



The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER

2019 3rd Edition

ACWS Ltd PO Box 270 Washington, Tyne & Wear NE37 9BX
www.acws.co.uk



118th Pennsylvania Proudly fly their new flag at Spetchley 2019

ACWS is a Member of

N·A·Re·S

Issue 193

Spetchley 2019



A.C.W.S. CONTACTS - Directors & Army Commanders



Chairman
Mr. Michael
Smart



Secretary
Mrs. Linda Reed



Treasurer
Mr. Ian Morris



Health & Safety
Mr. Martin Cross



Membership
Miss Claire Morris



Webmaster
Mr. Mike Bussey



Communications
Mr. Stephen
Griffin



Marketing
Mr. Roger
Willison-Gray



Confederate
Commander
Mr. Glenn Gibson



Federal
Commander
Mr. Tim Davies

www.acws.co.uk

Secretary's Report

Hey y'all,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well.

It has been great catching up with some of you at events this year and creating more happy memories with my ACWS family.

With Shackerstone still to go, it has been a good season but a cluster of events during the school holidays! Unfortunately it seems that is when we are required most by clients.

I hope you all had a super weekend at Tilston Wakes, It is a lovely event with friendly locals.

Please note that we will be doing a licence check at the Shackerstone event, this is for Health and Safety reasons and also to help the treasurer with his end of season accounts.

Remember it is law that states you should have your licence with you at all times!

(I use to keep mine in my cartridge box when I was infantry).

If you have taken any photos this year, whether on your phone or with a camera don't forget we still have our photography competition running and have already received

some entries. Send them to secretary@acws.co.uk.

It's still not too late to enter for the scenario competition either, some good entries for that too! Your idea could be re-enacted at one of our events next year.

On a more sombre note, this year our Chairman Mick Smart is standing down and moving on to pastures new. I myself am very sad to see him leave.

Also sadly our powder officer Kevin Holden will be standing down next year but is willing to provide training for anyone interested.

If you would like more information or are interested in either of the above positions, please come and have a chat.

On a brighter note we have had some interest in the Events Director position.

Enough of my ramblings, I hope you enjoy the rest of the events this year.

See y'all at Shackerstone.

Linda

(Company Secretary)

ACWS Main Event 2019

Shackerstone Family Festival



Celebrate 2019 with a no registration fee event for members

2019 is the 25th Shackerstone Family Festival. For the last 24 years the Festival has taken over the village of Shackerstone in Leicestershire at the beginning of September.

It brings together a large number of different family attractions that are centered around the village. The Ashby Canal runs through Shackerstone and the village is also home to a heritage railway. However for one weekend in September this sleepy Leicestershire village comes alive to the sounds of vintage vehicles, fairground rides, aircraft and no end of other unusual noises. This is the weekend of the Shackerstone Family Festival.

American Civil War

Food Theatre

Jason Smith's - Adrenaline Tour

Wildlife Display

Jurassic Experience

Shackiesaurus Children's Club

Jez Avery Stunt Show

Classic Cars

Battle of Britain Spitfire

Narrowboat Rally

The Gorillas Goin' Ape

Lawn Mower Racing

Wild West Arena

Shack Fest Land Train

Birds of Prey Demonstration

Stalls

Fun Dog Show

Real Ale and lots more...

ACWS at the M5 Multi Period Event at Spetchley



The ACWS travelled to the M5 Multi period Event at Spetchley Park Gardens on 10th and 11th August 2019 for the 13th anniversary of this increasingly popular multi period event. Yet again, this year's event still attracted well over 1,000 re-enactors from approximately 100 different re-enactment societies as well as numerous spectators particularly on the Sunday. All these have increased over the recent years as the event has now become one of the biggest multi period events in the United Kingdom. As usual, there was another commendable turnout by both ACWS Union and Confederate re-enactors and I will always continue to state that the ACWS turnout at this event is particularly awesome due to the significant distance many

people still have to travel alongside the inevitable delays/speed restrictions on our appalling motorways. Nevertheless, for many people, it was certainly worth it as this was another superb M5 festival despite the occasional shower and wind.

The M5 Multi period Event is run by the Worcester Re-enactors for the benefit of other re-enactors and yet again sees this prestigious event just get even bigger and better every year. Everyone agrees that it has now become the new Kelmarsh/Kirby Hall. This year, the organisers decided to focus on commemorating D Day with a much larger World War 2 presence in their own increased battle field space. In addition, they also invited the French Indian Wars Society. Due to this

increasingly popularity of the event, it was also felt that a 2 day programme was necessary with not all the display and re-enactments being repeated daily as in the past. The presence of so many other excellent displays by other re-enactment societies ranging in time from the Greeks to World War 2 as well as the ever popular Real Ale beer tent, excellent food stalls and various sutlers made it a great place to look around, shop, eat, drink and socialise. The Civil War Sutlers were present with a much larger range of goods including rare civil war artefacts, new ranges of uniforms, original and authentic firearms etc which did a busy trade. Overall, the M5 Event organisers as well as the owners and staff of Spetchley Hall should be really thanked for all their continued voluntary efforts,

unbelievable friendship and hard work which makes for such an enjoyable, pleasant and full multi period event. This is so important with the steady decline of many larger multi period events over the recent years. As such, it is even more vital we actively support and keep events such as these running.

As usual, the ACWS was required to perform a 30 minute skirmish each day in the main arena as well as do our additional drill displays and the 2 Grand Parades at the end of both days. As usual, the Union Army had a fine turnout with all their Federal regiments namely the 19th Indiana, 69th New York and 118th Pennsylvania all fielding good numbers as well as having Union cavalry and Union artillery. There was also the green jacketed USS





who were watching due to all the different and impromptu scenarios being employed at the same time.

On the Saturday, the battle started with Major Glenn Gibson, the Confederate Commander, opening up on the Union Army who were deploying at the top of the field with 2 Confederate artillery pieces with 2 full Confederate crews which is thanks to the hard work of the Confederate artillery officer Stuart Wardley in recruiting. In addition, the 24th Virginia were sent forward as skirmishers which they performed superbly and skilfully and paved the way for the advance of the whole Confederate Army. The Union Army commanded by Major Tim Davis responded by sending forward the

Sharpshooters who joined up with a few Union Soskan "Bucktails" which was really nice to see. The Confederate Army also had a fine turnout fielding 6 separate regiments namely the 1st Tennessee, the 32nd Virginia, the 43rd North Carolina, the 2nd South Carolina, the 24th Virginia and the 20th Texas (Soskan). For once, the Confederates had enough camping space for these long regimental lines and thanks to Martyn Clarke (Sergeant of the 2nd South Carolina/Confederate Camp Organiser) turning up early on Thursday and laying them out resulting in the fact they were much straighter! Both the big skirmishes on the Saturday and the Sunday were thoroughly enjoyed by all the public and many other re-enactors



USS sharpshooters and a few 42nd Pennsylvania "Bucktails" to flank the advancing Confederate Army and the rest of the Union Army forward to block it. As a result, the Confederate army was forced to refuse the flank on the left and hold their ground. A real firefight ensued with both armies firing at close range as well as both their respective artillery pieces and the cavalry attacking from both sides. The 20th Texas bore the brunt of this close up fighting with arranged hand to hand combat with a couple of Pennsylvania Bucktails as well as having their Texas flag standard



slashed and broken by a frenzied Union cavalryman. As the battle grew to a gradual stalemate, the Confederates slowly retreated. On the Sunday, both armies started as on Saturday but now both sides decided to move more quickly and sent fast moving flanking parties forward down both flanks as well as their respective cavalry units resulting in numerous small but fierce firefights between individual Confederate and Union regiments. The Confederates sent a strong

Tennessee and North Carolina flanking party down the right to take the Union cannon, protected by some USS sharpshooters who were well dug in, and the result was fierce close up slugfest volleys resulting in casualties on both sides. This was right in front of the public who were enthralled by the noise, confusion and gunpowder covering the whole fight. All over the battlefield, there was more movement, more real

close up and stand up slugfest fights between individual regiments with no side being prepared to retreat or fall back. As all our Civil

War battles are fought with passion, commitment so the field was totally covered in the smoke of battle as the rattle of continuous musketry fire and cannon fire filled the air. Eventually, due to their sheer numbers and resolve, the Confederates managed to eventually take the 2 Union cannon but not before suffering many casualties themselves. A cracking end to a thoroughly enjoyable battle enjoyed by all and a massive special credit to all our guests who were

superb, enthusiastic and professional on both days.

The ACWS always try and do more

movement, more close up fighting and more realistic casualty scenarios as many other re-enactors and public comment



on this excellent aspect particularly at the visible human carnage at the end of our battles. This is certainly not always the case with other re-enactment societies so we must ensure we continue to do all these things to enhance the reality and experience for the public. As usual, the ACWS also participated and excelled during the 2 Grand Parades with some quite complex company manoeuvres with many re-enactors expressing how much they had learnt and experienced. Full credit to everyone.

There are always unexpected highlights with the ACWS at Spetchley so I will mention a few. Highlights for the Union ACWS included the making by Daz Paul (Union) and the formal presentation

to the Union 118th Pennsylvania of their superb regimental flag (shown on the cover). This was a very emotional presentation and

thoroughly enjoyed by all who were there. In addition, the Union had their usual fine Medical and Apothecary display by the

roadside which many of the public enjoyed. On the Confederate ACWS side, there was a formal presentation to the 2nd South Carolina of their regimental battle flag. This was touched by baby Imogen Birtwell and accompanied by an authentic 1861 South Carolina flag reading by ACWS Secretary Linda Reed. In addition, our guests from the 20th Texas formally raised the General Robert E Lee Headquarters flag and afterwards all our Confederate female re-enactors linked arms with the Confederate Officer hierarchy and inspected the whole Confederate Army. From an overall Event highlight perspective, the Napoleonic battle was immense with all the colour, different infantry, cavalry and artillery regiments and

sheer numbers involved as well as their superb Napoleon re-enactor posing to the crowd. In addition, it was also nice to see the World War 2 battle getting larger and using more battlefield space.

On a much sadder note, there were also 2 other American Civil War re-enactors who were remembered over the weekend. The Union flag flew at half-mast for John Taylor over the whole weekend and there was a remembrance for Drum Major John Fairfield with the ACWS Drum and Fife Corps. Both were ACWS stalwarts who gave a tremendous amount to our society and will be very sadly missed by all.

At the end of the event on the Sunday afternoon and with nice weather, many Union and Confederate Civil War re-enactors decided to stay the Sunday night due to enjoying the superb location. The majority went out and enjoyed a fine carvery meal before returning for a final night round the campfire. Many thanks also to the organisers for leaving the large marquee up with a barrel of Citra IPA with a generosity £2 per pint box!

Overall, this was another highly enjoyable and packed weekend. Both the Union and Confederate camps had excellent socialising, singing and camaraderie around their campfires on both nights and

all those Civil War re-enactors who also visited the excellent Real Ale Tent had a fine time mixing with all the other re-enactors. It is to the ongoing credit of the ACWS that both armies continue to have excellent attendances and particularly pleasing to see both armies containing new and younger recruits. Another massive thanks to ACWS Commentator Christian Sprakes who was superb throughout the weekend for all the other societies. He is massively respected by everyone and his task only gets harder as the bigger and more diverse the events become!



Weird Weapons of the War (Part 2 - Hot Air Balloons, Calcium Floodlights, Land/Underwater Mines and the Winans Steam Gun)

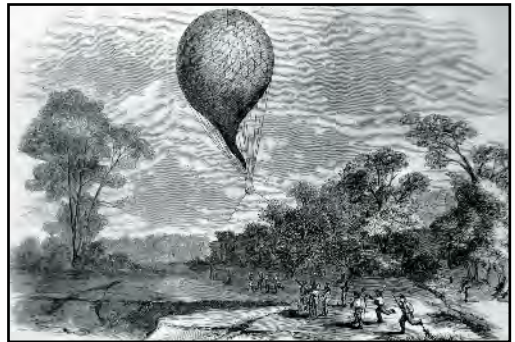
In my last article, I wrote about some of the most lethal weapons of the American Civil War. These mainly included pistols, muskets, early machine guns and cannons. In this article (in 2 Parts), I will write about some of the more unusual and unconventional weapons used by both the Union and Confederate armies as it was also a time of considerable innovation and experimentation. These came in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and these weapons were the forerunners of some often strange and gruesome combat technology.

Part 1 focused on Rockets and Grenades including the Confederate attempt to fire a ballistic missile on Washington as well as the use of various hand grenades by both sides during close quarter fighting in the trenches of various sieges. Part 2 will focus on Hot air balloons including the first US Aircraft carrier, Calcium Floodlights, Land/Underwater Mines and the Winans Steam Gun.

Hot Air Balloons

Hot air balloons were primarily used to allow Generals to get a better and

broader view of battlefields and as such were used for reconnaissance purposes. The Union had an official Balloon Corps which was a civilian organisation attached to the Union army. It was far more extensive than its Confederate counter part and was headed by Chief Astronaut Thaddeus Lowe.



The Union Balloon Corps made over 3,000 flights during the Civil War and used 6 gas inflated balloons called the Eagle, Constitution, Washington, Union, Intrepid (Lowe's favourite balloon) and Excelsior. These balloons also had their own mobile hydrogen gas generators so they could be deployed anywhere required. Under Lowe's direction, these balloons were used for scouting purposes at several large battles including the 1st battle of Bull Run/Manassas, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

They were also used for map making, reconnaissance of Confederate positions and Confederate troop movements and live updated reports (via telegraph or signal flags) of battles. All these balloons had a telegraph wire attached and were all tethered to the ground due to unpredictable winds. On one occasion, Lowe also directed actual Union artillery fire from the sky. The Union also used the first aircraft carrier for manned balloon flights namely the USS George Washington Parke Custis. The Union Balloon Corps saw its most prolific use during General McCellan's Peninsula Campaign of 1862. Throughout the Union advance up the peninsula, Lowe's balloons monitored and observed Confederate positions and movements and he utilised 2 - 3 at a time to ensure the Union high command was fully informed. On a number of occasions, Union Generals themselves made ascensions. However, these slowed down considerably when Union General Fitz John Porter took a solo flight both across and back over Confederate lines when his tether broke.

The Balloon Corps supported the Union army throughout the Peninsular campaign and headed back to Washington after being forced back. Despite valuable

service, the Balloon Corps was distrusted by the Union army and eventually in 1863 it was totally disbanded and Thaddeus Lowe returned to civilian life. The disbanding of the Union Army Balloon Corps marked the end of Civil War ballooning. Many years after the War, Confederate E.P Alexander wrote "I have never understood why the enemy abandoned the use of military balloons early in 1863, having used them extensively up to that time. Even if the observers never saw anything, they would have been worth all the cost for the annoyance and delays they caused us in trying to keep our movements out of their sight".

In response to these early deployment of Union balloons in 1862 during the Peninsula campaign, Confederate General Joseph E Johnston made an effort to counter them by having a rigid Montgolfier style balloon made. This was a "fire-balloon" or "smoke balloon" because it was filled with hot air from a fire to propel buoyancy. This technology was not on par with the Union hydrogen balloons. It was initially manned by Confederate Captain John R. Bryan who made a number of flights and reported back to General Johnston on Union troop movements. However, he also lost his tether and

requested his position back in the field. The Confederates then introduced another balloon namely the Gazelle. This was a gas filled balloon made from bolts of dress making silk which gave it a bright and colourful patchwork appearance. It was piloted by the famous Confederate artilleryman, E.P Alexander and his 1st flight was during the Battle of Seven Pines. He then made repeated flights throughout the Peninsula campaign and reported back to Confederate General Robert E Lee when he took overall command of the Confederate forces.

The Gazelle was captured by Union forces in July 1862 when the tugboat CSS Teaser ran aground to which she was attached. Confederate E.P Alexander subsequently returned to his field command and was promoted to General before the end of the war. During the Peninsula campaign, E.P Alexander was also instrumental in firing on overhead Union balloons thereby making his Confederate artillery the first ever anti aircraft battery. In addition, the Confederates also devised the first ever campfire "blackouts" as means of disguising troop movements and numbers from this prying Union aerial observation.

Calcium Floodlights

During the 1863 operation to take Charleston Harbour, Union General Quincy Adams Gillmore needed to first take the Confederate stronghold of Fort Wagner. As such, he bombarded the fort day and night with the help of a new and strange invention : The Calcium Light. Better known as "limelights", these chemical lamps used superheated balls of lime or calcium oxide to create an incandescent glow.

These had been previously used in lighthouses and theatres since the 1830's but Union General Gillmore adapted them for military and combat purposes. By shining these lights on Fort Wagner, they were able to illuminate their artillery target as well as simultaneously blind the Confederate gunners and riflemen. These Calcium Lights were also called Drummond Lights and were later used as searchlights to spot Confederate warships and also Confederate blockade runners. In early 1865, a Union searchlight spotted a Confederate Ironclad fleet moving along the James river under the cover of darkness. A Confederate Officer once noted that a planned sneak attack was made impossible due to the Unions "powerful calcium light".

Winans Steam Gun

The American Civil War produced a number of experimental cannons, machine guns and rifles but nothing was more unusual than the Winans steam powered centrifugal gun. This weapon was designed and built by Ohio engineers William Joslin and Charles Dickinson. This massive automatic weapon was sat on an armoured carriage with a large curved covering giving it a very menacing and frightening appearance. It used actual steam power rather than gunpowder to fire projectiles.



The shot was dumped into the top of a barrel which rolled down and were held by a spring loaded gate that allowed each individual shot to be fired one at a time per every revolution of the barrel. This was supposedly at a rate of 250 per minute. Newspaper stories at the time hailed the weapon as a super

gun and it received a considerable amount of political and media attention. When the designer, Charles Dickinson fell out with his partner, William Joslin in early 1861, he later headed to Harpers Ferry in May 1861 to purportedly sell the gun to the Confederacy. However, concerned Union forces intercepted him and immediately confiscated his invention. After being captured and subsequently tested by soldiers of the 6th Massachusetts Regiment, the steam gun was then transferred to Fortress Monroe in Virginia before being sent to Lowell, Massachusetts for safe keeping where it was eventually scrapped. The Union army never attempted to use or deploy the weapon and it was never used in any actual combat by either side which would appear to suggest it could never live up to its fearsome reputation. In essence, it would appear that steam fire power was never able to match the accuracy and power of gunpowder weaponry.

Landmines

These were primarily a Confederate weapon. They were originally designed and developed by Confederate General Gabriel Rains. They were anti personnel explosives and usually iron containers rigged with gunpowder, a fuse and a brass detonation cap. He first used them in the 1862 Peninsula Campaign against advancing Union forces and

then later buried thousands around Richmond and in various strategic parts of the Deep South. Some of these still active landmines are still being discovered to this day. Initially, the landmines made by the Confederates were artillery shells which were made to detonate by the tripping of a wire or being stepped on by a passing Union soldier.

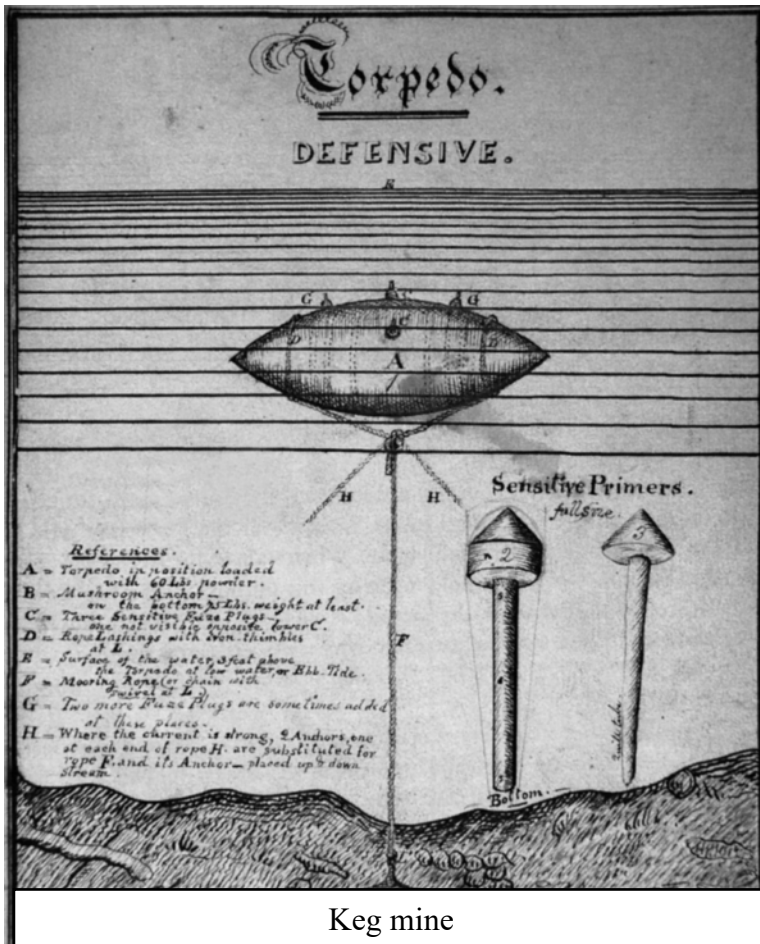
These shells were the ordinary 8 or 10 inch mortar or columbiad shells filled with gunpowder buried a few inches below the surface of the ground. In some cases they were attached to items of common use such as wheelbarrows, pickaxes, shovels and these were deliberately placed near springs, roads, telegraph poles or in the shade of trees to give the impression of accidental misplacement. A number of Union soldiers were killed before they discovered the actual cause. Union General George C. McCellan ordered Confederate prisoners taken at Yorktown during the Peninsula Campaign in 1862 to search, disinter and destroy them when found. On May 4th 1862, a Union cavalryman was on a road leading to Yorktown when he activated the 1st ever pressure operated landmine and was the 1st soldier to be killed by such a device. A young Union telegraph operator was also killed shortly afterwards when repairing a broken wire on a

telegraph pole that had been mined at the foot. Whilst undoubtedly very intimidating, they were viewed at the time as an unethical mode of warfare.

Union General George B McCellan denounced them as "barbarous" and Confederate General James Longstreet briefly banned their use by the Confederates. The most vehement critic was Union General William T Sherman who lost several of his Union troops to such underground devices whilst on his infamous March to the Sea. Decrying the landmines as "not warfare but murder", he reportedly made Confederate prisoners march ahead of his advancing army so that they might trigger such landmines. It has always been assumed that General Sherman was the first Union Commander to use Confederate prisoners in such a fashion in 1864 but Union General George McCellan was in fact the first in 1862.

Underwater Mines

Alongside landmines, the Civil War was also a testing ground for underwater mines known as torpedoes and the first time used in a conflict situation. Both sides used underwater mines and utilised them for protecting harbours and rivers. The Confederates were the most successful and they began by



the James river virtually impassable and terrorized the Union Navy at the battles of Mobile Bay and Charleston Harbour. The Confederates developed many types of torpedo including the Frame torpedo which was placed on an underwater timber frame where boats or ships would run into them. Others included the Floating mine or those which were weighted down as wooden keg torpedoes. The

sinking the ironclad USS Cairo in 1862. They went on to sink over 27 other Union warships and severely damaged many others. The Union only managed to sink 6 Confederate Naval vessels throughout the whole duration of the Civil War. The Confederates owed their skill in underwater warfare due to an oceanographer called Matthew Fontaine Maury who first demonstrated the use of mines in 1861. His "infernal machines" made

CSS Hunley used an underwater mine in an offensive capacity by attaching one to a pole to successfully sink the USS Housatonic.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas, 43rd North Carolina Volunteers

Sources : Wikipedia; Various Internet Sources; Unusual Civil War Weapons at history.com; Civil War Talk.



Fannins Retreat



James Walker Fannin Jr was a Colonel and a commanding officer in the Texian Army during the Texas Revolution of 1835 -1836. After failing to support the Alamo defenders, he was forced to retreat. Shortly afterwards, he was surrounded and outnumbered by Mexican forces and fought the Battle of Coleto Creek before having to surrender. Colonel Fannin and nearly all of his 344 Texian soldiers were executed soon afterwards at Goliad, Texas following express orders from Mexican General and President Antonio de Lopez Santa Anna that all rebels were to be executed. This is the amazing story of Fannins Retreat which will be re-enacted at the M5 Spetchley Multi

Period Event on 11th and 12th August 2018 by numerous re-enactors from different historical periods. This will be the 2nd re-enactment of events that occurred during the Texas Revolution. This follows on from the highly successful re-enactment of the Alamo at the MFest 300 Event which occurred at Weston Park, Telford in June 2017.

On February 25th 1836, Colonel Fannin received a desperate appeal from Colonel Travis at the Alamo who wrote "We have removed all our men into the Alamo, where we will make such resistance as is due to our honour, and that of our country, until we can get assistance from you, which we expect you to forward immediately. In this extremity, we hope you will send us all the men you can spare promptly. We have one hundred and forty six men, who are determined never to retreat. We have but little provisions, but enough to serve us till you and your men arrive.

We deem it unnecessary to repeat to a brave officer, who knows his duty, that we call on him for assistance". Colonel James Fannin immediately launched a relief march of more than 300 men and 4 pieces of artillery on 25th February 1836 from his headquarters in the small fort of Presidio La Bahia at Goliad,

Texas. He had earlier chosen this old mission fort as his base due to its defensible position and its strategic location near the Texas Gulf coast. It was situated on high rocky ground overlooking the San Antonio river and consisted of a square compound covering 3 ½ acres and surrounded by a stone fence. In essence, Colonel Fannins regiment consisted of 2 volunteer Battalions namely The First Battalion known as the Georgia Battalion of Permanent Volunteers which was commanded by Colonel William Ward and the Second Battalion known as the LaFayette Battalion which was commanded by Major Benjamin Wallace.

In addition to these volunteers, he also had Captain Westovers company of Regulars, Captain Hugh McDonalds Militia Company and Captain John "Jack" Shackelford's company of Alabama Volunteers known as "The Red Rovers" due to all wearing red pants. He also had 11 artillery pieces commanded by Captain Stephen Hurst. After a short delay, the column eventually set off on 28th February and headed to San Antonio, a distance of some 90 miles. This relief mission to the Alamo was a total disaster from the start with wagons very quickly breaking down, the oxen teams wandering off during the nights, the San Antonio river being too swollen

for the artillery pieces to safely cross and many men still remaining barefooted and hungry due to a lack of adequate food and provisions. After 2 days, they had still only marched less than a mile from Goliad and Fannin had no other option but to retreat back to his original base at Goliad. It was far too little and far too late to assist Colonel Travis and the Alamo defenders as the Battle of the Alamo was later fought on 6th March 1836 with all the defenders (approximately 187 men) being killed by the Mexican forces.

On March 14th , General Sam Houston, the overall Commander in Chief of all Texian forces, sent word to Colonel Fannin that he should now retreat from Goliad to Victoria for more defensive purposes but Fannin still needed means of transport including more wagons, carts and oxen which eventually arrived on March 16th. In addition, he waited for more reinforcements from nearby Refugio. On March 19th, Colonel Fannin and his Texian forces abandoned his position at Goliad (which he had personally renamed Fort Defiance) and burnt most of the buildings and dismantled any fortifications. Fannins column consisted of 9 cannon, 500 spare muskets and was also laden with supplies and baggage. They had only travelled 9 miles due to further delays with carts still breaking down

and both the men and oxen suffering from extreme exhaustion before Mexican cavalry arrived. The Texians immediately formed a hollow square in a slight depression out on the open prairie and placed cannon at each corner for defence against the onslaught of the Mexican cavalry which they easily repulsed. More Mexican forces including infantry under General Jose de Urrea quickly followed up and having surrounded the Texians attacked in 3 distinct columns from 3 different sides with their bugles blowing loudly and their flags waving.

Colonel Fannin calmly told all his men and cannon to hold their fire until the Mexicans were within 100 hundred yards at which time all the muskets and the artillery pieces loaded with grape and canister shot opened up with devastating effect. Although some of the Mexicans made it to the perimeter of the Texian square, they were unable to break through leaving the ground littered with all their dead. Colonel Fannin himself stood bravely in the open directing all his men despite being wounded in the thigh during the attack. The Mexicans retreated and on 2 more occasions charged the Texian square but to no avail. As nightfall approached after these attacks, Fannin strengthened his defences by digging deeper trenches and piling their dead animals and baggage on the outside

of these trenches. However, after this fierce 2 day battle, called the Battle of Coleto Creek, during which the Mexicans lost between 200 and 300 killed or wounded and the Texians 7-9 killed and 60 wounded, Colonel Fannin and his Texian forces were eventually compelled to surrender due to overwhelming odds and the arrival of more heavy Mexican artillery as well as fresh supplies of ammunition and infantry.

During the surrender negotiations, Mexican General Urrea had promised Colonel Fannin that all his men would be treated as prisoners of war and not be executed. This was written and read aloud in both Mexican and English to ensure all the Texians were aware of all the terms agreed upon. The Mexicans took the Texians back to Goliad where they were held as prisoners. They all thought they would be free in several weeks as they all believed on surrendering that they would be paroled and returned to the United States.

Indeed, the Mexican General Urrea wrote to the overall commanding Mexican General and President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna asking for clemency for the Texians writing in his personal diary "wishing to elude these orders as far as possible without compromising my personal responsibility". He also pleaded for leniency as "this show

of generosity after a hotly contested engagement is worthy of the highest commendation and I can do less than to commend it to your Excellency". General Urrea then left Goliad leaving command to Colonel Jose Nicolas de la Portilla.

On March 26th , Santa Anna overruled this plea for clemency by General Urrea by stating that he had no desire for such mercy of the "perfidious foreigners " and ordered Colonel Portilla to immediately execute all the Texian prisoners forthwith. Colonel Portilla reluctantly agreed as he had fretted over Santa Anna's orders and General Urrea's persistent pleas to treat the prisoners with due consideration. Colonel Portilla later wrote to General Urrea expressing his sentiments "I feel much distressed at what has occurred here: a scene enacted in cold blood having passed before my eyes which has filled me with horror".

The following day, on 27th March, Palm Sunday, Colonel Portilla had between 425 - 445 Texians marched out of Goliad in 3 columns on the Bexar, San Patricio and Victoria Roads. They were in a relatively jovial mood as they firmly believed they were on missions to collect wood, drive cattle or even being escorted to New Orleans for safe passage home via ships already prepared at Capano. Even the night

before, the Texians had engaged in an impromptu rendition of "Home Sweet Home". After half a mile, they were all stopped and immediately shot point blank between 2 rows of Mexican soldiers. Any lingering survivors were immediately clubbed, bayoneted, lanced or knifed to death. Approximately 40 wounded Texians who could not walk were also executed inside Goliad at the same time with many still lying in their makeshift hospital beds. Colonel Fannin himself was the last Texian to be executed after he had seen all his men killed.

Shortly after he was informed of the execution of all his men, he was told to prepare for his own execution. He calmly replied he was ready and he had no desire to live after the cowardly murder of all his men. He was taken by the Mexican soldiers to the courtyard in front of the Chapel in Goliad and blind folded and seated in a chair. He was unable to walk as he had been wounded in the leg at the earlier Battle of Coleto Creek.

He made 3 formal requests 1) He asked for his personal belongings to be sent to his family 2) He asked to be shot in the heart 3) He asked for a Christian burial. The Mexicans subsequently took all his belongings for keepsakes including his gold watch as a war prize, shot him point blank in the face and burnt his body

along with all the other Texians who were massacred that day. Astonishingly, 28 Texians escaped death by either feigning death or other means. 3 known survivors managed to make it back to General Houston's Texian army and fight at the Battle of San Jacinto. In addition, a Mexican woman called Francita Alavez rescued approximately 20 Texians from the carnage. She later became known as the "Angel of Goliad" as she managed to persuade a Mexican Colonel to spare them as necessary doctors, interpreters and orderlies to assist the copious Mexican wounded from the earlier Battle of Coleto Creek. This number included Captain John "Jack" Shackleton from the Alabama Volunteers who was a physician.

After the executions, all the Texians bodies were piled up and burnt. Their charred remains were then left in the open, unburied and exposed to vultures and coyotes. In June 1836, General Thomas J. Rusk found these remains and gave orders for a formal military burial. The remains were interred at a location south east of Goliad. This gravesite was then forgotten until years later when a group of boys found human bone fragments. In 1938, the current monument to Colonel Fannin and his men was erected at the gravesite. It contains the names of all the men slain.

Mexican President and General Santa Annas ruthless treatment of these captured Texians had exactly the opposite effect of what he had intended. The "Napoleon of the West" was no longer seen as a military strategist but a cruel and ruthless despot. The Goliad Massacre steeled resistance throughout the United States against him and unified Texian Resistance. Less than a month later as General Sam Houston prepared his men for the Battle of San Jacinto and the fight that would finally win Texas Independence, he concluded his rallying speech with the words "Remember the Alamo!, The Alamo!, The Alamo!". His Texians thundered back "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!"

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas, 43rd North Carolina Volunteers.

Sources : Wikipedia and other Internet Sources inc Colonel James Walker Fannin's Regiment at Goliad by Garland Lively



Legend of the lost Confederate Gold

On 24th May 1865, as the end of the Civil War approached, 5 wagons filled with gold, coinage and jewellery as well as containing the last vestiges of the Confederate Treasury and various Virginia Banks, were robbed at the Chennault Crossroads on the Chennault House Plantation in Lincoln County, Georgia. In 1865, the value of the gold at the time of the robbery was roughly \$250,000. In today's money, this would equate to approximately \$5 million. This money has never been properly accounted for so this is the fascinating story of the legend of the lost Confederate Gold which is also known as "The Midnight Raid at Chennault".

As the end of the American Civil War approached and Richmond, Virginia was about to fall to Union forces, the Confederates were desperate to ensure their gold and monetary reserves did not fall into Union hands. In addition, Confederate President Jefferson Davis had also promised to return to France a significant amount of gold that had been loaned to support the Confederacy regardless of the outcome of the Civil War. As such, Confederate Captain William H. Parker of the Confederate Navy with a number of young navy midshipmen volunteers was officially

tasked with escorting the wagons out of Richmond, Virginia and escorting them south to Savannah where it was hoped it would be loaded onto a waiting ship, taken out of the country and a portion returned to France as promised. This special cargo consisted of gold ingots, gold double eagle coins, silver coins, silver bricks and Mexican silver dollars.

In addition, there was a substantial amount of fine jewellery donated by women across the South to support the cause. One Confederate Commander described the special cargo "as a very troublesome elephant". Initially, Captain Parker managed to transport the gold by train to Anderson, South Carolina before transferring the gold to wagons to complete the eventual arrival at Savannah. On the way, Captain Parker was instructed to meet President Jefferson Davis outside Washington, Georgia for further orders whilst avoiding Union troops who were active in the area and urgently seeking both the Confederate President and the Confederate gold reserves.

As such, this "special cargo" was left for safeguarding in a Washington, Georgia Bank vault. Soon after, the fugitive Confederate officials all split up in the hope of avoiding capture

and only days later, the Civil War ended and occupying Northern troops took control of the Confederate gold. On May 24th 1865, all the confiscated gold, coinage and jewellery was packed into 5 wagons and set out on their long journey north. It was now the property of the United States Government.

The mostly gold coin was packed in 40 wooden kegs and surprisingly only guarded by just 2 sergeants, 5 privates and 5 teamsters. It was on the first night of this journey that the 5 wagons and all the Confederate gold was bushwhacked just 100 yards from the front porch of the Chennault House, Georgia and totally disappeared from history.

It was reported that the bushwhackers contained stragglers or paroled soldiers from both the Confederate and Union armies who had heard of some handouts being given to the escorting guards as well as locals, freed slaves and others. Eyewitnesses report that the many of these bushwackers were so overloaded with gold and silver coinage in various sacks, bags, shirts, pants, boots and saddles that much was spilt, discarded or hidden all over the county. Further Union troops soon after arrived at the Chennault House and were furious that all the gold, coinage and jewellery valued at \$ ¼ million had

been stolen. They acted harshly and consequently tortured all the occupants of the house and the entire Chennault family was taken to Washington, DC for intensive interrogation. A small amount was recovered by the Union troops from locals and having being dropped by the escaping bushwhackers on various trails and tracks leading from the scene of the raid. However, nothing about the whereabouts of the major part of the Confederate gold was revealed and all the family members were later released to return home to Georgia.

So where did all the Confederate gold go? Many theories still exist to this day and many treasure hunters are still actively hunting for the lost gold. As time went by, the Chennault House Plantation became known as "The Golden Farm" and for many years, people came to search for the missing gold. Over the years, quite a few individual gold and silver coins have been found on dirt roads around the plantation particularly after heavy rain storms.

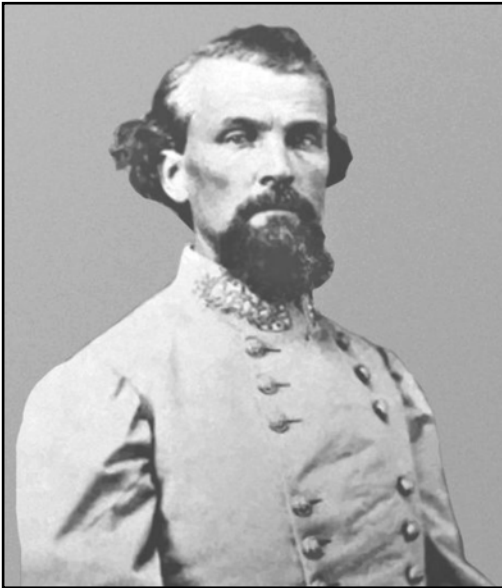
This has fuelled speculation that some of the gold, jewellery and coins were hastily buried nearby and still lie there to this day. Other theories abound including the story that the bushwhackers with the locals shared all the gold out between each other after participating in the robbery and rumours still abound that nearby

wealthy families can trace their fortune back to that very night. Another theory was that the bulk was buried near the confluence of the Apalachee and Oconee rivers. So if by any chance you pass the Chennault House, hire out a metal detector, find a faded discarded map and who knows what may happen next!

Sources : Wikipedia, Legend of the Lost Confederate Treasure - Washington, Georgia History, The Search for Lost Confederate Gold - Hans Kuenzi, The Lost Confederate Treasure - Southern Sentinel.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas, 43rd North Carolina Volunteers

Iconic Military History Event made at Battle of Johnsonville (Nov 4-5 1864)



On November 4th 1864, Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest attacked a massive and heavily fortified Union supply base at Johnsonville, Tennessee. He had earlier reached the west bank of the Tennessee river on October 28th 1864 with some 3,500

cavalry and infantry. Although he had already captured a Union gunboat and a transport as a diversion, he secretly positioned his 10 artillery pieces across the river from Johnsonville.

As he opened up on the 3 gunboats, 11 transports and 18 barges which were all full of Federal supplies, the commanding Union Officers Lieutenant E.M. King and Colonel C.R Thompson ordered all the vessels to be burned to prevent their capture. They had assumed that General Forrest had more than 13,000 troops and were desperate to ensure their supplies did not fall into rebel hands. The subsequent fire quickly spread to the docks and warehouses of Johnsonville and all the Federal guns positioned above the depot could not eliminate the well-entrenched Confederate guns across the river. The blazing docks, boats and warehouses so

illuminated the river that General Forrest was able to evacuate his position at nightfall and move his Confederate forces safely 6 miles to the South.

As a result of the engagement, the Confederates reported 2 dead, 9 wounded and 150 Union troops captured. The Union reported 8 killed or wounded. However, the estimate of the value of the vessels and the equipment destroyed was estimated to be in the region of \$6.7 million.

In addition, his very movements caused the Federal high command to move large amounts of troops to defend the area. Although it was a Confederate victory, the raid itself failed to either impede Union General Shermans March to the Sea or prevent the destruction of Confederate General Hood's forces at the Battles of Franklin and Nashville.

However, there is 1 particularly amazing and unique military aspect of this battle that is very rarely mentioned in the numerous Civil War historical accounts of the battle. That amazing fact is that 3 Confederate Generals namely Nathan Bedford Forrest, Abraham Buford and Tyree Bell all actually manned an artillery piece alone. This included loading, firing and repositioning their artillery piece

after recoils whilst directly under fire from Union artillery batteries situated across the river and above the Union depot itself.

The actual artillery crew itself was reported to have stood back watching in awe and both laughed and shouted encouragement as the 3 Confederate General artillery crew continually pounded the Union positions. The watching Confederate artillery crews were particularly enamoured by Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest himself shouting in erroneous terms, "Elevate the breach a little lower boys - elevate the breach a little lower" !

Reportedly, due to their accuracy and success, General Forrest shouted at the real artillery Captain John Morgan who was standing nearby "We'd wipe old Sherman off the map John if they gave me enough men and you enough guns!"

Never before or since in any active military conflict situation has a single artillery piece been solely manned by an all Brigadier General Officer group. Without question, this would appear to be the highest ranking artillery crew in all of military history!

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas, 43rd North Carolina Volunteers

NOTICE OF 2019 AGM

The American Civil War Society Ltd (a company limited by guarantee, (number 2610962) hereby gives NOTICE that it's AGM will be held on Saturday 7th December 2019, starting at 1pm prompt at Kegworth Village Hall, Nottingham Road, Kegworth, Derby, Derbyshire, DE74 2FH.

If you are a current member and have any nominations for posts of Directors or Army Commanders of the Society and/or you have any agenda items appropriate for the AGM, then put them in writing as soon as possible addressed to The Secretary, ACWS Ltd, PO Box 270, Washington, Tyne & Wear, NE37 9BX. These MUST be received at this location by NO LATER than Friday 4th October 2019.

Nominations for other than existing post holders have to be signed by the nominee and proposed by at least one other current member, who must also sign the nomination. The nominee may submit a short address for circulation to the membership to support their candidature.

The current directors standing for re-election as at the date of this notice are:

- Michael Smart (Chairman) is standing down.
- Secretary: Linda Reed
- Treasurer: Ian Morris
- Membership: Claire Morris
- Webmaster: Mike Bussey
- Health & Safety: Martin Cross
- Communications: Stephen Griffin
- Marketing: Roger Willison-Gray

The current two Army Commanders are standing for re-election as at the date of this notice are:

- Federal Commander: Tim Davies
- Confederate Commander: Glenn Gibson

Once relevant inputs have been received, the AGM Agenda can be put together and the appropriate documentation can be sent to you before the AGM.

Please note, only current members of ACWS are entitled to vote at the AGM or to submit proxy forms. Members who wish to attend the meeting are asked to bring their membership cards to the AGM to help validation, admission and/or voting if necessary.

For and behalf of the Board,

Linda Reed

Company Secretary and Director

20th August 2019

NB: Electronic delivery of Agenda and voting slips. We will seek to send all the AGM paperwork to all those of you who have e-mail addresses electronically by that means (to cut down on printing and postage) and post only to those who currently have no e-mail address or who have specifically opted-out of e-voting. PLEASE NOTE, your Webmaster has devised a secure way for you to deliver your Proxy Vote electronically. This will save everybody a lot of time and cost.

If you are coming to the AGM, you will NOT be voting electronically (or by post). However, you all need to make sure either Mike Bussey or Claire Morris have your correct, up-to-date email address for this to happen. If you fail to do this then you will not get the AGM papers or proxy vote form.

Please make sure we have the right information by NO LATER than Sunday 29th September 2019.

Spetchley Photos 2019







EVENTS CALENDAR 2019

***** **No ACWS Registration Fee for Members** *****

Aug 31 - Sep 1 - SHACKERSTONE, Barton Lane, Shackerstone, Leics, CV13 6LZ.

Full Society event at the Shackerstone Family Festival,

ACWS have been here before. It is a lovely show set in the heart of the Leicestershire countryside. As well as the Show there is the battlefield line steam railway and the historic canal boat festival.

Includes Infantry, Artillery and (hopefully) Cavalry.

***** **No ACWS Registration Fee for Members** *****

December 7th ACWS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2019 ACWS Annual General Meeting is to be held at Kegworth Village Hall, Nottingham Rd, Kegworth, Derby DE74 2FH

