



The Texas Union Herald



Colonel E. E. Ellsworth Camp #18
Department of Texas
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Volume I, Issue 4, May 2016

Ratting Sabres

This is the 4th issue of the Texas **Union** Herald and I am still begging for input from Camp #18 members as well as from anyone else! The whole idea behind a newsletter is to convey information to the organization's members and such information has to come from the membership. Let everyone know about what you are doing and what you have done. Photographs are especially wanted, but even single paragraphs outlining things of interest to camp members are definitely welcome. Of course, longer items are needed as well.

Remember, if there are 5 individual articles, written by contributors, that occupy at least 1 single column in the newsletter, then the readers will be able to vote and the winner will receive a medal that tells of that selection by the readers. Although only 1 medal per author will be awarded, for those persons who are selected as having the best article, for the month, additional times, there will be a pin that is to be attached to the medal's ribbon indicating each time this selection is made.

I recently received my first issue of "The Banner" since rejoining the SUVCW. I also understand that a new editor was recently appointed for the publication. From the articles, announcements, and so forth, in "The Banner", I believe that the national publication is also suffering from a lack of real input from the general membership. Considering the number of national SUVCW members, a lot more information should be provided for inclusion in the publication.

Looking at the news from the various departments, I see a wide difference in the amount of news submitted. Some Departments submit a fair bit of news and other Departments, and I notice that the Department of Texas is one of those Departments that fall into this, submit very little! A single paragraph, or news of a single activity, cannot possibly tell even a smattering of the activities that the camps, in the Department, have undertaken during a 3-months period. If a single paragraph actually tells everything, then I say that someone needs to "light a fire" under the camps, in that Department, and get their members off their posteriors and then do something!

I really believe that every camp, in the Department, should forward their activities to the official who makes the report to National. Then, that official needs to select at least one event, from each camp, and include that in his report for publication in "The Banner". Next, the information needs to be edited, if necessary, by the staff of the national newsletter. However, every camp needs to be recognized. Yes, that will require more pages. But, including information from each camp really needs to be a priority.

One particular large organization, of which I am aware, publishes membership information in a smaller type font, and that is definitely an option to reduce the number of

additional pages that would have to be included in each issue of "The Banner".

Considering the physical layout and not the editorial content, the basic font size and spacing, where the smaller type is used, is the same as what I am using with this publication, 10-point font. That is a good compromise between ability to be easily read and being able to get a good amount of text on a page. However, at least in my opinion, more of the double column format needs to be used. Again, in my opinion, using a single column format is not really that professional. Also, right justification of the columns really needs to be done as well. Right justification presents some really weird word spacing when done with a single column format but it looks very good when done with a multiple column format.

I hope that this is not taken to be an attack on "The Banner" but as constructive criticism with the intent on improving the publication. I well know the headaches that are impressed on the volunteer editor and/or publisher of an organization's publication and the lack of acknowledgement forthcoming from the vast majority of the organization's membership. Basically, the job is often thankless and is yet a very important part of any organization.

Although my principle employment was in the telecommunications industry, I do have over 50-years in the publication field having been the editor and/or publisher of organizational newsletters including those of a national nature, a contributing editor for an international magazine, and wrote a 3-times-a-week newspaper column for the Belo Corporation's, the owner of the Dallas Morning News, Suburban Newspapers Chain, for a number of years. Also I have written numerous magazine articles and one book. I personally hold over 1000 copyrights! As such, I am fairly familiar with the publication world.

Another thing I would like to see in "The Banner" are articles on historical subjects, just like those that are being included in The Texas **Union** Herald. Again, in my opinion, such adds to the knowledge of the membership as well as adding to the general quality of the publication. Of course, those higher up the food chain, in the SUVCW, might disagree with me! However, I am definitely not afraid of expressing my opinions!

I keep thinking of possible options and going to a largely E-Mail distribution would greatly reduce the cost of the newsletter. For those who do not have such capability, then a limited number of "hard copies" could be printed. By going to an E-Mail PDF format, color photographs could be included within the body of the newsletter as well as the cover. For the printed version, only black and white need be included within the body and the cover can also be printed in black and white. Also, going to a less expensive paper, especially for the interior pages, would also help reduce expenses. In my opinion, the paper in the latest issue is nice, but too expensive!

Meeting Minutes of Meeting Heritage Farmstead Museum, Plano, TX.

April 19, 2016

One thing that could be done is to offer subscription options to "The Banner". This is being done by more, and more, publications. The basic membership fee would be for an E-Mail subscription and, for an additional fee, hard copy issues would be mailed to the member.

Another thing about going to a primary E-Mail distribution is that the number of pages can be increased substantially with very little, if any, increase in the expense of the publication.

In addition, having more pages available reduces the amount of editing that the Editor and publisher have to do. They don't have to make hard decisions on just what items are more important than other items. Basically, they have sufficient editorial space to include almost everything.

Most people, these days, do have an Internet connection and E-Mail capabilities. I have relatives that are in their late 80s, and even early to mid 90s, that use E-Mail, Facebook, and similar Internet functions on a daily basis.

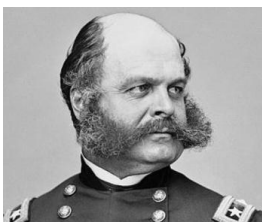
I am probably an exception to just how long someone has used a computer. In 1966, for a required class for graduation, I had to learn Algol 60 which was run on a Burrughs B5500 computer located on the Georgia Tech campus. Then, in early 1978 I got my first personal computer, a Radio Shack TRS-80 Model I. I have had at least one personal computer ever since. For many individuals, a personal computer is more of a 21st Century thing.

I really believe that the SUVCW needs to come into the 21st Century and utilize "modern" ways which allow expenses to be kept a low as possible. I have not seen a balance sheet for the organization. But, if things are like with most organizations, the newsletter presents a significant expense. In some groups, the newsletter represents as much as 90% of the organization's expenses. Reducing the cost of the newsletter will leave more funds for other activities.

Again, I am offering suggestions to improve the publication and am not criticizing those who are putting forth the effort to get "The Banner" into the hands of the SUVCW membership. In addition, I am not one of those "all bark, no bite" persons who offer "advice" but are not willing to contribute. I am quite willing to offer any assistance that I can give to help with the process. My wife might disagree with my volunteering to help because she thinks I already do too much! But, she doesn't really have any idea as to how much effort I really have to put forth because such activities are very enjoyable!

Brother Glen E. Zook, Editor
Past Commander
(old) Department of the Southwest

May Birthdays



Ambrose Burnside
23 May 1824

Commander Ridenour called Camp #18 to order at 7:05 PM. In attendance were Brothers Erder, Gates, Johnson, Peddie, J. Schneider, H. Sickler and Zook. Brother Sickler offered an opening prayer. Brother Peddie led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and The American Creed.

Introduction of Guests and New Members:

Dr. Stevenson Holmes, Department commander of Texas, was introduced to the camp by Commander Ridenour. Commander Holmes thanked the camp for welcoming him and wished the camp well in the future. Brother Gates introduced his wife Su Gates.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

Brother Gates reported that since there was no meeting in March there were no minutes to approve. Brother Gates read the Treasurer's report for April. There were no comments or corrections. Brother Gates moved that the Treasurer's report be accepted as read. The motion was seconded by Brother Johnson and it was carried unanimously.

Patriotic Minute/ Camp Monthly Program:

None

Guest Speaker:

Brother Gates presented a power point talk on the Battle of Lexington and Concord in honor of Patriot's Day.

Old Business:

Brother Gates filled everyone in on the outcome of the Medal of Honor Parade that was held on Saturday April 9, 2016 in Gainesville, Texas.

Commander Ridenour reminded everyone of the upcoming date to begin cleaning headstones at Greenwood Cemetery. He noted that the cleaning was schedule for 2 PM – 4:30 PM on Sunday May 22, 2016. Commander Ridenour urged everyone to attend.

Commander Ridenour indicated that the dedication of the Jehu E. Webb grave in Long Creek Cemetery in Sunnyvale would need to be rescheduled. He will work on setting a new date..

New Business:

Commander Ridenour asked about the status of the GAR grave markers. Brother Gates said the Department had acquired some of the aluminum GAR markers for that purpose.

Brother Gates presented Wade Graves as a candidate for membership in camp 18. He indicated that the veteran data was in order. Brother Gates moved that Wade Graves be accepted for membership in camp 18. The motion was seconded by Brother Zook and it was carried unanimously.

SVR/1st US Business:

No Report.

Closing Announcements:

The next month meeting will be on Tuesday, May 17, 2016.

There being no further business before the camp, Commander Ridenour declared the meeting closed at 8:06 PM.

Closing Benediction:

Brother Sickler conducted the Benediction.

Respectfully Submitted,
In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Don Gates, PDC
Secretary/Treasurer

The Texas **Union** Herald

The **Texas Union Herald** is published monthly by the **Colonel E.E. Ellsworth Camp #18, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War**. For official business, including editorial and article submission, the mailing address is as follows:

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Articles, news items, features, and the like are welcomed for publication in **The Texas Union Herald**. Deadline is normally the 1st of the month of the cover date of publication. Submissions may be handwritten, typewritten, or submitted in any of the popular computer formats (Microsoft Word, Open Office, Word Perfect, and ASCII). Please contact the editor for details.

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Texas Union Herald; and a copy of any publication incorporating such excerpts is immediately provided to both the original author and the editor of **The Texas Union Herald**.

Articles Needed!

If the members of the **Colonel E.E. Ellsworth Camp #18** do not want to be inundated with articles that were chosen by the editor (what he wants to see in the newsletter) then they need to start inputting items for inclusion in **The Texas Union Herald**. Tidbits about the Civil War, stories, articles, current news items, photographs, even commentaries are most welcome.

Don't worry if you are not an accomplished author. Get the idea onto paper (computer, etc.) and get it to the editor. He really can edit (rewrite, etc.) and you'll be surprised at just how well you can write!

If you have E-Mail capabilities, you can either include the information in the body of the message or put it in either Word format or ASCII ("txt") format. If, for some reason, you cannot do either, contact the editor to see if your particular word processor format can be handled.

If "hard" copy, make sure the copy is legible (can be read by someone else!). Typewritten, computer printed, even in Crayon on "Big Chief" tablet is acceptable. Just get the information in!

Even small (1 or 2 paragraphs) material, or photographs, can be used. That makes editing and publishing the newsletter easier since "fill" material is available for those little areas that seem to happen whenever an article is included in the publication.

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Blast from the Past



90th Anniversary Dedication of the Denison
GAR Monument 1996
Brother Glen E. Zook (Sgt Major) MC
Brother Larry Johnson and the
Heritage Brass Band

Colonel E. E. Ellsworth Camp #18

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Commander	Paul Ridenour paulridenour@tx.rr.com
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**Artillery Ammunition During
The Civil War**

Canister: Canister, a type of “case shot”, consisted of a light tin can filled with musket balls or slugs packed in dry sawdust. For a 12-pounder Napoleon, the can was a bit larger than a standard 46 ounce juice can, contained 76 balls, and weighed a bit more than 12 pounds. When fired, the can disintegrated, scattering the bullets like a great shotgun blast. Ineffective at more than 400 yards, canister could be devastating at close ranges. Canister was best used with smooth bore artillery, for the great number of balls could damage the lands and grooves of a rifled gun.

Canister was sometimes mistakenly referred to as “grape shot.”

Grape Shot: Grape was another form of case shot. It consisted of a number of large iron or lead balls - for a Napoleon there were nine - packed between two light metal plates or into a lightly reinforced canvas bag. When fired the package would disintegrate, and the balls would smash anything before them. Since the balls were larger than those used in canister, grape shot was effective at longer ranges, up to about a thousand yards. However, it was going out of fashion by the Civil War, since it was unsuited to rifled guns, and was anyway being replaced by shrapnel. It was rarely used on the battlefield after 1862.

Shell: Sometimes called “Explosive Shell”, this was a light, hollow cast iron sphere or “shell” filled with explosives. For a Napoleon, the standard shell weighed about 9.75 pounds, seven ounces of which was explosive charge. When set off by a fuse, fragments of the casing would be scattered and, if detonated against the ground pieces of wood and rock and other debris would be scattered in all directions. A variety of fuses were available. spherical shell could be set off by percussion fuses, which worked mechanically upon impact. Explosive shell for rifled cannon had a fulminate detonator in their tips which would go off on impact. Both of these had to hit something in order to go off. Since detonation of a shell above the heads of massed troops would give the maximum results, time fuses were also used. The typical time fuse was a color coded paper wad which plugged into the shell: black burned for four seconds, red for six, green eight, and yellow ten, though each fuse was two inches long. In addition, the gunner would cut the fuse to obtain a shorter burning period. If he cut it right, and if it burned at the prescribed rate, and if the gun was properly trained, the fuse would set the shell off above, and just in front of the target, so that the shell fragments would be thrown downwards, scattering right into the assembled troops. This did not always happen. Nevertheless, at anything but extreme ranges, shell was more effective than solid shot against troops, though its effectiveness was reduced at under 800 yards. In general, Union manufacturing standards were higher than those prevailing in the Confederacy, so that Union shells and fuses were more reliable.

Shot: Often called “solid Shot” or Round Shot”, was a cylindrical or cylindro-conoidal slug of iron or steel used to smash things, such as walls, earthworks, and troops. Upon hitting the ground, cylindrical (i.e. “round”) shot would often bounce several times, and could cut great swathes through large formations, a practice which could not be done with cylindro-conoidal shot. shot was the ammunition of preference when firing at long ranges or against “hard” targets.

Shrapnel: Invented by Henry Shrapnel, a British general, this was more correctly, but less clearly, called “case shot” or “spherical case shot”. shrapnel was essentially a combination of canister and explosive shell. A hollow, cast iron projectile was filled with lead bullets packed in Sulphur and provided with a bursting charge which could be set off by a percussion or time fuse, thus scattering the balls. Since it could be used at the same ranges as grape shot, and had the advantage of an explosive charge as well, it rapidly replaced the latter. Essentially a variant of explosive shell, shrapnel suffered from the same drawbacks as shell did.

Rifled Artillery Ammunition: There were two classes of rifled artillery ammunition which could be any of the types noted above. Parrott guns and 3 inch rifles used a round which was essentially a scaled up minie ball, with an expanding base to catch the lands and grooves of the rifling. Most other rifled guns had peculiarly shaped ammunition which had to be fitted to the grooves, making them relatively slow firers, unless they were breechloaders.

- a. U. S. Grant
- b. George Thomas
- c. Wm. S. Rosecrans
- d. Wm. T. Sherman
- e. Benjamin Butler

5 Lorenzo Thomas filled what post during the war?

- a. Chief of Engineers
- b. Adjutant General
- c. Quartermaster General
- d. Commissary General of Prisoners
- e. Judge Advocate General

Angel of Marye's Heights

On the night after the Battle of Fredericksburg (13 December 1862) thousands of Union troops lay dead and wounded on the cold ground before the Confederate lines on Marye's Heights. The piteous cries of the wounded could be heard throughout the night. Finally, as the new day dawned, Confederate Sgt. Richard R. Kirkland, a 19-year-old from South Carolina, could bear it no more. Kirkland asked permission to succor the wounded. His superiors demurred, but the young man pressed them and finally the brigade commander assented.

Carrying a number of canteens, Kirkland climbed over the low stone wall which ran along the crest of the heights and had formed the mainstay of the Confederate lines. No one fired on the young soldier as he went to a wounded Yankee and, kneeling, gave him a drink of water and a few words of comfort. For over an hour Kirkland went from man to man, giving them water and trying to make them more comfortable, as the amazed men of both armies looked on. He spread his overcoat to cover one man, and bundled up one that he found on the field to pillow the head of another man. In the end, as he walked back to his own lines, the watching Union troops cheered him for a gallant enemy.

Kirkland died at Chickamauga on 20 September 1863, but the memory of his brave and compassionate deed lives on.

Reprinted from The Standard, Clarksville, Texas, June 15, 1861

QUEEN VICTORIA'S PROCLAMATION

The steamship Etna has arrived: The following is the proclamation of Queen Victoria:

Whereas, we are happily at peace with all sovereign powers and States, and whereas, hostilities have unhappily commenced between the Government of the United States and certain States styling themselves the Confederate States of America; and whereas, we being at peace with the Government of the U. States, have declared our Royal determination to maintain a strict neutrality in the contest between the contending parties. We, therefore have thought fit, by and with the advice of our privy Council, to issue our Royal proclamation, and, we hereby warn all our loving subjects, and all persons whatever entitled to our protection that if any of them shall presume in contempt of this proclamation and of our high displeasure, to do any acts in derogation of their duty as subjects of neutral sovereignty, in said contest, or in violation or in contravention of the law of nations, and more especially by entering the military service of either contending party as commissioned or non-commissioned officers or soldiers, or by serving as officers, sailors, or marines on board of any ship or vessel of war, or transport or in the service of the contending parties, or by engaging to go or by going to any place beyond the seas with an intent to enlist or engage in any service, or by procuring or attempting to procure, within Her Majesty's dominions at home or abroad, or aiding others to do so, or fitting out any ship or vessel to be employed as a ship of war, or privateer, or transport, by either contending party, or by breaking or endeavoring to break any blockade lawfully or actually established by or on behalf of either of the said contending parties, or by carrying officers, soldiers, dispatches, arms, military stores, or materials, or any other articles considered or deemed to be contraband of war, according to law or modern usage of nations, for the use of either of said contending parties. All parties said State, by the law of nations in their behalf imposed; and we do hereby declare that all our subjects and persons entitled to our protection who may misconduct themselves in the promises, will do so at their peril, and their own wrong, and they will in no way obtain any protection from us against any liabilities, or penal consequence, but will on the contrary incur our displeasure by such conduct.

Given at Richmond Park, May 13th.

Civil War Quiz

1 "Pole, swing, and leaders" referred to:

- a. River navigation
- b. Positions on a six-mule team
- c. Radical Republicans
- d. Artillery harness
- e. States of the Union

2 Who proposed the "Anaconda Plan"?

- a. U. S. Grant
- b. George B. McClellan
- c. Abraham Lincoln
- d. Wm. H. Seward
- e. Winfield Scott

3 The "Bloody Pond" was at:

- a. Shiloh
- b. Gettysburg
- c. Chickamauga
- d. Vicksburg
- e. Antietam

4 Top command of Union troops at the battle of Chickamauga was held by:

IMPLIED PROMISE BY LORD PALMERSTON TO
RECOGNIZE THE REBEL CONFEDERACY

The Paris correspondent of the Independence Belge, writing under date of June the 10th says:

I told you that Mr. Rost, deputy from the Southern seceded States, appeared to have returned very well satisfied with his trip to London. I can now give you some details: Mr. Rost has obtained from Lord Palmerston, the formal promise of the recognition of the Southern Confederacy at a period more or less remote. Perhaps the English Minister had, as a by-view, the intention of waiting to see whether the seceded States will be able to resist the efforts which those of the North are going to attempt against them.

According to the information brought away by Mr. Rost, there was no understanding between England and France in regard to a simultaneous recognition of the Southern States. But it appears that the recognition will be made separately by these two powers. It is foreseen that this determination of the English Government would excite a lively irritation in the Northern States. I do not know whether it is supposed that the irritation will go as far as a declaration of war against England by those States. But I am pretty positive that the British Government is preparing for any emergency.

The English forces in Canada and Nova Scotia are being largely increased.

The British Reinforcements for Canada

In the house of lords, on the 11th June, Mr. Adderly asked the under Secretary of State for war, whether it was true that three more regiments of Infantry and a force of Artillery were under orders for North America, and that the Great Eastern steamship had been engaged for that transport.

Mr. T.G. Baring said that two regiments of Infantry, in addition to the one before under orders for Canada, and a battery of artillery, were to be dispatched to Canada, and he believed that two regiments and the battery of artillery would proceed by the steamship Great Eastern.

The reinforcement for Canada, to be shipped by the Great Eastern and Golden Fleece, exceeds three thousand and five hundred men, including a battery of the royal Artillery.

Answers to Quiz

1-B 2-E 3-A 4-C 5-B

May Meeting

The May 2016 meeting of the
Colonel E. E. Ellsworth Camp #18
SUVCW

Will be held on
Tuesday 17 May 2016
At the

Heritage Farmstead Museum, Plano, TX.

Photographs taken at the
Chattanooga National Cemetery
Chattanooga, Tennessee



South side Andrews' Raiders monument



North side Andrews' Raiders Monument



East side Andrews' Raiders Monument



Gravestone of Private William James Stump
Company I, 128th Indiana Volunteer Infantry
SUVCW Ancestor of Glen E. Zook
Note the misspelled last name! It has been that way for
152-years!

Military justice during the civil war: The courts martial of union colonels and Surgeons

by
John E. Schneider

During the Civil War most colonels were volunteers who acquired their positions through either political appointments, by using part of their personal fortune to purchase a commission or by raising a unit of volunteers who then elected their officers. Like many volunteer officers, the new regimental commanders had little military training or experience. Thrust into command, they were expected to train and lead a force of almost a thousand men into battle.

Like the regimental commanders described above, civil war surgeons were also mostly volunteers with little or no military experience. They found themselves treating wounds and diseases they had never before encountered coupled with having to cope with the discipline and regulation of military life. The two often came into conflict.

Like all soldiers at the time, the conduct of officers was governed by the Articles of War, the predecessor to Today's Uniform Code of Military Justice. The Articles of War were first enacted by the Continental Congress in 1775. At the time of the Civil War, the Articles had been amended several times with the last amendment enacted in 1806.

Designed to promote discipline, the Articles set forth both offenses punishable under the Articles and the conduct of courts martial. Offenses punishable under the Article include offenses such as theft and murder, as well as military specific offenses such as mutiny and desertion. Even the attendance at church services was mandated by the Articles of War. The Articles also contained what can best be described as catch-all offenses such as conduct unbecoming and officer and conduct prejudicial to the good order of the service. These latter offenses were used to punish behaviors not specifically covered by other punitive articles.

While administration of justice for enlisted personnel was generally handled by their company commander, discipline of officers usually involved a court martial. Court martial panels consisted of from five to thirteen officers of equal or higher rank than the accused. The senior officer acted as the president of the court. His role was similar to that of a judge, making rulings on procedure and evidence. A judge advocate would be appointed to try the case and to advise the president of the court on procedural matters. While a defense counsel was appointed for the accused officer, there was no requirement that counsel be an attorney. For this reason, many defendants hired their own lawyers or acted as their own defense counsel. Punishments for officers typically included dismissal (the equivalent of a dishonorable discharge), imprisonment, fines and even death. Appeals were limited to review by the Judge Advocate General and, on occasion, review by the President.

Many of the offenses committed by senior officers and surgeons during the Civil War involved excessive drinking. One such case was that of LTC Francis O'Keefe,

deputy commander of the 15th N.Y. Engineers. The charges against LTC O'Keefe included three occasions when LTC O'Keefe was too drunk to perform his duties. At least once, he was alleged to be so drunk that he fell off his horse during a formation. Despite a spirited defense, the court martial panel found LTC O'Keefe guilty of all charges and ordered dismissed from the service. An appeal to President Lincoln was unsuccessful.

Another example of where alcohol abuse led to punishment by court martial was Dr. Henry Murray, Assistant Regimental Surgeon for the 84th U.S. Colored Troops. Up to his court martial in 1866, Dr. Murray had a stellar career, rising through the ranks from private to Assistant Surgeon. Then in 1866, while his regiment was in garrison near New Orleans, Dr. Murray appears to have succumbed to the pleasures of the city during Mardi Gras. Arrested twice for drunkenness and for frequenting "houses of ill fame" Dr. Murray was charged with drunkenness and conduct unbecoming an officer. During his trial, Dr. Murray continued to drink heavily. He drank so much that the president of the court was forced to suspend the trial for two days because Dr. Murray was too drunk to participate. Forcibly confined by the provost marshal to prevent him from drinking, Dr. Murray sobered up and his trial finally resumed. He was found guilty on all counts and dismissed from the service.

Not all allegations of misconduct stemmed from misuse of alcohol. Some arose from an unwillingness or inability to work with the military system. One case reads like an episode from M*A*S*H. Dr. Charles Gray, a contract surgeon with the 11th N.Y. Fire Zouaves was charged with being absent without leave and with conduct prejudicial to the good order of the service. After being denied a pass to leave his unit, Dr. Gray went to Baltimore to secure lumber to build a floor in the unit's hospital. On his way he asked two fellow officers not to report him to the regimental commander. Dr. Gray was court-martialed and found guilty on both counts. Because his conduct was driven out of a genuine concern for his men and not personal gain, the court limited his punishment to suspension from duty and a fine.

Another example of an officer accused of wrong doing resulting from his concern for his men is the case of COL John Ballier, commander of the 98th Pennsylvania. COL Ballier was accused of misbehavior before the enemy for allegedly failing to order his men to attack. In fact, the regiment had engaged the enemy only to have many of their weapons fail to operate. In addition the unit had run out of water. During the trial it came out that COL Ballier did not refuse to obey the order to attack, but merely asked his commander for water and working weapons for his men. The brigade commander ignored the request and had COL Ballier "bucked and gagged" followed by referral to a court martial. COL Ballier was acquitted on all charges.

Many more officers and surgeons ran afoul of the Articles of War. For those interested in learning further about some of their misdeeds and the consequences of their actions, there are two volumes worth reading: TARNISHED EAGLES, THE COURT MARTIAL OF FIFTY UNION COLONELS, by THOMAS P. LOWERY AND TARNISHED SCALPES: THE COURT MARTIAL OF FIFTY UNION SURGEONS, by Thomas Lowery and Jack Welch. Both books are available through Amazon.com or Abe Books.

From the Richmond *Examiner*, 3/14/1863

Contributed by Don Gates

TERRIBLE LABORATORY EXPLOSION ON BROWN'S ISLAND – BETWEEN FORTY AND FIFTY PERSONS KILLED AND WOUNDED – HORRIBLE SCENES – The week ended to-day, fruitful in a great calamity by fire, was rendered mournfully memorable yesterday by a more frightful calamity by the same agent, involving scores of human lives and limbs. Between eleven and twelve o'clock yesterday morning – some fix the time at exactly twenty minutes past eleven o'clock – a dull, prolonged roar in the direction of Brown's Island, across the James river from the foot of Seventh street, startled that portion of the city and directed attention to the island, on which is located the Confederate Laboratory works, for the manufacture of percussion caps and gun cartridges. – But similar sounding explosions, arising from the trial of ordnance at the Tredegar Iron Works, had been daily heard in that neighborhood, and it was some minutes before a dense smoke arising from the island apprised the citizens of the true cause of the explosion, and that arose from the blowing up of a portion of the Laboratory, in all the departments of which were employed from three to four hundred females, of all ages, ranging from twelve to twenty years.

A tide of human beings, among them the frantic mothers and kindred of the employees in the laboratory, immediately set towards the bridge leading to the island, but the Government authorities, soonest apprised of the disaster, had already taken possession of the bridge, and planting a guard of soldiers, allowed passage to none except the workmen summoned to rescue the dead and wounded from the ruins. The ambulances for their conveyance to the hospitals, and the surgeons who hurried to the scene by dozens, as soon as the nature and extent of the calamity became known, had volunteered their services for the relief of the survivors. The reportorial corps of the Richmond press were among those denied passage to the island by one who seemed to be clothed with a "little brief authority," giving as his reason, that "they didn't want anything said about it," when hundreds of parents and relatives awaited in an agony worse than death the list of killed and mangled ones. From eye witnesses, who crossed from the island to the city after the explosion, we gather the following particulars:

The Laboratory buildings are of frame, one story in height and detached, and present a full view from the Seventh street bridge. The building that blew up was the department in which condemned cartridges were broken up, and where over sixty females were at work.

One rumor says a keg of powder ignited and communicated to the combustibles, but this is uncertain, as none in the room escaped death or injury in some degree. The apartment in which the explosion occurred, about fifty feet in length and twenty in width, was blown into a complete wreck, the roof lifted off, and the walls dashed out, the ruins falling upon the operatives, and the horrors of fire were threatened to be added to those of the explosion; but the flames were suppressed. While the male employees were laboring to rescue the helpless victims the most heart rending lamentations and cries issued from the ruins from the sufferers rendered delirious from suffering and terror. No sooner was one helpless, unrecognizable mass of humanity cared for and removed before the piteous appeals of another would invoke the energy of the rescuers. Some

ten or twelve were taken from the ruins dead, and from twenty to thirty still alive, but suffering the most horrible agonies, blind from burns, with the hair burned from their heads, and the clothing hanging in burning shreds about their parolled(?) persons. Others less injured ran wailing frantically, and rushing into the nearest arms for succor and relief. Mothers rushed wildly about, throwing themselves upon the corpses of the dead, and the persons of the wounded, trying to recognize in the disfigured features the linaments of a daughter, and calling out their names. The immediate treatment of the burned consisted in removing their clothing and covering the body thickly with flour and cotton, saturated with oil; chloroform was all administered – the sufferings of the wounded were alleviated by these means in the interval between their rescue and removal to their homes, or General Hospital No. 2, where many were taken. The returning ambulances carrying the sufferers were besieged by the friends and relations of the employees, and children clamored into the vehicles, crying bitterly in their search after sisters and brothers. The distress among friends was aggravated by the fact that it was utterly impossible to recognize many of the wounded on account of their disfigurement, except by peculiar bits of clothing, shoes, &c.

Up to two o'clock yesterday, the following were received at the General Hospital, No. 2 – George Chapall, (lad) Sarah Haney, Hannah Petticord, Ella Bennett, Mary Jenningham, Julia Brennon. Their burns are very serious, and several of them will die. The majority of the injured were carried to their homes, and until the roll of the employees at eh Laboratory is carefully overhauled, it will be impossible to give a correct list of the victims, as in some instances two or three sisters were employed there. We heard last night the following additional names of those injured: Peter Perkins, Alonzo Owens, and Mr. McCarthy, a superintendent, slightly.

From an officer connected with the Laboratory we learn that the department destroyed was in charge of Mr. McCarthy, Superintendent. The condemned cartridges were here broken by the girls, and distributed, the bullets into one recepticle and the powder into another. It is surmised that a percussion cap containing fulminating ingredients got mixed in with the powder and created an explosion. Fortunately there was but a small quantity of powder in the department, or the greater force of the explosion would have extended the ignition to the next department. As it was the partition wall was not thrown down, though the doors leading into it were broken open, which facilitated the escape of a number of the girls, who received no serious injury.

The bodies of the dead were not removed from the island, and a Coroner's inquest will be empanelled to-day to investigate the circumstances attendant upon the catastrophe. None of their names had transpired up to last evening, or were given too incorrectly to warrant their publication.

A full list of the casualties will be given on Monday, prepared from the roll books of the Laboratory.

We regret to learn that Rev. John Woodcock, of Richmond, one of the officials of the Laboratory, is among those seriously, if not dangerously, injured by the explosion. Mr. Charters, one of the Superintendents, was slightly injured.

The effect of the explosion did not extend beyond the building in which it occurred, and no interruption of the operations of the Laboratory will result from it. The loss to the Confederate States too, is very inconsiderable.