



The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER

2020 2nd Edition

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Eastnor Castle 2000

ACWS is a Member of

N·A·Re·S

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



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Mr. Glenn Gibson



Federal
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Reports

Chairperson Report

Hi all, we have had a difficult time beating the invisible enemy this year and we have either twiddling our thumbs or hitting them whilst doing D.I.Y..

I am so proud of you all for keeping everyone's spirits up during these last uncertain months, pictures of you in kit, spot the differences, recognise the Murton hut and many more have kept us all amused whilst our hobby has been postponed.

To be honest it has been very quiet for my first year as chairperson but being on the board still keeps me involved in the smooth running of our society.

A Big Thank You to all of the board members for your amazing dedication to our cause. To you all, keep happy, healthy and safe and see you at the agm in December if not before.

Helen Gibson Chair ACWS.



Events Report

At the moment we potentially still have 2 events taking place this year. Skegness on 4th July weekend has now been officially cancelled.

Whitby War Weekend (August Bank Holiday) is currently going ahead according to the organisers, unless the government restrictions are extended.

The event in September in association with Murton is still a possibility if restrictions are lifted, even if we cannot hold it as a public event it may be possible to have an end of season get together.

Marbury Merry Days, Worcester Living History Show (Spetchley) and Bedford Riverside Festival have

unfortunately cancelled their events, but have given dates for 2021, so we will hopefully be in attendance next year.

I will be keeping in communication with all the event organisers, and update you with any further changes for this year, as well as trying to build a healthy calendar of events for 2021.

Take care everyone and stay safe



Health & Safety Report

Dear Comrades-in-arms,

I write this, my first report as Health and Safety representative, while we are in the midst of a pandemic. This is not what I expected to be dealing with as ACWS H & S rep, but it most certainly falls under my brief. I put myself forward for the position vacated by Martin Cross (for whose years of service, many thanks), since in my main line of work I am accustomed to assessing and controlling risk of potentially hazardous things (chemical reactions, including explosive ones), and to filling in the necessary forms. The board accepted my offer, so here I am, hoping to be a sounding board for all matters H&S. Health and Safety is everyone's responsibility. If we see anything we consider unsafe it is our duty to report it, firstly within command structures of the unit and army.

We are all accustomed to handling potentially deadly equipment in a way that is safe, or at least which manages potential risks to an acceptably low level. But we now have to grapple with the implications of a tiny virus which has brought our hobby, and many of our working lives, to a halt.

As I write this, I dare to hope that we are past the worst, and that we can

look forward to some slow progress towards normality. We have not yet given up all hope of a

possible event or two towards the back end of this year, improbable though that remains. If we are indeed to keep the worst of the COVID19 pandemic behind us, we will need to continue to be vigilant in controlling the spread as much as possible. Watch out in future newsletters for additional measures we will need to adopt, should we be allowed out again.

Please do keep in touch, via email, zoom, facebook, or whatever; we remain a society of American Civil War enthusiasts; there is still research to do, kit to make, and friendships to nourish with continued contact, even if that has to be virtual for a time yet.

Stay distanced, stay safe!

Regards,

Dr. Frank Mair
Corporal, 19th Ind

ACWS Health & Safety
Representative



Secretaries Report

Hi Y'all,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family keeping well and safe. Haven't had much time to suffer from cabin fever just yet, with a full house on lockdown and I've been on full mother and nanna duties!

When can we all meet up again? I hear you all say!

As you know all we can do is follow government guidelines, at the moment people of 6 people or more can gather (social distancing still applies). Until the government lifts restrictions there isn't much any of us can do.

However, be totally assured the society is in good hands and your new Events Director "Marie" is securing events for 2021.

We had our very first "virtual board meeting" on the 23rd May, was great seeing faces I hadn't seen for a while. If you have become a member for 2020 you should have now received your new membership card for 2020/21.

As a board we thought it only fair (as there is no events) to give our members a year of free membership.

Please remember that if you are not a member of a club or society this could have an impact on licensing requirements with your local firearms unit.



We are still searching for a powder master as Kevin Holden will be retiring at the end of this year. If you are interested, please don't hesitate in contacting a member of the board or Kevin for a chat.

Well, that's enough off me for now, please stay safe!

Until next time...

Bye y'all

Linda Reed (Company Secretary)



A young future chairperson from Kirby Hall 2000

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.



Wordsearch Answers from last Issue

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1. South Mountain
2. Shiloh
3. Chancellorsville
4. Crater
5. Vicksburg
6. luka
7. Gettysburg
8. Malvern Hill

9. Chantilly
10. Antietam
11. Franklin
12. Fredericksburg
13. Manassas
14. Corinth
15. Richmond

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1. Federals
2. Blue
3. Grant
4. Rebels
5. Grey
6. Lee

Sunderland and the American Civil War

Here are 2 short stories about how the American Civil War impacted on Sunderland where I live.

PART ONE

The CSS Aries was built on the River Wear at Deptford in Sunderland in 1862 by the James Laing Company. She was the only Confederate blockade runner built on Wearside but the company did previously build military transport ships for the British Navy during the Crimean War.

When the CSS Aries was later captured by the Federals, she was described at the time as "one of the most fine examples of a blockade runner we have ever seen" by US Rear Admiral Samuel Du Pont.

The CSS Aries was an iron hulled screw steamer. She was sold to the London company of Frederic Obicino before being sold to the V. Malga company based in Havana, Cuba. The CSS Aries made 2 successful runs past the Union blockade including a first run which

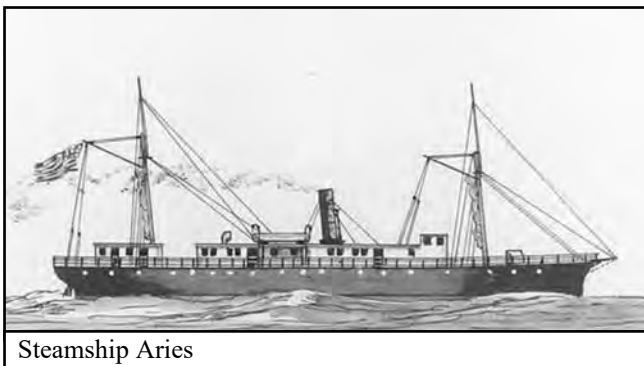
included bringing back a cargo of 740 tons of cotton.

On the second run, she ran aground and was captured by the pursuing Union warship USS Stettin at Bulls Bay, South Carolina on March 28th 1863. Following her capture, the renamed USS Aries was fitted out for service and purchased by the US

Navy. She was first assigned to the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron in July 1863 but was severely damaged in a hurricane

shortly afterwards and needed repairs.

On being seaworthy again, she then became involved in the capture of 2 Confederate blockade runners called the Ceres and Antonio and then the burning of another blockade runner called the Dare. Following another period of repair work, she was then involved in 2 attacks on Fort Fisher outside the last remaining Confederate port namely Wilmington, North Carolina.



After completing these mopping up operations she was finally reassigned to the East Gulf Blockade Squadron just before the Civil War ended.

She was then decommissioned and sold at public auction in Boston in August 1865 and renamed the SS Aries. She then had a long career in the merchant service before being scrapped in 1908.

PART 2



Ulysses S. Grant

On the morning of the 23rd September 1877, President US Grant and his wife Julia travelled from Newcastle by train to Sunderland whilst on his World Tour. Like his recent visit to Newcastle, the

local Sunderland press had been full of calls to honour the American Civil War hero in the proper way.

A letter to the editor of the Sunderland Daily Echo 2 weeks before Grant's visit urged the city to give the General a hero's welcome. The writer could not "overestimate the great and glorious task" Grant had achieved in freeing the slaves, while a subsequent supporting letter the next day said that Grant was "a friend of art, literature, and science" and should be recognised by Sunderland as such. Another letter on September 19th - four days before Grant arrived - asked if the mayor would consent to making the day a public holiday for the city's shop assistants. A day later the Sunderland paper confirmed the council resolution that granted the holiday.

By way of introduction to those unfamiliar with President Grant, the 21st September edition of the Sunderland Daily Echo treated readers to a long list of puns on his initials, including "Unaffectedly Simple Grant", "Unambiguously Straightforward Grant", and "Unintermitting Smoking Grant", which the paper said was "an idea peculiarly American". The next day's edition gave a long biography of General Grant and his American Civil War exploits.

General Grant arrived at Sunderland's Monkwearmouth Station at midday on the 23rd September 1877, aboard a "special engine, with a Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes flying at the fore", and was greeted by the Police Force band. The Times estimated that between 30,000 and 40,000 people came out to see him. As the President walked across the Robert Stephenson-designed Wearmouth Bridge towards Mowbray Park in Sunderland, writer John Russell Young noted that "as the General walked up the hill to the park a salute was fired.

Just then the sun came out from behind a cloud." Newspaper reports stated that "Poles were erected on the bridge, and flags stretched from either side. The streets were all gaily decorated with bunting, and every window and available space was occupied with spectators. The shops were all closed and the day was kept as a general holiday."

Shortly after his arrival, President US Grant then witnessed the laying of the foundation stone for the Borough Free Library and Museum (now Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens), which was the first free municipal public library in England. The stone is still very visible with his name on and was laid by the mayor Samuel Storey. It is directly opposite my local Weatherspoons namely



Jamiesons! After the conclusion of the proceedings at the new library, he went into Mowbray Park to see the statue of

British Major General Sir Henry Havelock, born in Sunderland, and famed for his leadership during the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

After the laying of the stone, he then ate lunch at a banquet organised by the Mayor at the Victoria Hall, which was located on Toward Road, beside Mowbray Park, and which was destroyed in 1941 by a German parachute bomb.

The Sunderland Daily Echo said the head table was "decked with flowers and ferns, and lines of flags and streamers were hung round the end of the hall." The banquet was a veritable feast, and included Goose Pie, Boar's Head, Collared Veal, Roast Hare, Grouse, Lobster, and much more. Dishes which are still very popular today!

The mayor then offered a toast, during which the Police Band unexpectedly started playing Old John Brown, much to the mayor's acute embarrassment.

He quickly composed himself and continued his glowing tribute to the former president. In response, President Grant said the reception he had received embarrassed him "beyond measure, and I know if I should attempt to express all I feel on this occasion, I should make a most stupendous failure of it".

After the lavish banquet, he visited Sunderland docks, where he was greeted by more wild cheering, and in the evening the town put on a fireworks display - provided by the pyrotechnists of London's Crystal Palace - in his honour. The following day, the 24th September, he stayed with former local mayor James Hartley at Ashbrooke Hall (later renamed Corby Hall), and visited the famous Wear Glass Works, where he watched a display of glass-

blowing. On the 25th September, President Grant visited Lambton Castle and Biddick Hall, before leaving for Sheffield at 9.35 in the evening.

Overall, the Sunderland Daily Echo surmised that "The General has been much impressed by his reception in Sunderland. He is surprised at the size and importance of the town, and he has expressed his pleasure at the orderly behaviour of the inhabitants."

After his return to America in September 1879, President US Grant would fail to reclaim the presidency, and died of throat cancer on July 23rd, 1885. In the weeks and months leading up to his passing, he would complete what many believe is the greatest military memoir of all time, with only that of Julius Caesar comparable.

Over the following decades, his presidential legacy would be slowly rehabilitated.

One North East spectator, who watched the procession and saw President Grant as he passed Grey's Monument in Newcastle, was quoted in the local press as saying that he was "as greet a man as ever Queen Victoria was!".

Articles by Stewart "Goober" Douglas

RIP Gary 'Tigger' Lakin

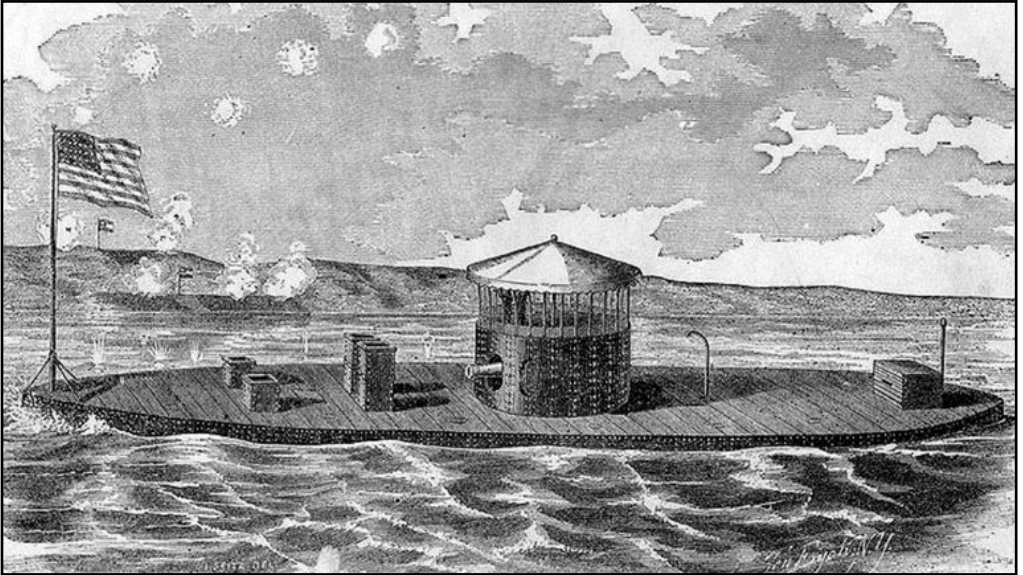


Sad to say Gary Lakin lost his fight with cancer this month and our hearts and condolences go out to his family and friends.

Tigger was a member of the 1st Maryland, 43rd North Carolina and Washington Artillery.

RIP Tigger

USS Monitor



USS Monitor Guns

Research into 2 of the USS Monitors famous huge 8 ton Dahlgren guns is to enter a brand new phase in March 2020 as a custom made coring drill machine and a spade bit will be inserted into both barrels in the hope of removing concretion and harmful salts still inside. Once completed, it is hoped that both guns will finally be able to be put on long term public display.

This is their amazing story.

USS Monitor conservators have just announced that they will soon start to clean the inside of the 2 16,000 pound Dahlgren guns that pounded the CSS Virginia during the Battle of Hampton Roads in March 1862 which is widely regarded as one of

the most famous Naval engagements in American history. This drilling project is considered a vital step in preserving them for future posterity. For nearly 20 years, both huge guns have been sat in treatment tanks at the Mariners Museum and Park in Newport News, Virginia and all the harmful sediments on the outside have now been removed making engraved inscriptions now quite visible.

However, Will Hoffman, the Museum's director of conservation, believes that by boring the guns they will be able to remove all the trapped ocean salts from inside these massive Civil War artefacts, then dry them out and put them on permanent public display. Due to the fact that this procedure has never

been done before, new equipment has had to be developed.

The iconic USS Monitors revolving turret was raised off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina in 2002. The turret has since been stripped of harmful concretion by the use of electrochemical treatments and handheld tools. Now is the time for the 2 barrels found inside the turret to be cleaned out but by different means. Both barrels have between 1 inch to 3 inch thickness of concretion from the bore to the muzzle and they were both unloaded when raised from the sea floor.

The axis of travel for the drill must exactly match the centre of the gun bore and so they will be mounted on a support system. The bores themselves are 11 feet long. In order to assist, the Museums conservators travelled in 2018 to the American Naval History and Heritage Centre to examine another famous and similar Dahlgren namely the one used by the USS Kearsarge which sank the CSS Alabama off Cherbourg, France in 1864.

After examining and measuring the interior of the gun, they were able to determine that both the guns from the Monitor and Kearsarge were made at the very same foundry and built to a very specific Board of Ordnance pattern. As such, the

exact measurements will now help to determine how far down and wide to drill without causing any damage. The guns will be drilled one at a time and the process will take a day for each

USS Monitors Cat

Researchers have just admitted that whilst boring out the 2 Dahlgren 11 foot long barrels from the iconic USS Monitors turret, they were also hoping to discover the remains of a very unlikely feline namely the USS Monitor's black and white cat. This has only recently been revealed after a personal account of the sinking of the USS Monitor off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina in a hurricane was re-discovered. This is that amazing story.

A Rhode Island Federal sailor named Francis Butts who was aboard the USS Monitor when it was actually sinking during the storm wrote a personal account long afterwards. In it, he wrote this very interesting tale. He stated that while the USS Monitor was actually sinking and he was personally involved in bailing out water from the iconic revolving turret, he managed to block one of the huge Dahlgren barrels with his coat and boots.

However, whilst in the process, he saw "a black cat ... sitting on the

breech of one of the other guns howling." He then states that "I caught her and, placing her in another gun, replaced the wad and tompon, but I could still hear that distressing howl." Strangely, Francis Butts never then revealed why he actually placed the poor distressed cat in the barrel let alone blocked it up. Was he trying to save it?

Was he trying to stop it wailing?

Anyway, conservators have just now revealed that the only thing found in one of the barrels was a single metal bolt and there was no sign of any cat in either barrel. Regardless, whether true or not, the story is just another fascinating example of Civil War history that has passed down the ages.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas
Sources : Found on the Civil War Picket blogspot at "the uss monitor overcame doubters its".

Civil War Soldiers Dyed Their Hair

Scientists have unearthed a 150-year-old Kentucky photography studio in what is an unprecedented discovery about the American Civil War.

Scientists have recently unearthed remnants of a US Civil War photography studio at Camp Nelson in Kentucky, on a site of what was once part of a Union camp, along with broken bottles of hair dye.

The discovery is the first of its kind and has revealed to researchers that Civil War soldiers actually dyed their hair to look better in photographs. Among the many items discovered by researchers Stephen McBride and his team were several broken glass bottles, now known to have once contained the hair dye. The

researchers from Transylvania University in Lexington initially thought the bottles were used for medicinal purposes. However, once the team started putting the pieces of glass together, they began to notice some embellished with lifted lettering.

Names such as "Bear's Oil," "Christadoro," and "Dr. Jaynes," all featured on the now reconstructed glass bottles.

The names were not in any way synonymous with medicines from the time and corresponded more closely with grooming products.

The "Bear's Oil" product was likely to be used as modern-day hair gel or wax to shape and style hair, according to the researchers.



Camp Nelson

The others, like the "Christadoro" and "Dr. Jaynes" products turned out to be hair dye brands. Experts found a lot of bottles that just never turn up on other Civil War sites. They think that the dye is particularly interesting as it clearly suggested that people were fixing up their hair before they had their photograph taken and may have actually been darkening their hair to look better in the photograph.

One potential reason behind this decision may have been that soldiers wanted to correct one failure of early photography which was that if you had light coloured or blonde hair, the black and white photography process could make you look like you had either white hair or grey hair.

Camp Nelson was founded in June 1863 as a US Army Supply Depot in Jessamine County, Kentucky. At the peak of its use, around two years later, the camp swept across 4,000 acres of land and housed up to 8,000 Union soldiers. It had some 300 buildings and tents, including a recruitment centre, prison, hospital, barracks, sawmill, slaughterhouse, woodworking shops and other services, according to the National Park Service.

In addition, the Union Army of the time also allowed private merchants to set up shop at the camp including taverns, a post office, a boot shop, fruit and vegetable stands and notably a photography studio - the existence of which has been

confirmed with several photography artefacts recently discovered.

Bob Zeller, Director of the Centre for Civil War Photography, expressed how exciting the find was for further knowledge and understanding of the American Civil War and also the history of Civil War photography. He stated "I think it's a really exciting find, Civil War photographic discovery is still very active today. And now we have an archaeological discovery of a Civil War photo studio.

As far as I know, it has not happened before". The American Civil War was the first conflict on US territory to be photographed, and over the course of the war which lasted from 1861 to 1865, demand for photographs rose causing the price of photographs to be dropped, making them more affordable to ordinary people and soldiers.

It was very common for those soldiers who had recently enlisted to have their portrait taken before they were sent off to fight. In October 2018, Camp Nelson was designated as a National Monument.

Photographs of Confederate General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard have shown his hair to have grayed within one year of Civil War engagement.



Many have naturally attributed this to the stressors of war, but others have now since theorized an alternative reason was to blame. The Confederate General may have simply run out of hair dye when the Union Navy started impeding routine shipments at Confederate ports.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas

Sources : Wikipedia, Daily Mail
Science Tech 11/12/2019,
Smithsonian Mag 6/12/2019

ACWS in 2000



COVID Advice



Always keep your distance and be safe, we recommend at least 1 Enfield musket including bayonet away from each other.



Always wash your hands regularly with soap and water throughout the day.

Please also carry hand sanitiser and use before and after passing anything to or from another person.

Please ask your commanding officer or camp coordinator before setting up tents. They will advise the present guidelines and distances your tents should be apart.

Stay safe and look after yourselves and others.



EVENTS CALENDAR 2020

Please note these events are only possible's at the moment due to them not being officially cancelled. They are also dependant on government guidelines.

August 29-31 WHITBY, N YORKS

POSSIBLE

Full Society August Bank Holiday Multi-Period Event at Whitby at War Through the Ages, Abbey Lane, Whitby, YO22 4JR.

A three day, multi period, living history and battle re-enactment festival for all the family. Located adjacent to Whitby Abbey and within short walking distance from the town centre.

Members camping from Friday.

Infantry Living History and Skirmish on SATURDAY, SUNDAY & MONDAY. Location Maps: YO22 4JR

September 5-6 MURTON PARK, YORK

POSSIBLE

ACWS 45th Anniversary Weekend. Full Society event at Murton Park Yorkshire Museum of Farming, Murton Lane, Murton, YORK, YO19 5UF

More details to follow. Location Maps: YO19 5UF

December 5 ACWS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2020 ACWS Annual General Meeting is to be held in December at a venue TBA. This may be held virtually depending on Covid restrictions.