



The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER

2022 4th Edition

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



USS Sharpshooters at Whitby 2022

ACWS is a Member of
N·A·Re·S

Issue 206

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



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Reports



Hi Everyone,

The season has finished and it was great to see both new and old members rejoin

this year. It has been a difficult task trying to get events, Thanks Linda, but hopefully Catherine Conyard our new Events Director will get us a full calendar of events for 2023.

Thank you to all of the board of directors and members. It's good to see pure dedication towards our society. Sorry to see our Communications Director Stephen Griffin step down, best wishes and thanks for all of his hard work, his role is up for grabs for anyone interested.

Everyone have a fantastic Christmas and a Stupendous New Year.

Love to all xx

Mrs Helen Gibson

Chairperson



Hey y'all,

I hope this newsletter finds you all well. 2022 turned out not to be a bad season

after all! With a range of events with a return to Moira Furnace and of course the lovely village of Marbury. It was lovely to see more members venturing out again after the previous couple of years and it was really nice creating more memories. Congratulations to Jason Murray being the recipient of the Roger Zwarycz Trophy, truly well deserved for all your efforts.

Nares have their virtual AGM at the end of November to which I will be posting details on our members page nearer the time, this is open for you all to be part of being a member of ACWS. It would be lovely to see some of our members present too!

Thank you all so much for your commitment to the ACWS, roll on next season (it is looking good)! All the very best wishes for the festive season and here's to your health, wealth and happiness to you and yours for 2023!

Linda

(Company Secretary)



I hope you are all well and keeping safe.

We appear to have turned the corner following Covid, despite membership and attendance figures being lower than pre-covid.

I am pleased to announce that this year we made a profit of £2,333 the major expenses this year were PL Insurance £1,528 and the van needed quite a bit done to it this year including a new power steering pump and steering rack (£749) and a engine oil leak (£283) hopefully this will keep it going for a few more years. Our bank balance at the year end is a very healthy £13,150

I am uncertain whether we will need to pay any Corporation Tax this year, the accountants should let me know before the AGM.

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

So, stay safe and let's hope, for another successful season next year

Ian Morris

Treasurer



Greetings Friends, Health and Safety matters are rolling down after another season.

It's also a good time to look back on the season, with just the AGM to look forward to.

So, we had a few minor incidents and one major incident, a broken femur. There really isn't much to say about this, other than to thank all those who helped and stayed with the patient until the ambulance arrived. A freak accident, nobody's fault. I guess all we can do is take extra care when negotiating rope fences to minimise the already small chance of a recurrence. Gently does it.

Please keep all sharp objects stowed away safe unless you are using them. If anything is out for display, blades should be blunted, or signs displayed 'Do not Touch' and a careful watch kept.

We did have to negotiate a barrier put in place between our camps and the toilet facilities at Whitby. Thanks to those that brought this to my attention; the person running the railway was persuaded to remove some rails to clear the way on the first evening it appeared. and at later

points, our members negotiated round or over this obstacle without further incident.

Thanks to those who reported incidents. A good Health and Safety culture has reporting of lots of minor incidents and near-misses, so that hopefully we don't have major incidents to deal with.

There was one near-miss, regarding the collaboration with members of another society, who were unfamiliar with our safety distance rules. Since those people are not signed-off on our FSPC system, I will have to make it clear that there can be no repeat of this. Unless everyone signs a guest form, and is tutored by the senior NCOs on the key safety distance points, they cannot participate in any ACWS scenario, whether that be regimental or full-society.

In the background, the committee have been updating all the Rules and Regs documents to be found at <https://acws.co.uk/rules-index>, so keep an eye on those for the updates appearing in the close season.

Many thanks to all the Company commanders for policing the FSPC (Firearms Safe Practise Certificate) system, just a reminder: any new recruits or people returning after being away last season, ensure you

get FSPC forms and get them filled in with your unit leader, with copies to me (electronic or hard copies are acceptable) at the earliest opportunity, which at the moment looks like it will be Whittington, April 1st 2023. An easy date to remember!

Finally, just a reminder: licence renewals are taking an age at present with many forces, so get your renewal requests in early (2-3 months in advance seems to be good practise at the moment) if yours are coming up in the coming months/year.

Kindest Regards

Frank Mair
H&S Rep.



To my fellow
Southern re-
enactors,
That's season
2022 over and a
better one than the
previous two, due to something that
swept the world and kept us inside
or apart. It's been great to get back
around the campfire and get close
to our friends once more even
though Covid is still lingering about.

My grateful thanks to all that made
the long journeys in these difficult

times to attend and support the cause. I was fortunate for a change that most were on my doorstep this year. It has been great to see Sgt Stewart Douglas (Goober) & Cpl Mark Moody on the regimentals taking the lead and allowing me to become a private for the weekend. Hopefully our professionalism and enthusiasm have been noted by the organisers and they book us fully for next or the coming years. It has also been helped by certain Board members working hard behind the scenes, cutting out the middle person and dealing directly with those who finance and run these events.

Congratulations to Pvt Jason Murray of the 2nd SC in winning the coveted Confederate of the year award, well deserved for all your hard work interacting with the public.

Well done to all those who have been involved in the flag raising and lowering ceremonies which has now become an integral part of the weekend. Indeed, well done to everyone for making the camp the way it is, which leads me onto a huge round of applause to John 32nd Va and the rest of the musicians both Confederate & Union who have entertained us on the evenings with their songs around the campfire.

We mustn't forget Sgt Maj Mike Bussey 1st Tenn. for all his hard work in taking drill and now the new role and responsibility of the Society powder Officer. Thank you.

Lastly, many thanks to Major Tim and the Union, who without them we would not have a society or someone to fight and of course bring the cannons away.

As most of you are aware I have made comments over the last few years about stepping down as Major and this year I was going to give my notice and announce the actual day. However, I have been humbled and honoured by all your comments and support, including those when I have tried to be a private and found it hard to stand back and be quiet. Therefore, because of this, I have decided to carry on as Major as long as I have your support and confidence in this role. But to stop myself and the army from going stale we need to introduce new aspects at the weekends, so if anyone has ideas please come forward.

Finally, as the year draws to an end and our kit and equipment is cleaned and repaired before putting into winter storage, please try and stop the mice from eating everything. We don't know what the economic or global situation will be in next year

so let's get saving and prepare for hopefully a full calendar of events in 2023.

Take care of yourselves, Merry Christmas and see you all next year if not before.

Your obedient servant

Major Glenn Gibson

Commanding Officer, Confederate Forces ACWS



Greetings all well that's another season over and done with and a very good one it was, some cracking events

this year things have started to improve from being grounded during covid times, lets hope next year is bigger and better than this year.

The season started off with some smaller events which have been a great opportunity to put out recruitment stuff and given us time to showcase some of the things we can do and offer as a society.

Some have been a challenge to stand up straight never mind keep your tent up and not blowing away but we battled on and it turned into a great event.

This year the Artillery was able to be a part of a sound recording event

bringing in some needed funds for the society. The highlight of that event has to be scaring golfers with the first shot and you hear some expletives coming from the distance on the recording equipment.

The balloon festival was a cracking event with hot air balloons taking off a stone throw away from the camp hoping they would not end up in the camp, there was also a cracking light show to music using some of the balloons in the evening followed by a good firework display.

My favourite event this season has to be Whitby beautiful location weather held off lovely and as always great company.

Next season looks to be a busy one we have some good events for next season starting to come in already the Events team are sure going to be busy welcome to the team Catherine and thank you for taking on this important role. Thank you to those who stepped into do this role until a new organiser could be found. Congratulates to Abi and Sam to the New the Recruit to the 118 Pennsylvania that's one way to grow a Regiment look forward to watching them grow.

Also thanks to Abi for her you tube videos hopefully catch a new

audience that's not seen the society before.

Thank you to all of Acws for the support over the year in keeping the Union and Confederate Army going and portraying some important parts of our history as we know it.

Best wishes to those members who are currently unwell, injured, recovering over operations or generally needs a hug.

Get well soon.

Hopefully next year will bring both old and new members back so here's to a wonderful Christmas and New Year and see you all at the AGM if not then ill see you at the start of the new season keep your beer cold and your powder dry.

Cheers

Major Tim.



Huge Congratulations to Abi and Sam and a big welcome to Lilly and Archie

ACWS at Barnard Castle

The ACWS attended the Barnard Castle Steam and Traction Engine Rally multi period event in County Durham on the weekend of 17th and 18th September 2022. This was billed as a 43rd North Carolina Regimental Event and was well attended by both Union and Confederate re-enactors considering it was only a small event and was the last ACWS event of the season.

Contrary to all initial expectations, the event was not in Barnard Castle itself but on an old military MOD site outside Barnard Castle itself. Nevertheless, once found, it was an excellent site with the 43rd North Carolina having earlier requested to camp on the wooded tree line as well as use the woods for the small skirmishes which were provisionally planned. Very pleasingly, there was also an excellent public attendance throughout the weekend.

Over the weekend, the ACWS performed both firing displays, drill as well as had 2 small skirmishes in the woods. The skirmishes involved the Union setting up a temporary camp in the nearby woods not knowing that the rebels are patrolling the area around them. The numbers for both sides were even and plenty of cover was available to both sides

which meant that, even with the element of a sudden rebel surprise attack, the Union soldiers dug in deep and fought hard. On the first day, the rebels managed to pincer the Federals by attacking on opposing flanks and skirmishing in. On the second day, the rebels formed a skirmish line and with both firm leadership and military acumen, advanced in an orderly skirmish line but using ground cover to again flank the Federal position.

The Confederates won on both days. These skirmishes in the woods were thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who took part and there were some superb pictures of both Union and Confederate re-enactors fighting in the woods and crouching behind trees. In addition, a small number of Confederates set up a campaign impression in the woods with shelter halves which was described as awesome by other re-enactors from other groups who were present at this multi period event.

Massive credit and thanks to both Mark and Frank for taking control respectively of the Confederate and Union forces, those re-enactors who took both blue and gray uniforms to ensure there were enough people in equal numbers to take part in the

planned skirmishes and Glenn for taking responsibilities for powder duties in the absence of Mike. It was also nice to see some new Confederate re-enactors attend who really blended in well. There were also drill displays over the weekend on both a regimental level as well as army level in both the arena and other public areas. To the credit of everyone present, there was a minute silence for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth followed by a typically crisp ACWS volley as well as a memorable rendition of the National Anthem by Frank and Catherine. Well done and brilliant.

Overall, the feedback from the organisers, other re-enactors and the public was extremely positive and everyone enjoyed taking part. As usual, the 43rd North Carolina always plan enjoyable nights in the beer tent and this weekend was no exception. The Friday 70's Glam Rock night being a favourite with many ACWS re-enactors present. There was also a 4 piece rock band on the Saturday which went down well. In addition, the nights around the campfires and playing music is always a great pleasure and this weekend was no exception.

Although only a small 43rd North Carolina regimental event, this site does have considerable potential in terms of both the location, the size

of the site itself and particularly the use of the woods for both battling, skirmishing and putting on campaign impressions. I am fully aware that other re-enactment groups including WW2 certainly hope to go back and use the woods for these specific purposes next year if allowed and invited.

Overall another cracking ACWS weekend and the last event of the 2022 season. Thankyou so much for all those who attended and due to the success other event organisers have requested if the ACWS can attend their events. Obviously, these will now be passed on to the ACWS Board and the new Events Organiser, Catherine for consideration next year which certainly looks like it could be a very busy one.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas and Mark Moody, 43rd North Carolina



Confederate Military Railways

Throughout the 19th century, the steam engine powered the Industrial Revolution and the railways transformed societies, fortunes and even landscapes. As such, it did not take long for military thinkers to start working out how they also might work in helping out fighting wars. Initially, trains were used as an efficient means of transporting large amounts of men and material across battlefields.

The Prussian, Russian and Austrian armies were the first to do this in the 1840's and the British too were early adopters by building the first ever 13 kilometre military railway during the Crimean War between the port of Balaklava to Sevastopol in order to resupply the British troops. However, it was not until the American Civil War that the full military potential of railways and steam engines began to be realised. It was during the Civil War that rail lines and railway junctions first become strategic military objectives as well as the first time that trains became weaponized. Here is a run down of how the Confederacy utilised their railway system throughout the Civil War.

At the beginning of the Civil War, as troop movement began in earnest in May and June 1861, a crippling

problem was discovered in the South. The railway system was fragile and was designed for short hauls of cotton to the nearest river or ocean port. The majority of rail lines terminated in towns without connecting to continuing lines. Instead, cargo would have to be unloaded, driven across town and then reloaded. Initially, Confederate soldiers and other passengers would often have to stay overnight to catch a continuing train the next day.

When the Confederate Government attempted to rectify this problem, they then ran into local opposition. Towns preferred the lack of railway connections which, under the principle of the the negative railroad, required the hiring of teamsters and hotel rooms. Railroad operators, while not opposed to connecting lines, were opposed to the possibility of sharing rolling stock with rival companies.

However, even in these early stages, the Confederates were the first to use railways offensively and they played a key role in the Confederate victory at the First Battle of Manassas. In July 1861, Confederate commander Pierre G. T. Beauregard, responding to a Union offensive at Manassas

Junction, hoped to move General Joseph E. Johnston from watchful Union forces near Winchester. Johnston marched south to Piedmont Station (present-day Delaplane) on the Manassas Gap Railroad, where his Confederate troops entrained to ride east to the battlefield near Bull Run. This was the first ever time in history that railroads were used to transport troops direct to a battlefield.

At a crucial point on July 21 1861, the rebels smashed into Union General Irvin McDowell's Union right flank, prompting a federal rout. Prior to this, the Manassas Gap Railroad had been involved in another memorable moment when Confederate General Thomas J. Jackson dismantled trains and rail on the Baltimore and Ohio at Martinsburg. He then directed them overland, pulled by horse teams some thirty-eight miles up the Valley Turnpike to the Manassas Gap's depot at Strasburg.

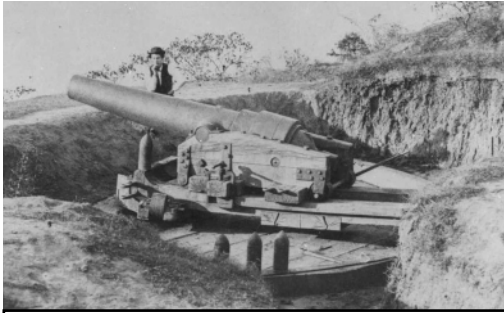
There, they were reassembled and moved for repair in Richmond. In addition to its importance in moving troops and armaments, the Manassas Gap Railroad was also important for moving meat-so much so, one historian has described it as "the Meat Line of the Confederacy." Confederates erected a large meat-packing operation along its tracks at

Thoroughfare Gap, with vast amounts of livestock coming from Valley farms. They were slaughtered, processed, and cured early in the conflict and then transported to various Confederate encampments.

Moreover, the slaughterhouse was only 13 miles west of the longer Orange and Alexandria line, carrying cars to far off locations. However, as the Civil war progressed and Union forces moved in close proximity to the Manassas Gap Railroad, the railroad and the packing plant were hastily abandoned and set to the torch causing much anger and blaming among high ranking Confederate officials.

As 1862 opened, the Confederacy purposely built a 5.5 miles (8.9 km) spur off the Orange and Alexandria Railroad at Manassas Junction toward Centreville, Virginia, known as the Centreville Military Railroad. This railroad served to supply the Confederate defences on the Centreville Plateau along the north side of the Bull Run feed into the Occoquan River. In addition, when the Virginia Central Rail Road was moving General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia west during the 1862 Cedar Mountain campaign, a railroad shuttle service was put in place between Richmond and Gordonsville. Trains of about 15

box cars were assembled at the 17th St Depot in Richmond, filled up, run out to Gordonsville, unloaded and sent back to Richmond. The crews kept this up for 10 days and nights continuously without relief. They only slept, in their clothes, briefly whilst delayed at various points. We know of at least 16 engines and train crews who did this.



Double Banded Brooke rifle at Vicksburg

In June 1862, the Confederates were the first to use armoured railways in an offensive role at the Battle of Savage's Station when they encased a 32 pounder Brooke naval rifle in an iron clad carriage being shunted into action ahead of a steam train known as the "Dry Land Merrimac". During the 7 Days Campaign in June 1862 when the Union Army of the Potomac were advancing on the Confederate capital of Richmond, Confederate General Robert E Lee looked for a response for a means of countering the enemy's preponderance in heavy siege artillery which they

would be transporting into position by rail.

On 5 June, he asked Confederate Colonel Josiah Gorgas, the Chief of Ordnance, if it would be possible to mount a heavy gun on a railway car. The challenge was taken up by the Confederate Navy, who already had experience of armouring the famous CSS Virginia (ex-Merrimac), which had taken on the Union blockaders and fought the first ironclad battle with USS Monitor at the Battle of Hampton Roads. On 26 June, Captain M Minor formally reported to General Robert E Lee The railroad-iron plated battery designed by Lieutenant John M. Brooke, C.S. Navy, has been completed. The gun, a rifled and banded 32-pounder of 57 cwt, has been mounted and equipped by Lieutenant R.D. Minor, C.S. Navy, and with 200 rounds of ammunition, including 15-inch solid bolt shot, is now ready to be transferred to the Army.

The railway gun itself was manned by Lt James Barry CSN, Sergeant Daniel Knowles and thirteen gunners of the Norfolk United Artillery Battery, many of whom had previously served on the CSS Virginia. The Battle of Savage's Station, fought on 29 June 1862, was a Union defeat and was personally watched by Confederate

Major General Magruder from the rail overbridge.

The railway gun was propelled towards the Union lines along the track of the Richmond and York Railroad by an unarmoured steam engine, with obstacles being removed or pushed aside by the gun itself. Firing explosive shells as it advanced, it forced the Union troops to abandon their lines across the track and take up flanking positions beside it, which the gunners could not counter as they had no means of training the gun from one side to another side.

Eventually, the gun had progressed so far in front of the Confederate lines that it risked being lost due to the Union flanking fire and Lieutenant Barry ordered it to pull back. According to Confederate records, the Confederates used the same idea in March 1863 when Union troops occupied Jacksonville, Florida. An 8" rifled cannon which had been imported from England was mounted on a flat car. It fired 1½ miles into Jacksonville before Federal gunboats on the St Johns River found the range and forced the Confederate armoured train to withdraw.

Nevertheless, as the Civil war waged on, attempts were made by railroad operators to acquire railroad

supplies abroad, necessitated by the Confederacy's small industrial base. The problem of supplies had become increasingly acute, especially with respect to the already small supply of engines and cars. Stressed by overuse, lacking material to make repairs and the conscription of men in the Confederate Army who could make them, rail operators were predicting a breaking point as early as 1862.

While railroad operators attempted, throughout the war, to get assistance from the Confederate Congress, the response was either indifferent or hostile. In April 1863, the presidents of the southern railroads again convened in Richmond and addressed Confederate Secretary of War Seddon on the condition of the rails and appealed to the Confederate Congress for remedial legislation. No record is available which shows that these recommendations were acted upon by the Confederate government.

In mid-1863, the Confederate government finally initiated an overall policy concerning railroads, and even then it was confined solely to aiding the military war effort rather than shoring up the weakening economy of the Confederacy. New legislation allowed commandeering (under the name of "impressment"),

which brought railroads and their rolling stock under the de facto control of the Confederate military. In March 1864, the Confederate Quartermaster-General's Department ordered all passenger trains to give governmental trains the right of way. By mid-1864, all passenger service in the Confederacy had come to a standstill.

Transport of goods for civilian use was also affected, exacerbating shortages brought on by wartime devastation, speculation, hoarding and the Confederacy's impressment policy.

The Civil War also brought about novel uses for locomotives. At Port Hudson, Louisiana the Confederates used a railway engine to power a grist mill to make cornmeal. The Confederates also used a massive siege gun during the siege Petersburg and also used hospital trains on a larger scale than previously because fighting was often fought to control strategically important railway centres.

In the last year before the end of the war, the Confederate railroad system was on the verge of collapse. The impressment policy of quartermasters ran the rails ragged. Feeder lines would be scrapped for replacement steel for trunk lines and

the continual use of rolling stock wore them down faster than they could be replaced and the system deteriorated from overuse, lack of maintenance and the systematic destruction by Union raiders. Overall, of the three major rail projects the Confederate congress proposed and funded, only one of them, a connection between Danville, Virginia, and Greensboro, North Carolina, was completed. Although the Confederate constitution forbade internal improvements to aid commerce nothing within it said anything about improvements to aid wartime defence.

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

Sources : Wikipedia and various Internet sources.



ACWS at the Whitby War Weekend



The ACWS travelled to the much anticipated multi period Whitby War Weekend on the August 26th, 27th, 28th and 29th the weather was nice and hot apart from the last day but this eventually cleared up. A few dedicated and keen ACWS members turned up early on the Thursday and left on the Tuesday to maximise the bank holiday weekend experience at this excellent location.

Much to our credit, the ACWS had fine attendance with Confederate army numbers numbering over 30

on the field well up on previous events. In addition, the appearance of the 4 Union artillery pieces primed and ready for action was a fine welcoming sight to behold and it was nice that the Confederates could take over 1 with a trained Confederate artillery team. The ACWS had a nice camping spot on the event site itself and all the A Frame tents in their long lines made for an impressive sight for both the public and all the other re-enactors. The area was also just a 15 minute

walk from the thriving town centre and harbour.

This Whitby War Weekend was the second multi period event organised by Outdoor Events and there were numerous groups in attendance. Apart from the ACWS, there was also the Northern World War 2 Association, Lonestar, Vanguard, Napoleonic, American War of Independence, World War 1 and the Spanish Civil War. Additional displays were the Archery, Axe Throwing, Sword Fighting and the very loud Ride in a Tank Experience.

The huge site itself was dominated by the large main arena so there was plenty of action and numerous displays ongoing in both arenas throughout the long weekend. Apart from the numerous traders and stalls, there was also a massive beer tent which had musical turns on throughout the whole weekend. The Whitby Abbey site itself is just outside the main site and was separately occupied by a large Viking force which really made this separate site a superb visit which was free to visit by all the other re-enactors in the main site. The highlight was a Viking Wedding with all the ceremony and rituals taking place with copious barrels of mead!

The ACWS was contracted to put on living history displays throughout the

weekend including a firing display on Saturday and 2 main battles on the Sunday and Monday. The firing display on the Saturday involved a Union artillery display and Confederate and Union infantry display in the main arena as well as both armies doing individual drill and living history displays throughout the day. All these firing displays went down really well with the public. On the Sunday, a large body of Confederate infantry, split into 3 platoons, and supported by a rolling thunder Confederate artillery piece attacked the Union infantry who were supported by 2 fast firing Union artillery pieces in the middle of the main arena.



Following some excellent skirmishing particularly in the 2 trenches in the middle, the Union infantry started taking casualties and were forced to pull back with their artillery to the trenches at the top of the arena. The Confederates pushed forward probing and flanking with their numerical advantage from



3 sides and eventually took the Union position with loads of blue bodies strewn over the trenches following some close up fighting.

On the Monday, the Confederates were split into 2 companies and supported in the middle by a single artillery piece. The Confederate Infantry advanced towards both the Union Infantry and Union artillery but without their artillery piece which had been taken out and thereby suffered the fearful consequences as they were torn apart by the grape and double cannister of the Union artillery pieces. As the Confederates tried to take the 2 trenches for cover, they left behind many grey clad bodies strewn over both the 2 trenches and battlefield as they were forced to withdraw. The sight of both the blue and the grey slain strewn all over their trenches on both days was a particularly touching

experience for the public. The public thoroughly enjoyed both battles and the feedback from the organisers was excellent and portrayed vividly the real horrors of war. The ACWS performed really well on all these 3 days and were thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who took part.

There are always highlights and people deserving of special mention during every ACWS event and there were numerous ones at this event. I will try and mention as many as possible and sincere regrets if I miss anyone or anything out. Huge thanks to Christian Sprakes, ACWS commentator, who commentated over the whole event. His knowledge of history and commentating style was so well appreciated by all the other re-enactors and the huge public present.



The World War 2 re-enactments particularly benefited from his presence and commentary. Other memorable highlights for the ACWS included Confederate 2nd South Carolina Private Jason Murray receiving the Confederate Soldier of the Year competition for his excellent living history impressions before he was later arrested and taken before General Lee for gambling!

The return of Denis portraying General Robert E Lee who performed several scenarios including a troop and camp inspection, a Confederate General's impression and taking the field to lead his troops in person. The superb Union artillery who fired and moved their artillery pieces constantly during both battles thereby taking some unscripted but heavy Confederate infantry casualties as they quickly moved and tried to unsuccessfully flank the Union position.

As usual, the ACWS social nights also involved some particularly memorable highlights in the beer tent particularly with the stunning Marina Mae on the Sunday night. It was great to see large amounts of Confederates and Federals dancing together and having fun. Also excellent were our musical highlights around both Union and Confederate campfires and the customary Major Gibson Cheese and Cracker night. The regular appearance of our friends from the Viking mead stall who came over and provided free samples of mead for those around the campfires also added to the occasion as usual! However, the one personal impression that came over was the superb living history displays on both camps that was so impressive over the whole weekend.

Every single ACWS member appeared to contribute and make an effort on both camps. The public who did engage were thoroughly impressed by our Civil War impressions. The flag displays on both camps were also awesome and it was nice to see the Union Regimental and Confederate States flags flying alongside our main flags. The camaraderie is certainly back. Personally, I really hope we can do more social events like this together.

Overall, this was another very special and memorable ACWS Bank Holiday event. The Event organisers were very pleased with our whole attitude and especially our mixing with the public and our performances in the main arena. As such, hopefully we can keep going back but with even bigger and better attendances. To those ACWS members who attended but who nevertheless also enjoy the other finer aspects of life other than the American Civil War, there were also these very nearby options below which were enjoyed by us all!

1) History - There is the iconic Whitby Abbey which was a 7th-century Christian monastery that later became a Benedictine abbey. The abbey church was situated overlooking the North Sea on the East Cliff above Whitby in North Yorkshire, England and became a centre of the medieval Northumbrian kingdom. The abbey and its possessions were confiscated by the crown under Henry VIII during the Dissolution of the Monasteries between 1536 and 1545. Since that time, the ruins of the abbey have continued to be used by sailors as a landmark at the headland. Since the 20th century, the substantial ruins of the church have been declared a Grade I Listed building and are in the care of English Heritage. This year there was splendid Viking Wedding

ceremony open to everyone to attend. (3-4 minutes walk from camp).

2) Food - Whitby Fish and Chips/Pie, Mash and Peas respectively from Robertsons, Trenchers and Abbey and the Humble Pie and Mash 16th Century shoppe. All award winning. (5, 10 and 15 minutes walk from camp)

3) Ales - Whitby Brewery. When the Micro brewery started back in 2013, they brought back local, craft brewing back to Whitby. Beers include award winning ales including Abbey Blonde, Jet Black, IPA and Smugglers Gold. (3 minutes from camp and still my personal daily favourite!)

4) Sport - Walk up the historic 199 steps from the harbour to the ACWS camp and abbey! Don't forget to count as you go and look out for the roman numerals on your way. These iconic 199 steps were made famous by being mentioned in Bram Stoker's Dracula. Dating back to around 1340 when they were wooden and believed to have been used to test the faith of followers of Christianity. It is a long walk up but it is worth it in the end for the fabulous views from the ACWS camp at the top. (Confederate 10 minutes - Union 30 minutes from camp).



Congratulations to Pvt Jason Murray of the 2nd SC in winning the coveted Confederate of the year award

The Battle of Painesville – April 5th 1865

The little known engagement at the small community of Painesville illustrates really well the chaotic and confused fighting of the Appomattox Campaign during the final few days of the Civil War. During the 6 day campaign, battles and skirmishes occurred every day. It was a complex campaign, with many moving parts, as columns from both Union and Confederate Armies used various roads, and at different points, encountered each other. In addition, at different times, each side had momentary numerical superiority over the other. The Battle of Painesville on April 5th 1865 is such a typical example.

On their retreat from Richmond, the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia used several parallel roads for its wagon trains to allow the army to move efficiently and not clog any one route. Having turned west from Jetersville, the Confederate army's columns were headed through Amelia County with Farmville as the next immediate objective and thereby linking up with the Army of Tennessee in North Carolina as the ultimate goal. The Confederate wagon train of General George Washington Custis Lee's division (son of the commanding Confederate General Robert E Lee), had left Richmond on the

Manchester Pike, moved through Powhatan Court House and Tobaccoville, crossed the Appomattox River, and finally camped at Painesville on the night of the April 4th. The next morning, the Confederate wagon train resumed its march west.

On the same day, April 5th, 1865, Union General Sheridan ordered General Crook to send cavalry patrols north of Jetersville to reconnoiter his left flank. At Crook's order, Union Brigadier General Henry Davis took his cavalry brigade consisting of the 1st Pennsylvania Cavalry, 1st New Jersey Cavalry, and 10th and 24th New York Cavalry through Amelia Springs, Virginia and then swung north to the Paineville, Virginia area of Amelia County. About 4 miles out of Jetersville, Davies spotted and immediately attacked the Confederate army wagon train belonging to General Custis Lee that was carrying vital supplies for the Army of Northern Virginia as it retreated from Richmond.

Striking fast, the Confederates had little time to prepare. Confederate General Ramsay's North Carolina battery was in the process of unlimbering and their infantry support (which included the only

black troops to be fielded by the Confederate Army) formed to receive the charge. Union General Davis subsequently wrote "I immediately moved down at the trot, sending the 1st Pennsylvania Cavalry . . . ahead at the gallop, and they succeeded in striking the train just as a piece of artillery had been placed in position to repel my advance."

The Confederate defenders repulsed this initial Union cavalry charge. But, the Union cavalry reformed and attacked again, this time capturing the guns, and scattering the guards of the train. Confederate courier R.M. Doswell recalled, "I saw a wagon train guarded by Confederate negro soldiers . . . When within about one hundred yards of and in the rear of the wagon train, I observed some Union cavalry a short distance away on elevated ground forming to charge and the negro soldiers forming to meet the attack, which was met successfully . . . The cavalry charged again, and the negro troops surrendered."

Subsequently, the 1st Pennsylvania Cavalry and 24th New York Cavalry rode along the length of the Confederate wagon train, capturing animals, men, and lighting the wagons on fire. Soon 20,000 desperately needed rations destined

for the starving Army of Northern Virginia were aflame. In all, the Union troopers took 11 Confederate battle flags, destroyed numerous wagons and captured 320 white and 310 black prisoners, 5 guns, and over 400 animals. According to historical sources, some of these men were armed black soldiers in Confederate uniforms, the only known instance in Virginia of combat involving organized black Confederate soldiers.

However, some historians doubt the claim that they were soldiers and describe them simply as teamsters. In his brief account of this action in his biography of General Sheridan, General Davies made no mention of black troops. Significantly, 1 of the items burned in the wagons was the war diary for the Army of Northern Virginia. 7 Union troopers earned the Medal of Honor in the action.

The muddy road was littered with burning wagons, dead men and horses, and the debris of battle. The victorious Federals rode back toward their army at Jetersville with Confederate prisoners in tow. However, their day was far from over. Upon receiving word of the attack at Painesville, Confederate General Robert E. Lee dispatched General Fitzhugh Lee's Cavalry to the area. General Fitz Lee wrote that, "I found the enemy had attacked and burned

a portion of the cavalry train, including my own headquarters wagons." Subsequently, the Confederate troopers passed by the destroyed wagon train near Painesville and continued east. They met up with General Gary's South Carolina Cavalry brigade, and soon found Davis's Union rearguard. General Fitz Lee had his own division and that of General Thomas Rosser charge into the Federals.

A running fight ensued as both forces moved east, through Amelia Springs, towards Jetersville, a total of 3 miles. Union General Davies found the road to Jetersville, and safety, blocked by Confederate troopers ahead of him. Directing the 1st Pennsylvania and 10th New York to attack, they succeeded in breaking through, allowing his column to make it back to the main Union army at Jetersville.

The 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry had been dispatched from Jetersville, aiding in the effort to get Davie's column back to safety. In the confused fighting during their withdrawal, the Federal troopers lost many of their Confederate prisoners.

They also suffered about 30 killed and 150 wounded. The Confederates broke off the pursuit as they neared Jetersville, where the

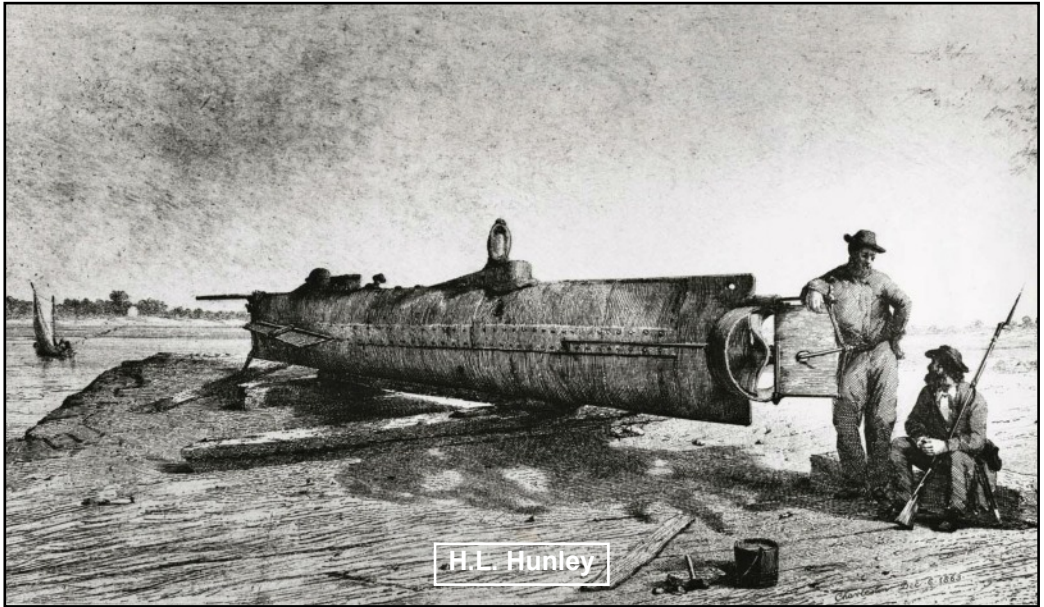
bulk of the Union army was concentrated.

Along the country roads of western Amelia County that week, desperate men, both white and black, found themselves cut off from their respective armies. These refugees of the armies went different ways, some trying to rejoin their units, others looking to get away, some for home and others for a new start later. The Civil War was already in its last death throes.

Article by Stewart (Goober) Douglas, 43rd North Carolina Volunteers, ACWS

Sources: Wikipedia, Emerging Civil War, various Internet sources and the Official records of the UNION and CONFEDERATE Armies, 128 Vols, Series IV, Vol 3, pp.1161-62 which stated that "By the time of the retreat which began April 3, 1865 from Richmond only an indeterminate few number of units had been organized from volunteers in the free black community around Richmond, and by mutual consent between the individual and their owners in the event of their enslavement."

Amazing Discovery of the Confederate Submarine, The American Diver (aka The Pioneer 2) claimed by Underwater Explorers, Chaos Divers.



It has just been claimed and reported in March 2022 that the Confederate submersible Pioneer 2 (aka The American Diver) has just been discovered by the underwater exploration team of Chaos Divers.

The group hope to have this stunning and ground breaking discovery later confirmed by the Alabama Historical Commission. If verified and proved, this would undoubtedly be one of the most significant American Civil War discoveries ever made, alongside that of the iconic CSS HL Hunley. This is the amazing story and history of the Confederate Pioneer 2.

During the American Civil War, 1862 saw the launch of the Confederate submarine, The Pioneer 1. She was developed by the Confederate engineers, McClintock and Baxter with their close partner, Horace Hunley. This vessel is very significant as she was the first Confederate submarine to be granted a letter of marque by the Confederate Government. The Pioneer 1 was 34 foot long with a 3 man team and powered by a hand cranked propeller. She was first successfully tested in the Mississippi river in February 1862. She was then moved to Lake Portchartrain for further trials where she successfully

sunk a barge with a towed torpedo. However, before she could be used in combat, she was quickly scuttled by the Confederates the following month as the Union forces rapidly advanced on New Orleans. She was later recovered by the Union forces, studied and then sold for scrap at a public auction after the War in 1868.

Interestingly, another Confederate submersible namely the Bayou St John submarine, now in the collection of the Louisiana State Museum, was for decades misidentified as Pioneer 1. Both the Bayou St John submarine and the Pioneer 1 may well have undergone trials at the same time and confusion between the 2 vessels may well date back to contemporary accounts at the time.

Nevertheless, as New Orleans fell to Union forces in April 1862, the Confederate engineering consortium moved to the much safer location of Mobile, Alabama where they constructed another submersible, The Pioneer 2 from an old 25 foot iron boiler. This boat was also known as the American Diver and had a crew of 5 men (4 men to turn the propeller crank and 1 to steer). The boat was a much bigger and better submarine than the Pioneer 1 being 36 foot long, 4 feet high and 3 feet across with a 30" propeller.

The team had by now recognised the limitations of manual power and experimented with both electrical and steam engines. However, the local engines still proved to be under strength to propel the boat and were temporarily discarded. They were replaced by a hand crank and the subsequent need for 4 crew members. The boat was supported by the Confederate Army and successfully tested in January 1863 although it was reported that she was deemed too slow to turn by the team. Nevertheless, an attack on the Union blockade at Mobile, Alabama was attempted. In February 1863, she was towed down to Fort Morgan and made an unsuccessful attempt at attacking a Union blockade vessel but due to the strong currents and foul weather had to cut away her spar torpedo.

On a second attempt shortly afterwards, she subsequently sank in similar conditions in a storm just outside the entrance to Mobile Bay. Although the Confederate crew escaped, she was not recovered due to the continuously moving shifting sands. It is this iconic vessel that is currently claimed to have just been found. It is recorded that as well as the Pioneer 2, several other Confederate submersibles were operationally active in Mobile Bay at the same time. The 3rd Confederate submersible built by the team at

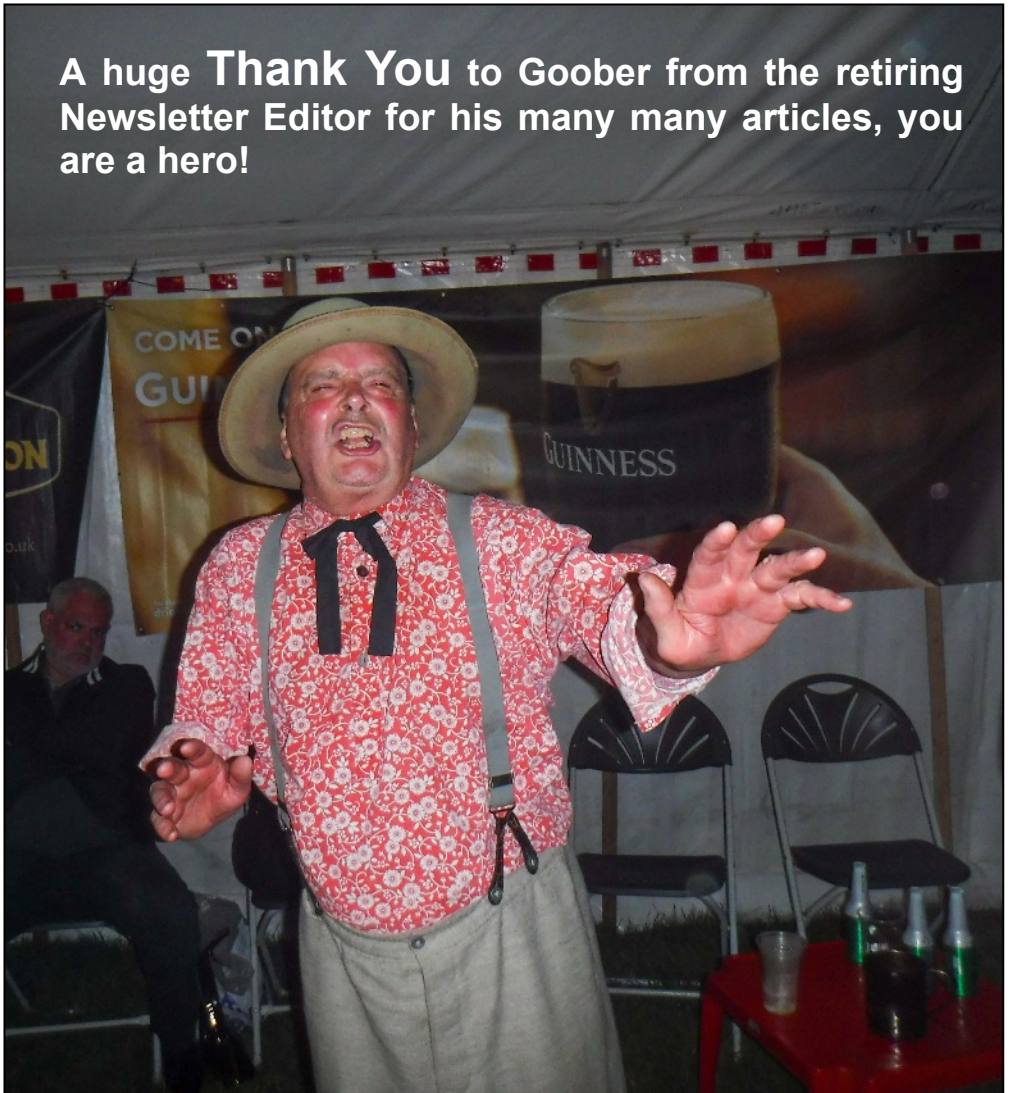
Mobile was the CSS HL Hunley which had a crew of 8 to cope better with the strong currents and conditions.

She went on to achieve ever lasting fame as the first submersible ever to sink an enemy warship. If the Pioneer 2 has just been discovered it would be such an historically

important find as she was the prototype for the construction of the successful CSS HL Hunley. I will keep everyone informed and up to date.

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

A huge Thank You to Goober from the retiring Newsletter Editor for his many many articles, you are a hero!





EVENTS CALENDAR 2023

Confirmed are in green and Possible are in blue

April 1-2 WHITTINGTON, SHROPSHIRE

CONFIRMED

Living History event at Whittington Castle, Whittington, Oswestry, SY11 4DF.
Infantry and Artillery only. Further details to follow.

April 23 MORLEY, WEST YORKSHIRE

POSSIBLE

Possible event at Morley Rugby Club, Scatcherd Lane, Morley, Leeds LS27 0JJ.

June 10-11 BOSTON BALLOON FIESTA

POSSIBLE

Full Society Event at Boston Balloon Fiesta, Boston, Lincs.
Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry, Cavalry and Living History.

June 16-17 WORCESTER BALLOON FIESTA

POSSIBLE

Full Society Event at Worcester Balloon Fiesta, Worcester Racecourse, Grand Stand
Road, Worcester WR1 3EJ.
Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry and Living History.

July 14-15 STAFFORDSHIRE BALLOON FIESTA

POSSIBLE

Full Society Event at Staffordshire Balloon Fiesta, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Wood Lane,
Uttoxeter, ST14 8BD.
Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry and Living History.

August 18-20 NORTHAMPTON BALLOON FIESTA

POSSIBLE

Full Society Event at Northampton Balloon Fiesta, Northampton Racecourse
Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry, Cavalry and Living History.

August 26-28 WHITBY, N YORKSHIRE

CONFIRMED

Full Society event at Whitby War Weekend, Hawsker Lane next to Whitby Abbey,
Whitby, YO22 4JR.

December 2 ACWS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2023 ACWS Annual General Meeting will be held in-person or virtual - TBC.