

# MUSEUM

NATIONAL MUSEUM ★ UNITED STATES ARMY



First Engineer Combat Battalion  
Attn: Dennis O'Dea  
8 Courtney Lane  
Somerset, NJ 08873

*I thoroughly enjoyed reading and signing this letter. Well done.*

Dear Friends:

Congratulations! Thanks to your generous support, the First Engineer Combat Battalion has joined the Silver Service Star level in the Veterans' Hall of the National Museum of the United States Army.

I want to thank the First Engineer Combat Battalion for the most recent gift of \$50.00 to bring its contribution to \$5,017.00 to support the National Museum of the U.S. Army.

Your contribution is important in helping us build this lasting tribute to the American Soldier. The Museum will honor America's Soldiers, preserve the history of America's oldest military service, and educate all Americans about the Army's role in our nation's development.

The Veterans' Hall will provide a unique setting to honor the service and sacrifice of America's veterans. Museum planners have designed this multi-purpose space for veterans to host reunions, meetings, dinners, and official functions in a patriotic atmosphere. The Hall will also showcase artwork, artifacts, the interactive *Registry of the American Soldier*, and will host a variety of educational outreach initiatives.

As a Silver Service Star Member, your organization will receive a signed Don Troiani print, along with a Certificate of Authenticity, for you to display proudly as testimony to your commitment to the history and heritage of the American Soldier.

Thank you for your outstanding support of the Museum. And most of all, thank you for your honorable and heroic service to our great country. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Schultz Seaman, Director of Grassroots Development, at 703-879-0006 or at [Beth.Schultz@armyhistory.org](mailto:Beth.Schultz@armyhistory.org).

Sincerely,

BG Creighton W. Abrams, Jr. USA-Ret.  
Executive Director, Army Historical Foundation

# *Certificate of Commendation*

*"In recognition of your support and commitment to  
building The National Museum of the U.S. Army"*

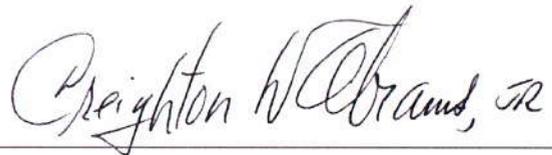
*This certifies by vote of the Board of Directors that the*

## **First Engineer Combat Battalion**

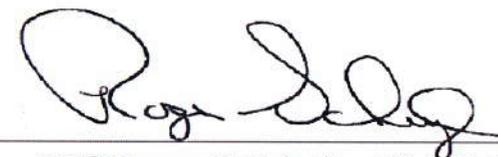
*is an official Silver Service Star Member of the National Museum of the U.S. Army.  
First Engineer Combat Battalion's name shall be placed on permanent display in  
the Museum's Veterans' Hall.*

*Your organization's unselfish generosity is herein acknowledged as vitally  
important to helping build a new national landmark that will pay tribute to the  
American Soldier in war and peace.*

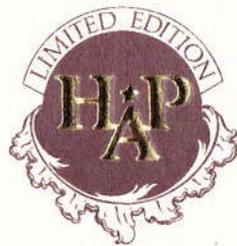
*Certified this 30th day of October, 2015.*



BG Creighton W. Abrams, Jr., USA-Ret.  
*Executive Director*



LTG Roger C. Schultz, USA-Ret.  
*President*



# 1ST CONTINENTAL RIFLE REGIMENT

*Summer - Winter 1776*

*By D Troiani*

On 14 June 1775, Congress authorized six rifle companies from Pennsylvania, two from Maryland, and two from Virginia, for the new Continental Army surrounding Boston. A few days later, Pennsylvania organized the Pennsylvania Rifle Battalion from new and existing companies along the embattled frontier. Congress commissioned French and Indian War veteran William Thompson colonel of the battalion. Sharing its birthday with the Continental Army, Thompson's Battalion was the army's senior command. The battalion fought numerous engagements, including the arduous Canada Campaign. When not battling British Army regulars, Thompson's riflemen sniped at sentries posted in Boston, and occasionally brawled with soldiers of their own army.

Following the British evacuation of Boston, the regiment marched to New York City. First Regiment riflemen fought in nearly every one of Washington's battles, including the Battles of Long Island, Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown, Red Bank, Monmouth and Yorktown. In addition to serving with the main Continental Army under Washington, two companies fought at Saratoga in 1777, Sullivan's 1779 Expedition against the Iroquois, and numerous skirmishes throughout the northeast. Their backwoods skills and "Pennsylvania Rifles" became a legend. William Thompson commanded the regiment until 1 March 1776, when he was promoted to brigadier general. Edward Hand replaced Thompson. Hand had served as a surgeon's mate in the 18th (Royal Irish) Regiment of Foot during the French and Indian War. On 1 April 1777, James Chambers replaced

Hand. He commanded the regiment until 1 January 1781. In the summer of 1781, Major James Parr, a former company commander and veteran of the Saratoga Campaign, organized First Regiment veterans for the Yorktown Campaign.

Disbanded at war's end in 1783, First Regiment veterans continued to serve the Nation. Troop D, 2/104th Cavalry, Pennsylvania National Guard, and the 201st Field Artillery (First West Virginia), West Virginia National Guard, perpetuate the heritage of Thompson's Battalion. These units share the unique distinction of answering America's call on the very day the Army was founded.

Joseph Seymour

Upon assuming command of the 1st Continental Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Hand took great pains to properly equip his riflemen and instill a sense of esprit de corps. New uniforms were ordered from Pennsylvania, in addition to a fine silk standard or colour for the senior regiment of the army. The latter was described by Hand on 8 March 1776 to "be a deep green ground, the device a tiger partly enclosed by toils, attempting the pass, defended by a hunter armed with a spear...on crimson field the motto Domari nolo." Made in Philadelphia from Hand's description, the standard was forwarded to the rifle regiment, arriving in time to be carried during the fall 1776 campaign; this stalwart veteran of Revolutionary service has survived until present, carefully handed down by descendants of Thomas Robinson (the regiment's third commander), until donated by them to the Pennsylvania Historical and

Museum Commission. The regimental uniforms were to match the colors of the standard: short green coats with scarlet or red facings, with buckskin breeches. However, most of the woolen uniforms sent forward for the enlisted men were in store at Fort Lee and captured when the post fell on 20 November 1776. Thus, most of the men continued to wear their traditional riflemen's dress of linen for the remainder of the fall and winter, while many officers (who had privately purchased their own uniforms), such as this ensign carrying the standard, were better clothed for cold weather. This rifle undress or campaign uniform was a short, fringed, green-dyed hunting frock and matching trousers, worn with narrow-brimmed, "round" hats trimmed with white binding and plumes—typically bucktails or feathers, often to suit the whim of its wearer.

James L. Kochan

The artist, Don Troiani, is nationally known for his painstakingly accurate paintings of the American Revolution, War of 1812 and Civil War. His works hang in major private and public collections and have been published in hundreds of books, magazines, and newspapers. He has designed a stamp for the US Postal Service and three coins for the United States Mint. Author of several books on uniforms and equipment, he recently served as a consultant on the feature film "Cold Mountain". To find out more about the artist and his work, visit [www.historicalartprints.com](http://www.historicalartprints.com) or call 203-262-6680.

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