

# The Sentinel



Vol. 9, No. 8 – The Newsletter of the 6th Arkansas Infantry, Company A, C.S.A. – August, 2005  
Living Historians  
<http://www.geocities.com/capitalguards>

## Corinth is Coming – Are You?

Registration is still open for Corinth, and in fact they've extended the cheaper \$12 registration fee until August 15th. From August 16 to September 15 it will be \$20, and registration will be closed after September 15. If you're interested, please let me know...

Here's Who's Registered At This Time:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Capt Tom Ezell    | X |
| 2. 1Sgt Steve Shore  | X |
| 3. Pvt Jerry Simpson | X |
| 4. Pvt David Sesser  | X |
| 5. Pvt Corey Platt   |   |
| 6. Pvt Ethan Webster | X |
| 7. Pvt Bob Black     | X |
| 8. Pvt George Davis  | X |
| 9. Pvt Ken Nations   | X |
| 10. Pvt Tyson Savell | X |

If you've got an "X" out by your name, then you're paid in full. If not, you're in hock to the Company Fund for \$20, the sum of \$12 for registration and \$8 for Brigade rations. I got everyone registered who had contacted me with an intent to go by this past weekend, but still have a little less than a month to get anyone else signed up and taken care of.

Rations for the weekend are \$6... (not \$8 as they initially told us) So the total will be \$18 on or before August 15; \$26 after that date.

And if you're pressed for time, let me know anyway, and I'll get you registered before the deadline. We can catch up with the Company fund at one of the September events.

### CORINTH EVENT INFORMATION

Gentlemen,

Greetings! I hope this finds you all well and braving the summer heat.

You are receiving this e-mail because you are either already affiliated with the Red River Battalion for the Corinth event, or your information has been passed to me from Mark Griffin (Mississippi Valley Brigade commander) with your intentions of doing so. If this is not your intention please e-mail me back stating such and I'll remove you from further updates.

This will be the first of many updates in the coming months. In this correspondence I hope to set the general groundwork for our combined battalion. We are many units coming together for common goals: authenticity, experience, and fun!

*Continued on Page 4...*



With this in mind, let us all be patient and understanding as we work together. Above all, put the safety of everyone in our battalion as first priority.

Please feel free to ask any questions, as well as supply information and suggestions, but please send or respond "TO ALL" so that everyone may benefit.

The following information is listed by topic.

### GOAL:

The goal of our combined battalion is to replicate, as closely as possible, the composition and actions of the 2nd Texas Infantry during the 1862 Battle of Corinth.

### COMPANY ASSIGNMENTS:

Company assignments have not yet been determined. This will probably not be done until after the August 1st registration deadline. At such time we will have a better idea of numbers for each company and what companies need to be combined, if any. Then the battalion's companies will be assigned to match the original 2nd TX companies as close as possible in both strength and company designation.

### COMPOSITION OF OUR COMBINED BATTALION:

We currently have good numbers present, and casualties, for the 6th Texas at Franklin. We are in the process of assembling these for the 15th Texas and should have these soon. Please bear with us as this info is hard to obtain.

#### Red River Battalion Units:

- 9th TX Co. F (Color Company)
- 9th TX Co. G
- 9th TX Co. H
- 9th TX Co. I
- 6th TX Co. K
- Texas Rifles

#### Affiliated Units:

- 1st FL
- 4th LA
- 6th AR
- 15th TX Ground Hornets
- 32nd MS
- 37th NC
- CHAPS
- Lazy Jacks Mess
- Western Independent Grays

### RATIONS:

The Red River Battalion will issue rations to everyone in our combined battalion. These rations will consist of cured ham or salt pork, potatoes, onions, apples, corn meal, farina,

*Continued on Page 2...*

**Corinth Event Info** (Continued from Page 1)

beans, lard, and parched corn. The cost is \$6.00 per man. All dues paid 9th Texas members will NOT need to pay additional money for rations. The \$6.00 ration fee for these members will be taken out of the \$30.00 9th Texas Year 2005 dues monies already paid. Any member who has not paid year 2005 dues, as well as all other affiliated units, will need to submit the \$6.00 payment for rations.

Please make checks payable to "9th Texas Infantry" and mail to:  
 Corinth Rations  
 C/O Adj. Tom Corll  
 2979 County Road 4935  
 Kempner, TX 76539

It is extremely important that rations be paid for as quickly as possible so the battalion quartermaster/commissary sergeant can plan and purchase accordingly. The due date is September 1, 2005.

**CASUALTIES:**

The battalion will be conducting a casualty lottery for one of the weekend's scenarios. The lottery will take place late Friday evening to allow for late comers. Casualties for privates will be on the lottery basis drawn from within the company each represents. Casualties for corporals, sergeant, and officers will be assigned based on the rank/person they portray.

**IMPRESSION GUIDELINES:**

These guidelines are aimed at being historically accurate, while trying to allow for as much leeway as possible given our units' diversity in normal impression. This is one area in which we should all strive to be accurate, but understanding. I don't think any unit in this composite battalion will have a problem meeting these guidelines, so none should worry about being turned away.

The list below is in order of scarcity to the 2nd Texas Infantry during Corinth, with items further down the list being increasingly rare amongst the ranks. Please select your items from as far up the list as possible.

**Jackets**

- Houston Depot (un-dyed jeans cloth)
- Homespun or private purchase civilian sack coat
- CS Issue four button jacket/sack coat
- Military or civilian frock coat
- Mobile/Mystery Depot
- Columbus Depot

**Trousers**

- CS Western Military Issue (un-dyed jeans cloth)
- Civilian of varying shades and materials
- No Federal Issue trousers

**Shirts**

- CS Issue Shirt of correct osnaburg or similar cotton fabric
- Civilian shirt
- Federal Issue shirts (limited numbers)

**Socks**

- Correct wool or cotton socks (no elastic, no rag wool)

**Drawers**

- Civilian pattern drawers of linen, osnaburg
- US issue Canton flannel

**Shoes**

- Civilian shoes
- Captured US booties
- CS Manufactured footwear

**Headgear (No hat brass, animal parts, feathers, etc)**

- Civilian slouch hat (correct brim tape and hat ribbon)
- CS Kepi
- Cap of Western CS manufacture

**Cartridge Boxes (Leather or tarred canvas/ cloth sling; must have tins)**

- Unmarked CS issue
- Houston Arsenal
- Baton Rouge Arsenal
- Federal issue

**Cap Pouches**

- Unmarked CS issue
- Houston Arsenal
- Baton Rouge Arsenal
- Federal issue

**Belt Plates & Buckles**

- Texas Star Buckle
- Roller Buckle
- Plain brass (rectangular)
- Georgia Frame

**Waist Belts**

- Baton Rouge Arsenal
- CS issue leather with plate/roller
- Federal issue

**Weapons**

- M1842 Springfield
- P1853 Enfield
- M1855 Springfield
- M1861 Springfield

**Bayonets (optional)**

- Correct issue and fitted to weapon

**Scabbards (required if using bayonet)**

- Baton Rouge Arsenal
- Unmarked CS issue
- Federal issue

**Canteens**

- CS Tin Drum
- Captured US Smooth-side or Bulls-eye

- Correct Gardner or Nuckolls pattern wood canteen

**Haversacks**

- CS plain linen/duck/cotton haversack
- Correct Homespun ticking bag
- Federal Haversack

**Knapsacks**

- US M1853/55 Double
- CS Single bag/Mexican War style
- Blanket roll

**Blankets**

- Civilian coverlet
- Federal Issue
- Quilts (limited number and of period design)
- CS Issue

**Overcoats**

- Civilian pattern
- CS Issue (see CS *Echoes of Glory* for examples)
- Captured Federal (very limited numbers)

**Ground Cloths**

- Correct CS Issue oil or painted cloth
- Captured Federal Issue

**Tentage**

- CS issue fly
- US issue shelter half
- A-frames (very few, and only allowed in static camp)

**Campaigning and Base Camp:**

This will be a campaign/static camp event. Friday night will be spent campaigning in the field, as we have been selected to participate in a special battle on Friday. Saturday night will be in the static camps. Arrangements will be made for those that feel they are unable to campaign in the field either or both nights.

**Ammunition:**

Each man will need at least 120 cartridges for the weekend's battles at Corinth. We will be using the company arsenal (ammunition) boxes to carry extra cartridges during the event. The boxes are to be transported by supply wagon. You will need to start the event carrying 40 to 60 cartridges; the remainder of your cartridges will be carried in the arsenal boxes.

**Battle Schedule (condensed):**

**Thursday, 9/29**

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM - CSA camps open 24 hrs for troops to arrive and set up.

**Friday, 9/30**

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM - School Program.

Afternoon - Battle of Iuka on remote site (selected units only).

Continued on Page 4...

## Reed's Bridge Drill – August 27, 2005



Some of the early arrivals – George Davis, Bob Black, Steve Shore, Jerry Simpson, David Sesser, and Tom Ezell



Bob Black & Jerry Simpson



As the drizzle started... Steve Shore, David Sesser, Tyler Bowie, Bob Black, and Jerry Simpson



Working on the sharp end of the hobby, fixing bayonets. L to R: Tom Ezell, Jerry Simpson, George Davis, and Ethan Webster.

### “Hayfoot, Strawfoot...”

The Capitol Guards gathered at Reed's Bridge Battlefield Park on Saturday morning, August 27 with two goals in mind – to knock off some of the rust from the long summer hiatus, and to assist the Reed's Bridge Preservation Society in marking the anniversary of the battle, fought on this date in 1863 during the Little Rock Campaign.

We had a fair turnout, with Tom Ezell, Steve Shore, Bob Black, George Davis, David Sesser, and Jerry Simpson, along with new recruits Ethan Webster and Tyler Bowie.

We started off fairly well, but quickly found out that there was a lot of stuff forgotten over the summer's vacation from drill. Even our old veterans were as if they had just come down from the hills and were literally re-learning their left from their right.

We had gone through the basics of the manual of arms again and were working on loading and the firings when the rains came down – first a Methodist sprinkle, then an outright Baptist downpour, with water rising in the streets nearby. We forged on, working at fixing and unfixing bayonets, stacking and unstacking arms. As the rain got heavier, we broke out the ponchos and ground cloths, hoping the rain would pass on by. It didn't, and by 10:30 or so the RBPS folks were still a no-show.

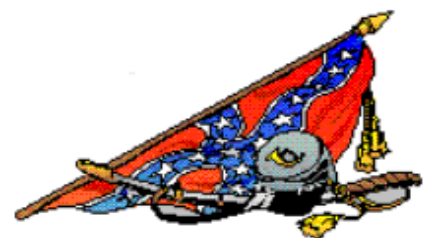
After half an hour or so we retreated to a shed at Dupree Park where we worked on the basic marching maneuvers, but the remainder of the plan, shirmish drill and outpost duties, were pretty well rained out.

After securing the weapons and gear, we had a group lunch over at the Crooked Hook catfish restaurant, and headed for home just as the sun started clearing things off.

All in all, it was a pretty good get-together and as we all saw, it was badly needed no only

by our new guys, but our forgetful old folks as well. The rain was misfortunate in that it shortened the time we had to work on things we needed to get ready for Corinth, so expect to work a little harder the next time we get together.

In the meantime, pull out those Resource CDs and be sure to read up on the School of the Soldier and School of the Company. If we're going to make much progress here, we need to get to the point that we don't have to start back from zero at every derved drill session.



Corinth Event Info (Continued from Page 2)

**Saturday, 10/1**

Morning: First Annual FCD Drill Competition  
3:00 PM - Battle for Battery Powell  
Evening - Entertainment in Citizens' Camp

**Sunday, 10/2**

8:00 - 9:00 AM - Religious services  
1:30 - 2:00 PM - Battle for Battery Robinette

**References: and Links:**

The following is a list of available references for more information and accounts of the battle.

- *The Second Texas Infantry: From Shiloh to Vicksburg.* By Joseph E Chance

- *The Darkest Days of the War: The Battles of Iuka & Corinth.* By Peter Cozzens

- *Battle of Corinth (Incidents in the American Civil War, 33)* By John F. Wakefield (Editor) [Featured are reports by Earl Van Dorn, Major General, CSA, and William S. Rosecrans, Major General, USA. Other reports are by Generals Lovell (CSA), Price (CSA), Ord (USA), and Hurlbut (USA); and by Captain George A. Williams (USA), commander of the siege artillery at Corinth, including Battery Robinett.]

- *The Siege and Battle of Corinth: A New Kind of War*

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/tw/whp/wwwlps/lessons/113corinth/113corinth.htm>

- *The Second Texas Infantry or the 2nd Sharpshooters* (also called Moore's, Roger's, Smith's and Fly's regiment) <http://www.bauer.uh.edu/parks/tex/irg0020.html>

- North-South Alliance Corinth Reenactment: <http://www.nsalliance.org/corinth/>

- Corinth - Crossroads of the Confederacy January 2005 Photos Courtesy of Matt Hering, Memphis TN

<http://www.civilwaralbum.com/misc/corinth.htm>

- *Blue and Gray Magazine* - Corinth and Iuka, Volume XIX, Issue 6, 2002. Contains outstanding maps, photos and modern photos. Superbly written narrative by Stacy Allen (Chief Historian, Shiloh NMP). This edition is available via mail from Shiloh NMP and Corinth CW Interpretation Center.

I hope this information is sufficient to get us underway. I look forward to hearing from each of you and seeing you in the field.

## August 25th Site Logistics Update

This is very important information regarding how your men will check in at the Check In Area at North Corinth Baptist Church when they arrive at the Corinth event.

ALL CSA Participants will check in by BRIGADE. There will be an area clearly marked for each brigade. Cavalry, Artillery, Division Staff and CSA registered Civilians will have a combined check in area.

General Jack King's Brigade, who are "going Federal" for the Corinth event will check in at the CONFEDERATE CHECK IN AREA.

About 40% of the registration forms DID NOT contain correct unit and/or brigade information. This will lead to confusion at event check in if your men do not know whose brigade that they are in. It is imperative that you send each unit in your command information regarding this check in process and make sure that all their men know which brigade that their unit belongs to.

The people running the Check In Process DO NOT KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT REENACTING. They will not be able to answer questions like "What brigade is the 11th Tennessee in?" Therefore, let me say again - it is the responsibility of the Brigade and Battalion commanders to make sure that each member of your organization knows which BRIGADE he belongs to. In a few cases, we have received registration forms that we have no idea of what unit these people belong to, let alone which brigade. IF you have a participant whose name is not listed with your brigade, ask them to see the FCD officer overseeing registration and we'll find the paperwork.

Your soldier will also need to know his brigade when he arrives at the unloading area at the CSA camps. We are splitting the brigades into two unloading areas to keep traffic out of the main camp area. General Flowers and General Huckabee's Brigades will now unload along a new road that will be between the fence at Davis Yancey Road and the edge of the woods that is General Flowers' camp. General Rambo and General Griffin's Brigades as well as Division Staff, Artillery and Cavalry will proceed up the fire lane and unload in the flat clearing between the North and South Woods.

There will be LOTS of signage directing each brigade, division staff, artillery and cavalry

to the proper unloading area.

CSA Registered civilians will proceed to the main site entrance - follow signage to "US & CIVILIAN CAMPS" to their camps and parking.

The camp area will be closed to vehicles at 12 midnight Friday night. Anyone arriving after that will unload at the East Gate on Davis Yancey Road (the gate that has been used for access to the CSA camp area), walk their gear to their proper camp and then take their car to the parking area.

### IMPORTANT CHANGE TO PARKING PLAN:

ALL CSA Reenactors will now park in a parking area off State Line Road east (to the right when standing at the site main entrance looking towards the battery) of the main site entrance. After unloading, all vehicles will exit the CSA camp, turn RIGHT on Davis Yancey Road and proceed to the stop sign at TN 22 / Shiloh Road. Turn RIGHT on TN 22 / Shiloh Road and proceed to the second road on the right, STATE LINE ROAD. Turn RIGHT on STATE LINE ROAD and proceed to the parking area.

There will be signs in the parking area asking all to deactivate their vehicle alarm system so that the alarms are not set off by the cannon fire. No one should leave valuables in their vehicle. There will be mounted security patrols in the parking area 24/7. Anyone returning to their vehicle during the event must check in with the parking lot security patrol and show an ID. The patrol will log the name, time and vehicle (by license tag) that the individual visited.

CSA reenactors will walk from the parking area back to the camp by exiting toward the sutler row and following that fence line back to camp. The way will be marked with period signs that say "Chewalla" with an arrow, and we should have sentinels along the route to direct them. (Van Dorn / Price marched to Corinth from Chewalla on the Chewalla Road). This walk is about a mile, so they should unload as much as possible in camp before heading to the parking area. Mounted personnel are urged to ride their mounts in from the parking area.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above, please contact me directly.

Mike Ventura  
Chief of Staff  
First Confederate Division

# The Loaner Musket

by Craig L. Barry

Civil War enacting is great fun and I enjoy working on reproduction firearms as an amateur gunsmith, not a John Zimmerman or a Bill Osborne. I can, however, relate to what these guys are able to do with firearms. In terms of skill, I can turn a screwdriver, and they can make a musket out of a tree and a piece of steel. It is generally known that I own more than one musket. It is not uncommon for me to loan out my "extra" to new recruits at any event with the caveat that it must be returned to me in the identical condition in which it was loaned out. What follows is a recap of my resulting adventures from this policy, and some general comparisons regarding this hobby and others I participate in, or know about.

First, I will allow that it is certainly nice to have a loaner musket, or other equipment available for new recruits. The initial expense of our hobby is relatively high, but in the long run compares favorably to others. Take golf as an example. Equipment expense is similar. There is always a new piece of gear you need or want, and both take a substantial investment of time. The fairer sex often views both hobbies for what they are, which is a form of spouse avoidance. Both have many new participants coming in and about an equal number going out in any given year. As a result, it is relatively easy to sell your equipment for close to what you paid should that become necessary. The difference in favor of the enacting hobby is you do not have to pay some country club a couple hundred dollars a month, plus a food minimum to enact on a regular basis. Event fees are a bargain compared to greens fees. Nobody pays money to watch me play golf either (and for good reason). The golf course sends you home after a while and does not let you spend the night in a tent on the grounds. And most importantly, the club Pro is not going to loan out clubs, balls or tees to get you interested in playing golf. To my thinking, the ability to "try before you buy" is a real plus for enacting. They are also similar in the sense that both hobbies are cheaper than a shrink, and we all know participants that need to go ahead and pay the difference, if you know what I mean. The bottom line: any hobby with a comparable fun quotient will cost you about as much or more than Civil War enacting.

You have to think of these things as an investment in necessary recreation, not as a pure expense item. Most things that are this much fun, and get you out of the house for this much time, are not the least expensive hobbies. Skiing? It much more expensive, inconvenient and usually colder. Mountain biking? It is not cheaper, and most of us look better in our

uniforms than in those spandex pants. Tennis? Two hours does not constitute a getaway. Fishing? Enacting is much cheaper than anything involving a boat. I recall my dear old dad's advice to never buy anything that feeds or floats (and something else). To my thinking, that remains good advice

The point is that the participant in any hobby is going to have to eventually go ahead and make an investment. Most units give you up to a year or two to get yourself outfitted, and will provide loaners as long as they are available during that time, which is very generous. I know of no other hobby where the participants are similarly magnanimous, but I constantly read complaints about the high cost and expense of enacting. We have participants in our unit that still borrow gear several years into the venture, including at one time, my musket. This experience with my loaner came at the large, carnival-like 140th Sharpsburg. My son suddenly became ill and I had to leave. Since we were short on firearms in the ranks, I loaned mine out to one of our long-term, non-committal borrowers of gear. While he reportedly "only fired it twice," it came back with the ramrod bent and the bore full of gunk. At least the bayonet was undamaged. This person once showed up for an event with one of his wife's old handbags that, if it had been permitted, he intended to use as a cartridge box. What do you hope to get out of something you put so little into?

I once loaned my "extra" to one fellow who forgot to bring his musket (?) to use in a Fourth of July parade. Let me add that we won a big trophy and had our photo taken with our state senator. The gun came back to in the same canvas bag it was in when I loaned it out some weeks earlier. However, other than being in the same bag, there were not too many other similarities in terms of condition. The barrel may have been wiped down, but the bore was trashed. The area around the bolster was peppered with rust, and when I removed the cone, the bolster area was neglected during "cleaning" as well. It only took about an hour to reverse most of the damage. Needless to say, most borrowers use my loaner one time, like the hobby and go get outfitted straight away. The wise recruits seek advice on which products are likely to perform well up front, and the foolish seek advice later on, along with some frustration and additional unnecessary expense.

We have resources available like the *Watchdog* to make sensible recommendations concerning equipment purchases that, in the end, will save the time and money. This is the difference between wasting money and investing your recreation dollars sensibly. **What other hobby can say the same thing?**

## A Tale of a "Borrowed" Rifle.

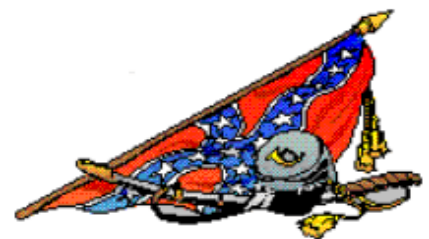
Continuing on the theme of borrowed weapons, here is a story taken from an account in W. A. Keesy's 1898 book, *War as Viewed from the Ranks*.

Moses Pugh, a corporal in the Fifty-fifth Ohio infantry, was looking at holes in the field in front of a battery near him. While counting over one hundred holes left during a great cannonade on the second day's fighting at Gettysburg, he spied a beautiful new, bright musket lying near a dead Confederate soldier. It did not take him long to exchange it for his own, which was somewhat rusty and old. He found it to be a Richmond rifle musket of the same caliber as his old Springfield.

Several days later while his regiment was part of the Federal force pursuing Lee's army, the men were ordered to sleep on their arms. As it was raining slightly, Pugh greased "my precious gun with a piece of bacon rind." The next morning his first act was to remove the cap from the cone. He placed his thumb upon the hammer. Being greasy, it slipped from his thumb and Pugh's first "Johnny ball" went through three of his comrades' blouses and killed the colonel's horse, which was tied to a stake about twenty rods away. His tent mates had earlier joked that Pugh's new gun would "turn traitor," and now with the terrific report still echoing, Pugh began to believe it.

Colonel Gambee was much incensed at the death of his faithful horse and ordered that Pugh's stripes be cut off and demanded that Pugh pay for the horse. The regiment had not drawn any pay for six months, so Pugh gave the colonel a promissory note, which still had not been paid by May 1864 when the regiment was in front of Resaca, Georgia. Just before the battle on 15 May, the colonel came over to Pugh with a sergeant's commission and burned the note in his presence. Apparently the colonel had a premonition of an impending danger and wanted to settle up. The good and brave colonel was killed in that battle.

Pugh did not bring his gun home. During the battle of Bentonville it was struck by a piece of shell while he was loading around. The damage was so severe that Pugh pronounced it unfit for duty. During the remainder of the war Pugh used the musket of a comrade who was killed while in the ranks at Pugh's side that very same day.



# Belgian Army Cloth in the Trans-Mississippi: Edward Gautherin & Company's Imports through Matamoros

by C. Lon Webster

## Introduction

"Cadet gray" wool is generally associated with the mills and textile manufactories of Great Britain. While England certainly supplied a huge amount of such material to the Confederate States, the contributions of Belgium and France figured significantly in imports of cadet gray cloth. The story of these importations and the unlikely connection between Verviers, a Belgian mill town, and Havana, Matamoros, Houston, Little Rock, Alexandria and Vicksburg, begins in the pre-war South's commercial capital, New Orleans.

## The Crescent City: An Overview.

To say that April 1862 was perhaps the darkest month of the war for the citizens of Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas and Missouri is no exaggeration. Two simultaneous events dealt the theater such a severe blow that it would never fully recover. The first was the removal of the Army of the West to the eastern shore of the Mississippi, an operation which spanned the latter part of the month; the second was the fall and occupation of the South's largest city, the commercial metropolis of New Orleans. These disasters removed the focus of the war forever from the region and sapped the department of the better part of its already weakened military capability. Subsequent armies would be raised in the Trans-Mississippi and significant achievements would follow, but the damage to its prestige and morale would never fully heal.

On 25 April, the very day that the last of Van Dorn's and Price's troops departed by steam boat from Des Arc, Arkansas, the city of New Orleans was occupied by advance elements of Admiral David G Farragut's victorious Federal fleet. Forts Jackson and St. Phillip, obstructing chains, floating batteries and an incomplete naval squadron had failed to hold back the Federals. As the eleven warships hove into view of the city, they were met with an unearthly scene. The waterfront was ablaze, the result of fires set by the frantic populace in an effort to do anything and everything to impede Federal occupation. Floating past the anchored squadron, came the burning hulk of the unfinished Confederate gunboat *Mississippi*, which had not been completed in time to take part in the lopsided battles below the city. [1] On shore, the landing party of US officers was met by an unruly mob that thronged the streets, screaming curses as the victors made their way to the city hall. Mayor John Monroe refused to surrender the city, on the grounds that he had no authority to do so.

Brigadier General Mansfield Lovell, who had already evacuated the place with what forces and supplies he could, was likewise unwilling to offer a formal concession. [2] As a result, New Orleans was simply occupied, and on 26 April the US flag was raised over the old United States Mint at Esplanade Avenue amidst the roars and catcalls of an infuriated civilian mob.

Lovell could do little but start the somber trek towards Vicksburg with his small force: "...every Confederate soldier in New Orleans, with the exception of one company, had been ordered to Corinth, to join General Beauregard in March," Lovell later recounted. "[T]he city was only garrisoned by about 3,000 ninety-day troops, called out by the governor at my request, of whom about 1,200 had muskets and the remainder shot-guns of an indifferent description." [3]

New Orleans, at the mouth of the Mississippi, would be held by the Federal army for the remainder of the war. The South had lost her premier commercial city, her one true megalopolis, the generator of an enormous amount of wealth and enterprise. With a population of some 168,675 citizens in 1860, New Orleans ranked as the sixth largest city in the former United States, bigger than St. Louis, Chicago, or Cincinnati, and four times the size of her nearest Southern rivals, Charleston and Richmond. [4] Sheer numbers, however, were secondary to the enormous commercial prestige of the city. During 1860-61, cotton shipped from the docks and warehouses of the city peaked at 2,200,000 bales, an all-time high, having an aggregate value of \$110,000,000. [5] On the eve of war, the city's trade had placed Louisiana second only to New York in terms of export and the third largest market for imports into the country. [6] Most of the cotton had been shipped directly to Liverpool, and the city had developed strong and valuable ties with the commercial houses of Great Britain. Two major Southern-owned ocean-going steamship companies were headquartered in New Orleans: the New Orleans-Mobile Mail Company, with five vessels, and the Southern Steamship Company, with fifteen vessels and a string of privately-owned port facilities strung around the Gulf of Mexico. [7] Combined with smaller domestic concerns and a multitude of vessels brought in through private speculation, New Orleans was in a position to be the premier entry point for supplies and munitions destined for the Confederacy. For a variety of reasons, however, the city was never to reach her potential before Farragut's flotilla steamed up

the river and closed the door forever. The Federal blockade of New Orleans began a year earlier (31 April 1861), followed in short order by a massive exodus of foreign-owned vessels. Under international law such "neutral" ships were allowed a grace period within which to depart a blockaded port without molestation, and the foreign steamers at New Orleans took full advantage of the opportunity. Many of the remaining domestic vessels were impressed by the CS government and put to a variety of uses. With a much smaller surface area to police than its sister squadrons at Charleston or Mobile, the blockading fleet at New Orleans, even at this early point, appears to have been particularly effective. Only nine steamships attempted to run the blockade out of the mouth of the Mississippi River during the period of November 1861 through April 1862; of these, two were captured, and two more turned back, unable to escape. [8] During the same time period another seven vessels left from Brashear City, some eighty miles to the southwest, as well as a handful from Grand Cailleu, Barataria Bay and Calcasieu Pass. [9] A paltry total of only three vessels made it through the blockade into Louisiana ports between December 1861 and the fall of New Orleans—the *Elizabeth*, the *Victoria* and the *Fox*—all bound from Havana and none of which put in at the Crescent City. [10] Desperate for arms and ordnance stores, Lovell, headquartered in what was formerly the second busiest port of entry in the United States, was now compelled to bring in supplies via distant Gulf ports in Florida and the backwater harbor of Brashear City. It was a humiliating final chapter in the Crescent City's brief association with the Confederate States.

With the fall of the New Orleans in April 1862, the South was deprived of one of its largest industrial and manufacturing bases—a significant collection of small and medium-sized machine shops, manufactories and mills that would have helped sustain the war effort—particularly in the Trans-Mississippi. Besides a long list of gun, sword, button and clothing establishments New Orleans also boasted a number of large and quite prolific accoutrement manufactories. Located at 97 Royal Street, Henry Ducatel gave notice in the 26 June 1861 edition of the *Times Picayune* that he was "manufacturing knapsacks, cartridge boxes, cap boxes and belts for volunteers... Mr. Ducatel is enabled in his present force to turn out 400 knapsacks in a week of the most complete workmanship." [11] The firm of Leaumont, Blache and Company likewise

**Belgian Army Cloth** *(Continued from Page 6)*

offered for sale knapsacks, bayonet scabbards and cartridge boxes to volunteer companies. [12] In the fall of 1861 from his establishment at 5 St. Charles, saddle maker James Cosgrove manufactured and sold hundreds of accoutrement sets to various units, amongst them several entire companies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Louisiana Infantry Regiments. A manufactory of cotton and woolen "plantation clothes" located on Canal Street was converted to military uses. By 16 June 1861 the 130 persons employed there had already managed to turn out some three thousand uniforms and a like number of knapsacks for the Louisiana state volunteers. [13] A new shoe factory had likewise been recently established, which was manufacturing six hundred pairs of "plantation brogans" per day as of March 1861. [14] In June 1861, acting under instructions from Richmond, Assistant Quartermaster Capt. John M. Galt entered into a contract with New Orleans merchant B. W. Woodlief for the provision of 50,000 uniforms. [15] While subsequently cancelled, the fact that Galt was able to enter into such a large contract is reflective of the city's manufacturing capacity.

Undoubtedly the most prominent New Orleans accoutrement maker was the established partnership of Magee and George, which had been doing business since at least 1843 as a large-scale manufacturer of quality saddles, trunks, valises, harness and military goods. With offices and a store front located at 54 Canal Street, the company was able to quickly convert their extensive manufacturing resources to the production of army equipments at the commencement of the war. Magee and George manufactured waist belts, cartridge box belts, cartridges boxes, cap pouches, bayonet scabbards, knapsacks, gun slings and artillery harness. The company furnished accoutrement sets and other equipments to at least ninety-six companies of twenty different Louisiana Infantry Regiments; additional sets were provided for various regiments of the Louisiana State Militia, at least three battalions of regular infantry and Company G of the First Regiment Louisiana Heavy Artillery. Besides furnishing directly to companies and regiments, the company sold an additional 22,103 knapsacks, 1,158 oilcloth capes and 999 canteens to the State of Louisiana for future issue. The magnitude of the firm's business is reflected in its ability to fill large orders for entities outside the State. When Missouri required accoutrements for Price's State Guard in the fall of 1861, it contracted with Magee and George. A total of 16,000 sets of accoutrements and 8,500 knapsacks had been delivered on the account by 2 December 1861, less than six weeks from the date of the original order. By 22 August 1861 the State of Mississippi had already purchased 12,003

knapsacks and 3,000 canteens with straps from the company. In December 1861 the Confederate Ordnance Bureau entered into an extensive contract with the firm, which resulted in 10,674 sets of accoutrements, 8,432 knapsacks, 26,600 canteen straps and 20,165 haversacks being shipped to the Memphis Arsenal for use in the armies of the western Cis-Mississippi. By the reckoning of Thomas Czekanski, who compiled the entirety of the research on the firm presented herein, Magee and George furnished at least 50,000 sets of accoutrements and more than 50,000 knapsacks for the war effort. This was accomplished in the span of perhaps one year, from the spring of 1861 through April 1862. [16]

Until the Federal occupation, New Orleans continued to be the primary source of accoutrements and equipment for the Lower Mississippi Valley. Unable to obtain supplies at the Grenada Depot, in the spring of 1862, Major General William J. Hardee resorted to ordering 2,500 tin canteens for his division from an unidentified New Orleans manufactory. The canteens were duly shipped and received by the Memphis Arsenal, then under the command of Major W. R. Hunt. Under dire pressure from all sides, Hunt issued the privately-purchased canteens to other units, to the great outrage of Hardee. [17] A distinctive pattern of tin canteen with the letters "CS" within a ring on each side has been attributed to New Orleans; the majority of existing specimens with provenance are associated with Shiloh and the Corinth-Iuka campaigns. [18]

The city provided much more than accoutrements and canteens. Under the supervision of Lovell, the foundries and the small powder mill at New Orleans were able to help supply commands far removed from Louisiana—including the Richmond and Nashville Arsenals and Albert Sydney Johnston's assembling forces in northern Mississippi. Founded by two recent English immigrants (one of whom was a former employee of the armory at Enfield), Cook and Brothers reportedly produced approximately 7,200 small arms and bayonets on the Enfield pattern at their New Orleans armory before removing their plant to Georgia. [19] John Clark & Company, Edmund Ivens and Messrs. Leeds & Company all produced and sold cannon in the city. [20] Tredegar Iron Works likewise maintained a foundry at New Orleans, which had already produced at least two cannon by June 1861. [21]

When Major General Benjamin F. Butler's 18,000-man army of occupation marched into city at the end of April 1862, they found a cache of four hundred and eighteen bronze plantation bells intended for use in cannon manufacture. [22] In a memo dated 28 December 1861 M. H. Wright, commanding the Arsenal

at Nashville, noted that ten 24-pounder cannon had just been received from New Orleans. [23] Large amounts of powder and cartridges were likewise being shipped from the city. On 12 March 1862 John G. Devereaux, Assistant Adjutant General to Lovell, wrote Johnston's Chief of Ordnance, Hypolite Oladowski at Jackson, Tennessee that:

Major Genl. Lovell has received your telegram of this date & instructs me to reply that he has but recently sent to Richmond 10,000 lbs. musket powder which was about all he has left after supplying deficiencies made by sending a million cartridges to Tennessee. The powder received by recent arrivals was all very inferior musket powder and has had to be reworked and saltpeter amended in considerable quantities. It has being made into cannon powder as our stock of that quality of powder is nearly exhausted. The General directs me to supply your needs as far as he is able and will set apart the amount you desire as soon as he can do so. The guns you ordered at Leed's foundry are now finished. There is still enough metal in the foundries of the city to cast 60 field pieces. [24]

**The Gautherin Contract.**

New Orleans' close commercial ties with France likewise proved to be of substantial benefit to the Confederacy both before and after the city's occupation. Prior to secession, the exporting firm of Edward Gautherin & Company, doing business at 28 Canal Street, had been engaged in purchasing and shipping tobacco and cotton to France. With the outbreak of war the company turned to the business of importing military stores into the South, most especially, woolen goods. In late June of 1861 representatives of the firm traveled to Richmond for the purpose of negotiating a contract with the CS Quartermaster Department for a quantity of uniform cloth. [25] On 29 July 1861, based on cloth samples provided, Richmond officials placed an order with Gautherin for 225,000 yards of "cadets' gray," "the texture to be fully equal to the samples," and an additional 150,000 yards of unspecified material:

*Confederate States of America  
Quartermaster's Office,  
Richmond, Va., July 29, 1861*

*ED. GAUTHERIN & CO:*

*Your proposition to supply cloth for the Army of the Confederate States is accepted.*

*The Quartermaster's Department agrees to receive and pay for 175,000 yards of sample C, 150,000 yards of sample D, and 50,000 yards of sample B.*

*The color of B and C to be cadets' gray, and the texture fully equal to the samples.*

*B to be six-quarters wide, at \$2.55 a yards.*

*C to be six-quarters wide, at \$1.97 a yard.*

*D to be three-quarters wide, at 18 cents a yard.*

*The understanding between yourselves and*

*Continued on Page 8...*

**Belgian Army Cloth** (Continued from Page 7)

*the department is that the above must be delivered between the 15th of November next and the 15th of January, 1862, sooner if possible, delivery to be at a port of the Confederacy as near the city of Richmond as possible.*

JAS. B. SMITH Major and Assistant Quartermaster [26]

Through its sister firm of G L. More & Company, located in Havre, France, Gautherin made arrangements with one Baron Silliere, an established provisioner of military goods to the French government. [27] As will be demonstrated, the Quartermaster Department's contract with Gautherin proved to be especially fortuitous for the Trans-Mississippi.

**Matamoros.**

In the spring of 1862 United States Counsel Leonard Pierce, Jr. arrived at his new post of duty in the Mexican border city of Matamoros. He was alarmed at what he found. "Matamoros is now the great thoroughfare to the Southern States," he reported to Washington in a 1 March 1862 letter, and added that, "They pass their coffee, flour, and in fact all the supplies they receive through here." [28] Unbeknownst to Pierce, the influx of goods into the Confederacy through northern Mexico had only just begun. Some twenty crooked miles up the Rio Grande River from the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico, Matamoros had been little more than a dying border town just prior to the war, with a population of a few thousand and over half of its houses vacant. [29] Subject to occasional outbreaks of smallpox and yellow fever, there was precious little for which to recommend the city. Across the river lay Brownsville, Texas, connected by way of a ferry; and therein lay the key to Matamoros' brief claim to commercial significance. Located in the semi-lawless state of Tamaulipas, Matamoros was the nearest Mexican town of any significance to both the Gulf and the State of Texas. Goods could be landed at Bagdad, a tiny Mexican village near the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Gulf, then laboriously transported either up the river or by road to the storehouses in Matamoros. Once payment was made and the custom house duties paid, the stores could be ferried over to Brownsville. Mexico was a neutral country, and the United States, pursuant to the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, could not outwardly interfere with vessels anchored in Mexican water, goods landed on the Mexican shore, or goods ferried across the shallow Rio Grande to Confederate Brownsville. Federal officials watched in frustration as the traffic into Mexico increased exponentially with every passing season. The former president of a Brownsville bank recalled that before the war he could not remember a single instance of an

English vessel arriving at the mouth of the Rio Grande with a cargo; by spring 1862 the situation had begun to change dramatically. [30] As of September 1862 twenty anchored ships were counted off Bagdad, awaiting lighters to carry their cargo ashore; by March 1863 there were sixty to seventy vessels; and in late 1864 and early 1865 the average number had risen from two hundred to three hundred ships of all nations. [31]

Matamoros had grown into a thriving city, filled with teamsters, speculators, commission merchants, northern spies, northern businessmen, and Confederate Quartermaster agents. Passing through the city in October 1864 following the sinking of the CSS *Alabama*, Raphael Semmes later recalled his impressions of the place:

*The heretofore quaint old Spanish town presented the very picture of a busy commercial mart. House-rent was at an enormous figure; the streets, as well as the stores, were piled with bales and boxes of merchandise, and every one you met seemed to be running somewhere, intent on business. Ox and mule teams from the Texan side of the river were busy hauling the precious staple of the Southern States, which put all this commerce in motion, to Bagdad..* [32]

The transformation of Bagdad at the mouth of the river was perhaps even more striking, as there had previously existed nothing more than a few fishermen's' huts. "Numerous shanties had been constructed on the sands," Semmes recounted in his memoirs. He added, "Some of the shanties were hotels, some billiard rooms, others grog-shops... The stores were numerous, and crowded with wares... The whole panorama looked like some magic scene, which might have been improvised in a night." [33] William Watson of the blockade runner *Rob Roy* described the tremendous confusion and traffic that characterized the make-shift port of Bagdad:

*The immense piles of goods which had been landed from the ships lay wasting, and on most of them the enormous charges for ligherage, which had been laid on heavily, when added to the freight, port dues, and import duties far exceeded the value of the goods, and in many cases the owners had disowned and abandoned them altogether, leaving those who had made the charges to make the most of them. In fact, everything seemed to be in a state of chaos so far as regarded business, every one tried to grab what he could... Every small vessel that would do for a lighter had been brought to the place, put under the Mexican flag and converted into a lighter. One enterprising Yankee brought to the place a large number of tarpaulins, off which he was reaping a harvest by hiring them out at a dollar each per night for covering goods and other purposes... Restaurants were conducted under tarpaulins spread over poles, and rough wooden sheds hastily knocked together were used as grocery stores and rum mills, as they were called.* [34]

The question of landing army stores at

Matamoros was made much more difficult by the intermittent presence of both Federal and French warships off Bagdad during much of the period in question. As part of its plan to make a vast imperial colony out of the anarchy that was Mexico, the French had seized the port city of Vera Cruz in 1861. Ostensibly the occupation was for the purpose of securing the repayment of large debts on which the Republican Government of Benito Juarez had reneged, but Napoleon's plans went far beyond that. Initially, France had been joined in the effort by a multinational force that included the English and Spanish, but these nations had withdrawn from the affair when France's long-range designs became clear. From its stronghold at Vera Cruz, France poured troops into the interior over the next several years, eventually driving Juarez's Republican forces into the north.

Wishing to keep imported arms and war material out of the hands of the Republicans while at the same time desiring the avoidance of conflict with Washington, the French navy was instructed to block the importation of such goods into Mexico's northern ports. French policy, however, vacillated with the season. Some arms were indeed landed with French knowledge, and there was no consistent interference with the importation of the large amounts of blankets, cloth, shoes, medicines and ready-made clothing which came into the port. The US Navy began active efforts to blockade the Texas side of the lower Gulf in February 1862, when the twenty-two gun steamer USS *Portsmouth* arrived off the mouth of the Rio Grande. [35]

Over the next few years a number of vessels would be improperly overhauled and taken as prizes in the supposedly sacrosanct waters of Mexico, but outside of occasional half-hearted threats from the British and French, there was little that could be done. At times, neither French nor Federal warships were present off Bagdad. Vessels carrying contraband made the most of these narrow windows of opportunity. In order to avoid unnecessary interference (and Mexican duties), vessels sometimes sent their non-military cargoes to the Mexican shore during daylight hours and secretly lightered obvious Army stores to the Texas shore during the night.

Having successfully eluded Federal (and oftentimes, French) warships, blockade runners lightered the cargo to Bagdad or Matamoros, then laboriously ferried the same to the safety of Brownsville. Confederate quartermaster and ordnance officers were then faced with transporting the goods on the terrible overland route to Houston and San Antonio. Depending on where one crossed—at Brownsville, Laredo, Eagle Pass, or a host of other small cities further north on the Rio Grande—the journey involved travel across



**Belgian Army Cloth** *(Continued from Page 8)*

three to four hundred miles of the worst country imaginable. In good weather, when there was water available for the legions of mules and oxen necessary to sustain the traffic, the journey to San Antonio or the railhead at Alleyton might take from four to six weeks. [36]

Securing the requisite wagons and teamsters for the weeks-long haul was a separate nightmare altogether. Private enterprise and the Government constantly vied for both, with the specie-poor Government generally coming out on the losing end. This difficulty, in turn, added further to the maddening delay of getting the stores where they were most needed. "The slowness with which teams loaded with Government stores come from the Rio Grande is disgraceful," Assistant Adjutant General Edward P. Turner chided Hamilton Bee in October 1863; but there was little to be done to rapidly improve the situation. [37] In hindsight, every successful delivery of a Government train into the interior can be viewed as nothing short of minor miracle.

Goods intended for Houston took a path paralleling the inward curve of the south Texas coast, with the midway point of the journey being reached by arrival at King's Ranch. From there the long trek continued through an equally barren wilderness to Victoria, followed by the final leg into San Antonio or Alleytown, some eighty miles west of Houston. At Alleytown began the tracks of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. "[T]he place was crammed with wagons and other vehicles, and the roads leading from there were literally blocked up with teams," reported one observer in October 1863. The report continued,

*Ox-teams, driven by hardy looking, muscular men, that ought to be in the army, and in some instances by boys apparently not more than twelve years of age, with now and then a straw negro, all cursing the poor brutes that are staggering under their loads; Mexican carts in charge of swarthy greasers, clad in buckskin, with their gaudy colored blankets, shouting in their mongrel Spanish, to their half starved oxen; Government ambulances dashing past, filled with soldiers; Artillery men riding back and forward, with their strings of horses to water, and stages crowded with passengers arriving and departing, together with the Railroad cars, which came in every evening, made up such a Babel as have never witnessed before in Texas. Everybody seems to be in a hurry and all appear anxious to get away as soon as possible, as it would cost a man a small fortune to live there a week. There could not have been less than two hundred persons, who took supper at the hotel the evening we were there, and such a motley crowd we never remember having sat down with before. Officers in gay uniforms; clerks in broadcloth, bedizened with jewelry; planters in homespun, wagoners in their dirty shirt sleeves, and deserters with balls and chains around their legs, might all be seen at the same table, contesting for the possession of such edibles as were placed before them. [38]*

**The Gautherin Contract: Delivery and Issues.**

Despite the logistical nightmares, chronic credit problems and occasionally ineffectual and/or corrupt agents, some good was indeed achieved through Matamoros for the Trans-Mississippi. CS Quartermaster General A. C. Myers' previously-referenced July 1861 contract with the Ed. Gautherin and Company of New Orleans resulted in several significant and early deliveries to Brownsville via Matamoros. By the fall of 1861, Baron Silliere, Gautherin's well-placed French purchasing agent, had made large contracts with woolen mills at Verviers, Belgium to fill the huge orders called for by the contract. [39]

The US Consul at Brussels informed Washington that, in addition to cloth, large purchases of blankets, shoes, arms, and other war material were likewise being made on behalf of Gautherin in Belgium. [40] "Information has been received from a source deemed reliable that the States in rebellion have made a contract with the manufacturers at Vieviere, in Belgium (near the frontier of Prussia), for 220,000 yards of army cloth," reported US Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles on 21 October 21 1861. He went on to state that,

*The contract has been distributed between some six or eight manufacturers. The cloth is to be a mixed color of blue and white; to cost 5 francs 75 centimes for the coarsest and 7 francs for the finest quality the meter; width 1-43/100 meters; weight 50 to 60 grammes [about 1.5 pounds] a meter; to be delivered in December next . . . It is desirable that this cloth should not be permitted to get into the States in insurrection. [41]*

The "220,000 yards of army cloth" was a reference to the 225,000 yards of "cadets' gray" called for under the contract; no mention was made in Welles' dispatch of the additional 150,000 additional yards of material being simultaneously procured elsewhere in Belgium and France. Whatever overt attempts the Federal Navy may have taken to stop the goods were unsuccessful. By early April 1862 the larger part of the material called for by the contract had been shipped to Cuba, and thence to Matamoros. For reasons unclear the vessel and cargo (accompanied by Edward Gautherin) returned abruptly to Havana, having failed to unload. [42] Traffic to Matamoros was barred for a short period in April due to one of the periodic outbursts of civil strife that plagued Northern Mexico, and this may have been the cause of Gautherin's return to Cuba. Safely once again in Havana, the cargo was broken and trans-shipped back to Matamoros by way of several, smaller vessels, unloaded, then ferried across the Rio Grande to Brownsville, where Confederate officials took receipt of the ponderously large shipment:

*Received, Brownsville, June 22, 1862, in good order and condition, from Charles Priolland, and for account of Messrs. Ed. Gautherin & Co., of New Orleans:*

Mark	Number
E. G. C.	182 bales cloth, measuring 54,743 5/6
	[Class] B yards, at \$2.55 a yard.

E. G. C.	427 bales cloth, measuring 134,626 3/8
	[Class] C yards, at \$1.97 a yard.

*W. L. SHARKEY, Captain and Assistant Quartermaster [43]*

On 15 April 1862, ten days before the fall of the city, William Sharkey had left New Orleans, bound for the Rio Grande. Newly commissioned and a native of Mississippi, Sharkey had been specially dispatched to Brownsville from New Orleans by Lovell in order to take charge of the expected shipment. Why Gautherin arranged for shipment of the goods to Matamoros, rather than an eastern port (as required by the contract), remains unknown. While originally intended for issue in Virginia, the bulk of the cargo was subsequently given over to the armies of the Trans-Mississippi. As will be demonstrated, Sharkey distributed a large portion of it as he accompanied his wagons on the long journey back towards the river. While no communication authorizing these piecemeal issues has been located, it is highly improbable that the conscientious Sharkey acted other than in accordance with his instructions, whatever they may have been. [44] On 4 July 1862, before beginning the tortuous overland journey to the railhead at Alleytown, twenty bales of cadet gray cloth were promptly turned over to Captain Frank Lynch, Quartermaster at Brownsville's Fort Brown. [45]

Sharkey apparently left the slow-moving wagon train in other hands and proceeded directly to Houston, arriving there by mid-July. Awaiting the goods at Houston, the Assistant Quartermaster consented to further distributions of the cloth to local commands. "... [I]f the papers are made satisfactory to me, I would have no hesitation in leaving you a portion of the goods referred to," Sharkey informed Acting Assistant Adjutant General Captain C. M. Mason in an 18 July 1862 memorandum written at Houston. Sharkey requested that "in addition to Qr Mstrs receipt I would like to have an order from one of the commdg. Generals. I will leave for San Antonio on or before Tuesday next, and have no doubt but that we can satisfactorily arrange it for me to leave you some of the Goods for this Department." [46] Acting on Sharkey's written consent to Mason, on 31 July, with the cargo still in transit overland, General Paul O. Hebert,

*Continued on Page 10...*

**Belgian Army Cloth** *(Continued from Page 9)*

commander of the District of Texas, ordered that an additional eighty bales be issued to Quartermaster Capt. Joseph F. Minter for the use of the District. [47]

As of late August the wagons had reached Alleytown, where Sharkey turned over, in compliance with Hebert's directive, eighty-nine bales of material to Assistant Quartermaster Capt. William Prescott. [48] At least some of the material received at Alleytown was then transported back to San Antonio. On 6 September Prescott, having returned to his post at San Antonio, reported that "one bale grey cloth marked 'B' which was opened yesterday and for which I receipted to Capt. Sharkey as being superior cloth for officers wear, proves to be inferior cloth intended for soldiers wear ..." [49]

By 1 September the remaining five hundred bales had arrived at Houston, where they were warehoused. Hebert had directed Sharkey to store the cloth at Houston while seeking further instructions from Richmond. [50] Either the grueling overland journey or the long passage from Europe had damaged some of the material, and while at Houston, Sharkey requested that a Board of Survey be convened to examine the bales. The subsequent survey determined that of the five hundred bales remaining, 169 bales had been damaged to some extent. [51] A substantial amount of the Gautherin army cloth appears to have been left at Houston for the use of Quartermaster Capt. Edward C. Wharton. Sometime in the fall of 1862, "Wharton received a shipment of 12,000 yards of coarse cadet gray cloth through the blockade," which in turn served as the foundation for the establishment of the Houston Quartermaster Depot's tailor shops. [52] While the specific source for the referenced 12,000 yards of material is not clear, the time and location of its receipt strongly suggest that the "coarse cadet gray cloth" was not English, but rather a portion of the Gautherin cargo brought up from Brownsville.

Leaving Houston with his charge in early September, Sharkey's slow journey towards the Mississippi River continued as news of the shipment spread. Given the crisis then facing the region, the desire to retain the material for the use of the Trans-Mississippi was well-nigh irresistible. In August 1862, while Sharkey's wagons were making their way towards Houston, Major General Thomas C. Hindman was pleading with Texas Governor Francis Lubbock to supply his newly-raised army in Arkansas with cloth from the Huntsville Penitentiary: "It would make your heart bleed to witness it. Hundreds of them are almost in a state of nakedness." [53] Cognizant of Hindman's needs and believing the material to still be in Texas, on 11 September 1862, from his Headquarters in Arkansas, departmental commander General Theophilus Holmes

ordered that "all the grey cloth rec'd from Matamoros that could be spared be forwarded to Little Rock." [54] The cloth had already left Houston, but District of Texas officials scrambled to recover the prize. Responding to Holmes' directive, on 7 October, Hebert ordered Assistant Quartermaster E. C. Wharton to "take immediate measures to ascertain whether any of the grey cloth in charge of Capt. Sharkey ... is now on the west side of the Mississippi River and if so will take charge of the whole amount and forward without delay all of said cloth without delay to Little Rock, Arkansas to Chief Quartermaster Dept. of Trans-Miss District..." [55]

Sharkey had not, in fact, made it over the Mississippi with his remaining stores. By late September the cloth had reached Alexandria, Louisiana, awaiting transportation across the river. Sharkey did not arrive with the train, and in his absence Major General Richard Taylor requisitioned enough of the material to clothe six thousand men of the District of West Louisiana. [56] Under the supervision of Taylor's Chief Quartermaster Major E. Lasare, the cloth was promptly "cut out and distributed throughout the parishes to be made up..." [57] Holmes' directive of 11 September had yet to reach Alexandria, and the remaining bales were placed on steamboats for passage to Vicksburg. Before the boats left, however, the departmental commander's orders were at last received, and the recently-arrived Sharkey was compelled to give over the entirety of his cargo. [58]

How much of the cloth remained when Holmes' order arrived at Alexandria, how it was distributed and where it went is subject to some conjecture. In a 17 November 1862 report to Brigadier General M. L. Smith at Vicksburg, Major E. Surget, Taylor's Assistant Adjutant General, recounted that the remaining bales were turned over to Quartermaster Major T. S. Moise, who "sent 100 bales of it back to Texas, the remainder to Arkansas." [59] A memorandum found within Sharkey's compiled service record reflects that on 12 October 1862, Taylor ordered 85,000 yards of the cadet gray cloth be turned over to Chief Quartermaster LaSare, "the same being for the use of the soldiers and officers of the Trans Miss Dept." [60] Taylor's requisition specified 80,000 yards of the class "C" material and 5,000 yards of the finer class "B." At an average of 315 yards and 301 yards per bale respectively, Lasare would have received approximately two hundred and sixty-nine bales of cadet gray cloth. It is unclear whether Taylor's 12 October requisition represented the balance of Sharkey's remaining cargo destined for Arkansas, less one hundred bales sent back to the District of Texas, but given Surget's subsequent explanation to Smith, "100 bales of it back to Texas, the remainder to Arkansas," it appears the most plausible.

Bereft of his charge, Sharkey made his

way across the river to Vicksburg, where intelligence of the cargo's dispersal was quickly relayed to Richmond. News of the shipment's fate was not well received. Gautherin's contract had anticipated receipt at an eastern port, "as near the city of Richmond as possible." Delivery at Brownsville and the subsequent total dispersal of the cargo in Trans-Mississippi had not been contemplated by Quartermaster General Abraham Myers. In a memorandum dated 7 November 1862, Richard P. Waller, Chief of Myer's Richmond-based Clothing Bureau, lamented that "the large lot of English goods under contract for this depot [emphasis added] have been as I learn, stopped by some officer of the Government near the Mississippi River." [61] When news of the Trans-Mississippi requisitions reached Richmond, the War Department made efforts to salvage what it could for the East. "The Secretary of War directs that you will have all the seizures of cloth made under your direction released," Adjutant and Inspector General Samuel Cooper wrote Theophilus Holmes on 8 November 1862. Cooper added that the Secretary directed him "to inform you that these seizures are unauthorized, and are viewed as unreasonable, and that they defeat all efforts to clothe the armies operating east of the Mississippi." [62]

Approximately four weeks had passed between the requisition of the remainder of the cargo at Alexandria and Holmes' receipt of Cooper's directive in mid-November 1862. "In regard to the cloth ordered to Vicksburg, it was not from Huntsville, but some French cloth, that was destined originally for Richmond and which I stopped in transitu, for which I was reprimanded and ordered to forward at once," Holmes explained to Hindman in a 14 November memorandum. [63] Significantly, the Departmental commander's memorandum is silent on the issue of compliance with Cooper's order. Faced with the immediate crisis of clothing Hindman's forces before the coming winter, Holmes appears to have made only a token effort at retrieving the material. Reprimands from far-removed Richmond could not begin to compete with the compelling needs of Hindman's suffering army. In an effort to demonstrate some measure of compliance with the Secretary of War's directive, a small but respectable portion of the cargo was retrieved and shipped over the river. "One hundred (100) bales French cloth arrived," Major John G. Devereaux advised Quartermaster General Myers in a 1 December 1862 telegram from Vicksburg. Devereaux asked Myers to "please permit some to be sold to officers for uniforms." [64] Save for the referenced one hundred bales that eventually reached Vicksburg in December 1862, there is no evidence that any of the cloth requisitioned by Holmes, Taylor or Hebert was ever sent east of the Mississippi.

**Belgian Army Cloth** *(Continued from Page 10)*

Based on these facts and additional corroborating evidence discussed below, the Huntsville Penitentiary supplied wool and cotton jean, which began to arrive at the re-established shops of the Arkansas State Penitentiary in the last quarter of 1862; appears to have been augmented by the Belgian woolen cloth shipped from Alexandria. [65] Indeed, imported Army cloth may have made up most of what was then available. While the aggregate quantities shipped from Huntsville to Arkansas during the period of September 1862 to February 1863 are known, the exact dates of receipt are less certain. [66] Whether made of imported wool, domestic jeans, or a combination of both, the long-suffering District of Arkansas experienced a sudden upsurge of clothing availability in the last two months of 1862 just in time for Hindman's Prairie Grove campaign. Reflecting the availability of cloth for uniform manufacture, on 5 November 1862, Assistant Quartermaster John Burton, Chief of Holmes' Clothing Bureau, was actively seeking large numbers of clothing "cutters" via the Little Rock *True Democrat*. [67] Burton's local advertisements were not enough to meet the expected demand. "Information has been received by Major J. B. Burton, Chief of the Clothing Bureau, that a sufficient quantity of English grey Army cloth to make clothes for 30,000 men will in a few days reach Little Rock," reported Hindman in a 10 November 1862 circular issued to his subordinates. The circular further stated, "To make up this material, in the shortest period of time possible, Maj. Burton applies for details of tailors from this command, the men so detailed to be returned to their companies as soon as the clothing is made." [68]

Within twelve days of Hindman's circular, the army's clothing crisis had abated dramatically. In a 22 November 1862 memorandum announcing an impending inspection of his Army, Hindman informed his Division commanders that, "It is believed that there is now here complete clothing for every man of the Corps, and all must be well clad by the time of inspection." [69] Chief Quartermaster John Crump subsequently reported the following issues, amongst numerous other articles, to Hindman's army during the last quarter of 1862: 12,920 "suits," 3,420 coats, 836 jackets, 1,158 pairs of pants, 7,770 caps and 2,129 hats. [70] Whatever the case may be, judging from the dozens of receipts encountered in the compiled service records of Arkansas District staff officers, there was no shortage of "gray cloth" for sale to officers at Little Rock from the winter of 1862 through the eventual evacuation of the city. [71]

With portions delivered to depots at Brownsville, San Antonio, Houston, Alexandria, Little Rock and Vicksburg, the shipment was of immediate benefit to the

struggling Confederate armies of the West. All told, the combined efforts of Edward Gautherin and Company and Captain Sharkey had successfully delivered some 189,369 yards of Belgian wool to Confederate Quartermasters—enough material for approximately 122,000 jackets or 132,000 pairs of trousers. [72]

**Gautherin: Subsequent Shipments.**

Despite the misdelivery at Matamoros and the dispersal of the cargo across the Trans-Mississippi, Myer's Quartermaster Bureau did its best to ensure that Gautherin & Company were paid for their efforts. Just before the fall of New Orleans, Confederate officials had quietly arranged for the physical transfer of gold specie in the amount of \$406,000.00 for partial payment on the contract to Count Mejan, French Consul at New Orleans. In the midst of the ensuing Federal occupation, Mejan managed to transport the money out of the City on the Spanish vessel *Blasco de Garay* to company representatives in Havana. Having received partial payment, the balance of the contract goods, already warehoused in Cuba, were prepared for Mexico. "Another cargo is now in Havana," fumed General Butler in a November 1862 communique from occupied New Orleans. He continued, "By this wrongful, illegal, and inimical interference of the French consul ... the money had gone forward, so that the holders of the goods will be ready to ship the remainder for the benefit of the Confederate Army." [73]

Butler interrogated a number of citizens, sentenced the two principals of Edward Gautherin & Company still remaining in the City (brothers Alfred and Jules Le More) to hard labor on a ball-and-chain at Fort Jackson, and eventually managed to have Mejan removed from the French Consulate, but the damage was already done. Relocated to France, Edward Gautherin continued to do a substantial business with the Confederacy. The original July 1861 contract had called for a total of 375,000 yards of material. Roughly half this amount had been safely delivered to Sharkey at Brownsville; the remainder—some 186,000 yards—was warehoused in Havana while the company awaited payment on the first installment. [74]

It is not entirely clear whether Gautherin delivered the second half of the original contract shipment, but circumstantial evidence strongly suggests that the firm fully honored its contract. Now headquartered in France and reconstituted as Gautherin & Girard, the company was, evidently, sufficiently satisfied with the payments thus far received from the Confederate government. In early 1863, the company submitted a proposal to the CS Navy Department for the provision of two years' worth of shoes, blankets and cloth. [75] Based on the reasonable prices offered and the

company's past performance, the Navy accepted the proposal and a contract was signed on 2 February 1863. In early May, officials at the Navy Department were notified that the cargo called for under the contract would be "ready for delivery at Brownsville at the end of the month, and would comprise more than the articles ordered." [76]

A copy of the contract in question has not been located, but the amount of stores sent forward for the Navy must have been substantial. Based on spring 1864 estimates prepared by Paymaster John DeBree, the CS Navy required approximately 3,500 yards of wool per quarter—or 28,000 yards over a two-year period. [77] Gautherin's naval cargo was delivered as promised at Matamoros in late May 1863, but Grant's Vicksburg campaign made hopes of transporting the stores to the East extremely tenuous. The Mississippi River was now more or less closed to any substantial traffic. As a result, "this valuable cargo had to be turned over to the quartermaster's department for the use of the Trans-Mississippi army." [78]

In spite of this disappointing blow, Navy Department officials remained justifiably encouraged about continuing purchases through the firm. Gautherin & Girard had managed to fulfill a substantial contract for European supplies within four months of its execution, and Paymaster DeBree, who oversaw contracts on behalf of the Navy, was surely cognizant of the company's earlier successes on behalf of the Army. As a result, in August 1863 a duplicate contract was executed, calling for delivery of the Navy's goods at Bermuda rather than a Confederate port. [79] Despite delays resulting from the failure of the government to promptly reimburse the firm for "very heavy deliveries in Texas," by April 1864 substantial quantities of cloth had been delivered at Bermuda, and large amounts of ready-made clothing were on the way to the Islands. [80] Gautherin proved to be one of the very few firms that not only consistently delivered goods, but did so at a less than extortionate price.

C. L. Webster III

**NOTES:**

[1] E. B. Long, *The Civil War Day by Day: An Almanac 1861-1865* (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1971), 203.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Jefferson Davis Bragg, *Louisiana in the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1941), 104, citing *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* (hereinafter cited as OR) ser. 1, vol. 6, 513.

[4] Campbell Gibson, "Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in The United States: 1790 to 1990," US Bureau of the Census, Washington (1990), table 9.

*Continued on Page 12...*

**Belgian Army Cloth** (Continued from Page 11)

[5] Louis E. Madere and Donald McNabb, "A History of New Orleans," New Orleans (2003), 14.

[6] *The American Almanac and Repository of Useful Knowledge, For the Year 1859* (Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Company, 1859), 169.

[7] Stephen R. Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 74-5.

[8] *Ibid.*, 270.

[9] *Ibid.*, 270-1.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Bruce S. Bazelon and William F. McGuinn, *Directory of American Military Goods Dealers & Makers 1785-1915* (Manassas: REF Typesetting and Publishing, Inc., 1999), 72.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Louisiana in the Confederacy*, 104.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Leslie D. Jensen, "A Survey of Confederate Central Government Quartermaster Issue Jackets, Part 3," *Military Collector & Historian*, Fall 1989, vol. 61, no. 3, 110-1. The 1851 New Orleans City Directory contains an entry for one "P. W. Woodlief," a dry goods merchant.

[16] Thomas Czekanski, *Notes on Accoutrement Makers: Magee and George of New Orleans* (research paper, New Orleans, revised edition, March 2000).

[17] Compiled Service Records, Confederate General and Staff Officers and Non-Regimental Enlisted Men, RG 109, Microfilm Series M331 (hereafter cited as CSR NARA M331), Reel 117 (Hardee, W. J.), National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[18] Michael J. O'Donnell and Stephen W. Sylvia, *Civil War Canteens* (Orange, Virginia: Moss Publications, 1990), 85.

[19] Henry Woodhead, ed., *Echoes of Glory: Arms and Equipment of the Confederacy* (Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1996), 41.

[20] *Directory of American Military Goods Dealers & Makers 1785-1915*, 47, 138 and 160.

[21] *Louisiana in the Confederacy*, 83.

[22] Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative: From Sumter to Perryville* (New York: Random House, 1958), 370.

[23] CSR NARA M331, Reel 274 (Wright, M. H.).

[24] CSR NARA M331, Reel 75 (Devereaux, J. G.).

[25] OR, ser. 3, vol. 2, 769.

[26] *Ibid.*, 774.

[27] *Ibid.*, 678. Silliere (also spelled Selliere) was described as a "noted furnisher of military cloths, &c., for the French Government." *Ibid.*

[28] OR, ser. 1, vol. 9, 674.

[29] James A. Irby, *Backdoor at Bagdad; The Civil War on the Rio Grande* (El Paso: The University of Texas Press, 1977), 5.

[30] James W. Daddysman, *The Matamoros Trade: Confederate Commerce, Diplomacy and Intrigue* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984), 33.

[31] *Ibid.*, 23.

[32] Raphael Semmes, *Memoirs of Service Afloat During the War Between the States* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 792-3.

[33] *Ibid.*, 792.

[34] William Watson, *The Civil War Adventures of a Blockade Runner* (London: Unwin Brothers, 1892, reprint 2001), 26.

[35] *The Matamoros Trade*, 151.

[36] *Ibid.*, 107.

[37] OR, ser. 1, vol. 26, pt. 2, 316.

[38] *Austin State Gazette*, October 14, 1863.

[39] OR, ser. 3, vol. 2, 678. Union authorities likewise entered into large contracts with French firms. See Don Troiani, "French Uniforms, Cloth & Equipage of the Union Army" (in two parts), *North South Trader's Civil War*, vol. 26, no. 2, 38-50 and vol. 26, no. 3, 24-32.

[40] OR, ser. 3, vol. 2, 678.

[41] OR (Navy), ser. 1, vol. 6, 351-2.

[42] OR, ser. 3, vol. 2, 777. The name of the vessel has not been ascertained.

[43] *Ibid.*, 772.

[44] Sharkey's original 15 April 1862 orders had directed the officer to transport the goods "to this city," i.e., New Orleans. As noted, New Orleans fell while Sharkey was making his way to Brownsville. Officials in Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana (as well as Sharkey himself) were well aware that the original intent was to deliver the bales "to our Army East of the Mississippi" (see Gen. Paul Hebert's Special Orders No. 32, issued at San Antonio and dated 31 1862). In spite of this, there is no record of Sharkey objecting to or otherwise protesting the repeated requisitions made against his cargo as he made his way east. It is probable that Sharkey received further instructions (now lost) which authorized these piecemeal distributions. Alternatively, the Assistant Quartermaster may have felt that the requisitions—made under the authority of both district and departmental commanders—superseded his original orders.

[45] CSR NARA M331, reel 223 (Sharkey, W. L.).

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] *Ibid.*

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] CSR NARA M331, reel 202 (Prescott, W.).

[50] Hebert memorandum to Sibley, 8 August 1862, OR, ser. 1, vol. 9, 730. Hebert informed Sibley that "in view of the great difficulty in transportation across the Mississippi," he had directed Sharkey to store the cloth at Houston and "to proceed to Richmond for further instructions thereto." Ignoring the fact that one hundred and nine bales had already been requisitioned for the use of the District, Hebert opined that "it might be advisable to appropriate a portion of it to the use of the troops on this side." Sharkey did not proceed to Richmond.

[51] CSR NARA M331, reel 223 (Sharkey, W. L.). The Board of Survey, composed of Captain Charles Bickley, Second Lieutenant R. M. Rutledge and Second Lieutenant Enoch Wight (the latter two officers being from Griffin's Regiment of Infantry) was convened at Houston on 1 September 1862. The Board determined that one hundred and sixty-nine bales of the cloth "had been damaged 25 per cent." Damage to imported materials was not uncommon. In late November 1863 the Houston Depot took receipt of 10,500 blankets, 14,300 pairs of

shoes, 26,000 yards of gray cloth, 7,000 yards of gray kersey, 6,700 yards of drilling, 684 yards of blue, red and yellow cloth and thirty boxes of tin—apparently a portion of the cargo of the Sir William Peel, combined with additional European cloth brought in from the border. To the great disgust of Wharton, a large number of the blankets received at Houston in November were "totally damaged by salt water" while others were "small, light and unfit" for use in the field (Major E. C. Wharton to Brigadier General Slaughter, 29 February 1864, NARA CSR M331, reel 264 [Wharton, E. C.]).

[52] Frederick R. Adolphus, "Confederate Clothing of the Houston Quartermaster Depot," *Military Collector and Historian*, (Winter 1996), 172.

[53] Michael R. Moore, *The Texas Penitentiary and Textile Production in the Civil War* (Honors Paper, University of Texas at Austin, 1984), 138, citing an 6 August 1862 letter from Hindman to Lubbock, Penitentiary Papers, 4-8/ 707, Texas State Archives, Austin, Texas.

[54] CSR NARA M331, reel 223 (Sharkey, W. L.).

[55] *Ibid.*

[56] OR, ser. 1, vol. 15, 867, 872.

[57] *Ibid.*, 872.

[58] *Ibid.*, 867, 872.

[59] *Ibid.*, 867. Moise, a Quartermaster for the District of Texas, happened to be in Alexandria on other business when Holmes' directive arrived. He was subsequently cashiered from the service in the spring of 1863 for his collusion in transferring possession of a Government steamer at Galveston to a private blockade-running partnership.

[60] CSR NARA M331, reel 223 (Sharkey, W. L.).

[61] Harold S. Wilson, *Confederate Industry: Manufacturers and Quartermasters in the Civil War* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi 2002), 37, citing CSR NARA M331, reel 258 [Waller, Richard P.]. Despite Waller's (and subsequently Hindman's) description of the cloth as "English," there is no evidence that Gautherin's representative, a French army contractor, was compelled to contract for cloth in Great Britain. A September 1862 communique from the US Consul at Brussels confirms that the manufacturers of the cloth were located in Verviers. See OR ser. 3, vol. 2, 678.

[62] OR, ser. 1, vol. 13, 911.

[63] OR, ser. 1, vol. 13, 916.

[64] CSR NARA M331 Reel (Devereaux, J. G.).

[65] Michael E. Banasik, *Embattled Arkansas: The Prairie Grove Campaign of 1862* (Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing, 1996), 256, citing the *Missouri Republican*, 20 February, 1863.

[66] Moore states that "in the six months following this change in cloth distribution [the September 1862 establishment of Burton's centralized Clothing Bureau], the departmental clothing bureau received over 47,000 yards each of woolen cloth and cotton jeans, and twice that amount of osnaburgs." *Texas Penitentiary and Textile Production in the Civil War*, 139.

[67] Little Rock *True Democrat*, 5

**Belgian Army Cloth** (Continued from Page 12)

November 1862. Additional imported goods were reaching Little Rock via other routes. In the 22 October 1862 edition of the Little Rock *True Democrat* merchant Peter Brugman was advertising for sale "Military Caps—of fine Blue Cloth, with covers, just received from Havre, via Mobile ..." (Ibid., 22 October 1862).

[68] Peter Wellington Alexander Papers, Copy Book of Letters & Orders, Little Rock, 1 June–12 December 1862, 352, reel 11566, Columbia University Library, New York (hereinafter cited as Alexander Papers).

[69] Alexander Papers, 578, reel 11566.

[70] CSR NARA M331, reel 76 (Crump, J. A.).

[71] For examples of the cloth furnished to officers by Burton, and later Haynes, see CSR NARA M331, reel 68 (Cunningham, M. D.); reel 257 (Walker W. G.); reel 258 (Wall, G. S.), (Walworth, E.); reel 259 (Warner, S. M.).

[72] These figures are based on the computations of District of Texas Quartermaster Major Benjamin Bloomfield, who in September 1863 calculated that 17,162 1/4 yards of recently imported "cadet grey cloth" would be sufficient to produce 11,100 jackets, and that 15,828 yards of the same material would suffice for 11,100 pairs of trousers. Bloomfield's calculations result in an allowance of approximately 1.5 yards of material per jacket, and 1.4 yards per pair of trousers. See "Summary of clothing, clothing materials, equipage and equipment materials from Steamship S. Wm. Peel rec'd by Major Charles Russell at Brownsville, Texas and post-shipped to September 6, 1863," National Archives, *Inspection Reports and Related Records Received by the Inspection Branch in the Confederate Adjutant and Inspector General's Office*, Record Group 109, M935, Reel 8, 95-J-41. For the purpose of these calculations the width of the material brought in by Gautherin is presumed to be the same as that used in Bloomfield's computations. Pursuant to the contract, both grades of Gautherin's cadet gray wool were required to have a width of "six-quarters," or fifty-four inches. OR, ser. 3, vol. 2, 774. By way of comparison, Houston Quartermaster E. C. Wharton estimated 1.75 yards of "double width" cadet gray wool per jacket and 1.25 yards per pair of pants. "Confederate Clothing of the Houston Quartermaster Depot," 172, 174. Using Wharton's figures and assuming a similar width of cloth, the Gautherin shipment equates to 108,210 jackets or 151,495 pairs of pants. The jeans produced by the Huntsville Penitentiary was of a much narrower width than imported cloth, thus requiring more yards per article of clothing. According to a 12 September 1862 letter from Texas Governor Lubbock to Quartermaster J. F. Minter, some 5.5 yards of Penitentiary cloth were needed to make a "uniform suit." *The Texas Penitentiary and Textile Production in the Civil War*, note 71, 158.

[73] OR, ser. 3, vol. 2, 766.

[74] Ibid., 768, 777.

[75] OR (Navy), ser. 2, vol. 2, 555.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid., 646.

[78] Ibid., 556.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.; see also Frank E. Vandiver, *Confederate Blockade Running Through Bermuda 1861–1865: Letters and Cargo Manifests* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1947), 56.

The author wishes to thank John Schwarz, Michael Banasik, Tom Ezell, Cody Mobley and

Stan Whitehorn for their advice and input in the preparation of this article. The Austin State Gazette and the Little Rock True Democrat were accessed at Vicki Betts' Newspaper Research, 1861-1865, web site (<http://www.uttyl.edu/vbetts>).

## TAKING THE TOP RAIL

by Cal Kinzer

The evening shadows were starting to fall and the temperature was dropping rapidly as the long, blue column made its way laboriously along the narrow road. It was the end of another hard day of marching and shoulders ached as accoutrement straps cut into them. Muskets were frequently shifted from hand to hand as their weight seemed to increase with each passing mile. Finally, the welcome order, "Halt!", was heard coming down the line from the regiments ahead. "Break ranks!" the Captain shouted; and the order was obeyed with alacrity. The tired troops immediately made for an open field which was surrounded by a rail fence. As soon as their muskets were stacked and their traps shed, the parades started their nightly ritual. One started the fire and got the coffee boiling. The other headed for the fence to try to get a few rails. If successful, these would be just "bully" for keeping the cold away during the long night to come. In some cases, extra rails could also be laid close together to form a bed of sorts to separate the soldier from the cold ground.

The Army had a standing order against the wanton destruction of private property and even made some efforts toward enforcing it, at least during the first half of the war. In the case of rail fences, this order stated that only the top rail was to be taken for firewood. This sounded good in theory—preserving the bulk of the fence for the hard-pressed farmer. But like so many of the theories of war, this one did not prove to be particularly effective. Soldiers found a neat way of circumventing it. When the top rail of a fence is taken, the second

rail becomes the top one. When that one is gone, (you guessed it!) the third one is then the top. And so on right down to the ground. The soldier who was caught and hauled up before the authorities for taking the very last rail in a former fenceline, the one laying on the ground, could still truthfully defend himself by claiming it was the top rail when he got there. In time, the officers simply threw up their hands and despaired of enforcing such a ridiculous regulation. Nor was their attitude made any stricter by realization that the fences in question belonged mostly to their enemies anyway. By the last two years, it was open season on Southern fence rails.

The destruction which resulted must have been considerable, especially in those areas of the South which were habitually infested with soldiers. Literally hundreds of thousands of rails must have been burned. The fences in

whole regions must simply have disappeared. In order to understand the enormity of this loss, it might be well to consider the cost of fencing in the middle of the 19th Century.

The cost in time and materials involved in building the miles of wooden rail fences which criss-crossed America was a topic of constant discussion in agricultural circles in the 19th Century. The topic

appeared continually during the period of 1850 to 1880 in agricultural journals, state agricultural bulletins, and the annual reports of the Federal Commissioner of Agriculture.

The simple fact was that splitting rails and building fences consumed an immense amount of the average farmer's time. One



GOING FOR THE "TOP RAIL."

Continued on Page 14...

FENCING STATISTICS OF U.S. AGRICULTURE, 1850-1910.

	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910
1. Rods of fence per acre in farms	3.7	3.5	3.9	3.6	4.6	5.0	5.1
2. Total rods of fencing (millions of rods)	1096	1425	1619	2126	2879	4208	4460
3. Percent of each kind of fence:							
Worm	79	73	64	58	18	12	--
Post and rail	9	9	9	8	12	--	--
Board	5	8	ii.	17	21	13	15
Stone	7	6	5	4	—	--	--
Hedge	--	2	3	4	—	--	--
Wire	--	3	7	9	49	67	85
4. Numbers of each kind of fence* (millions of rods)							
Worm	862	1019	1032	1133	528	504	--
Post and rail	99	122	150	170	345	--	--
Board	53	107	187	354	604	547	669
Stone	74	85	89	84	—	--	--
5. Labor input to build new fences (1000's of man-years)	--	41	21	45	45	48	4
6. Labor for repairs and maintenance (1000's of man-years)	128	151	1E5	:71	142	117	47
7. Percent of adult male labor force repairing fences	4	3.5	3	2.3	1.7	1.3	0.5
8. Total cost of farm fencing (in millions of current collars)	1310	1757	1996	2238	2495	2571	
9. Cost per rod (current dollars)	0.92	1.08	0.93	0.77	0.59	0.57	
10. Cost per rod (Constant 1909 dollars)	1.49	1.49	1.26	1.16	0.84	0.57	
11 Cost per rod (constant 1909 dollars) 1910 = \$100	261	261	221	203	149	100	

\* The blanks for worm, and post and rail fences in 1900 and 1910 are due to lack of data to differentiate the various wood fences in those years. The heading Board fences for 1890, 1900, and 1910, wood fences. The blanks for stone and hedge fences for 1890, 1900, and 1910 are due to insignificant amounts of fencing of these types after 1880.

statistical study (See Table Below) confirms that the literary evidence of the period was correct in claiming that the cost of fencing was indeed a heavy drain on American farmers in the 1850's and 1860's.. Figures on new construction are not available, but the labor required for repairs and maintenance alone in 1850 was 128,000 man-years! In 1860, American farmers spent 151,000 man-years repairing and maintaining existing fences and an additional 41,000 man-years building new fences! These figures constitute a substantial drain on the time of the average farmer and outcries about the burdens of fencing by agriculturalists in the 1850-1880 period seem amply justified.

Not only was fencing time-consuming, but there was an increasing need for the amount of fences per acre. Farms were relatively small in size. The shift from a frontier to a more highly developed style of agriculture meant a

higher proportion of improved to unimproved acres, an increase in the livestock-grain combination of enterprise, and a general need for more adequately fenced agriculture. Mechanization had not yet begun to reduce the fencing requirements by allowing for larger fields. It would not have a significant effect in this regard until well into the 20th Century. All this meant that in the 1860's, the average farmer was still burdened with labor-intensive wooden fencing and was, at the same time, facing a need for an increased amount of fencing per acre.

A great debate was raging within the agricultural community as to a solution to this problem. The protagonists took two approached toward a solution. One approach involved changes in institutions, especially fencing laws, and was directly related to the shortage of idle land available for pasture. Efforts were made to shift legal responsibilities

for adequate fencing from farmers primarily producing crops to those mainly raising livestock. In many areas the owners of livestock were made responsible for damage due to trespass of their stock. But these efforts did not substantially reduce the heavy burden of the high cost of fencing.

The second approach involved a persistent search for cheaper fencing materials. The traditional fence of American agriculture was the Virginia, or snake-rail fence. The advantages of home-grown material and ease of construction were eventually outweighed by the prodigious amount of wood used, the large land area occupied by the fence, and its structural weaknesses. To save wood and land, straight-line (post-and-rail) fences were often used: but as soon as sawmills appeared in an area, board fences usually took their place. As agriculture moved onto the western prairies, the scarcity of wood and its consequent high cost

**Taking the Top Rail** *(Continued from Page 14)*

encouraged experimentation. Sod and ditch fences were tried, but with little success. The sod fences simply did not hold up and the ditch fences involved too high an initial labor cost to construct.

Other experiments to solve the fence problem were little more successful. Jonathan B. Turner was a pioneer in the use of hedge fencing, which enjoyed a period of popularity in the 1850's and 1860's. But the extreme care needed to control the growth of the hedges, plus the large amounts of land used and the extensive winter killing after 1855, reduced their usefulness for fencing purposes. Early experiments were tried with smooth iron wire, but met only with moderate success because the wire that was then available could not withstand the changing weather.

It was not until the introduction of a cheap, rust-resistant wire, made possible through the Bessemer process, that the fencing problems of American agriculture were substantially solved. Barbed wire was invented in 1874 and by 1890 had surpassed rail fences as the primary type (See Table). To us today, those pretty split-rail fences, leisurely snaking their way through grassy fields are both quaint and homely. But to the farmer of the late 19th Century, that devilish-looking barbed wire must have seem a God-send. Its impact on farm labor costs was enormous! The man-years of farm labor utilized to maintain and repair fences (line 6 of Table) rose from 128,000 man-years in 1850 to 171,000 in 1880, then fell to only 47,000 in 1910. The reduced drain on the farmers' time is more clearly shown in terms of the percentage of time that adult male agricultural workers (line 7 of Table) devoted to this activity. It fell from 4% to 0.5%! This was caused essentially by the shift from Virginia and post-and-rail fences to board, hedge, and smooth wire fences until 1880, and then a massive shift to barbed wire after 1880.

Given the above background, then, it is not hard to imagine the feelings of the typical Southern farmer when he came out one morning to find that all of his fences had been taken for firewood by an encamping Union or Confederate army. His anger and frustration must have been acute. It would take him years to replace his fences. One wonders if, in many parts of the conquered South, the fences destroyed by the Civil War were ever replaced before the coming of barbed wire in the 1870's and 1880's.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Danhoff, Clarence H., "The Fencing Problem in the Eighteen-Fifties," *Agricultural History*, Vol. XVIII (Oct., 1944), pp. 168-186.

Hayter, Earl W., "Barbed Wire Fencing: A Prairie Invention," *Agricultural History*, Vol. XIII (1939), pp. 189-LU/.

Primack, Martin L., "Farm-Formed Capital in American Agriculture, 1850-1910". (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1962), pp. 67-77.

Primack, Martin L., "Farm Fencing in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. XXIX:2 (June, 1969), pp. 181-191.

Smith, Henry M., "Barb Wire and the Fence Question," Report of the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture, 1881.

**In Mississippi, History Is Now a Salvage Job**

By FLORENCE WILLIAMS  
*New York Times*  
September 8, 2005

THE barrel of the Confederate 12-pounder howitzer was missing, and so was the saddle on which Jefferson Davis rode into the Mexican War. Four days after Katrina, Patrick Hotard's face was shadowed with exhaustion and dismay as he surveyed what was left of Beauvoir, the beachside Jefferson Davis home and presidential library, where he is the director. He had just arrived from his refuge in Louisiana, and many of his worst fears were being confirmed as he picked through the bricks, giant wafers of plaster and nylon Confederate flag replicas.

"Devastated," Mr. Hotard said, a hand on his forehead. "It's a real feeling of emptiness." Beauvoir is not just his personal address - he and his family lived in a house now vaporized on the 51-acre site, which is owned by the Mississippi division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans - but his life's work.

Some \$220,000 had just been spent renovating the graceful gallery porches and the entrance doors, each with its nine oval panes, of the 1852 Greek Revival house where Davis, the Confederate president, spent his last 12 years. Those features are now either gone or in ruins, along with two original porch-wrapped cottages, a replica of a Civil War barracks and the entire first floor of the presidential library.

Mr. Hotard is one of the many curators, archivists and preservation advocates who are beginning to tally the losses in the areas hardest hit by the hurricane, even as emergency workers turn to the more essential tasks of gathering the dead and providing supplies. For preservationists in Mississippi no less is at stake than the region's architectural patrimony.

"Our concern is that people might think we care more about buildings than people, but buildings are them and their community," said Jennifer Baughn, an architectural historian for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. She and David Preziosi, the director of the nonprofit Mississippi Heritage Trust, joined this reporter and a photographer with a full tank of scarce gasoline and drove from Jackson, Miss., to Biloxi on Sept. 1 to begin to survey the damage.

"You can lose what makes a place a place," Ms. Baughn added. "The character it had won't be there."

Cruising slowly along Beach Boulevard, where some of Biloxi's finest homes had stood, Ms. Baughn and Mr. Preziosi were ashen. "Ohh ... " was all Mr. Preziosi could say. The Dantzler House, a two-story raised cottage dating from the 1850's that had just been renovated, lay smashed behind a bronze statue of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, who founded the French settlement of Biloxi in 1699. The elaborately latticed Brielmaier House, which was built around 1895 and had served as a visitors' center in more recent times, was missing altogether. Later, reports came that it was seen floating down the street during the storm.

The preservationists also got word that another beloved landmark, the Pleasant Reed House, an elegant modified-shotgun built by a former slave starting around 1887 that had housed a museum of African-American history, was destroyed except for a chimney. The Tullis-Toledano mansion, a brick Greek Revival from 1856, was also reported gone. Just to the east, in Ocean Springs, a two-house retreat designed by Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright in the 1890's was severely damaged.

The mansions along the coast were mostly built as second homes by merchants from New Orleans and planters from points north. Like large antebellum houses across the South, many were Greek Revival or Colonial Revival in style, but their designs were influenced more by New Orleans and the West Indies than by the upland South.

They and many of the region's more modest vernacular houses, including the so-called Biloxi Cottages, merged folk and European styles to create a distinct coastal form, with wide porches that served as outdoor living spaces, breezy central hallways and high ceilings. No one yet knows how many of them



*The folks who built Beauvoir knew a little bit about hurricane-resistant housing it seems... The last home of Jefferson Davis survived the past 120 years, including "Camille" and now "Katrina." Other buildings on the site were not so fortunate.*



## The Captain's Tent

by Tom Ezell

Contrary to popular beliefs, I haven't quite fallen off the face of the earth... though it probably seems like it, and reenacting-wise, I might as well have. What did happen is that I took over a new job at the Department of Environmental Quality as of the first of August, as the manager for the State's inactive and abandoned sites cleanup programs, including the old Superfund sites (like that Vertac place out at Jacksonville, which is now one of my new responsibilities) and the new "Brownfields" community cleanup and redevelopment programs.

One thing that attracted me is that it lets me use my abiding interests in battlefield and site preservation, and work at that sort of stuff on a lot bigger scale. I got a little more "rank," if you want to call it that in state gov' mint, a bit of a pay raise, a lot nicer corner office, and a heap more responsibility & stuff to do, there being something like a 10-month backlog when I moved over from being a regulator to being a cleaner-upper. The downside is that the quiet evening hours I have previously been using to do things like work on the unit newsletter (or riding bikes) have been pre-empted by "homework," learning the guts of new programs, as well as coming up to speed on all the sites and projects that I'm responsible for. As an added bonus, I got to keep all of my old projects until they hire a replacement for my old job. Hence, the absence of recent updates to the *Sentinel* this summer, and in near-term, it will probably cut down some on my personal event schedule. It has been, however, a heck of a ride and a lot of fun.

For those looking to track me down at the office, the new phone number is (501) 682-0854. For the mathematically inclined, just subtract 22 from my old phone number :-)

Things are starting to get caught up a bit, though it's still some long hours and a frenzy as we work at getting a lot of sampling and clean-up field work done before the end of the federal fiscal year (and the expiration of some of our federal grants to do that stuff) at the end of this month. It may take me a little more time to respond to an e-mail for a little while longer, and I'll be out on the road to one place or another a lot more often, but I'll eventually get one of those "Round Tuits."

### WAY DOWN YONDER IN N'AWLINS...

The events of this past week have brought catastrophe of Biblical proportions with the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast and its secondary impact in the flooding of New Orleans. As things unfold, we may very well have lost the cultural and economic center of the South. While the idea pales in comparison to the human tragedy of the past week, a lot of concern has been expressed about the fate of many of the Civil War sites in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast. At the most recent report, Jefferson Davis' last home, "Beauvoir" in Biloki, sustained major damage, but the basic structure of the house is still there. Most of the outbuildings are a total loss, however. (See [http://katrina.infernal-machines.com/\\_sgt/m1\\_1.htm](http://katrina.infernal-machines.com/_sgt/m1_1.htm)). Confederate Memorial Hall on Camp Street in New Orleans managed to remain above water (it's only a block or so away from the Convention Center) and everything there should be okay. The National D-Day Museum across the street, however, has apparently sustained some vandalism.

Some concerns have been voiced about the Corinth event and how the site fared after Hurricane Katrina. First and foremost is our concern for those in the affected areas. So many people have been touched in one way or another by this tragedy and there's no doubt that some of our own reenacting family are among the unfortunate. Our prayers are with them now and will be with them during the difficult days ahead. If you are able and inclined you might think about how you can help. You'd be surprised what you could do even if you live in Alaska. Check with the FEMA Hurricane Katrina resource information page about ways of helping.

"We are nothing if not resilient and committed." Who said that? I did and couldn't find reference to anyone that may have said it first. General Moore assures that the event will carry on as planned. The site has been inspected and no appreciable damage has been done to it. Any information will be passed down directly from the General or his staff. Stay tuned to the NSA Bulletin Board for the official word. The green lamp is burning and we're on go for the event.

At this point it looks like the Road Trip Crew will be pulling out for Corinth on Thursday evening, September 29th. We'll spend some time with the vendors early Friday, and it looks like the war will start to pick up around Noon on Friday, with the Brigade's move out to their first staging area. We plan to stay over Sunday night, visit the Catfish Hotel Orre-visit it if we get in early enough Thursday evening), and tour Shiloh in a little more detail

on Monday before heading home around mid-afternoon...

### DEJA VU ALL OVER AGAIN...

This issue of the *Sentinel* includes a recent article by Lon Webster, an old friend from the Dixie Guard and FGLHA ovement. Lon has spent a great deal of time and effort over the past couple of years researching the flow of imported goods and equipment into the Trans-Mississippi Confederacy, and recently published a sample of his findings in *The Watchdog*, a long-standing journal of the "hardcore" movement in living history. While Lon focuses on bringing new light into the sources of supply for Confederate clothing manufactories in Houston, and Little Rock, the opening of his article reveals what a stunning loss the fall of New Orleans in April 1862 presented to the fledgling Southern Confederacy. While much of Southern commerce has fled to post-War population centers such as Atlanta, Dallas, and Houston, the loss of New Orleans to the present United State is no less a disaster than it was to the Rebels of 1862. Reading Lon's article on Friday, and watching the demise of modern New Orleans the following Monday was an eerie experience.

I hope you enjoy Lon's article as much as I did... there's more coming.

### THE 'DOG...

While we're at it, I'd like to encourage our folks who have enjoyed the various articles we've reprinted in these pages from the *Watchdog* over the past eight years or so to try a subscription. For years we've relied on the *Camp Chase Gazette* for a look at our eclectic hobby, but over the past year that publication's new owners have taken it from being one of the better publications in the hobby to being one of the sorriest. There have been some new ones coming up, for example the *Civil War Historian*, which I have enjoyed very much but the one that I still read from cover to cover every issue and file away carefully for future reference is The Dog.

*The Watchdog* publishes a 20-page quarterly newsletter quarterly (that means 4 times a year), for \$15 per year, and a nice discount for multiple year subscriptions. You, too, can get on the mailing list by going to <http://www.watchdogreview.com>, or by mailing 15 Yankee dollars to THE WATCHDOG, P.O. Box 1675, Warren, MI 48090-1675. I've got a complete collection filed away, and can assure that you'll enjoy it. And it's a good cause, as all profits from the publication are donated to local battlefield preservation efforts throughout the former Civil War zone.

ARF!



**The Captain's Tent** *(Continued from Page 2)*

**ARKANSAS POST NATIONAL PARK**

The yearly living history will be held at the park on Sept. 24 and 25. *This is a change from the dates that we have been showing on the calendar all year.* The impression this year will be Federal and they need some more people to participate. If you want to take part, contact David Sesser at (870) 230-6859, or e-mail [thecivilwardude@hotmail.com](mailto:thecivilwardude@hotmail.com).

**Coming Events**

September 10-11, 2005 – Bloomfield, MO Picket Post. Confederate impression.

September 24-25, 2005 – Arkansas Post National Memorial living history. Federal impressions.

**October 2-4, 2005 – Battle of Corinth Re-enactment**, Corinth, MS. Sponsored by the North/South Alliance, N/SA maximum effort event. Confederate impression

October 22-23, 2005 – “Battles Around Bentonville” reenactment, (The Event Formerly Known As Cane Hill) Bentonville, AR.

October 31, 2005 – Big Boo-Zeum Bash, MacArthur Museum, Little Rock, AR

**November 5-7, 2005 – Civil War Weekend at Old Washington**, Washington, AR. Confederate impression.

*Events marked in bold type are maximum effort events as voted upon by the Company, and your attendance is expected. If for some reason you will be unable to attend a maximum effort event, please contact Steve Shore or Tom Ezell (6th Arkansas) or W.J. Monagle (37th Illinois) beforehand.*

**37th Illinois Update:**

Here is a summary of the meeting held at Harvey Moore's home on July 31st.

1. Meeting began at 7:00pm. Those in attendance were Mike, Keith, Harvey, Tom, and Jeffery.

2. The deadline for federals to register for the Corinth event and not have to pay the late fee is August 31st. If you have not registered yet, please do so promptly.

3. Keith and Harvey will be riding together to Corinth. Jeffery is going alone at this time. Tom will be fielding with the 6th Ark. Mike will not be able to attend the event.

4. The 37th will be attending as Federals, and will be falling in with the 1st Battalion, Frontier Brigade under Major Don Gross. We have fielded with the 1st US before at Bentonville, and Port Hudson.

5. Tom advised that if we need any spare federal equipment or uniforms that the 6th Ark. has some that they will loan us.

6. Everyone was encouraged to start stocking up on caps and making cartridges.

7. There will be a drill at Reed's Bridge on August 27th for all who want to attend.

8. Mike reported the company/association funds at \$784.02. He also handed out a sheet with a list of all the company's loaner gear listed.

9. Meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

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.

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

<b>Captain</b> Tom Ezell 338 Johnson Road Scott, AR 72142 (501) 961-1937 (501) 912-1047 (cell)	<b>1st Sergeant</b> Steve Shore 68 Stonewall Drive Jacksonville, AR 72076 (501) 985-0560
---	--

Visit us on the Internet at  
<http://www.geocities.com/capitalguards/>

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

**Mississippi** (Continued from Page 15)

survived.

By comparison with many of its historic neighbors, Beauvoir is lucky. The main structure of the Davis house, raised 12 feet off the ground on brick piers, still stands, and many artifacts had been removed before the storm. And because it had been listed by the National Park Service as a National Historic Landmark, the highest ranking, it will be among those first in line for federal restoration money.

For other sites, the competition will probably be stiffer: in Mississippi's Gulf Coast counties alone, Katrina plowed through 15 historic districts and over 120 individual properties that are listed on the lesser National Register of Historic Places, as well as scores of other historically important buildings that were not nationally recognized.

Although Mississippi's oldest building is still standing (a 1720 plantation home called the Pointe-Krebs House on the coast in Pascagoula), historic neighborhoods in Bay St. Louis and Waveland were flattened.

"I can understand why there's so much attention being paid to what New Orleans has lost," Ms. Baughn said, "but I hope we don't get overlooked. We're already being overlooked."

But there are signs of hope. In the 1000 block of Beach Boulevard in Biloxi, the preservationists found a party of sorts under way.

"Want a Coke?" asked Walter Blessey, sunburned, bearded and wearing a Hawaiian shirt. He sat on a red and white cooler, surrounded by high-spirited family members and boxes of carefully gathered china and silver. The 1903 Colonial Revival raised cottage owned by Mr. Blessey and his wife, Katherine, survived more or less intact, minus most of its west wall, the living room floor and a later addition.

"It was designed by a commercial hotel architect," said Mr. Blessey, a lawyer. "That's why it survived." He showed visitors a shoulder-high cupboard holding water glasses still neatly arranged but full of murky seawater. The house smelled of rotting fish.

Around the corner on Seal Street, a shoulder-high berm of debris is all that remains of the first few houses in from Beach Boulevard, but most of the street looks almost normal, if bedraggled. Many of its residents willfully rode out the storm, and the homes proved just as stubborn.

"We had a big window blow in," said Lolly Barnes, 37, who sat with her mother on the porch of Mrs. Barnes's 1905 Queen Anne bungalow. Her toenails shimmered with a perfect coat of red polish; the only outward sign of hardship was the absence of ice in her mother's Scotch.

"This was such a beautiful city," said Ms. Barnes, a member of an old Biloxi family who worked until recently as a historical administrator for the city. "I'm going to miss so much the Colonial Revival homes that gave me pleasure every day, and now they're all gone. It makes me want to move away. I'm terrified of what's going to replace them."

At Turkey Creek, a historic African-American community about 10 miles west of Biloxi that was settled by freed slaves after the Civil War, Mr. Preziosi checked up on a resident who is on the board of his Mississippi Heritage Trust. Although the area is about three miles inland, it sits in the upper reach of an estuary, Bayou Bernard.

The board member, Martha Snelling, rode out the storm, first in her house, then on a neighbor's porch as floodwaters rose, then in the local church. At her house, she said, the water reached to her chest.

Now, like most of her neighbors, she was airing out belongings and clearing debris amid the aromas of an evening barbecue.

"In all my life, I'd never seen the water so high," said Ms. Snelling, who is 56 and works as a drug addiction counselor in Gulfport, Miss. Her yellow cottage suffered structural

and water damage, and her longleaf pines snapped in half.

The residents of Turkey Creek have struggled in recent years against industrial pollution, a proposed expansion of the nearby airport and commercial development draining adjacent wetlands. "At one point we had 70 houses here, now down to 60, and now we've lost more," she said.

One home in Turkey Creek, the Thomas and Melinda Benton House, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2002, and the community as a whole was named one of the state's 10 most endangered historic places by the Mississippi Heritage Trust. The Benton House, a pyramidal cottage, appeared to have weathered Katrina well. Its owners were still out of town.

Across the street Occletta Norwood, 70, was piling branches from several fallen trees on her property and throwing out her soggy living room furniture. Water, she said, rose most of the way up her 52-inch television screen.

"We're survivors," she said. "They've tried to take our land. We've fought for it. As long as the Lord leave us here, we'll survive."

For Gulf Coast residents still reeling from Katrina, water and electricity are priorities, but assistance in rebuilding comes close behind. "I don't need water; I just need FEMA," said Ms. Snelling, referring to the reconstruction funds provided by the agency.

Preservationists, however, hope for speed coupled with prudence. In rebuilding, said John Hildreth, director of the southern office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, "we want to provide information and expertise to make decisions for the long term and not just the short term."

"The loss of so many of these wonderful structures makes those that remain all the more important to preserve and restore," said Ken P'Pool, the director of historical preservation for the State Archives and History Department. "They will become the symbols of stability and continuity around which communities will rebuild."

That tension - between loss and resurrection - already lies at the heart of Southern identity, and it has long drawn people to the region. And no doubt it will again, Mr. P'Pool said. "If the buildings can hang on in the face of such devastation," he said, "then so can we."