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Commander's Corner

Brothers of the SVR,

It's a great feeling to know that the long winter is over and with it comes the re-enacting season, living history demonstrations and SVR activities.

We had a lot of great activities through the winter and I want to thank each and every one of you for your participation and hard work. Let's keep this momentum going during the spring and into the summer by continuing to go out there and show people what the SVR is and stands for.

It is also that time of year again when all the unit reports and dues need to be turned in to the adjutant, 1st LT Hinman. Commanders, if you have not done

so, I encourage you to send in your unit dues and paperwork as soon as possible so that your adjutant



can submit the District Paperwork to National in a timely fashion.

There is nothing new to report for the first part of this year except that we are in the process of adding a few new units to our ranks and we have a new inspector general for the

district, Brother Ted Golab. He is the Senior Vice-Commander for the District of Georgia and South Carolina and brings a wealth of experience that will be put to good use in furthering the aims of the 7th, MD, SVR.

Please congratulate brother Golab on his new appointment.

Finally, I would like to thank you personally for your time and effort in making the 7th Military District a beacon of success in the SVR and for allowing me to be your commander. Without members such as you and the support of my staff we would not be where we are today.

Huzzah for the Union!
Major Early

The Lost State of Nickajack

By Jim Lance

The divisions in American that resulted in the Civil War were hardly drawn at the Mason-Dixon line. While divisive opinions

about slavery abounded throughout the United States, and to an extent the Confederacy, the issue of secession caused more disagreement throughout

the South than slavery did. For these "Unionists," as they became known, whether or not slavery was constitutionally mandated was beside the point - once



“There was little support for the confederacy or secession in the Nickajack region”

Nickajack (cont.)

a part of the United States, there was no turning back, no secession.

Although support for a nascent Confederacy was strong in many of the Southern states during the Secession Crisis of 1860-1861, this support was hardly unanimous. A significant number of Southerners felt that secession was either illegal or unnecessary, of this number, there were those who felt that secession would never truly come to fruition. Others still, those who did not own slaves or perhaps did not support the institution of slavery, were opposed to secession from the Union on the grounds that the inevitable outcome would be a “rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight.”

As the threats of secession became reality in many Southern states, those who did not support the Confederacy reacted with hostility - and ingenuity. In areas where these Unionists were plenty, attempts to rejoin the Union often flourished.

While the most famous example of this dissension is the state of West Virginia, which was formed at the outset of the war by disenfranchised citizens of the western part of Virginia who wanted no part of secession, there were other instances throughout the South of towns

and even regions attempting to secede from their seceded home state.

One such example was the proposed state of Nickajack. A geographic area composed of parts of Southeast Tennessee and North Alabama, Nickajack was home to many Southern Unionists who resisted the yoke of the Confederacy and attempted to form their own state - to be called Nickajack - from parts of both states.

The residents of these parts of Alabama and Tennessee had little in common with the wealthier parts of the state. Plantations and slaves were scarce in the Nickajack region, as was agriculture such as was found in the central and southern parts of Alabama and the central and western parts of Tennessee. Not surprisingly, there was little support for secession or the Confederacy in the Nickajack region.

In both Alabama and Tennessee there were those who fought actively to prevent secession. In Alabama, the convention to debate secession was thrown in the favor of the central and southern regions, which had larger populations due to the number of slaves in area, and thus had more delegates. Northern Alabama delegates fought to have the decision of whether or not to secede put to

popular vote, knowing that it was possible that a popular vote would defeat secession - while the population of central and southern Alabama was larger, the mostly-white northern region accounted for more votes. However, a popular vote never came to pass, and Alabama ultimately seceded.

In Tennessee, the agonizing decision of whether or not to secede *did* come to a popular vote, and passed by a slim margin. In East Tennessee, where secession and slavery alike were not widely supported, this was a bitter blow. On two occasions, representatives from 26 pro-Union counties in East Tennessee met to discuss seceding from the state, going as far as to petition the state legislature.

What they got instead of independence was Confederate occupation. Back in Alabama, one county in the Nickajack region, Winston County, refused to join the Confederacy. County representative to the Alabama secession convention, schoolteacher Christopher Sheats, refused to sign Alabama’s order of secession, and was arrested, but Winston County’s steadfast refusal to accept the Confederacy persisted, resulting in what was referred to as “the Free State of Winston.”

While the state of Nickajack

Nickajack (cont.)

jack never became a reality, the citizens who lived in these and other areas where support for the Confederacy was scarce found themselves fighting a war that they never wanted, often in their own towns and homes. One can only wonder how the history of the war - and of the United States - would have been different if the state of Nickajack had been admitted to the Union.



Tennessee Union Veteran Honored

By 1SG Dave Dubrucq

Sergeant James Henry McCulley, Company K, 13th Tennessee U.S. Cavalry was honored in a ceremony in Cookeville, Tennessee on April 10th, 2010. The ceremony was conducted by Fort Donelson Camp 62 and the 10th Regt, Tennessee U.S. Volunteer Infantry, SVR. Camp Commander Sam Gant and Junior Vice Commander and 10th Tennessee SVR Corporal James W. "Bill" Heard, great, great grandson of Sgt McCulley, officiated. Flag and GAR marker were placed at the gravesite by McCulley's 4th great grandson, Isaac Heard. Members of the 10th Tennessee Infantry, SVR, 1st Sgt David DuBrucq commanding, rendered military honors. The memorial was attended by President Abraham Lincoln (portrayed by Mr. Dennis Boggs of Nashville, TN)) who was escorted by Bill Radcliffe of the 13th U.S.C.T. Members of Schofield's Battery, CSA, joined in the ceremony honoring Sergeant McCulley. Sergeant McCulley was born in 1839 and originally served as a conscripted Confederate soldier, but he was a strong unionist, joined the Federal army in 1863. He participated with the 13th Tennessee U.S. Cavalry in the Battles of Bulls Gap and Blue Springs. The unit also was responsible for mortally wounding Confederate General John Hunt Morgan and participating in the capture of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Sgt McCulley survived the war, had twelve children, and served as the first post-war sheriff of Putnam County, Tennessee.





7th Military District, SVR

Capt Eric Peterson : Editor

4680 Rutledge Drive
Snellville, GA 30039

Phone: 678-344-6893

E-mail: gdy2shosflthybst@bellsouth.net



Flag Participated in the End of the War at Appomattox

By Charmaine Z. Brackett

The Wigwag flag from the surrender at Appomattox rests in a case in the Signal Museum. Photo by Charmaine Z. Brackett Under the leadership of Gen. Robert E. Lee, the Southern states surrendered to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in the parlor of the McLean House in the village of Appomattox Court House in Virginia, April 9, 1865.

A relic from that eventful day 145 years ago is on display at Fort Gordon's Signal Corps Museum. It's the wigwag flag flown during the

ceremonial surrender.

"We have the reproduction hanging in the museum," said Robert Anzuoni, Signal Corps Museum director.

The irreplaceable flag can be seen by visitors upon entry to the museum. However, the original, cannot be displayed in that manner. It is sealed under glass. Usually, the flag is stored; but in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Signal Corps, the flag will be on display through the end of the year.

Anzuoni said the flag has been restored, but it demands extra care. The weight of the material would

cause unnecessary strain upon itself if it were to be hung from the ceiling.

The proper way to display it would be to lie the flag flat and or at an angle, but space constraints prohibit this, he said.

The wigwag flag was donated to the Signal Corps by the grand daughter of Brig. Gen. Albert Myer, who founded the Signal Corps.