



Tennessee

# Sons of Confederate Veterans

## The Hunley Torpedo

The Lt. Dixon – CSS Hunley Camp, Sparks Nevada



Virginia

Number Seven

Website: [crossmicro.com/csshunley](http://crossmicro.com/csshunley)

July 2006

### Dues are Due

Compatriots, this is that time of year again for those of you who haven't already paid up. The SCV year runs from August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 1<sup>st</sup>. There is a grace period if you need the extra time until November 1<sup>st</sup> for national dues. On the camp level the grace period ends on September 1<sup>st</sup> for the newsletter.

Out of the \$32 we receive, \$20 goes to national and \$12 goes to our camp. We have some of the lowest camp dues among all of the 850 SCV Camps in the country. And almost all of it goes toward financing our newsletter. Eighty per cent of our membership receives the Hunley Torpedo in printed form. The only way our camp generates extra money for projects are by extra donations, the dues saved by the twenty per cent who receive the newsletter via email and fund raising efforts by Joe Scamihorn.

Traditionally, we have sent out the newsletter to delinquent members for the full three months of the national grace period. Usually, up to ten per cent of the membership does not renew. This means that the members in good standing are paying for the others to receive this publication for an extra three months. In order to avoid this disparity, those in arrears for dues will receive their last newsletter in August. After that date, they will receive everything they missed if their status is brought up to date. Please send your dues check made out to SCV to:

Ralph Covington, Adj.  
1719 Matteoni Dr.  
Sparks, NV 89434

Or to:

Lee Cross, Cmdr.  
1580 Ridgeland Dr.  
Sparks, NV 89434-1616



### Dark in August

Compatriots, there will be no meeting in August. I will be out of town during the first couple of weeks. Also, our summer attendance has been off. This is as usual and is due primarily to vacations. We will meet in September. Official notice of where will be in the August newsletter.

### Special Thanks

The following men enclosed donations up to an additional \$50 when they sent in their dues:

Rick Farmer  
Jim Mancuso  
Davy Crockett  
George Martin

### In Memoriam

Compatriot Connie Edward Cox passed away. Connie was a Rebel's Rebel; so much in fact, that I almost felt like a Yankee in his presence [Well, maybe not, that's too extreme]. He was only with us a short time but never missed a meeting. A Navy Veteran of WWII, Connie was in his 80s. Joe and I contributed flowers for our camp.

## Important Resolution From Our July Meeting

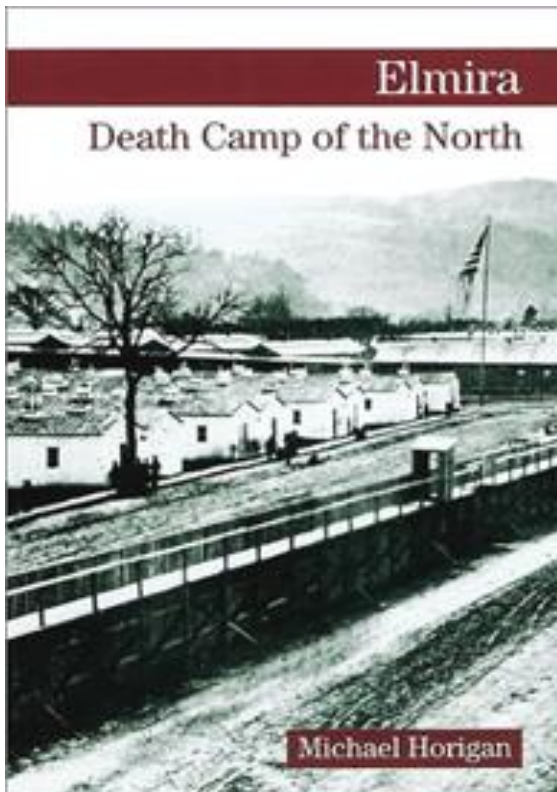
It was approved by unanimous acclamation at the July meeting to change the day of the week and time of our meetings. The weekends are a favored time for family activities, trips out of town and for other conflicting activities of high importance.

For the time being, we are considering all suggestions from members. No time is best for everyone. The consensus at the July meeting was for these meetings to take place from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. If we hold these at a public eating establishment, we would probably convene about 6:00 PM for supper. The most auspicious day of the week is probably Monday. Everyone present thought this was the best time. I need more input from the membership and would appreciate hearing from all who plan to attend meetings.

I also considered having these meetings in my own home. This would however, prove disruptive to my household during the school year. I have since rejected this idea.

There is a downside to this. The library is not open that late which would force us to another location automatically. We are grandfathered in our time slot there now, but we will lose it if we change. Considering the time of day though, we are automatically propelled toward using a restaurant.

Compatriots, again, I ask for your input on this.



### **Books: Elmira: Death Camp of the North**

**288 pages, \$18.87 from Amazon.com, no tax, plus shipping of about \$3.49.**

The prison camp for the Confederates at Elmira, New York, had the highest death rate of any prison camp in the north, almost 25 per cent. Comparatively, the overall death rate of prison camps in the south was 15 per cent.

This story shows in all in detail.

Michael Horigan taught and lectured American History for more than twenty years. His views were included in a 1993 Public Television documentary on this subject called Helmira: 1864-1865. This is his first book.

## General Lee's Warhorses



General Lee used more than one horse during the War Between the States. The famous picture of him riding 'Traveller' above was taken late in the war. Lee's first horse was named 'Richmond' after the capital city, whose people presented it to him in 1861. 'Richmond' was a good horse but he didn't like being around other horses which certainly doesn't work well for the general of an army. Considering the horse was an important gift, Lee used him for a time and then sent him to the farm.

Lee actually knew of Traveller in 1861, but the horse wasn't for sale. The grey gelding was named 'Greenbrier' at this time. This was because he won several blue ribbons at the Greenbrier County Fair in Western Virginia. At another time, the horse was actually named 'Jeff Davis' after the president.

Lee's second horse was a roan gelding of good disposition but it didn't have much stamina. Lee got rid of this one and acquired his third horse of which he was very fond. It was a chestnut mare named 'Lucy Long' and General Lee usually just called her 'Miss Lucy'. She finally broke down after two years of rigor and forced marches and was sent to a farm for a rest. Here she was captured by the Yankees. After the war a friend of General Lee found her in a riding academy, purchased her and gave her back to the Lee Family. "Miss Lucy" was used as a pleasure horse for the family until the age of 31 when she was humanely put down.

In 1864, Lee tried to buy the gelding 'Greenbrier' again. This time, he was able to purchase it for \$200. Lee actually turned down the horse as a gift; its owner was an admirer of Lee. The horse was strong with a fast walk, so much so in fact that General Lee renamed him 'Traveller'. Traveller carried the general throughout the remainder of the war including home after Appomattox.

Shortly after General Lee's death, Traveller stepped on a rusty nail, and contacted tetanus. There being no cure for this in those days, Traveller was shot to end his agonizing suffering.

# CIVILIANS, SOLDIERS, AND THE SACK OF ATHENS, ALABAMA

**This Article is Condensed**

**By Theodore J. Karamanski**  
**Historical Research and Narrative**

**S**oldiers from Illinois clashed with southern rebels at Athens, Alabama, in May 1862, and sacked the town. Yet, the name of Athens does not appear on the list of battlefields associated with the Nineteenth and Twenty-fourth Illinois Infantry. What happened in Athens was an atrocity, by no means on the scale of My Lai or Lidice, but an arresting break with the image of Christian soldiering that had marked the initial year of the American Civil War and a step on the road toward making the conflict a total war. The incident at Athens is an example of how in the course of a war both politics and society become enmeshed in the escalating violence of the conflict.

The incident occurred in the wake of the costly Union victory at Shiloh. The federal Army of the Ohio pushed deep into the Confederacy after capturing and using the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. The sudden occupation of northern Alabama shocked Southern civilians. Among the many towns garrisoned by the Yankees was Athens, the seat of Limestone County and home to nine hundred civilians. Many of the townspeople professed to being pro-union and offered to cooperate with the Army of the Ohio. That may have lulled the soldiers into a false sense of security because on the morning of May 1, 1862, the First Louisiana Cavalry mounted a surprise attack on the garrison, driving the Union soldiers from the town. Residents of Athens delighted in the blue coats' rout, aiming curses and spit at the fleeing foe. The rebel cavalry was "greeted with cheers and a waving of hats and handkerchiefs... the ladies at the tavern brought to light a Confederate flag that hasn't seen the light in some time..." wrote diarist Mary Fielding. As many as one hundred townsmen joined with the Confederate soldiers in a six-mile pursuit of the retreating federal garrison.

Rebel commander Colonel J. S. Scott reported, "My boys took few prisoners, their shots proving singularly fatal." The fortunes of war swung just as suddenly the next day when the Eighth Brigade (consisting of the Eighteenth Ohio, Thirty-seventh Indiana, Nineteenth Illinois, and Twenty-fourth Illinois) forced the Confederates to once again abandon Athens. Colonel John Basil Turchin led the counterattack. Determined to punish the citizens of the town for what he regarded as treacherous conduct, Turchin strode into the town square and loudly told his officers and men: "I shut my eyes for two hours." The angry and tired soldiers required no further clarification, and they proceeded to sack the town. Shop windows were shattered, and in short order jewelry stores, druggists, and dry goods stores were relieved of their wares. With enthusiasm the troops then turned to the private homes of Athens. Bureau drawers were pulled to the floor and trunks were pried open with bayonets and rifled in the quest for valuables. Some men feverishly pocketed silver utensils, gold watches, and jewelry. Others simply sought the tobacco, sugar, or molasses that would improve their rations. Most— even officers— seemed to have delighted in insulting the men and women of the town. Although physical violence was kept to a minimum, troops firing their guns into one home unknowingly caused a pregnant woman to suffer a miscarriage, resulting in both the mother's and fetus's death. "Indecent and beastly propositions" were made to many of the women, and at least one "servant girl" was raped. When night came, the soldiers appropriated private homes and completed their despoilment by chopping roasts on pianos and cutting bacon on rugs before

## Continued from Page Five

retiring. "Men who had been sleeping in the mud," one veteran recalled, "laid fine broadcloth on the ground that night and slept on it."

John Basil Turchin sat before the court-martial for ten days while the citizens of Athens enumerated the abuse they suffered at the hands of his Eighth Brigade. Turchin made an appealing villain. He was born Ivan Turchinenoff and was educated in a Russian military academy. After rising to a post on the Czar's staff during the Crimean War, Turchin immigrated to the United States. He settled in Chicago, where he was one of the leading construction engineers for the Illinois Central Railroad. Testimony by the Alabamians, however, painted Turchin "as fierce and brutal a Muscovite as the dominions of the Czar could produce." Such descriptions reveal native-born Americans' suspicion of immigrant soldiers as potentially more brutal and less honorable than native-born Americans. This suspicion was reinforced by the fact that the Twenty-fourth Illinois, which participated in the sack of Athens, was a largely German unit. Its Colonel, Geza Mihalotzy, also a veteran of European armies, was reprimanded for having "behaved rudely and coarsely to the ladies" of Athens.

Even after he was found guilty by the court-martial, Turchin remained a potent symbol of a new willingness on the part of Illinoisans to see the harsh hand of war directed against the citizens of the South. Although General Buell ordered Turchin dismissed from the Army, Turchin was invited back to Chicago, his adopted hometown, for a hero's triumph. Amid the "din of clapping hands, stamping feet, vivas and huzzas," Turchin announced that instead of being sacked from the service, President Abraham Lincoln had set aside the verdict of the court and promoted him to the rank of Brigadier General.



### Laura J. Williams

Disguising her sex, she raised a company of Texans for the Confederate Army early in the war. She was known as "Lt Henry Benford" and she ably led her company at the Battle of Shiloh and during several other actions during The War Between the States.



### Brigadier General Thomas Jordan

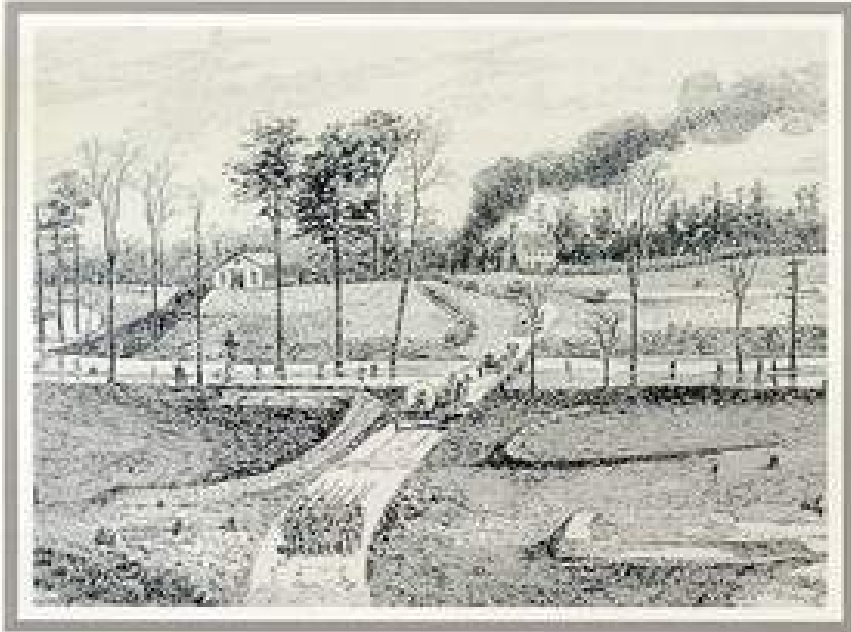
Self-determination was a treasured thing to this great Confederate General. In 1869, he went to Cuba and joined the Cuban Revolutionaries there. For a time, he was chief-of-staff of the revolutionary army. Then he rose to become its commander-in-chief. The Spanish put a \$10,000 price on his head.

In 1870 General Thomas Jordan soundly defeated the superior forces of the Spanish at the Battle of Guaimaro. But the Cuban cause for freedom received no support from outside sources. Due to the lack of supplies, General Jordan later resigned and returned to the United States.

Jordan had also been a hero of the U.S. Army during the Mexican War. As a Confederate Officer, he served prominently at Manassas and Shiloh.

# Big Bethel

## The First Battle of the War Between the States



Most people have come to believe that the Battle of Manassas was the first battle of the war. That is not so. The first battle took place near the town of Big Bethel on June 10<sup>th</sup> 1861. It was a Confederate Victory but on a much smaller scale.

During the blockade of Chesapeake Bay in May-June of 1861, Union General Benjamin Butler arrived at Fort Monroe on the southern tip of the Virginia Peninsula to take command of the Union troops

This was the same Butler of later New Orleans fame, also known as 'Beast Butler' who a politically appointed general from Massachusetts. He was probably the worst of the union generals who incompetence was demonstrated on numerous occasions including having his 30,000 man army whipped at the Battle of Mansfield, Louisiana by Richard Taylor's 8,800 Confederates. Butler also showed incompetence at the 'Battle of the Crater'. Butler did not like the nearness of the Confederates to Fort Monroe and decided to push them back.

Opposing Butler's 4,400 Yankees were 1,400 Confederates under the command of Colonel Daniel H. Hill, who later in the war became a general and one of Lee's corps commanders. Hill's Virginia and North Carolina Troops occupied their position on June 7<sup>th</sup> and spent two days building a solid earthwork behind Brick Kiln Creek where the road from Fort Monroe crossed the Black River.

During the night Butler dispatched his Yankees in two columns against Big Bethel. They were to converge at dawn and launch a surprise attack on the Confederates. Instead, they blundered into each other, mistaking each other for Confederates and firing into each other's ranks. This alerted the Confederates.

The confused Union soldiers at first retreated and then regrouped. At 9:15 A.M. they advanced toward the Confederate position and came under artillery fire. The Yankees were repulsed after suffering 86 casualties to a mere 8 for the Confederates.

This first battle of the war took place just eight weeks after Confederate guns fired on Fort Sumter. The Confederate Artillery at the Battle of Big Bethel was under the command of Major George W. Randolph, a grandson of President Thomas Jefferson.



# The Heritage Page



By John Kindred

## Mississippi Division Taking the High Ground

I know that our camp gave generously to the restoration of Beauvoir but after reading the article from the Clarion Ledger, shown below, I feel it's important to continue supporting the restoration project.

**The following information is from the Mississippi Division website:** As was feared, Beauvoir and the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library suffered heavy damage from Hurricane Katrina. These two structures can and will be restored given time and funding. However, it is with great sadness that the Library pavilion (where Jefferson Davis penned "The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government", the Hayes cottage, Soldier's Home Barracks replica, Confederate Soldier's Museum, Gift shop, and director's home were totally destroyed.

**Artifact search and recovery has already begun, with restoration to begin soon.** Replicas of those buildings totally destroyed will be built after the restoration of Beauvoir House and Presidential Library are complete.

<p><b>Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis Home and Presidential Library</b>  2244 Beach Blvd.  Biloxi, MS 39531  (228) 388-4400</p>
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<p><b>Financial Contribution</b>  Beauvoir Relief  P.O. Box 7  Meridian, MS 39302-0007</p>	<p><b>Equipment and Supplies Contribution Contact:</b>  Rick Forte  601-268-3323</p>
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### An Article from the 'Clarion-Ledger' Washington Bureau

But civil rights groups and at least one congressional budget hawk decry congressional plans to provide money for rebuilding Beauvoir, the majestic house in Biloxi built in the 1850s that served as Davis' retirement home after the war. Damage to the home amounts to at least an estimated \$25 million.

**"We adamantly oppose the restoration of Beauvoir," said Mississippi NAACP President Derrick Johnson.** It is one of the most divisive symbols in this state and in this state's history. The federal government has no responsibility to rebuild historic sites damaged by a natural disaster."

But at the behest of the National Trust and other historic preservation organizations, Senate Appropriations Chairman Thad Cochran has included \$80 million to restore storm-battered historic property in a \$27 billion emergency hurricane package. The grants would be administered through state historic preservation agencies in Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama. They also would be used to repair historic sites such as Beauvoir, a complex of buildings that includes Davis' coastal home and several outbuildings. One building is a library where Davis wrote "**The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government.**" Another was a barracks for Confederate soldiers that served as a museum.

"Certainly, I'd think Beauvoir would be eligible and a priority," said Cochran press secretary Jenny Manley. "Thousands of historic structures were damaged by last year's hurricanes. These funds are important to ensure the full economic and cultural recovery of the Coast."

But the money for Beauvoir in Cochran's home state and other historic places may be challenged by Sen. Tom Coburn, R-OK. "He would be concerned about this not being a true emergency," Hart said. "When people are homeless, that should be the first priority."

Stephanie Jones, executive director for the National Urban League Policy Institute, also said the money to restore Beauvoir "Does not seem to be an emergency."

Most armies have wished they had a General Lee, we did.

Lee's Tomb

