

# The Sentinel



VOL.11, No.4 – THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 6TH ARKANSAS INFANTRY, COMPANY A, C.S.A. – APRIL, 2007  
LIVING HISTORIANS

[HTTP://WWW.GEOCITIES.COM/CAPITALGUARDS](http://www.geocities.com/capitalguards)

## On the March to Marks' Mills...

The Capitol Guards & friends will be donning the "Army blue" (again) and joining forces with the 37th Illinois and a few other friends for the third biennial attempt at reenacting the April, 1864 Battle of Marks' Mill at and around the Marks' Mill Battlefield State Park on the week-end of April 28-29, 2007.

Marks' Mill Battlefield State Park is about 8 miles east of Fordyce on Arkansas Highway 8. From Little Rock, take I-530 south to Exit #10, and bear right on US 167 through Sheridan. Keep going south to Fordyce. When you arrive in Fordyce, cross US 79 and proceed to the junction with Hwy 8. Turn left on Highway 8 and proceed approximately 7 miles to the site.

An alternative route is to head down to Pine Bluff and take Highway 79 south through Rison to Fordyce. Turn east on Highway 8 and go out to the site. This way is a little closer for me, so I'll probably go down and back through there. It also goes through the old Ashcraft family place down in Cleveland county, and not having been down there in a couple of years, I'll stop off in Pansy on the way home and visit my Confederate ancestry.

The park is a teeny-weeny little place... a parking lot, a fenced-in area, and an interpretive pavilion. Across from the north side of the park is a dirt road leading back into the Marks community and the actual battlefield. We'll be camping back in this area, on either side of the road. I am unsure about separation or division of the camps between Union/Confederate/civilian or whatever, but us bluebellies will probably be clustered up together, camping light. The 6th Arkansas and 37th Illinois will be falling in together as a consolidated company, along with a few strays, so we ought to have a pretty good little group.

The Marks' Mill reenactment is tied together with the "Fordyce on the Cotton Belt" festival, a local "hometown hootenanny" in downtown Fordyce. This is the reason for some of the weirdness of the event schedule, such as the optional parade in downtown Fordyce, and the delay of the Saturday battle until 5 p.m. ... lots of folks and stuff will be shuttling between Fordyce (where the hootenanny and the spectator parking is) and the reenactment site, which is way out in the piney woods close to nothing else. (If you

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*The Capitol Guards (Tom Ezell, Steve Shore, Ken Nations, and Randy Puckett), galvanized on Saturday at Pleasant Hill.*

## Pleasant Hill 2007: "Pleasant Hill at its Pleasant Hilliest"

I had had earlier plans to re-visit the Shiloh Living History, but late last fall made a vow to accompany a new recruit down to the Battle of Pleasant Hill, Louisiana, where several of his ancestors had fought with the 22nd Texas Infantry in the original 1864 battle. The two events ended up overlapping, and so I found myself driving South on a drizzly Friday afternoon.

But the company was good, as Randy Puckett, Tifney Scott, and I moseyed on down to Pleasant Hill, taking our time and stopping to check out the local cuisine. Arriving at the battlefield shortly before dark, we took a quick tour of the little community, signed in at the dog trot house, and reported to camp where Steve and Ken were setting up wall tents for the ladies.

Yep... wall tents. We have a rebirth of interest in civilian reenacting in our little group, and Pleasant Hill's "family friendly" atmosphere was an ideal place to indulge that. So we were camping heavier than we have in the past several years, and as things

turned out weather-wise, that was probably a good idea, too.

The rain showers had abated a good bit while we set up camp next door to the old pole barn near the southern tree line. Formerly known as the "Dancing Pig Saloon" during the earlier, wilder days at PH, it's seen use as a makeshift church in more recent years, and now it's seen its better days, having nearly fallen in upon itself. Our little camp was set to simulate a double-pen dogtrot house itself, and as darkness fell we gathered in the breezeway under the central fly for a cool drink and to catch up on things since the last event. Showers picked back up off and on, more on than off, and as *Taps* sounded through the camps we turned out the lights and turned in.

The showers turned into a thunderstorm at midnight, as I drifted off to sleep, lulled by the sounds of raindrops on the tent canvas. The storm intensified, and a little after 1:30 a.m. I woke up as my ground cloth was starting to float—nearly an inch and a half of water covered the ground where we were camped. Grabbing

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## Confederate Flag Day, Little Rock - April 7, 2007



*The whole gang at the Confederate Flag Day observance at the Confederate monument on the lawn of the Arkansas State Capitol on Saturday, April 7, 2007.*



*Roughly fifty spectators and SCV members came out to this year's event; for our part, there were 17 rifles in the firing party, five from the Capitol Guards*

For the first time in several years, the Capitol Guards returned to the annual Confederate Flag Day Event held on the State Capitol grounds here in our own stomping grounds in Little Rock. Turnout was pretty good, with Steve Shore, Ken Nations, Ethan Webster, Randy Puckett, Tom Ezell, and Rusty Guenard shouldering muskets and bringing out our Cleburne battle flag for display.

For awhile, it reminded me a good bit of why I had quit coming for the past couple of years – a long hour spent standing in line out in the grass while the names of the war dead were sonorously read, then once the program actually began, the speakers were dry and long-winded; the sound system intermittent. I had a few coffee beans in my haversack from events past, and chewing on them helped pass the monotony. Finally the time we were all chafing for came, with calling the troops to



*For such a motley crew, we delivered three crisp, thunderous volleys to close the event.*

attention and the command, **LOAD!** Musket butts came thumping down, then the flash of ramrods as loads were tamped down tight.

Then the crowd and scenery to our front vanished in a cloud of powder smoke, instantly blown away by a brisk western wind as we mechanically loaded fresh charges. Small boys cahsed down the wisps of Southern cotton from the blank loads as they drifted down. Two more sharp volleys, then a singing of *Dixie*, and we got down to what most everyone had really come for, the fellowship and brotherhood of those who wear the gray and follow the Southern Cross or the simple blue banner of Cleburne.

All agreed that it had been a worthwhile effort, and we need to start back supporting these sorts of events more often, countering the impact of the fire-eaters and the professionally-offended as well.

## Battle of Pleasant Hill Re-enactment - April 14-15, 2007



Drying out from Friday night's rainstorm... The old "Dancing Pig Saloon" at Pleasant Hill ain't what she used to be, but it was just right for shelter in the wee hours of the morning when there was more than an inch of stormwater over the whole field.



Kenny evicted a dead man from his coffin, and took his place for the evening... evidence of being a battle-hardened campaigner.



Heard in the other camp: "These guys galvanize, and look like they really are Yankees!" Randy & Ken with Lt. Col. Gary Stephens and newly-elected Sergeant Major Bob Hutcheson of the TMVI Battalion.



Saturday's battle scenario called for everyone who had brought blue uniforms to wear blue, so we found ourselves galvanized alongside the 1st Arkansas's "redlegs" and a few others.



...and we wound up in a somewhat more confused battle against what was left of the Rebels as well as both sides' cavalry, it seemed. Here each rank is fighting in a different direction!

up and wringing out my coverlet and ground cloth, I got everything off the tent floor to higher ground, then Randy and I took off to the tent fly, where we found things just as wet. I took a quick tour around the pecan orchard to find the situation pretty much the same everywhere... under two inches or more of storm water through the whole camp; the few "campaigners" holed up on the back porch of the dog trot house. After



As always, the pyrotechnics used at Pleasant Hill are a big draw for the crowd and the re-enactors alike.

checking on the ladies to ensure they were secure, the menfolk took up residence for the evening in the Dancing Pig. While the roof had gaping holes, the eastern side was solid enough to turn the rain away. Ken found a dead man in a coffin where a local undertaker had stashed him out of the weather, and ever the resourceful campaigner, evicted him from his box and took his place for the evening. Steve, Randy, and I laid our gum

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**Pleasant Hill 2007** (Continued from Page 3)



*When the rain finally quit, it was time to stoke up the fire and try to dry things out... Here's our infantry camp.*

blankets out on a couple of old church pews stashed in the barn for similar reasons, stretched out there, and passed a much more comfortable evening there.

Reveille came with daylight, as we straightened things out, strung blankets and quilts out to dry, and got a good fire going for warmth and coffee. The bullfrogs were jumping down in the cattle pond, and this provided a bit of amusement. Breakfast came at the American Legion hut across the road, biscuits and gravy, eggs, sausage, and grits, and we all felt a little more human after that.

Returning to camp, I got accoutered up and went in search of the 1st Arkansas

camp, where we would be falling in for the weekend. They turned out to be located on the opposite corner of camp, next to the artillery. After the morning meeting it turned out that everyone who had brought their Union informs would be needed to galvanize for that afternoon's battle scenario, so I wandered back over to camp to share the unwelcome news. We skipped out of the Saturday morning parade, as usual, and spent the time checking out the sutlers and breaking out the Federal gear from the wagons.

The main unit present were the Texas and Louisiana companies of the TMVI Battalion. Arkansas attendance was weak, with only a half dozen or so from the 1st Arkansas, and later on Saturday, five troops from the 9th. The Capitol Guards added an additional four free lance rifles to the mix. The Federals were represented by the host unit, the 3rd Louisiana, and handfuls of independent federal companies, one of which ("114th New York") had never drilled as part of a battalion before. We also had a handful of our old pards from 2004, the 173rd, and a lone Zouave from the Red River Battalion.

The sutlers were a little more sparse than usual, as well. Of the usual suspects, only Galla Rock, Sidekick, Haversack Depot, and James Country Mercantile were present, along with a few shops more oriented toward the ladies. Randy took the opportunity to outfit himself with a set of Union blues for the time we need to galvanize, and I found a nice sword belt for dress use.

Formation came at 12:30, as we gathered for a bit of drill and the safety briefing concerning the use of pyrotechnics on the field. A nice touch which is sort of unique to Pleasant Hill was calling out all the actual veterans from the ranks for recognition before the battle demonstration.

The Federals then marched out across the field and around the corner of the woods, and the battle demonstration opened where we missed a great deal of the opening pyro shots. After awhile, we moved forward and formed line of battle in the center of the field as first the Confederate skirmisher moved forward to engage us, followed by the separate wings of the TMVI, one at a time. The Rebels didn't seem too aggressive at all, and their conduct of all battalion drill at the half step or near marking time stretched things out considerably.

Things were livened up a bit as the Confederate cavalry and federal cavalry attacked us from the rear, forcing each rank at times to fight in different directions, and confuse the issue a bit as to just how they would have gotten back there in the first place. We generally held our position as the battle sputtered to a close, and we all regathered to clear weapons

and march past the audience on the way back into camp.

Once back in camp, we got the water heating to clean weapons, and supper heating. We had traditional Yankee rations, beans, salt pork, and soft bread, washed down with coffee.

The TMVI Battalion used this event to elect their new slate of officers for the coming biennium. They chose to stick with the same slate, Ricky Hunt (TX) as colonel, Gary Stephens (LA) as Lt. colonel, and Ron Strybos (TX) as major. The one new change was that Preston Ware (OK) stepped down as sergeant major, and was replaced by Bob Hutcheson of the 1st Arkansas.

After weapons were cleaned and inspected and the supper dishes washed and wiped, Randy Puckett and I took a hiking tour of the Pleasant Hill battlefield. One of Randy's gg-uncles had died on the field in 1864, and we were curious whether there were any Civil War markers in the old town cemetery on the far side of the field. There weren't, but we found an appropriate marker for the Old Boys down in the little private battlefield park, and returned to camp in high spirits.

Just before dark, several of the boys took off for the Masonic meeting over at the Legion Hut while others got ready for the camp dance afterward. The dance was delayed a little while when the Masonic ritual ran overtime, but soon moved inside. I returned to camp and stoked the fire for awhile, then as the wind picked up and the temperature plummeted, I dug out a few more blankets, feathered my nest, and turned in. I got up for awhile when the rest of the group came back to camp after the dance, but after a long night the previous evening, we all turned in early.

Sunday's reveille came at the same time, and we stoked the fires and went to the Legion commissary for breakfast. Randy reported to sick call after a hard time with John Barleycorn the previous evening, but a dose of blue mass and salts soon cleared his system. Steve and Jan had to make an early departure, so we broke camp, cleaned equipment, and loaded the wagons, then got ready for the noon battle formation.

Formation came way early, at 11:30 for the 2:00 p.m. battle. we stood in formation for a good bit, were inspected two or three times, had a short session of battalion drill conducted at a half notch past marking time, and stood around some more. There were to be two battles, one chasing the Yankees through the woods behind the battlefield, then the main fight in front of the spectators. As we moved out for the woods fight, the crowd was gathering for the afternoon battle, but we went on past and after giving the Yankees some time for a head start, we went in after them, moving out in column by the right flank.

The first company deployed into line and began volleying at the treetops in an effort to push the Yankees back through a small creek bed while the rest of the battalion stacked up behind them in column. The bluecoats were holding good ground, however, and gave it up only grudgingly. As the battalion inched forward, the ground opened up and additional companies were brought on line. These companies were more interested in shooting at the Yankees rather than the squirrels, and the Federal line was now steadily being pushed back until they made a final stand in an open pasture. As the trailing companies of the TMVI came out of the woods and moved on line, we started the line forward to put paid to these stubborn bluecoats, and they were saved from a long stay at the Camp Ford POW facility only when the clock ran down to halftime, and the teams were withdrawn to take a breather and swap ends of the field.

After a short pause, the TMVI countermarched and re-crossed the little creek bottom we had just fought through to come back out on the east end of the field for the 2 p.m. spectator battle. We halted in the shade to allow the Federals to move past us and take their position behind the snake-rail fence on top of the hill, and we moved back to the staging area next to the dogtrot house, stacked arms, and took a short rest while the artillery and cavalry skirmishers took the field to open the spectator battle. We had a much better view of the pyrotechnics than we did the

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**Marks' Mill Event Info** (Continued from Page 1)

want to get away from it all, Marks' Mill is a good place to start.)

The event hosts will provide firewood, water, and straw for bedding, and there should be a fair amount of deadwood for campfires as well. The event site is oriented more toward campaign camping than anything else; the original Federal units were on the march as guards for a wagon train at the time of the battle and were traveling light; given good weather most of us will likely be campaigning it, though we will have a number of tent flies available "in the wagons" in case bad weather happens. Shelter halves (dog tents) are ideal if you have one (being Federal issue items), if not, we'll have shelter available under the company flies. The Civilian Corps of both the 6th and the 1st Arkansas will be on site at the Park area portraying the community of Marks' Mills; the Federal infantry will be camping campaign style a short distance away in the same wooded area we occupied in 2003.

There will be hostile third parties (bushwhackers and jayhawkers) loose in the area as well, so it will be a good replication of the general lawlessness of southwestern Arkansas at this time of the War.

The Capitol Guards commissary will be providing a period meal for our consolidated company on Saturday evening; otherwise you should bring appropriate rations for other meals from Friday evening until Sunday noon. Don't count on either sutlers or food vendors being available on the site... The first year (2003) we had both, but the last time (2005), there was nothing at all. I would planto be self-sufficient for the weekend; the closest place to "forage a meal" will likely be 8 miles away in Fordyce. Please plan and pack your haversack appropriately! Hardtack, cornbread, pork or bacon, and coffee are good period foods appropriate to this event.

**Schedule of Events**

**Friday, April 27**

- Registration and Camps open
- School programs at Courthouse in Fordyce .

**Saturday, April 28**

- Formation and Safety Inspection ..... 7:00am
- Early morning tactical
- Camps open to the public ..... 9:00am
- Bus pick-up for Parade (optional) ..... 10:00am
- Parade in town (optional) ..... 11:00am
- Drill and demonstrations in the camp areas ..... 9:00am - 4:00pm
- Formation and Safety Inspection ..... 4:00pm
- Battle ..... 5:00pm
- Camps close to Public ..... 7:00pm

**Sunday, April 29**

- Camps open to the public ..... 9:00am
- Period Worship Service ..... 10:00am
- Drill and Demonstrations ..... 9:00am - 12:00noon
- Formation and Safety Inspection ..... 1:00pm
- GO HOME ..... 4:00pm (times subject to change)

The event flyer states that "Usual Battalion and Division regulations and standards will be enforced by appropriate staff officers. I have not seen the scenarios for the battles, but the woods down there are pretty thick. The battle demonstration field will be in the same place as the last time, an open pasture 1.5 miles west of the park on Highway 8. The rest of the area is heavily forested, with a few very small clearings.

It looks like we will be heavily outnumbered again, so come prepared and fired up to take on and whip the entire Southern Confederacy. In addition to the Rebs, our old friends the bushwhackers will be back – apparently with reinforcements. We will have our old bag of nasty tricks for the Johnnies, as well as a few new ones. It will behoove you to brush up on the School of the Skirmisher, as I do not plan to fight in the open, nor do I plan to "fight fair", either... at least to the point

that means standing up somewhere and trading volleys with the Johnnies. There will be some pretty hot fighting, most of it in skirmish order, so I encourage you to bring lots of ammunition. Bring at least 40 rounds for each engagement; 100 rounds per man (50 per battle) may be a better estimate of what you'll be shooting. We will probably get a belly full of fighting this weekend. Expect no quarter from the damned Secesh... and be prepared to give none in return!

**Western Federal Impression**

At the January planning session, we agreed to pursue a Federal impression for this event. We will be deploying to Marks' Mill in Army Blue, and will portray Federal troops for the entire weekend. We will be located in the Federal Camp all weekend, so you can leave your gray at home. There was no Confederate infantry at this April, 1864 battle, but 2,500 of Fagan's Arkansas and Shelby's Missouri cavalry.

The Federal forces at Marks' Mill were the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, VII Corps, consisting of the 43rd Indiana Infantry, 36th Iowa Infantry, 77th Ohio Infantry, and a small contingent of the 1st Iowa Cavalry, escorting a large train of more than 200 wagons, teamsters, and Union-sympathetic refugees.

By the time of the ambush at Marks' Mill these men were veteran campaigners. For the wagon escort detail they were traveling light — each soldier carried only three days' rations, 60 rounds of ammunition, and a blanket. A proper impression for the troops on the Camden Expedition in April, 1864 would thus be:

- Federal fatigue jacket (dark blue 4-button sack coat - lined or unlined). (NCOs are authorized and encouraged to wear the Federal dress, or frock coat),
- Sky-blue infantry issue trowsers
- Forage cap, Hardee hat, OR black or dark blue slouch hat. (Officers, too...)
- Infantry-issue brogans
- Civilian-pattern (cotton) or federal-issue domet flannel shirt.
- .58 caliber 3-band rifle musket, either P1853 Enfield or M1861 Springfield.
- M1855 pattern .58 caliber cartridge box (if you have the standard .58 cartridge box, this is the right one), cap box, Gaylord pattern bayonet scabbard & bayonet. (no Enfield bayonet scabbards — these were mostly used by the Rebs, who got the leather along with the rifles)
- M1858 pattern federal smoothsided canteen
- tarred (black) haversack
- federal issue gray or light tan blanket, rolled into a bedroll.
- Rations: (two days')
- 1.5 lbs salt pork or bacon
- 18-20 hardtack crackers
- 1/4 lb coffee
- 1/4 lb brown sugar
- foraged fruit/vegetables as seasonably available
- pilfered poultry, ham, bacon, etc. seized from local smokehouses. This is the basic, essential kit, what else you bring will depend on your style of camping for this event.

If you do not have your Federal gear yet, or are missing a particular item, please contact Steve or Tom and we will arrange to get you kitted out. The Company Loaner Box will be available at the event site with spare Federal uniforms and gear.

**Guiding Impression:**

**The 36th Iowa Infantry**

The guiding impression for the Capitol Guards at Marks' Mill will be Company B, 36th Iowa Infantry. For some of us, this won't be the first time that we have crossed paths with the 36th Iowa, since we

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represented this regiment, along with Captain Edmund Joy of Company B at the re-opening of the Old State House Museum in July, 2000 as well as the Marks' Mill event in 2003. The 36th is typical of the western federal regiments that served in Arkansas, serving briefly in the early attempts to capture Vicksburg, then assigned to the Federal garrison at Helena, where it took part in the battle of Helena and the Little Rock Campaign in the summer of 1863. The 36th was involved in the capture and garrison of Pine Bluff following the fall of Little Rock, then returned to winter quarters near the Little Rock Arsenal. The 36th provided the guard detail for, and was present at the hanging of David O. Dodd on January 8, 1864, then marched out with Steele's expedition in March, fighting at Elkins' Ferry, Prairie D' Ane, and the occupation of Camden. Their being detailed to guard the wagon train would lead to a Significant Event in the regiment's history. Regimental histories show that the troops of the 7th Corps were wearing mostly fatigue blouses and slouch hats on this campaign. There would have been no resupply for more than a month, so a ragged, "scruffy" look would be more appropriate. The 7th Corps eventually adopted a corps badge using the crescent moon and star of the Trans-Mississippi (the 3rd Division would be blue); however these badges were not adopted for general use until early in 1865.

## Early Confederate Companies in Little Rock

[LITTLE ROCK] *WEEKLY ARKANSAS GAZETTE*, March 16, 1861, p. 2, c. 3

Military.—As a decided Military spirit seems to pervade, we would suggest that there are four good military companies in Little Rock, any of which afford ample inducements to the citizen of military tastes or inclinations:

Capt. Churchill's Cavalry, is a fine company, well officered and will soon be well armed. In it there are some vacancies, and we would like to see its ranks well filled.

Capt. Peay's Capital Guards, is a first rate Infantry company, as well commanded as any company in the State, and the ranks are not yet full.

Capt. Woodruff's Artillery; is a new company, well officered and appointed, with room in the ranks for yet a few more.

Capt. Franklin's Rifles, a new company, is organized and in the tide of successful experiment. Sharp shooters can have a chance in that company.

Gentlemen desirous of attaching themselves to Cavalry, to Infantry, or to Artillery service, have, in Little Rock, superior advantages in all respects.

[LITTLE ROCK] *WEEKLY ARKANSAS GAZETTE*, April 20, 1861, p. 2, c. 4

**Military Ball.**—The Ball given by the "Capital Guards," on Friday night of last week, was a brilliant affair, and went off in the most admirable manner. The supper, prepared by the ladies of the Episcopal Church, afforded ample evidence that they are judges of the good things of this life. The beaux, with their profusion of Military ornament, made a good display, but they were outshone by the sparkling eyes of the beauteous fair who graced the occasion. Being an invited guest, and having the run of the house, we "sloshed about," saw, and paid general attention to all, including, of course, the presiding divinity of the gallery, whom we regarded as among the chiefest of the attractions.

## Pleasant Hill 2007 (Continued from Page 3)

day before when we had been the recipient of most of the explosives, but we did miss those moments huddled behind the rail fence from years past.

Once the major portion of the pyro demonstration had been finished, the infantry was called back to arms and we advanced in line of battle to drive the Yanks from their hill. We moved out by the right of companies to the front, passing through the cheers of the artillery's gun line, then back into line of battle as we pressed forward. The right wing halted just past the pond and opened fire, providing cover for the left wing to clear the obstacle of the pond and move back up on line. Here we stood for awhile and volleyed back and forth with the Yanks, spending a great deal of ammunition. I had neglected to check my cartridge box before falling in, and started off nearly a packet short of cartridges, and had already emptied my top tins during the firefight back in the woods. I was working to make every round count, but still was down to my last tin of cartridges as the battalion charged bayonet and attacked the fenceline. A sheer wall of fire drove us back... Randy went down, and then down to my last rounds myself, I cleared my weapon and took a hit just short of the fence. The battalion retreated to the bottom of the swale, and as I took a discrete look around, I was pretty lonely out there in the field, and the Yanks looked like they could use some help.

Still under fire from both sides, I crawled to the fence and gave myself up, then settled down behind a pine tree with some of the federal sharpshooters and fired my last four rounds on behalf of Uncle Sam. Thinking about it at the time, I just couldn't help taking a "cheap shot" at the TMVI one more time :-)

This got the Southern boys pretty riled up, and here they came again, serious this time, on the run. I fired my last cartridge in haste as the cavalry jumped between us and the charging Rebs, then took leg bail for the back side of the hill with the rest of the Yanks.

Out of sight and out of the line of fire, I wandered down to a little grassy spot by a stream, sat down wearily, and took a long pull on my canteen. It was quiet for once, on the original battlefield, and I took a little time to clear my weapon, get out my musket tool and tighten the hammer that had loosened a bit toward the end of the fight. That done, I simply let the moment was over me, and reflected on the weekend while waiting for the battle to peter out and the closing parade to get well on its way back to the camp area. I got up eventually and wandered back across the battlefield to the vendor area where I negotiated with a sweet young Louisiana lass for a Coke and a couple of Natchitoches meat pies (yum!). Then, feeling refreshed in spirit as well as in flesh, I shouldered my rifle and headed for the wagon park and the forced march to safety down in Grand Ecore.

All in all, Pleasant Hill 2007 was definitely at its "Pleasant Hilliest" with regards to the atmosphere, but was still a fun event. It's not often that we get to visit the Holy Land (original battlefields at the same time of year) like we do at PH, and this alone makes it a very special event. For my part, there was a little misery due to the weather, and yeah, I'm a Drill Nazi too, so the Awkward Squad can sometimes get a little frustrating. But I had a good time, being down there with friends and visiting old friends, and getting the chance to burn a bunch of powder through the musket... something I haven't really had a chance to do in a long time. I was especially pleased with the "new" M1841 Mississippi rifle in the first chance I've gotten to go out and reenact with it. We had a few adjustments to make after the first two commemorative services I took it to, but after a full-up range day at Hattieville, and now with a powder-burner of an event under the belt, I get more fond of it each time. I deliberately took a spot in the rear rank with it on Sunday to see just how much a problem it might be. I found that if you follow Hardee's instructions just as they're written and keep a good awareness of what's going on around you, there's no problem at all. Save for the saber-bayonet (which I wisely left in the wagon) it's as easy or easier to pack around as the Enfield or Springfield rifle-muskets. And most satisfying,

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## ILLINOIS STATE JACKETS

In the opening days of the Civil War the state governments of the "old Northwest" as well as others were pressed to find uniforms, weapons, and equipment for the volunteers responding to Lincoln's call for troops to avenge the insult of the Southerners' attack on Fort Sumter and restore the Union by force of arms. Several states, including New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois devised their own state uniforms for the new volunteers. Most of these states had standing laws providing for the organization and outfitting of the state militia, and/or at least had active adjutant generals and quartermaster offices to set a standard for and begin procurement of military clothing.

The first regiments raised by Illinois for service in the upper Mississippi valley were issued uniforms of militia gray, which a number of them retained until the early winter of 1862. Illinois began numbering its volunteer regiments for the Civil War with the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment (in consideration of the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup> Illinois regiments organized for the War with Mexico), and at least the 7<sup>th</sup> through the 12<sup>th</sup> regiments as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> Illinois Cavalry were outfitted with gray shell jackets with 7-button fronts and "fancy trim" on the cuffs.

However, battle experiences and Union fiascoes such as the confusion at Bull Run, and for the Suckers of Illinois, the battles at Belmont in November 1861 and at Fort Donelson in February 1862 (where a few Sucker regiments were still wearing their militia gray) demonstrated the need for a standardized uniform for the Union volunteers. In response, New York, Ohio, and Illinois rushed to re-issue their volunteers with roundabouts (shell jackets) made of dark blue wool kersey of various styles, or with the regulation U.S. Army dress (frock) coats and fatigue blouses (sack coats). New York issued a distinctive dark blue shell jacket piped around the collar and cuffs with Saxony blue, as well as epaulettes (shoulder straps) and belt loops piped in the same manner. Ohio and Illinois also decided on the dark blue shell jacket "in the New York style," but due to varying vendors, these jackets differed between the various lots purchased.

Only a couple of vendors are known as the primary suppliers of non-regulation infantry jackets for the State of Illinois. One of these "contractors" or vendors was a Cincinnati clothing house which acted as a Western agent for the A. T. Stewart & Co. of New York City,



*Private Gustavus Henry Martin of Company G, 45th Illinois, the "Lead Mine Regiment" from Galena, wearing an Illinois state-issue shell jacket. Martin is armed with an M1858 Enfield rifle and is holding his tin cup and a piece of hardtack.*



*Reproduction state jacket from County Cloth pattern, this one from a surviving jacket with Ohio provenance. (Chris Daley Historical Reproductions)*

Illinois jacket one of their top projects for more than a decade, but so far have come up empty-handed.

Ample photographic evidence of these jackets exist, however, in the portraits that Sucker soldiers had made of themselves in their spiffy

according to the testimony of Captain Dart, contained within the Serial Set. It is reasonable that clothing manufacturers in New York City who were interested in supplying and selling to the markets in the West may have manufactured or bought and sold jackets of the type adopted by New York, and that these jackets may have found their way, (due primarily to procurement on the open market) to troops from Illinois and also Ohio serving in the Western Department. The sources of supply for these jackets are far from definite, and this is a topic worthy of further research.

This was certainly the case with the W. F. Enders and Co. of Boston. These folks provided clothing to both the assistant quartermasters at Cincinnati and St. Louis, and may also be responsible for the unusual mounted service jackets that show up in images of the "Merrill Horse," the 2<sup>nd</sup> Missouri Cavalry the 3<sup>rd</sup> Iowa Cavalry, both of the Western Department and Arkansas service in the Little Rock Campaign, as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, and Battery A, 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio Light Artillery.

These state-issue jackets began appearing in the field early in 1862. While some of the newer Illinois regiments received their state jackets or U.S. regulation uniforms before heading down the Tennessee River for duty at Fort Henry or Fort Donelson, the older regiments began receiving their new issue shortly before the battle of Shiloh. In camp at Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee on March 13, 1862, James Jessee, of Co. K, 8<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry noted in his wartime diary that he received "...new uniform jacket dark blue, pants light blue..." On the same day, Gouldsmith D. Molineaux, Co. E of the 8<sup>th</sup> Illinois wrote in his diary: "...We received our new uniforms today light blue pants dark blue jackets. Mine don't fit me..."

What did these jackets look like? That is a mystery that western Federal living historians are still pursuing. Despite the large quantity of "Illinois state jackets" procured and proudly worn during the War, no surviving example has been positively identified as of this time. The Mudsills and Skulkers' Mess, some of the premier authentic reenactors in our region, have made finding an original

Illinois State Jackets (Continued from page 7)



Private Tom Brown of Co. K, 37th Illinois. This jacket has the apparent characteristics of a state-issued jacket: the roundabout cut, epaulettes, and a 8- or 9-button front. Brown is holding a Colt revolving rifle, since Companies A and K were the flank companies of the 37th, they were armed with these early versions of an "assault rifle."



Corporal Ira Rose Martin, of Company C, 37th Illinois Infantry in a state jacket. Again, note the roundabout cut, and the distinctive epaulettes on the shoulders. This and the previous images are from the "Illinois in the Civil War" web site.



A good image of a soldier from Company C, 46th Illinois Infantry, showing more detail of the jacket, to include a slash pocket on the jacket front as well as two top-opening pockets in the lower jacket front -- very practical for a seasoned campaigner! (John Wedeward, private collection)



Two young men from Tazewell County. Armed with converted M1816 muskets and the odd pistol. The jackets have 8 or 9 buttons, stand up collar and shoulder straps. (Steve Sullivan, private collection)

features a portrait gallery of Illinois veterans. Browsing through these images, a significant number can be found wearing what has been termed the "Illinois state jacket," including two members of the 37<sup>th</sup> Regiment. Likewise, photographs of Illinois soldiers in private collections show good detail of these jackets, their common characteristics, and their sometimes differing features.

Comparison of the various photographs indicate some common characteristics of the Illinois-style state jacket:

- Shell jacket or "roundabout," made of dark blue (indigo-dyed?) kersey with a six piece body;
- simple tube sleeves;
- standing collar, usually without piping;
- distinctive straps or epaulettes on the shoulder;
- 8- or 9-button closure.

**WHERE CAN I GET ONE?**

Vendors of "good" state jackets are somewhat uncommon, as this is still somewhat of an "oddball" uniform item within the reenacting community.

Most current vendors base their pattern off the County Cloth "Ohio jacket" pattern, which contains many of the basic features of the Illinois jacket images, with the specific details customized from there.

Pat Brown, of Goldberg & Company Textiles, Salt Lake City, UT makes, in the author's opinion, probably one of the best copies of these jackets, based on observation and comparison. However, Pat is currently deployed to Iraq for an indefinite period of time and is not currently making jackets.

An "Ohio jacket kit" from County Cloth (\$90) is a good option for those with good sewing skills, and allows you to customize yours with the external pockets, etc. County Cloth also offers finished jackets at a higher price and approximately a 6-month wait.

C.J. Daley (www.cjdaley.com)

offers a finished "State Jacket" from the Ohio pattern (\$225) which makes a very decent substitute for the Illinois jacket. The author recently procured one of these jackets to expand his Sucker impression, and is pleased with the final garment. The Daley jacket is based off the County Cloth Ohio pattern, it would seem, and the example considered for this article was made of a nice, dark blue wool kersey and lined in the body with blue denim, quilted to provide the fashionable pigeon-breasted look of the times. The sleeves are lined with white muslin. This

new uniforms and then sent home to their loved ones. Likewise, a number of photographs show these uniforms worn in the field, notably by the 17<sup>th</sup> Illinois at Vicksburg, and by the 7<sup>th</sup> Illinois at Chattanooga.

Illinois thought enough of its soldiers who fought for the Union that the Illinois State Monument at Vicksburg National Battlefield Park lists the name of every soldier from the Sucker State who fought in the Vicksburg campaign. In the same manner, Illinois sponsors a web site, "Illinois in the Civil War," (<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilcivilw/>) which



**Illinois State Jackets** (Continued from page 8)

example has no exterior pockets, but a pocket similar to that in a sack coat is set into the quilting on the left inside front facing. Nine large general service eagle buttons close the front of the jacket.

These jackets were evidently very popular with the soldiers from the Land of Lincoln. While in the grand scheme of an authentic Western Federal impression these are an "oddball" item in your wardrobe, they do make for an excellent bit of detail in capturing the image and spirit of the Suckers from Illinois and the Ohio River Valley.



Sgt. Samuel Sines Co. B, 25th Illinois. He sports an 1842 musket, and a longer than usual jacket. Exterior an 8 or 9-button front, epaulettes, and a high, stand-pocket on the left (image is reversed). He is wearing up collar. Signs of an external pocket are not visible. (Steve Sullivan, private collection)



Wearing a mixture of hats as well as a mix of state jackets and regulation sack coats, Company F of the 7th Illinois Infantry poses atop Lookout Mountain in June, 1864. This is an excellent image of some of the federal soldiers as they set out on the Atlanta Campaign. Fresh from veterans' furlough back home to Illinois, many of these Suckers spent part of their reenlistment bounty equipping themselves with 16-shot Henry repeating rifles for the coming campaigns. The 7th served with the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, XVI Army Corps of the Army of the Tennessee.



Sergeant James S. Travis of Company H, 38th Illinois Infantry, in what is probably an Illinois state jacket.



C.J. Daley reproduction State Jacket, based on the County Cloth "Ohio Jacket" pattern

# Does a Wild Rebel Sh\_t in the Woods?

## A Look at Field Sanitation in the Civil War Armies

The last couple of events the Capitol Guards attended brought to mind a key aspect of military management from the War for Southern Independence. At Shiloh, the Confederate campaign battalions spent two full days way out in the woods away from any of the event amenities (straw, cut firewood, and especially porta-johns), and at Pleasant Hill, a late night visit to the sinks reminded me of another PH tradition – the perpetually atrocious condition, lack of maintenance, and lack of toilet paper of the event’s porta-potties. And considering historical experiences, we’re likely to face both conditions at Marks’ Mills... And while amateurs may argue tactics, real soldiers argue logistics (like this) before tactics come into play.

Field sanitation and the disposal of human and animal wastes is a period issue, too. Many times at living histories, school presentations, and even in telegraphed conversations with new reenactors over the Internet, the timeless question inevitably come up, “What do you do when...?”

Before you laugh, remember that this is a subject of great importance, not only to a young child, but to us all. So, in order to give you a little background should you be asked this question the following is offered.

One of the great accomplishments of the modern era has been the introduction of public sanitation by means of septic systems and wastewater treatment plants for the protection of the citizen’s health. Water flush toilets were available prior to the American Revolution, but only the wealthy could afford them. American cities lacked sewers and treatment facilities. The first effort in modern times to construct sewers was the passage of the Public Health Act in London in 1841. American cities would have to wait until after the Civil War for these improvements. Prior to this, American cities and farms were noisome, usually smelly pestholes. So it should come as no surprise that the “bathroom habits” of antebellum Americans were somewhat lacking.

The general run (no pun intended) of camp sanitation left much to be desired. The only troops that regularly observed camp sanitation practices were the regular soldiers of the pre-War U.S. Army. Paragraph 510 of the *Regulations for the Army of the Confederate States* requires that:

**“The sinks of the men are 150 paces in front of the color line those of the officers 100 paces in rear of the train. Both are concealed by bushes. When convenient, the sinks of the men may be placed in rear or on a flank. A portion of the earth dug out for sinks to be thrown back occasionally.”**

What the regulations called for and what they actually did are two different things. The volunteer soldiers of both armies found it too much trouble to travel so far to use the sinks, so they would use a convenient patch of brush or trees to do their business. Many men also found it quite discomforting to use such an obvious place.

An order issued during the summer of 1863 to the Federal XIII Army Corps encamped at Hebron Plantation (near Vicksburg) Mississippi is revealing of the nature of camp hygiene during the heat of summer, as well as some of the less than savory “evacuatory” practices of a few soldiers. On July 25, 1863, Maj. Gen. E. O. C. Ord issued General Order No 17:

Division Provost Marshals will be in charge of the Police of Division Camps, and will promptly punish any violation of cleanliness or good order. They will see that:

I. Every Regiment and Battery will be immediately provided with a sufficient

number of sinks for the use of the men and officers, and that cesspools are made convenient to each Company and officers’ mess cook fire, into which all the offal of the Kitchens must be thrown. These sinks and cesspools will be filled in every two (2) days with at least three (3) inches of earth and will be entirely filled when within two feet of the surface and new ones dug.

II. Any soldier or [officer’s] servant failing to use these sinks and cesspools will be arrested and placed on fatigue duty for one day.

III. After the sinks are built and this order published any man who is caught committing a nuisance within one hundred yards of camp will be armed with a stick and placed sentinel over it for two hours to warn persons that way of the danger, after which he may be permitted to bury it.<sup>1</sup>

Letters home mentioned the disgusting conditions of the camps and bivouacs that soldiers were required to endure. Since sinks often were not dug for hasty overnight encampments, regiments on the march which were required to bivouac in field previously occupied by other units – especially Confederates – often found it to be an unpleasant experience. One veteran from Longstreet’s corps of the Army of Northern Virginia recalled his brigade stopping for the night in a field previously used by another division as a campsite. Despite the darkness the men were extremely careful where they spread their blankets. In a letter home he stated, “I can’t tell you what we slept in, but it didn’t smell like peaches.”

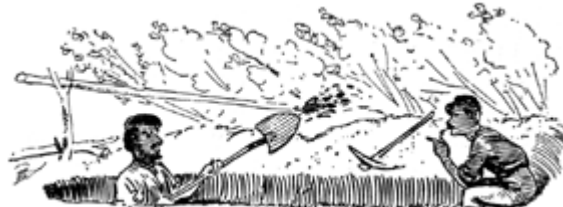
It was difficult to enforce the camp sanitation regulations concerning the disposal of both human and animal waste. The volunteer officers were often reluctant to punish men for violating camp policy. Failure to follow regulations led to contamination of local water supplies, which would lead to dysentery, which made further problems.

In Augustus Kautz’s military handbook, *Customs of Service for Non-Commissioned Officers and Soldiers*, Kautz quotes Dr Hall of the Sanitary Commission as giving the following advice. “Inattention to nature’s calls is frequent source of disease. The strictest discipline in the performance of these duties is absolutely essential to health as well as decency. Men should never be allowed to void their excrement elsewhere than the well-established sinks. In well regulated camps the sinks are visited daily by a police party and a layer of earth and lime or other disinfecting agents be used...”

Kautz goes on to explain in his handbook for officers, that among the regimental and brigade duties for junior officers is the designation of the “Officer of Police” for each day. In smaller units or camps this is typically designated as a “sergeant of Police.” The responsibilities of the officer or sergeant of Police are to inspect and ensure that the unit area and campgrounds are kept clean and neat and in a proper state of military order. The officer or sergeant of police is under the supervision of the unit’s Officer of the Day.

“The sinks, or latrines are also subject to the inspection of the Officer of Police. Each Company usually has its own sinks. The sinks consist, when the troops are in the field and in camp for several days at one place, of **trenches about ten feet long, two feet wide, and three or four feet deep, dug in the earth, and screened by shrub branches, located about two hundred yards in front of the encampment, and inside the line of sentinels of the Camp or Police Guard.**

Sinks cannot be constructed too soon after a camp is once established, and the Officer of Police is usually entrusted with the duty of directing where they are to be placed, and seeing that the necessary number are properly dug and maintained. The earth that is dug out is thrown back again, little by



Digging Sinks...

little, thus rendering them less offensive. In due time they are entirely filled up, and new ones dug.

In Garrison the sinks are more permanent – typically in the form of outhouses – and are kept clean by washing, and the use of lime. They require constant attention, or they will soon become very offensive.”

In an outstanding reference book which covers the devastating impact which humans can have on a local environment; Kathleen Meyer, states that it takes up to two years for even small amounts of human waste to decompose. During this time the decomposing waste is spreading bacteria such as Giardia and Escherichia coli into the water table or into surface waters. Giardia is a serious intestinal infection that might be more familiar by its other name; “Montezuma’s Revenge.” E. coli is the culprit in many recent food poisoning scares, such as rare hamburgers, spinach and other vegetables. Imagine the impact an army of 30,000 to 100,000 men must have had on the local eco-system!

Improper disposal of human waste has another drawback besides contaminating water supplies. Insects such as flies spread contamination rapidly through a camp. You not only have to consider human waste, but horses and mules, of which the army had plenty, generate enormous amounts of manure. Can you guess where that fly that is now crawling on your plate was just a few minutes ago?

Although ignorant of the correlation between proper camp sanitation and disease control, those units that took care to observe proper camp discipline suffered noticeably less so than in units that were lax about enforcement of regulations. Loose bowels was the common ailment of Civil War soldiers, both Confederate and Union, and was almost accepted as an unavoidable misery associated with soldiering. Indeed, it was commonly euphemized as “the old soldier’s disease.” One soldier of the 100<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry wrote home, “Diarrhea is about the only disease in the army. Almost all have it more or less.”

Loose bowels fell into two categories of ailment, with medical differentiation between the two being very simple – “loose bowels” was simple diarrhea, and “loose bowels with blood” was dysentery. There were many “soldier names” for the condition as well: “the quickstep,” “flux,” and “bloody flux” (the last referring to dysentery). More indelicate soldiers simply called it “the shits.” The symptoms are self-explanatory. Treatment was similarly rudimentary: Opium was typically given to bind up loose bowels (blackberries and blackberry brandy had a similar effect); “blue mass” (calomel) was given to get things flowing again in the case of constipation resulting from a little too much curative.

## TP?

Another common question that comes up from the public, as well as new reenactors, is “What did they use for toilet paper?”

The first commercially produced toilet paper was unbleached pearl-colored pure manila hemp paper made in 1857 by Joseph C. Gayetty of New York City, whose name was watermarked on each sheet. It sold at five hundred sheets for fifty cents and was known as *Gayetty’s Medicated Paper* - a perfectly pure article for the toilet and for the prevention of piles.” It was sold as a medicated wipe for people with hemorrhoids (or those who feared getting hemorrhoids), and it wasn’t much of a success. So if we apply our modern mindset, a closer parallel would be those special wet wipes. If someone always uses those today and carries them everywhere so they don’t have to use regular toilet paper in public restrooms, they might be the kind of person in the 1860s who would feel the lack of commercial toilet paper.

On farms and in other rural areas, corn cobs and corn shucks, often moistened by soaking in a pail of water, were widely used. Other solutions were the use of a cloth or rag, which was washed or rinsed after use. The PBS special *Pioneer House* several years ago highlighted this; The families there each had a piece of rag for every family member, and you rinsed out your rag and hung it on a peg in the outhouse.

Toilet paper was not issued by the army, nor was it on the list of items sold by US sutlers, nor does it show up in the “Standard Supply Table for Three Months... For Hospital of 100 Beds/For 1000 men in the field,” as listed in “Medical Purveying Department of U.S. Army.” Nor does it appear in many inventories kept by sutlers following the armies. Since most people didn’t use commercial toilet paper at home, they felt no lack if it wasn’t sold by sutlers.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR RE-ENACTORS

If a company or battalion is going to be operating in the field for the weekend away from event-provided blue outhouses, there should be a review of the rules on proximity and sanitation, especially on a long stop and definitely on an overnight stop. The commanding officer or ranking NCO should declare a specific area for the sinks and make sure everyone knows about it. A small group of men overnight won’t foul a site so badly that the EPA declares it as a Superfund site, but carelessness and thoughtlessness about this stuff can give someone else an unpleasant experience. An area or perimeter for this kind of activity needs to be set and marked or clearly understood – the last thing you want is guys looking for a place to bed down after dark in an area where nobody marked the area as having been used as sinks.

A final thought: there ain’t no washrooms or other hand-washing facilities out in the woods or at most of those blue outhouses, and in addition to those bodily functions, you are walking around where horses have been and occasionally a goat, getting gosh knows what on your shoes and then tracking it into the campfire area where you’re going to be preparing food. Just stop before you get out the bacon and wash your hands with soap. Very little food modeled after Civil War period rations “goes bad” over a weekend and some of the stomach upsets commonly attributed to spoilage is undoubtedly coming from fecal contamination. Some of it may also be just your system reacting to changes in diet or to the stress of the weekend. But just washing your hands ought to eliminate a lot of the “spoiled food syndrome.” And it’s period-correct.

While soldiers didn’t know of the existence of bacteria or their relationship to disease, most had cleanliness drummed into their heads from the cradle. Undoubtedly some took advantage of the loosening of domestic reins to run wild and dirty, but probably most tried to get clean whenever an opportunity presented itself. Stories and accounts of cleaning clothes and such abound, along with notations in diaries at the discomfort associated with marches on which there was no opportunity, for prolonged periods, to get clean. So we know it was important, and that being dirty was considered a hardship by most.

An essential piece of your campaigner’s kit and haversack content should be a good washrag. Wrap a piece of lye soap in this rag, and you now have the tools to to sanitize your hands should be come into contact with something as nasty as a porta-potty or a necrotic armadillo; and to bathe the necessaries when needed.

For those who are a little less purist in their impressions, I still recommend the wash rag and lye soap, and a small squeeze bottle of Purel™ or equivalent waterless hand sanitizer in the haversack is a very nice thing. Wal\*Mart offers small, pocket-sized rolls of water-soluble, biodegradable TP in their camping section, 3 rolls for \$1.75 or so. One of these fits neatly in the haversack, knapsack, or even in a jacket pocket. Old veterans may have access to a stash of the small TP packets included with Army MRE rations, which are ideal for our use. Cartridge wrappers, period newspapers, pages from blank books, and even certain leaves will suffice in a pinch (which is where you quite often find yourself in these sorts of moments). Or, instead of using that order or dispatch as a cigar wrapper, employ it for sanitation. It is more comfortable than leaves, more authentic than TP, and is less likely to be inspected closely by curious cavalry scouts.

<sup>1</sup> Regimental Orders and Courts-Martial Books, 33<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteers, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

## **Further Mishaps to Si & Shorty...**

### **CHAPTER IX.**

#### **VICTORY AT LAST—SI REAPPEARS AS FROM THE GRAVE, WITH AN APPETITE LIKE PRAIRIE FIRE.**

ON THEIR way back from “settling the battery,” Si and Shorty each broke off a big armful of cedar branches. These they spread down on the ground when the regiment resumed its place in the line-of-battle, and lay down on them to spend the rest of the night as comfortably as possible. The fire with which they had roasted the pig, and from which they had drawn much comfort during the day, had had to be extinguished when darkness came on. But it had dried out and warmed the ground for a considerable space around, and on this they made their bed.

“We seem to play in fair luck right along, Shorty,” said the hopeful Si, as they curled up on the boughs. “Most of the boys ‘ve got to lay down in a foot of mud.”

“Don’t get to crowin’ too loud,” grumbled Shorty. “If they find out what a good thing we have, some Jigadier-Brindle’ll snatch it away for himself.” But Si was fast asleep before Shorty finished speaking.

Sometime before midnight the Orderly-Sergeant came around, and after vigorous kicking and shaking, succeeded in waking them.

“Get up,” he said, “and draw some rations. The wagons ‘ve got in from Nashville.”

“My gracious !” said Si, as soon as he was wide enough awake to understand the Orderly-Sergeant’s words, “is it possible that we’re going to have plenty of hardtack and pork and coffee again? Seems to me a hundred years since we drew a full ration.”

He and Shorty jumped up and ran over to where the Quartermaster-Sergeant and his assistants were dealing out a handful of crackers and a piece of pork to each man as he came up.

“Mebbe I oughtn’t to say it,” said Si, as he munched away, taking a bite first off the crackers in his right and then off the meat in his left, “but nothing that ever mother baked tasted quite as good as this.”

“This does seem to be a specially good lot,” assented Shorty. “Probably a wagon load that they intended for the officers and give us by mistake. Better eat it all up before they find it out.”

The morning of Jan. 2, 1863, dawned bleak and chill, but this at least brought the great comfort that the dreary rain was at last over. The sharp air was bracing, and put new life and hope into the hearts of the Union soldiers. Many wagons had been gotten up during the night, bringing food and ammunition for all. Soon after daylight cheerful fires were blazing everywhere, and the morning air was laden with the appetizing fragrance of boiling coffee and broiling meat. The sun began to rise over Murfreesboro’ and the rebel camps, giving promise of a bright, invigorating day.

“I hope this thing’ll be brought to a focus to-day, and the question settled as to who shall occupy this piece of real estate,” said Shorty, as he and Si finished a generous breakfast, filled their boxes and pockets with cartridges, and began knocking the dried mud off their clothes and rubbing the rust from their guns. “I want them gents in brown clothes to clear out and leave. It frets me to see them hangin’ round. They’re bad neighbors.”

“I hope,” said Si, carefully picking out the tube of his gun with a pin, “we won’t put in to-day as we did yesterday—layin’ ‘round making faces an’ shakin’ our fists at one another. Let’s have the thing out at once.”

Evidently the rebels were of the same frame of mind. They saluted the dawn with a noisy fusillade that ran along the miles of winding line. It was spiteful, crashing and persistent, but as the Union lines lay

beyond good musket range and the rebels showed no disposition to advance across the fields and come to close quarters, the noise was quite out of proportion to the harm done.

The two rebel batteries on the opposite side of the river opened up a terrific fire upon one of our batteries, and the air seemed torn to shreds by the storm of howling missiles.

The 200th Ind. was too far away to have more than a spectacular interest in this tempestuous episode. They stood around their gun-stacks and watched and listened while the hours passed in ineffective noise, and wondered when the crisis of action was going to arrive.

“They seem to have lost their appetite for close acquaintance with the 200th Ind.,” remarked Shorty. “They found that Jordan was a hard road to travel whenever they came across the fields at us, and are tryin’ to scare us by makin’ a racket. I think we kin stand it as long as their powder kin. But I’m gittin’ hungry agin. Let’s have somethin’ to eat.”

“Good gracious, it is noon,” answered Si, looking up at the sun. “I believe I do want some dinner.”

They had scarcely finished dinner-eating when the 200th Ind. was ordered to move over toward Stone River. It halted on a little rise of ground on the bank, which commanded an extensive view on both sides of the river. There was a portentous flow in the great, dark-blue sea of men. The billows, crested with shining steel, were rolling eastward toward the river.

“Something’s goin’ to happen; meetin’s about to break up ; school’s goin’ to let out,” said Shorty eagerly. “Isn’t it a grand sight.”

“Gracious me !” said Si, devouring the spectacle with his eyes. “How I wish that father and mother and sister could see all this. It’s worth going through a great deal to see this.”

It was by far the most imposing spectacle they had yet seen. The whole Army of the Cumberland was crowded into the narrow space between the Nashville Pike and Stone River. Its compact regiments, brigades, and divisions showed none of the tearing and mangling they had endured, but stood or moved in well-dressed ranks that seemed the embodiment of mighty purpose and resistless force.

Around its grand array, a half mile away, lay the somber, portentous line of brown-clad men. Beyond them rose the steeples and roofs of the sleepy old town of Murfreesboro, with crowds of men and women occupying every point of vantage, to witness the renewal of the awful battle.

It was now long past noon. The bright sun had long ago scattered the chill mists of the morning, and radiated warmth and light over the dun landscape. Even the somber cedars lost some of the funereal gloom they wore when the skies were lowering.

“There go two brigades across the river,” said Si. “We’re goin’ to try to turn their right.”

They saw a long line of men file down the river bank, cross, and go into line on the high ground beyond. Their appearance seemed to stir the brown mass lying on the heights a mile in front of them to action. The rebels began swarming out of their works and moving forward into the woods.

Presently a thin line of men in butternut-colored clothes ran forward to a fence in front, and began throwing it down. Behind them came three long, brown lines, extending from near the river to the woods far away to the left. Batteries galloped in the intervals to knolls, on which they unlimbered and opened fire.

It was an overpowering mass of men for the two little brigades to resist. Si’s heart almost stood still as he saw the inequality of the contest.

“Why don’t they send us over there to help those men?” he anxiously asked. “They can’t stand up against that awful crowd.”

“Just wait,” said Shorty hopefully. “Old Rosy knows what he’s doin’. He’s got enough here for the business.”

The artillery all along the line burst out in tor-rents of shells, but Si's eyes were glued on the two little brigades. He saw the white spurts from the skirmishers' rifles, and men drop among the rebels, who yet moved slowly forward, like some all-engulfing torrent. The skirmishers ran back to the main line, and along its front sped a burst of smoke as each regiment fired by volley. The foremost rebel line quivered a little, but moved steadily on.

Then a cloud of white smoke hid both Union and rebel lines, and from it came the sound as of thou-sands of carpenters hammering away industriously at nails.

Presently Si was agonized to see a fringe of blue break back from the bank of smoke, and run rapidly to the rear. They were followed by regiments falling back slowly, in order, and turning at the word of command to deliver volleys in the faces of their yelling pursuers.

Si looked at his Colonel, and saw him anxiously watching the brigade commander for orders to rush across the river to the assistance of the two brigades.

Suddenly there was a whirl in front. A battery galloped up, the drivers lashing the horses, the can. noneers sitting stolidly on the limbers with their arms folded. It swept by to a knoll in front and to the right, which commanded the other side of the river. Instantly the gunners sprang to the ground, the cannons were tossed about as if they were play-things, and before Si could fairly wink he saw the guns lined up on the bank, the drivers standing by the horses' heads, and the cannons belching savagely into the flanks of the horde of rebels.

Then another battery swept up alongside the first, and another, until 58 guns crowned the high banks and thundered until the earth shook as with the ague. A deluge of iron swept the fields where the mighty host of rebels were advancing. Tops were torn out of trees and fell with a crash, fence-rails and limbs of oak went madly flying through the air, regiments and brigades disappeared before the awful blast.

For a few minutes Si and Shorty stood appalled at the deafening crash and the shocking destruction. Then they saw the rebels reel and fly before the tornado of death.

A great shout arose from thousands of excited men standing near. Regiments and brigades started as with one impulse to rush across the river and pursue the flying enemy. The 200th Ind. was one of these. No one heard any orders from the officers. The men caught the contagion of victory and rushed forward, sweeping with them the lately-defeated brigades, hurrying over the wreckage of the cannon-fire, over the thickly-strewn dead and wounded, and gathering in prisoners, flags and cannon.

They went on so, nearly to the breastworks behind which the rebels were seeking shelter.

Si and Shorty were among the foremost. A few hundred yards from the rebel works Si fell to the ground without a groan. Shorty saw him, and ran to him. The side of his head was covered with blood, and he was motionless.

"Stone dead -- bullet plum through his head," said the agonized Shorty. But there was no time for mourning the fallen. The pursuit was still hot, and Shorty's duty was in front. He ran ahead until the Colonel halted the regiment. Fresh rebels were lining up in the breastworks and threatening a return charge which would be disastrous. The Colonel



"SI KLEGG FELL WITHOUT A GROAN."

hastily re-formed the regiment to meet this, and slowly withdrew it in good order to resist any counter-attack. After marching a mile or more the regiment halted and went into bivouac. The rejoicing men started great fires and set about getting supper. But the saddened Shorty had no heart for rejoicing over the victory, or for supper. He drew off from the rest, sat down at the roots of an oak, wrapped the cape of his overcoat about his face, and abandoned himself to his bitter grief. Earth had no more joy for him. He wished he had been shot at the same time his partner was. He could think of nothing but that poor boy lying there dead and motionless on the cold ground. He felt that he could never think of anything else, and the sooner he was shot the better it would be.

The other boys respected his grief. At first they tried to tempt him to eat something and drink some coffee, but Shorty would not listen to them, and they drew away, that he might be alone.

He sat thus for some hours. The loss of their sturdy Corporal saddened the

whole company, and as they sat around their fires after supper they extolled his good traits, recounted his exploits, and easily made him out the best soldier in the regiment.

Presently the fifes and rums played tattoo, and the boys began preparations for turning in.

Shorty had become nearly frozen sitting there motionless, and he got up and went to the fire to thaw out. He had just picked up a rail to lay it on the fire in better shape, when he heard a weak voice inquiring :

"Does anybody know where the 200th Ind. is?"

Shorty dropped the rail as if he had been shot, and rushed in the direction of the voice. In an instant he came back almost carrying Si Klegg.

There was a hubbub around the fire that kept everybody from paying the least attention to "taps."

"Yes, it's really me," said Si, responding as well as he was able to the hearty handshakings. "And I ain't no ghost, neither. I've got an appetite on me like a prairie fire, and if you fellers are really glad to see me you'll hustle up here all the grub in the Commissary Department. I can eat every mite of it. I was hit by a spent ball and knocked senseless. But I ain't going to tell you any more till I get something to eat."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE VICTORIOUS ARMY - SI AND SHORTY FINALLY SUCCEED IN GETTING OUT OF THE WET.

THE BOYS were so glad to see Si back again alive that they robbed themselves of any choice morsel of food they might have saved for tomorrow's delectation.

"Here, Si," said one, "is a nice knuckle-bone o' ham, that I pulled back there at the General's when his cook returned to the tent for something. You ought t've heard the nigger cussing as I walked away, but he couldn't recognize the back o' my head, nor see under my overcoat. Me and my chum 've had supper off it, and we wuz saving the rest for breakfast, but I'll brile it for you."

"Some of them Kentucky fellers," said another, "found a sheep in the briars and killed it. I traded 'em my silk handkerchief for a hunk o' the meat. I'm going to cook a slice for you, Si."

"Si, I'll bile some coffee for you," said a third.

"I'll toast some crackers for you," added a fourth.

Shorty roused. He felt so much gladder than any of them, that he was jealous of their attentions.

"See here, you fellers," said he, "this is my partner, an' I'm able to take care of him. I'll bile all the coffee an' toast all the crackers he kin eat; though I'm much obliged to you, Jim, for your ham, and to you, Billy, for your mutton, though I'm afraid it'll taste too much of the wool for a wounded man."

"Don't mind about that," said Si; "I'm hungry enough to eat the wool on the sheep's back, even."

Hand over your mutton, Billy, and thankie for it. My appetite's not delicate, I can tell you. Woolly mutton won't faze it more'n bark would a buzz-saw."

Si didn't overstate the case. He ate everything that was cooked and offered him, until he declared that he was so full he "could touch it with his finger."

"I'm sure you're not a ghost, from the way you eat," said Shorty, who was beginning to recover his propensity for sarcasm. "If ghosts et like you there'd have to be a steam bakery an' a pork packery run in connection with every graveyard."

"And I'd never take no ghost to board," said Billy.

"Come, Si," said Jimmy Barlow, filling his briar wood pipe with kinnikinnick, lighting it from the fire, taking a few puffs to start, it, and handing it to Si, "tell us just what happened to you. We're dyin' to hear."

"Well," said Si, settling down with the pipe into a comfortable position, "I don't know what happened. Last thing I knowed I wuz runnin' ahead on Shorty's left, loadin' my gun, an' tryin' to keep up with the Colonel's hoss. Next thing I knowed I wuz wakin' up at the foot of a black-oak. Everything was quiet around me, except the yellin' of two or three wounded men a little ways off. At first I thought a cannonball'd knocked my whole head off. Then it occurred to me that if my head was knocked off I couldn't hear nor see"—

"Nor think, even," injected Shorty.

"No, nor think, even. For what'd you think with?"

"I know some fellers that seem to think with their feet, that blamed awkwardly," mused Shorty.

"I kept on wakin' up," continued Si. "At first I thought I had no head at all, an' then it seemed to me I was all head, it hurt so awfully. I couldn't move hand nor foot. Then I thought mebbe only half my head was shot away, an' the rest was aching for all."

I tried shuttin' one eye an' then the other, an' found I'd at least both eyes left. I moved my head a little, an' found that the back part was still there, for a bump on the roots of the oak hurt it.

"By-and-by the numbness began to go out of my head an' arm, but I was afraid to put my hand up to my head, for I was afraid to find out how much was gone. Nearly the whole of the left side must be gone, an' all my schoolin' scattered over the ground. I lay there thinkin' it all over—how awful I'd look when you fellers came to find me and bury me, an' how you wouldn't dare tell the folks at home about it.

"Finally, I got plum desperate. I didn't seem to be dyin', but to be gettin' better every minute. I determined to find out just how much

of my head was really gone. I put up my hand, timid-like, an' felt my forehead. It was all there. I passed my hand back over my hair an' the whole back of my head was there. I felt around carefully, an' there was the whole side of my head, only a little wet where I'd got a spent ball. Then I got mad an' I jumped up. Think of my makin' all that fuss over a little peck that might have been made by a brick-bat. I started out to hunt you fellers, an' here I am."

"Yes, but you wouldn't 've bin here," philosophized Shorty, examining the wound, "if the feller that fired that shot'd given his gun a little hunch. If that bullet'd went a half-inch deeper, you'd be up among the stars a bow-legged Wabash angel."

"Well, we've licked the stuffin' out of 'em at last, haven't we?" asked Si.

"Well, I should say we had," replied Shorty with an impressive whistle. "I thought the artillery would tear the foundations out of the whole State of Tennessee, the way it let into them. There won't be more crashin' an' bangin' when the world breaks up. I'd a bin willin' to serve 100 years just to see that sight. Lord, what a chance the cannoneers had. First time I ever wanted to be in the artillery. The way they slung whole blacksmith shops over into them woods, an' smashed down trees, and wiped out whole brigades at a clip; filled my soul



SHORTY THINKS SI DOES NOT LOOK LIKE A GHOST.

with joy."

"We must go over there in the mornin' an' take a look at the place," said Si drowsily. "It will be good to remember alongside o' the way they slapped it to us the first day."

Si and Shorty woke up the next morning to find the chill rain pouring down as if the country had been suffering from a year's drouth, and the rain was going to make up for it in one forenoon.

"Lord have mercy," said the disgusted Shorty, as he fell into line 'for roll-call. "Another seepin', soppin', sloshin', spatterin' day. Only had 14 of 'em this week so far. Should think the geese'd carry umbrellas, an' the cows wear overshoes in this land of eternal drizzle. If I ever get home they'll have to run me through a brick-kiln to dry me out."

In spite of the downpour the army was forming up rapidly to resume the advance upon Murfreesboro, and over the ground on the left, that had proved so disastrous to the rebels the day before.

While the 200th Ind. was getting ready to fall in, the sick-call sounded, and the Orderly-Sergeant re-marked to Si:

"Fall into this squad, Corporal Klegg."

"What for?" asked Si, looking askance at the squad.

"To go to the Surgeon's tent," answered the Orderly-Sergeant. "This is the sick squad."

"That's what I thought," answered Si; "an' that's the reason I ain't goin' to join it."

"But your head's bigger'n a bushel, Si," remonstrated the Sergeant. "Better let the doctor see it."

"I don't want none of his bluemass or quinine," persisted Si. "That's all he ever gives for anything. The swellin' 'll come out o' my head in time, same as it does out o' other people's."

"Corporal, I'll excuse you from duty to-day," said the Captain kindly. "I really think you ought to go to the Surgeon."

"If you don't mind, Captain," said Si, saluting, "I'll stay with the boys. I want to see this thing to the end. My head won't hurt me half so bad as if I was back gruntin' 'round in the hospital."

"Probably you are right," said the Captain. "Come along, then."

Willing and brave as the men were, the movements were tiresomely slow and laggard. The week of marching and lying unsheltered in the rain, of terrific fighting, and of awful anxiety had brought about mental and physical exhaustion. The men were utterly worn out in body and mind. This is usually the case in every great battle. Both sides struggle with all their mental and physical powers, until both are worn out. The one that can make just a little more effort than the other wins the victory. This was emphatically so in the battle of Stone River. The rebels had exhausted themselves, even, more in their assaults than the Union men had in repelling them.

When, therefore, the long line of blue labored slowly through the mud and the drenching rain up the gentle slopes on the farther side of Stone River, the rebels sullenly gave ground before them. At last a point was reached which commanded a view of Murfreesboro' and the rebel position. The rebels were seen to be in retreat, and the exhausted Army of the Cumberland was mighty glad to have them go.

As soon as it was certain that the enemy was really abandoning the bitterly-contested field, an inexpressible weariness overwhelmed everybody. The 200th Ind. could scarcely drag one foot after another as it moved back to find a suitable camping-ground.

Si and Shorty crawled into a cedar thicket, broke down some brush for a bed, laid a pole in two crotches, leaned some brush against it to make a partial shelter, built a fire, and sat down.

"I declare, I never knew what being tuckered out was before," said Si. "And it's come to me all of a sudden. This morning I felt as if I could do great things, but the minute I found that them rebels was really going, my legs begun to sink under me."

"Same way with me," accorded Shorty. "Don't believe I've got strength enough left to pull a settin' hen off her nest. But we can't be drowned out this way. We must fix up some better shelter."

"The Colonel says there's a wagon-load o' rations on the way here," said Si, sinking wearily down on the ground by the fire, and putting out his hands over the feeble blaze. "Let's wait till we git something to eat. Mebbe we'll feel more like work after we've eaten something."

"Si Klegg," said Shorty sternly, but settling down himself on the other side of the fire, "I never knowed you to flop down before. You've always bin, if anything, forwarder than me. I was in hopes now that you'd take me by the back o' the neck and try to shake some o' this laziness out o' me."

"Wait till the rations come," repeated Si listlessly. "Mebbe we'll fell livelier then." The shelter we've fixed up'll keep out the coarsest o' the rain, anyway. Most o' the boys ain't got none."

When the rations arrived, Si and Shorty had energy enough to draw, cook and devour an immense supper. Then they felt more tired than ever. Shorty had managed to tear off a big piece of the wagon cover while he was showing much zeal in getting the rations distributed quickly. He got the company's share in this, and helped carry it to the company, but never for a minute relaxed his hold on the coveted canvas. Then he took it back to his fire. Si and he spent what energy they had left in making a tolerable tent of it, by stretching it over their shelter. They tied it down carefully, to keep anybody else from stealing it off them, and Shorty took the additional precaution of fastening a strip of it around his neck. Then they crawled in, and before night come on they were sleeping apparently as soundly as the Seven of Ephesus.

## *How to Move a Battle Line in Heavy Brush*

*From Henderson, STONEWALL JACKSON, p. 696 Note II*

"The following details, communicated to the author by one of Lee's generals as to the formations of the Confederate infantry, will be found interesting:

'Our brigades were usually formed of four or five regiments, each regiment composed of ten companies. Troops furnished by the same State were, as far as possible, brigaded together, in order to stimulate State pride, and a spirit of healthy emulation.

'The regiment was formed for attack in line two-deep, covered by skirmishers. The number of skirmishers, and the intervals between the men on the skirmish line, depended altogether on the situation. Sometimes two companies were extended as skirmishers; sometimes one company; sometimes a certain number of men from several companies. In rear of the skirmishers, at a distance ranging from three hundred to one hundred and fifty paces, came the remainder of the regiment.

'When a regiment or a brigade advanced through a heavily wooded country such as the wilderness, the point of direction was established, and the officers instructed to conform to the movements of the 'guide company' or 'guide regiment' as the case might be, the 'guide' company or regiment governing both direction and alignment.

'The maintenance of direction under such circumstances was a very difficult matter. Our officers, however, were greatly assisted by the rank and file, as many of the latter were accomplished woodsmen, and accustomed to hunt and shoot in the dense forests of the South. Each regiment moreover, was provided with a right and a left "general guide," men selected for their special aptitudes, being good judges of distance, and noted for their steadiness and skill in maintaining the direction.

'Then, again, the line of battle was greatly aided in maintaining the direction by the fire of the skirmishers, and frequently the line would be formed with a flank resting on a trail or woods-road, a ravine or

watercourse, the flank regiment in such cases acting as the guide: (at Chancellorsville, Jackson's divisions kept direction by the turnpike, both wings looking to the centre). In advancing through thick woods the skirmish line was almost invariably strengthened, and while the "line of battle," covered by the skirmishers, advanced in two-deep line, bodies in rear usually marched in columns of fours, prepared to come, by a "forward into line," to the point where their assistance might be desired. I never saw the compass used in wood-fighting. In all movements to attack it was the universal custom for the brigade commander to assemble both field and company officers to the "front and centre," and instruct them particularly as to the purpose of the movement, the method in which it was to be carried out, the point of direction, the guide regiment, the position of other brigades, &c. Like action was also taken by the regimental commander when a regiment was alone.

'This precaution, I venture to think, is absolutely indispensable to an orderly and combined advance over any ground whatever, and, so far as my knowledge goes, was seldom omitted, except when haste was imperative, in the ANV. Practical experience taught us that no movement should be permitted until every officer was acquainted with the object in view and had received his instructions. I may add that brigade and regimental commanders were most particular to secure their flanks and to keep contact with other troops by means of patrols; and also, that in thick woods it was found to be of very great advantage if a few trustworthy men were detailed as orderlies to the regimental commander, for by this means he could most easily control the advance of his skirmishers and of his line of battle.

N. H. Harris  
General, late Army of Northern Virginia"



## The Captain's Tent

by Tom Ezell

### TOUCHING ELBOWS...

April has been a pretty busy month, starting off with the Confederate Flag Day event out at the State Capitol. We've been staying away from this one for the past couple years, for various reasons, and even with our bringing an additional six rifles into the mix, re-enactor turnout was still a lot lower than it was four or five years ago. In 2000, for instance, we were able to field an entire infantry battalion on the State House lawn. In 1998, the first year I took part, we had 30, in '99 we had 22, in each year 13 of those rifles provided by the 6<sup>th</sup> Arkansas. The following year, the SCV leadership invited R. Gordon Thornton, some goober from the Arkansas group of the League of the South who had written a pro-secession book called *Southern Nation*, a southern nationalist group with rather radical tendencies, who pointed out the 18 re-enactors standing in the light rain in damp wool as "the army of the new South" or something similar. As a group, we didn't take kindly to that reference, nor to the rest of Mr. Thornton's remarks. In following years, reenactor participation plummeted – one in 2002 (from the 6<sup>th</sup>), 6 in 2003 (4 from the 6<sup>th</sup>), 10 in 2004 (4 from the 6<sup>th</sup>). I was the only 6<sup>th</sup> member in 2005 of around 7 riflemen, and didn't go or take a count in 2006, but numbers were still about the same, with no one else from the 6<sup>th</sup> in attendance. This year's attendance swelled to 15 rifles, with 6 men from the 6<sup>th</sup> present, so maybe we're back on the upswing.

In addition to the typically strident tone the SCV has taken in its programs over the past few years, the manner in which they've used the re-enactors has helped in keeping numbers low. Beginning in 2000, in a copycat move from a similar service held at the South Carolina state capitol, they began compiling names of Arkansas Confederates who died in the War and began reading that list of names as part of the service. One big difference they didn't copy was that the South Carolina service (with more than 20,000 names) is held quietly as a separate event rather than integrated into the service itself. Beginning in 2003 at least they began forming up all the re-enactors early and standing them in formation while they read this list, and then leaving them there for the duration of the service as "stage dressing" or decoration for the background of flags.

In the ten years that I've taken part in Confederate events, much of that time as an SCV member, a driving reason that I come to these events and continue to support them is the opportunity to visit and fellowship with like-minded friends. Looking back through our old newsletters, I found an article that I had lifted and ran on the cover in June 2003, titled "Touching Elbows" which succinctly captured the spirit that most of us carry forth in both this hobby and the remembrance of Confederate and other memorials:

*Take a man who served in the [...], and another who fought under [...] or [...], or was with [...] at Vicksburg, and the moment each recognizes the other, they are friends. The writer, one day, stepped off a train in Illinois, at a town where all were entire strangers. Immediately two or three stepped up and said "we do not know you but," pointing to my [membership] badge, "we know where you have been." Then there was a smile and a hearty handshake. The badge was enough. We were old acquaintances at once.*

*During the war, men who had never met each other, till they found themselves touching elbows under the same canopy of smoke amid the hell of battle, gave repeated instances of as great heroism to save each*

*other, day after day and year after year. No matter his age, his size, no question if he spoke English, German, or had just landed from Cork; if he wore the uniform, his life was as sacred as if he was a brother. This is what drew men close to each other. As our ranks were thinned we closed up more determined than ever to protect each other and avenge those who had fallen.*

*The writer will never forget the order to "fall in," in front of Vicksburg, how we touched elbows for the fearful charge, how we glanced down the line to see by the faces of the men, better than by words, how much of the determination there was to do or die in the doing. Every man knew that one half of that line would fall, either killed or wounded, within an hour.*

*These lines were formed and the charges made all during the war. [...] they were made by twos and threes and fours, in thousands of skirmishes. It was by forming these lines and touching elbows in days of danger that the chain of comradeship was welded.*

*We have never tried to break this chain. We would not have it broken. Only One may do it.*

*We are content to abide, bound by the chain of comradeship; and touching elbows as best we can in our feeble way, wait until He shall break it and order us into final camp.*

In our small brotherhood of living history, those of us who have worn the gray or even the blue in remembering the veterans of the War for Southern Independence, we've formed those same bonds of camaraderie as we touched elbows in line of battle at Raymond, Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Marks Mill, Pleasant Hill, and on many other fields. The touch of a comrade's elbow on the left and on the right reassures you that you are not alone... your comrades are present and that you are part of a larger team, and that with these comrades, the charge across the deadly space between you and the enemy can be done.

We touch elbows with each other when we form line of battle at re-enactments and memorials to our Civil War ancestors. There is safety in this comfort, as the touch and nudges with our file partners and comrades in arms assure us that the proper intervals are being observed to avoid injuring each other with our own weapons. And as we touch elbows with each other in the flesh, we also touch elbows with the spirits of the Boys of '61-'65, through shared experiences and the hardships of campaigning. This contact and fellowship is what keeps folks coming back to share the experiences and keep the commemoration going.

I confess to being prejudiced – I learned long ago as a regular in the old National Army that you don't use soldiers for decoration, and you don't place a sentry on something you don't want protected by the potential use of deadly force. (Note that the sentries on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington, for all their pomp and ceremony, carry loaded rifles with fixed bayonets and will break their ritual in an instant to challenge and stop any tourist or any other person who crosses a certain line and gets too close to the Tomb.) Standing out there in formation on the Statehouse lawn for an hour or more gave me plenty of time to ponder things – that such services aren't quite the place for full-length Sunday sermons despite the captivity of the audience, and while the emphasis on ceremony and symbology (the "flags of our fathers") is important, the most important idea, and the one that most needs to be nurtured is the concept that we as a group come to these events to "touch elbows" with one another and seek the fellowship of our compatriots in the memory of The Cause. It's a big let-down for our young/new members to come to these services seeking that fellowship and instead find themselves isolated out in formation until the event breaks up. After a time or two, they catch on that they're simply being used for decoration, and they don't come back, maybe not to that service, and maybe not to another one, either. In our collective insistence on pageantry and decoration, we've been steadily filing away to sever the chain of fellowship that holds our brotherhood together.

Those of the Capitol Guards who came to Flag Day felt that it was a worthwhile effort and worth further support, however felt that it fell



# Coming Events

**April 27-29, 2007. Battle of Marks Mill re-enactment**, Marks Mill Battlefield State Park, near Fordyce, AR.

**May 4-6 Battle of Chalk Bluff Re-Enactment**, near Piggott, AR. Chalk Bluff is one that wasn't on the original schedule because we set our May event as the AMLA shoot in Berryville. In fact, they weren't planning to hold Chalk Bluff this year, but the SCV apparently changed their mind a couple of weeks ago. Most everybody else in the state is part of the TMVI or 1st Arkansas Battalion, and they're planning to go to Jefferson, TX that weekend. I don't mind supporting this one by taking a crew up there, but would like to see our max efforts stay with Berryville. The 7th Arkansas will be providing a federal presence, so if we do support this one, we would be the Confederates.

**May 18-20 Arkansas State Muzzle Loading Championship**, Berryville, AR May's max effort event... Live-fire black powder matches, and the annual Civil War Shoot-Out.

**June 8-10, 2007. Vicksburg Living History**, Vicksburg National Battlefield Park, Vicksburg, MS. Sponsored by the Western Independent Grays.

**June 8-10, 2007. "Battlefire" Civil War Weekend**, Tribbey, OK. 1st Arkansas, TMVI, Frontier Brigade and most mainstream Confederate units will be going here.

**June 9, 2007. Old State House living history, "Arkansas Becomes a State."** Little Rock, AR. We've been invited, this would be a pre-Capitol Guards state militia/backwoodsman-type impression

**August 18, 2007. Civil War History Seminar, Old State House Museum.** Topic: Technology and Innovation in the Civil War." Living history program on the State House grounds. Impression TBD.

**August (?), 2007. Battle of Bloomfield**, Bloomfield, MO. I haven't been to this one before, but have heard a lot of good things about it.

short in focusing on the Confederate soldier and his accomplishments, due to the merger of several functions into a single one-size-to-fit-all event. Before 2000, when the SCV began to hold a single centralized event for both Confederate Flag and Confederate Memorial days out at the State Capitol for media visibility, each local group held its own services at local Confederate cemeteries. Here in Little Rock, we went out to the Confederate section of Little Rock National Cemetery, and then to the mass grave next door in Oakland Cemetery as well, where we held the "service of the rose" to allow each participant to render honors to the honored dead, as well as to his own ancestor(s) in the process. The Little Rock SCV camp quit doing this in 2000 when they began hosting the statewide event at the Capitol.

So, in 2008, one goal of the Guards is to pick up where we left off, and continue the tradition of observing Confederate Memorial Day out at the National Cemetery, to include the service of the rose at Oakland Cemetery. We will sponsor/host the event on the Sunday afternoon closest to April 26<sup>th</sup>, and will open it to any other folks who want to attend and continue the tradition of Memorial and Decoration day, as well as to "touch elbows" with each other and their Southern forebears. Fellowship and remembrance will be the key notes. Y'all come...

I HOPE that everyone is enjoying the serial on Si Klegg and Shorty that has been running in the past few newsletters. Some folks have called

Confederate is okay, but I'm probably a little more familiar with the federal end of the story. The original *Stars & Stripes* newspaper was printed here by the Yankees in 1861...

**September 8, 2007. Little Rock Campaign Anniversary Living History, Old State House Museum.** Details still being worked out, potential impressions of the 27th Arkansas Infantry (CS) and the 3rd Minnesota Infantry (US).

**September 14-16, 2007 145th Anniversary Reenactment, Battle of Antietam**, Sharpsburg, MD. (national event)

**September 21-23, 2007. Battle of Fort Davidson re-enactment**, Pilot Knob, MO. 6th Arkansas max effort event for September

**September 28-30, 2007. Battle of Mill Springs re-enactment**, Somerset, KY. North/South Alliance Maximum Effort Event.

**October 12-14, 2007. Battle of Columbus-Belmont re-enactment**, Columbus, KY

**October 12-14, 2007. White Sulphur Springs living history & Confederate memorial services**, Sulphur Springs, AR

**October 26-28, 2007. Outpost III**, Rippavilla Plantation, Spring Hill, TN. Immersive (e.g. hardcore) tactical; hosted by the Western Independent Grays.

**October 26-28, 2007. Battle of Pea Ridge re-enactment** (formerly "Cane Hill"/"Battles Around Bentonville"), Bentonville, AR.

**November 2-4, 2007. Civil War Weekend & Battle Demonstrations, Old Washington State Park**, Washington, AR. Intentions here are to field a Confederate rifle company, principally armed with 2-banders.

to ask "what's different" between the stories that have been running in the *Sentinel* and the book *Corporal Si Klegg and His Pard* that has been popular in the reenactor market for the past several years. The answer is that there are two sets of Si Klegg stories... the original 1888 book by Wilbur F. Hinman, and a later, expanded serialization written by John McElroy that ran as a serial in the Washington DC *National Tribune* between 1897 and 1907. It's the later, expanded version that we're serializing here, and I do not believe these stories have been re-published or re-distributed since WWI or so. Yes... it's a strongly pro-Union tale, but then, so am I, and as soon as I find a Confederate equivalent, I'll run it too.

See you at the camp fire...

*Sam Egzell*



The 6th Regiment, Arkansas Volunteer Infantry, Co. A, the "Capitol Guards" is dedicated to the faithful and historically accurate portrayal of a unit of Confederate infantry in the War Between the States in 1861-1865.

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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 Captain 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 Captain.



Ken Nations and Rusty Guenard at the Capitol on Confederate Flag Day.



Ken and Diana Nations in a tintype image recorded at Pleasant Hill.

**Pleasant Hill 2007** (Cont.'d from Page 1)

on the ride home Sunday afternoon, Randy, Tifney, and I stopped off to tour the Mansfield battlefield, and I was pleased to find on display there a Mississippi used at PH, as well as a number of images of Red River Campaign Rebels, all packing Mississippi rifles!

And a big thanks to all the folks from the Capitol Guards who turned out for a weekend's trip back into the "good old days" of re-enacting... Steve Shore, Jan, Ken and Diana Nations, Tifney Scott, and Randy Puckett.

See y'all at Marks' Mills!



When real world news gets a little too close to re-enacting... noting that the 39th Infantry Brigade is on alert again for overseas deployment.