



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

## **2020 4th Edition**

ACWS Ltd PO Box 270 Washington, Tyne & Wear NE37 9BX  
[www.acws.co.uk](http://www.acws.co.uk)



ACWS is a Member of  
**N·A·Re·S**

**Issue 198**

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



Chairperson  
Helen Gibson



Secretary  
Linda Reed



Treasurer  
Ian Morris



Health & Safety  
Dr. Frank Mair



Membership  
Claire Morris



Webmaster  
Mike Bussey



Communications  
Stephen Griffin



Marketing  
Roger Willison-Gray



Events  
Marie Mitchell

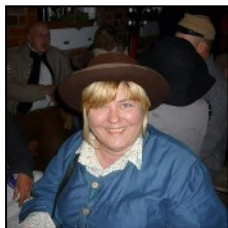


Confederate  
Commander  
Glenn Gibson



Federal  
Commander  
Tim Davies

## Chairperson Report



What a year please let it all be over!! Thinking of reasons to be thankful are that none of my family or friends have

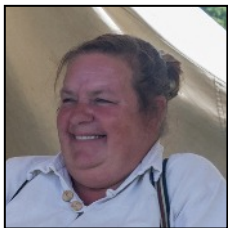
lost their lives to this covid pandemic and a vaccine will be available soon.

Thank you all for your patience and understanding and trust we the board are working for your best interests. Thank you to the board of directors for all they do for us and looking forward to a brighter future.

Helen x  
Mrs Helen Gibson

---

## Secretary Report



Hey y'all,

Well, what a strange year !!

I hope this newsletter finds you all well and safe. 2020 "The year of lockdown" and "45th Anniversary of the ACWS".

Who would have thought the last time we all saw each other that we wouldn't see each other for a whole year.

Even though we haven't been able to attend events the whole Board of Directors have still continued to work hard behind the scenes keeping our lovely family society running smoothly.

With the AGM around the corner i hope you can all join us on "Zoom" for our all new virtual AGM. Details

will be sent to you soon, although you can still vote by email or paper vote as you normally do.

This year we unfortunately say goodbye to our "Powder Officer" Kevin, who has worked so hard for the ACWS over the past and for which we are ever so grateful. Thank you Kevin from us "ALL".

If you feel as though you could fill the role, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Board for a chat. Anyhow enough of my ramblings!

I really do hope to see everyone soon and would like to take this opportunity to wish you ALL a Very Merry Christmas and all the Very best of Health, Wealth and Happiness for 2021.

See y'all soon  
Linda

## Events Report



I know that 2020 has been a difficult year, and many have been disappointed not to have been able to attend any events,

but there is hope in 2021.

We have a couple of events already penciled in, as well as a number of other possible events in discussion. Some are events that have been postponed from 2020 and the organisers have requested our attendance next year.

I already have a potential timetable with up to 12 events from March-August 2021. I will send details to Mike soon, so that he can update the events page, so that people can start to make arrangements. Obviously these are subject to the status of C-19 at the time, and we will adhere to government regulations and put members health and safety first and foremost.

We hope that we will see all of you soon.

Marie

---

## Confederate Commander Report



Greetings to my fellow Southern Gentlemen, Ladies & children

Let's now look beyond 2020 with

great anticipation and that we emerge into 2021 free from the shadow of Covid 19.

(Let's just hope the aliens decide not to invade.) I have some new ideas for change, but welcome any comments from members to improve our impression, drill and dialogue/ displays to the public.

One issue that I feel that I must mention due to the colour of our uniforms and the flag we fight under, is to read up on aspects of history so we are ready to discuss/ debate the expected questions and possible abuse that we as members may be subject to, from certain groups in our country, while we are away at weekends.

I know that this sounds a bit extreme, but I want to continue to re-enact the American Civil War and am prepared to try and educate people at weekends. We must protect our hobby and we will



be the frontline while away on camp.

get together around the camp fire in 2021.

Apart from that, keep your gun oiled, buttons and brass polished, kit clean and see you all for a large

Hope to see you all soon

Major Glenn Gibson

---

## Union Commander Report



When I was asked to do my end of year report I instantly said how the hell I can report on something we haven't had. So

instead I'm going to use my report to say Hi to you all, wish you all well and hope to see you all next season.

This year has taught us how much of a family we really are I for one have missed seeing all your faces on a morning, I have missed the moans on camp about how far away the water point is and the means that there isn't enough wood, I've missed the stress of what are we going to do with the few people we have, I've missed the morning calls and flag raising, I've also missed the de briefing meeting and officer and NCO meetings. But most of all I have missed every single one of you my extended family.

I hope lock down hasn't been too hard on you all having worked through it I know how hard it got for a lot of people.

I'm hoping next season we can get together and have some of the things back again. This year spend your time repairing that kit that you have been attempting to repair or patch your tent re water proof it keep it all dry and check for any unwanted visitors from last season.

Have the best Christmas and New Year you possibly can and keep yourself safe and keep plodding on.

We will be holding our AGM remotely so if you haven't got an email address registered with membership then please send them one so they can invite you. You can also do you vote via proxy again this year. We need to keep things in line ready for next season so please do try and cast your vote for the positions that's available each season.

Until the next event  
Keep your powder dry

Major Tim  
Take care and stay safe

# Health & Safety Report



Dear Gang, Blue and Grey,  
It's AGM time, so as Health & Safety Director it falls to me to write an Annual Report on

matters of H & S in a year with no events.

Well, I am aware that one or two members have caught the dreaded Covid 19, through workplace exposure in most cases. As a board, we are vindicated in our decision to cancel all events in 2020 on H & S grounds. At least we can be sure that we did not make things worse. Isolation is the best defence (of those currently available) in this war of attrition between the virus and us. As we look forward to 2021, we do so in the hope of a safe and effective vaccine. I am sure I speak for all board members, and all ordinary members of ACWS, in wishing a full and speedy recovery to all members afflicted with Covid 19.

The hiatus in events does give us room to reflect on how else we might minimise risk in our hobby. Leaving aside the risks of using black powder weapons, which are well-covered in the Code of Practise, the next-most significant risk of harm probably comes from the open fires at the end

of every street of tents. General care and common sense, and adherence to the Code of Practise, manages these risks, as does the wearing of period-correct materials: wool and jeancloth. Of course, on both safety and authenticity grounds, synthetics are a no-no. However, cotton, silk and linen, while correct, are quite flammable. A means exists to reduce this risk while not affecting the appearance of period-correct flammables: modern fabric treatments with fire-retardant formulations can greatly reduce flammability.

It is, therefore, recommended that all persons wearing cotton, linen or silk on an outside layer of clothing pre-treat it with a spray-treatment fire-retardant. Many are available. Some, based on borax, may even be considered as historically appropriate. Most water-based ones will need re-applied after heavy rain or washing.

So, along with polishing buttons and brass, cleaning weapons, one more thing to do in the coming winter season: fireproof those dresses. And that goes for the womenfolk too! In addition, Roger Willison-Grey has kindly been helping with the formal incorporation of risks specific to the cavalry into our overall Risk

Assessment. That concludes our report of progress this year.

And before I finish, just a reminder: Please check your shotgun and explosive license renewal dates. If they are coming up, make sure you apply in good time. Waits can be several months. Many Police forces are now requiring doctor's letters in all cases, and many doctors are charging for these now. If yours wants to charge over £50, then use a web-based service instead: Here

are two suggestions.

<https://firearmsmedicalreports.co.uk/apply/>

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

Kindest regards, and best wishes for a safe and cosy Christmas. Here's looking forward to a stonking year in 2021.

Frank Mair  
Director for Health and Safety.

---

## Communication Report

What can I say that hasn't been said weird year so far and 2 months left.

I do have some good news though, the rest of the board have let me off the lease some what and allowed me to create, what I hope, is an amusing piece.

What?

Yes, as you read the rest of this newsletter be aware that one of the stories may not be true, I may have made it up and I do have a very vivid imagination. I'm not giving you any clues, but you might spot it easily. I am also aware that it's joke is dependant on pronunciation and can cause a North South divide. Pun intended.

Are you curious now?

Hopefully it will make you giggle in these strange times.

Marie has managed to get us quite a few events for next year, dependant on Covid. So I hope to see you all then.

I will have a video camera as well as the normal camera, as I intend to start videoing the weekends more. If you have anything special on your camps that would want me to video then please let me know. I'm particularly interested in getting authentic cooking, gun maintenance and anything authentic that could be instructional for all.

Missing you all.

Keep safe

Griff

## ACWS AGM 2020

Due to Covid 19 restrictions we will not be able to hold the 2020 AGM as a physical meeting and therefore the Board have agreed to hold the meeting as a Zoom Webinar.

All ACWS Members who have registered their email will receive an invitation to join the webinar which can be viewed on any device with a web browser.

When you join the meeting, your microphone will be muted, and you will not have a video feed.

The Board members will have audio and video which you will be able to see.

The webinar has a polling system, and you will be able to vote during the meeting, but please note if you voted by post you should not vote at the meeting.

Voting will for the main be anonymous with the exception of votes for the Union and Confederate Commanders, these votes will record the email address of the member voting and will be checked to ensure that only bone-fide members of the relevant Army have voted.

If at anytime you wish to raise a formal point please use the Q&A button which will be visible to the Board members and if appropriate, they will unmute you and allow a video feed.

If you simply wish to comment or discuss issues with other members you should use the Chat button, please do not use Chat for points of order or any other business.

The AGM will be recorded, and access will be available for those who miss some or all of the meeting via the ACWS Web site.

The Board will be holding a number of rehearsals prior to the AGM to test the process and technology and we would welcome any members who are willing to help with this, please email [secretary@acws.co.uk](mailto:secretary@acws.co.uk) if you would be willing to take part.

You will receive the invitation one week before the meeting and be reminded 24 hours and 1 hour before the meeting.

We look forward seeing you all at the first ever on-line AGM



# Amazing American Civil War Medical Inventions

The massive number of casualties and injuries created during American Civil War battles necessitated some quick, creative ideas... some of which we still have today. The war resulted in more than 600,000 deaths. About 500,000 were wounded. The war created a massive need for inventions of various kinds and led to rapid advancement in medicine. There were several things newly invented during the Civil War that became keys to saving lives, as well as taking them. The Gatling Gun and repeating rifles, both invented just before or during the war, became quite effective at slaughter, as well as producing wounded men in unprecedented numbers. Because such a devastating and massive war usually generates rapid advancement along medical fronts, inventions and new discoveries came fast and furious during those four years.

## 1. Amputations

There was a reason amputations were streamlined during the war - and it was not because the surgeons and other medical staff were not capable. In 1840, a new kind of bullet was invented; the Minié Ball, named for its inventor. This was 0.58 caliber - slightly smaller than the end of an adult human thumb. Due to

their usage in rifled barrels, this bullet dramatically increased the accuracy of weapons of the time, as well as their damage. Rapid amputations were "invented" and practiced during the Civil War partly because of the sheer number of casualties and the need for the injured to be quickly stabilized. But the primary reason was because that very same Minié Ball caused such fragmentation and shattering of bone, ligaments, muscle, and flesh, that if amputation were not performed, then complications such as gangrene and infection - followed by death - were certain.

The solution? Cut the limb off well above the damaged area.

Spent a good part of the day in a large brick mansion on the banks of the Rappahannock, used as a hospital since the battle - seems to have received only the worst cases. Outdoors, at the foot of a tree, I notice a heap of amputated feet, legs, arms, hands, &c., a full load for a one-horse cart. - Walt Whitman

## 2. Anaesthesia inhaler

With that many surgeries going on at once, pretty much constantly during most battles, there had to be a way to mercifully knock these people out while their limbs were amputated. Chloroform and ether

were invented just 15 years before the war began, and they had not been deployed for use on battlefields involving mass casualties yet. When available, chloroform was the go-to on Civil War battlefields, because ether was extremely flammable. It was usually applied via cotton balls, handkerchief, etc. This, however, wasted much of the precious drug.

The invention that saved a lot of soldiers from excruciating pain (something on the order of 95 percent of those who endured surgery for such wounds) was the anaesthesia inhaler, invented just before the war and deployed as the field hospitals began to have an extreme need. These enabled medical staff to rapidly give chloroform to multiple soldiers with as little waste as possible. And, still to this day, a modern variant of that invention is used (with newer, superior intoxicants) before and during surgeries.

### **3. The ambulance-to-emergency-room system**

One of the early high-casualty battles of the Civil War was the First Battle of Bull Run (or Manassas, as it's known to Southerners), which began on July 21, 1861. The soldiers who ended up being hurled into the fight had no idea what to expect; many of the Union forces were 90-day volunteers that President

Abraham Lincoln had sought after Fort Sumter fell to Confederates. There were many gatherings of people watching the fight; expecting nothing as severe as what was to come, some bystanders - including a few dozen senators, and enterprising people selling pies and other food - setup picnic blankets and watched. But when the horror unfolded, many of them got in their carriages and headed back from whence they came.

Fleeing with those non-soldiers, however, were most of the private ambulances hired to help out; they'd never seen such carnage, and this experience terrified them, causing them to flee just as they were needed. A few days later, when the full extent of the back-and-forth was over, there were 3,000 casualties on the Union side and about half of that on the Confederate side. Many lay dying for hours on the fields, since the concept of quickly ferrying the wounded to field hospitals was not yet invented - and all of the private ambulances hired had skedaddled.

The Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac, Jonathan Letterman, got to work immediately after Bull Run, and devised an ingenious "ambulance-to-E.R." system involving the use of existing soldiers and medical staff that is still basically in use today. By the time of the

Battle of Antietam in September, it was fully deployed, with 50 ambulances containing a driver and two stretcher-bearers each, to quickly get the injured to field hospitals

#### **4. Plastic Surgery**

Before the U. S. Civil War, reconstructive plastic surgery, especially of the face, didn't really exist - it had been theorized in the medical journal known as *The Lancet* in 1837, and before that, facial reconstruction was limited to taking skin flaps and bone from other parts of the body to form facial features. But with over 10,000 cases of gunshot and cannon shrapnel wounds to the faces of various soldiers during the war, the need for something to at least partially reconstruct facial features was pretty dire. That put it high on the priority list. Of course, with it being more or less experimental in nature and very much in need of research and testing, it couldn't be deployed for very many of those 10,000; indeed, it was successfully performed on only about 30 former soldiers or officers.

#### **5. Embalming**

The act of "arterial" embalming the dead - replacing their blood with chemicals to preserve the body long enough to get through services and burial - had been invented in France

about 25 years before the Civil War. But it took until the end of the war for it to really catch on in the United States; the casualties from the war itself were partly why. Up until that time, a family member dying usually meant the body would not be preserved, but would rather decompose within a few days or a week. This meant funeral services happened quickly, by necessity. And even then, the body was frequently surrounded in candles and other masking scents.

Most of the over 600,000 soldiers who died during the entire war were either put into mass graves or left where they lay in the fields and trenches. Only those with wealthy families had their bodies retrieved for services back home - and even then, all of those arrangements had to be made quickly, or the bodies would be too decomposed for even recognition.

The science of embalming was still relatively new, so various experiments in the practice were conducted on deceased soldiers; indeed, 40,000 of the 600,000 dead were embalmed during the entire 4-year period. It was "catching on." Fast forward to the end of the war, when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. His body was quickly embalmed, and then placed on a funeral train that worked its way

across the country to Illinois. Even then, the new process wasn't effective enough to keep the body preserved for the entire two-week trip. While people near the early train stops marvelled that his appearance was so life-like - they even tried to reach out and touch him - near the end of the funeral train stops, Lincoln's face appeared hollow and gaunt. It was time for him to be lowered into the family burial plot. Still, the experience of seeing and hearing about Lincoln's funeral train's visit to 180 cities made the concept of embalming the dead a permanent part of U.S. Culture.

## **6. Hinged prosthetic limbs**

Because amputations of the leg were considered worse than those of the arm due to the social impact as well as the ability to work on the farm and in factories, the lack of a prosthesis for either leg was becoming a big problem for soldiers returning home missing a lower limb. One Confederate Virginia soldier, James Edward Hanger, was wounded early in the war, during the Battle of Philippi.

When he returned home, his leg amputated just below the left hip, he disappeared into isolation - his family assuming he was depressed and didn't want anyone to see him in the state he was in. This was true, however, Hanger approached that

isolation from a creative and nuance angle: His missing leg was a problem to solve.

I cannot look back upon those days in the hospital without a shudder. No one can know what such a loss means unless he has suffered a similar catastrophe. In the twinkling of an eye, life's fondest hopes seemed dead. I was the prey of despair. What could the world hold for a maimed, crippled man!

Up until that time, leg replacements were simple devices, usually "peg" legs, stiff and definitely not something that would enable someone to have a gait that was at all normal. He created not just the first jointed leg prosthetic out of barrel staves, rubber, joints, nails, and hinges, but a revolution in an industry that was about to explode. The "Hanger Limb" went from being a creation out of necessity to an industry that won a state grant to mass produce them in Virginia, and then after the war, a U. S. patent, and factories were setup in major cities across the world, making the limbs commonplace and effective for amputees of the Civil War as well as all other wars since. Indeed, today Hanger, Inc. remains the largest maker of prosthetics in the world.

Sources : Big Think - Brandon. A Weber 28.1.19

## Spetchley Gardens Multi Period

The ACWS travelled to the M5 Multi period Event at Spetchley Park Gardens on 8th and 9th August 2020 for the 14th anniversary of this increasingly popular multi period Event.

The weather was glorious and the sun shone all weekend, but it wasn't too hot or too cold, it was perfect re-enacting weather. With glorious sunsets to finish each day.

The fleet of shower/toilet trailers which are easily disguised as a tent street, were a God send. Donated to us by 'At your Convenience Ltd'. We could easily get a morning shower and use very expensive complimentary soaps and gels.

The weekend was very luxurious indeed. I couldn't help but notice the green faces of the other societies present. There were a record



It was great trying out the new editions to our ACWS arsenal. The new startup company, 'Re-enactors Butler' who have taken our tents in advance and put up the full streets. They then waited for us to arrive at the gates with a complimentary bottle of wine, lead us to our tents and then park our cars.

number of combatants this year, with all societies present having a full compliment of members in attendance.

As usual, the ACWS was required to perform a 30 minute skirmish each day in the main arena as well



as do our additional drill displays and the 2 Grand Parades at the end of both days.

This is the first event for a long time that we have had 8 cannon on the field, 3 Confederate and 5 Union. I feel I must congratulate Stuart Wardley and Caz Davies for a fantastic display and a record zero misfires.

Saturdays battle started with a 5 minute cannon display with perfectly timed ground charges. The Union had an extra mock cannon which was blown to smithereens in a crescendo of spark, sire and debris.



The USSS pushed forward talking out many confederates as they cut a swathe across the battle field. They were pushed back only when the 11 strong cavalry entered the field. The cavalry moving swiftly through the grass, cannons blazing as they came. Brought a mighty Union cannon crashing down in sheets of flame. Sensing victory was

nearing. thinking fortune must have smiled, people started cheering "Come on thunder horses!"

With the Union in retreat Major Gibson brought on the rest of Confederate army. They filled the field from one side to the other, all in single file. As they moved forward, they formed their regiments in ranks of 2.

Alas, they only made it to the middle of the field when the air was filled with the sound of drums. As the Union army majestically left the tree line and entered the field of play.

A glorious cacophony of sound and a spectacle of flags, made the Confederate's take heed. This was not going to be an easy fight.

This article will not do the spectacle I witnessed justice, suffice it to say both sides fought well and managed to cover the field splendidly so every member of the audience got a taste of what ACWS is capable of. All were happy.

Camp life was just as entertaining and a surprise was had by all. The Great British Bake Off team had arrived on camp while the battle was in full flow.

Mary Berry was on the 69<sup>th</sup> New York camp admiring Shaz Paul's amazing campfire skills. Mary was



in awe of Shaz's campfire Scone's, to such a degree that she insisted Shaz take part in the bake off that weekend.

their Best Confederate of the Year trophy to hand out. This year like last year and the year before it went to Andrew Farnsworth.

I know I have no need to tell you the outcome of the competition, as the Society is very proud of Shaz for easily beating the other competitors. I shan't tell you the name of her winning piece but you will see it when turn the page.

Mary didn't leave empty handed as she proudly walked away with Shaz's recipe and Andy Farnsworth's mobile number.

Speaking of which, being the end of the season the confederates had







# British Bake Off Winner Scone Mountain

## ACWS Explosives Officer Needed

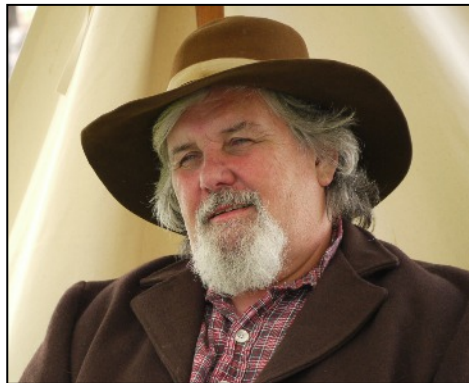
Kevin Holden will be leaving the position of Explosives Officer in 2020.

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 out 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 a 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 2021 in order to learn all that the role requires.

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



# **The Battle of Nueces (aka The Nueces Massacre)**

## **10 August 1862**

The Battle of Nueces on August 10th 1862 was a violent confrontation between Confederate soldiers and German Texans in Kinney County, Texas. However, the aftermath of this confrontation and particularly the efficacy of Confederate actions after the battle continues to haunt and plague the residents of Hill Country and beyond today.

Descendants on both sides still hotly debate the incident and the animosity felt over it still continues to this very day. The German defeat did certainly end overt resistance to Confederate governance in Texas during the Civil War but it also fuelled outrage among the Texan-German population. This is the story of the Battle of Nueces which is also known as the Nueces Massacre.

Prior to the Civil War, many 1st time German immigrants settled in Central Texas in a region called Hill Country. The majority of the 20,000 population supported the Union and were opposed to slavery and they were called the Forty-Eighters. Most secessionist Anglo Texans found this an affront to their gradual insurrection against the Union and this led to growing animosity throughout the 1850's. These disputes were suddenly escalated

by Texas secession from the United States in March 1861 and the start of the American Civil War on April 12th 1861.

Upon the start of the Civil War, the Germans projected an outward appearance of passivity towards the conflict. However, Confederate officials saw the German population as an internal threat. During votes on secession, Hill County and many other neighbouring areas voted clearly against secession. In addition, they supported Union victories in 1862 and Confederates began to fear the creation of German run armed local militias.

1 of these militias was called the Union Loyal League and organised by the Forty Eighters. They maintained that their sole purpose was to defend Hill Country from Indians and outlaws. The Confederates however considered it the enforcement arm of German Unionist sentiment and there were implications in their strategies to free Union soldiers captured and imprisoned at Camp Verde early on in the War.

With a need for more soldiers, the Confederate Government established in the spring of 1862 a





Confederate conscription for Texans. This Confederate Conscription Act of 1862 turned general German opposition into outright open opposition. As a result, several Union Loyal League members decided to leave Texas under Frederick "Fritz" Tegener and make their way to Mexico via Union-controlled New Orleans. Many intended to join the Union Army and indeed they called themselves "The Comfort Company of the Union Army". In order to counter this well known open opposition, the Confederates sent in Captain James Duff with Confederate troops to deal with the situation. According to one historical source at the time, he said "I will hang all I suspect of being anti-Confederates".

Between August 1st and August 3rd 1862, 61 Germans under Fritz Tegener began their journey to the Mexican border. Well informed of their intentions, Captain James Duff sent a determined Confederate force of 96 soldiers under Lieutenant Colin McRae to go after them with thoughts of San Jacinto and glorious Alamo. 6 days later, the Confederate force spied the Germans in a small prairie by the Nueces River and on the evening of August 10th, having divided their forces into 2, attacked the camp. However, 2 German watchmen from the camp spotted the imminent Confederate attack and managed to alert their comrades who subsequently beat back the first attack. At this stage, several Germans became very disheartened by the Confederate

presence and disappeared through the night. The remaining Germans fully realising they were in an untenable position tried to organise a defence and built a barricade with saddles. However, a second charge close to dawn broke through these defences and routed the Germans with many fleeing both during and after the battle.

Confederate losses amounted to 2 dead and 18 wounded including Lieutenant McRae. The Germans lost 19 dead in the assaults on their camp. However, that was not the final tally as after the battle, Confederate soldiers killed 9 badly wounded Germans. They were taken in nearby woods by Confederate Lieutenant Edwin Lilley due to the injury suffered by Lieutenant McRae. They were all shot in the back of the head. Later that year on October 18th 1862, Lieutenant McRaes party journeyed down to the Rio Grande and killed 9 more Germans who had escaped the initial battle.

Several Germans did make it to both Mexico and California and some joined the Union 1st Texas Cavalry in New Orleans. The most important aspect of the incident however was that all overt German Unionism in Texas came to end for the rest of the Civil War.

In discussing what actually happened at Nueces, there was an Englishman named R.H Williams serving with the Confederate forces and he wrote an interesting account about his personal experiences at the incident. In it, he suggested that Confederate Captain James Duff intended to show no mercy to any fugitives from the very outset and there were rumours he had told certain of his close followers that he wanted no prisoners. Regardless, Williams wrote that after the battle and tending to the German injured that "They had fought a good fight and bore themselves so pluckily that I felt sorry that I had taken any part against them.

We bound up their wounds, gave them water, and laid them as comfortably in the shade as we could". Williams then left to search for more Unionists. On returning later that day, he found the camp deserted and was told the prisoners had been moved to better shade in the nearby woods. Soon after, he heard a volley of shots and fearing a further attack ran in the direction of the firing where he met another man who saw him running. He said "It`s all done. You needn`t be in a hurry. It`s all done. They have shot the poor devils and finished them off". Williams replied "It can`t be possible they have murdered the prisoners in cold blood ? ". "Oh yes",

said the man "they are all dead, sure enough, and a good job too".

Upon the Civil War ending, the Germans were the most exuberant of the Union victory. A few surviving men from the Tegener party returned home after the War in 1865 and recounted what had occurred. The German community grieved and seethed and later recovered all the remains of those killed who were then buried under a limestone monument called "The Treue der Union Monument" (True to the Union) in Comfort, Texas. This is the only monument dedicated by locals to Unionism in former Confederate territory.

The titles "Battle of Nueces" or the "Nueces Massacre" still resonate

fierce and contested debate even today. On the former title, many believe that the Germans were a well armed militia as they were able to repel the superior numbers of the first Confederate assault. In addition, the Germans were actively supporting what was at the time an enemy cause and some were actively planning to join the Union Army. On the other hand, many believe that the execution of 11 Germans following the battle lends credence to the latter title. The argument is still fierce to this very day and has still not ended.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas.

Sources : Wikipedia, New York Times - Massacre on the Nueces 8/11/12 and various Internet sources.

---

## Civil War Witch Bottle Found

American Civil War Archaeologists have just found a very rare "Witch Bottle" that may have been used to ward off "evil spirits" during the American Civil War. The bottle stands at a height of five inches (13 centimetres) tall and three inches (eight centimetres) wide and was found near a Civil War fort called Redoubt No. 9.

The fortification was built by and initially used by Confederate troops. However, by late 1861, Union

soldiers from the Pennsylvania cavalry had taken over. Archaeologists first thought that the glass bottle was just a mere container for rusty nails but experts now feel that the place where it was actually discovered was far more interesting and significant.

The glass bottle itself was from Pennsylvania and found deliberately buried near a hearth. It is believed a Union soldier would have purposely

placed it there to keep himself safe. As the bottle was located near a hearth and contained rusty nails, the evidence hinted that it served a ritualistic purpose. Civil War experts believe that the occupying Union soldiers deep in enemy territory had much to fear going back down South during the Civil War and were thereby very keen to ward off evil spirits and bad energy.

The tradition of 'Witch Bottles' originated in East Anglia, England, during the 16th and 17th centuries. These forms of protection for buildings and families were most numerous during the 16th and 17th centuries when witch-hunting and fears of harm through witchcraft were reaching a frenzied peak.



hearth of his house, and the heat of the hearth would animate the pins or iron nails and force the witch to break the link or suffer the consequences." It is said that once the evil-doer or evil spirit was drawn into the bottle and dead, the bottle would break.

According to experts, the discovery highlights the sheer terror which Civil War soldiers were going through at the time and they would resort to every measure in order to stay safe.

It represents a time capsule representing the experience of Civil War troops, a window directly back into what the soldiers were going through occupying this fortification at this

If a person thought they had been cursed, they would fill a glass container with bent pins and nails. Anthropologist Christopher Fennell wrote in 2000: "The victim would bury the bottle under or near the

period in time.

Perhaps the nails in the bottle were put there not by enlisted Union soldiers using the bottle as an expedient container, but instead by

an Union officer who felt especially threatened occupying hostile territory. Given the perceived threat of imminent Confederate attack and the general hostility of local Southerners, he may have had good reason to pull out all the stops and rely on folk traditions from his home community back in Pennsylvania to help protect his temporary home. Civil War experts believe that the "Witch Bottle" is a classic example of how a singular artefact can speak volumes. Numerous hidden "Witch Bottles" dating to centuries ago have been found concealed in homes in London and around the United Kingdom.

The practice originated in England and then travelled to North America with British immigrants and it persisted on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean well into the 20th century. These "Witch Bottles" were either glass or ceramic bottles with bent pins and nails, sometimes added by bits of human hair, nail clippings or even urine.

Though approximately 200 such bottles have been found in the United Kingdom, fewer than 12 have turned up in the United States. The new discovery of a "Witch Bottle" in a 19th-century Civil War fort offers a fascinating glimpse of traditional superstitions persisting well beyond







## **EVENTS CALENDAR 2020 - 2021**

### **December 5 2020 ACWS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The 2020 ACWS Annual General Meeting is to be held virtually by Zoom starting at 1pm prompt, please see page 7 or further information

---

**Below are our potential events for 2021  
All are Covid dependant and not confirmed**

**Whittington Castle 27/28 March 2021** Castle Street, Whittington, Shropshire, SY11 4DF

**No Man's Land 17/18 April 2021** Bodrhyddan Hall, Dyserth Rd, Rhuddlan, Rhyl LL18 5SB

**Morley 25 April 2021** Morley, Leeds, LS27 0JJ

**Marbury Merry Days May 2021** Hollins Lane, Marbury, nr Whitchurch, Cheshire, SY13 4LN

**Skegness Showground July 2021** East Coast Showground, Burgh Road, Skegness

**Rempstone Steam and Country Show 10/11 July 2021** Leicestershire LE12 6ST

**Bedford River Festival 17/18 July 2021** The Embankment, Bedford MK40 1RW.

**Pitchford History Festival 7/8 August 2021** Pitchford Estate, Shropshire.

**Worcester Living History Show August 2021**  
Worcester