



17 Swan Street, Sileby,
Loughborough, LE12 7NN

The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER

2016 Autumn Edition



KELHAM HALL

ACWS is a Member of NAReS

N·A·Re·S

Issue 181

A.C.W.S. CONTACTS

Directors & Army Commanders

Mr Michael Smart, Chairman

Mrs Linda Reed, Secretary

Ian Morris, Treasurer

Mr Peter Holt, Events

Miss Claire Morris, Membership

Mr Martin Cross, Health & Safety

Mrs Val Holt, Communications

Mr Mike Bussey, Webmaster

Mr Tim Davis, Federal Commander

Mr Glenn Gibson Confederate Commander

Mrs V Corbishley. International Co-ordinator

ACWS at Kelham Hall, Newark

The ACWS travelled to Kelham Hall, Newark on the 24th and 25th September 2016 for the final ACWS event of the 2016 season. Both the fine sunny weather and the superb venue made it one of the most enjoyable events of the year and a fitting climax to a full and excellent season. This venue certainly bodes well for the future training and International events to be held here next year. Kelham Hall and Country Park is a beautiful Victorian stately home located in the Trent Valley and nestling within 44 acres of stunning parkland. A significant feature is the return of the excellent Maize which offers 5 acres of twists and turns in a huge field of 6ft tall maize and which the ACWS was able to use. Kelham Hall is a stunning building and has a rich history as the ancestral home of the Manners-Sutton family and as a theological college for an Anglican Order of Monks for the preparation for missionary work. The distinct and unique features were built by renowned architect George

Gilbert Scott who also designed St Pancras Hotel and Railway Station and the similarities are striking. The most impressive feature of Kelham Hall is the incredible 70 foot huge domed chapel which makes it a year round favourite for weddings and events.

The ACWS was contracted to perform 4 skirmishes (2 each day) throughout the weekend and all of these were excellent and enjoyable clashes with lots of movement and firepower. The first 2 skirmishes on the Saturday involved the scenario of the Union holding both camps with a sudden Confederate infantry and cavalry charge who had been hiding in and behind the nearby woods. The Confederates subsequently drove off the surprised Union troops and ransacked the first camp by looting from all the tents before moving on to secure the second camp. It was at this stage that the Union army gradually regrouped and a fierce encounter ensued. With 4 cannon, cavalry and infantry all fighting in the relatively enclosed field between the 2 camps and excellent pyro-technics adding to the

spectacle, the 2 skirmishes were excellent for both the re-enactors and the public. Both sides took turns in being the victor but credit must go to both sides who took numerous casualties on each occasion. Particularly impressive was both Union and Confederate Infantry having to hold their fire as the cavalry charged between the 2 armies thereby allowing both sides to fully re load and when safe releasing a powerful volley at each other at the same time and at a close but safe range. On the Sunday, the scenario was changed with the Union army surprising the 2 camps which were Confederate. The surprise attack caused initial mayhem in the unprepared and confused Confederates but they eventually slowly managed to regroup and push the Union back. As on the Saturday, both sides took turns to win but again there was some excellent volleys, individual unit clashes and the ground was littered with blue and grey casualties. Credit must go to both Army Commanders namely Tim Davis (Union) and Kevin Mitchell (Confederate) but special mention must go to

Gareth Knight (brevet Confederate Lieutenant) who stood in for the first time and did a really excellent job in controlling and drilling the Confederates forces both on and off the battlefield throughout the whole weekend. Overall, these were 4 enjoyable skirmishes of movement, fire-power and confusion at times. Both armies had good turnouts and it was nice to meet some new recruits from both sides despite being the last event of the 2016 season. Every ACWS weekend has an unexpected highlight and for this event it was the Derek Gregory drum presentation witnessed with due respect by both armies. Derek Gregory was a long standing early member of the ACWS who served in both the 32nd Virginia and 2nd Wisconsin who has sadly passed away. Sometime ago, he had been presented with a drum which had fallen into neglect. However, after much hard work and skill, Drum Major James Reed fully restored the drum with the original plaque and it was presented back to the ACWS Fife and Drum Band by Viv Corbishley. The moving presentation and speeches

speeches were then followed by an excellent performance by the ACWS Fife and Drum Band with their newly restored drum. Much credit must go to Drum Major James Reed and all his musicians this year who have all put so much hard work into making the Drum Corps the excellent unit it is today.

Other highlights of the weekend included separate photo shoots in the Maize by both the Confederate and Union armies which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. Hopefully, we will be fighting in the Maize at next years International Event and if so this promises to be an unforgettable surreal Civil War experience. The Union Medical display continues to both popular and excellent. The Ask a Soldier proved enjoyable for the younger members of the public. Finally, the sight of the Confederate cavalry cooling down their horses up and down in the middle of the River Trent was another incredible sight. Although various individual Confederate and Union regiments held their own end of season parties, there was no big end of season society event as in the past which in my personal opinion was a bit of a

pity due to the excellent camaraderie that has been built between both armies this season. It would have been nice for everyone (particularly the Officers and NCOS) to have said a formal farewell to our opposite foes with a bit of evening Civil War music from our excellent ACWS Fife and Drum with a drink or 2 in hand! Nevertheless, this excellent event at Kelham Hall very appropriately ended the 2016 season on a high note. Overall, it has been another fine season with a number of very varied but thoroughly enjoyable events. Feedback from all the various event organisers this season has been very positive which is always beneficial for gaining new events in the foreseeable future. The ACWS 2016 AGM will be held on 3 December 2016 at the United Services Club, Gainsborough. There will be 2 very special events in 2017, namely The Alamo at Weston Park, Telford, Shropshire on June 24th and 25th 2017 and the International Event at Kelham Hall, Notts on Sept 23rd and 24th 2017.

Article by Stewart "Goober"
Douglass, 43rd North Carolina

Summary of ACWS Board Meeting

8th October 2016

Directors present: Michael Smart Chairman, Linda Reed Secretary, Ian Morris Treasurer, Mike Bussey Webmaster, Claire Morris Membership, Peter Holt Projects, Val Holt Communications, Glenn Gibson Confederate Army Commander, Tim Davies Federal Army Commander and Viv Corbishley.

In attendance: Stephen Griffin Minutes, Roger Wilison-Gray Horsemater, Matt Body US Cavalry, Peter Francis-Wemyss Marketing Officer, Sharon Francis-Wemyss & Caz Davies Catering.

Apologies received from Rob Harbottle 8th Texas & Martin Cross Health & Safety.

The usual routine matters such as approving previous minutes and tracking action points from previous meetings were covered, but this note is intended to keep everybody informed about the important decisions taken.

Griff was welcomed to the meeting as Minutes Secretary.

Ian Morris (Treasurer) reported that the finances were looking good after a successful season.

Mike Bussey (Webmaster) was told he had been missed this year and mentioned there is nothing medically wrong with him and he enjoyed the events at Kelham and Shackerstone.

Claire Morris (Membership) stated that 9 members had achieved the 100% attendance for the 2016 season and that the 14th Brooklyn showed as having no members join in 2016. It was agreed that if any members from the 14th Brooklyn join in 2017 they will be registered as staff.

Martin Cross (Health & Safety) although not present at the meeting sent a report. In the report he noted that he had been drilling ALL Artillery CS & US together and Rockbridge (CS) were now carrying out the correct procedure and well aware of firing distances. There was a discussion on the use of Shotguns, Mike Bussey noted that

no shortages were reported of muskets during the American Civil War. NO double barrelled shotguns are to be used and it is the responsibility of both Army Commanders to make sure this is enforced.

Tim Davies (US Army Commander) thanked Peter Holt for the events during 2016 and also thanked Glenn Gibson for his input over the year.

The Autumn newsletter will be mailed separately than the AGM papers.

It was stated that the Alamo event was NOT an ACWS event even though a large majority of members will be attending.

Roger Willison-Gray asked for more space for Cavalry at Spetchley if we are to attend this year.

A discussion about Family Membership was had, it was agreed that the Board put trust in the membership to be honest and anyone who gives fraudulent information will make their insurance void.

The AGM meeting place will have a bar this year and sandwiches will be available to buy. There is a nice local fish & chip shop nearby.

A letter was received by mail from Sharon Francis-Weymss for her to stand for election as Communications Director at the AGM, this was proposed and seconded and signed.

The Cavalry will remain bi-partisan under the Cavalry heading with two new units being formed, the 8th Texas (CS) and the 2nd Massachusetts (US). The overall command will be Roger Willison-Gray as Horsemaster, Matt Body as US Cavalry Commander and Rob Harbottle as CS Cavalry Commander, with an Adjutant to be appointed at a later date. NO Cavalry member will have a vote on Army Commanders. Any Cavalry Commander has the honorary rank as a Captain but will have NO rank within the infantry and it is not a field rank. Cavalry riders, Horse Suppliers and Grooms will be exempt from registration fees however anyone else will have to pay full fees.

Soskan have been officially invited to the International at Kelham

Hall in 2017.

Glenn Gibson, Tim Davies and Darren Paul are to work together on battle scenarios for this event. The registration fee has been agreed on and it is considerably lower than any other International, giving something back to the members.

The meeting commenced at 12.19pm and concluded at 4.59pm



Events Report

Another season is over and the time has come to start looking forward to next year. We already have some events lined up for you and others are in the pipeline and under discussion.

Kelham Hall and Country Park near Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5QX, preparation event for the International later in the year from Saturday 6th to Sunday 7th May 2017. Camping from Friday 5th to Monday 8th May 2017, family camp within Hall grounds. Living history for infantry, artillery and cavalry (self funding). Confirmed full

society event open to all members.

Marbury Merry Days, Marbury Cheshire, SY13 4LN. From Saturday 13th to Sunday 14th May 2017, camping from Friday 12th. it will be a full society event with infantry and artillery, and there will be space if cavalry wish to attend as self-funding. Still working on event programme and location of family camp and horses if attending. To be confirmed, full society event open to all members.

In discussions about a possible event for the late May Bank Holiday the 28th and 29th May 2017 at the **Carrington Rally**, a steam fair. All details passed to them, costs etc. It is to be discussed at their next committee meeting later this month.

Possible return to **Sedgefield** 17th and 18th June 2017, I have

spoken to them about what we can offer them dependant on fee available. They are going to discuss this and get back to me with an amount.

The Alamo Event, Weston Park, Staffordshire on the 24th and 25th June 2017 with camping from the 23rd, This is NOT an ACWS run event, it is part of MFest 300. Glenn Gibson is our main contact; and details are updated on their Facebook page, The event is open to any society members who wish to attend BUT they need to register on the Remember the Alamo Facebook page.

Spetchley Hall and Gardens, Worcester WR5 1RS, on the 12th and 13th August 2017, camping from Friday 11th to Monday 14th August 2017. Living history with a skirmish each day, infantry, artillery and cavalry attendance as self funding. Confirmed subject to contract, full society event open to all members.

ACWS International Event 2017 at Kelham Hall and Country Park near Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG23 5QX.

From Saturday 23rd to Sunday 24th September 2017, Living history and battles each day involving infantry, artillery and cavalry. Confirmed subject to contract full society event open to all members and guests. Further information to follow.

As always, Viv and I will continue to seek out new events for next year.

Peter Holt
Events Director

The Mad Hatter?

Colonel Dixon S Miles commander of the federal garrison at Harper's Ferry during the Antietam campaign was considered by his men to be an eccentric as he wore two hats one on top of the other. A fellow officer said of him he "Needed near him a man with sound judgment in order that misdirection and eccentricity might be prevented".

Hurricane Matthew uncovers Civil War Ordinance

Hurricane Matthew, one of the most powerful storms to have hit the US south east coastline and neighbouring countries in over a decade, has unearthed a cache of Civil War cannonballs on a beach in South Carolina with its 6 foot storm wave surges.

The historic ammunition was found on Folly Beach, South Carolina on 9th October 2016 by a beach stroller who initially thought they were some “brown rocks”. However, on closer examination, he could clearly see some fuse holes embedded in the 150 year old shells. The Charleston County Sheriffs Office was immediately called and the beach was sealed off. The Police subsequently contacted the US Air Force Explosive Team along with Bomb Technicians who cleared the area and informed local residents of the impending explosions. The US Air Force Team detonated some of the ordinance where it was found on the beach and some was transported to a nearby Navy

base for a more controlled detonation. The cannonballs were not easily reached at first due to the rising tides and had to wait until the ocean levels dropped.

Folly Beach in South Carolina is just 10 miles south west of Fort Sumter where the first shots of the Civil War were fired in 1861. It also has a fascinating Civil War history. The Federals first occupied Folly Beach in early 1863 and it proved to be a daunting and desolate place for the soldiers with its copious foliage, open exposure to the Atlantic and a chronic lack of sanitation and accommodation. However, it was extremely strategically important to the Federals due its proximity to Fort Sumter and its coastal location between important Confederate military forts and installations. As such, the Federals constructed forts, roads, an artillery battery and the Pawnee Landing supply depot. There was also fighting on Folly Beach between a Confederate reconnaissance team and some Federal pickets on 10th May 1863 and the artillery battery was used to continually shell nearby Fort Wagner. These engagements

formed part of the larger Battle of Morris Island which lasted from July to September 1863. When Fort Wagner was later abandoned by the Confederates and subsequently occupied by the Federals, they moved their artillery battery from Folly Beach to the captured fort and began shelling Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbour. The Federals occupied Folly Beach until the end of the Civil War and it then became virtually abandoned for many years. However, a fascinating discovery occurred in May 1987 when a group of construction workers discovered 14 Federal bodies at the western end of Folly Beach. A subsequent detailed investigation by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology revealed that they were the remains of soldiers from the 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment (coloured). However what was more macabre was that 12 of the bodies had no heads, other body parts were totally missing and there was no sign whatsoever of any battle injuries or wounds. Why they were interred in this way still remains

both a Civil War and Folly Beach mystery.

Article by Stewart “Goober” Douglas, 43rd North Carolina.

Sources : Wikipedia : Folly Beach, South Carolina History; BBC News (12/10/16); Wikipedia : 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment (coloured).

Civil War Gator

On 4th September 2016, a group of Mississippi hunters finally shot and killed an alligator weighing a monstrous 910 pounds (413 kilograms). However, on inspecting the animal, they discovered it had numerous injuries caused by musket balls dating back from the American Civil War. A total of 9 spherical Enfield musket balls were later found in both his tail and hind legs. On further specialist forensic examination, tests and analysis, the musket balls were confirmed to have been fired at the alligator in the early 1860`s and were also confirmed to have been fired by Enfield Pattern 1853 rifle-muskets supplied to the Confederacy

by the United Kingdom. As such, it has been widely suggested that the alligator was used as a "Yankee" target for shooting practice by Confederate troops during the early part of the American Civil War. The huge animal also bore 5 other bullet wounds from 3 different calibre hunting weapons as well as many dents and scars. However, it did not survive the 6 .50-calibre bullets fired at him by the group of amateur hunters from Jackson, Mississippi who finally managed to take him down. This incredible animal brings a whole new perspective to the alligators endemic to the south eastern United States. These alligators have been well known to survive over 50 years and were thought capable of living up to 80 years. However, this unique specimen was estimated to have been as old as 185 years at the time of his death. Other reptiles such as turtles are known to have life spans of over 150 years but this is the first alligator of such an age that has ever been discovered. It is also one of the largest ever recorded in the United States.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas.

Confederate Cipher Disc

During the American Civil War, if signals were to be used by both the Union and Confederate armies, in either the presence or view of the opposing side, each side would use their own cipher to ensure the messages and details were kept secret. These ciphers were capable of being often changed. The rules by which these changes were to be made had to be frequent and simple thereby ensuring less chance of them being deciphered. When alphabet ciphers were used, the aim was never to allow any letter to be appear twice. In addition, the termination of words was to be concealed, the letters used in an unusual sequence and the words in messages could be reversed. Overall, it was fully accepted by both sides that with time and appliances, ciphers could be easily deciphered. However, if the ciphers could be used quickly before interpretation, the message would subsequently be of no use to the enemy. As such, simple devices such as the

Cont on page 23

KELHAM HALL



Kelham Hall



Kelham Hall





**AGM 3rd of December at the
United Service Club Bridge Street
Gainsborough DN21 1LP**

**The Club is booked for all day and all
evening for those members who wish to
have a social after the AGM
we have the room.**

**There will be sandwiches available to
purchase and free tea and coffee
at the AGM.**

**There is a bar available and takeaways
and restaurants local and the takeaways
will deliver to the club.**

The Rededication of The Derek Gregory Drum

Derek Gregory joined ACWS in 1983 and was for many years a member of 32nd. Virginia. He eventually 'crossed the line' and became a member of 2nd. Wisconsin. He was a dedicated member, very quiet, just always there. As well as being an infantryman he was also a drummer.

He joined Shiloh American Civil War Society, who worked for a well known Holiday company, and was quite a character, always late on Parade but always had a smile on his face. The Society purchased a Tenor drum which Derek played with gusto.

ACWS were at an event at Tynemouth Castle. Late on the Friday afternoon I received a telephone call telling me the shocking news that Derek had died of a heart attack whilst preparing to go to the event. Everyone was devastated and he was sadly missed, he was a lovely person and only in his early 40's.

In 1999 Shiloh closed due to their Sponsor pulling out on them. The members had all joined ACWS some years before. During an event at Sheffield I presented the drum to ACWS in memory of Derek at a full Drumhead ceremony, with full honours.

In recent years the Drum went missing, questions were asked of its whereabouts and it was eventually returned to us as a small pile of no more than 'firewood' with its original plaque which had been made by Andrew Parrott. It was presented to James Reed who has done the most amazing job of restoring it. Half of the cost of the restoration was paid for with the proceeds of a society raffle run by Claire Morris and the other half was paid for by James and Linda Reed. It was a tremendous pleasure to rededicate it and present it to our wonderful drum corps.

Viv Corbishley

Director

The Horse

One cannot overstate the vital importance of both horses and mules during the Civil War.

The cavalries on both sides rode them. The materiel and supplies that each side depended upon was hauled by them. The artillery pieces and heavy guns could not be moved from battle to battle, or maneuvered during battle, without them. They carried the Generals and other high ranking officers into battle, and they transported the wounded soldiers away from battle to hospitals behind the lines.

They were, truly, the backbone of the Army.

During the first year of the Civil War, the toll on horses was especially high. Neither side expected the conflict to last as long as it ultimately would, and the Union troops, especially, were filled with green recruits who were not very familiar with horses except as draft animals.

The Confederate soldiers, on the other hand, were still much more likely to be adept riders, owing to the terrain and less developed infrastructure of the South. In many early battles, Union artillery units made tactical blunders by leaving

their horses unprotected and exposed after positioning their cannon. Confederate sharpshooters quickly noticed their mistake, and would target the horse's right out of the gate.

After the skirmish, unless there were Union reinforcements close at hand, many pieces of artillery were simply abandoned due to lack of means to move them, and fell into Confederate hands.

Still, a horse isn't so easy to kill with a single shot, unless it is at close range. Often, a horse could take up to five bullets before it would drop. The horses that died from gunfire or artillery shells were the fortunate ones. Many, many more suffered a much more cruel death. Many were simply ridden to death, either due to the exigencies of battle or to poor judgement by cavalry leaders. Some were wore down over time, became sick or lame, and were either abandoned or shot. Horses were used to haul supplies without being shod, and their hooves would wear down to the quick until they could no longer walk. Towards the end of the war, when the pace became more frenetic, many horses

which had been ridden hard and became ill, but weren't actually lame, were nonetheless shot and killed by rear guard troops simply because they didn't have time to wait for them to recuperate. It was deemed preferable to allowing a still serviceable horse to fall into enemy hands, and feeding them was always an issue.

The recommended feed ration for a horse was 14 lbs of hay and 12 lbs of grain. Multiply that by the hundreds of horses a large unit would typically have, and you can see how simply feeding them became a logistical challenge of its own.

One Union General estimated that the forces under his command required over 800,000 lbs of feed each day to maintain their horses. A wagon could carry about one ton of feed, so the General needed 400 wagons just to transport a day's worth of feed for the horses.

Much of the fighting during the war was done on Southern soil, and as the war dragged on feeding the horses became an increasingly difficult issue.

Most of the horses belonging to the civilian population had already been confiscated by

one side or the other. That left Southern farmers without farm animals to pull a plough, not to mention the fact that able bodied men were in short supply as well. As the farms languished, troops found it harder to even find grain or hay to steal from the local populace, so the horses went increasingly without, or with severely curtailed rations. As the horses grew more emaciated, the saddles no longer fit them properly, causing horrendous, oozing wounds to their backs.

Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman was an adept cavalry man, who knew the military value of the horse. He issued explicit directives to his commanders to tend to the feeding and watering of the horses in their units immediately whenever the opportunity to stop and rest presented itself. Still, on his 900 some mile march towards Atlanta, he lost fully one quarter of the horses he started off with to starvation. There are accounts by cavalymen of horses becoming so hungry that they would eat the tails and manes of each other, and chew at the soldiers' uniforms

When we think of the Civil War, we think of it being such a long and bloody conflict. Fiercely fought, face to face, under gruelling circumstances. It was all that, and more. But the toll taken upon the horses and mules that were so key to the military forces of the day is not often considered.

Perhaps the most famous horse from the Civil War was Robert E. Lee's grey mount, Traveller. He acquired the horse in 1861, for \$200, and was greatly attached to it. Lee died in 1870, and Traveller walked, riderless, in the funeral parade with Lee's empty boots backwards in the stirrups. Traveller died just a year later.

When one thinks of all of the military campaigns that Lee and his horse Traveller lived through, and the fate so many other horses met in that war, it is almost ironic that Traveller's end came after the horse stepped on a nail and developed tetanus. Traveller had to be euthanised.

When Lee met with his adversary, Grant, to surrender at Appomattox Court House, to hammer out the terms of surrender, it was not a completely unconditional

surrender. While agreeing that the soldiers under his command would give up their weapons, Lee insisted upon their right to keep their horses if they had one. Grant agreed to that stipulation, understanding that if a former soldier was to return to the farm he had left behind, he'd need a horse to put the next crop in with.

US STILL PAYING A CIVIL WAR PENSION

The Civil War may have ended more than 150 years ago but the US Government is still paying a veterans pension from the conflict. "One beneficiary from the Civil War is still alive and receiving benefits" Randy Noller of the Department of Veterans Affairs has officially confirmed. "Veterans Affairs (VA) has an obligation to take care of our Nation's veterans no matter how long. It is an honour to serve and care for those who served our country" he added. This is the amazing story of a North Carolina woman who is the daughter of a Civil War veteran and is the last person still receiving his Civil War

pension.

Irene Triplett, the 86 year old daughter of a Civil War veteran still receives \$73.13 each month from her father's military pension. Her father was Mose Triplett, born in 1846, who initially joined the Confederate Army in 1862 but later deserted and signed up with the Union Army. His first wife died and they did not have any children. Mose Triplett then married Elida Hall who was at least 50 years younger than him. They had 5 children, 3 of whom did not survive infancy. However, Irene and her younger brother, Everette did survive. Mose Triplett was 83 when Irene was born. Mose Triplett died a few days after returning from the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg in 1938. Elida Triplett died in 1967 and Everette Triplett died in 1996. Irene Triplett recalled a very unhappy and abusive childhood in a 2014 interview. With regards her parents, she stated "I didn't care for neither one of them, to tell you the truth about it. I wanted to get away from both of them. I wanted to get a house and crawl in it all by myself". It should be noted that in the case of Mose Triplett

marrying his very much younger second wife, there may have been little romance in relationships and marriages at that time in the American South. There was very little economic activity during that period and many men had left the area. Parents would frequently encourage their daughters to marry anyone they could to relieve them of the expense as they would cost more to feed on the farm than they would contribute.

The US Government is committed to paying out veterans benefits to spouses and dependants of former soldiers. A subsection of Title 38 of the United States Code spells out the rules and regulations for their allocation, including the Civil War. There is only Irene Triplett remaining who still qualifies. "Whenever there is no surviving spouse entitled to pension, the Secretary shall pay to the children of each Civil War veteran who met the service requirements of section 1532 of this title a pension at the monthly rate of \$73.13 for one child. A veteran met the service requirements of this section if such veteran served for 90 days

While Irene Triplett has outlived all the spouses of Civil War veterans, it is not as long a period as one might think. The last Confederate widow, Maude Hopkins died on August 1st 2008 at the age of 93 and the last Union widow, Gertrude Janeway died on January 17th 2003 also at the age of 93. The last Civil War veterans, both Union and Confederate, died in the 1950s. Both men were over 100 years old.

Stewart “Goober” Douglas, 43rd
North Carolina Volunteers
Sources : Curt Mills,
Staff Writer, 8/8/2016.



Kate Cumming

Kate Cumming was born in Edinburgh between 1828 and 1835. In the 1840's, her family emigrated to Canada and then Alabama. Her mother and two sisters left for England at the beginning of the war in 1861 but

Kate stayed in Alabama as her father and brother enlisted in the Confederate Army. She was later inspired to help the Southern cause by becoming a volunteer nurse. Together with 40 other women she joined the Confederate Army in Corinth, Mississippi to help nurse some of the 23,000 Confederate and Union soldiers who were wounded at the Battle of Shiloh.

While many considered female nursing inappropriate for a woman of Cumming's social class, she was of the firm belief that every patriotic Southern woman should help the cause. The work undertaken by female nurses like Cummings led to the re-organisation of Confederate field hospitals and a reduction in the death rates amongst wounded soldiers. Following the end of the war she became a staunch proponent of the *Lost Cause* ideology and her diaries are considered an important source of information on Civil War nursing. An active member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, she died in 1909.

Source:
History & Archaeology

Confederate Cipher Disk, made it possible to exhibit signals so that their interpretation to the enemy was impractical if not impossible. The entire code changed every day with every message or with every word. As such, all the relevant Officers of a Corps or Army who were to remain in communication with each other would be given rules and times for the changing of the disks. As such, everyone involved would find that his cipher would exactly correspond with whoever they were signalling despite never having met each other.

The Confederate Cipher Disk (a polyalphabetic cipher disk) was a mechanical wheel cipher consisting of 2 concentric disks, each with the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet, which was used for the encryption of messages. It was created by Francis La Barre and was based on the Vigenere Cipher. Francis La Barre served in Co. H of the 17th Virginia Infantry before he was formally employed by the Confederacy in an official capacity as a "plater" who made medals and cipher disks. The Confederate Cipher Disk was made of brass. The outer disk has a diameter of

approximately 2 ¼ inches whilst the inner disk measured approximately 1 ½ inches. On each of the disks, the alphabet is written out clockwise in the usual order (A-Z). The disks share a common axle so the inner disk can be rotated.

The smaller disk carries the text CSA SS. The CSA stands for Confederate States of America and the SS is most likely the abbreviation for Secret Service. On the rear is the inscription F. La Barre (the creator) and Richmond VA. Not many real Confederate Cipher Disks have survived and there are only 5 known to be in existence. 2 are owned by private collectors, 1 is in the Smithsonian and 2 are in the Museum of the Confederacy (Richmond, VA). High quality and accurate replicas are made and can be purchased at certain museums.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas

Sources: Crypto Museum, Wikipedia, The Cipher Disk by Mark C Hageman.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

The following article first appeared in issue 59 but I think it is worth another airing. It is a short story written by Joe Ferrie who was with the Washington Artillery.

The Watch

Abraham Lincoln liked the look of the hunter pocket watch. It hung by its gold chain from a polished wood display rail in the tiny curiosity shop just off Pennsylvania Avenue. Normally man of plain and unpretentious taste, he was strangely drawn to the watch with its gaudy gold facing. The front facing casing of the watch was engraved with an American eagle, with outstretched wings and it seemed to capture the patriotism of these times. Even the exorbitant price of two hundred dollars did not deter the normally thrifty Lincoln and the purchase was soon made. Only when he showed it to his wife, Mary, did he fully examine the ornate timepiece. The eagle on the front was truly magnificent but the back cover

was poorly engraved with what seemed to be the head of a mountain goat. The goat's head was out of place on such a fine watch and it puzzled him. Mary Lincoln took an instant dislike to the goat and said so. She refused to handle the watch. She could not explain why, but the goat's head both frightened and unnerved her. She felt a sense of evil radiating from the object and told Lincoln so. He dismissed her with a smile. But she would not give up and began to show her temper. Eventually, Abraham had to give in and promise to agree to her strange request that he would not wear the watch for the duration of the war. It irked him but he gave his promise. He would never understand women. The watch was placed in a trunk in the storeroom to wait out the war, and it there it stayed until.... The party for Elmer E. Ellsworth was in full swing. The young colonel was the toast of Washington that night. Lincoln was pleased that his young friend would soon cross the Potomac to rid Alexandria of the rebels who perched so close to the capital. Lincoln called him the greatest little man and

Ellsworth was all of that. Abe treated the young officer almost as a son and was proud of him, as a father would a son. The women at the banquet were in fine form, fussing and fawning round the handsome young colonel. They bestowed gifts on him to show their affection and admiration. Abe Lincoln frowned. He felt guilty. He had not thought to buy his friend a gift and now watched awkwardly as Ellsworth was honoured. Then it came to him. The watch. Such a fine watch should not be relegated to a store box, it should be worn and exhibited, and Elmer would do it justice, and, so Colonel Ellsworth graciously accepted the watch from his benefactor, the president of the not so United States. Mary Lincoln never witnessed the exchange. Abe thought it safer not to tell her, after all what a woman doesn't know and anyway, hadn't she detested the watch. Ellsworth had remarked on the fine engraving of the eagle, but had said nothing about the goat's head, even though it had puzzled him, Elmer Ellsworth did cross the Potomac on May 24th 1861. He entered the town of Alexandria, whereupon he

spied a rebel flag above the marshal house hotel. He rushed upstairs and indignantly cut it down. But as he came down the stairs, a sinister figure awaited, James Jackson, a secessionist inn-keeper, fired his shotgun at the colonel, killing him. A union corporal named Brownwell avenged Ellsworth there and then. He buried his bayonet into Jackson. The dead inn-keeper slumped to the floor, his blood dripping away. For a moment a tattoo on Jackson's right forearm caught the soldier's eye and puzzled him. The tattoo was of the head of an animal, perhaps a goat, but he could not be sure, then he turned away to look after his colonel's corpse. Ellsworth's body was brought back to Washington to lie in state. Abraham Lincoln was inconsolable. Grieving violently for his young friend. That evening he finally brought himself to view Elmer's uniform coat with its gory bloodstained hole, and there among the dead colonel's belongings was the watch. Lincoln absentmindedly picked it up and fiddled with it. Mary Lincoln, watching, exploded in horror.

How had Ellsworth come by the watch? Snatching it from her husband she thrust it into the hands of his black manservant, ordering him to take the watch away and smash it up. Then with an angry glance back she stored out of the room. The servant looked at Lincoln, was he really to destroy such a fine watch? His master shook his head and took the watch from him, placing it in a wooden box which contained the president's most private souvenirs. He would keep his promise not to wear the watch until the war's end, but how could not destroy this ticking memento of his dead young friend, and there it stayed, in the box until..... The War Between the States was bloody and long, but the day did come when it was all over. Life would now return to normal. On the evening of 14th April 1865, the Lincolns were getting ready to leave for Ford's theatre, to watch the play 'our American cousin.' Lincoln. In the way of all men, was ready before Mary and was seated deep in his thoughts. So many good men had died, and poor Elmer, was it really four years? Strangely, he remembered the watch. Yes, it was still in the

box and after an eternal winding, still worked. A tear came to his eye, as he placed the watch in his waistcoat pocket. It was to be his last visit to the theatre, for that night Lincoln was shot. As the assassin's bullet hit the back of his head he was thrown forward. The watch spilled out of his pocket and fell on the floor of the private box, goat's head up. Mary Lincoln screamed. She screamed at the horror of her husband's wound, screamed at the final significance of the goat's head. She screamed and screamed.

On April 26th 1865, one John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln's murderer, was shot dead by federal cavalymen. By a strange coincidence, Booth died at the same hour as Lincoln. His body was removed from the barn and covered by an army blanket. But one of the troopers was puzzled, for on Booth's right forearm was a strange tattoo. It looked like the head of a goat, but he could not be sure, as Booth's blood was dripping on the tattoo making the goat, if that's what it was, appear vampirish.

The watch? Well, it disappeared never to be seen

Was it destroyed that night by poor distraught Mary Lincoln? No one will ever know, but there was talk that a watch similar to Lincoln's was bought by another American president of more modern years. Perhaps it was Lincoln's old watch... who knows? We can only guess. If it was, it goes some way to explain, for you see ... that president too, was assassinated

CSS Hunley. Confederate Submarine

This craft was originally a boiler, which was made into a submarine. It was cigar shaped and 60ft long. Eight men turned a crank that was attached to a propeller to produce movement, and the ship's weapon was a 25ft pole attached to the bow. The Hunley was actually a death trap, more than a dozen men including H.L. Hunley, the inventor, drowned or suffocated in test drives before the submarine was ready for battle. On February 17th 1864, off the harbour at Charleston, SC. it attacked the union ship Housatonic, crippling the enemy ship, but going to the bottom with its victim and

proved to be more of a liability to the Confederates than a threat to the Union.

Rough Justice

"FRAGGING," or purposely killing a fellow soldier, was the probable cause of the death of Thomas Wilson, a tyrannical Federal general. He died in action at the battle of Baton Rouge when, according to one account, he was seized by a group of his own men who held him in front of a cannon before it was fired at the enemy.

Jackson's Two Graves

When Gen. 'Stonewall' Jackson was wounded at Chancellorsville, the surgeon had to amputate his arm. Jackson's Corps Chaplain gave the arm a full and respectful burial in the family cemetery complete with gravestone. When the General himself died a week later, the rest of him was buried in Lexington VA.



EVENTS CALENDAR 2017

6th and 7th May 2017

Joint ACWS Preparation Weekend, at Kelham Hall & Country Park, Kelham, Nottinghamshire, NG23 5QX. Camping from Friday 5th May 2017. Full Society Event; details to follow. Confirmed (STC).

Marbury. Cheshire, On 13th - 14th May 2017. This event has yet to be confirmed,

Frontline Sedgefield as 17th & 18th June 2017.

There are no details as yet

24th and 25th June 2017, MFest 300. The Battle Of The Alamo at Weston Park, Weston-under- Lizard, Nr Shifnal, Telford, TF11 8LE.

**12th and 13th August 2017 Spetchley Hall and Gardens, Worcester WR5 1RS Confirmed (STC)
Details to follow.**

**23rd and 24th September 2017, Kelham Hall & Country Park, Kelham, Nottinghamshire, NG23 5QX.
Full Society Event; Confirmed (STC). Details to follow.
Confirmed (STC).**