

# The Haversack

Newsletter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Military District, Sons of Veterans Reserve



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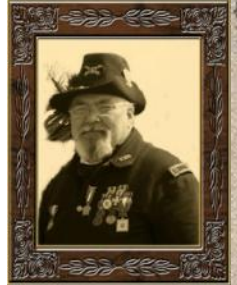
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## Commander's Comments

Gentlemen,

I hope you and yours are well. Here we are at the end of another year, busily trying to make plans to be with family and friends. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa or Ramadan or even just the winter solstice its a magical time of year. Partly because of your faith, partly because of the celebrations with family but also, for many of us a time of reflection on the events of the past year. It is important that we take time to reflect on what has happened and more importantly, why? In this way we can improve upon what we did next year which is right around the corner. Leaders who take the time for this introspection will find that they can find ways to improve themselves even if you are happy with the way everything turned out. But whether you are in a leadership role, formal or informal, everyone can benefit from doing this. Isn't this what the famous or infamous New Year's Resolution about? Presumably the resolution you make is the result of your reflection and resolve to improve yourself in some way.



Its difficult to know where you are going if you do not know where you have been. In 2016 I challenge each of you to start keeping a journal. It doesn't have to be anything fancy and it doesn't have to become a chore. Taking just 20 minutes to reflect and right on what happened in that week will cause you to become a better person as the year progresses, and when it comes time to reflect at the end of the year, the job is all the easier because you have been taking notes!

This year we lost two of our comrades in arms; Charlie Engel of the 10th Tennessee and "Buck Custer" of Amzi Harmon Company. I have known these two men nearly as long as I have been in the SUVCW / SVR. They were both dedicated to the welfare of the SUVCW and the 7th Military District. You may not always have agreed with them, you may have argued with them over some point of order or other matter. The one thing that is indisputable about both men is that they were truly dedicated to the welfare of their units, the district and the SVR as a whole. They will be missed by comrades, friends and family this holiday season. Let us all take a moment this holiday season to remember them and their families in our prayers.

Finally, there has been much controversy around religion and what is the correct wish to say around the holidays. I will wish you all a Merry Christmas regardless of your creed. This should not be viewed as some insult as some in the media would have us to believe. There should be no offense taken just as I take no offense when someone wishes me a Happy Hanukkah, and yes I have been greeted in the past with "Happy Kwanzaa" and "Happy Ramadan". I take no offense in that but instead think warmly how nice it is that someone thought enough of my well being to wish me well. I also smile when someone says "Happy Holidays" although that sometimes makes me wonder if the person chose that particular greeting out of a sense of needing to be sensitive. Don't get me wrong; if I know which holiday you choose to celebrate I will greet you accordingly, but if I do not I will default to the greeting of my own faith, "Merry Christmas". If the person is not Christian and they return the greeting with "Happy Hanukkah" we can both smile and part knowing that a total stranger has wished us well, and that too, is the magic of this season.

Merry Christmas to all the soldiers of the 7th Military District and your families!

In FC&L,

Major Eric Peterson  
7th Military District, SVR  
Commanding.



**Brother Charles Engle, PDC**

Member of Missionary Ridge Camp 63, McTeer Camp 39 and the 10th Regiment, Tennessee U.S. Volunteers, SVR, passed away on Dec 2, 2015.

Affectionately known as Brother Charlie he was a friend to all who knew him and a mentor to many. Brother Charlie was twice elected Department Commander for the Department of Tennessee and was named a Lincoln Fellow of the SUVCW Charitable Foundation. Brother Charlie was also the long time Secretary /Treasurer of the Missionary Ridge Camp 63. He was indeed the much beloved "Lion of the Department of Tennessee"

Sincere Condolences to all who knew Brother Charlie and especially to his family. He leaves behind a legacy of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty in keeping with the very highest traditions of the Sons of Union Veterans and the Sons of Veterans Reserve.

Capt Dave DuBrucq,  
Chief of Staff,  
7th Military District, (SVR)



**Charles "Buck" Custer**

Member and Past commander of Amzi D. Harmon Company passed away on Dec. 10, 2015.

A service commemorating the life of Br. Custer was held on 17 December 2015 in Orlando FL. Additionally, the 2nd Florida Light Artillery Battery B / The Cracker Battery had a memorial on 12 December during a Wreaths Across America service.

Our condolences and prayers to his family, friends and brethren.



The muffled drum's sad roll has beat  
The soldier's last tattoo;  
No more on life's parade shall meet  
That brave and fallen few.  
On Fame's eternal camping-ground  
Their silent tents are spread  
And Glory guards, with solemn round,  
The bivouac of the dead.



# Christmas in the Civil War



During the period of 1861–1865 Christmas was celebrated on both sides although the day did not become an official holiday until five years after the war ended. The war continued to rage on Christmas and skirmishes, raids and even executions of deserters occurred throughout the season. Celebrations for both troops and civilians alike were significantly scaled back, though many tried to celebrate no matter how little they had. Christmas then was more about the birth of Christ than Santa Claus and gifts, but the tradition of giving and exchanging gifts were an important part of the celebrations.

Because of the privations of war, children in the south were told the lack of presents was caused by the Yankee blockade which Santa experienced much difficulty trying to avoid. Later it was because Santa had been shot by the Yankees. In December 1864, a Richmond newspaper declared Santa was a Dutch Yankee from New York who had nothing to do with Southern Christmas Tradition.

A soldier in the 13th New Jersey, Joseph Crowell, described a soldier's Christmas in his memoir, published in 1906. Crowell stood picket duty on Christmas Eve, cold, lonely and uneasy in the night. Returning to camp, he saw comrades lying feet to the fire, like the spokes of a wheel. The warmth reached their legs, but shoulders and heads were buried in snow. Christmas breakfast was hardtack and coffee, followed by dinner comprising desiccated vegetables, rehydrated by boiling in a tomato can. They swelled out of the pot, tasting like rags. Crowell relates the soldiers completed the festivities by boiling lice out of clothing seams.

Despite the privations and propaganda, the spirit of Christmas survived throughout the war. In one incident on December 25, 1864, 90 Union soldiers from Michigan, led by their captain, dispensed "food and supplies" to poor Georgians, with the mules pulling the carts decorated to resemble reindeer by having tree branches tied to their heads.

At the same time, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was writing his famous Christmas Bells poem which was later set to music. When the song joined the pantheon of Christmas Carols, the stanzas referring to the war were omitted. Longfellow wrote the poem while agonizing over his severely wounded son.

No grand eloquent Christmas messages were delivered by presidents, politicians or generals. In fact, in some cases, soldiers were actually prohibited from conducting celebrations. Still the spirit of Christmas could not be erased.

In 1870, Christmas became an official holiday, in part as an effort to help reunite the nation and reestablish its traditions.

Submitted by: Captain D. Dubrucq

Article II.

INSTRUCTION OF THE BATTALION

49. Every commanding officer is responsible for the instruction of his command. He will assemble the officers together for theoretical and practical instruction as often as he may judge necessary, and when unable to attend to this duty in person, it will be discharged by the officer next in rank.
50. Captains will be held responsible for the theoretical and practical instruction of their non-commissioned officers, and the adjutant for the instruction of the non-commissioned staff. To this end, they will require these tactics to be studied and recited, lesson by lesson; and when instruction is given on the ground, each non-commissioned officer, as he explains a movement, should be required to put it into practical operation.
51. The non-commissioned officers should also be practised in giving commands. Each command, in a lesson, at the theoretical instruction, should first be given by the instructor, and then repeated, in succession, by the non-commissioned officers, so that while they become habituated to the commands, uniformity may be established in the manner of giving them.
52. In the school of the soldier, the company officers will be the instructors of the squads; but if there be not a sufficient number of company officers present, intelligent sergeants maybe substituted; and two or three squads, under sergeant instructors, be superintended, at the same time) by an officer.
53. In the school of the company, the lieutenant-colonel and the majors, under the colonel, will be the principal instructors, substituting frequently the captain of the company, and sometimes one of the lieutenants; the substitute, as far as practicable, being superintended by one of the principals.
54. In the school of the battalion, the brigadier general may constitute himself the principal instructor, frequently substituting the colonel of the battalion, sometimes the lieutenant-colonel, or one of the majors, and twice or thrice, in the same course of instruction, each of the three senior captains. In this school, also, the substitute will always, if practicable, be superintended by the brigadier general or the colonel, or (in case of a captain being the instructor), by the lieutenant-colonel or one of the majors.
55. Individual instruction being the basis of the instruction of companies, on which that of the regiment depends, and the first principles having the greatest influence upon this individual instruction, classes of recruits should be watched with the greatest care.
56. Instructors will explain, in a few clear and precise words, the movement to be executed; and not to overburden the memory of the men, they will always use the same terms to explain the same principles.
57. They should often join example to precept, should keep up the attention of the men by an animated tone, and pass rapidly from one movement to another, as soon as that which they command has been executed in a satisfactory manner.
58. The bayonet should only be fixed when required to be used, either for attack or defence; the exercises and manœuvres will be executed without the bayonet.
59. In the movements which require the bayonet to be fixed, the chief of the battalion will cause the signal to fix bayonet, to be sounded; at this signal the men fix bayonets without command, and immediately replace their pieces in the position they were in before the signal.

# Reflections ...

Christmas! The very word brings joy to our hearts. No matter how we may dread the rush. When Christmas Day comes there is still the same warm feeling we had as children, the same warmth that enfolds our hearts and our homes. In the true spirit of Christmas may we offer forgiveness to one who has wronged us, tolerance to one who opposes us. To our friends, our hearts. To every child, a good example. To yourself respect and to all charity. May you find Peace in the spirit of Christmas and joy in the birth of our Savior. May the New Year bring you good health and much happiness, and may Almighty God continue to Bless you and yours!

Captain Dave Dubrucq

Chief of Staff, 7th Military District, SVR  
10<sup>th</sup> Tennessee USVI, SVR, Commanding

It is not often that I actually pen something for the newsletter. Often, I would much rather compile and present the thoughts of the command, officers, and brothers of the 7<sup>th</sup> Military District.

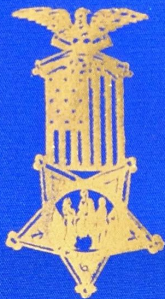
The Christmas is different. It has been a long year, and we have lost several good men. I personally will miss Br. Charlie Engle. I looked forward to seeing him at Departmental and National Encampments. He was an interesting man. He was also a faithful contributor to *The Haversack* with submissions of poetry, and wit. He added salt to the regular matters of life. I had only begun to learn everything the Charlie had to teach.

I would also like to thank everyone who contributed to *The Haversack* this year! You make my job easy.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Years to All!

George Andrew Huttick, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.  
Public Information Officer, 7 MD, SVR





59<sup>th</sup>

**ANNUAL  
GRAND  
ARMY  
OF THE  
REPUBLIC  
REMEMBRANCE  
DAY  
PARADE**



**21 NOVEMBER  
2015**

**GETTYSBURG  
PENNSYLVANIA**



**SPONSORED BY  
SONS OF  
VETERANS  
RESERVE  
MILITARY  
DEPARTMENT  
OF THE  
SUVCW  
MAJ. GEN.  
ROBERT E. GRIM,  
COMMANDING**



**152<sup>nd</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
OF  
PRESIDENT  
LINCOLN'S  
GETTYSBURG  
ADDRESS**

**COMMANDER  
SONS OF VETERANS RESERVE**

takes pleasure in presenting the

**Commanding Officer's  
Unit Citation**

21 November 2015



to

**AMZI D. HARMON COMPANY  
VOLUNTEER INFANTRY REGIMENT  
SONS OF VETERANS RESERVE**

As set forth in the following citation:

For consistently cultivating the principles and objects of the Sons of Veterans Reserve and promoting patriotism through their efforts in commemorating our Civil War ancestors and their respective units.

Amzi D. Harmon Company Volunteer Infantry Regiment has for many years participated in patriotic and educational projects and programs in several communities including helping honor a Union Veteran ancestor of a DUVCW member with a gravesite ceremony in Mount Peace Cemetery, St. Cloud, Florida in 2013, participating in the annual three-day Battle of Olustee observance at Olustee Battlefield in Florida, and Memorial Day and Decoration Day observances at Mount Peace Cemetery, St. Cloud, Florida. Some of these events would not have been possible without this unit's participation. They have also participated in a number of Remembrance Day ceremonies in Gettysburg, PA.

Their strong commitment to the principles for which our Order was founded, clearly distinguishes them as a loyal representative of the Sons of Veterans Reserve and most noteworthy recipients of this distinguished award.



**Robert E. Grim  
Major General, SVR  
Commanding**





## Civil War Factoids

### Dubious Firsts Edition!

- Cyrus W. James of the 9th New York Cavalry is listed as the first man to be killed at the Battle of Gettysburg.
- A trooper of the 8th Illinois Cavalry is credited with firing the first shot and starting the largest battle of the Civil War at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
- Highly Respected Union General John Reynolds was the first general officer to be killed at the Battle of Gettysburg.
- Captain James H. Ward was the first Union naval officer to die in combat during an artillery battle at Aquia Creek in June, 1861
- Colonel Elmer Ellsworth of the New York Fire Zouaves was the first Federal officer to die. He had just removed a Confederate flag from the roof of a hotel in Alexandria, Virginia when he was shot by inn keeper James T. Jackson. Jackson was promptly shot and killed by Private Francis E. Brownell.
- And in closing, a dubious last: Private John J. Williams, Company B, 34th Regiment, Indiana Infantry is recorded as being he last soldier killed in the American Civil War. He was killed at the Battle of Palmetto Ranch near Brownsville, Texas on May 13, 1865.

Submitted by Capt. DuBrucq

The Haversack is published quarterly as the newsletter of the 7th Military District, Sons of Veterans Reserve.

The Sons of Veterans Reserve (SVR) is the ceremonial uniformed military component of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW).

The 7th Military District the states of Arkansas, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, and South Carolina.

Any letters, articles, etc., published in The Haversack do not necessarily represent the views and/or opinions of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, officers, membership, guests, or the editor/publisher.

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## On Facebook...

### SVR

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- [3rd Military District SVR](#)
- [4th Military District, SVR](#)
- [6th Military District, SVR](#)
- [7th Military District, SVR](#)

### Departments in our District

- [Department of Tennessee](#)  
(includes MS and AL)
- [Department of Georgia and South Carolina](#)

### Camps in our District

- [Gen. John A. Logan #4 \(NC\)](#)
- [Gen. James B. Mcpherson #1 \(GA\)](#)
- [Elias Moon #2 \(GA\)](#)
- [Kennesaw Mountain #3 \(GA\)](#)
- [Charles Devens Jr. #10 \(SC\)](#)
- [Sultana Camp #1 \(TN\)](#)
- [Maj. Gen James H Wilson #1 \(AL\)](#)
- [Maj. Wm. A. McTeer #39 \(TN\)](#)
- [Pvt. Richard Taylor #53 \(TN\)](#)
- [Fort Donelson #62 \(TN\)](#)
- [Army of the Tennessee #64 \(TN\)](#)

- [National SUVCW](#)

Click the link, and "Like" them!

(you'll get lots of updates of what is going on!)

## We want articles (with pictures!)

**Thanks to all the contributors of this edition!**

### So... What's needed...?

Articles for the Winter 2016 Edition of the Haversack!

- Unit Activities
- Biographical Sketches
- 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](mailto:GAHuttick@netscape.net)!

**NEXT ISSUE MARCH 2016**