



THE CHEROKEE RANGER

American Civil War Reenactors
And
Historic Interpreters

19th Alabama Infantry, Co. I
And
*42nd Indiana Vol. Infantry,
Co. I*

Proud Members of the
First Confederate Legion
And First Confederate Division



2003, Issue 2

July 2003

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Field Commander's Corner

By 1Lt. Danny Eldridge

The members of the 19th have had a few months away from the field and I for one am ready to get back out.

The last event I attended was Selma and we had a great time. It has been several years since I was able to make that event, so it was all new to me again. The 33rd Ala. invited us to camp near their camp even though we were doing Federal and they were doing Confederate. They again invited us to their camp for a great meal and an evening around the campfire.

It was especially interesting and fun for Jim and me when we were getting ready to settle in around the fire after Saturday's dinner. We found that no one but he and I had been to the ball and no one was planning to go. We, of course, felt that to experience Selma you had to attend the ball at least once. So we convinced everyone to get cleaned off and head out. I have to say it was enjoyable even if I had been to several of them before. Especially with the opportunity to introduce our newest and youngest soldier Jake to the fine art of ballroom dancing. In fun, we made every effort to find young Jake a dancing partner even if he didn't want one. I do believe Jake did end up dancing with one or two young ladies, and had a great time.

Some of our members have been absent from the field the last year or so, and we have missed your company. We are starting out the fall with our annual Fall Muster in August. We hope everyone will be able to attend and knock off some of those cobwebs that have gathered since spring. Your Cpls. will be contacting you soon and give you more details of when and where.

Another event you will not want to miss is the Living History at the Chickamauga National Battlefield. If you attended the one we did at Shiloh last year you will not want to miss this one. It is shaping up to be a lot like the Shiloh event so, if you did not make the Shiloh event, don't miss this experience.

We are again putting on a large scale school program, the 3rd of October. We are working very close with the Sumner County, TN. School Director to get this event off the ground. There is a separate article with more detail on this very important event.

Other events coming up are the Battle of Murfreesboro in October, Battle of Tallassee, and Battle & Encampment, Camp Moore, La. in November.

This is our year also for our period Christmas Party that is going to be held on December 27th and the party will concentrate on the time frame of the Battle of Murfreesboro (Dec-Jan 1862). You don't want to miss this great event. There will be more info out on this event in the next few months, so mark you calendar for December 27th.

I look forward to seeing all of you in the field for these events.

From the Right Flank

By 1Sgt Don Davis

We are about to get cranked up for the Fall events. We are working on two places to have the fall muster and should finalize it soon. We have two very exciting reenactments coming in September and October and a fantastic school program planned for October in Tennessee for the Sumner County school district. We need a good turnout for these events! As the events approach details will be sent out through the Corporals.

So with that in mind, I wanted to take a few minutes of your time to discuss a VERY important subject, FEEDBACK.

feedback /fed bak / n. [U] **1** the return of some output into input in order to control a process: *The feedback in the order process function updates inventory levels.* **2** the response to one's ideas (proposals, actions, etc.) in the form of approval, disapproval, suggestions, etc.: *The radio station decided to cancel the show after receiving negative feedback from its listeners.*

I know that over the years one of the hardest things for the command structure has been getting information out to the rank and file. This has improved in the last year or two. But, what has not changed is getting information or feedback from the rank and file through the Corporals and back to Command.

Gentlemen, great effort is placed on getting an event organized for us to participate in. Usually rosters have to be turned in several weeks if not months in advance of an event. Meals have to be planned and work-details need to be assigned.

I know it is sometimes hard for people to predict their schedule and that is understandable but, if you know you are going to go to an event let the Corporals know in advance. They can start their list ahead of time so when they are asked for information on an event they can provide that information quickly. Often Command is placed in a wait-and-see situation. This causes one of two problems, either our roster does not get delivered in time to take advantage of an entry fee discount or people have their names left off of the list in the last minute confusion. Lately, we have had to turn in lists with names we had to just take a guess as to who is going. That costs the company money.

The 19th produces a schedule early in the year for everyone to use in deciding when and where they want to go. When you see an event coming up and you want to go, please let your Corporal know ahead of time. You should not need to be asked first.

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After Action Reviews

Battle of Ft Blakely, April 4-6 2003

By Danny Eldridge

Captain J. Rhodes
Commanding 42nd Indiana Infantry

Major J. Rhodes,

I respectfully submit the after action report on the latest Rebel defeat at Fort Blakely, Alabama. Your brave troops made their way just outside the town of Blakely on Friday April 4th with the end of the column arriving sometime around 6:00pm. We found the ground to be very agreeable for camps and the men set their meager shelters in good order. The afternoon was quite comfortable within the beautiful grounds around the town, near the river and among the swamps surrounding us.

The men were able to relax and forage for food that evening in the local town of Fairhope. It being on the gulf coast, it allowed for good forage of beef, poultry and fish. After returning from the town, the men made themselves comfortable to prepare themselves for the hard battle the next day. I can attest that most of the men heard the threats of the next day's battle buzzing in their ears, like a million mosquitoes, making for a restless sleep. Upon rising from their slumber the men prepared their rations for the long march to the fortress being held by the rebels.

The order was given for the battalion to move out at around 10:00am with the 16th Louisiana boys leading as skirmishers. Our boys being combined with the remnants of the 33rd Ala boys made up the second company. We did not see much of the enemy, but could hear the skirmishers pushing them toward the fortress through the woods and undulating terrain. The skirmish company being spent at the swamp just before the readout below Fort Blakely, we were ordered in to replace them and to push the enemy to their works. Your company showed outstanding bravery and skill in following and implementing the last minute, orders they received. Upon moving forward we found ourselves on a narrow bridge that was heavily guarded by the enemy. I ordered the first squad of our company to the widest point in the bridge to commence a concentrated firing on the enemy that held the higher more imposing position on the hill above us. The second squad was then ordered in front of the first and continued the fire allowing the first squad to reload. Upon reloading the first squad was ordered around the second squad and to show the enemy the cold steel before the enemy had time to reload their weapons. Of course the show of bravery from our boys at charging them up hill, the enemy ran like the cowards they were. The enemy of course found safety within their works behind their artillery. Our battalion was then able to cross the bridge over the swamp and settle into the hill side long enough to reform and continue to push the enemy out of the readout forcing them into the main fortress.

Our battalion was then joined by the other battalion under the command of Col. Thomas that apparently got lost in the swamp. We then proceeded to man rifle pits to guard against any pending attack by the enemy. At approximately 2:00pm in the afternoon our company was ordered to man the most forward rifle pits. I positioned the first, squad on the pits to protect our right flank and the second squad on the left flank. Upon doing so we were soon attacked by a small number of Rebel troops upon our left flank. Having no attack on our right flank I then ordered our company to reform and retire in good order to the next perimeter of rifle pits. Having done so we reformed and repulsed their advances and started pushing them back into the ravine from which they came. The enemy retreated so quickly I could not hold the zealously of our boys who wanted to push them to the river. The boys pushed them beyond the enemies own rifle pits and pushed them back into the safety of the fort. The boys wanted to take the fort, but the Battalion was ordered to retire for the evening and was given assurances we would have the fort the next day.

The evening passed with out many disturbances except for a few attacks upon our flanks up to about 8:00pm. The boys settled in for the night in shelter they built or some just felt comfortable under the cloudy skies. The night passed well and some men got much needed sleep, but were still plagued with the voices of the enemy that buzzed in our ears all night. A light rain lulled some to sleep and kept others awake, but all was well by morning. After breakfast and a good sermon given to us by our sister company the boys were able to lie around and rest most of the morning. The battalion was formed at approximately 12:00pm and our company under the command of Captain D. Masters, was ordered to man the breastworks around our camp. At approximately 2:00pm we were given the order to rise and advance towards the Fort. The men were itching for the fight, knowing that when they took the fort their transportation home was just beyond the fortress walls. After the artillery weakened the enemies resolve

Cont. on page 4...

Ft Blakely (cont. from page 3)

our battalion marched straight into the fort with little resistance, gaining the surrender of the forts commanding General Somers.

Sir, you may rest assured that your boys were brave and fought like they have drilled. I must tell you that it is with pleasure that I was given the opportunity to command such soldiers as we have in our company and that of our sister company that we formed with.

Respectfully submitted
Captain D.P. Eldridge
Commanding 42nd Indiana Inf. Vol.

After Action Reviews

Battle of Selma, April 26-27 2003 and Tannehill, May 23-25 2003

By 2nd Sgt Russ Spry

SELMA

This years Selma event was my first and I'd have to say that the weekend was beyond description. How do you capture all of the emotion that occurs in a weekend like Selma, and then convey all of that on paper? It is a daunting task but one I shall gladly accept.

As I drove down to Selma with Cpl Marshall, listening to old sea-shanties and other period music, we were both hopeful. Knowing that this was an event hosted by the 33rd Alabama, a high level of expectation of fun was present. Both Dennis and I, being revelers at heart, looked forward to the night around the campfire singing, but soon, hopes of even *having* a fire were being doused by BUCKETS of rain! It is hard to build a fire in a creek. Folks, it is impossible to describe! We had to dig, not just a drainage ditch, but a drainage canal around our sleeping area just to keep from floating away that night between the sirens of the flash flood warnings and those of tornado warnings. Luckily, we had just finished pitching the flies when the rain started and we were able to keep most of the unused hay, our gear and firewood dry.

In keeping with the finest traditions of our associations with the 33rd, they helped to salvage the evening by providing a wonderful stew and fellowship. It is a welcome we hope never gets worn out.

Despite being a bit damp on Saturday, and humid to boot, we enjoyed a fine time attacking the works. For those of you who have not been to Selma, the park has an extensive set of works. Not only that, but they build a cabin and barn specifically tagged for destruction during the course of the weekend.

Saturday night and the ball were indeed special as well. I, for one, am glad that Jim and Danny talked us into going. I have never been to an event quite like it. Women in ball gowns, large Confederate flags, period music... what a time!

Sunday we were compelled to wear the blue and fall in with Col Thomas' boys. The union numbers were thin and we ended up assaulting the works at just about skirmish interval to make us look bigger. The great thing about serving under Thomas is his love for firing to the sound of the drums. If you have never done that, it is a nice touch and makes you appreciate the musicians much more. When done properly, the whole regiment can be effective and none of the officers have to go hoarse screaming.

TANNEHILL

Most of the 19th could not make Tannehill this year for one reason or another, but Cpls Ryan and Marshall and I did fall in with our pards in the 33rd and some of the Jonesboro Guard (nice to see ya again). For such a small event tucked (or is it crammed) into such a small location, we all had a good time. Going to sleep to the pleasant glow of the Pepsi machine took getting used to and it was impossible to get cars out of camp because we camped right next to the parking lot.

From what I understand, the battle location changed from previous years and was located up in the trees instead of in the open. Fighting in the shade was great! For once the spectators were in the sun!

The three of us have started another new thing for camp- the chess game. So brush up on your skills.

After Action Report 1860's Celebration, Lebanon, Tennessee, July 7-8, 2003

By Mary Ann Hoover

A small group of the Civilian Corps represented the 19th Alabama at the 1860's Celebration held in Lebanon, Tennessee June 7 & 8th.

Don and Elizabeth Ray, the Hoover clan and our own Ann LaFramboise all attended. The event was hosted by the 46th Tennessee and had us set up in the Fiddlers Grove so we would be part of the living history. Don and Bill strung the telegraph wires a good distance to give a more period effect. Sara and Abby explained the children's games and Ann had the mortuary set up.

The weather was great if you overlooked the rain and wind Friday night through Saturday morning. Things got wet and we were a little damp but the spirits were high. The Hosting Company kept checking on us to see if we were okay and needed anything. I fear they felt another wet Resaca was upon them.

The afternoon battle took place in Fiddler's Grove (a collection of original buildings arranged to represent a village). Ann's coffin was carried down to the general store. In the little school was Mom (Elizabeth Ray) and General John Hunt Morgan's son. Marcus runs out during the battle and gets mortally wounded. When the fight was over, Mom accompanied by Ann went walking through the dead and wounded looking for her son. Elizabeth, with terrific screams, finds her son. The coffin is purchased, the boy placed inside and carried away. The scenario was so realistic that a lot of the spectators and fellow reenactors were actually crying.

The weekend was great. Terre Lawson had her dye pots up in the military camp or was on some front porch with her spinning wheel and the 19th Civilians answered questions to the numerous visitors we had in camp. Linda Salts, one of the coordinators of this event, told us that this event will go every other year starting 2005, so not to interfere with Parker's Crossroads.

Civil War Trails- Port Columbus National Civil War Museum and Andersonville

By Cpl. Jerry West, Staff Writer

Port Columbus

Last year after visiting Charleston and the "Hunley", Jackie and I took a trip to Columbus (PORT COLUMBUS), Georgia to visit the newly opened of the NATIONAL CIVIL WAR MUSEUM. The museum opened in March of 2001. Port Columbus allows visitors to place their feet in the shoes of those who made history in the sea services of the Union and Confederate Navies during the Civil War.

Here you can see remains of the ironclad CSS JACKSON and of the gunboat, CSS CHATTAHOOCHEE. Both of which were burned and scuttled to prevent capture by Union forces.

They also have life size mock-ups of several ships. These include the CSS ALBEMARLE, USS MONITOR, and the USS HARTFORD. The first and latter you can walk thru and see several interior areas of these ships which, I might add, are outstanding.

As you walk thru these you really get a picture of what the sailors on both sides saw and possibly felt. Verbal descriptions don't begin to give you decent picture. There are also many exhibits of weapons and other items produced at the arsenal located nearby. For the model buffs in the unit, there are many scale models of ships and ironclads of the time. All are quite impressive.

Included in the museum is a theater in which you are looking out of one of the gunports of the CSS ARKANSAS during it's engagement with the USS QUEEN OF THE WEST and other Union vessels. It ends with it's being sunk with a torpedo delivered by a Union raiding party. They have the original flag of the ALBEMARLE on exhibition. It was captured by a Union crewman during it's engagement with the QUEEN OF THE WEST and returned in 1999.

So if you have a weekend to kill (or maybe just a day trip), I would highly recommend visiting this site. You can get more in-

Cont. on page 6...

Civil War Trails (cont. from page 5)

formation on the web at: <http://www.portcolumbus.org>

Andersonville

Since you are in the area, you might want to consider going to the ANDERSONVILLE PRISON. It is about an hour + away. On the way we stopped and visited Jimmy Carter's birthplace.

The Andersonville prison site is almost exactly as it was during the war minus the walls, etc. When you view the area you can almost see the mass of union prisoners packed into it's confined area. While several of the walls and gates have been reproduced, it's outline mainly represents the wall and the internal DEAD LINE. The feelings you get for those poor souls that were confined and died there really come to light when you visit the cemetery. Seeing the lines of tombstones packed side by side echo the feelings you feel looking at the interior of the prison.

And if that doesn't get to you, visiting the NATIONAL POW MUSEUM located on the prison site will. It represents and honors POW's from all the wars. It is impressive yet very disturbing how man can treat his fellow man. People are almost silent as they look at the exhibits and displays. It really makes you think.

While there, visit the little village of Andersonville. It is quite quaint. The centerpiece of the village is a memorial to Henry Wirtz. Still remaining is the old train station where Union prisoners arrived before being marched off to the prison. It is now a museum and gift shop. Other than a few improvements, it basically is unchanged.

There are several other original buildings housing little gift and antique shops. Our civilians may enjoy these though some of the other buildings are a little touristy. It is still a neat place.

All and all it was a neat little (and relatively inexpensive) weekend journey into the past. So again, if you got a little time, I would recommend visiting all of the above sites.

CALL to ARMS Sumner County School Program

We of the 19th again have an opportunity to do a great thing. We have been asked by the Highland Rim Historical Society and the Sumner County School Director, to again put on another large scale school program October 3rd. The board has agreed this is a great opportunity for the membership to teach more than 1000 young 4th and 5th graders about the life of soldiers and civilians in the 1860's.

This also is a great fund raiser for our unit to do the things we want and are incorporated to do. The 19th will get \$2.00 per student from the school program and it does appear that the numbers can be over 1000 students.

This year the camp will be set up in a great area with a wooded hill and plenty of shade. The location is the new Station Camp High School between Hendersonville and Gallatin; TN. Students from both cities will be bused in to tour our camps. We will have access to the site from Thursday October 2nd through the 4th.

There is also an opportunity for us to do another candlelight, tour on Friday night. We have not worked out all the details on this yet, but things are looking good for the 19th.

Needless to say to pull off a School Program this size it will take everyone's commitment to put together the stations needed. Please do all you can, to help us out on this and please give me a call or email your level of participation. Again this is a great opportunity for us and I look forward to hearing positive attendance from all of you.

You can email me at Deldri1864@aol.com or call me at 615-855-0231.

Book Review: Lee's Last Retreat: The Flight to Appomattox. By William Marvel

Reviewed by Cpl Karl Ryan, Staff Writer

William Marvel writes a highly critical work of the efforts of the Army of Northern Virginia to escape from the three pursuing Federal armies. I learned many things about the last week of the war that I did not know. Marvel's idea of being highly accurate is to place a lot of blame on folks. The book is written to show the effects of bad luck, poor military intelligence, and the overwhelming desperate situation the Confederates were in during the last week of the war in Virginia. The book reads like a fast paced disaster movie. You know the outcome of the book but you are always pulling for the Confederates to make the escape. But any number of shortcomings, pitfalls, lack of rations, and the Union Army are right there to thwart them.

Marvel uses only the sources written closest to the actual events and not memoirs written decades later. Marvel is highly suspect of Chamberlain's account of the stacking of arms ceremony on April 12. The writer also takes on the creation of the myth of the "Lost Cause." He gives a very good campaign analysis. Basically Lee started 1865 with 75,000 men in the ANV and it's support units. As they fell back from Richmond and Petersburg the first units to give way and desert were units closest to their homes. The northern Virginia units simply melted away as they followed Lee's Army. Hunger, lack of faith in the Cause, and a wish to go home are all listed among the reasons given in the journal entries of the deserting confederates. Additionally some units and individuals slipped away to fight their own war.

By the time Lee's army reach Appomattox, he had only about 7500-armed troops, and 25,000 men without arms. He was surrounded by three armies and out of time. We all know what happened on April the 9th. The author gives multiple impressions of the events of that day. It provided a very moving end of the book. One officer surrendered less than 500 yards from his home. I give the book 8 out of a pack of ten Minie balls.

Book Review: Raising the Hunley: The Remarkable History and Recovery of the Lost Confederate Submarine. By Brian Hicks and Schuyler Kropf.

Reviewed by Cpl Karl Ryan, Staff Writer

Since some folks are headed over to Charleston to be on the honor guard, I thought maybe I should know a little about the story. I got this book from Bill Colvard of my section. It was great. The book is in three parts. The first part is about the history of the Hunley and it's attack on February the 17th. The second part is about the 130-year search for the lost submarine. The third part is about the location of the Hunley and it's recovery. This book covers lots of ground. The story spans 137 years and hundreds of people.

If you have seen the History Channel program then be sure to read this book, as they left out lots of stuff. If you are familiar with Clive Cussler (he funded the expedition) and his works, then that author could not have written a better real life novel. There is action, intrigue, and suspense throughout the entire book. I do not want to give everything away, so pick this one up. You will enjoy. I give this one a Ten out of a pack of Ten Minie Balls.



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Huntsville, Alabama 35815

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Editor's News

By Russ Spry

You will notice that this edition of *The Cherokee Ranger* is basically void of graphics. That is because I lost access to my photo editing software during a computer upgrade. Jerry West, Barry Bowden and others have all supplied photos from events discussed in this edition. Unfortunately, I was unable to edit them for inclusion in this *Ranger*, but I should have the problem fixed shortly. Sorry folks.

This does bring up a related topic: photo galleries. The 19th Alabama web site now has a photo gallery where we can have pictures posted from events. Once I get my software working again, you can send pictures to me and I can edit for file size and quality before sending them off to be posted on the web page.

If you would like to see any of the pictures currently posted, just go to our web page at <http://www.19thalabama.org> and click on the "What's New" section of the page.