



THE CHEROKEE RANGER

American Civil War Reenactors

19th Alabama Infantry, Co. I

Proud Members of the

And

And

First Confederate Legion

Historic Interpreters

42nd Indiana Vol. Infantry

And First Confederate Division

Co. I



September 2004

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Attention, COMPANY!

By Major Jim Rhodes

As I get older it seem as though time moves so quickly! This year is no exception as we rapidly approach the last major events for 2004: The Shaker Village Living History on September 25-26 and the BIG one the Battle of Franklin on October 1-3, the Battle of Raymond on November 13-14 and our Christmas Party on January 1. There is a lot to accomplish in the last few months of this year. I hope that everyone has these dates on their schedules and are planning on being there!

For those of you, who attended the 19th's July Picnic on the 10th and our Fall Muster on August 14-15, thank you for being there! I really enjoyed the "water" fight at the Picnic, and for those of you who missed it, you missed a great gathering and another superbly planned day of activities...thanks to Lynn & Danny Eldridge. As I have said many times we are all richer when we are all together and we are diminished when we are not.

The Fall Muster was one for the books. Not only did we have great drill with some new folks in our ranks, and not only did our civilian corps show up in mass and do their outstanding as always job, also with some new folks, but, we were at Pond Springs on the anniversary of the 19th Alabama's muster into service and on the actual ground on the anniversary where they camped on their way to Franklin. Talk about magic moments and the opportunity to keep alive those



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who have gone before us! We did all this while at the same time providing a living history to help raise funds for Pond Springs and Belle Mont, of which we raised some \$380.00 on that Saturday! Long may each of you who took the time to do this WAVE!!!

On a personal note, thanks to each of you there who wished our young LT Jimmy “the Beard” Rhodes a hearty farewell after our July Picnic, as he left this summer to begin his adventure as a Cadet in the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University. It was an emotional time, and while Jimbo was very excited about his adventure and a little apprehensive, he was wondering when would be the next time he would be able to gather with his pards in the 19th Alabama. I must report that he is doing well as a FISH Cadet! He has been picked as a representative of the corps to the broader university community and surrounding community and to assist in recruiting next year’s incoming cadets as well as being awarded a Corps Scholarship for leadership and is awaiting his full ROTC scholarship offer, which he expects at anytime. He has become a member of the Rudder Rangers which is a special ops Army Unit in the corps and has joined the Eagle Scout Organization. His classes are difficult but he seems to be doing well. His day starts at 5:30am and ends at 10:30pm with many corps duties and of course classes. He attends all of his classes and activities on campus in uniform, so the Cadets are a visible sign of the sprit, commitment and 128 year tradition the university and Corps of Cadets has in building the next generation of leaders for all branches of our armed services. There are some 2,800 cadets in the corps. They are in their own garrison/brigade area on campus this is where the corps has been housed since 1876, its like taking a military academy and planting it on a regular university campus. Carolyn and I were fortunate to have been on-campus for the Corps first review (FISH review) which you can imagine brought tears to our eyes and we popped a few buttons in the process. It is very impressive to see 2,800 young men and women marching to the sound of the corps’ “Fighting Texas Aggie” Band in review and hear and watch the 678 members of the class of 2008 being sworn-in by the commanding general. Jim may get to come home a day or two at thanksgiving but will be here for almost a month at Christmas, he is planning on attending the Farby Christmas Party.

On yet another personal note our other former LT, Cadet Adam Eldridge is now a “FIRSTIE” at the USMA, top dog, head of the pack, boy how time flies! Do I feel old, but of course I look much younger than Danny Eldridge and can dance better too, but I digress! Adam is doing us all proud as always, gained some great leadership accolades while leading underclassmen at Fort Knox and Camp Buckner this summer, Hooah-ah! He just recently had his senior ring ceremony and is now proudly wearing the West Point Ring! May’s graduation and commissioning ceremony is not far off! Thinking back on our youngins who have enriched the 19th Alabama over the years it sure makes this old veteran feel very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to have shared time in my life with these fine young people. I for one look forward to watching our next generation of young folks realize their dreams and the opportunity to share in some small way in their lives.

With the end of the 2004 reenacting year in sight, now is the time to start planning and looking toward the future of the 19th Alabama organization. As I’m sure you know this will be my last year in a leadership and board of director position for the unit. In my duties of field command I have decided that the Battle of Franklin will be my last Harrah, if you will. After the experience of Chickamauga this year it became very clear that I could no longer keep up on the field with the men. I am a firm believer that a leader can not lead from behind or from a position in the rear with the gear. I have enjoyed the opportunity and honor to sever you and the unit on and off the field over these many years and can tell you that I have gotten much, much more than I have ever given. As Col. Paul Whaley would say “It’s been one hell of a ride”. I will tell you though that I am not retiring from the hobby or the unit I will be active with my pard Danny in the useless mess and our living histories, school programs and anything else that doesn’t cause me that have to break a sweat.

I want to thank the NCO cadre for their care of the men and the civilian leadership for the care of our corps. I want to thank in a very special way my buddy Danny Eldridge, I love you pard! Without Danny I could have never done any of the good and correct things I have done as your president and commander. As well, I want to thank my dear pard Don Davis, I love you pard! Don has been Danny’s and my right hand for several years and been the honest and clear voice of the membership. It is my opinion that Don Davis will be one of the finest president/commander this unit has ever had...I personally believe him to be the most qualified individual to lead this unit forward into the future.

I have been talking to y’all for a couple of years about planning for the future and the time has now come for others to pick up the standard and advance the mission of this fine organization and it’s members. You who will carry the unit forward are faced with some challenges; as has been the case for the last few years membership on the military side has been dropping, so how to recruit more soldier members will be a constant concern. Fortunately our civilian corps has seen very strong growth and is now the most

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vibrant part of the unit, how the unit functions, how our resources are used and what organizational structure is best to accommodate the make-up of the unit are decisions that will have to be made. For those who will do this I offer these thoughts, whatever you put into this endeavor will never equal the personal return you receive, never forget that the integrity and honor of the unit must always be upheld, make every decision with the thought of what is best for **all** members of the unit and remember that the 19th Alabama is one unit military and civilian with a thought and eye towards “one for all and all for one”!

As I look back on my leadership tenure I can think of many things I could have done better or should have done differently and for those shortcomings I truly apologize. I can tell you that the decisions I made and the ground I would not yield on certain issues, were decisions I made with the view of what is best for the all members of the unit and does this decision detract or add to the honor of the 19th Alabama. I hope that the unit is better for my being here and not worse for it. I hope that everyone has been made to feel part of something larger than them selves. I know that those who will lead you and the unit forward from this point will have better ideas, more energy and will advance the 19th Alabama far beyond where it is now! Long may each of you wave!

Speaking of leadership, each of you has talents! Please consider what you can do for the unit and our members. We need overall leaders and we need event and activities chairmen and/or chairwomen. Some of these duties have long term commitments while others are for short duration. Please think about what you can do to give back to the unit and this wonderful hobby. Please seriously consider running for an office you are qualified for or stepping up and chairing an activity or an event. We can only continue to be strong if we have new folks willing to learn the ropes and accept leadership roles. We must always be planning for the future of the 19th Alabama and not rest on the past.

Again, as I close my thoughts turn towards our current men and women in uniform and their brave deeds in the war on terror. The price of freedom is not cheap and is certainly not free. Please keep those who keep us safe, save our freedoms, and insure our liberty in your thoughts and prayers. Again, please take the time when the opportunity presents itself or make an opportunity to personally thank those brave Americans currently active and veterans alike, for their service to our nation and each of us.

God Bless each of our brave service men and women and God Bless America!

Hope to see ALL of you in the field soon!

From the Right Flank

By 1st Sgt Russell Spry

This will be my last article as 1st Sgt of the 19th Alabama. It is also my last as a member of the 19th.

I have been with the 19th Alabama for five years. I have met some wonderful folks, done some really fun things and had some good times. But this past year has been a difficult one for me in many respects both inside and outside of the 19th Alabama.

I have become restless as many of us do when routine starts to grind on you and you start to feel out of place and in need of a change. That restlessness manifests itself in many ways but for me I just get plain-ole-hard to deal with. After all, this is the longest I have lived any place since 1988. For me, five years doing anything is a loooooong time.

To combat the same old grind I started implementing changes in the way the Military conducts itself on the NCO front. Some of the changes were good, some good but unpopular because they bucked tradition. Some of the changes and opinions I had were very unpopular and sprung up from the Shiloh civilian conflict. I'll spare the membership the details because they are moot now. The issue was solved, hopefully for good.

I am not leaving reenacting entirely. I am now moving up to the Burritt Museum as a volunteer historical interpreter. I am moving out of the Civil War period to the 1830s-40s in an attempt to broaden my historical knowledge. I may even do some War of 1812.

I will miss being in the ranks, hanging out with my pards, and being a general nuisance to all of you, especially you Yankee-lovers. I hope you'll miss me being a nuisance too.

Just remember, the South was right and Abe Lincoln was a Constitution-trampling #%@^& and I will have done my job. HAHA!

-In Place Rest

Battle of Resaca

By 2nd Sgt Dennis Marshall

The last engagement of the spring campaign for this year was a good note. The 19th, in our 42nd Indiana guise, found ourselves paired with the redoubtable boys from the 33rd (again) – forming the 6th Indiana. Due to our turnout, we were placed under Lt. Rusty's able command, with Lt. Rhodes serving as his second. I was given the responsibility of Second Sergeant for our amalgamated Company. Maj. Rhodes & Capt. Eldridge were generally "useless" that weekend, as "Whaley's Useless Mess" made its first appearance of the year. Aside from an abundance of Poison Ivy, the campsite was grand; save it was a ¼ - ½ mile hike to the nearest "little blue building." Friday night, the 19th struck out to forage for dinner at the old Cracker Barrel, where we ate more than our fair share, but did so in grand company.

Saturday dawned sunny & hot, as we made our way to the morning "opening ceremony." Although the flag raising was viewed by many as a waste of time, I found it to be a neat experience. This was followed by a very light company drill. By this time, the "useless" ones had begun their arduous labors cooking the General's meal that would be served later that evening. We stepped off to a lively cadence for the afternoon's engagement, thanks to the drum & fife from the 33rd. We were utilized as the screen for the Federal forces, and as such advanced across the field in skirmish order, initially driving off the remnants of the Rebel cavalry, until they were re-enforced by a large contingent of infantry. We were pushed back to our works, but we were able to do so in good order, with little panic, where we would remain, holding off the Rebel counter attack.

That evening, the "useless" ones showed that they were not quite as useless as we were lead to believe, when the meal they had worked on all day was spread before us. Roast, beans, potatoes carrots & cornbread made up the main course, but that was nothing compared to the six apple pies that constituted desert. All of us pitched in to help serve & then clean all of the various cook-ware & such, and were treated (as were all of our compatriots from the 33rd) to the lion's share of the food, as the mess had made more than enough for all.

That night, the 33rd struck up the band, and were joined by all of the drummers & fifers in the Federal army. They alternated between the guitar & vocal pieces we have heard so many times from the 33rd (I missed Capt. Master's harmonica though) and the traditional drum & fife cadences from the others. Through this, I gained a lot of appreciation for the musicians that accompany the army, and learned that I could listen to Hell on the Wabash & British Grenadiers over & over.

Sunday again dawned hot & steamy – and the rain clouds tried to threaten us, as they would all day. After a repeat of the morning assembly, we headed back to camp, or sutlering, as the men desired. We broke camp, getting ready for the return trip, then awaited the coming battle. We again served as the screen for the army, and then were moved into reserve. We were assigned the honor of participating in the final assault, charging the very center of the Southern lines. With a hearty cheer we stepped off, but the Rebel gunners bore down on us, and a volley from a battery of Reb artillery finished us for the day, with Cpl. Nick & Preacher gloriously charging the works alone, after our demise.

All in all this was a good event & I look forward to returning to Resaca in the years to come.

Battle of Selma

By 2nd Sgt Dennis Marshall

I arrived with our contingent of troops on Friday evening at the works of Selma. We sortied as a group to the local eat-em-up joint (Shoney's) for the all-you can forage lobster bar. Returning to the camp, I was privileged to join in with the full group of the 33rd singers. They were really on fire that evening, and I was honored to be even a small part of it. This was my first event as the First Sergeant for the unit & I wanted to thank Lt. Davis & Capt. Eldridge for making the experience a relatively painless one for me. I only hope that I was able to live up to your expectations. Friday Night was capped off by an artillery demonstration that left part of the field ablaze, requiring the attentions of Selma's finest.

The drill went well Saturday morning (except for me forgetting to present the Company to the Captain) and we formed up for the afternoon's engagement. On Saturday, we stepped off lively, but were unable to breach the Rebel's defenses, even though it was undermanned, although well-stocked by artillery. After a second trip to the all-you-can forage eat-em-up joint, Saturday night was again capped off by the outstanding Selma Ball. The ladies were out in all of their glory, and the troops turned out in their finery. Music was provided by the Old Town Brass. The event, as usual, went off with nary a snag, and a good time was

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had by all. By a stroke of luck, Capt Eldridge, and a few others and I were invited into an across the street ball party hosted by one of the locals. It was encouraging to see the locals enjoying that event almost as much as the attendees were. They were most gracious hosts and made us, even the token Yankee of the bunch (me), very welcome.

Sunday dawned bright & sunny, but rather cool for this time of year. After taking part in the honor march in the Selma Cemetery, followed by a rather lazy late morning & early afternoon, we formed up and marched out to form up in the river bottom. We stepped out, and though the Rebs put up a spirited fight, our cavalry was able to destroy the outbuildings, then the infantry was called upon to breach the works. Our battalion went straight through the resistance and over the wall of their works, killing or capturing nearly the whole garrison. We then were able to slip out in good time. I would like to thank the 33rd for yet another grand event.

19th Civilians not slowed by Tunnel Hill Cancellation

By Don "The Admiral" Ray

Although disappointed by the Tunnel Hill event cancellation, the 19th Alabama Civilians were not swayed from their appointed tasks to get out there and enjoy the great outdoors. On Saturday Sept. 11th several members of the Civilian Corps gathered at Long Hunter State Park for a day of fun in the sun, picnicking, boating, music, nature watching and great conversation. In attendance were Bill, Mary Ann and Sara Hoover, Erna Gray, Ann Jarrett, and Don and Elizabeth Ray. We met on the shores of Couchville Lake where Miss Elizabeth had set up some tables for all the food goodies. As usually there was not shortage of fine fixings for all to enjoy. We had lots of fried chicken, Subway sandwiches, potato salad, biscuits, fresh tomatoes, and lots of chips, iced tea, and soft drinks.

After a fine meal and visiting it was time to head for the lake. Bill rented a johnboat and Don had his canoe (The Waterbug). Bill, Mary Ann, Ann, and Elizabeth boarded the johnboat while Erna, Sara and Don launched The Waterbug. It was a gorgeous, sunny day with a nice light breeze. The sun glimmered off of the water like a blue quilt covered with diamonds. We headed up the lake with Bill at the oars of his boat and Erna and Don paddling the canoe. Miss Erna took to this canoeing thing like a duck to water and within the first few minutes was already talking about getting a canoe of her own. Bill manned the oars of his craft like a real sea dog, keeping his crew on course for the four-hour tour. Although there was an occasional "slip" of the oar or paddle, causing a spray of water to be projected onto the parties in the other boat. As we silently floated along we saw some beautiful wildlife, including several great blue herons, egrets, a red tailed hawk and finches. At one point we got the canoe only about 30 feet from a great blue heron walking on the shore. The canoe is so quite this beautiful bird just walked slowly along looking us over without intimidation. Every now and then we would see a turtle stick his head out of the water like a periscope, look around and then pop back down again. Several dragonflies flew around our boats with a few landing on our bright colored life jackets (good luck). Then, as we entered the quite, mirror like upper portion of the lake we ran into a school of water bugs, hundreds of them. This location, by the way, is where the canoe got her name. As we passed beneath several high-tension power lines it was so quite we could hear the lines "sing" with the crisp whine of current running through them. Talk about your magic moments...this place was filled with lots of them.

We arrived back at our base camp around four o'clock. We sat around and talked for a while and then Don brought out his Hammered Dulcimer. This is the first time this instrument has been present at one of our unit activities. A couple of the reasons for this is that the "musician" in question is just getting used to the challenges of playing this instrument, and the fact that Don was among friends who would not react to his amateur abilities with any of those fresh tomatoes. This was also a first for Miss Elizabeth. For reasons known only to herself and select family members she has never been tempted to board The Waterbug, although invited several times. She was, never the less, quite willing to join the crew with Mr. Bill in the johnboat. Could this have something to do with the respective captains? This question may be the subject of considerable ponder by other members of our unit around future campfires.

And as the sun sank slowly in the west, this lusty band of folks loaded up bag, baggage and canoe, and headed out with fond memories of the day, and comfort in the assurance that the future holds even more magic moments for folks who will seek them out. Thanks to all of you for sharing this day and the joys of this hobby with one another. We are indeed quite fortunate to be so blessed.



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