideas on their usefulness.

Footnotes:

1. I've tried, and it's a fearsome quest.
2. Michael R. Cunningham, "Evaluating Reproduction Federal Enlisted Men's Frock Coats," *The Watchdog*, 2, 4, pp. 2-3. A good example of the inflation brought about by the War, even in the North.
3. Richard van Wyck, *A War to Petrify the Heart*, East Fishkill Historical Society, 1997, page 72.
4. Regimental Order Book, 86th NY, page 76. On file at the National Archives.
5. Details and photographs of the Arkansas frock coats can be found on the Capitol Guards' web site at <http://www.geocities.com/capitalguards/LRfrock.html>.
6. Nathaniel C. Hughes, Jr., Ed. *The Civil War Memoirs of Philip Dangerfield Stephenson, D.D.*, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge., (1995) p. 18.

Sources:

- Chris Daley, *Sewing Workshop Instructional Binder: Single-Breasted Confederate Frock Coat*, Chewsville, MD, privately published, 2002.
- Jon Isaacson, *Burbridge's Regiment Clothing Authenticity Guidelines*, published on-line at <http://www.geocities.com/capitalguards/clothing.html>, 2000.
- Ed Quigley, "Enlisted Men's Frock Coats," *The Columbia Rifles Research Compendium*, privately published, 2001.



The Captain's Tent

by Tom Ezell

Post Dodd-ed...

After having decompressed a little bit, unloaded the truck, cleaned the loaner muskets, and downloaded something like 12 megs of pictures, I think I can breathe a little easier now.

The Dodd event on January 11 created a LOT of very favorable publicity for the Capitol Guards, as well as the Greyhounds of the 37th, since we were indistinguishable throughout the week. There was a large, very nice article in the *Democrat Gazette* (re-printed elsewhere in this issue, in case you don't read the newspapers), as well as television coverage by KARK Channel 4, KATV Channel 7, and KTHV Channel 11. Even the radio folks got involved, with reports aired on KUAR/PBS and KARN/AM. There was even a nice gripe in the anti-Confederate, anti-history *Arkansas Times*. It really looks like we got folks' attention with this one.

The paper said "more than 200" spectators; the official headcount kept by the little fellow down at the front door of the Arsenal building was 253, which includes about 24 of us reenactors. Very nice coverage on both Channel 4 and Channel 11 on the six o'clock news; but I don't think they re-ran it at ten. The Little Rock government access channel taped the whole show; provided that they get the editing wrapped up this week, they plan to broadcast it about two weeks from now. The raw footage should be available around the middle of this coming week. We will get a copy, and there will be one for the Museum as well.

I am just flummoxed at how well the whole thing went. Every single player had his part right down to a "T". One old fellow from the Museum board came up and told me that he had sat on twelve courts martial in WW2, trying deserters. He said we got it all exactly right. Nearly every comment I've gotten so far has been extremely favorable. The only complaints have been secondhand, from a few of the SCV guys from out of town, and one gripe directly in that I let a "yankee" place the wreath at the grave out at Mt. Holly.

This isn't something we'll do every year, and once I get my thoughts

recollected and the AAR/lessons learned compiled over the next week or so, I'll put it all in a binder and give it to Stephan for the Museum's files, and will leave the scripts and stuff up on the web site in case somebody wants to do it again sometime.

Looking Forward...

It sometimes looks like it was overshadowed by the morning's events, but our Company meeting down at the Pizza Hut went extremely well, too. We got a lot done in a relatively short time, and again, it was because you fellows were so well prepared.

I thank each of you for the trust you placed in me by re-electing me to another year of toting the sword, and I will do my best not to disappoint anyone. It is an honor and a privilege to represent you like this.

We've got a busy schedule ahead of us this year. September will be an extremely pressing time, in that we've violated some of our guidelines by booking two "max effort" events on back-to-back weekends, even if they are technically in different months. Pilot Knob (Sept. 25-26) is one of those events that comes around only every once in a long while, as well as the home town event of one our members, Ken Nations. This event is held on original ground, in an original Federal fort, so it ought to be a good one.

The following weekend, (October 1-3) the North/South Alliance will be holding its annual event at Spring Hill, TN, representing the 1864 Tennessee Campaign and the battles of Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville. The original campaign was fought in the last week of November and the first two weeks of December, 1864 - a bitter winter campaign. However the event organizers have meddled a bit with the experience by moving the dates forward by two months so that the farbs won't freeze, and to attract more spectators. I appreciate their intent, but it really puts the squeeze on a very busy time of the year when every little place wants to schedule its event inside the same three-week period. It will be a busy fall.

Mobilization Orders?

When I said that the Dodd event was bringing us to the public's eye, I wasn't kidding... Last Tuesday, after the Governor had begun planning for a possible shutdown of the state government, the following note appeared in *Bullwhiz*, a mostly political/social e-mail newsletter in the central Arkansas area, advocating

that we be called back up to defend the state:

<< A few weeks ago, I wouldn't have thought that was possible. In light of the complete paralysis of substantive legislative action, I now think such a "doomsday" scenario is indeed possible. I do not believe we can wait until the hammer falls before we at least start thinking about contingency plans. I am asking that you huddle with your senior management team, division directors, or other key personnel to develop a possible response to shut-down.>>>

Perhaps we should start a list for the Rev/Gov on things that could be shut down under a "doomsday" scenario. Think of things that require state funds to operate.

Like:

- *Razorback Games (state employees open doors, turn on lights, etc)*
- *State Police (the Highway Patrol would be unaffected so we would be protected.)*
- *Tyson Foods (Don cannot process meat without a meat inspector being present and the meat inspector is paid by the state.)*
- *Prisons (on second thought we might want to keep that open)*
- *Revenue Department (don't have to renew your drivers license)*
- *The Supreme Court (then there is the Moibus (sp?) scenario, if they close down the state then they have to go home because they are paid with state funds)*
- *The Judiciary (Many judges and Prosecutors are paid by the state)*

Well some of the closings might not be too bad. Of course, they would have to recall the Capital Guard (the 6TH Arkansas) to surround the Capital and protect the Legislators when the people riot against them.

Hmmm... given the current popular opinions of the Guv'nor and the Arkansas Legislature, we'd probably be out there with everybody else rioting against them; or maybe just prop the Statehouse doors wide open and get back out of the way...

On-Line Updates

There have been a few updates to the Company's website, with the current event schedule now posted, along with an archive of all of last year's newsletters. We will continue to post this year's newsletters as time goes on, and will shortly be uploading some additional references, to include Kautz's handbooks for soldiers and officers, and a copy of the Confederate army regulations. The Links page has been updated as well to include our sister units in the Battalion and the

new Battalion bulletin and message board.

Our Big Hairy-Assed Goals (“BHAGs) for 2004:

I mentioned them elsewhere, but here’s what I think we should be working at, and where I will strive to pull us in the coming year:

1. Grow our membership to the point that we can consistently field 20-25 rifles at max effort events within a 4-hour drive of central Arkansas. Strong companies are the building blocks for reenacting battalions.

2. Work in closer partnership with our neighboring units and other community organizations such as State and National Parks, the local round tables, and the SCV. Greater visibility in the community will help with recruiting new members, as well as retaining our old ones.

3. Get a uniform, “issued” look to the company by getting everyone in at least one similar jacket, where we look something like we belong to the same army. Our standard jacket is the Columbus Depot pattern, the 2nd choice is a jean single-breasted frock coat.

4. I want us to have more fun and enjoyment out of the time we spend together as the Capitol Guards. Some of this will involve getting out of the “same old same old” rut, and pushing the envelope now and then. I believe that complacency – allowing a unit to become stagnant – is every bit as sure a poison to that unit as any splits over who is “hardcore” and who is not. When we cease to try to improve ourselves, both as individual reenactors and as a group, when we become stagnant, then we cease to grow as a unit and as a band of comrades... brothers in arms. In the same manner in that you only improve in sports if you exercise yourself – if you seek to stretch your old limits each time you play – then if we don’t stretch ourselves as a unit from time to time we won’t grow... we won’t improve, either.

5. Our spare time is the most precious thing that our members entrust to us, and I want to see that this precious resource is not squandered or abused. You should get something positive from each event you attend with the Capitol Guards, and if we’re not meeting our member’s needs, then our leadership needs to do something about that. That’s what we get paid the big bucks (although in Confederate script) to do.

6. I want to continue learning about the Civil War soldier and the world in which he lived. It’s about the history. One project I’ve been hacking away at is something

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Coming Events

February 28-29, 2004 – Company Camp of Instruction, Reed’s Bridge Battlefield Park, Jacksonville, AR.

March 13, 2004 – Little Rock St. Patrick’s Day Parade, MacArthur Park to the RiverMarket, details to follow.

March 20, 2004 – MG Patrick Cleburne Memorial Service, 12 p.m., Maple Hill Cemetery, Helena, Arkansas. 6th Arkansas Max effort event (LH/memorial)

April 2-4, 2004 – 140th Anniversary Reenactment, The Red River Campaign (Mansfield/Pleasant Hill, LA) 6th Arkansas & TMVI Battalion maximum effort event. (Battle reenactment)

May 1-2, 2004 – Civil War Days, Jefferson, TX. 6th Arkansas and TMVI Battalion Maximum effort event. (battle demonstrations)

May 15, 2004 – Rededication of the Capital Guards Monument, MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History, MacArthur Park, Little Rock. (living history)

May 21, 2004 – Cabot School System Living History, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Cabot Middle School (North), Cabot, Ark. (living history)

May 28-30, 2004 – 140th Anniversary Living History, Battle of Pickett’s Mill, Pickett’s Mill Battlefield State Park, Paulding County, GA. Hosted by the Western Independent Grays. (semi-immersive, “hardcore” battle reenactment/living history)

June 26-27, 2004 – “Bleeding Kansas - 1855” near Lawrence, KS. Immersive civilian living history event, Pre-War civilian impression

July 10-11, 2004 – Midwest Civilian Camp of Instruction. Mahaffie Stage Coach Stop Park, Olathe, KS. (a “how to” seminar)

July 31, 2004 – N/SA Annual Business meeting, Nashville, TN

August 7-8, 2004 – Wilson’s Creek Living History, Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield. (immersive living history. Missouri State Guard impression.)

September 18-19, 2004 – Arkansas Post National Memorial. Gillett, AR. Semi-immersive living history, Confederate impression.

September 24-26, 2004 – 140th Anniversary Reenactment, Battle of Pilot Knob. Pilot Knob & Iron County, MO

October 1-3, 2004 – 140th Anniversary reenactment, Battles of Franklin and Spring Hill, Spring Hill, TN. *1st Confederate Division Maximum effort event*

October 9-10, 2004 – “Ambush at Jacksonport” reenactment/living history, Jacksonport State Park, near Newport, AR. Hosted by the Wretched Mess.

November 6-7, 2004: Civil War Days at Old Washington. Old Washington Historic State Park, Washington, AR.

December 3-5, 2004 – Battle of Prairie Grove reenactment, Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park, Prairie Grove, Ark. TMVI Maximum effort event.

Events marked in bold type are maximum effort events as voted upon by the Company, and your attendance is expected. If for some reason you will be unable to attend a max effort event, please contact Steve Shore or Tom Ezell beforehand.

The 6th Regiment, Arkansas Volunteer Infantry, Co. A, the "Capitol Guards" is affiliated with the Arkansas Reenactors' Alliance, the Trans-Mississippi Volunteer Infantry Battalion, Mississippi Valley Brigade, and the 1st Confederate Division. We are dedicated to the faithful and historically accurate portrayal of a unit of Confederate infantry in the War Between the States in 1861-1865.

The *Sentinel* is published on a more-or-less monthly basis by the "Capitol Guards", 6th Arkansas Infantry reenactors. Subscriptions are included as part of Company dues; or are available separately for \$15.00 per year. Back issues are \$2.00 each (index available upon request). Send subscription requests, inquiries, and article submissions to the Captain below.

<p>Captain Tom Ezell 338 Johnson Road Scott, AR 72142 (501) 961-1937 (501) 912-1047 (cell)</p>	<p>1st Sergeant Stevw Shore 68 Stonewall Drive Jacksonville, AR 72076 (501) 985-0569</p>
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Visit us on the Internet at
<http://www.geocities.com/capitalguards/>

The 6th Arkansas is always in need of "a few good men" to fill the ranks in service of the Cause. If you are interested in Civil War Reenacting, please call the Recruiter or the Company Commander as listed above.

The 6th Arkansas living historians are available for living history presentations to schools, public and private organizations, and community events. Please contact the Company Commander.

that an old pard has dubbed the Cornfed Companion, a notebook compiling bunches of basic and sometime esoteric information on the western Confederate soldier: from examinations of original surviving uniform items and the correct proof marks on Enfield rifles to things like street maps of Little Rock in 1860, raising cotton, corn, and hogs, and a list of the "babes" in Little Rock in 1861 and how to court them! Stuff that the typical young man in Pulaski County would know about as he went off to war. We're here for the history...

Thank you all again for your hard work and participation in the Capitol Guards. We've had an excellent year in 2003, and we will seek to build on and surpass those accomplishments in 2004. This is a group, that when we put our mind to it, can "turn goat whizz into gasoline." There's a great deal of positive energy here, and I'm very proud to be one of the Capitol Guards. I hope you are, too..

Tom Ezell

The Sarge Sez...

Gentlemen:

I wanted to tell you "Thanks" for attending today's memorable event and re-electing me to my post. I do enjoy serving you.

Is it just me or was today something special? The weather "gods" provided warmer, cloudless skies which were a sparkling blue for everyone to enjoy.

The spectators were more than I ever expected and Tom's planning and coordination at the Arsenal was something to behold. Three Cheers should be given to him for his mental stress, long hours of typing scripts, and the one thing that most people didn't get to see... the evidence that was taken off David O. Dodd. During the Court Martial I was marvelling at the alleged hand written letters he had in his possession. I couldn't tell if they were computer generated or actually hand written. Either way it was a lot of hours to make the trial look realistic!

I was glad to see Bob Teeling show up. It has been a long time since he left the fold. I really think if given a tweak... we might get some of the fella's back if we keep growing that this rate. We've doubled in size from last year and with this Miracle Grow now taking effect... next years meeting will have to be held in a larger facility.

Thank you again for making this a special day and remember to be watching for today's event on the local cable channel in two weeks!

Your Pard,
1st Sgt Steve



Dodd Memorial (Continued from Page 2)

the Early Arkansas Reenactors' Assn. As we went onstage, the cast of characters included David Sesser (David O. Dodd), Ken Nations and Jerry Simpson as the provost guards, Tom Ezell as the judge advocate, Jason Massey and Gregory Ferguson as Fishback and Yonley, Dodd's attorneys, Harvey Moore, Charles Durnette, Jim Brigg, Steve Shore, and Mike Loum as the members of the court; Robert Giles, Sheldon Gately, W.J. Monagle, Tyson Savell, Bob Black, Mark Kalkbrenner, and Larry Hulsey as witnesses for the prosecution, and Keith Peterson, Matt Bond, Will Hardage, Kathie Gately, and George Davis as witnesses for the defense.

We had gotten together the previous weekend to read through the script and get everyone familiar with his or her part and what to expect, and despite the lack of practice, every person "nailed" it... Several old veterans who had taken part in actual courts-martial came up later to comment how "real" that everything looked. Well, we tried... taking pains to get everyone suited up authentically, matching the scripts to the original records, and even presenting the evidence. All the evidence and documents made up for the court was authentic... that is, it said just what it was supposed to say, and was on the appropriate repro form, just in case somebody wanted to look at it. Everything from the convening order to the charge sheets, Dodd's petitions and oath of allegiance, the letters, etc. Even the memorandum book had the writing in it, Mark K. was really trying to decipher my chicken scratches in there. That was a real copy of the Regs and DeHart's 1847 manual on courts-martial just in case one of the panel really did ask a question or need to look something up while the court was in session.

Following the conclusion of the trial reenactment, we gathered our gear and headed out to Mount Holly Cemetery for the traditional memorial service at Dodd's grave site. As with the Museum program, we had a large turnout here - In addition to the two officers and color guard, there were 40 rifles in the ranks, as well as approximately 70 spectators and observers. For once, the ceremony held to the issue at hand, a military ceremony in honor of a fallen comrade. It closed with three sharp, crisp volleys as 40 rifles shattered the afternoon calm and black powder smoke drifted into the blue, crystal-clear sky.

Hmmm... maybe for next year...