

The Haversack

Newsletter of the 7th Military District, Sons of Veterans Reserve



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Commander's Comments

Greetings,

Today I am going to address training of our SVR members and staff. It is generally not possible to teach a soldier everything he needs to know simultaneously so as a leader, it is our responsibility to assess what they know and build on that. Place priority on what tasks will make them a contributing member of the organization first. Continue to move their training forward, and don't repeat the same fundamentals once they have been mastered. By continuing to build and move on, not only do we keep the training fresh for the soldier but they quickly become excellent and well rounded members of the organization.

As an example, General Grant misapplied the priorities at his camp at Pittsburg Landing by not having his troops dig in. This cost his army dearly at the Battle of Shiloh in April of 1862. General Grant answered his critics by saying' " The troops with me, officers and men, needed discipline and drill more than they did experience with the pick, shovel and axe. Reinforcements were arriving almost daily, composed of troops that had been hastily thrown together into companies and regiments-fragments of incomplete organizations, the men and officers strangers to each other. Under all these circumstances I concluded that drill and discipline were worth more to our men than fortifications."

General Grant seems to have forgotten that his first duty to his men is force security. The troops had all been trained in basic drill before they left their training camps. They could have developed the type of cohesion and discipline he noted was lacking by building fortifications, plus they would have gained an additional skill at the same time. Casualties were enormous because of the surprise attack and lack of fortifications. Perhaps if he had properly prioritized the needs of his command then the rescue by the Army of the Ohio would not have been so critical to the survival of The Army of the Tennessee.

By properly assessing the training needs of our troops and building on the training they already have we can quickly build our units into a cohesive, efficient and effective unit.

I will close by saying that it is my intent to personally visit each of our companies in the district this year so please keep me informed of your upcoming events.

In FC&L,

Major Eric Peterson
7th Military District, SVR
Commanding



Battle of Olustee

Brothers,

It was the best of times and the worst of times at Olustee February 14th-16th. Best in that, despite dark comments at Officer's Call on Friday night about possible live Confederate rounds and the Florida Park Service concerns about a "mistake" happening during the battle reenactment, nothing untoward occurred. Not so good was the lack of SUVCW presence. Our Department fielded myself and brothers Brad Quillin and James Yancey but the Florida SUVCW had no tent or display as they have had in past years, and though we reported Saturday and Sunday as directed by email our Florida brothers apparently did not show.

...

Since this was a sesquicentennial event Olustee was well-attended, making it roughly equal to the event's attendance of a decade or more ago. Due to the economy and what I take to be a jaded attitude toward the Civil War soldier and public attendance at battle reenactments has been falling for the past seven or eight years. This coincides with the rise of WW2 reenacting (I confess to having reenacted as a Polish paratrooper in my younger days) as Americans

rightly honor their fathers and the Greatest Generation of the last century. We in the SUVCW represent the greatest generation of the 19th century and it is their blood, as it were, that calls to us. As we emphasize, the Civil War made us the great nation we are today, and our men and women of the last century extended that greatness around the globe in WW1, WW2 and the Cold War. Despite so many current cultural failings in America. Our monument and media projects and youth recruitment are ways to do this.

Yours for Lincoln and Liberty in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Ray Wozniak

Cmdr. Elias Moon Camp # 2

[Ed. Note: This is an excerpt of the Commander's Comments from The Georgia Unionist; March 2014

The Newsletter of Elias Moon Camp # 2; Department of Georgia & South Carolina. A full version of Br. Ray's comments may be found there.]

June 9, 1862.

This war has done me good in many ways. It has taught me patience and endurance and to "labor and wait." It has learned me to be less particular in a great many things. When I see dirt in my victuals, I take it out and eat on. If I taste it, I swallow and eat on. If my bed is hard and my head not high enough, I content myself with the idea that it might be worse and go to sleep. I think I have seen the dark side of soldiering and although it is tolerably hard, yet there ain't any sense in calling it intolerable.

E. J. Ellis

FROM CASEY'S INFANTRY TACTICS COLOR-GUARD

43. In each battalion the color-guard will be composed of eight corporals, and posted on the left of the right-centre company, of which company, for the time being the guard will make a part.

44. The front rank will be composed of a sergeant, to be selected by the colonel, who will be called, for the time, *color-bearer*, with the two ranking corporals, respectively, on his right and left; the rear rank will be composed of the three corporals next in rank; and the three remaining corporals will be posted in their rear, and on the line of the file closers. The left guide of the color-company, when these three last named corporals are in the rank of the file closers will be immediately on their left.

45. In battalions with less than five companies present, there will be no color-guard and no display of colors, except It may be at reviews.

46. The corporals for the color-guard will be selected from those most distinguished for regularity and precision, as well in their positions under arms as in their marching. The latter advantage, and a just carriage of the person, are to be more particularly sought for in the selection of the color-bearer.

10th TN US Vol Infantry

Captain Dave DuBrucq, Commanding

152nd Anniversary of the Surrender of Fort Donelson

The Battle of Fort Donelson was fought from February 11 to 16, 1862, in the Western Theater of the American Civil War. The capture of the fort by Union forces opened the Cumberland River an important avenue for the invasion of the South. The success elevated Brig General Ulysses S. Grant from an obscure and largely unproven leader to the rank of Major General earning him the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" Grant in the process. Following the surrender of CS General Lloyd Tilghman and capture of Fort Henry after heavy bombardment by Flag Officer Andrew Foote's fleet on February 6th, 1862, an attempt was made to reduce Fort Donelson with naval gunfire. On February 14th, 1862, Foote started his attack but well placed CS guns and limited maneuvering ability on the Cumberland rived forced him to withdraw after sustaining significant damage to his fleet.

On 15 February, Gen John B Floyd's confederates attempted a break out by launching a surprise attack On Grant's army. Grant, who was away visiting Foote at the time arrived in time to rally his forces and repel the attack. Despite a partial success, Floyd lost the initiative and retreated back into Fort Donelson. Grant launched a counter-attack and regained what he had lost.

Floyd realized that he was about to be captured and would probably be tried for his alleged previous misconduct by the North. He promptly turned over his command to General Pillow, who also feared Northern reprisals. Pillow passed it in turn to General Buckner, who agreed to remain behind and surrender the army. Pillow escaped by small boat across the Cumberland in the night. Floyd left the next morning on the only steamer available, taking his two regiments of Virginia infantry. Disgusted at the show of cowardice, a furious Nathan Bedford Forrest announced, "I did not come here to surrender my command." He stormed out of the meeting and led about 700 of his cavalymen to escape the fort. Forrest's horsemen rode toward Nashville through the shallow, icy waters of Lick Creek, encountering no enemy and confirming that many more could have escaped by the same route, if Buckner had not posted guards to prevent any such attempts.



General Grant and Staff with members of the 10th Regt, Tennessee USVI, SVR at the Dover Hotel, surrender site, February 16, 2014. The room directly behind the group is where the actual surrender took place in 1862.



10th Tennessee, SVR, Honor Guard Presents the colors at the Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Donelson Memorial Service, February 16, 2014, at the Fort Donelson Nat'l Cem.

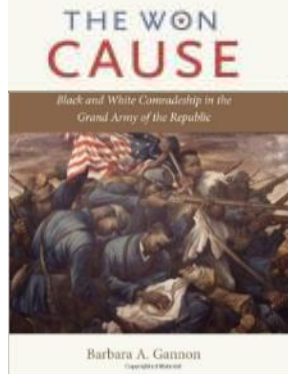
Grant was very courteous to Buckner following the surrender and offered to loan him money to see him through his impending imprisonment, but Buckner declined. The surrender was a humiliation for Buckner, but also a major strategic defeat for the Confederacy, which lost more than 12,000 men, 48 artillery pieces and stands of small arms and equipment. More importantly control of the Cumberland River was lost which led to the evacuation of Nashville, which would be permanently lost to the Union.

One hundred and Fifty Two years later, February 16, 2014, at the very same Dover hotel on the banks of the Cumberland River, the surrender ceremony was re-enacted for the third consecutive year by members of the 10th Regiment, Tennessee U.S. Volunteers, SVR, General Grant and his staff (protroyed by 10th Tenn member Dr Curt Fields), and the 9th Kentucky U.S. Volunteers and local confederate re-enactors. Following the surrender re-enactment, a ceremony honoring those who had fought in the battle was held at the Fort Donelson National Cemetery.



Book Review

THE WON CAUSE by Barbara A. Cannon, assistant professor of military history at the University of Central Florida. Published in 2011 by the University of North Carolina Press. The volume takes its title as a cause (the Union) that won, as opposed to the myth of The Lost Cause, with which we posted to the south are all too familiar.



What makes Professor Cannon's book unique, and long overdue, in GAR history is its recitation of the participation and treatment of African-American brothers who rallied to the colors in the Civil War. I agree with some historians that while the Union Army won the war in the sense that they drove the rebels from the field and saved the nation, ultimately African-Americans, those with such a large stake in the outcome of the war, lost. One of the ideals that made the terrible losses of the war worthwhile (and kept Europe out) was the liberation of the four million slaves held in the south and the seeming destruction of the slavery system.

The fact that 189,000 African-Americans joined the Federal army and 30,000 the navy, and had to fight for the right to shed their blood for the cause of their nation and their people, deserves the respect it only recently has begun to attain. We just didn't free the slaves; 38,000 laid their lives on the altar of freedom to further that victory. Like most black history their attainments in the Civil War have been heretofore lost, forgotten, twisted, ignored. I have often thought of the story of African-Americans in our nation as the greatest unrequited love story in history. The Won Cause brings out a shining example of which we can be justly proud: an interracial GAR.

In fact, the GAR was the only interracial social organization of its time. Yes, there were segregated camps. Some GAR departments did better than others at admitting black members. Generally, it fell along geographic lines, with the North and upper south doing better than the deep south. The Department of Georgia and South Carolina was emblematic of this situation. We had the segregated Shaw Camp in Savannah, Delany Camp in Brunswick, Lincoln in Hilton Head, Reed in Charleston and Hunter in Beaufort. We had no integrated camps. The segregation of some camps in any region had the effect of drawing the black community together into a local organization of esteemed veterans and their families. As the GAR motto which we espouse was practiced, charity became a large component of the black GAR experience. Their camps evolved into self-help societies. The book is full of many moving passages on the old veterans coming to each other's aid, standing the dues of brothers who are unable to pay regularly. The camps were fraternal in practice as well as name.

While black GAR camps were self-sufficient, The Won Cause also points out cases of white brothers demanding the admission of black veterans, extending charity when needed and holding them in an esteem that only those who together have bared their breasts to the bullets and shells of the enemy can fully appreciate. Most of the Northern camps were integrated, and in several Departments blacks not only held camp office but Jr. Vice Commanderships and other offices on the departmental level.

The book points out that white veterans may have withstood social pressures of the times in allowing black membership in the GAR though an appealing notion. While they comprehended the American political culture that gave them a political understanding of their cause (Daniel Webster's "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.") it was the Christian faith, of these aging warriors that explains their remarkably cohesive interpretation of the meaning of the Civil War.

While the Lost Cause, a brand name that arose in 1867, may have leaped ahead over the years of we loyalists on the propaganda front, Professor Cannon has coined the term The Won Cause. I heartily recommend this volume. It has an appendix and notes that are a welcome addition to the study of GAR history, and the contemplation of a vexing social question: how we can regardless of color cherish each other today as brother Americans, and put behind us the injustices of our flawed past. It remains a sad comment that it was mostly through the brotherhood of battle and its aftermath that interracial friendships were formed. We can do better, and this book is an inspiring look at how some noble GAR brothers bucked the trends of their times and found comradeship across the color line.

Chaplain's Pulpit

Brothers of the 7th Military District,

The picture is of a Chaplain in the Union Army by the name of William Earnshaw. His Civil War service and Chaplain duties began on 16 April 1861. He initially enlisted as a private, but it was soon discovered he was a minister, at which time he was commissioned a Captain. He served as the Chaplain of the 49th Pennsylvania until 2 October 1862, after which he resigned his commission, due to his regiment being consolidated with another. On 22 April 1863 he was re-commissioned as a Hospital Chaplain of U.S. Volunteers and remained in this posting until 27 August 1867. After the war he served as the superintendent of construction of Stones River and Nashville National Cemeteries. During this time he served as Chaplain of the National Military home in Dayton, Ohio from September 1867 until he retired due to illness.



Chaplain (Captain) William Earnshaw
Union Army

Chaplain Earnshaw was Commander of the Ohio Department, Grand Army of the Republic in 1876, Junior Vice-Commander in 1877, and presided at the national encampment of the G.A.R. in Albany, New York in 1879, when he was elected to serve as the national organization's 8th Commander-in-Chief. He served in this post from 1879 to 1880.

Chaplain Earnshaw died on 7 July 1885 and was buried in the Woodlawn city cemetery.

Chaplain Kenneth Early
7th Military District, SVR



Ed. Note: A history of the 49th Pennsylvania will be printed in a future edition of The Haversack

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Why was this edition so bland?!?!?

We want articles (with pictures!)

New and Updated emails!

Articles for the Spring 2014 Edition of the Haversack!

- Unit Activities
- Biographical Sketches of your Unit or your Ancestor, Biographical Sketches of other Civil War units or persons
- Research methods
- Civil War era jokes / cartoons

Some editing may be done to long articles to fit in the space available

Email updates and articles (with pictures!) to GAHuttick@netscape.net!

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