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# Silver Stars and Sixguns: the Texas Rangers

By Mike Cox  
Texas DPS



*"A Ranger is an officer who is able to handle any given situation without definite instructions from his commanding officer or higher authority. This ability must be proven before a man becomes a Ranger."*



"They were men who could not be stampeded."

That's the way the late Colonel Homer Garrison, Jr., long-time director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, once described the men who have worn the silver or gold star of the Texas Rangers, the oldest law enforcement agency in North America with statewide jurisdiction.

Rangers have a heritage that traces to the earliest days of Anglo settlement in Texas. They often have been compared to four other world-famous law enforcement agencies, the FBI, Scotland Yard, Interpol and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Scores of books, from well-researched works of nonfiction to Wild West pulp novels to best-selling works of fiction, have been written about the Rangers. Over the years numerous movies, radio shows and television shows have been inspired by the Rangers.

The Rangers are part of the history of the Old West, and part of its' mythology. Over the years, a distinct Ranger tradition has evolved.

As former Ranger Captain Bob Crowder once put it, "a Ranger is an officer who is able to handle any given situation without definite instruction from his commanding officer or higher authority. This ability must be proven before a man becomes a Ranger."

That definition worked well more than 150 years ago and still fits today. Yet, unlike years ago, today Texas Rangers have access to modern communications, which keeps them in touch with the rest of the world.

But a good horse was the only fast means to travel, and the best alibi for outlaws, in the early days of the Rangers.

Despite the long history of the Rangers, the term "Texas Ranger" did not appear officially in a piece of legislation until 1874.

## For The Common Defense

The Ranger story begins many years ago. In 1823, the Father of Texas, Stephen F. Austin realized the need for a body of men to protect his fledgling colony, the land settlement effort that marked the beginning of Texas' development.

On August 5, 1823, on the back of a proclamation issued by Land Commissioner Baron de Bastrop, Austin wrote that he would "...employ ten men...to act as rangers for the common defense...The wages I will give said ten men is fifteen dollars a month payable in property..."

These men, not soldiers, not even militia, "ranged" the area of Austin's colony, protecting settlers from Indians. When no threat seemed evident, the men returned to their families and land.

Despite Austin's plan to pay a group of Rangers, the defense effort continued primarily on a voluntary basis.

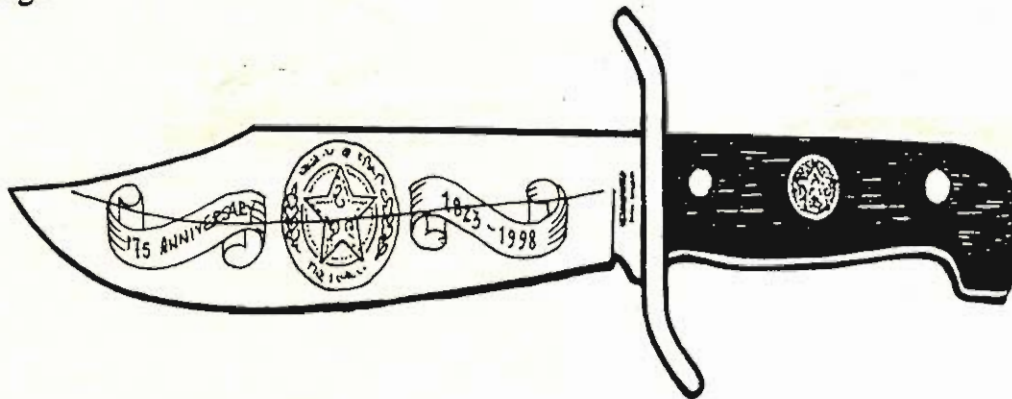
By 1835, as the movement for Texas independence was about to boil over, a council of local government representatives created a "Corps of Rangers" to protect the frontier from Indians. These Rangers would be paid \$1.25 a day and could elect their own officers. They furnished their own arms, mounts, and equipment.

R.M. "Three-Legged" Williamson (so nicknamed because he had a wooden leg to support a crippled limb) headed three Ranger companies led by Captains William Arrington, Isaac Burlison and John J. Tumlinson.

When Texas declared its' independence from Mexico, some Rangers took part in the fighting, though most served as scouts.

# Texas Ranger 175th Anniversary Special Commemoratives

*CMWTX9 - Wood Handle Bowie with 14 Karat Gold Texas Ranger 175th Anniversary Logo etched on Blade, Brass Plated Texas Ranger Shield, Sheath, and Standard Western Packaging.*



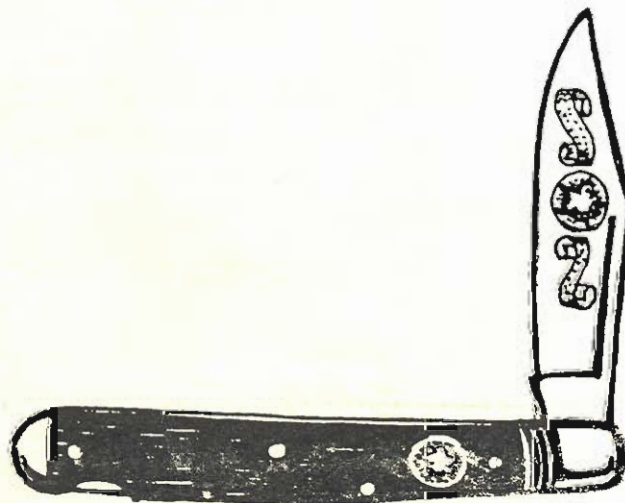
*Knife Only*

*Suggested Retail \$252.95*

*With Optional Wooden Plaque - No Box or Sheath*

*Suggested Retail \$299.95*

*#DWTX10 - Genuine Jig Bone Lockback with Platform Box, Nickel-Silver Texas Ranger Shield, 175th Anniversary Logo on Box Cover and Etched on Blade*



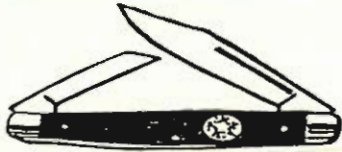
*Suggested Retail \$66.49*



## TEXAS RANGER FOUNDATION SERIES KNIVES

- Features:
- \* 440 Stainless Steel Blades
  - \* Select Hardwood Rosewood Finish Handles
  - \* Brass Bolsters and Liners
  - \* Brass Texas Ranger Shield
  - \* Western Tang Stamp
  - \* Standard Western Packaging

#DWTX1 - 2-15/16" 2-Blade Pen



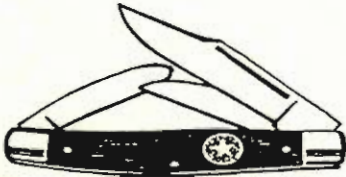
*Suggested Retail* \$28.49

#DWTX2 - 3 1/4" 2-Blade Jackknife



*Suggested Retail* \$32.49

#DWTX3 - 3 1/4" 3-Blade Stockman



*Suggested Retail* \$36.49

#DWTX4 - 4" 3-Blade Stockman



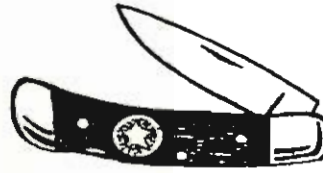
*Suggested Retail* \$39.95

DWTX6 - 5" Lockback w/plain sheath



*Suggested Retail* \$55.95

#DWTX7 - 3" Lockback



*Suggested Retail* \$32.49

#DWTX8 - Western Mountaineer Fixed  
Blade w/plain sheath



*Suggested Retail* \$40.95