

TMA Journal

The Official Journal Of The Traditional Muzzleloading Association

Issue 5 June 2007





WELCOME TO THE TMA JOURNAL!

For over six hundred years, Muzzleloading weapons have played an integral part of societies all around the world. Wars have been won, wilderness has been tamed and generation after generation of human life has been sustained. From cannons to matchlocks, smoothbores to rifles, the muzzleloading firearm has become an image synonymous with the freedom of an American Nation.

The TMA is dedicated to preserving the rich and fascinating heritage of the traditional muzzleloading firearms of early America. Whether your interest is in rendezvous, re-enactments, historical clothing, camps, trapping, weapons, accoutrements or American history, all historical topics in relation to the muzzleloading firearms prior to 1900 are welcomed.

FROM THE EDITOR



Hello all! Well, here's another issue. Good thing we don't get paid to do this or folks would be complaining because we are always late. But that's a volunteer's prerogative, eh?

I have some things from Longknife to publish that I haven't got-

ten to yet. They are a couple of stories he has written and Lynn gave them to me to publish here. We'll have to get to them next time, I promise.

There are lots of things going on with traditional vs. modern muzzleloaders lately. I think we all need to keep calm heads about this and not put ourselves in disfavor by saying or writing things in anger. Keep in mind that emails and postings are forever and can and will come back to haunt us. We must remember that some of the people most disliked by traditionalists are professional writers and know their craft very well. They can out speak and write

most of us. They have a far wider audience than individual traditionalists. We need to speak and write on their level with wit, wisdom, charm and guile. Not sarcasm. Enough lecture.

The Rondy season is here and I hope we all get to many of them. Remember to take lots of photos. We all love those photos.

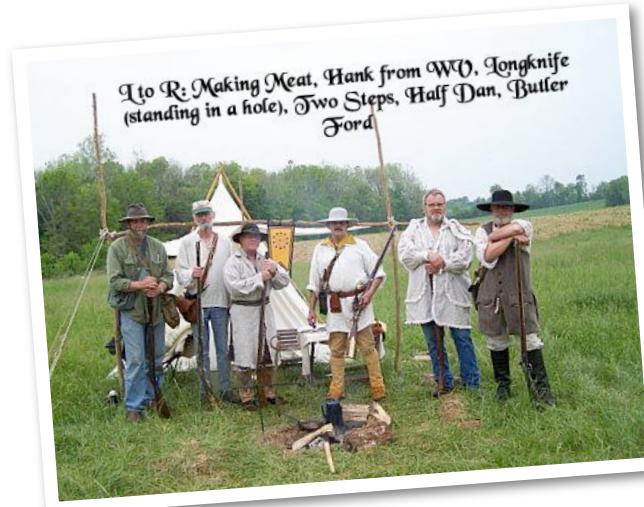
Well, I'll let you get on with your reading, Happy shooting!!

-- Firewalker

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to another great issue of the TMA Journal. We have the second installment in a series of excerpts from the Dapper Manuscripts presented by Mike Rumping. Mario brings us a couple of very

informative articles on skulking and the history of the ranger cap. Tim Gilliland teaches us the ins-and-outs of casting roundballs. And we've added a new recipe section.





From The President's Desk

Greetings Friends,

Here we are with another TMA Journal....it just keeps getting better. A HUGE THANKS to the talented folks who make this happen.

Summer is almost here, young ones getting out of school, vacation time getting closer and lots of events to attend. I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer. I also hope that you'll find the time to check in on the TMA Forum to let us know what you're doing and post some pictures.

While you're enjoying the summer, please continue to promote and support your TMA;

- Don't forget "The Great TMA Raffle" that will be going on through the summer. We have some of the finest prizes you'll see anywhere.
- Check out the TMA goods that are now available to you. Otaktay has posted pictures and an order form in the 'TMA Information' forum. There are some nice things there.
- Last, but not least, join in on the fun of the TMA Monthly Postal Shoots. It would be GREAT to see more members Pre-Pay and sign up for the whole shootin' match (pun intended). It would be a time saver for you, and would make life a LOT easier for Otaktay and Talking Hands.

Enjoy your summer and keep in touch!

A1

—Two Steps, TMA President





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DRAPER MANUSCRIPTS

The following are excerpts from the "Draper Manuscripts" owned by the Wisconsin Historical Society. These and many more manuscripts are available from them through many local libraries and online. -Firewalker

**'Simon Kenton Papers' by Judge John James
Volume 5, pp. 100-126*****Part Four – Presented by Mike Rumping******Conversations with Simon Kenton 13th of February, 1832 at his house in Logan Co. Ohio 4 1/2 miles north of Zanesfield, taken by the honorable John H. James of Urbana, Ohio.***

"Maria Dougherty, the mother of Louis D was taken at Carr's creek, but whether in was in 1763 or 64 she did not remember. She was taken to Danville in 1796 when Kenton- her brother. But she was there. The brother did not know her. She would not leave the Indians. Her son, Lewis, married Sutawnee, daughter of John Ward. John Ward was killed at Paint creek- he had been clever to me. His daughter told me her father would befriend me. I did not then know his brothers. in 1778 I met with Logan at a little winter town used for hunting on the east side of the scioto. "Young man you have been stealing these peoples horses & they are very mad" well, I am a chief & tomorrow I'll send 2 men to Sandusky to speak good for you. Next morning he brought me some bread & meat & told me I must go with these 2 men, but did not tell me what was to await me. On my way I began to meet troops of boys painted black, & mounted on fine horses 20 or more who would ride round me & dart off with the most terrific shouts & screams. Peter Drewyer had been sent from Detroit as a kind of spy to watch McIntosh's army, but not succeeding in learning anything he prevailed on the Indians to let me go to Detroit to tell the commander the number of troops, etc. It was agreed that I should be brought back to be burned, though I did not then know it. One of the chiefs accompanied us & waited at Detroit, claiming a restoration of me, but finally had to go away disappointed.

1779 It was on the June 1779 Mrs. Edgar had given me a rifle a pouch of musket balls & a horn

full of powder when I got the gun I went back to a swamp to hide. The officers on horseback were shortly after dark? & their servants. watching their course, so I had to be very cautious. We set off & traveled 14 nights laying by all day until we got somewhere near where Ft. Wayne now is. We lived on coons & often had as high as 3 of a night. We then traveled by day. Col. McCullough was acquainted with Simon Girty from 1800-1804 at which time he lived 1 mile below Malden & had a farm. He had 2 children, a daughter of 18 who married a frenchman & a son of 14. They were children of a white woman whom Girty had captured but did not then live with her. He was then lame, from having had his thigh broke. He was the bravest looking man I ever saw, is said never to have had a wound. He lived here till the British evacuated Malden, then he went off. Was blind many years. He was an interpreter & received a dollar a day from British govt. Could speak more Indian languages than any man I ever heard of. He was very friendly & kind to all Americans he had known or previously met with. Jas. Girty had known me, as well as any man could know another, but when he saw me a captive & about to be bound, he did not know me. While Simon was very kind to me & never ceased his efforts. I stayed all night with Drewyer at Adam Brown's & he did not take notice of me (that is Brown) I had often seen him in the council house. The U.S. Government gave him 3 sections of land & he did not deserve it quite as well as I. Jim Girty lived below Malden. Brown went back & saw his old brother ...being absent 40 years. he had an Indian family & came again to the Indians. He is thought to have gone often on war parties. Simon Girty told me he had been an ensign & was put in a guard house for being charged with having intercourse with the indians. He said that he felt that he could remain no longer with them. He was a man of sensitive feelings. Never heard of the powder story & don't believe it was true. Says most emphatically that Cresap did not kill Logan's family. I knew Cresap well. That family was killed by Baker & Greathouse. George Ash told me he had decoyed many a boat & they were taken but I rekon he did not tell that to congress when he applied for & got three sections.

Mr. James, I've had some people in my time that were very fond of me. I had a good deal of property



& maybe they saw my weak parts enough to know how to use me.

Col Crawford was taken about where Montgomery lived near Ft. Stephenson. Drewyer showed me the place he was burned near Upper Sandusky. Logan was at Detroit & was accused & said he would go & join Clark. he set out alone & is said to have been followed & killed. The Delawares had a town near little Kanawha which Kenton had visited they went to White river, 18 m. from Wabash & when Gov. Hamilton was taken they broke off & went to Mississippi. There was a town on Muskingum & during the war a portion of them were friendly with us & fought in our ranks. Mingoes had a small reserve at Sandusky re. Gardner's treaty."

**'Simon Kenton Papers' by Judge John James
Volume 5, pp. 100-126**

**Part Five – Presented by Mike Rumping
Conversations with Simon Kenton 13th of February, 1832 at his house in Logan Co. Ohio 4 1/2 miles north of Zanesfield, taken by the honorable John H. James of Urbana, Ohio.**

"In 1780 a man deserted from Clark at Newport. I wanted to follow him & told Clark I would fetch him back. " You shan't go, for you will never stop till you find him; let him go. This man had enlisted as a substitute & was supposed to have been prevailed on by someone in Ky. to go & betray. He gave the Piqua towns notice of our approach & was drowned at the rapids of the Maumee.

I read to him (Kenton) the story of David Morgan from Border warfare. Yes, yes, I knew him very well I guess that's all true. Said Mrs. K " I've heard it before, every word of it." Said the old man, " But he spoiled it all by his brutality to the dead bodies. He skinned them, & had the skins tanned, & from the leather made a shot pouch, belt, razor strop & many other things.

p. 114.

At Boon's station the Indians & French commenced undermining from the river. Boon had a box fixed with ropes to haul up to the pickets so that they could see the work. He commenced digging in the blockhouse & dug out the whole floor to the depth of 4 feet. We could then have killed any number of men that could have entered from a mine. Drewyer and the Indians also told me that

their plan was broken in on by wet weather & they quit on that account not because Boone was digging a counter-mine. After Boone had treated with them & it was concluded to have amity, the chief said it was usual to shake hands in friendship but when they made a long peace & a lasting one they caught by the shoulders & brought their hearts together. 3 Indians were, as if by accident, near each white man & the design was forcibly to capture them. Boone gave the orders to the nearest bastions to fire on the whole crowd, many were killed. He told me it was his pointed order to the men he had stationed in the 2 basteens to shoot without one moment's delay with well directed aim at the enemy. It was wisdom in him to do so. It tended to keep the Indians in negotiations for he expected succor. A table was taken & a clerk brought forth writing, drawing.

In Bowman's attack 1799 on Piqua town (Chillicothe) he was pursued nearly to the Little Miami. Black Fish was not killed but his thigh was broke, & he lived till Fall.

Abram Chapline who was captured at Capt. Clark's (Col. Rogers) defeat at mouth of Licking told me that he told Black Fish that there were doctors in Gen. Clark's army that could cure him. Blackfish seemed much taken with the proposed relief & thought of releasing Chapline & to agree to pay him on his return in order to be cured, but it is supposed the nation overruled him. This was in October. Chapline was presented with a gun by Isaac Zane & made his escape. Many years after he had a fine rifle made in Kentucky & sent it by Kenton to Zane's youngest son. The man who had escaped the Piqua town piloted Bowman out.

1778 McClung makes me say sir a dozen times to Blackfish. Now I never stirred an Indian. Blackfish came to me and said Young man, did Capt. Boone send you here to steal horses? No, he did not but I stole them because you steal our horses. An Indian came to me and held a long conversation with me, " Young man, didn't you know it was wrong to steal Indian's horses?" "No, I did not, for you come & steal our horses. Don't you know the great spirit don't love people that steal? No. Did you ever know it. Yes, 20 years ago. Indians have got no cattle about their doors like white people. The buffalo are our cattle but you came here & kill them. You have no business to kill Indians cattle. Did you know



that? No, I did not. He then whipped me pretty smartly & told me it was for stealing Indian's horses.

The Boones- in Boone's account Scioto is written Sciotha, Kenton calls it Sciotha. He also says Tecumthe but when I asked him whether it was Tecumthe or Tecumseh he said Tecumseh.

McKee was a Pennsylvanian by birth & looked as if of Indian descent. He was Indian agent at Ft. Pitt was captured in 1775 & detained till spring of 1778. He made his way home He was charged with breaking his parole but denied it saying he would not be afraid to face Genl. Washington on that point. What became of him? Why that was a kind of witchery business as the Indians would think. He had a pet deer & it came into his bedroom as he was rising from bed & as he was drawing on his pantaloons it ran at him piercing his thigh with the tines of its horns & producing death in a very short time. This was in the spring of 1780. (It was many years later 1794 LCD) At Detroit 1779 British receiving scalps. Frequent councils were held I asked the committee if I might attend. Yes, whenever you please. One of them, some Indians, they returned from an excursion into Kentucky (Pennsylvania) bringing many scalps. The commander secured them & thanked them in such a way as to show he wished to receive more. He took the tomahawk & pretending to whet it said you have dulled it, & it is now sharp. Go dull it again. The Indians received many presents & whatever they wished.

Hobson's choice- Wayne's camping ground at Cincinnati."

To be continued next issue.



SKULKING FOR SIR WILLIAM

Rangers in the Mohawk Valley 1750-1763 by Mario Doreste

The Mohawk Valley of central New York was the end of the earth for most English-speaking people in the 1750s. By mid-eighteenth century, English settlement in the colony started at present day NY City, extended north up the Hudson River to Albany and west about 60 miles up the Mohawk River. This valley was settled mostly by immigrants from the area of southwestern Germany known as the Palatinate and were known as the "Palatines". In a bid to escape war and poor crops these people fled to New York in search of a better life. They first settled along the Hudson River about 1710. But by the 1720s they moved out to the Tappan-Hocken Valley of Pennsylvania, New York's Schoharie Valley and to the Burnetsfield Patent of the Mohawk Valley. Burnetsfield, known to outsiders as the German Flatts, was the westernmost settlement in New York.

Also a resident in this valley was a young Irishman by the name of William Johnson. Young William was brought to NY by his uncle Peter Warren to manage Warren's lands and trading store. William was a shrewd businessman and by the 1740s was a prosperous landowner himself and set up his own store for the Indian trade. William showed a knack for dealing with the Mohawks who were members of the Iroquois Confederacy and the easternmost tribe of the group. William, it was said, could "eat dog soup with the savages and drink brandy with the gentry on the same day." These skills were to serve him well in years to come.

The end of the valley was exposed to attack by French and Indian forces and this was of great concern to William and the other residents of the valley.

"I must beg leave to observe to your Honour, that the Inhabitants of the Mohawks River, (who are daily in fear of the same fate of the Eastern Settlements being now the only Frontier) will think it great hardship...while they are so exposed to the Enemy. I am certain that our Indians would also think the same, being as much afraid as our enemy."



William agrees that Provincial troops are needed to defend the valley, but adds his own suggestion:

“...but unless we have a proper number of woodsangers continually scouring the Woods, together with some of our best Indians (whom I believe may be got for pay) to give us intelligence of the enemys approach, our numbers be them ever so well armed, and provided will avail but little, for they live so scattered it will require three or four days notice to muster any considerable number of them together. Our safety depends greatly on having early Intelligence so that we maybe able to guard against a surprise.”

Evidently, the Provincial soldiers did not, in his eyes, provide any real protection for the Valley:

“There are some of the New York provincials posted at Harkemere’s [Johan Jost Herkimer] House there. They are no Protection to the Inhabitants; as they are under no Order to scout, they keep in & about the House.—Under the present Situation of our Publick Affairs, I can think of no Measures to encrease our Indian Interest. To keep the little we have steady, is all I can expect to do. I can think of no Method so likely to protect our Frontiers from the Depredations of Enemy Indians & Canadians, & counterbalance the Enemy’s Advantage over us that Way, as a sufficient, well chosen, and well-directed Body of Rangers; These might not only protect us, but annoy the Enemy, dishearten their Indians, and animate our Own.”

“They say the Troops posted there as they keep within the Bounds of their Garrison are no cover or protection to them, their Habitations being Scattered & distant, and that was the Garrison Stronger it would not avail them the more, against the sudden attacks of Scalping Parties.”

This was not the first time Johnson recommended such men. In 1748 he wrote Governor Clinton of New York:

“...when I was going to Onondaga I left Orders whenever the Indians call’d for men to scour the woods, that their should be a number ready for that purpose, and since that time there has been two parties out with some Indians...”

William’s fears were not unfounded. In March, 1756, Fort Bull, located at the western end of the Mohawk River on the portage route to Lake Ontario, was raided by a combined force of French Marines, Army, milice (militia) and Indians. Chaussegros De Lery, an officer in France’s Compagnies franches de la marine, led his force of over 300 men from Montreal to the mission at La Presentation (present-day Ogdensburg, NY) and then down through the Western Adirondacks for this attack on the supply lines feeding the garrison at Oswego. The garrison was put to the sword after 3 requests for surrender and the fort, with its supplies, burned to the ground. De Lery made it back to Canada having suffered only 2 men killed. In November of 1757, Burnetsfield (German Flatts) was raided. The village was mostly destroyed and over 100 were carried into captivity in Canada. The village was struck again in April 1758, but local militia repelled the raiders.

In 1755, William Johnson was given command of an expedition meant to attack Fort Saint Frederic on New York’s Lake Champlain. It was then that William met a woodsman from New Hampshire, captain of the 1st NH Regiment’s ranging company, Robert Rogers. Rogers’ men acted as escorts for the supply train coming up from Albany and later scouted around lake George for Johnson’s force.

After emerging victorious from what became the Battle of Lake George, William became Sir William Johnson, baronet and Superintendent of Northern Indian Affairs. His influence with both the Indians and the English establishment grew exponentially, as did the activity of his scouts/Rangers.

“I dispatched Scouting parties all round the German Flatts for several miles, but made no Discovery of any Enemy; I have some Scouts still out whom I desired to take a larger Circuit...”



Minutes of a British Council of War in Albany read:

"It is the opinion of the Council that Major General Abercrombie should immediately give Directions to Sir William Johnson to raise a number of Rangers, as he shall Judge necessary to Join them with the Indians in harassing and annoying the enemy in Canada. The Council also Recommended it to the General to raise another company of Rangers for the Publick Service."

Being a Ranger for Sir William could be profitable.

"To 9 Woodrangers who were employed to join the Indians scouting and scalping, as per their receipts...125£ 13s."

That's about 14£ a man!!! Quite a sum of money for the time when Rogers' Rangers were paid 3 shillings (that's NY currency mind you) a day.

Sir William fought for Ranging companies on the Mohawk Valley frontier all the way through Pontiac's Rebellion as this letter to Lt. Gov. Colden shows:

"I had a short meeting with Sir Jeffery Amherst a few days ago at Albany...as He informed me he expected some Troops from Hallifax & Pensicola immediately, however they must be a meer handful, neither can they be so well calculated for so necessary a Service, as the Woodsman of this Country Joined by trusty Indians whom I should readily provide..."

Sir William was probably right all along. Nowadays, our military uses Rangers and other branches of our Special Forces Command to patrol, observe, report back information and keep the enemy off balance. Troops stuck in garrison still do poorly against highly mobile raiding parties, be they Viet Cong, Mujahideen or French and Indians.

¹ Letter from William Johnson to Lt. Gov. James DeLancy. September 8, 1754

² ibid.

³ Letter from Sir William to Thomas Pownall, Sir William Johnson Papers Volume 2, page 737

⁴ Letter from Sir William to James Abercromby, Sir William Johnson Papers Volume 2, page 739

⁵ Documentary History of the State of New York, E. B. O'Cal laghan, MD, Manuscripts of Sir William Johnson, pg. 77

⁶ Letter to William Shirley, 10 May 1756

⁷ Minutes of a Council of War held at Albany, 16 July 1756

⁸ Account of Indian Expenses, November 18th, 1756

⁹ Sir William Johnson Papers Volume 4 page 231-232, November 4, 1763



RECIPE CORNER

Fry Bread by Otakta

Combine 6oz can of evaporated milk with enough hot water to make 1 1/2 cup liquid. Dissolve 1 package yeast in liquid. Add 1 TBSP sugar. When liquid starts to bubble add 1 TBSP oil. Mix together: 3 cups flour, 1 tsp baking powder, 1/2 tsp salt, and 1 TBSP sugar. Incorporate liquid ingredients and knead, leaving dough sticky. Knead for 10 minutes. Let rise in warm place for 30 minutes. Break off pieces and roll into round pancake like shapes. Fry in 350° oil (approx: 1/2", make sure its not covered) until light brown on both sides.



HOW TO

Running Ball
by Tim Gilliland

Running Ball as the Old-timers used to call it, is what we call ball or bullet casting. This article pertains to the ball, and is for the person that has never cast their own. Maybe he or she thought it was to expensive or did not know how. So here I will lay it out for you.

Expense: casting equipment can be expensive if you want to buy the really fancy stuff, but it can be low cost if you shop wisely. And low cost does not mean low quality. For example, a top of the line Lyman Mag 20 electric furnace will set you back about \$229.00, or you can get a Lee melting pot for \$2.74. This is just an example of how much or how little you can spend.

So lets get started. First, lets look at equipment.

You will need:

Lead melting pot: This is used to melt the lead. There are two kinds of pots; electric, and the kind that you put over a fire. Both work fine.

Ball molds: There are two basic types of ball molds. Aluminum and steel. Aluminum being the cheaper of the two and works just fine. There is literally 100's of sizes. This is where you need to know the caliber of your muzzleloader. For example, if you shoot a .54 caliber, then you could select a .530 or .535 caliber ball mold. This example is the same for any caliber. You will always select a mold that is undersized, because it is pretty hard to get a .540 ball down a .540 bore. The patch makes up the difference.

Dipper or ladle: This is to transfer the melted lead from the lead pot to the mold (I prefer the ladle as it has partially enclosed head with a pour spout on the bottom, making it easier to pour with. It also holds more lead and will force the air pockets out of the mold or ball.

Ingot mold: If you have a big hunk of lead, than you can melt it down and pour 1 lb ingots in the mold for easier handling (this is optional).

Casting thermometer: This will tell you the temperature of the lead. It should range from 200 to 1000 degrees.

Flux: This helps clean the lead and flux (condition) it.

Bullet/powder scale: This is used to weight the balls when they cool. If they are to light, then they either have an air bubble in them or not enough lead was poured in the mold. Although the latter will be known when the ball is dropped from the mold (it will not look like a ball).

Spoon: Needed for skimming the lead.

Safety gear: You should always wear good eye protection and skin protection. Gloves because molten lead will burn to the bone. So be careful!!! Do not let this scare you off, I have made my own balls for over 30 years and have not as of yet been burned. SO JUST BE CAREFUL!!! Next have good ventilation as the fumes can be toxic.

Lead: Can be bought pure or scrounged for free.

Ok, lets get started!

First, put the lead in your melting pot and put it over a burner or in electric pot. Bring it up to about 650° F for pure lead and to about 800° F (this is where you need the thermometer) if it is not pure, such as lead wheel weights or unknown source. This will not melt foreign materials but will move them to the top of the melting lead to be skimmed off. Now take your kitchen spoon and skim off all foreign material from the surface of the molten lead (this material is known as Dross) and set it to the side to cool and be disposed of later. I use an old coffee can to throw the dross in. Another word of caution, make sure the surface you are working on is either a metal surface or wooden



work bench. Lead will burn your kitchen table, if this happens, you then have the spouse issue and well...you know what I mean.



OK, back to the molten lead. After you have skimmed the surface, usually 1 time, sometimes twice with impure lead, you put in the flux, this helps condition and clean the lead. For flux you can use a large pea size piece of paraffin wax or you may use Marvelous from Brownell's which can be purchased from Track of the Wolf.



Next, heat your mold. I do this by putting a corner of the mold in the molten lead. Some people pour lead in the mold until it heats up. I do not recommend this as you can damage your mold, after all pouring 650° to 700° lead into a room temperature mold can cause cracks and warping. When your mold is hot, take your dipper/ladle and heat it up by putting it in the lead.



Ok, we are ready to make some pumpkin balls. Now, take your dipper and dig up some lead from the pot and pour it in the mold. Try to keep an even pour until you see it come through the sprue cutter on the mold. When the lead hardens, usually about 2 to 3 seconds, you can now open the mold and drop the ball out. OK, now you are asking yourself "how do I open the mold?". Take a wooden hammer or a piece of hard wood and hit the sprue cutter on the top. This removes the excess lead and will let you open the mold (see picture).



Go ahead and make 15 to 20 balls when you get that done. There are some things to look for. A word of caution here, do not pickup the balls for 30 minutes or so, as they are still very hot. Now, look at the ball and check for any lines that run horizontally through the ball or holes. If there are any of either, put it back in the pot and do it again. Also look for a frosty looking ball. This means your mold was too cold. Let's step back to the lines in the ball. What happened here is you did not get an even pour. Remember, start and do not stop pouring and keep your mold hot.



Now that you have poured your first ball, pour some more. When you are done pouring, let the balls cool down (I place the balls in a bowl with a little paper towel so they will not dent coming out of the mold). This all sounds like a lot of fuss to make your round ball. It is actually not that bad. Most of this is done within minutes. I can mold 50 balls in about 30 minutes. So if I can do this, anyone can.

Now get your powder scale/ball scale and weigh each ball to check the weight. They should all be within a few grains of each other. If you do not know your ball weight get one from your store bought batch and weigh it. This will give you a reference weight. There you go, you have now made your own ammo. There is something satisfying about doing this yourself. I guess that's why we shoot Traditional Front stuffers. Good Luck. Oh yeah, there is another warning. When you see that pile of shiny round balls, it can be very addicting!



Cost for Equipment:

We will try to keep the cost down.

1. Ball mold from Lee \$13.25
Suggest single cavity mold (1 ball)
2. Lead pot from Lee \$2.75

3. Ingot mold from Lee \$9.95 (Optional)
4. Bullet dipper from Lee \$2.75
5. Casting thermometer \$28.50 (optional)
6. Flux or paraffin wax \$5.95
7. Lead free or buy pure lead

These prices are from Track of the Wolf and is an example of how inexpensively it can be done.



THE RANGER CAP

**A study in history, form and function
by Mario Doreste**

History

The Ranger cap, also called a jockey cap, is pretty well known in re-enacting circles. In the northern "colonies" Butler's Rangers, Quebec and Six Nations Indian Department personnel, and some Rogers' Rangers wear it.

It is made from a cut-down felt hat and much resembles a modern-day baseball cap with a rounded crown about 3-4" tall and a bill in the front. They are also, at times, made of leather. Most of the time this bill is folded upwards against the front of the crown and held with a hook-and-eye.

One of the more famous depictions of someone wearing a Ranger cap is this portrait by Thomas Hart:



Originally believed to be a painting of Major Rob-



ert Rogers, it shows a man wearing a military regimental, a powder horn and a beaded shot pouch, while carrying a light fowler or military fusil. On his head, the cap trimmed in white.

Caps of this type were certainly available at the time. Major George Scott advocated the use of the jockey cap for Rangers in 1758. The New-York Mercury of December 17, 1764 carried an advertisement for, "black, green and blue jockey caps".

Light infantry of the F&I period also used the Ranger/Jockey cap:

"...his hat made into a cap, with a flap and button, and with as much black cloth added as will come under his chin, and keep him warm, when he lies down, it hooks in the front, and is made like the old velvet caps in England."

In "The Death of Wolfe" by Benjamin West (ca. 1770) there is a figure wearing a ranger cap:



He is on the left of the painting, dressed in green and has been variously described as Maj. Robert Rogers, one of Rogers' Rangers and, most likely, an Indian Department Ranger under Sir William Johnson. His cap is bound in black instead of white, and has a beaded band around it.

A similarly decorated cap is found in this next painting, also by West, circa 1775. It is believed to be Sir William's son, Sir John Johnson, or Sir William's nephew, Guy Johnson.



Again, the cap has the band of beadwork around it, but this one has the addition of feathers and beadwork on the brim as well as a red tuft at the top center of the crown.

The cut-down cap was also recommended for Light Infantry Troops of the 1770s:

"Jackets made from the old coats (which a very trifling degree of economy might readily contrive), and snug little caps formed from hats..."

The cap was apparently also adopted by the 18th (Royal Irish) Regiment of Foot. During a 1772 courts martial, Pvt. Nicholas Gaffney testified:

"that his hat was Cut, and two tassels put to it, a Tape band round the Mould of the Hat, white Looping and a black tape that goes round both the [brim] and the mould of the Hat."

Practical use in the field

At first glance, the Ranger cap looks quite odd. But, wear one in the woods, and you may learn to love it.

On the (re-enacting) battlefield, the fact that it has only the brim in front means you aren't likely to knock it off your head performing the Manual of Arms.

When traveling in deep woods, there is no wide brim or soft cloth to catch twigs and branches and pull it off your head. Having a hat without a brim also widens your field of view greatly. Being made of felt, it doesn't make much noise if a branch does



rub across it. If you construct it with the wool cloth that General Amherst called for, it also protects the back of the neck and ears from the cold.

During the weekend of March 31st and April 1st, the Herkimer Home State Historic Site hosted a Spring Muster weekend. During our tactical battle in the woods (set in the year 1778), I portrayed an Indian Department Ranger covering the right flank of a British Regular unit (the 24th Foot). I was amazed at how I barely remembered I was wearing a hat, yet didn't have to deal with the sun in my eyes in the open areas. I'll likely wear it more often when doing a "ranger" impression because of this experience. It didn't get in my way. It kept the sweat out of my eyes. With the bill unhooked, it kept the sun out of my eyes, and during an hour-long battle running through the woods, it didn't fall off my head once!

This is a simple Ranger cap of my own making:



This one was made using simple cotton binding tape. To be more correct, the binding should be made of worsted wool tape. I prefer the black binding, as it isn't so easily seen in the dark woods.

The bill can be unhooked and lowered to provide shade to the eyes. It much resembles a modern baseball cap like this:



Lastly...it just looks cool. But don't let that be your primary reason for wearing one. There are only a few types of personas that can be documented as wearing them, namely Rangers, Northern Indian Department employees (Rangers and field Officers) and Light Infantry troops. If you choose to portray one of these men, I think the Ranger/jockey cap will satisfy the need for a versatile (yet stylish...) piece of headgear.

The re-created Southern Indian Department guidelines for Indian Dept. officers & rangers reads:

"The ranger or "jockey cap" was worn by some ID Officers in the Northern Department but, to date, we have not seen any documentation for those on Southern Department Officers."

It doesn't seem that militia wore them much, if at all. Nor have I found any evidence that Continental Ranger units (e.g. Whitcomb's, Morgan's) used them either.

So, next time you see a British Light Infantryman or a Loyalist ranger with that silly little hat on, remember...watch for him in the woods.

¹ General Jeffery Amherst, Orders for Light Infantry, 1759

² Cuthbertson's System for the Complete Interior Management and Economy of a Battalion of Infantry, 1776 ed., Chapter XXXI Article V, page 190

³ Major I. Hamilton to Gen. Thomas Gage, 20 Nov. 1772; Gage MSS, Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan page 320 as quoted in Military Collector & Historian, Volume 49, #4 Winter 1997

⁴ www.southernindiandepth.org, Portrayal guidelines for Indian Department Officers and Employees.



TMA EVENTS

**'Transitions'****TMA Monthly Postal Shoot News**

Our dear friend and TMA brother Ohio Joe has turned over the National Match Director position to me. He has a lot of important things going on at home and needs more time with his family. I would like to thank Joe for all his hard work. Without Joe, I would be really lost!

Our 2007 Postal Shoots are off to a great start! We have seen some pretty impressive shooting.

One thing I would like to mention regarding these shoots. These are YOUR shoots. They are a fun way to get together (via the mail) and shoot with the other members of the TMA. You get out of it exactly what you put into it.

Come on into the MPS part of the forum and talk about the monthly shoot. How you did...how everyone else did. Razz each other and have some fun! I know things were a little bumpy during March, but we are in full swing now and I would like to see some lively discussions happening after each shoot.

We have now wrapped up the May Mike Fink shootout and scores are being tallied as they come in.

As a reminder, you should get your registration sent in for our National Championship shoot. registration runs through August 31st 2007. For more information see the TMA forum or just ask me.

We still have a lot of shooting going on so if you have not entered any of the postal shoots, now is the perfect time to get involved! We have a lot of new members that are joining in the fun.

Did you know that you can pre-pay for the entire year? This is the easiest way to enter the postal matches. By pre-paying for the year, you do not have to worry about sending a check in every month and you can focus on that bullseye!

I am still getting my feet wet as the NMD and have been having a lot of fun. If you ever have any questions or need any help, please feel free to contact me and I will get you squared away.

We will see you further on up the trail.

Lucas Kuntz,
Otaktay

**Calendar****June 8-10**

Multi-Lakes Annual Rendezvous - MI

June 9-17

Friendship Spring Shoot - IN

June 14-17

Prairie Villa Rendezvous - WI

July 20-28

Midwest Primitive - WI

For more info see the events section of the TMA forum.

Journal Scribes**FIREWALKER**

Editor, co-publisher. aka Bob McMahon has been involved muzzleloading for about 30 years.

During that time he has been to many shoots and rendezvous' throughout Wisconsin. Charter member of the TMA since 12-05.

OTAKTAY

Designer, co-publisher aka Lucas Kuntz is a brain tanner, craftsman, musician and IT Consultant in Wisconsin. He has been shooting muzzleloaders with his dad since he was a youngin'.



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