



Sons of Confederate Veterans

The Hunley Torpedo



The Lt. Dixon – CSS Hunley Camp # 2016 of Sparks, NV

Number One

Website: www.dixon-hunley.org

Jan / Feb 2009

Camp Report

We are getting off to a great start for the year. Four men who had let their memberships expire have informed us that they plan to renew these soon; and another one already has. In addition to this the Lt. Dixon – CSS Hunley Camp welcomes its newest members; they are:

Douglas Barnes
William (Bill) Kohse
David Von Medlin

At this rate, it won't take long for our membership to again exceed one hundred men.

Our website is up and running, Ken Hanson has done an excellent job in restoring it; and we recommend that anyone who hasn't done so already review it.

Next Meeting

It will be on Saturday, February 14th at 10:00 a.m. in the conference room of the Sparks library.

Bill Hawkins in Afghanistan

Sergeant Bill Hawkins is a helicopter mechanic in the Nevada Army National Guard, and a member of our camp. He was activated along with his unit and sent to Afghanistan. At a recent camp meeting at the Black Bear Diner, we resolved to send him a package of treats in appreciation of his service to the country. Rodney was able to contact him, and Bill gave us his "wish list." Bill would appreciate receiving some good quality jerky; long cut Copenhagen; and books about the "War Between the States." It was voted that this would come out of camp funds. We will likely repeat this, so your suggestions for future gifts are welcome.



From the Commander Col. Rodney Clifton

Well time is rolling on. I am almost thru my 1st month as your Camp Commander. And it has been a pretty busy month to say the least. We held our Lee / Jackson Dinner on the January 17th and by all accounts it was a resounding success. We raised a nice amount of money for the Southern Legal Resource Center (SLRC); and everyone there had a really good time during the dinner as well as during the fellowship before and afterwards. I was amazed by all the positive comments about my uniform coming from other patrons in the Casino. Others of our group had the same experience.

Also, former member, Robert Lee Smith lost his father recently. Keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers as they go thru this difficult time. Robert is going to renew his membership into our camp in the very near future. I hope to see you all at our next meeting.

Photos from Our Lee / Jackson Dinner are shown on the following two pages. Forty-three attended. Apologies, two persons were missed!





Excerpts from “The Amazing Civil War” by Webb Garrison

When Bathing Wasn't a Smart Idea

Capt. H. C. Weaver of the Sixteenth Kentucky led one of the regiments that tried to stop John B. Morgan's famous 1863 cavalry raid into that state. According to Weaver, a band of retreating Confederates was heard approaching while “many of the infantry were bathing in the creek.” His men “gathered their clothes and ran toward their guns as a preface to one of the most ludicrous spectacles of the war – half-nude soldiers fighting Morgan's men.

Confederate Gen. Matt W. Ransom gave men of the Twenty-fourth North Carolina permission to bathe in a mill pond on July 26, 1863. Most of them were still in the water when several hundred cavalymen in blue converged upon the scene. Following orders to grab their weapons and man the trenches, Ransom's men had their fingers on their triggers when the enemy arrived. For five hours, the Union horsemen “tried to find a way around the entrenched nudist of Boone's Mill, but the swamp behind them was too vast.”

Pride in our Flags

Under the right circumstances, a dramatic loss of any kind was enough to reduce a strong man to tears. At Antietam, thirteen Confederates died trying to defend the flag of the First Texas regiment. Union soldiers had to roll a dead officer off the flag so they could seize it as a prized trophy. When the triumphant Yankees carried the banner passed captured Confederate Lt. William E. Garry of the Fourth Texas, Garry asked for permission to reach out and touch it. As he did so, his eyes welled with tears.

Union Lt Thomas B. McClure's diary of the 1861 siege of Lexington, Missouri, includes a highly personal passage: “At three o'clock our noble flag was taken down and handed to General Sterling Price, and as the deafening cheer of the rebels went up, again my eyes filled with tears”.

Punishments

Fellows who took one drink of beer too many were forced to strip and then climb inside a barrel for a stay of hours or days. This mild punishment was imposed so frequently that any ordinary barrel came to be called “a wooden overcoat.”

In at least one instance, a general who earlier had murdered another general became enraged when some of his men took dresses from the homes of enemy civilians. Humiliation was punishment enough, Jefferson C. Davis told his provost marshal. Thus the culprits were tied behind wagons after being forced to don their stolen finery and wear placards reading “STOLEN” that hung from their backs.

Who Am I?

A Yankee who first saw this Rebel cavalry leader at night, by the dim glow of candles, was so fascinated by the charismatic leader and superb field commander with no military training that he penned a long account of his visual impressions: “His eyes appeared to be brown-pleasant looking and lit up occasionally by a gleam of soldierly bravery. His expression, both pleasant and striking, is given to his physiognomy by the slightest possible elevation of his eyebrows. The latter are black with a slight tinge of gray and a black moustache and chin whiskers, both cut short, add to the military bearing of the man. His face is long and cheekbones rather prominent, eyes large, though not noticeably so and the waxen face and black whiskers gives a very aristocratic appearance. His habitual expression seemed rather subdued and thoughtful, but when his face is lighted up by a smile, which ripples all over his features, the effect is really charming.” **Who am I? I am General Nathan Bedford Forrest.**



Death Is Coming

The above line is a chapter heading from a book entitled *Quantrill's War* by Duane Schultz. But this excerpt is about others among these Missouri Rebels. It is paraphrased here to fit the page.

Bloody Bill Anderson led his men into Centralia on September 27th 1864. There his men executed 24 Union soldiers from a train, each taking three bullets in the head. Only days before, a young boy had joined Anderson's troop so that he could fight alongside his brother, Frank. The sixteen-year old boy was named Jesse James. Anderson wanted revenge; recently, some Union troops had scalped six of his men. He seemed to forget that only days before his own men had scalped five Yankees and cut the throats of three more. The fighting in Missouri was no gentlemen's war.

An hour after Anderson's departure from Centralia 147 Yankees rode into town under the command of Major A. V. E. Johnson. Outraged, Johnson vowed to chase Anderson's men down. It wasn't the Yankee major's finest decision. His state militia was mounted on commandeered plow horses that had not been broken to the sound of gunfire. He would have to fight on foot and was chasing some of the finest light cavalry the world had ever seen. Add to that, Johnson's men were armed with long-barrel muzzle-loading Enfield rifles. And his Yankee boys had only been in the State Militia for one month.

Anderson and his men were back in camp when scouts rode in telling of the Union pursuit. Bloody Bill sent Archie Clement and ten men out to serve as decoys. They had instructions to retreat as soon as the Federals saw them. The rest of the Confederates, two hundred strong, formed an arc a quarter of a mile wide at the base of a sloping hill where they would not be seen by the Union troops until they crested the hill. Johnson's Yankees pursued Clements' men, reigning in just below the ridgeline upon seeing Anderson's men. Then he ordered his men to dismount, leaving every fourth man to hold the horses while the rest formed into a tight battle line. That was what the army manual dictated. The Confederates were incredulous upon seeing this.

"Why the fools are going to fight us on foot!" John Kroger said. "God help 'em."

"Boys," shouted Anderson, "when we charge, break through the line and keep straight for their horses."

Anderson urged his men forward. Frank James described the scene to a reporter 33 years later. The Confederates laid their heads low over their horse's necks, and the only volley the Yankees fired went mostly over their heads. Only three Confederates were hit.

In the twinkling of an eye the Confederates were upon the Union line. The Yankees seemed hypnotized with fear. Some of them with fixed bayonets. Some were biting off their cartridges, preparing to reload. Yelling and discharging their pistols the Confederates decimated the Union line on contact. The Confederate cavalry had overwhelming firepower. Each Rebel carried several pistols—usually four to six and each holding six rounds. Within three minutes all of the Yankees lay dead or dying. All had at least one bullet in the head. Major Johnson was standing fast and firing his revolver to the last when he himself was killed by Jesse James. The Confederates charged through toward the line of horse-holders and chased the survivors all the way back to Centralia.

Of the original 147 Yankees under Johnson's command, 131 were killed. Add to this the 24 killed in Centralia earlier that day, 155 Yankees had been laid low. Only sixteen of Johnson's men survived. Against a loss of only three—it was a very good day for Bloody Bill Anderson. Unfortunately, only a month later, Anderson himself would be killed by Union cavalry. **Just another day on the job for the Missouri Rebels!**