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THE ARTILLERY RESERVE NEWS



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VICTORY IN THE VALLEY REBELS ON THE RUN!



Winchester, Va.

A great victory was won in the Shenandoah Valley as our boys under the command of Maj. Gen. Phillip Sheridan repulsed Jubal Early's Army of the Valley, CSA, causing the rebels to retreat in disorder from the area known as Cedar Creek near Middletown and Belle Grove Plantation. The full scale attack at 5 a.m. by the Confederates caught the Federals completely by surprise as they were awakened by the roar of cannon and the infamous "rebel's yell".

There was some doubt as to whether the Army of the Shenandoah would overcome the rebels hidden in the early morning fog struck the Federal encampment at Belle Grove. Many Federal soldiers of the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps of Sheridan's army were taken prisoners along with considerable artillery, camp equipment and trains. Next, Early attacked the Sixth Corps under Gen. Wright, who was in command of the entire army due to Sheridan's absence.

The Sixth Corps was quite stubborn, managing to make numerous stands against Early's thrusts, withdrawing to a post just north of Middletown. About 10:30 in the morning Sheridan arrived from Winchester.

Rallying and inspiring his troops, the Federals counter-attacked at 4 in the afternoon hurling the Confederates backwards towards Fischers' Hill. More than 30,000 troops were engaged with great losses on both sides along with many senior officers.

It is estimated that the Confederates sustained losses of 3000 while the Federal losses amounted to 5500.

LOOTERS DENY REBEL VICTORY

What could have resulted in a rout of Sheridan's army and a victory for the Confederates was the action by many rebels who stopped to pillage the Federal camps. Reports have surfaced that detail how Confederate troops along with their officers spent hours looting and scavenging through the camps eating rations and carrying off the personal belongings of fleeing Federals. This Confederates lost its cohesion and momentum, and with the loss of time allowed the Federal army to regroup and successfully counter-attack.

COURAGE AND BRAVERY WAS NEVER AT A LOSS

There were many brave and heroic acts by our boys during the battle. Capt. Henry DuPont, Artillery Brigade, managed to slow the Confederate advance by firing canister blindly into the fog, extracting two of his three batteries by conducting a leapfrogging retreat. The 8th Vermont, 12th Connecticut and 160th New York regiments fought valiantly on the grounds of Belle Grove. Fighting hand to hand, bayonets dripping with blood, men clenched and rolled upon the ground in a frenzy of contest for the flags and then to be finally swept from the field. Incongruously, as the battle raged on, Custer's divisional band, just a mile west of the Valley Pike, played a medley of tunes.

A PROCLAMATION to the CITIZENS OF THE VALLEY

Be It Known that henceforth the Civil Law is suspended, to be replaced by Martial Law as prescribed in the Code of Military Justice of the Army of the United States.

That citizens who offer aid and comfort to those in Rebellion against the government of the United States shall be declared enemies of the United States.

To be arrested, trial by a military tribunal, and if found guilty, executed by hanging.

In retaliation for the attack at Cedar Creek by rebels under the command of Jubal Early and the murders of Lt. J.R. Meigs, Lt. Col. C.W.

Tolles and Dr. E. Ohlenschlager; those farms, mills, granaries, crops, livestock, and barns lying 5 miles on either side of the Valley Pike between Strasburg and Harrisonburg shall be put to the torch.

Evidence proving that citizens had full knowledge of an impending attack upon the Federal army on October 19th, 1864 and did give aid and sustenance to the enemy.

And whereas any citizen who is suspected of having knowledge of the whereabouts of the partisans known to be John Mosby, Harry Gilmore or Hanse McNeill shall be considered a member of the partisans, forfeit his property and be hanged as a traitor.

By Order of Provost Marshal

Major Monsee Snow



CUSTER IN PURSUIT

In the closing stages of the Battle of Cedar Creek, men on horseback played a dramatic part; but none more notable than Gen. George Armstrong Custer. When the Confederates gave way, the flamboyant young general stayed hot on their heels. At Hupp's Hill he made his first big haul, charging recklessly into the enemy sobering right and left. Custer continued to harass the rebels which finally ended at Tumbling Run Bridge, near Strasburg. There he captured many prisoners and numerous materiel. Returning to Belle Grove a jubilant Custer lifted Gen. Sheridan into the air exclaiming, "My God Phil, we cleaned them out of their guns and got ours back too."

AT RAMSEUR'S DEATH BED

Belle Grove, Va.

Confederate Maj. Gen. Stephen Ramseur wounded at Cedar Creek was captured early today and brought to Belle Grove. He was pronounced mortally wounded by surgeons and given medicines to ease his pain. During the evening he was attended by his West Point friends, namely George Custer, Wesley Merritt, and Henry DuPont. Ramseur died, wishing he could be with his wife on their 1st anniversary and see their newborn child. Arrangements will be made to return the body to his family.

NATIONAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING

Washington.

President Lincoln has issued a proclamation setting aside the last Thursday in November "as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to Almighty God the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the Universe".

CEDAR CREEK...HOW DID IT HAPPEN ?

Winchester, Va.

High above Cedar Creek looms the dark and forboding escarpment known as Massanutten Mtn. Few know of its pathways and secrets, and those that do assisted Confederate generals to climb to its top and survey the countryside. Sources report that Confederate General Gordon mapped out the positions of the Federal army from this vantage point and planned the attack. "We would have our own people on top of that mountain if it weren't for reb bushwackers", so stated Sgt. Paul Gauthier of the 1st NJ. Officers have confirmed that hidden riflemen prevented troops from advancing to Massanutten's summit.

BY THE ROADSIDE

Strasburg, Va.

On a dusty road sits a woman crying, Holding on to her is a girl child, bare footed wearing a tattered dress. A mounted trooper stands over her while men in blue carry belongings from the house, loading them into a wagon. All the while a barn is ablaze, the fields are engulfed in flames and livestock lie slaughtered in their pens. She sobs, "I'm a Christian woman and did what the bible tells me....I gave a man water and shared what little food we had. They say he was a rebel and that I gave aid and comfort to the enemy. We are farmers, why can't they leave us be? I haven't seen or heard from my husband and son for almost two years. I think they might be in Georgia with Johnston. We don't own darkies, we're farmers....Please let me be". The trooper with a scolding look, "Sesech, they're all alike, ain't none different from the other....Let her be? It's them like her kind that brought misery to themselves; they caused this war, it's them that caused our Nation to endure great sadness and misery. They were gonna have their own country, be free from the Yankees, be rich and have their slaves do for them. Her man and boy are fightin' for them slavers and that's the same as owning them. Let em' be? Hell no. When this war is over there'll be a reckoning. Let em' be? Hell no." She and the girl climb up on to the wagon and slowly head South soon to disappear in the gray smoke.



CAMP DEDICATION

Cedar Creek, Va.

It is the custom of the Artillery Reserve to dedicate its camp to one of its own who has passed on. The 145th Cedar Creek Artillery Camp will be dedicated to 1st Sgt. Frank Cucurullo of the 2 US Battery M.

Having overcome a battle with cancer, Frank died of a heart attack on May 3rd, 2008. His death was a tremendous shock and great loss to family and friends. Sgt. Frank Cucurullo was employed as a Park Ranger for the Dept. of Interior, a historian and president of Battery M. A loving and devoted father and husband, he is survived by his wife Karen and two children, Anna and David.



The Tale of Private Ryan and Miss Peaches

By Alice Taylor

As we attend the 145th anniversary of the battle of Cedar Creek I have an interesting tale to share. I came across this story at the 145th battle of New Market, while reading a soldier's diary.

It seems that back in 1863 an artillery unit was passing through the Shenandoah Valley. (I'll leave them nameless as I have reason to believe that present members of the unit are related to the groom of my story.) This artillery unit stayed a few days in the Valley, somewhere near Cedar Creek, to help Snow's Battery attack on the valley and try to take it for the Union and shut down the "Bread Basket" of the Confederacy. Among this artillery unit was a young lad, Ryan, who had recently joined his father in fighting with the Union.

It seems that the father of a rather "attractive" young lady was enjoying his daughter being present and visiting the camps. Her name was Peaches. While the two units were together, young Ryan took Peaches for a picnic. Peaches was so happy to have this young man from Pennsylvania be smitten with her. Things happened, if you know what I mean.

Well, suddenly, Peaches found herself in a family way, and her suitor was long gone. Now Rufus, a close friend of the family, loved Peaches. But, alas, Peaches would not give Rufus the time of day. His father, a Druid Priest, was saddened to see his son's heart broken. The battery was a tight group and was upset to know that Ryan had come along, taken advantage of the dear mascot of their company, and then left.

Well, the fighting was still happening and in May of 1864 Snow's Battery was called to arms at New Market, a few hours from their base in the Cedar Creek area. As they arrived and waited with other troops they heard that Ryan's battery was in the area as well. Peaches was still with them, even though she was far advanced in her pregnancy. She had no one at home to stay with her.

After confirming that yes, Ryan was there Snow's Battery came together and went to Ryan's camp. They were led by the druid priest and his son Rufus. Following the Priest with his forked cane they marched. First came "Peaches" and her father, a lovely bride, dressed in a peach colored blouse and black floral skirt, wearing a snood to cover her trestles, although for some reason, the top of her head was bald and her face needed a shave? This is according to the soldier's diary that I read, but it seems odd to me. Then in the mob, marched forward the rest of Snow's Battery, following to make sure that the honor of Miss Peaches would be tended to, by the marriage of Ryan and Peaches.

When they arrived at the neighboring camp young Ryan was called to the head of the company street by a commanding officer. He came forward sheepishly and nervously. I wonder, did he recognize the beautiful bride with this near mob? The priest addressed Ryan, asking him if the love of a good woman was what kept him alive through battle? He then asked Ryan if he had been present in Cedar Creek the previous fall? Peaches shouted out at her now blushing groom, "Oh yes that is my Private Ryan." She told the tale of the fateful picnic where Private Ryan, an educated boy, had read poetry to her, and she loved poetry. He wooed her and she allowed him to, to be discreet, have his way with her. He promised to write and come back when he could, but she had never heard from him again. Meanwhile, one of Ryan's pards reached over and took his pistol from him, fearing this situation would become violent. Ryan realized he was had. It was decided he would wed, there and then. He tried backing up into the group that had formed a circle to watch what was happening. His pards pushed him back forward, making him be an honorable man. Rufus asked him, "What you got boy. Rufus love Peaches and yet she went to you." People were actually laughing at this event. Even the groom was laughing and had to be chastised by the priest of what a serious situation this was. I'd think they would have been shocked. I guess we never know how people respond.

So the wedding is to begin. The priest asked Peaches if she would take this man to be her beloved and tend to her, and her unborn child, for the rest of her days. Of course, she said yes. The priest turned to Ryan and asked him the same. Not responding promptly, the priest pointed his forked cane at Ryan's family jewels and said "There ain't no answer but yes boy". Ryan tried to run and was stopped by the crowd. Peaches ran forward and scooped up her groom in her arms and carried him away. As they stood for pictures, I wish I had a copy of this beautiful couple, Peaches said, "Oh my, I think my water broke, or did I just pee myself?"

I wonder what happened to this couple. Did they live happily ever after?

I wonder if we might spot their ghosts at Cedar Creek if we wandered the artillery batteries camped here in 2009?

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FIRE IN THE VALLEY

Hdqtrs. Army of the Shenandoah

Reliable sources have reported that as a result of Gen. Sheridan's retaliatory measures against rebel sympathizers that there has been a razing of 2000 barns, 120 mills, 200 grainaries and a half a million bushels of grain, and the confiscation of 50,000 head of livestock. "The Burning", as locals refer to it, is a systematic destruction of property by the Federal army. They put a torch to every conceivable source of food and comfort to the enemy. According to one official, many families were left "without a pound of meat, bread, or anything to live on, to say nothing of firewood." The nights are aglow from the fires of burning barns and the days are void of sunlight from the pale of smoke. "If we can't win this Valley with cold steel and lead, then we'll win it with the fires of Hell." Gen. Sheridan

WHAT IS A FARB?

By Alice Taylor

In 1960 centennial reenactments of the Civil War began. The word farb appears to come from then. A possible definition of the word, it has no known origin, is "Far be it from Authentic. With early reenactors farb generally was directed at inauthentic reenactors for clothing too colorful. To avoid being a farb we must be careful not only in accurate clothing and items that would have been there and used in the 1860's, but in our attitudes as well. We are in the 1860's. We are at war. We have stepped back into time. We are the actors. The spectators are the fans. How good of a performance do you do?"



PLANNING FOR THE 150TH

The Sesquicentennial of the Civil War will be upon us in 2011 _only fourteen months away. Already many states, communities and organizations are in the pre-planning stages for the 150th anniversary year's cycles. We already know that the GAC began planning in January for the 150th Gettysburg Event. Among those actively involved is Chris Anders, Chesapeake Volunteer Guard, who is coordinating the 150th Cycle Initiative which includes a "five year plan" for reenactors who will choose from a menu of events supported by a coalition of reenactor military organizations. The coalition appears to be made up mostly of progressives with some mainstreamers who support the idea, "that reenactors have a vested interest in events, that 25% of net profits from events be donated to chaitable organization, that scenarios be authentic, and to preserve the legacy of the Civil War for posterity". A meeting of the 150th Cycle was held in August in which Rick Dennis and Jim Lynch of the Artillery Reserve Assoc. were invited. A document called the Common Sense Resolution which serves as a guideline was brought up for discussion and revision. Jim Lynch pointed out that the phrase, "by invitation only" as it applies to the artillery is a cause for resentment and anger by many in the AR _ there is the implication that lends itself to re-using the same units over and over while excluding others. A consensus agreed that the phrase should be eliminated and substituted with, "artillery participation will be based upon scenario." Rick Dennis offered a point of information explaining that the AR was the largest artillery organization and as its name implies, the AR will offer its assistance with events provided that the AR represent all the units present and that an AR officer be in command of the Federal artillery. The Blue Gray Alliance is yet another 150th Cycle planning group. Its membership includes the USV, Mifflin Guard, National Rgt., ANV, Longstreet's Corps, and PACS. Little is known about their mission or what they have discussed at meetings. The Artillery Reserve however has not been in contact with the Alliance. One wonders what the Blue Gray Alliance will use for artillery in the future.

REMEMBRANCE WEEKEND

Gettysburg. Pa.

Remembrance Weekend will be celebrated on Saturday and Sunday, November 21st and 22nd. The Parade will step off at 1 PM. The Artillery Reserve is requesting a maximum effort from its members in a show of strength and solidarity. Redlegs, both blue and gray, are invited to enjoy the hospitality of Olivea's Restaurant on the Baltimore Pike after the parade. The Artillery Reserve Annual Conference will be held on Sunday at 9 AM in the conference room located at the Gettysburg Outlet Mall. Further information will be posted on the AR's bulletin board.

RETURN TO REDDING FARM

Gettysburg. Pa.

Reports indicate that the 147th and subsequent Gettysburg anniversary events will return to the Redding Farm. There is the possibility that the 147th will be a four day event as Monday, July 5th is the holiday. Two tacticals, in which one will be viewed by the public are under discussion. Gen. Baldwin will command the Federals. The Artillery Reserve will command the Federal Artillery.

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HONEY, I SHRUNK THE BATTLEFIELD

As we approach the Sesquicentennial, it appears that land is becoming more and more unavailable for reenacting events. And what little is available comes at a high price. Event organizers and coordinators are limiting the number of registrants and artillery because of limited space. It is unlikely that we will see the tens of thousands that once filled the fields as in the past.

The 100 plus artillery pieces at anniversary events may well be a thing of the past. Early registration is now required and those who wait until the last minute will find themselves closed out of an event. The AR encourages its members to plan their calendars early and register early.

BRIGADE NEWS & VIEWS

Jeff Cohen, 6th NY Indep. and New Market Artillery Commander, has been selected as the USV's Election Committee Chairperson.

Paul Foust, of the Mifflin Guard's Medical Dept. has been promoted to the rank of Major by the Mifflin Guard. The Mifflin Guard has assigned Maj. Foust to the Artillery Reserve as Chief Medical Officer.

Something new in the artillery camp...

The Artillery Commissary, offering a menu of diverse and healthy meals to reenactors for a reasonable price. Alice Taylor, who manages the Commissary can prepare meals for 100 reenactors. Reservations are always required.

JERSEY'S COMEBACK

The past decade has seen a decline in CW reenactments in the Garden State. Thanks to the efforts of the 2nd NJ Brigade and 1st NJ Battery A, New Jersey is making a comeback to the hobby. The Dey Farm and Allentown events drew large numbers of spectators with a renewed interest in the Civil War. The Hamilton Reenactment will be resurrected next summer. A Sesquicentennial Commission has been established to develop events commemorating the 150th Anniversary. New Jersey is becoming reenactment and reenactor friendly...is it any wonder then, when they say, "New Jersey and You, Go Perfect Together".

The Gospel According to John

"Artillery cannot defend itself when hard pressed, and should always be supported by either infantry or cavalry. The proposition to arm the cannoneers with small arms is calculated to do more harm than good. They should be taught to look upon their pieces as their proper arm of defense, to be abandoned only at the very last moment. The fate of many a battle has turned with the delivery of a few rounds of canister at short range upon an advancing column; and if they have the means, how natural for men to resort to them for personal safety thus imperiling a whole army whilst they are defending themselves. Let the rifles, therefore be given to the infantry, the sabers and carbines to the cavalry to guard the artillery, and teach the cannoneers that their salvation is in sticking to their pieces"
- Capt. John Gibbon, writing in the "Artillerist's Manual"



AND THEN THERE WERE NONE

Orange Cty. Va.

Despite a battle by preservationists and prominent historians, Virginia's Orange County Board of Supervisors granted a permit to build a Walmart Superstore in Locust Grove, close to the Wilderness Battlefield. Walmart representatives claim the store won't detract from the battlefield and will create hundreds of jobs. Opponents had pointed to increased traffic congestion as likely to cause problems while supporters (mostly young adults) anxious for jobs, formed picket lines in support of the retailer. Isn't there an old adage that goes something like, "money talks while ___ walks"? In this age of self indulgence is it any wonder that our heritage as a people is jeopardized by the acts of selfish citizens and self serving government officials. If we fail to act now, the best we can hope for in the future are bronze roadside markers that point to once were Civil War battlefields. Of the 10,455 military actions during the Civil War, Virginia hosted 2154 military events. What's going on Virginia?

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