



# ***The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER***

## **2019 4th Edition**

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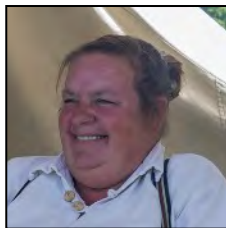
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## A.C.W.S. CONTACTS - Directors & Army Commanders



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Mr. Glenn Gibson



Federal  
Commander  
Mr. Tim Davies

## Treasurer's Report 2019

This year we have made a profit, despite a decrease in membership and attendances, mainly due to an increase in sponsorship.



The profit made this year will partly offset the loss from last year and we should not need to pay Corporation Tax, the accountant should confirm this.

The bank balance and cash in hand figure stands at £15,189 at the year end, and this year we neither owe anyone any money or have any owed to us.

One success this year was the recovery of the monies owed to us by Kelham Hall, the fee in full plus a partial recovery of our legal fees. I would personally like to thank our secretary Linda Reed and chairman Mick Smart for all the hard work they have put in, and also Philip and Jennifer Clark for their help and advice.

Our accountants will work out the depreciation costs regarding the company's assets.

If you have any queries or questions please ask at the AGM, or if you are unable to attend you can contact me through the PO Box.

Ian Morris  
Treasurer

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## Union Army Commander Report 2019

Greetings one and all.

Wow, where has the time gone, another season has come to an end already. I must admit we have had some very good events even the weather has been good some good battles and some excellent living history displays, my particular favourite is Spetchley park. I feel the way forward is with more



living history and short sharp skirmishes. Both Armies played the game and I have never seen so many dead bodies litter a field.

This along with Christians and Martin's excellent commentary really gave the public a sense of what a battlefield would be like. Again this year the brigade as a whole is slowly increasing and recruiting more fresh blood. But we must continue recruiting never stop! The more the

better! Our overall impression is getting better, but of course we could always do with improving even more.

On a personal note Gary and I with all the blue and the green, would like to wish Mike and Jo all the best in the future we hope to see you at a few shows. It has been an honour to have you as a part of the ACWS family, once a family member always a family member.

Good luck to the person who has to fill your role also like to thank the band for all their hard work.

Hope to see you all at the AGM, for those who can't make it let me take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from myself and all your Union Army staff.

Remember re-join ACWS for 2020 as soon as you can. I look forward to seeing you all next year.

Keep your beers cold and your powder dry.

Major Tim

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## Communications Report 2019

So my first full season as Communications Director ends. It started roughly with personal problems but ended on a high note with 4 excellent events. Consecutive weekends but well worth the effort to attend them.



Must admit I do love small events especially those with music, I can't wait to go revisit them when they inevitably ask us back. Rewind may have been flooded and cancelled, but you can't beat ACWS company and dancing with air-'musket'-guitars.

Good news for the newsletter as the society has now got it's own colour laser printer and the printed newsletter should hopefully be on time. Bad news for Mike as he has to produce them.

We already have 6 events confirmed for next year with more being looked at now. It is my intention to not only continue photographing all events, but to also start videoing them as well.

If anyone has any video ideas/scenarios they would like me to film then please let me know.

My report is short and sweet, look forward to seeing you all next year, have fun be happy.

Griff

# Confederate Army Commander Report 2019

To All members of the Confederate Forces,



Well another season over and quite a strange and difficult one!

With a low turn out at the preparation weekend in April, then a long gap until Earls Barton (which was a good event) and then once again another long gap until August when all our events came in thick and fast.

I'd like to thank all those who made the effort to support the ACWS at events. I know it can be difficult in the present climate, especially during August.

I apologise if I shout and rant at individuals and regiments but I am just so passionate and want to show you off to the Union and Public because when it is done right we all look so fine and splendid.

So looking forward to next season, keep recruiting, get your kit repaired, put savings aside and look forward to having some good fun and laughter at the weekends.

I would like to thank the board for all their hard work and Major Tim and the Union forces (even though I lose my temper with them sometimes) for their support over the season and may that continue next year.

I must also thank Soskan for their support and attendance and may our co-operation continue in good faith.

I look forward to seeing members at the AGM and for those who can not attend "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" see you next year.

Your Obedient Servant,  
Major Glenn Gibson  
CO Confederate Forces ACWS



## ACWS At Tilston Wakes Country Fair



The ACWS attended the Tilston Wakes Country Fair on the Bank Holiday weekend of 24/25/26 August 2019. As forecast, the weather was blazing hot and it is not surprising that it was deemed the hottest August Bank Holiday ever recorded!

There were no displays on the Monday so all the ACWS activities were confined to the Saturday and the Sunday. There was a commendable turnout from both the Union and Confederate Armies and this was pleasing considering the amount of ACWS events throughout August.

On the Saturday, the ACWS was commissioned to lead the Grand Parade through the village which was enjoyed by both the re-enactors as well as the whole village who turned up to see it. A highlight of the parade was a giant Elvis impersonator who came over with his large microphone to which the

Confederate Army responded by singing "Dixie" to the enjoyment of all.



The ACWS then did a 4 piece artillery display which was excellent and thoroughly enjoyed by all except a few who complained it upset their dogs despite being warned beforehand. The ACWS then did a Kids Drill which went down well with all the children and parents who participated. Martyn Clark (Sergeant of the 2nd South Carolina) did a fine job at short notice throughout both days commentating and has clearly developed his own unique and

friendly style by really engaging with the public. During the night, there were 3 bands playing which is a regular feature of the event and they were all thoroughly enjoyed by everyone late into the night. During the last rock band, the Confederates took advantage of all the kids wooden muskets to play air guitar which was a slightly mesmerising sight for the locals and others to behold!

On the Sunday, the ACWS opened the carnival with a 4 piece artillery display. The Mayor of Tilston was supposed to open the firing but had a number of embarrassing misfires with his jerking of the lanyard. In my personal opinion, the blonde and flaxen haired Tilston Wakes Dairy Queen would have had a far more premature explosive effect with just a gentle first time tug.



The Union Army then did a fine Infantry display before another Kids Drill which was sadly not very well supported by the audience before doing the main infantry skirmish in

the main arena. This was an excellent small skirmish involving the use of 4 artillery pieces as props. The skirmish started with 4 cannons in the arena being guarded by Union artillery crews. The Confederates then rushed on and took the Union artillery crews out before sending in their own rebel crews which were in turn taken out by the arriving Union forces. A skirmish then developed with both sides trying to take the cannon.



The Confederate Major Glen Gibson then managed to split his forces to take the Union by both flanks with the 1st Tennessee taking the left flank and the 43rd North Carolina circling around and taking the left flank. Despite some excellent Confederate volleys, the Union remained stubborn under Major Tim Davis. Both sides took huge casualties before only a couple of soldiers on each side remained. The Union held the cannon but at a price neither side could afford. Again, excellent commentary by Martin Clarke who explained all the

purpose of the volleys, the screaming NCO orders and flanking movements made by both armies. The public responded with much applause and the organisers were very happy.

Both Armies did living history over the weekend and new activities included Catherine Conyard teaching people to read music on the Union camp which was open to all and is vital for our superb Civil War musicians. Another pleasing feature was the return to the Confederate Camp of 2 long thought lost Confederate flags. These were an early 1861 South Carolina Flag with 7 stars and the Rockbridge Artillery flag and Guidon. Both had been languishing for numerous years in attics and sheds and covered in dust and cobwebs so it was really nice to

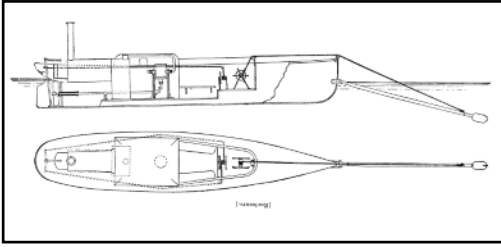
see them back outside and flying again with their proud regiments.

Lets hope more Union and Confederate flags are returned from by gone days, fixed up and put back on display. Although there was no ACWS activities on the Monday, many Civil War re-enactors stayed over for the Sunday night disco, take advantage of the very friendly Real Ale pub in the village and above all the Ox Roast which had been cooking since Saturday on the festival site.

Overall, another cracking ACWS weekend and massive credit to all the stalwarts, both Union and Confederate, who attended and who performed professionally throughout.



## CSS Squib



On the night of 9th April 1864, a small Confederate semi submersible vessel silently left port and headed towards the vast patrolling Federal fleet off Newport News, Virginia. Her target was the huge flagship of the Union fleet. She managed to slip in quietly through the Union blockade and explode a vast charge against her side before slowly backing off.

No, this is not story of the iconic CSS Hunley and her attack against the USS Housatonic but the long forgotten and amazing story of the CSS Squib striking the pride of the Union fleet namely the USS Minnesota.

This successful attack, in very many ways, could be viewed in a similar light to the CSS Hunley due to the sheer audacity, bravery and technical innovations required to carry out such a David and Goliath feat.

The CSS Squib, which was also referred to as the Infanta, was a very small torpedo boat in the service of

the Confederate States Navy in 1864. She patrolled the James River and her sole armament consisted of a spar torpedo. Her captain was Lt Hunter Davidson who led the Confederate Torpedo Service (aka the Submarine Battery Service). Although his primary mission was to patrol the James River and prevent any Union excursions up the river to Richmond, he also took the art of torpedoes (underwater mines) to a brand new level by accomplishing the art of electronic detonation. These advanced torpedoes consisted of iron boilers filled with powder and armed with a simple electronic or galvanic fuse. The heat generated from the electrical current was enough to set off the fuse and detonate the torpedo.



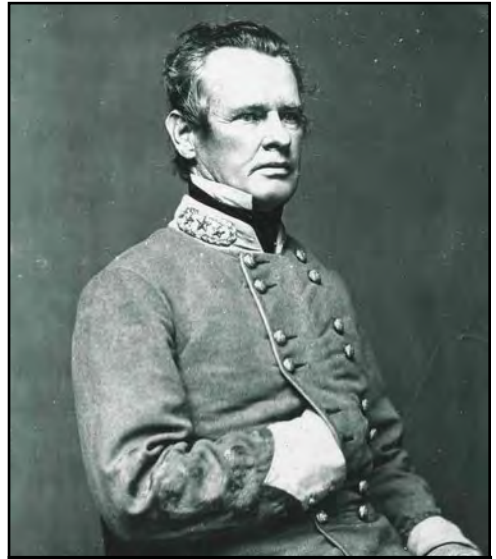
Lt Hunter Davidson

Hunter Davidson performed many tests to determine the ideal depth and charge for these new torpedoes and the results showed that " two thousand pounds of cannon powder was sure to destroy utterly any ship

of any size at a depth of not more than thirty feet". These were a massive improvement of the previous Confederate torpedoes designed by Confederate Brigadier General Gabriel Rains which consisted of a simple beer keg filled with powder and detonated by impact detonators and were not very dependable. As such, Lt Hunter Davidson was able to thwart any attempts by the Union Navy to sail up the James River and many Federal ships that tried were lost to his new invention. The most famous were the Commodore Barney and the Commodore Jones. The latter was literally thrown over 50 feet in the air when she hit one of these torpedoes.

In the spring of 1864 after successfully defending the James River from any Federal incursions due to his advanced torpedoes, Lt Hunter Davidson decided to go on the offensive. Using the recent development of the David class submersibles built in Charleston, South Carolina as an example, he built his own semi submersible boat, the CSS Squib. She was only 20 feet long, 5 feet wide and drew only 3 feet of water. She was armed only with a single impact detonated spar torpedo. Her target would be the largest vessel in the Union Navy, the 265 foot USS Minnesota which was permanently stationed at the mouth

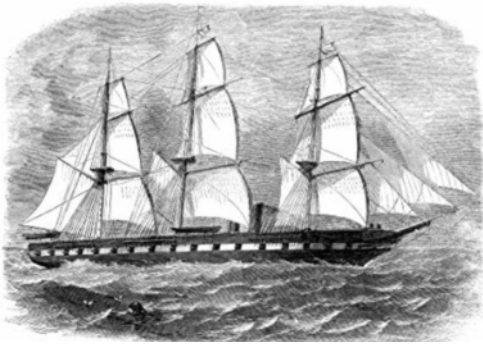
of the James River due to the fear and concerns of the Confederate torpedoes positioned further up the river.



Brigadier General Gabriel Rains

Lt Hunter Davidson felt that if they were too frightened to sail up the James, he would sail down to confront them.

As such, on the night of 9th April 1864, Lt Hunter Davidson and the 6 man CSS Squib decided to attack. Sailing his craft in the dark around the whole of the Union fleet off Newport News, Virginia, he searched for and eventually spotted the flagship, the USS Minnesota. He immediately headed towards her and rammed her side with 53 pounds of gunpowder in his spar torpedo before backing off and safely sailing back up the James



River to safety. Although the explosion caused significant damage to the USS Minnesota and put her out of action for the rest of the War, the torpedo was exploded too near the surface to cause more serious crippling damage.

There is a very big irony in this story that I thought readers would be interested in. When Lt Hunter Davidson joined the Confederate States Navy at the beginning of the Civil War, his first assignment was to serve as a Confederate Naval Officer on the famous ironclad CSS Virginia. As such, he was in action on the vessel at the historical battle with the ironclad USS Monitor at the Battle of Hampton's Crossroads. There is a very interesting twist of fate at this battle as the USS Monitor actually saved the USS Minnesota from the wrath of the CSS Virginia during the clash. As such, the above incident clearly indicated that in time she would still not be safe from Lt Hunter Davidson. There are references indicating that he purposely targeted his old foe the

USS Minnesota in this particular mission due to this former incident.

This attack was invaluable to the Confederates for many reasons. Firstly, the sheer size and power of the target, the flagship USS Minnesota. Secondly, it was the first successful attack on a Union vessel by a Confederate torpedo boat in which both the crew and vessel made it safely back to port. Thirdly, for his "gallant and meritorious conduct" in this action, Lt Hunter Davidson was promoted to the rank of Commander in the Confederate States Navy. Sadly, the final resting place and disposition of the CSS Squib has never been established.

Following the Civil War, like many of his Confederate comrades, Hunter Davidson fled the country and settled in Paraguay, South America. He served in the Paraguay Navy for many years and died peacefully in 1913.

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

Sources : Naval History and Heritage Command; Reocities ; Hunter Davidson: Confederate States Navy Submarine Battery Service.

See American Diver on page 28 for more Civil War Submarines

# ACWS AT SHACKERSTONE FAMILY FESTIVAL 2019



The ACWS travelled to the 25th anniversary of the Shackerstone Family Fair in Leicestershire on the weekend of 31st August and 1st September 2019. The weather was fine on both days and as such there was a typically large and appreciate crowd for the whole event. Due to the fine weather, this 25th anniversary event proved really popular with the public and covered a huge area with lots of activities taking place, numerous interesting stalls, a canal walk, a steam train line and yet another cracking real ale beer tent called "The Watering Hole".

The ACWS had a large camping area with excellent close parking and portaloos. The ACWS had another good turnout with both Union and Confederate infantry alongside 4 artillery pieces, Confederate cavalry and the ACWS pyrotechnic team as this was always billed as full Society event.

The ACWS was contracted to perform 2 skirmishes over the weekend in the main arena site as well as 2 full infantry displays. All these went down well with the public and it is nice to be both fully appreciated by both the public and particularly the organisers.



The first skirmish on the Saturday started relatively slowly as the lanyard on the Confederate artillery piece which was supposed to actually start the event broke twice as it was rotten. Nevertheless, our dependable commentator, Christian Sprakes kept the public thoroughly entertained with his Civil War knowledge and interesting

commentary before the battle was able to start.

Once the battle had started both sides advanced towards each other and both sides tried to flank each other but were unsuccessful. The Confederate cavalry were the most active by running down both Federal flanks and had some cracking close up fighting scenarios with the green jacketed USS Sharpshooters. In the middle, both sets of infantry clashed and volleys poured in and an eventual stalemate was reached before the Union started pressing and the Confederates pulled back and started to take mounting casualties. The result was a Union victory.



On the Sunday, there were a few more scenarios planned with the movement of Infantry being speeded up and these turned out really well



for both the re-enactors and the public. The battle started with the Union infantry and artillery crews playing a baseball game. Suddenly, a Confederate artillery piece opens up and numerous pyros in front of the Union forces explode and a large body of Confederate infantry quickly advances against the disorganised Union forces.

Following a regrouping by the Union, both sides advance, powerful volleys pour in from both their respective infantry and artillery and the fast moving Confederate cavalry attack down both sides. Suddenly, 2 figures appear from both opposing ranks namely a Union standard bearer with the 69th New York green Irish colours and a Confederate standard bearer with the rebel battle flag and both smash into each other right in the middle of the battlefield before both armies.

A fierce hand to hand melee ensued with 2/3 others from both sides struggling before the Confederate

escapes with the captured Union Irish flag to the sound of loud cheering from the rebel ranks. Nevertheless, the fierce battle still continues before the sheer amount of rebel volleys decimate the blue ranks with their excellent massive casualties and the Confederates storm on to capture the 2 Union field pieces.



Well done to Daz Paul (Union) and James Reed (Confederate) for formally organising the hand to hand and flag capture and those others involved. A final cracking battle with excellent scenarios to end the season with even the public commentator overawed by the spectacle. Both armies also did their regular drill displays and fine firing displays in the main arena in both mornings which also went down well as a precursor to the later battles.

Again, well done to Christian Sprakes for his excellent and informative commentaries over the whole weekend.

There are always unexpected highlights during ACWS weekends and this event certainly proved no exception with some really memorable occurrences of which I will try and recall as many as possible.



For the Union, there was a lovely 70th birthday presentation to Val Holt, who has done so much for our Society over many years, of a super mirror signed by all her close friends and acquaintances; the Union also organised the ACWS Raffle which was a total success and enjoyed by everyone; the Union managed to take over all the WW2 military vehicles with arms on the Sunday and subsequently mow down a large body of Confederates spectating as they passed by in the main arena.



The sight of Union Major Tim Davis grinning down the sight of a 50 calibre machine gun in the American half track was brilliant as was the totally shocked reaction from the public! In addition, the Union had some fine living history displays including playing boules, the medical display and the learning drum music display by Catherine Conyard.



For the Confederates, Mike Bussey deservedly won the 2019 Confederate Soldier of the Year Award and the Confederates also had a ride in the American half track and the Chairman's Austin Champ with rebel flags flying behind. It was also nice to see another fine turnout by the 24th Virginia who have really settled in and added to the Confederate Army over this last season.

However, what was clearly evident on both Union and Confederate camps during both days and nights was superb musicianship and singalongs which were enjoyed by all the re-enactors and the public.

With such quality, an ACWS concert and party must be in the making for next season. Personally, I also thought it was so nice to see the banter and camaraderie between the 2 camps really come to the fore this weekend and long may it continue into next season. At the end of the event, both sides congratulated each other with salutes and sadly our Chairman Mike Smart announced his standing down having served the ACWS so well during his 2 stints.

There were other highlights during this weekend and these included an original Battle of Britain Memorial World War 2 Hurricane fly past on both days, Jez Avery the stunt display driver, the Dancing Dinosaur Invasion!, the Going Ape Gorilla Show, the super Viper Lounge Rock band on the Friday night in the real ale tent which saw loads of Union and Confederate re-enactors dancing well into the night.



Lawnmower Racing, the all too predictable and all too loud Chain Sawing display, the Wild West

Arena show with regular shoot outs by the Lincoln County Regulators (containing a couple of very old ACWS members!) at the "Shoot Out at the OK Canal"!, the Nuneaton Line Dancing dog show!, the Birds of Prey Display, a Professional Culinary Presentation, Donkey Rides and the Battlefield Steam Train "Round Trip" service which was particularly well used and enjoyed by Confederate 2nd South Carolina Sergeant Martyn Clark!

Overall, this was another really enjoyable weekend and a really fitting climax to a fine ACWS season. The organisers and the large public all enjoyed our battle displays, living history, music demonstrations, infantry drill and cavalry displays. As always, the event organisers were particularly pleased at our positive and totally can do professional attitude.

As this is the final ACWS Event (apart from the AGM), please support the ACWS Photography and Scenario competitions over the close season and send in any other articles and letters to the ACWS Editor and if you hear of any possible Events for the coming 2020 season please let a member of the ACWS Committee know.

The ACWS have their AGM at Kegworth, Derbyshire on the 7th December 2019.

Personal Reflections by Stewart "Goober" Douglas, 43rd North Carolina.

Goobers Civil War Notes: The Union playing baseball on the Sunday as part of the prelude to the battle was an excellent initial scenario and totally authentic.

Please read my following article and see the picture in this of Union Prisoners actually playing baseball in the Confederate POW camp in Salisbury, North Carolina.

This is so important historically as it the FIRST ever artists impression of a baseball game being actually played!



## Confederate Prison Remains Unearthed

A recent archaeological excavation in downtown Salisbury, North Carolina in April 2019 has revealed the remains and remnants of a Confederate Civil War Prison. The Cultural Resources Analysts believe that part of a portico to a cotton mill was very likely the remains of a barrack building used by the prison. Timothy Roberts, who has led the excavation, said that the dense concentration of bricks, mortar and granite indicated the corner of a significant building.

The portico described is well known to have existed from drawings of the mill and the prison site including in sketches made by Union prisoner, Robert Knox Sneden. As such, this is an important Civil War archaeological find which may add more information about this Confederate Prison Camp. This article is about the fascinating history of the Salisbury Confederate Prison of War Camp which was the first and only Civil War prison in North Carolina.

In May 1861, when North Carolina seceded from the Union, the Confederacy sought a site in Rowan County, North Carolina to use as a military prison. They discovered a 20 year old abandoned cotton mill owned by Maxwell Chambers near

a railway hub and this was selected. It was made from brick and was 3 stories high with an attic. Cottages and a stockade were later added. It opened in December 1861 and housed 120 Union prisoners transferred from the Raleigh State Fairgrounds but rose to 1,400 in May 1862. In this early part of the War, the Union prisoners were well cared for and even indulged in baseball.



They also made trinkets and performed theatrical productions. At this stage of the war the Union POWs were also exchanged and paroled back to the Union. As such, the prison became full of Yankee deserters and dissident Confederates rather than Union POWs. A famous painting by Major Otto Boetticher of Union prisoners playing baseball inside Salisbury prison is believed to be one of the first ever works of art to show the game being played.

As the Civil War progressed, the Salisbury prison suddenly expanded and held 5,000 Union prisoners by

October 1864 and this rose to 10,000 shortly afterwards. The Union prisoners were as a direct result of the fall of Atlanta and the ongoing siege of Richmond. The town of Salisbury itself only had 2,000 residents and concern was expressed at their safety as the number of Union prisoners suddenly increased.

As the prison became more overcrowded, the death rate rose from 2% to 28% and mass graves were used to accommodate the dead. Accounts from Union POW diaries indicate that a lack of food leading to diarrhea was the most common deadly disease. The majority of the bodies were collected daily at the "dead house" and hauled in one-horse wagons to trenches in a nearby cornfield. In the fall of 1864, attempted escapes became common place. Many successfully escaped with 300 eventually reaching the Union lines.

However, in an attempted mass escape on 25 November 1864, none succeeded with 200 prisoners losing their lives in the attempt. Tunnelling was the most popular form of escape

with the most famous tunnel escape taking place in mid January 1865 when over 100 prisoners managed to successfully escape. In addition, 2,100 Union POWS defected to the Confederacy over this period but contributed little to the



Confederate cause. In February 1865, the Confederates moved the prisoners to various other prison locations in Wilmington, North Carolina and Richmond, Virginia.

By the time Union General George Stoneman reached Salisbury, the prison camp had become a Confederate supply depot. He ordered the prison burned and a wooden fence was built around the graves. Only 1 building remains of the prison which is a house on Bank Street and was believed to be a guardhouse.

After the Civil War, the Salisbury prison cemetery became the Salisbury National Cemetery and had remains from many other cemeteries in the area transferred to it. The wooden fence was replaced with a stone wall. After the Civil War, a report by General T.W

Hall estimated that 10,321 prisoners arrived between October 5 1864 and February 17 1865 and that 2,918 died in the hospital while 3,479 were buried there. Many of the dead were buried in 18 separate 240 foot long trench graves without coffins in a former cornfield so it is unknown how many were actually buried there.

Significantly there are major discrepancies in the actual figure. In 1869, Brevet General L Thomas estimated that there were 11,700 buried after opening 2 of the trenches and this number is recorded on the National monument at the site.

However, recent research estimated the figure as much lower at 3,800. In addition, many of the 3,800 can be identified through the 1869 Roll of Honour but in 2014 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs stated that they had no plans to either change the monument or add individual grave markers being that other people "may" be buried there and there is no certain way to verify this. However, in 2014, the Roll of Honour was added to the website.

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

Goobers Notes:

1) Both Union and Confederate prisons were equally depressing places due to overcrowding, unsanitary conditions and poor diet. Both had an overall average death rate of 12%. The victor writes the history but Northern prisons such as Elmira, New York had 2,980 Confederate POW deaths (32.5%), Point Lookout, Maryland had 3,446 Confederate POW deaths (9%), Camp Douglas, Illinois had 3,759 Confederate POW deaths (16.8%) and Rock Island, Illinois had 1,992 Confederate POW deaths (77.4%) These were particularly high death rates. Overall, 3866 more Confederate POWS died than Union POWS during incarceration.

2) A young man named Rupert Vincent (aged 21) was fatally injured in the riot on 25 November 1864. In fact the young man was called Robert Livingstone (aged 18) and he was the eldest son of the famous explorer and missionary Dr David Livingstone. He enlisted in a New Hampshire Regiment and gave a false name and date of birth to avoid any "further dishonour" to the family name. He is very likely buried in 1 of the mass graves.

3) After the Civil War in 1866, Confederate Major John H Gee, the commandant of Salisbury prison, was charged with both murder and

"violation of the laws and customs of war". After a lengthy trial, he was acquitted of both counts.

Remains unearthed- Archaeology Magazine (April 1 2019) and NCpedia Confederate Prison (Salisbury).

Sources: Wikipedia, various Internet Sources, Confederate Prison

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## ACWS Explosives Officer Needed

Kevin Holden will be leaving the position of Explosives Officer in 2020.

Would you like a role in the ACWS as Explosive Officer. See what the role entails below.

You would be responsible for acquiring black powder and breaking this down into 500g containers. Powder will be handed at specific events and you will be required to maintain records of how much you hand out and who to.

All licences must be checked on a regular basis of all society members and records updated as new licences are acquired.

You may need to setup a powder store on site and all equipment is stored in secured trailer, which can be towed to an event that requires it.

ACWS will pay for your Explosives Licence as a new licence will be required for this position.



If you don't have a tow bar, ACWS will pay for one to be fitted to your car, but please note. If ACWS do pay for this we ask you to remain as Explosives Officer for a minimum of 2 years.

You won't be left on your own as you can shadow Kevin during 2020 in order to learn all that the role requires.

Please contact a member of the board if you wish to apply for this role.

## Civil War Log Roads Discovered



In June 2016, the Archaeology Department of Fairfax County was officially notified of an important Civil War archaeological discovery during a routine and mundane road maintenance project near an entrance to Lake Accotink Park, Fairfax County, Virginia. What is amazing about this find is that just a year earlier another very similar but very rare Civil War find was also discovered in the very same county. This is the amazing story of the discovery of 2 Civil War roadways that due to their historic significance are now very likely to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In June 2016, the Archaeological Department of Fairfax County was notified of an archaeological discovery whilst working on the road entrance to Lake Accotink Park. The earth had opened up and revealed a 90 foot long section of corduroy road. This is a type of road made by placing sand covered logs perpendicular to the direction of the road. These roads were constructed to support travellers and armies over low and swampy areas thereby improving impassable mud or dirt roads. They certainly helped but they were still difficult in the best of conditions as loose logs were undoubtedly still a hazard to horses

and cavalry. County archaeologists immediately documented the road, recorded every detail with accuracy, took detailed notes and compiled scale drawings.

Based on the importance of location during the Civil War, it is highly significant that this particular road was in nearby proximity to the Orange and Alexandria Railroad and other important Civil War features and sites. It was confirmed to have been built during the mid 19th century. Because this discovered road was in a road project area, it was felt that the best way of preservation was to document it, leave it in place and carefully protect it for future archaeologists. As such, the road was capped with a layer of gravel to further protect it before repaving took place. This particular road was found both intact and regarded as highly significant. It is likely to be put on the National Register of Historic Places.

The discovery of such a well preserved road is a very rare discovery. However, what is so astonishing is that a year earlier another Civil War corduroy road was discovered in Fairfax County, Virginia whilst road works were underway on Ox Road near George Mason University. Fairfax County Senior Archaeologist Chris Sperling stated "I didn't think I would ever see

one (corduroy road) but the discovery of two in less than a year is unheard of". The earlier Civil War road found in Fairfax County was discovered after a road maintenance crew found a layer of old macadam ( a small stone aggregate road surface invented by John MacAdam). Beneath this layer was a line of cedar logs laid next to each other. This is the design known as a corduroy road due to resemblance to the linear fabric design.

The archaeologists called in made sure that the macadam stones were removed very carefully to ensure the wood underneath was not disturbed or damaged. Further investigations revealed that the road was indeed a Civil War road surface over which tramping Union and Confederate soldiers would have marched instead of turning dirt roads into sucking mud pits. Again, the road was carefully covered and reburied.

Further archaeological work uncovered evidence of a nearby Civil War circular fort designed to protect the roadway. Civil War experts state that this corduroy road from Occuquan River to Fairfax County Courthouse was a major pathway in the Civil War. It was built in 1862 and would have undoubtedly been travelled by Union General Joseph Hooker and Confederate General JEB Stuart as well as other

famous Civil War generals. The road would have been a link to get supplies from the railroad at Fairfax Station to the Fairfax County Courthouse. This was a significant Union supply depot. Most other Civil War corduroy roads have long since rotted away so experts agree that these 2 recent finds are extremely important historical discoveries.

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

Goobers Notes: Corduroy roads are the earliest type of manufactured thoroughfares. One of the earliest recordings was during the French and Indian War in 1755 when the British Army under General Braddock "used significant lengths

of corduroy construction" to build a wide road stretching from Cumberland in Maryland to Pittsburgh.

The British Army aimed to use the road in their mission to recapture Fort Duquesne from the French. "Although construction of the road was successfully completed, the military mission failed as a few kilometres from the fort a massive ambush destroyed the troop of 1,459 men".

Sources : Smithsonian Mag 8/11/18; The History Blog ; Civil War cedar log road discovered in Virginia and Fourth Estate 27/1/2016. M.G Lay and James E. Vance "Ways of the World".

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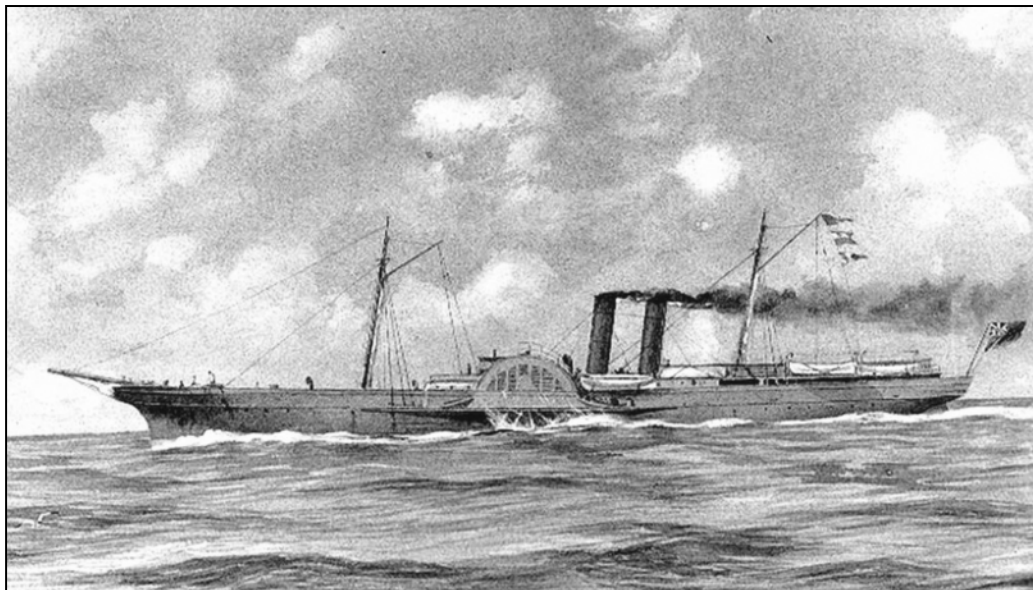
## **Confederate Blockade Runner Ivanhoe Found**

In November 2018, the wreck of a Confederate blockade runner namely Ivanhoe has just been uncovered in the surf just along from Port Morgan off Mobile Bay, Alabama. Although the wreck site was well known and documented, it always lay well beneath the shifting sands and its actual state of preservation was not known.

However, during the summer of 2018, the size of the waves attributed to all the tropical storms and hurricanes in the vicinity has swept away the sand that covered

the wreck site and has revealed the full outline of the hull, its 2 giant smokestacks and many of its ribs. This is the amazing short lived story of the Confederate blockade runner, Ivanhoe.

Ivanhoe was an iron hulled paddle steamer built in Scotland in May 1864. She was specifically designed for the Confederacy for blockade running as she was extremely sleek and fast. This was in response to evading the far more cumbersome and slow patrolling Union blockade ships. She was 201 feet long and



20.1 feet in the beam. This was an extreme design for the time as she was both exceptionally long and narrow. She was built to be fast rather than seaworthy. She was 1 of 5 identical blockade runners all built on the Clyde and although very few designs, images and illustrations remain of her, she was very similar to another Clyde steamer of similar size namely Fergus.

Ivanhoe set out on its maiden voyage from Scotland in May 1864 and was sunk just 7 weeks later as it attempted to steam into Mobile Bay, Alabama. According to historical accounts, the Ivanhoe came under heavy fire from Union ships and was forced to run aground on Fort Morgan before it sank. All the crew survived the incident and most of the cargo was salvaged by

Confederate forces who were stationed inside Fort Morgan.

The Union ships were held at bay by the big Confederate cannons at Fort Morgan as the Confederates salvaged all the cargo as well as the engine from the stricken vessel. Union forces managed to slip in under the Confederate cannons in a small boat about a week later and set the Ivanhoe on fire.

The Ivanhoe, like all Confederate blockade runners, was purposefully built for evading the Union ships blockading Southern ports. They were invariably steam powered and designed for speed and sleekness. They were employed in sneaking cotton out of the South to Europe and particularly the United Kingdom and then returning with cannons,

guns and gunpowder which was vital to the Confederate war effort. In addition, the wealthy of the South were also deprived of luxury goods from both Europe and New York so goods such as wine, perfumes, fine clothing and other luxury goods were highly sought after and fetched significant prices.

As such, blockade running was a very lucrative business and you could become very wealthy if you could make even one successful run. By the end of the Civil War, the Union Navy claimed to have captured over 1,000 Confederate blockade runners and sunk over 355 more.

Jim Delgado, a celebrated marine archaeologist, said that most of the Civil War era wrecks being discovered today are Confederate blockade runners. He states "There are smaller craft but there were also these highspeed greyhounds of ocean steam power. That's what the Ivanhoe represents. It was a ship designed for speed." He adds "The wreck is important because while you are always talking about different civil war wrecks, and how much of the Southern coastline is littered with them, each represents a unique story". The Ivanhoe itself was one of the last blockade runners to attempt to enter Mobile Bay sinking in June 1864. Mobile Bay itself was the last Southern port to

remain open before falling to Union forces in August 1864.

Just a few months later, the Civil War was over as the Confederacy was unable to get any goods out or any guns in to their last remaining port. Finally, Jim Delgado states that the "Ivanhoe really underscores the importance of the port of Mobile and all of that throughout history. We are seeing more storms and more and more ships are becoming exposed. I'm seeing this nationwide. With sea level incrementally rising, we are going to see more and more of this".

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



## Easter Colouring Competition Winners



Huge congratulations to Jessica and Ella Holman of the 19th Indiana...

The girls put their competition money towards their holiday and treated themselves to all these cool gifts.

Might get you a job helping with the newsletter!!!



## ACWS - 100% Attendance

<u>Regiment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>
<u>1st Tennessee</u>	<u>Bussey, Mike</u>	<u>1st Sergeant</u>
<u>1st Tennessee</u>	<u>Crump, Michael</u>	<u>Private</u>
<u>1st Tennessee</u>	<u>Harding, Ron</u>	<u>Non-com</u>
<u>2nd U.S. Art.Bty.B.</u>	<u>Davies, Caroline</u>	<u>Corporal</u>
<u>19th Indiana</u>	<u>Mair, Frank</u>	<u>Corporal</u>
<u>19th Indiana</u>	<u>Manison, Neil</u>	<u>Corporal</u>
<u>19th Indiana</u>	<u>Conyard, Catherine</u>	<u>Private</u>
<u>19th Indiana</u>	<u>Mair, James</u>	<u>Musician</u>
<u>19th Indiana</u>	<u>Burke, Paula</u>	<u>Non-com</u>
<u>19th Indiana</u>	<u>Sprakes, Siena</u>	<u>Non-com</u>
<u>69th New York</u>	<u>Morris, Claire Michelle</u>	<u>1st Sergeant</u>
<u>118th Pennsylvania</u>	<u>Robinson, Martin</u>	<u>Corporal</u>
<u>118th Pennsylvania</u>	<u>Hooper, Abigail Grace</u>	<u>Non-com</u>
<u>C.S. Staff</u>	<u>Gibson, Glenn</u>	<u>Major</u>
<u>Pyrotechnics</u>	<u>St John, Benjamin</u>	<u>Corporal</u>
<u>Rockbridge Artillery</u>	<u>Wardley, Stuart J</u>	<u>Sergeant</u>
<u>Rockbridge Artillery</u>	<u>Wardley, Leigh Nuala</u>	<u>Non-com</u>
<u>U.S. Staff</u>	<u>Davies, Timothy Mark</u>	<u>Major</u>

The ACWS board would like to say a huge thank you to those members listed above who have attended all events in 2019.

You are a credit to our society and heartfelt congratulations to you all.

## American Diver

On the night of the 14th February 1863, a Confederate submarine left her base in Fort Morgan, Alabama and secretly slid off to attack the Federal blockading ships patrolling the important Confederate port of Mobile, Alabama. She was a hand cranked craft which propelled the vessel and she was armed with a lethal torpedo. The intention was to dive under the nearest Union blockading vessel and attack it with the torpedo. As she approached her victim, unforeseen circumstances arose. This is NOT the story of the iconic CSS Hunley but the very much lesser known fascinating tale of her sister submarine the CSS Pioneer 11 which was also known as the American Diver.

The CSS Pioneer 11 or American Diver was a submarine built by the Confederates at Mobile, Alabama in 1863 during the American Civil War. She was built in the machine shop of Tom Park and Tom Lyons, Mobile, Alabama. She was based on plans by Horace L. Hunley and her principal builder was William A. Alexander. He was a serving Confederate Army Engineer of Company B, 21st Alabama Volunteer Regiment and he was ably assisted by Lieutenant George E. Dixon, Company A, 21st Alabama Volunteer Regiment. She was built with the full knowledge of the

Confederate Government and had the additional support of the Confederate States Army but all the records were obviously extremely top secret. With the burning of many Confederate government official papers in 1865 due to the loss of Richmond and the top secret nature of these designs, very little information and facts remain. Most of what is known is gleaned from private letters and eye witness accounts.

However, rare Confederate documents left by designer Horace L. Hunley reveal that he provided the "entire means" for this 5 man submarine and it discloses fascinating information. This boat was built from an old boiler which was designed to have a long hull allowing for more men. She would have a knife like bow which would come to a vertical blade rather than a point which would allow her to easily slice through the water. But most importantly Hunley and his team hoped to revolutionize underwater navigation with a unique engine propulsion system. Hunley himself admitted that much of the money was spent on trying to power this particular vessel with either an electro-magnetic engine or a small custom built steam engine as a suitable power plant. If successful, the boat only allowed for 1 crewman.

With no remaining documentation of either engine or the results of the tests and trials undertaken, we'll probably never know how close the Confederates came to building this unique engine propulsion system or how much earlier the Navy could have used and developed submarines.

However, after numerous unsuccessful trials of both designs, Hunley had to install fitted hand cranks instead to turn the propeller by hand. These were to be worked by 4 men. However, there were concerns that such propulsion by this method was not enough to create sufficient speed to attack the Union ships blockading Mobile.

In a letter written after the Civil War in 1868, the CSS Pioneer 11 dimensions were stated as being 36 feet long, 3 feet wide, 4 feet deep and 12 feet of each end tapered to facilitate movement through the water. She had no ballast tanks and her actual speed was barely 2 knots per hour. However, she could easily travel underwater and surface at will. She both handled and turned well. She also seemed ideal to drag a contact mine behind her and take out one of the Union blockading ships outside Mobile, Alabama. In February 1863, the Confederates decided to launch the CSS Pioneer 11 against the Union fleet and try

and break the blockade. However, the crank was physically hard for the 4 men propelling the vessel and Mobile was 20 miles from the mouth of the bay where the Union ships patrolled. So, the CSS Pioneer 11 was towed from her base at Navy Cove, Mobile to Fort Morgan which was located on a spit of land which guarded the harbours entrance and was well as within close proximity of the Union fleet. This was to conserve the energy of the crew for the final attack. Having successfully made it to Fort Morgan, the scene was set for the first attack.

On her first night mission, she made it out of Fort Morgan and back from where the Union ships were patrolling but did not have an opportunity to strike any of them. It would appear that the current was too strong and they had to abandon her torpedo. So, on her second night mission on the 14th February, the prospects were high for a successful attack but on this occasion a sudden and unexpected squall erupted which swamped the vessel due to an unsecured hatch. As a result, the submarine had to be abandoned and sank but all hands were saved.

Significantly, there is also a very rare preserved written account of the events provided by a Confederate deserter on 26th February 1863 to the Senior Officer of the Federal

Blockade off Mobile, Alabama at the time. He had written down that "On or about the 14th, an infernal machine, consisting of a submarine boat, propelled by a screw which is turned by hand, capable of holding 5 persons, and having a torpedo which was attached to the bottom of the vessel and exploded by means of clockwork, left Fort Morgan at 8.00pm in charge of a Frenchman who invented it. The intention was come up at Sand Island, get the bearing and distance of the nearest vessel, dive under again and operate on her but on emerging they found themselves so far outside the island and in so strong a current (setting out) that they were forced to cut the torpedo adrift and make the best of their way back."

The loss of the CSS Pioneer 11 hit the Confederates hard as she had cost a lot of time, money and resources and had been a potentially promising venture. Nevertheless, H.L Hunley and his team would continue with their innovative submarine designs. They already had another boat in the initial planning stages which included significant changes and improvements. She was called on paper "The Fish Boat", "The Fish Torpedo Boat" or the "Porpoise". Of course, as we all know now, she was later to become the iconic "CSS

Hunley". The first submarine ever to successfully sink an enemy vessel. The wreck of CCS Pioneer 11 lies, with many other Civil War wrecks, just off the coast of Mobile, Alabama. Clive Cussler, the world renowned author of the "Dirk Pitt adventures", who financed and discovered the wreck of the CSS Hunley as well as many other iconic ship wrecks, is actively engaged in trying to find and then possibly raise this vessel like the CSS Hunley and exhibit it alongside its iconic sister ship. Significantly, during a survey of Mobile Bay in 1877, an "old boiler" was recorded as being found in the main channel. In a similar survey in 1856, no "old boiler" was recorded.

Obviously, no-one who undertook the 1877 survey would have known about this top secret Confederate submarine. However, to date, the wreck still lies undiscovered and probably lies under tons of sand as the regular storms move so much around in the Mobile Bay area. This could be very beneficial as sand preserves ship wrecks. Therefore, if the wreck is ever discovered, it could prove to be one of the most significant Civil War discoveries of all time due to its historical and archaeological importance

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

## **Events Calendar 2019 - 2020**

### **December 7<sup>th</sup> 2019 ACWS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The 2019 ACWS Annual General Meeting is to be held at Kegworth Village Hall, Nottingham Road, KEGWORTH, Derbyshire DE74 2FH, Opens at 12 noon and starting at 1pm prompt.

Free tea and coffee provided to members.

More details will be posted to all members.

## **Events Calendar 2020**

### **March 28-29<sup>th</sup> WHITTINGTON, SHROPSHIRE - CONFIRMED**

Full Society Event at Whittington Castle, Whittington, Oswestry, SY11 4DF.

A chance to brush of the cobwebs.

Members camping from Friday afternoon to Sunday.

Public will be in attendance to see Living History on SATURDAY & SUNDAY.

### **April 26<sup>th</sup> MORLEY, WEST YORKSHIRE - CONFIRMED**

Small Society Event at Morley Rugby Club, Scatcherd Lane, Morley, Leeds LS27 0JJ.

This is part of the town's St George's Weekend< of activities with ACWS involved on the SUNDAY with Living History and in the parade at c.11:30am from the Town Hall to the Family Fun Day at the Rugby Club. Event runs from 10:30 to 17:00 Sunday, with setting up for the day from 08:30 Sunday. Living History on SUNDAY only.

Members camping available overnight Saturday from 17:30 to Sunday. Toilets, water, showers and a bar on site. All fires off the ground. Dogs welcome.

No registration fee, but members must still register for insurance purposes.

### **June 6-7<sup>th</sup> SKEGNESS, LINCS - \*\*POSSIBLE\*\***

Small Society event at the East Coast Showground, Burgh Road, Skegness.

Living History and firing display on SATURDAY & SUNDAY.



## **EVENTS CALENDAR 2020** continued

### **June 13-14<sup>th</sup> EARLS BARTON, NORTHANTS - CONFIRMED**

Full Society event at the multi-period event East Midlands History Festival 2019, Whites Nurseries, Clay Lane, Earls Barton, Northampton. Living History and skirmish on SATURDAY & SUNDAY with Infantry & Artillery.

Members' camping from Friday 12 noon until Monday 12 noon.

Re-enactors market, beer tent and live music on Saturday night.

### **June 29<sup>th</sup> GAINSBOROUGH, LINCS - CONFIRMED**

Small One-Day (SATURDAY) Regimental Event hosted by U.S. Artillery open to all ACWS members to attend. Community and Armed Forces Day at Middlefield Lane, Gainsborough DN21 1TY. A fun filled family day bringing together Armed Forces and community, 9am to 10pm.

Members' camping available.

### **July 4-5<sup>th</sup> SKEGNESS, LINCS - CONFIRMED**

Full Society event at the East Coast Showground, Burgh Road, Skegness.

Living History and skirmish on SATURDAY & SUNDAY with Infantry, Artillery and Cavalry.

Members' camping available.

### **July 18-19<sup>th</sup> BEDFORD RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL - CONFIRMED**

Full Society event at the Bedford Riverside Festival, off Horne Lane, Bedford, Beds MK40 1AS. Living History and Firing Displays on SATURDAY & SUNDAY.

**Wishing you all a good close season, have fun be happy and see you all next year!**