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The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER

2012 Summer Edition

Tatton Old Hall 2012

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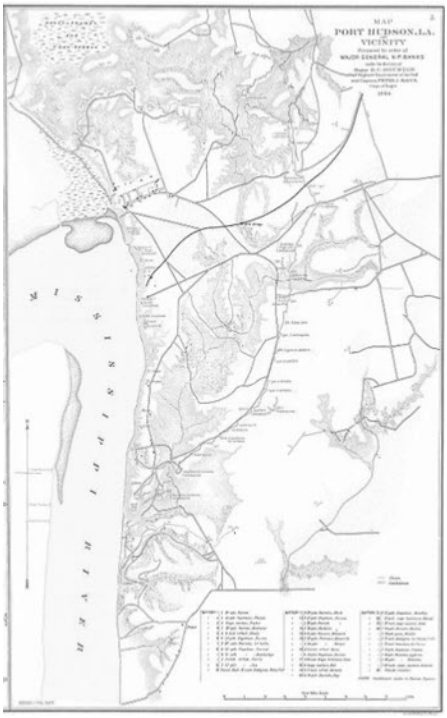
Forty Days and Nights in the Wilderness of Death

The Siege of Port Hudson occurred from May 22 to July 9 1863 when Federal Troops assaulted and then surrounded the Mississippi River town of Port Hudson, Louisiana, during the Civil War. The siege lasted for 48 days with continuous fighting and involved Union General Nathaniel P Banks making two determined frontal assaults on May 27 and June 14 but being repulsed on both occasions. It is regarded as the longest siege in American history. Afterwards, the siege of Port Hudson became known as " Forty Days and Nights in the Wilderness of Death".

Port Hudson was located on a sharp bend on the Mississippi River 20 miles north of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Confederate stronghold, with its defensive fortifications and heavy cannon situated on 80ft high bluffs overlooking the river, protected the vital supply lines flowing north to Vicksburg. The hills and ridges of the town represented extremely tough and rough terrain, deep ravines, thick forests, swamps and cane breaks. It presented as a natural fortress. However, its transport infrastructure was poor by the beginning of the Civil War. Although a single railroad did exist, it consisted of strips of iron nailed flat to rotten ties. The whole rolling stock consisted of only 1 locomotive, 1 passenger car and 6 flat cars. This lack of transport, apart from the river, would make Port Hudson defensively vulnerable. In addition, the commanding Confederate Officer, Major General Franklin Gardner, had demanded the construction of large earthworks for fortification which necessitated continuous hard labour thereby having a severe detrimental impact on the health on the troops. They were also far too expansive to man for the garrison available. Within the fortifications, there was no logistical systems of warehouses to store food, grain, medicines and other necessary military needs.



Port Hudson contained 6,800 Confederate soldiers during the long siege. Throughout this period, supplies rapidly dwindled and became extremely scarce forcing the troops to resorting to eating dogs, horses, mules and rats. Indeed Lieutenant Howard C. Wright of the 30th Louisiana Infantry stated "The last quarter of beef had

been given out to the troops on the 29th June. On the 1st July, at the request of my officers, a wounded mule was killed and cut up for experimental eating. All those who partook of it spoke highly of the dish..... some horses were also slaughtered, and their flesh was found to be very good eating, but not equal to mule. Rats of which there were plenty about the deserted camps, were also caught by many officers and men, and were found to be quite a luxury – superior, in the opinion of those who eat them, to spring chicken". Many Confederate privates also recorded the harsh conditions of the siege. Louisiana Private Robert D. Patrick wrote "never since I have been in the army have I fared so badly and in truth I have been almost starved." Another Confederate soldier wrote " We eat all the meat and bread in the fort.....eat all the beef.....all the mules.....all the dogs.....and all the rats around us". This constant long term consumption of rats with their numerous diseases and mule which was described as a darker colour than beef with flavouring between that of beef and venison could not maintain the physical health or morale of the troops.

With regards tobacco, as it ran out, the rebel troops started smoking sumac leaves that grew wild in the woods. It was smoked by the Indians under the name of "Killickenick" and was reported to be a moderately tolerable substitute. With regards preserving grain, the remaining peas for the troops were so indegistable and unwholesome that they were fed to the horses and mules in an effort to preserve their meagre corn supplies. As a direct result, many were immediately killed.

With regards drink, there was a chronic shortage of drinking water during these hot summer Louisiana months that was exacerbated by a severe drought at the time. As a result, Lieutenant Wright continued "sugar and molasses was put to good use by the troops in making a weak description of beer which was constantly kept at the lines by the barrel–full, and drank by the soldiers in preference to the miserable water with which they were generally supplied".

However, recent discoveries have now revealed that some individual Confederates might have had some different liquid refreshment to accompany their scant and meagre rations. As, during a recent excavation of a civil war rubbish site within the Confederate fortifications, a cache of empty bottles has been found. But these are no ordinary bottles. These are some of the most expensive wine bottles of the era. These include prestigious wines such as Chateau St Julien (a full bodied dry red wine), Chateau Laroze (a dark plum coloured fruity wine) Haut Sauterne (a semi sweet dry white wine) and Chateau Lafite (aka "The Kings Wine"; a very exclusive and rare red wine that currently costs £10,000 per case for a 2005 vintage). The latter has always been and remains one of the worlds most exclusive and expensive wines. So who could have been able to enjoy such fine and rare vintage wines during one of the most gruelling sieges in American history? Who consumed the best of wines in the worst of times? Well, we`ll probably never find out but I do hope that some Confederate officer or soldier may

have been able to find an ironic smile for just a brief moment whilst suffering such harsh deprivations as he savoured perhaps the dry white wine of Haut Sauterne with his semi cooked rat or toasted the deep red plum Chateau Laroze with his slice of mule. After 48 days of extreme hardship, the Confederate garrison surrendered on July 9 1963 after hearing of the nearby collapse of Vicksburg on 4 July 1863. 6,500 Confederates surrendered, 750 were killed or wounded and 250 died of disease. The Confederates could not cope with constant losses through starvation, scurvy, disease, dysentery, malaria, sniping, shell fragments, desertions and sunstroke but had

The Peace Monument At Port Hudson, Louisiana

valiantly held on in the most of extreme of circumstances. By early July, the chronic lack of food, ammunition and supplies had greatly reduced the men available to fight and man the trenches.

However, it is important to recognise that severe hardships were suffered and experienced by both sides in the siege of Port Hudson. The Federal Army had 5,000 killed or wounded and another 5,000 died of disease. Indeed, in recognition of this mutual hardship, Union General Banks offered extremely lenient terms to the surrendered garrison by saluting Confederate General Gardner on his surrender and refusing to take his sword. In addition, he also paroled all the enlisted Confederate troops and only kept the Confederate Officers for exchange purposes with captured Union Officers.

With the loss of Port Hudson (thereby control of the Mississippi river) within the same week as both the loss of Vicksburg and the defeat at Gettysburg, the Confederacy was struck a mortal blow from which it never recovered.

Article by Stewart “Goober” Douglas.

The Vicksburg Chair

A singular aspect of the American Civil War was the frequency with which private soldiers of both armies fraternised when they were not fighting. It was not unusual during lulls between close engagements, or after battles ended, for young men, who had been trying to kill each other to engage in friendly banter. Enemy soldiers on picket lines swapped all sorts of things – a little northern salt for a bit of southern honey, a measure of northern coffee for a plug of southern tobacco, tall tales and hopes for the future.

At no time was such fraternisation more pronounced than during the long weary forty seven days and nights of the Vicksburg Siege. Confederates would yell “ Hey Billy Yank, when are you coming to visit us?” The Federals would answer “Not until you have learned better manners to strangers.” At night each army posted pickets in advance of its lines, particularly in the

final stages of the siege as the Federals closed in, pickets, often just a few feet from each other. By general agreement on picket duty did not fire on each other, and that gave them even more freedom for friendly exchange as the monotonous night dragged by.

Perhaps it was on one such night that the friendship between William Duffner and A K Sheifer began.

Duffner, with the 24th Indiana Infantry spent much of his time at Vicksburg making a full size, four rocker chair on which was drawn, written and outlined with tack heads the details on the campaign. He finished it after the fall of Vicksburg on 4th July 1863 with he inscription, 'From William Duffner, Yank, to A K Shaifer, Reb' and 'May God forgive, unite and bless us all.' And presented it to his friend. It rocks today in the museum at Grand Gulf, Mississippi.

Projects Report

We are well into the season now, so just a few words on past events. We usually go to Sewerby Hall on the last weekend in May, but this time we were asked to attend the first weekend and this showed in the weather. It was very cold during the nights.

The ACWS formed a Guard of Honour for a couple getting married at the hall on the Saturday afternoon, very much to the Bride's delight. That evening the Board put on a Beer and a Bun party. This seemed go to down very well with everyone.

Tatton Park was another good event, although the numbers attending were down. This was probably due to the unseasonable weather we have been experiencing recently, although when the sun did come out, it was very warm and very pleasant.

HULL VETERANS WEEKEND 28th – 29th JULY

This will take place in the same park as last year, although the Family Camp will be sited in a slightly different place and the Events manager has ordered that **NO AUTHENTIC TENTS** will be allowed in the Family Camp this year.

As this event is dedicated to veterans of our Armed Forces, the sponsor has agreed that if you have served and have earned campaign medals; you may wear them to the Drumhead Service on Sunday morning. The proposed programme for this event has been set out as a separate article in this edition of the newsletter.

SPETCHLEY 18-19 AUGUST

This popular event will take place again this year. The artillery will be attending this event, and it is hoped that those who were planning to go to Lanark will now attend this event. Unfortunately dogs are not allowed to attend on the grounds at Spetchley. The usual camping is available from Friday until Monday.

LANARK 18 -19 AUGUST

This event has been cancelled, as I reported previously. The organiser has contacted me stated that he hopes that

the event will go ahead next year in a new location, so keep watching the forum.

SHEFFIELD FAYRE 25 – 27 AUGUST

After waiting many anxious weeks to see if Sheffield Council would be staging this event, it was agreed that it would go ahead as usual. As yet I have no details about times, I will post them to the forum as soon as I have anything to report.

CRIEFF 8 – 9 SEPTEMBER

Unfortunately, I have to report that due to the sponsor being unable to secure funding this event has had to be postponed until next year. He is hopeful that it will go ahead in June on the anniversary of the battle of Secessionville. This is where the brothers from Crieff faced each other in battle.

INGLETON 15 – 16 SEPTEMBER

It is due to the tremendous efforts of John Ward to secure a new site that this year's event will take place. Many thanks John.

The new field is much bigger and has much better drainage, if it does rain…. Surely not again!! The field itself is through the farm next to the caravan site on the right as you approach Waterfalls Field opposite.

A.G.M. BIRMINGHAM 8 DECEMBER

This will be held at Rubery and Rednal Royal British Legion Club, beginning at 1pm.

Thank you to those who manned the cannon at Tamworth to welcome the Olympic flame to the town. This went very well and was greatly appreciated by the organisers.

Now for a gentle reminder,. Would ALL members please return partially or unburned wood to the woodpile at the end of an event and not leave it lying around for those who check over the site before leaving.

The Projects Team are always looking for events for you to enjoy and will pass on any information we get as soon as we get it, so keep watching the forum for details.

Peter Holt and Viv Corbishley
ACWS Projects Team

CALLING ALL VETERANS

Did you serve in the Armed Forces?
If so ACWS and the sponsors of the event taking place in Hull on the weekend of 28th – 29th July would be very happy for you to wear your campaign medals to the Drumhead Service on Sunday morning

Proposed Timetable For Hull Veterans Weekend

BATTLEFIELD PROGRAMME

SATURDAY

11.00 - 11.30 WWI demonstration

11.30 – 12.00 WWII firing display and talk

12.00 - 12.30 ACWS cavalry display

13.00 – 13.45 WWII battle re-enactment and parade of troops

14.00 – 14.30 ACWS battle re-enactment

14.30 – 15.00 WWI and cavalry

15.00 – 15.30 The Humberside and South Yorkshire Army Cadet Force Band

15.30 – 16.00 ACWS and WWII fire power display and march past

SUNDAY

Programme postponed due to the Drum Head Service being held on the Main Stage

11.30 - 12.00 WWI demonstration

12.00 – 12.30 WWII firing display and talk

13.00 – 13.30 ACWS cavalry display

13.45 – 14.15 ACWS battle re-enactment

14.15 – 14.45 WWI and cavalry

15.00 – 15.30 The Parachute Regiment Free Fall Team

16.00 – 16.30 WWII battle re-enactment and parade of troops

16.30 – 17.00 ACWS and WWII fire power display and march past

A range of living history displays are positioned within the battlefield area and on the showground in front of the pavilion café throughout the weekend.

ACWS – NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The American Civil War Society Ltd (a company limited by guarantee, number 2610962) hereby gives NOTICE that it's AGM will be held on Saturday 8th December 2012, starting at 1pm prompt at the Rubery & Rednal Royal British Legion Club, 64 New Road, Rubery, Birmingham B45 9HY.

If you are a current member and have any nominations for posts of Directors or Army Commanders of the Society and/or you have any agenda items appropriate for the AGM, then put them in writing as soon as possible addressed to the Secretary ACWS, P O Box 52 Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 1JQ. These MUST be received at this location by NO LATER than Saturday 6th October 2012.

Nominations for other than existing post holders have to be signed by the nominee and proposed by at least one other current member, who must also sign the nomination. The nominee may submit a short address for circulation to the membership to support their candidature.

The current Directors are standing for re-election as at the date of this notice are as follows:-

Chairman	-	Denis Jarwick
Secretary	-	Philip Clark
Treasurer	-	Ian Morris
Membership	-	Miss Claire Morris
Projects	-	Peter Holt
Marketing	-	Roger Willison-Gray
Confederate Army Representative	-	Kevin Holden
Communications	-	Mrs Val Holt
Webmaster	-	Mike Bussey
Projects Assistant	-	Mrs Viv Corbishley

Mr Tony Radcliffe is standing down as H&S Director and Mr Martin Cross has been duly proposed and seconded as the new Health & Safety Director and is standing for election accordingly.

The current Army Commanders are standing for re-election as at the date of this notice as follows:-

Federal - Tim Davies (a Director)

Confederate - Bill Brown (not a Director, hence Confederate Rep on Board)

Once relevant inputs have been received, the AGM Agenda can be put together and the appropriate documentation sent to you before the AGM.

Please note, only current members of ACWS are entitled to vote at the AGM or to submit proxy forms. Members who wish to attend the meting are asked to bring their membership cards to the AGM to help validation, admission and/or voting if necessary.

For and on behalf of the Board
Philip Clark

Company Secretary and Director 19th June 2012

NB: 1) There will NOT be a Dance this year arranged by ACWS. However , as far as we know at this moment the Worcester Re-enactors will be having their Time Travellers Ball that Saturday evening.

2) Electronic delivery of Agenda and voting slips . We will seek to send all the AGM paperwork to all those of you who have e-mail addresses electronically by that means (to cut down on printing and postages) and post only to those who currently have no e-mail address or who have specifically opted-out of e-voting. PLEASE NOTE , your Webmaster has devised a secure way for you to deliver your Proxy Vote electronically . This will save everybody a lot of time & cost of postages. If you are coming to the AGM , you will NOT be voting electronically (or by post) . However , you all need to make sure either Mike Bussey or Claire Morris have your correct , up-to-date e-mail address for this to happen. If you fail to do this then you will not get the AGM papers or proxy vote form , will you ?

Make sure we have the right information by NO LATER than Saturday 29th September 2012.

Chairman's Report

Well the season has finally started. The Union and Confederate training weekends have come and gone and, to my knowledge, both progressed well.

Our first event was Sewerby Hall, and although the weather was not as kind to us as in previous seasons I feel that overall everyone enjoyed the weekend. I also feel that special mention should be made of the performance of the Cavalry. The authentic horse line, drill displays and the first wedding escort all passed off extremely well and was appreciated by those members of the public who braved the weather to come and see us.
So my congratulations to the O. C. David Blackmore and all of his team.

As many of you were aware there was a small regimental event at Kiplin Hall earlier in the season. The attendance was good (as was the weather) and the event organiser at the hall was, I am informed, pleased at our drill displays and interaction with the public as the event had been well publicised. It was pleasing to see the co-operation between both Union and Confederate troops to entertain, and perhaps, to inform, the public of our society and just as importantly our capabilities and professionalism. It is earnestly hoped that our efforts will bear fruit and that a full society event will follow next season. However that is an issue for the Projects, whom I am sure will keep us informed of any further developments.

My thanks to all those members who, despite the gloomy weather forecast made the effort to attend Tatton Park, the majority of whom I am informed enjoyed the event. However since returning from Tatton Park there have been a number of concerns raised by some members which have been brought to the attention of the Board. These issues will be treated seriously and discussed in detail with the relevant parties at our next Board Meeting which will be held on the 11th August.

Denis Jarwick
Chairman ACWS

The Battle of Secessionville

As it is hoped that the event at Creiff will go ahead next year I researched where the brothers faced each other in battle.
The Battle of Secessionville (or the First Battle of James Island) on June 16, 1862, was the defeat of the only Union attempt to capture Charleston, South Carolina, by land during the American Civil War.
In early June 1862, Maj. Gen. David Hunter transported the Union divisions of Brig. Gens. Horatio G. Wright and Isaac I. Stevens, under the immediate direction of Brig. Gen. Henry Benham, to James Island, where they entrenched at Grimball's Landing near the southern flank of the Confederate defences. Benham landed 6,500 men from the 3rd New Hampshire, 8th Michigan, 7th Connecticut, 28th Massachusetts, and 79th New York

"Highlanders" on the south eastern end of James Island, and marched toward Charleston. However, Brig. Gen. Nathan "Shanks" Evans, who commanded less than half that number of Confederate forces, made up of troops from South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia, met the Northern troops at a fort at Secessionville commanded by Colonel T. G. Lamar and routed them. The Union suffered 683 casualties (107 dead), compared to 204 (52 dead) by the Confederates. Although the battle was minor, it served as a powerful propaganda victory, increasing morale particularly in Charleston and offsetting recent Confederate losses in the Western Theatre. Benham had acted against orders in attempting to take James Island, and he was subject to a court martial after the loss. Although the numbers involved were small, the stakes were high. The Union would continue to attempt to starve and attack Charleston for the rest of the war, and, had they succeeded, the "Fort Lamar" at Secessionville (which had been named not for the secession of South Carolina, but for an earlier attempt of some plantation owners to rebel) would have controlled the harbour.

Brother Against Brother at Secessionville

BY WILLIAM J. HAMILTON, III

Excerpted from a longer and more detailed article by J. Tracey Power, "Brother Against Brother: Alexander and James Campbells's Civil War," South Carolina Historical Magazine, 95:2 (April 1994)

Two brothers, born in Scotland and building new lives in America found themselves fighting each other for their adoptive countries at Secessionville in 1862.

They immigrated to America in the 1850's. Confederate James Campbell settled in Charleston where he worked as a drayman and clerk, joining a militia company known as the Union Light Infantry, sometimes called 42nd. Highlanders (probably after the 42nd British Black Watch Regiment because of its predominately Scottish ethnicity). His brother Alexander settled in New York, but spent time in Charleston working as a stone mason on the new U.S. Customs House being built at the end of Market Street shortly before the war. While in Charleston he also enlisted in a militia company later identified in letters from his brother as "the H.G.s" which was probably the Home Guards, composed of foreign born residents of Charleston. In March 1862, James and the Union Infantry were consolidated into the Charleston Battalion. In New York, Alexander joined the 79th Highlander regiment. As preparations for war were made on both sides, the brother's corresponded. Alex's unit was transferred to Charleston and occupied parts of James Island in early June 1862, placing him in sight of the city where he and his brother had once lived and that's conquest he had sworn to help obtain. Federal Alex learned of his Confederate brother's service in the vicinity of Secessionville from Henry Walker, a prisoner captured in a skirmish on June 3, 1862. He relayed the information

Cont. On page 24

The Ladies Page

What Lady Ought to Know About Wearing a Victorian Corset

Wearing a Victorian corset is quite different from any other garment you've worn. The body is formed into another silhouette with heavy fabric and metal boning – no wonder it feels different! Although a corset can restrict movements and habits, you can adapt to the corset's limitations and learn to move quite well. Until you are used to it though, go easy on yourself, spend some time wearing your new corset before the next event, and remember to relax. Just because you are donning a restrictive undergarment doesn't mean your entire body becomes petrified and stiff.

Lacing & Unlacing – the most important but overlooked side of corset wearing First, make sure the laces at the waistline come out and back in on the same side to create the tie loops. This is the best lacing method to get that waist cinched down. Ties that tie at the very top and/or bottom are not effective. Use one long lacing string about 7 to 8 yards long for maximum comfort in getting in and out of the corset. To put the corset on, spread the corset halves by opening the laces wide first. Then wrap the corset around your body and fasten the busk. Tighten from the top to the waist then from the bottom up to the waist pulling the slack with the tie loops. Continue this pattern until you're snug but not tight. WAIT several minutes (like, 5 to 30) then tighten the laces again to where you need them to be to fit your costume. Do not over-tighten the first few minutes you are getting into your corset. Give your body a chance to adjust, move organs around, and accommodate the shifting blood flow. To remove a corset, untie the knot/bow and pull the laces loose from waist to top and waist to bottom continuing in reverse the same manner as in tightening the corset. Loosen slowly until the blood has settled in the torso area and you can open the busk easily. Never pop open the busk to remove a corset when it is on and tightly laced. Doing so will cause the blood from the head to rush into the torso which can cause severe light-headedness, possible fainting or other unwanted health issues. ALWAYS loosen the laces in the back first, even if only a little, before removing a corset.

Breathing Learn to breathe to the fullest in the upper portion of your lungs. Practice deep breathing before you put on your corset so you get a feel for what a true deep breath is (using your entire lungs and diaphragm) and how you can get a large amount of air into the top part of your lungs. Avoid breathing too shallow. You don't want to hyperventilate. Think of your breathing When exerting yourself with walking or dancing. When dancing, allow yourself to sit out every once in a while to recapture oxygen. You may get wrapped up in some occasions and forget to breathe (unconsciously). Resting will keep the light-headedness away.

Eating Take small bites and chew well. Start with half the plate size you normally would serve yourself and do not overeat. Avoid carbonated drinks

SEWERBY HALL

Photos by courtesy

Of Stephen Griffin

ACWS ARTILLERY WELCOMES THE OLYMPIC TORCH TO TAMWORTH

Photos by courtesy of

Stephen Griffin

TATTON OLD HALL

Photos by courtesy of

Stephen Griffin and Ian Morris

Tatton Old Hall

Photos by courtesy of

Stephen Griffin and Ian Morris

(e.g. sodas, sparkling water, champagne) or consume very little amounts. Burping and retaining gas in a corset is not fun.

Walking/General Moving When wearing your corset, don't bend at the waist too much. A corset is designed to keep you in an upright posture. Bending forward or to the side can cause damage to the boning or busk by severely bending and perhaps breaking them. Metal busks and bones CAN break. Use your thigh muscles to bend down, reach the floor, stand up, etc. Since your legs are not restricted, they come in very handy for movement while your torso is stationary. Allow the corset to support your back. Although it is possible to slouch somewhat while wearing a corset, do not do so. It may put undue strain on your lower back. Be very careful leaning forward while standing, especially when holding a heavy object such as a full wine bottle to serve or handing a bag to a friend.

Sitting Perch on the front end of the chair or bench. Keep a straight posture. Rest/relax IN the corset while keeping an upright figure; let the corset hold you up. If you must recline, do so gently and easily. Avoid deep or overstuffed chairs. Side chairs will keep your body aligned and prevent twisting the back (which CAN happen).

Riding in Vehicles Move the seat back to a more upright position. You might have to adjust the seat forward a bit too to get you closer to the steering wheel. Climb in, shifting any skirts to the side or gently pile them on your lap. Move the seat belt carefully over your chest. The shoulder belt should cross in the same manner as you normally wear it. Have a friend close the door, securing you in. Leaning over to close the door can be tricky – be careful to not strain your back. If you are riding in the back seat, a small pillow between the seat and your back may be more comfortable as it will put you in a more upright position.

Using the Facilities Wear historically accurate split-crotch drawers. Ladies knew that when a corset was snug at the waist there was no pulling down of any sort of pant-type underwear. Open drawers allow women to respond to nature easily. Proper drawers are the best choice, but note that it is extremely difficult to wear BOTH modern underwear and drawers at the same time. It is not recommended. Nor is wearing only modern shorts, bike shorts, PJ bottoms or a thong with a corset and full period clothing

Facilities Trick: Walk front first into the stall. DO NOT turn around. Lift dress/skirts/petticoat and sit on the commode backwards facing the wall. This may feel weird at first but is amazingly quick when wearing a corset and many dress layers. Make sure you have split-crotch drawers on when attempting this. Keep hanging corset laces pulled up and/or tucked under the corset. Walk out of the stall backwards instead of turning around while smoothing out the front of your skirts.

Taken from an article
by Jennifer Rosbrugh

I think the facilities trick may be difficult in a portoloo tho. Editor

CONGRATULATIONS

I am sure that we all wish to congratulate our Membership Secretary, Claire Morris, on her recent engagement to Gareth Hamilton.

I hope you both enjoyed your surprise party at Tatton Old Hall. Did you think ACWS would actually let you get away with not having one.

Wishing you a long and happy life together.

Statement regarding Proxy Voting at next AGM

As you will all note from the Notes at the end of the formal AGM Notice in this edition of our Newsletter, we intend to go for e-proxy voting at this Decembers AGM. Mike Bussey has done a lot of work to sort this out & prepare, and the voting system has been trialled, and “tested to destruction “(Thank you, Martin Cross!) and found to be valid & secure.

If other organisations can do it, so can we!

However, IF you do NOT have an e-mail address or do NOT want your AGM papers by e-mail / vote electronically for your Proxy Vote then tell us, and you'll get your usual AGM papers through the post. However, we would like to send out the AGM paperwork by e-mail to as many of you as possible, in order to save on expensive printing & postage costs, and to increase efficiency.

Remember, if you are coming to the AGM, then you vote there, NOT by Proxy!

So firstly we need to verify your e-mail addresses. A lot of you good folks change your e-mail account or provider without telling us, or your in-box gets full up or you have written your e-mail address so unclearly on your Membership renewal form that we get it wrong. Of the Newsletters sent out electronically, each time about 30 get bounced back, and we have to send out a paper copy!

So we need to sort this out. Tell Claire Morris or Mike Bussey - preferably by e-mail - of your correct e-mail address soonest, if you are NOT getting your Newsletter successfully electronically (but you asked for it that way) or if you have changed your e-address or if you have just come onto this" new-fangled, whizzy-wonderful " thing called e-mail !!

Then Mike will e-mail you all to check our data-base out and to advise that you have to opt-out by positive reply if you do not want AGM papers and e-proxy voting this way. For the balance, which we expect to be the majority of you, in due course this autumn, Mike will send e-voting instructions and a link to the AGM documentation and Membership renewal forms held on the ACWS web-site. This will be password protected. Opt-outs will have to be in good time so I can send paper versions out, so note the cut-off dates in the AGM Notices. You have been warned!

We are keen not to disenfranchise anyone. I've done a trial e-proxy vote & it was remarkably simple & easy. If I can do it, any of you good folks can!

All the e-votes come to me, as Secretary, directly and are copied to Mike our Webmaster for backup security purposes. I report the result of the voting at the AGM in the usual anonymous way. Don't try to vote more than once electronically - we'll catch you!!

One last thing: there is an anomaly where a household has more than one Member to vote but only one e-mail address or one has opted-out. To be secure, we have to know an INDIVIDUAL'S e-mail address (you'll see when you vote how the pass wording works) so other users of a “family / joint e-address" or opt-outs in that household will have to get the paperwork by post.

Right - hope that’s clear to you all. So let’s give it a go, then!

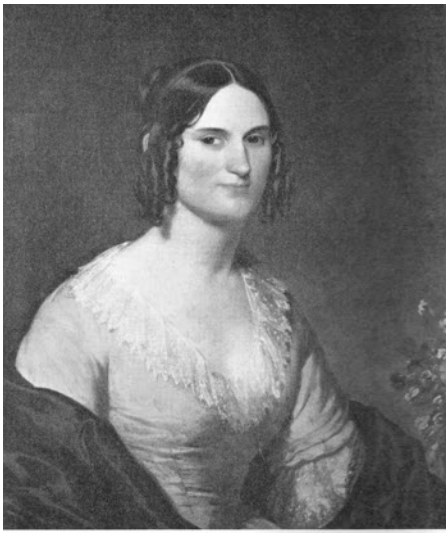
Philip Clark
Secretary

They Surrendered Honourably

Mary Custis, was the great granddaughter of Martha Washington and daughter of George Washington Parke Custis. She must have had a happy childhood at the beautiful home she grew up in, Arlington, it was where a young West Pointer, Robert E Lee, whom she had known since childhood, came to visit in 1827. Mary returned his affections and he offered marriage, which proved to be a very happy one, They married four years later on 20th June 1831.

When war came, her beautiful home. Arlington, was confiscated, her belongings were swept away. She knew the anxiety that must be endured whose husbands and sons are in frequent combat and against heavy odds. She watched as Virginia was drained of men, money and resources, we can have some idea of the privations of the time when we read in one of his letter that General Lee sent her two peaches.

After the surrender of the South in April 1865, she wrote the following letter to her cousin, Mrs Edgar Snowden, wife of the editor-owner of the Alexandria Gazette.



Young Mary Custis Lee.

Richmond 18 April

My Dear Louisa,

I cannot tell you how much I was affected by your kind letter the first I have received from ant friend since our terrible calamity and your offering us asylum in you hospitable home when I know with your large family you must find it very difficult to maintain them –

Should we never by in a situation to reward your kindness God will not forget you and your store like the widows curse never fail. We have passed through a terrible ordeal the last 10 days. Our gallant army greatly reduced by starvation and constant exposure during the whole winter to a foe which outnumbered them so greatly, discouraged by the knowledge that their homes were desiccated their families suffering became demoralised – 25 thousand threw down their arms and the 8 thousand 5 hundred who alone retained them, after several days of hard fighting without any food save a few ears of corn nor rest day or night cut off from all their provisions although they told Gen Lee they would follow him anywhere and they decided if Grant had required an unconditional surrender to sacrifice their lives and cut their way through the enemy, yet when the terms he offered were so honourable Gen Lee told them he did not think it right to sacrifice the lives of so many brave men when nothing could be gained by it – My husband and two sons got here yesterday & Rob I believe is safe tho he has not appeared yet – There are accounts of all this in the Herald so falsified that you would have a very incorrect idea of the whole affair, one thing is certain that the enemy have succeeded in their cruel and cowardly design avowed more than a year past of starving out those whom they could not subdue in any honourable way-

It would take volumes to record the savage cruelty which has produced this state of things, of the houses burned over the heads of the inhabitants even in the depth of winter, the last morsels taken from helpless women and children even the bedclothes that covered them, the mills and all implements of agriculture destroyed, the watches torn from the bosoms of our refined and gentle ladies the rings from their fingered and ears, & insulted and even knocked down by these wretches & often by negro soldiers & yet we are expected to return with joy into the union with such people & to forget the desiccation they have

Invaders on the steps of Mary Lee's Arlington

wrought upon our fair land and our people. Future generations may forget but we never can & there is many a foul deed committed upon isolated and unprotected dwellings that can never be recorded – I wish you could have witnessed Lincoln's triumphal entry into Richmond. He was surrounded by a crowd of blacks whooping and cheering like so many demons, there was not a single respectable person to be seen & one kerchief was waved from the Spotswood Hotel by a Yankee woman – we must submit to the will of Heaven but this is bitter pill for the South to swallow May God overrule it all for their eternal good & let us all see that in mercy we have been so afflicted & humiliated.

The girls and Nannie Lee who is staying with me unite in so much love to you and yours and all our old friends in Alexandria.
Gen Lee begs his special regards to you and yours & tells you much he appreciates your kindness. We are all unsettled now and know not what our future may be. I will write again when our plans are arranged – There is a report here today that Lincoln & Seward are assassinated but I cannot believe there is any truth in it. I should be glad to hear from you, can you tell me anything about Arlington.

Yours most affect'ly
M C Lee

The Largest Prison in the World.

On 3rd December 1864, Union Cavalry entered the empty stockade at Magnolia Springs in Georgia. They were already resolute and determined with rumours rife up North of desperate conditions in Confederate prison camps and they were eager to free their comrades. In addition, General Sherman was also eager to enlist thousands of Union prisoners to join his invading Army as they reeked destruction throughout the Deep South on their infamous "March to the Sea". On their arrival, the Yankee Cavalry became even more distraught as they realised the Rebels had beaten them to it by removing thousands of Yankee prisoners in the middle of the night just 4 days earlier. The site of a very hastily and freshly built shallow grave with the simple wooden sign "650 buried here" compounded this pent up anger. The stockade and everything inside was immediately burnt to the ground and the transportation railway hub and hotel at nearby Millen was also completely torched. The site was then totally lost to history with no-one having any interest in either the location or possible whereabouts of this Confederate prison camp. It remained a very minor and obscure footnote in the annals and history of the American Civil War.
Until, in December 2010, Kevin Chapman, a young graduate student at the Georgia Southern University decided to write a Thesis for his Archaeological Degree on Camp Lawton and its possible size and location. The result was to astonish Civil War historians and archaeologists alike with one of the most important finds in decades of American Civil War history. As not only had he discovered the exact location, size and dimensions of the Camp Lawson prison site but also numerous invaluable personal Union artefacts.
Camp Lawton was built in October

1864 and was specifically designed to accommodate the overspill of Union prisoners at Andersonville. It was located in Magnolia Springs, near Millen in Georgia approximately 50 miles south of Atlanta due to easy access to the Augusta and Savannah railroad. It was designed by Confederate General John. H. Winder and the camp itself covered more that 42 acres. It was estimated that the

camp could accommodate over 40,000 Union prisoners. The camp itself was built in September 1864 by 300 Union prisoners and 500 slaves and was of 42 acres. It was a log stockade 12 to 15 feet high with guard towers known as "pigeon roosts" by the both the guards and inmates. Outside the stockade was a ditch dug with walls and then at least 3 earthworks on the higher ground for artillery placements with cannon to deter any mass breakouts. Inside the stockade was a 30 foot deadline of low pine scantlings to deter prisoners from approaching the walls. In addition, there was a guards camp and hospital, a sutlers cabin, a prisoner of war hospital and a log building for administrative purposes. Significantly, General Winder was promoted to Commissary-General of Prisons East of the Mississippi whilst based at Camp Lawton so this administrative log building became, for a short period, the centre of all the administrative duties for the whole of the Confederate prison system. On its completion, General Winder said "It is, I presume, the largest prison in the world".

Union prisoners started arriving in late October 1864 but had no living quarters. As such, they built lean twos, she-bangs, shelter halves and covers from all the scraps of pine and wood left over from building the log stockade. Although conditions were extremely poor, it did benefit from a fresh supply of water from Magnolia Springs which was regarded as a drastic improvement from Andersonville. By early November 1864, the only existing Confederate camp return record to Richmond indicated that the Camp held over 10,229 Union prisoners of whom 349 enlisted in the Confederate Army, 486 had died and 285 were working as parolee labourers inside the camp. Overall, it is estimated that between 750 and 1,200 prisoners died at Camp Lawton. Conditions of both the receiving long term prisoners from Andersonville and the winter months would have contributed to this. Due to scant existing Confederate records, it is thought the camp was guarded by the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Georgia Reserves (mainly poorly trained old men and teenage boys), the Florida Light Artillery and the 55th Georgia Regiment. The Confederate forces commander was Colonel Henry Forno and the Confederate camp commandant was Captain D.W. Volwes. The camp was only in existent for 10 weeks as with the rapid approaching Union Army under General Sherman, the Confederate Authorities were compelled to move the prisoners as soon as possible and they moved them further South by the end of the month and before the imminent arrival of the Union Cavalry. They were moved to various locations including Blackshear and Thomasville Camps in Georgia and some were transported back to Andersonville. In addition, some sick Union prisoners were later exchanged for sick Confederate prisoners at the port of Savannah in a formal mutual exchange.

At the present time, due to its extremely significant historical importance, Camp Lawton is being very carefully excavated. It is envisaged that excavation will now take many years due to its size and importance. Many professionals thought that due its short lived nature that there would be nothing left of worth. However, if as is now expected, the Union prisoners and Confederate guards were moved on in

a hurry, many personal artefacts and historical items could still remain. Although less than 1% of the site has been excavated, the very recently discovered finds during 2011 have been fascinating. These include 2 coins of Austrian and German origin, spoon bowls and handles, makeshift pipes, bullets turned into gaming pieces, a well preserved tourniquet buckle, jewelry, keys, minie balls, various coins including a Michigan grocery token, brickwork installations for prisoners ovens, a suspender buckle from Massachusetts, a soldiers ring and a Corps badge with insignia of the Union Army 3 Corps. It is hoped that by identifying particular items with certain Union states, the location and grouping of regiments within the confines of the camp can be verified.

Whilst researching this article, I came across a record of a very rare letter sent from an inmate, John Ransom QM Sergeant 9th Michigan Cavalry at Camp Lawton to his family. I quote exactly verbatim from the letter as I think it says so much. "This morning we have drawn rations, both the sick and the well, which are good enough. The stockade is similar to Andersonville but in a more settled country, the ground high and grassy, with no swamp at all. A portion of the prison is timberland and the timber has been cut down and lays where it fell, and the men who arrived before us have been busily at work making shanties and places to sleep in. There are about 6 thousand prisoners here and I should judge there was room for twelve or fifteen thousand. Men say they are given food twice each day which consists of meal and fresh beef in rather small quantities but good and wholesome. The rebel officer in command is a sociable and kindly disposed man, and the guards are not strict, that is, not cruelly so. We are told our stay here will be short. A number of our men have been detailed to cook the food for the sick and their well-being is looked to by the rebel surgeon as well as our own men..... Barrels of molasses (nigger toe) have been rolled inside and it is being issued to the men, about one-fourth of a pint to each man, possibly a little more. Some of the men, luxuriously, put their allowances together and make molasses candy of it". By this letter, it indicates that Camp Lawton would appear to be a far improved environment than Andersonville.

The treatment of prisoners of war by both sides in the American Civil War reveals a deep and disturbing chapter in the annals of American history. Camp Lawton has recently now been revealed as part of that history. As such, it is vital that such places are preserved and interpreted in order that civil war historians, scholars, enthusiasts and archaeologists can reveal more about the stories and events that took place particularly in the Southern theatre of the War where few historically relevant places remain. Sites such as Camp Lawton are so extremely rare it is imperative that those authorities responsible do everything they can to protect the past for future generations and are financially supported despite the current economic difficulties. It is vital that the stories told from both sides are recorded for posterity. Fortunately, Camp Lawton is located within the Magnolia Springs State Park and this provides an element of statutory protection. In addition, the area is now fenced off and under close 24 hour

surveillance to deter and preventing looting. I will keep everyone updated of further finds and developments.

Stewart “Goober” Douglas. Article dated 9/1/12.

Sources: Civil War Prisons and Escapes. A Day to Day Chronicle by Robert. E. Denney.

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Cont from page 11

home in a letter to his wife on June 10. "We are not far from each other now . . . this was a war that there never was thelikeofbeforeBrotheragainstBrother." Neither knowing at the time, they fought each other at Secessionville. At the peak of the first and most successful attack against Ft. Lamar, Alexander, now a Colour Sergeant in the 79th planted the United States Flag before the parapet of Ft. Lamar and kept it there in the face of massed musketry and canon until ordered to withdraw. In the midst of the fighting, when Confederate resistance began to buckle, James, now a Lieutenant in the Confederate army, mounted the parapet unarmed, rolled a log down into the mass of advancing federal troops, seized a Federal musket and continued fighting. The Charleston Mercury reported, "The foe, it is true, displayed admirable courage, the famous Highland regiment, the 79th New York, occupied the prominent place in the picture, but their desperate onslaughts were of no avail against the stubborn resolve and lofty valour of our brave boys."

The Charleston Courier editorialised on the two brothers, "another illustration of the deplorable consequences of this fratricidal war." It stated Alexander Campbell, "fought gallantly in the late action" and "displayed ... a heroism worthy of his regiment and a better cause" while James Campbell "was conspicuous and has been honourable mentioned on our side."

Afterwards Confederate James wrote his Federal Brother, "I was astonished to hear from the prisoners that you was colour Bearer of the Regiment that assaulted the Battery at this point the other day." James continued, "I was in the Brest work during the whole engagement doing my Best to Beat you, but I hope you and I will never again meet face to face bitter enemies on the Battlefield, but if such should be the case You have but to discharge your duty for your cause for I can assure you I will strive to discharge my duty to my country and my cause." The letter from brother to brother was carried across the bloody fields of

James Island under flag of truce. Shortly after the battle, Confederate James tried to visit his federal brother by going to the Union lines and asking if the 79th. N.Y. was on picket duty. They went and the officer in charge of the Federal troops would not allow James to cross the lines and search for his brother nor would he send for Alex so he could be brought out for a meeting. Alexander wrote his wife in New York, sending along a copy of James' letter, "it is rather bad to think that we should be fighting him on the one side and me on the other for he says he was in the fort during the whole engagement, I hope to god that he and I will get safe through it all and he will have his story to tell about his side and I will have my story to tell about my side." After Secessionville the war continued for these two brothers. Alexander went with his regiment to be wounded in the foot carrying the U.S. colours in the aftermath of the Federal defeat at 2nd Manassas (2nd. Bull Run) He was one of five Highlander colour bearers wounded during that Battle. At that battle General Isaac I. Stevens took the flag from one of the colour Sergeants to rally his men, crying, "Give me the colours! If they don't follow now, they never will!" The General charged forward a few feet and was killed by a shot though the head. It is unknown if Alex Campbell was present at this incident, or had already been wounded. Alexander never fully recovered from his wound, was promoted to 2nd. Lieutenant and eventually resigned his commission and left the Federal army in May 1863. James continued to fight for the Confederacy, helping to defend Charleston. In the famous attack on Battery Wagner by the 54th Massachusetts and other federal units on July 18, 1863, James was in the fort, having endured a terrible artillery barrage. The Federals overran part of the fort. James volunteered to investigate. He jumped atop the dark parapet in the night, demanded the troops identify themselves and was attacked by two federal soldiers who lunged at him with their bayonets. He pushed them from the parapet. They fell on their own bayonets and James ordered the other Federals there to surrender. They grabbed him by the leg and dragged him into the ditch below. When they withdrew from the fort, they took James as one of their five prisoners. Newspapers reported, "the oath of allegiance was tendered (Campbell) at Hilton Head, but rejected with the utmost scorn and contempt." While a prisoner, he was promoted to 1st. Lieutenant. While a prisoner, he corresponded with his brother Alexander. He was eventually freed on June 12, 1865 and returned home to Charleston.

After the war James managed a Plantation and eventually bought land on the Ashepoo River South of Charleston. he was active in Charleston's St. Andrews Society and the United Confederate Veterans. Alexander moved to Connecticut and established a business manufacturing "artistic monuments." They corresponded with each other and were on good terms after the war. James died in 1907 and Alexander died in 1909.

Who says Britain did not take part in the American Civil War?

Ed

MAMA'S MUTTERINGS

I apologise if this is more like Mama's Moanings than mutterings, but I feel I must say something about Warning Orders.

I have tried sending them out two weeks to ten days to the event and was told by many of you it was way too soon as they forgot about them by the time the event came round, so I then sent them out a week before the event and was told by others it was too late. When there are two events close together it seems that some of you get the orders confused, so could I please space them out. So what's a girl to do? When do you want the Warning Orders sending out to you? Do you receive the Warning Orders at all? I send warning orders out to each address and also ask your officer and/or NCO's to pass them down through the chain of command in the hope that someone along the line holds the correct email address. Then again, do you actually read the Warning Orders if you do receive them? Judging by the questions I get asked on camp I am beginning to doubt it.

The Warning Orders are for your benefit. I try to give as much information as I can so you know where and when and at what time you can arrive and leave the event.

Any special notices are printed in bold.

On occasion times or the programme order may have to be changed at short notice on the request of the event sponsor and this is out of the control of ACWS.

Please make sure that the Membership Secretary has your correct e mail address if you are not receiving the Warning Orders. You can do this when you sign in. Your help in this would be appreciated by myself and the Membership Secretary.

Enough of my moans for now.

See you all at the next event.

Val Holt
Communications

DRIVER WANTED

Driver wanted to transport Ordnance Trailer to and from events.

The Society will pay all fuel costs and if necessary, provide a tow bar.

The trailer will normally be required on site by the Thursday prior to the event.

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Mike - 01832 734674

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All advertisement & editorial copy should be sent by the above date

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EVENTS CALENDAR 2012

July 28-29th - EAST PARK, HULL Full Society Event

August 18-19th SPETCHLEY Full Society Event

August 25-27th Sheffield Fayre Full Society Event

September 15-16th - INGLETON, North Yorks Full Society Event

December 8th - ACWS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Watch this space for future events