



The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER

2020 3rd Edition

ACWS Ltd PO Box 270 Washington, Tyne & Wear NE37 9BX
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Tilston 2019

ACWS is a Member of
N·A·Re·S

Issue 197

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



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Commander
Glenn Gibson



Federal
Commander
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Confederate Commander's Report



Greetings to all my fellow Southern re-enactors. I'm sure everyone will mention the strange year we have had, but it is

good to see everyone still communicating and posting on Social media.

The Board have been busy behind the scenes and I have been slightly re-organising the Confederate forces within the ACWS and so I will inform you all what has happened.

Sgt Martyn Clarke has stepped down as Regimental Commander of the 2nd South Carolina. As you may not be aware I asked him to take command even though he was not a combatant during the regiments difficult time.

I think you will all agree he did a sterling job of stabilising the regiment and recruiting new members. He will still come away but do his camp stall activities with the public. I thank you Martyn for your dedication to the cause.

On that note I have promoted Robert Jamieson to Corporal in the 2nd SC and he will take up the roll of communicating to members and

trying to recruit. Thank you Robert for taking on this responsibility.

Cpl Robert is still learning the role and has only been re-enacting a short time, I'm sure everyone will help him along the way and because of this I have placed the 2nd SC regiment under the wing and guidance of the 32nd Virginia regiment.

Therefore, I have promoted Sgt Andy Booth to 1st Sgt to oversee the two regiments and Cpl Andy Farnsworth is promoted to Sgt within the 32nd Virginia. Congratulations to the both of them on their promotions.

I would like to do the same amongst the 43rd NC and 1st Tenn in the future, so then i could finalise Mike Bussey as Sgt Maj.

If anyone would like to discuss the above then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regarding re-joining the Society can i push you all to take up the Societies offer of joining this year and getting next year free as this will also help members whose licenses are due for renewal.

On the political front and in the current climate, the fact that our uniform, flags and who we portray

can spark controversy and even protest. Can i especially ask all Confederate members not to engage in any online social media activities, discussions, talk to press etc, that may cause detriment to our hobby and Society, but to pass anything onto the Board so our designated Director can deal with it.

Well, to the future and hopefully activity next year. Please keep in touch with each other and continue to recruit and like everyone is saying on social media, that they

can't wait to get round the camp fire for a drink with everyone.

Maybe this year, has made us stronger and more determined to come back and keep our hobby alive.

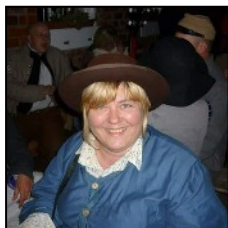
Keep you kit in good order, your powder dry and walk tall with Southern pride.

Hope to see you all soon.

your obedient servant

Major Glenn Gibson

Chairpersons Report



Hi All, so looking forward to seeing you all next year. It has been a strange and disappointing year for us this year in regards to events but I am so thankful we are all safe and well. Be assured we are

still in contact as a board and are looking forward to next year. Please stay safe and can't wait to meet up soon.

Yours faithfully
Mrs Helen Gibson
Chairperson acws

Communications Report



Hi All, Hope you are all distancing and keeping well. Sadly no battles this year so I thought to include some fun non-

authentic pics to lighten the present mood, see over.

For those renewing their licences. If you need a medical record check completing and your GP no longer provides this service, here is a helpful link

<https://www.medcert.co.uk/>

They do charge £50 though and please note this is not endorsed by ACWS

Fun Times



Fun Times cont...



Coughs up Bullet

The aged Confederate veteran 75 year old Willis Meadows grasped his throat and began to choke.

Whatever was stuck in there would not come out and with the coughing spasms growing more violent, his breathing almost stopped. Then, just as he felt it was time to die, something flew from his mouth, bounced on the wooden table and tumbled to a stop.

Trapped in his head for nearly 58 years, here was a one ounce Yankee Civil War slug that had taken out the Confederate veteran's right eye when he was just a boy in the trenches at Vicksburg. Coughs up Bullet was a national newspaper story around the world in 1921 but they missed the most unbelievable part of the final story. This is that final story.

After the story had been published, a former Union soldier called Peter Knapp of Kelso, Washington believed he may have been personally responsible for firing the bullet that had lodged near Willis Meadows brain and decided to write to him and perhaps exchange notes. They both soon realised that it was true.



Willis Meadows was just 19 when he and his brothers and cousins joined Company G of the 37th Alabama Volunteer Infantry. He was assigned to the western front along the Mississippi River. The regiment suffered heavily before being placed in the summer of 1863 into the city of Vicksburg for defence. On July 1st 1863, the final Federal push was on and just outside the town, through a peep hole in an old boiler plate, Confederate sniper, Willis Meadows, was firing off his rifle to

pick off the Yankees as they approached.

Peter Knapp was 21 at the time and with 3 other Union soldiers of Company H of the 5th Iowa Volunteer Infantry were specifically assigned with orders to take out and kill any Confederate snipers. During his approach on Vicksburg, Peter Knapp spotted Willis Meadows behind his peephole in the boiler plate, then took aim and hit him in the right eye. The 4 Union soldiers saw his prostrate figure, blood pouring from his eye socket and believed him well and truly dead and moved on.

However, Willis Meadows did not die, he was later found by Union soldiers and brought to a Federal hospital for the surgeons to treat. The Union surgeons never found the bullet despite probing and felt it was far too unsafe to perform an operation. He was then put on a Union POW ship and taken to a Union hospital. Later, he was paroled to a Confederate hospital where he spent the rest of the War as a patient and nurse's aide. After the War, he returned to Alabama and got married.

Peter Knapp was captured by Confederates a few months after Vicksburg. He was held in a number of Confederate prisons including

Andersonville. After the War, he returned to Michigan and then Kelso, Washington to be a farmer.

Following their initial exchanges after the story had been published in 1921, the 2 aged veterans, who had once tried to kill each other outside the killing fields of Vicksburg, would become firm friends in their twilight years. They would exchange stories, photographs and wish each other the best of health until their final days.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas
Sources : Coughs up Bullet, the unlikely sequel to a Civil War mystery - by Bill Miller: Wikipedia - Coughs up Bullet.



ACWS Explosives Officer Needed

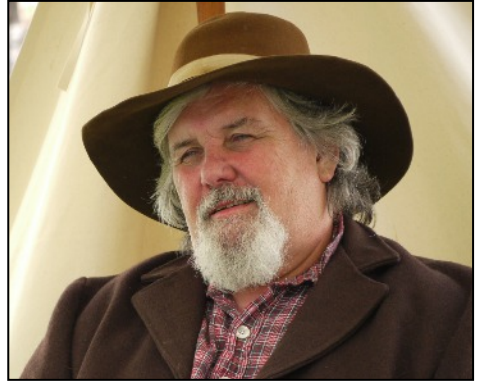
Kevin Holden will be leaving the position of Explosives Officer in 2020.

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.



NOTICE OF 2020 VIRTUAL AGM

The American Civil War Society Ltd (a company limited by guarantee, (number 2610962) hereby gives NOTICE that it's AGM will be held online on Saturday 5th December 2020, starting at 1pm prompt via Zoom (virtually).

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 2nd October 2020.

Nominations for other than existing post holders must 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:

- Chairperson: Helen Gibson
- Secretary: Linda Reed
- Treasurer: Ian Morris
- Membership: Claire Morris
- Webmaster: Mike Bussey
- Health & Safety: Frank Mair
- Communications: Stephen Griffin
- Marketing: Roger Willison-Gray
- Events: Marie Mitchell

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, with guidelines regarding "Zoom" 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 attending the virtual meeting are asked to have their membership cards to hand to help validation, online admission and voting if necessary.

For and behalf of the Board,
Linda Reed
Company Secretary and Director
26th August 2020

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.

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 27th September 2020.

Battle of the Crater Map Recently Discovered

During the Overland Campaign in 1864, the Union Army ambitiously tunneled 511 feet to reach the Confederate lines during the siege of Petersburg, Virginia, in 1864. Unique to this Civil War battle, they set off a massive explosion that created a 170-by-120-foot crater beneath the Confederate lines and stormed the defenses in a failed effort, known as the Battle of the Crater.

However, a recently discovered map suggests that this was not the end of the story by far as the Confederates were now worried that Union forces might again strike from under the ground. The South's tactical response was therefore to construct tunnels called countermines to detect any further Union digging. This detailed map of the Crater area is now revealing the actual extent and planning behind this long forgotten Confederate countermining during the siege of Petersburg.

Even before the July 30, 1864, explosion, the Confederate defenders of Petersburg constructed countermines in places where the terrain was susceptible to underground enemy approaches. Federal engineers also constructed countermines and listening galleries

or listening wells in locations where they suspected their opponent might make use of underground approaches. Although each side suspected the other was constructing mines, by their very nature these structures were hidden, their locations unknown to most of the miners' compatriots.

With the exception of the famous Crater mine, which became part of a tourist attraction after the war, Petersburg residents either never knew, or lost sight of the locations of the mines. Two sets of Confederate tunnels were found serendipitously during the twentieth century- one when a mule pulling a plow totally disappeared into a hole in the earth, and the other during construction activities in the 1970s.

A research group called the Petersburg Project is now studying the role of Confederate countermines played at Petersburg. They have researched the recently discovered map in conjunction with conducting battlefield archeology and examining underground images to determine the precise locations of many Confederate tunnels.

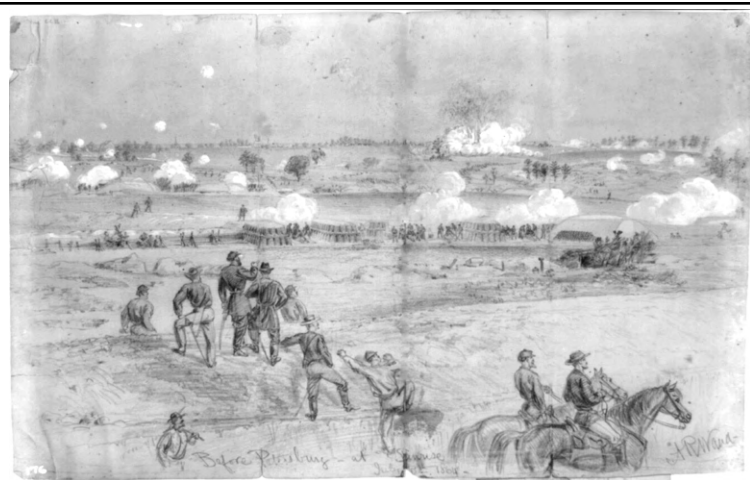
The actual map itself is untitled and is a mixture of ink and pencil, suggesting that it is a proof. The

locations of forts, defences, and railroad tracks are clearly identifiable and it has red lines indicating topography. In the background are thinly penciled lines that denote triangulation points for mapping. However, in some

cases, the penciled lines represent tunnels.

The Federal mine resulting in the Crater is frequently referred to in history books as if it were a unique marvel of military engineering in overcoming ventilation concerns and other issues to stretch over 500 feet in length. However, it is important to understand that at the same time Pennsylvania miners were excavating their tunnel, Confederate engineers were constructing and overseeing counter-mining efforts in at least 6 other locations.

In an effort at Gracies Salient, the day after the battle of the Crater, the Confederates attempted to detonate two explosive chambers at the ends of two tunnel branches in an attempt to destroy Federal saps and drive the Yankees back across Poor



Explosion from Union perspective

Creek. As with the Federal mine the day before, the first attempt at firing the mine didn't work.

The Confederates rethought their approach, dug one gallery closer to the enemy, and on August 5, detonated two charges totaling 850 pounds of powder at two locations on this gallery. However, the effects were disappointing. Confederate General Bushrod Johnson reported that the "effect was slight. Not a gabion or sap roller displaced, nor much of a crater formed".

In an after battle official report to the Confederate Authorities regarding Confederate countermining at the Crater, he wrote "Accordingly, counter mines were commenced at the points where the hostile lines were nearest. In the construction of these the shafts with, a cross section

of 6' and 4' generally began to be sunk some thirty or forty feet behind the infantry trench and descended at an easy grade until it reached the water-bearing stratum at the particular point, which was seldom over thirty feet beneath the surface.

Then pushing forward, until some sixty to one hundred feet in front of the trench had been gained, the gallery was extended laterally right and left for a greater or less distance to cover the menaced point. This was the general outline of their construction, but some were very elaborately executed, ramifying in every direction.

All were ceiled with plank and scantling as the work advanced and were lighted and ventilated by perpendicular shafts. Holes were also bored with earth augurs from the galleries horizontally towards the enemy to serve as acoustic tubes in conveying the sounds of hostile mining.

Sentinels were kept in the galleries night and day; and their cool, quiet aisles were delightful retreats from the heat and turmoil of the trenches. It must be confessed, however, that with the ever present death above ground there was something in the dank stillness that reigned within them suggestive of the grave". Confederate General Beauregard

reported the countermining explosive attempts as "experimental".

As for the battle itself, the Siege of Petersburg began June 15, 1864 and lasted to April 2, 1865. It was fought about 25 miles outside the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, and was a costly grind, resulting in some 70,000 casualties. The siege was a defining chapter in the Civil War and signaled the downfall of the Confederacy.

The Union eventually forced General Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia to take flight to avoid being cut off from supplies.

In hot pursuit, the Union forces under General Ulysses S. Grant quickly outmanoeuvred the worn out Confederates and negotiated their surrender at Appomattox, Virginia, on April 9, 1865. General Grant considered the Union assault at the Crater as "the saddest affair I have witnessed in this war."

Although these events have long passed, this new 1865 map shows that there is still very much to learn and rediscover about this momentous period of American history.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas

"Old Douglas" - The Confederate Camel

Douglas The Camel or "Old Douglas," was a domesticated dromedary (one hump) camel used by Company A of the 43rd Mississippi Infantry, part of the Confederate Army during the American Civil War. Because of Old Douglas, the 43rd



Mississippi Infantry came to be known as the Camel Regiment.

Old Douglas was originally part of a U.S. War Department program called the Texas Camel Experiment, which aimed to experiment with camels as a possible alternative to horses and mules, which were dying of dehydration in vast numbers. Jefferson Davis, who had ascended to the position of United States Secretary of War in 1853, was a strong proponent of the program and used his political influence to make the experiment happen.

In his annual report for 1854, Jefferson Davis wrote, "I again invite attention to the advantages to be anticipated from the use of camels

and dromedaries for military and other purposes....". In March 1855, the U.S. Congress agreed and appropriated \$30,000 for the project.

In June 1855, Major Henry C. Wayne, whose opinion agreed with that of Jefferson Davis, departed New York City on board the USS Supply, under the command of then Lieutenant David Dixon Porter.

After stops throughout the Mediterranean Sea, Wayne and Porter purchased thirty-three camels, including two Bactrian, twenty-nine dromedaries, one dromedary calf, and one Booghdee (a cross between a male Bactrian and a female dromedary).

They also procured proper camel pack saddles and covers and hired five camel drivers. In 1856, Lieutenant David Porter was once again dispatched to the Mediterranean to acquire more animals and he returned with a herd of forty-one camels and nine additional camel drivers. The newly

acquired animals joined the first herd at Camp Verde, Texas, which had been officially designated as the camel station. The camels were used in several expeditions to the southwest.

The camels proved to withstand the brutal heat and scarcity of water much better than horses and mules. In the spring of 1861, Camp Verde fell into Confederate hands until recaptured by Union troops in 1865. When Union troops reoccupied Camp Verde, there were estimated to be more than a hundred camels at the camp and many others freely roamed the countryside. In 1866, the U.S. Government was able to round up sixty-six camels. The camels were sold and the U.S. Army's camel experiment was complete.

Although the exact details are unknown, Old Douglas somehow made his way from Camp Verde to Mississippi at the beginning of the Civil War. He was initially given to Confederate Colonel W. H. Moore of Company A of the 43rd Mississippi by 1st Lt. William Hargrove of Company B, 43rd Mississippi. Besides being a regimental mascot, Colonel Moore also assigned Old Douglas to the regimental band to carry instruments and knapsacks as well as the baggage of the officers' mess. Though the Confederate troops first

tried to treat Old Douglas like a horse, the camel was known to break free of any tether put on him and he was eventually allowed to graze freely.

Despite not being tied up, Old Douglas never wandered far from his men. Old Douglas's first active service campaign was with General Price in the luka campaign. He was first sent to the wagon train but managed to stampede all the other teams. However, there was only one horse which would face up to Old Douglas at first and that was Pompey, the little bay stallion belonging to Colonel Moore and it was not long till he was on intimate terms with all. His keeper would chain him to keep him from wandering off but Old Douglas would sit back and snap any kind of chain and then proceed to graze at leisure, though never leaving his regiment or interfering with anything that did not interrupt him. When the regiment was ready to start, Old Douglas would be led up to the pile of things he was to carry and his leader would say, 'Pushay, Douglas,' and he would gracefully drop to his knees and haunches and remain so till his load was adjusted and he was told to get up.

His long and swinging gait was soon familiar with the entire Confederate command and the 43rd Mississippi

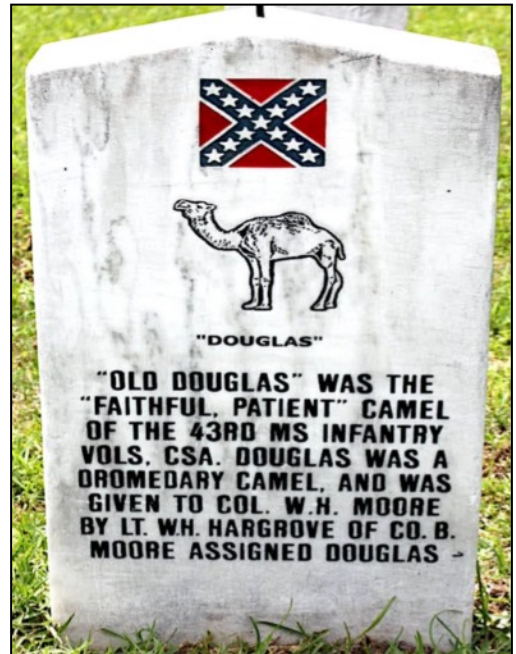
became quickly known as the 'Camel Regiment.'

However, there was one famous incident just before the Battle of Corinth that has always been recorded in the annals of the 43rd Mississippi. As it was well known that many of the infantry's horses really feared Old Douglas, his driver was always instructed to stop just outside any camp when it halted.

But in a forced march toward Iuka, Mississippi just before the battle of Corinth, the command had halted just after dark and the camel and driver accidentally got in the line of march and into the camp before he knew it. The result was that a frightened horse made an immediate break with a fence rail attached to his halter and ran through the whole Confederate camp. He stampeded men and animals in every direction. Many men took to the trees or any other protection and the panic spread through much of the Confederate brigade. As a result, a number of men and animals were hurt and one or two horses were actually killed.

Old Douglas remained with the 43rd Mississippi and took part in the Siege of Vicksburg. However, on that fateful day of the 27th June in 1863 at Vicksburg, he had gently wandered into no man's land to

graze between the Union and Confederate armies as he was usually wanted to do but paid the ultimate price.



He was deliberately targeted and shot by a Union sharpshooter. Although his current gravestone marker states that he was then eaten by his starving Confederate comrades, local lore relates that it was the Union soldiers who actually retrieved and ate the camel's corpse as well as made expensive souvenirs out of his bones. Whatever happened to the camel's corpse, the Confederates were absolutely enraged at his totally unnecessary death and the men in

his regiment swore to avenge him. As a result, Confederate Colonel Bevier enlisted six of his best snipers with orders to avenge Old Douglas and successfully shot the culprit.

Of Old Douglas's killer, Colonel Bevier reportedly said, "I refused to hear his name and was rejoiced to learn that he had been severely wounded".

Old Douglas is currently honored with his own grave marker in Cedar Hill Cemetery, in Vicksburg, Mississippi. He is, along with other camels used during the war, not overlooked by Civil War historians nor by Civil War Reenactors. There is currently a Confederate reenactment regiment called the Texas Camel Corps, whose mission is to promote the stories of camels, like Old Douglas, used during the Civil War. Anyone got a spare camel and fancy starting up a similar regiment in the UK?

Goobers Notes :

1)To find the iconic grave of Old Douglas the Camel turn into the Vicksburg City Cemetery on Lindsey Street from Sky Farm Ave. Just after the first cross street, you will see a group of graves on the left with Confederate flags. Old Douglas the Camels grave marker, the one with

the camel on it, is on the right side of the group, second row in.

2) After dismantling the Camel Corps, some of the camels were simply released to wander in the deserts. In the mid-1870s one such forlorn beast wandered into Fort Selden, New Mexico Territory.

The young son of the post commander saw it and ran, absolutely terrified, to hide behind his mother. The post commandant was Colonel Arthur MacArthur. The terrified child grew up to be none other than General of the U.S Army Douglas MacArthur.

Mass Grave found at Vicksburg

The collapse of a hill at the Vicksburg National Cemetery in May 2020 - a burial site for Union soldiers - in Mississippi led archaeologists to a shocking find. Buried deep beneath the now collapsed hill was the grave of 15 soldiers who had died during the US Civil War.

Experts state further DNA testing may be required to ensure that each soldier's remains are now identified. According to a release from the Vicksburg National Military Park, the remains will be carefully removed and stored to ensure each set of the remains of each soldier are kept together. Archaeologist Dawn

Lawrence said: "This is among the most important work that we do. These soldiers served and died for their country and they deserve our respect for their sacrifice.

The collapse of the Cemetery Road in February created tremendous challenges. None are more important than protecting the remains of those who fell in the service of our country. These archaeologists stepped forward to ensure that happens. They are a special group."

Goobers Notes: Vicksburg National Cemetery was established in 1866 to serve as a central burial location for Union soldiers who were killed in action or died of disease during service in this region. Union soldiers whose remains could be located in battlefield graves or at hospital sites were disinterred, brought to Vicksburg, and placed in the national cemetery.

There are approximately 17,000 Union soldiers interred in the National Cemetery at Vicksburg of which number 13,000 are listed as "Unknown."

The Confederate soldiers who were killed or died of disease during the siege of Vicksburg were, by necessity, buried behind Southern lines. Mr. J.Q. Arnold, a local

undertaker under contract with the Confederate government to bury soldiers, selected Cedar Hill (Vicksburg City) Cemetery as the final resting place for those who died in the defence of Vicksburg.

As these men did not meet the criteria established by Congress for burial in a national cemetery, their remains were not disinterred, and remain today in the Soldiers' Rest section of Cedar Hill Cemetery, where their graves are maintained by the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The plot in Cedar Hill Cemetery is the final resting place for an estimated 5,000 Confederate soldiers. One of these is a tribute to Old Douglas (see above).





EVENTS CALENDAR 2020

Stay Safe

Sadly due to Covid 19 we have no events this year, but the team are working hard to get us a full season for next year.

December 5th ACWS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2020 ACWS Annual General Meeting is to be held in December at a venue TBA, or a virtual meeting.

See centre pages for more information



Please send any article you want publishing to the editor at the email below
editor@acws.co.uk