



# The Texas Union Herald



Colonel E. E. Ellsworth Camp #18  
Department of Texas  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Volume ii Number 8, August 2017

## Rattling Sabres by Glen E. Zook

I again have to apologize for the newsletter being late. My much younger brother, David, died a couple of weeks ago up in LaPorte, Indiana. He was exactly 1 month short of being 22-years younger than me. My birthday is 13 February and his was 13 January. My mother was pregnant at my wedding and my wife, and I, were not aware of the situation. David was not married. That left all the arrangements to be handled by my sister, who still lives in LaPorte, and me. As such, there was a lot of telephone traffic, etc.

The result is that I did not have the time to get the newsletter put to bed in a reasonable length of time.

Previously, I have mentioned that I enrolled my youngest granddaughter, Maya, in the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War. There is a DUV "Tent" in the city, in which my youngest daughter and her family live, Marietta, Georgia. I was pretty sure that my daughter, Wendy, would go ahead and join the DUV and I was correct. She has also joined.

The name of the Marietta "Tent" is the Emma Stephenson Tent. Emma was a former slave woman from Tennessee who served as a nurse for wounded Union soldiers from the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain. She died two-weeks after the battle and is now buried in the Marietta National Cemetery. Wendy wonders if our ancestor, Private William James Stump, Company I, 128<sup>th</sup> Indiana Volunteer Infantry, who was wounded at the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, was treated by Emma. Of course, William was transferred to General Hospital Chattanooga where he contracted Typhoid fever and died.

It is said that Murphy never takes a vacation and that was definitely obvious at the July Camp #18 meeting. My presentation, on the United States Army Camel Corps, never got off the ground! The laptop computer, owned by Brother Donald Gates, decided to go "belly up". Therefore, my Microsoft Office Power Point presentation was not able to be viewed. As such, the presentation has been rescheduled for the December meeting.

At the July meeting, it was decided to have the October, 2017, meeting as a dinner meeting to which the wives, girl friends, etc., will be invited. The tentative location was agreed upon as the Outback Steakhouse on 15<sup>th</sup> Street, in Plano, just west of Central Expressway and the date of 14 October. I hope that this location is where the meeting will be held. At least not at a Mexican restaurant because my wife, of 52-years, absolutely will not eat at a Mexican restaurant! I do like Mexican food but she does not!

## August Meeting

The August 2017 meeting of the  
Colonel E. E. Ellsworth Camp #18  
SUVCW

Will be held on  
Tuesday 15 August 2017

At the  
Heritage Farmstead Museum, Plano, TX.

## More 2017 Department Encampment Photographs





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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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## 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 ACSII ("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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# The Sinking of the Sultana

## An Eyewitness Account

The following unedited story was published in the **Indiana History Bulletin** (Volume 32 - Number 7, Pages 123-125) for July of 1955:

### Sgt. Talkington Survived the Explosion and Sinking of the **Sultana**

Robert Talkington was born in 1824 in Butler County, Ohio and died in 1902 at the National Soldiers Home in Marian, Indiana, at the age of 78 years. He was the son of Jesse Talkington, Sr. and Sarah Elkins, Decatur County, Indiana pioneers, and the grandson of John Talkington, Sr. of early Pennsylvania.

He moved to Indianapolis when quite young and lived with a married sister while he learned the bricklayer's trade. Robert worked hard, acquired some real estate, and on July 2, 1850, married Rebecca McGinnis, a cousin of General George McGinniss, who was later Postmaster of Indianapolis.

When the Civil War began, Robert bade farewell to his wife and three little girls and joined the 9th Indiana Cavalry.

After the war, he told many exciting stories about his military experiences. A nephew, the late Edgar Talkington of Alert, Indiana recorded Robert's vivid eyewitness account of the **Sultana** tragedy.

### He Was a Prisoner of War

"I was captured with my entire squad and taken to the Libby prison. After a short stay there I was removed to another point further south, Cahaba, Alabama."

"I was held in the barracks for a time and later put on construction work. Being an expert in my line of work I was a little better treated than a lot of others, and was paid fifteen to twenty dollars per day in Confederate currency. This was worth very little compared to greenbacks, probably ten to one."

"After several months of this kind of work I was paroled with hundreds of other prisoners in exchange for southern prisoners who were in northern camps."

"On April 24, 1865, about 2,000 of us were received on the **Sultana** at Vicksburg. We steamed upstream to Memphis, Tennessee, where we took on more passengers and coal."

### He Slept on the Coffin of a Dead Union Officer

"We left Memphis about midnight. There were so many on the boat that quarters for sleep or rest were very scarce. Each person had to bunk as he could. There was a dead northern officer on the forward part of one deck, almost over the boiler room. I laid down on his coffin using my knapsack for a pillow. I told someone that I was going to hold that officer down for the rest of the night."

"We had proceeded about ten miles north of Memphis and it was about two o'clock in the morning of April 27. I was awakened by a loud crushing noise. I was in the midst of a dense cloud of hot steam and realized I had been scalded but how bad I did not know."

## Ship Catches Fire

"The steam was so hot I could scarcely breathe. I groped my way out of this place as quick as I could. It took me a moment to realize what had happened. A boiler had blown up. Within a few minutes the ship caught fire."

"When the crowd fully realized what had happened men began to jump into the water by the hundreds."

"Articles of all kinds were thrown overboard for men to cling to. It seemed the water was swarming with men crying for help and drowning."

"I saw two men pick up a large board probably two by twelve inches and perhaps twelve feet long, carry it to the edge of the boat and drop it overboard among the crowd of men in the water."

"They immediately jumped in after it. The board and two men both disappeared under a mass of humanity struggling to get hold of it."

### Did Not Think He Would Live

"I, and others, threw several cords of four foot engine wood overboard for the men in the water to hold to. Many were praying, some were crying, and a few were cursing."

"Some did not seem to be the least bit excited. Personally, I tried to imitate the latter although I thought my time had come and did not think I would get out alive."

"Since I never could swim I did not intend to leave the board as long as I could stay on. The current kept sweeping men away from the boat and more kept going overboard."

"The fire was spreading rapidly from the forward end of the boat and only a few of us were left on board."

"The back part of the boat was getting pretty hot so I began to consider taking to the water. I procured a piece of timber about two by four by four or five feet long. I removed all my clothing except my underclothes and socks, and with this as my only support dropped into the water."

"Not many people were near me and I paddled around awhile on my piece of scantling and got a little way out from the boat. It was now burning fiercely."

### The Night was Very Dark

"I was lucky enough to capture two fence rails that came floating along. The river was very high from spring rains and there was much debris in the river. It had been raining, was still cloudy, and I never saw a darker night."

"In this manner I floated past Memphis. I could see the lights as I went by but was so far out I knew there was no use to call for help."

"About twelve miles below Memphis I floated nearer the shore. There was an army post at a small town there. I began to cry for help."

"Some one heard me and answered back. We called to each other several times, then I heard someone throw an oar in a rowboat."

### Home at Last

"I thought at the time that was the best sound I had ever heard. I guided them by shouting and in a few minutes my rescuers caught up with me. They hauled me into the boat and landed me safely in the little town I had just

passed among Union soldiers and friends. After about two weeks I was released and sent home."

This Editor's note followed the story: Number 3, Volume V of the Indiana Historical Society Publications, by Joseph T. Elliott, provides an account of the **Sultana** disaster. W. Hoffman, Brevet Brigadier-General, U.S. Army, who conducted an inquiry under the direction of the secretary of war, states in his report: "I am on the opinion that the shipment of so large a number of troops (1,866) on one boat was, under the circumstances, unnecessary, unjustifiable, and a great outrage on the troops." There is no indication, however, that any disciplinary action was taken against the officers responsible--Ed.

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## **The Emancipation Proclamation**

### **By the President of the United States of America:**

#### **A Proclamation**

Whereas on the 22nd day of September, A.D. 1862, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the 1st day of January, A.D. 1863, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the executive will on the 1st day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State or the people thereof shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such States shall have participated shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this 1st day of January, A.D. 1863, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days from the first day above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of

States wherein the people thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the parishes of St. Bernard, Palquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terrebone, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Morthampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Anne, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all case when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

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## **Making It Warm**

**By  
Harry Dolbier**

In November, 1861, no less an authority than Brigadier General Robert E. Lee assured the commander of Georgia's Fort Pulaski, "They will make it pretty warm for you here with shells, but they cannot breach your walls at that distance." The opinion was not exclusively a Confederate one. In the words of General Joseph G. Totten, the Union army's chief engineer, "You might as well bombard the Rocky Mountains as Fort Pulaski....The fort could not be reduced in a month's firing with any number of guns of manageable caliber."

In less than two days Brigadier General Quincy A. Gillmore proved these officers wrong and showed that the development of modern gunnery had forever negated the defensive capability of masonry forts. Fort Pulaski on Cockspur Island in the Savannah River guarded the approach to the port of Savannah from the Atlantic Ocean.

The island and most of the surrounding terrain consisted of bogs, salt marshes, quicksand pits, and innumerable creeks and inlets. The nearest solid ground was over a mile to the east at Tybee Island where a lighthouse on the Atlantic coast guided ships to the river's mouth.

Georgia authorities seized Fort Pulaski, unmanned save for a caretaker, from the Federal government on January 6, 1861, two weeks before the state seceded from the Union. As soon as Georgia became part of the Confederacy, the rebel government garrisoned and armed Fort Pulaski to assure that the port of Savannah, 18 miles up the river, would remain a safe haven for the blockade runners that were so important to the Southern war effort. By early 1862, four hundred troops manned the fort and forty-eight big guns bristled from its walls.

One of a string of masonry forts that Congress authorized for the Atlantic and Gulf coasts after the War of 1812, Fort Pulaski exemplified fortification techniques used since the Middle Ages. Brick walls twenty-five feet high and seven and a half feet thick rose above a seven-foot-deep moat. The only entrance to the five-sided structure was in the western face, which was protected by a demi-lune, two earthen walls that formed a triangular barrier. The bastion was designed to hold 146 cannon on two levels, with guns firing through embrasures in the walls and mounted en barbette to fire over the top of the wall.

On November 7 1861, Union forces captured Port Royal and Hilton Head, South Carolina, ten miles north of Cockspur Island, and established a huge naval base, leading to the closure of all the rebel ports south of Charleston - with the exception of Savannah. Brigadier General Thomas W. Sherman, commanding the Department of the South at Hilton Head, assigned his chief engineer, Captain Quincy A. Gillmore, to devise a plan for Fort Pulaski's capture or destruction. The 36-year-old Gillmore, top-ranking graduate in his 1849 West Point class, worked out a scheme to reduce the fort by an artillery bombardment. On December 4, Sherman approved Captain Gillmore's plans, and named him an acting brigadier general. Gillmore quickly established his headquarters in the Tybee Island lighthouse.

But it was not just a matter of rolling up the cannons and blasting away.

After the artillery pieces were assembled at Hilton Head, Gillmore ferried them, along with the mounts, accouterments, ammunition, and construction supplies to the northern point of Tybee Island. Without docks or other landing facilities, troops manhandled everything through the surf and up on to the beach.

Gillmore planned to distribute the heavy ordnance in eleven batteries stretching along the northern shoreline for nearly a mile. To move the thirty-six guns and mortars into position, he first had to construct a two and a half mile road across Tybee Island's sand and mud. Once the road was in place, Gillmore's soldiers began to drag the artillery along it, mostly by man power. Moving one 13-inch mortar, weighing 17,000 pounds, along the road on a crude cart called for the effort of 250 men.

Naturally, the battery sites had to be built within range of Pulaski's guns, so Gillmore ordered the men to alter the natural vegetation, a little bit each night so the changes would be imperceptible to the watchers in the fort. Behind this mask, and at night, the work went on, so far as possible in silence. The stratagem proved effective, for during the entire construction period, the rebels fired only

two shots towards Tybee – at men who foolishly exposed themselves.

As the work neared completion, Major General David Hunter relieved General Sherman as commander of the Department of the South. Hunter immediately instructed Gillmore to carry on with his operation against Fort Pulaski.

By the end of March, 1862, the preparatory work was done and the Tybee Island batteries, named for President Lincoln, Secretary of War Stanton, and nine senior generals, were ready for action. The eleven batteries mounted 36 pieces:

- 12 13-inch mortars
- 4 10-inch mortars
- 6 10-inch Columbiads (smoothbore)
- 4 8-inch Columbiads (smoothbore)
- 2 84-pounder James rifles
- 2 64-pounder James rifles
- 1 48-pounder James rifle
- 5 30-pounder Parrot rifles.

As dawn broke on April 10, 1862, a boat carrying Union Lieutenant James H. Wilson under a flag of truce landed on Cockspur Island. Wilson made his way to the fort and was admitted for an interview with its commanding officer, 25-year-old Colonel Charles H. Olmstead. Wilson presented Olmstead with General Hunter's demand to surrender the fort in the face of overwhelming force. Olmstead politely gave the only answer he could give, that he was there to defend the fort, not to surrender it.

Wilson left the island and the first shot hurtled towards Fort Pulaski at 8:15 from a 13-inch mortar. Then the other batteries opened up and soon the Yankees were pounding the bastion at the rate of four shots an hour from each of the twelve mortars and ten to twelve shots from the twenty smoothbore and rifled guns. Four of the ten-inch Columbiads dismounted themselves when they opened fire.

Return fire erupted from the fort almost immediately, the rebel gunners finding their targets as the Union batteries revealed themselves by the smoke rising from the foliage of Tybee Island.

Throughout the morning, General Gillmore kept a close watch on the fort through his binoculars to see what effect the bombardment was achieving. By early afternoon he noted with satisfaction that his shells were beginning to visibly eat away at the masonry where the south and south-east walls met, the point at which he was concentrating all his fire not directed at the enemy guns.

The attack continued at a steady rate for nine and a half hours, until curtailed by darkness. When the firing ceased for the night, the Union officers could clearly see that if the bombardment continued at the same rate the walls would certainly be breached. They observed that nearly all the damage was caused by the big guns, principally the ten rifles, and were disappointed to see that the mortars' effects were negligible, since no more than one in ten mortar shells reached the fort's interior.

It appeared to Gillmore and his senior staff after the day's efforts that, because they were doing so little damage inside the walls, the fort would have to be taken by an infantry assault once the walls were breached. Gillmore considered such an assault impracticable because he had few boats and would have to wait for the navy to provide sufficient water transport.

By day's end, the shelling had disabled five of the rebel's twenty guns that bore on Tybee Island were disabled. To prevent the defenders from repairing or replacing them, Gillmore ordered a slow, steady fire from two or three of his guns to continue throughout the night.

The artillery attack resumed at full force early the next morning. As noontime approached, the breach had been widened and shells were now passing through it to explode on the opposite side of the parade ground near the magazine with its 40,000 pounds of black powder.

Not only was there now a hole in the wall too big for the garrison to defend, but rubble filled the moat in front of it, sloping upwards to provide an attacker easy access. Gillmore went ahead with plans for the infantry assault.

The Northern batteries shifted their fire to widen the breach yet more, and the shelling continued. At two o'clock, the Union gunners broke into cheers as a white flag appeared over Fort Pulaski, and the Confederate colors slowly descended the mast.

Once again a boat made its way to Cockspur Island, this time with a party of Union officers led by Quincy Gillmore, who would accept Colonel Olmstead's surrender of the fort. The brief ceremony was courteous and dignified, in part perhaps because the furious two-day artillery duel that battered Fort Pulaski into an indefensible ruin had resulted in the death of only one of its defenders.

Besides closing the Savannah River to blockade runners, Gillmore's attack also demonstrated for the first time in actual combat the superiority of modern rifled ordnance against masonry fortifications.

Back in December, when General Sherman approved the plan, he cautioned, "If the place is to be reduced, it is to be done with mortars of the heaviest caliber." He had no faith in rifled cannon for this kind of work. "All that can be done with guns," he declared, "is to shake the walls... in a random manner."

But after the fort fell to 3,543 shots from the guns and 1,732 shots from the mortars, Gillmore drew a different conclusion. Among his "deductions from absolute results" were: "Mortars...are unreliable for the reduction of works of small area, like Fort Pulaski. They cannot be fired with sufficient accuracy to crush the casemate arches."

"Good rifled guns, properly served, can breach rapidly at 1,650 yards' distance... I would not hesitate to attempt a practical breach in a brick scarp at 2,000 yards' distance with ten guns of my own selection."

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## The Peace Walk

Decades ago, the Old Farmer's Almanac  
ran this story

On a cold day in November of 1867, four Yankee veterans sat around the stove arguing in an Edgerton, Wisconsin general store. That argument led to a strange bet, and possibly the most sensational walk any man ever took through American history.

In those bitter post-war days of so-called Reconstruction, the triumphant North was split. One side were those who felt, similar to incumbent President Andrew Johnson, that all Southerners should be forgiven, and likewise forgotten. Then there was the other side, the Rebel haters who demanded vengeance and punishment through

tough and angry policies. "We licked 'em but has that changed 'em any?" argued the Edgerton storekeeper. "Traitors don't change."

To the angry storekeeper, Gil Bates, a former Yankee sergeant of the First Wisconsin Heavy Artillery responded, "They're Americans, just like us," and further exclaimed, "I'll bet I could walk right through, say where Sherman marched to the sea, and nobody would touch me."

His buddies took Gil Bates up on the bet, and the terms of the wager were these: Sergeant Gilbert H. Bates engages to walk from Vicksburg, Mississippi, to Washington, D.C., carrying the Union flag unfurled; to go unarmed and without bodyguard; to carry no money and accept none, but live off Southern hospitality, to start in January and finish, at the latest, by the following Fourth of July.

In the middle of January, 1868, Sergeant Bates left on what his friends surely regarded as attempted suicide. His Yankee buddies knew that Johnny Reb had plenty of reason to hate the Yanks. The past two years had done little to improve relations between the North and South. The South was devastated, praying for the many areas close to famine, with residents suffering from illness and depravity.

For Bates' friendly invasion of the South, Bates wore rough farmer's clothing. He was thirty years of age, square-shouldered, dark-haired, with deep-set blue-gray eyes, with a natural courtesy of manner. He was apprehensive, but believed that Southerners loved their America, just like he did, and he set out to prove it.

On the train for Vicksburg, the man seated next to him, a traveling salesman from Kentucky, asked about his business. Bates told him. He actually could give no clear idea of his purpose, which was nothing less than to prove the brotherhood of man, but his eyes shone with obvious honesty and faith.

At Vicksburg, the salesman insisted on putting Bates up at the Prentiss House. Being well known in the city, he did even more. Bates had hardly washed up when the mayor and a committee of prominent citizens came calling.

Vicksburg adopted Gil and his cause. The mayor gave Gil an official dinner and a group of young men had a velvet walking suit, made just for Bates and to his embarrassment. When he again appeared on the streets he was cheered and his hand pumped repeatedly.

To replace his tattered regimental flag, a delegation of ladies presented him with a fine new silk Star Spangled Banner they had sewed for him themselves. Tears came to his eyes as he accepted it. For the hands that had made it had only a short time before been sewing the Stars and Bars, the First National Flag of the Confederacy.

His departure for Jackson was a great parade led by the mayor and councilmen on horseback. Next came a brass band, then Bates with his new flag, then citizens in carriages, then people on foot. At the city limits he was cheered, his hand shaken and his back slapped. He waved his flag and nervously started out, finally alone with the South.

By three o'clock he reached the village of Bovina. The weather was raw and damp, with snow falling. The closed, dark houses looked hostile. The only person about was a stern, angry-seeming old gentleman who demanded to know, what he was up to, carrying the Union flag. In his Yankee accent, Bates explained his mission. The old gentleman took off his overcoat without a word, draped it

over the sergeant's shoulders, stepped back, saluted, and marched off. Bates called after him, but the old man wheeled, saluted again, turned the corner and disappeared.

At dark, Bates approached a ruined plantation house. The owner came to the door and the sergeant found himself propelled inside, to tell his story over a brandy beside a roaring fire. "You must stay the night," said Mr. Cordevent of Kidd's Plantation. "I apologize for the bareness of my hospitality. My broken windows and wrecked furniture are Northern improvements. No offense meant, suh. We'd have done the same to you if we'd had the chance."

Bates went on his way the next morning, warmed inside by Southern food and outside by a Southern overcoat. The snow had turned to cold rain and the roads were mud bogs, so he took to the railroad tracks. Some four miles from Smith Station, a train came to a stop beside him. The passengers swarmed out to pump his hand. They knew from Vicksburg the story of the crazy Yank with the Stars and Stripes. Many offered money, which Bates continually refused. But as the train started, the conductor thrust some bills into his pocket, saying they were for postage stamps for letters back home – to tell the North that Southerners were "all-fired Americans."

At Edwards' Station, a cheering crowd welcomed him. In the midst of it, suddenly, Bates began to laugh. When he could finally stop laughing, he told how well-meaning friends in Wisconsin had warned him he would never come back alive, the Southerners would cut out his heart and trample it on the flag. Men stamped and howled, and in laughter he set out again.

Jackson made Sergeant Bates the city's most honored guest. He was warmly welcomed at the Capitol and forced to make a speech about his mission of American brotherhood. In an impromptu ceremony, he waved his flag from the balcony.

At a lonesome spot called Hickory, exhausted, rain-soaked, Bates stopped for the night at the home of a Mr. Gray. His much-shaken hand, arm and shoulder were giving him pain, his feet were raw, and the twelve-pound flag needed drying out. In the dead of night, he was awakened by the sound of many voices. He started up in alarm, and went to the window. In the light of torches, he made out about fifty men who shouted when they saw him. It sounded menacing – until he heard the gay music of "Arkansas Traveler" heartily performed by a dozen fiddles. He went out. The rain had stopped and he saw that the men had brought a keg of whiskey. "Some of us has come forty miles to see you, Sarge," said one of them, handing him a tin cup full to the brim. "Here's to the flag." Bates sang and danced with them until nearly daylight.

He took to the road again, feeling no weight at all in the flag he carried. At Meridian, he was paraded through the streets in an open carriage, his flag unfurled, while Southern belles waved their kerchiefs and blew kisses.

So it went on, this odyssey of a soldier passionately attached to his flag – as a symbol not of conquest but of peace.

At White Hall Plantation, while he was sleeping, the ladies decorated his banner with laurel wreaths on St. Valentine's Day. On the road from Sparta he was ambushed – by a picnic party of children, school having been recessed to make him welcome. Farther on he was ambushed again, this time by twenty ladies who had been waiting for him, with a dinner all prepared.

Informed of a dying Rebel captain who wanted to meet him, Bates left his route for the first time. He left the road again when a woodchopper begged him to visit the grave of his brother, killed in the War Between the States. They prayed there together.

"Joyful multitudes everywhere hail his advance as though it were the advance of an Emperor," commanded a New York Times editorial describing his progress. Gilbert Bates had proved that the Southern heart was sound; and the professional haters must certainly realize it by now.

In Charlotte, young James Orr came to him. "Sir, I was a soldier under General Lee. Here is a flag of yours we took after hard fighting and many killed. You have recaptured it. Sergeant, without firing a shot – take it!"

In Tuskegee, he had a grand reception on the day after the House of Representatives voted to impeach the President. "Shook hands with every man in Columbia (South Carolina) today, I think, and with several of them more than once," he noted in his diary.

At the border, twenty five Confederate veterans awaited him – to escort him in honor into the state. On the same day, the United States Senate began sittings on the impeachment of the "appeasing" President.

Sergeant Bates arrived in Washington – and was met by the usual rain, crowds, cheers and a brass band – on April 14. A happy procession practically danced him to the Executive Mansion. President Johnson came on the front steps to greet him personally. Gilbert Bates' 1,400 mile mission was completed. And the impeachment of President Johnson, when the votes were counted, failed, if by a narrow margin. But it never entered the mind of the man who quietly resumed his life in Wisconsin that it might have been his mission that saved the President. Nor is there any available proof that it did.

But the simple action of this plain man from the grass roots did prove that in spite of a bloody war, and its aftermath of grief, devastation and intrigues of politics, Americans were still all of one family.

Yankee Sergeant Gilbert Bates proved something else – that even during such a painful time in history, American patriotism remained constant. From North to South and back again, Americans loved their country and welcomed the banner of the United States of America.

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## Tidbits of the Civil War

The war's first major battle, First Manassas or Bull Run, saw the home of Wilmer McLean used as headquarters for several Confederate generals and his property overrun by Rebel soldiers. Disgusted, McLean soon afterwards moved his family in an attempt to get away from the war. He moved to Appomattox Courthouse, only to have the armies find him once again, on April 9, 1865, when Robert E. Lee surrendered to U. S. Grant in McLean's parlor.

The bloodiest single day of the war came on September 17, 1862, near Sharpsburg, Maryland, along Antietam Creek. As many as 4,800 men died, and total casualties for both sides came to more than 26,000. More Americans lost their lives that day than in the D-Day landings at Normandy.

The bloodiest battle of the Civil War was fought at Gettysburg, July 1st through the 3rd, 1863. At least 5,700 were killed outright, and total casualties came to 43,500 or more, almost a third of the 150,000 men engaged.

The vast majority of actions during the Civil War were actually of a small character, and the majority took place not in Virginia, but in the "western" states.

Numbers of events:

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Virginia         | 2154 |
| Tennessee        | 1462 |
| Missouri         | 1162 |
| Mississippi      | 772  |
| Arkansas         | 771  |
| West Virginia    | 632  |
| Louisiana        | 566  |
| Georgia          | 549  |
| Kentucky         | 453  |
| Alabama          | 336  |
| North Carolina   | 313  |
| South Carolina   | 239  |
| Maryland         | 203  |
| Florida          | 168  |
| Texas            | 90   |
| Indian Territory | 89   |
| California       | 88   |
| New Mexico Ter.  | 75   |

The states of Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Vermont had less than 10 events each, although the Battle of Gettysburg was the most massive of the war.

The largest fleet action of the Navies during the Civil War was the virtually unknown Battle of Plum Run Bend, Tennessee. On 10 May 1862 eight unarmored and ill-armed Confederate gunboats attacked a fleet of seven Federal gunboats. Two Yankee boats were rammed and sunk. Four Rebel vessels were neutralized, and the Southerners had to withdraw.

Captain Franklin Buchanan, commanding the Confederate Virginia in its attack on the Union fleet at Hampton Roads, Virginia, was firing at his brother McKean Buchan, an officer aboard the U.S.S. Congress, one of the ships sunk in the battle. On 7 November 1861, at Port Royal, South Carolina, Union Commander Percival Drayton brought his gunboat in closer to Fort Walker than any other vessel, knowing full well that his brother, General Thomas Drayton, was in command of the fort.

Approximately 1 Federal in 50 enlisted in the Navy, a total of just 132,554, of whom almost 5,000 were delegated to the Marines. Only about 1 in 200 joined the Confederate Navy. The total enlistees are unknown, but in 1864 the entire Confederate Navy was 3,674 including the Confederate Marine Corps.

The town of Winchester, Virginia, changed hands at least 76 times during the war!

One Confederate cannon was manufactured with 2 barrels, side-by-side, which was to be fired with a chain between the projectiles. This was only test fired a few times with the projectiles going everywhere except where intended. In one test firing several persons were injured and one killed. The cannon was delegated to being used as a warning gun to be used if Federal troops were approaching Athens, Georgia, the place of manufacture.

At Port Hudson on the Mississippi River the

Confederates were in such need of food that they resorted to eating mules. Although they tried to keep this from the Union soldiers, one morning the Federals appeared on the river bank braying like mules.

One Confederate cook, a Joe Keno, French by birth, grew tired of cooking and retired. Being of foreign birth he was not required to be a combatant. He provided to many army camps of the Confederates fresh meat. Allegedly providing lamb and kid, Keno actually brought dog meat!

The 39th New York's colonel was a Hungarian; its lieutenant colonel Italian; its surgeon a German. The ranks were filled with English deserters, Swiss, Croats, Bavarians, Cossacks, Garibaldians, Sepoys, Germans, and Algerian Zouaves of the French Foreign Legion. In addition there were three companies of Hungarian Hussars, three of German infantry, one of Italian Carabineers, one of Swiss guards, one of French Chasseurs a' Pied, one of mixed Spaniards and Portuguese. Almost all were veterans of various European wars.

Jefferson Davis, while captive on his way to a Federal Prison, rode with Vice-President Stephens in a carriage through Augusta, Georgia, in the Spring of 1865. An eight-year-old boy peered at them through the blinds of the Presbyterian minister's house. The boy was Woodrow Wilson!

When the Confederate cruiser Alabama was defeated by the USS Kearsarge, a young Edouard Manet was so impressed by the scene that he painted the battle scene which now hangs in a Philadelphia art gallery. Of course, Manet became one of the most famous French painters of the 19th Century.

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## August Birthdays



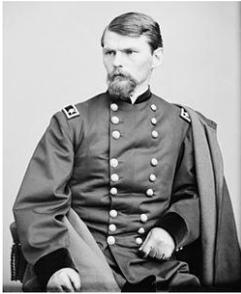
Johnny Clem  
13 August 1851



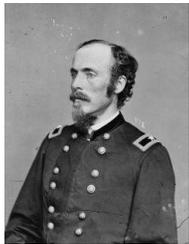
Thaddeus S. C. Lowe  
20 August 1832



William Cogswell  
23 August 1838



Emory Upton  
27 August 1839



Theodore Harvey Barret  
27 August 1834



Fitz John Porter  
31 August 1822

M. Wood of the 14th New York. He served with his regiment for some time thereafter. Though apparently well-regarded by his comrades in arms, away from his regiment he was subject to the normal abuses which were inflicted upon blacks, and was once even arrested for being armed.

Jacques Esclavon: Described as a 40-year old mulatto, Esclavon joined Ragsdale's Texas Cavalry Battalion in September of 1864 and served as a combatant through to the end of the war.

Levin Graham: A black servant, took up a musket and allegedly "killed four of the Yankees" in an action in late 1861.

Gabriel Grappe: Enlisted in September of 1862 in the 6th Louisiana Cavalry, a regiment which appears to have has a many as eight men of mixed background, all free volunteers.

Tom and Overton: Two black camp servants, picked up some arms at Brandy Station in June 1863, mounted a couple of stray horses, and took part in several charges.

Jean Baptiste Pierre-August: A freeman, he joined the 29th Louisiana in the spring of 1862. Captured at Vicksburg he was later exchanged and returned to his regiment. Although apparently a combatant prior to Vicksburg, he later served as a cook.

Luf-ray Pierre-August: With the 16th Louisiana in the Army of the Tennessee, being discharged at Murfreesboro in early December, because he was "colored".

Peter Vertrees: Kentuckian of about 21, he served throughout the war in the 6th Kentucky Infantry as cook and bodyguard to his half-uncle, John Luther Vertrees, being several times engaged in combat at his side. In 1986 he became the first black honored by the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

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## Black Confederate Soldiers

Many black men, both free and slaves, willingly served the Confederacy in all sorts of ways. The feelings among many of the slaves was "we would rather fight for our own white folks than for strangers". And, these were slaves, not the freedmen! A few of the blacks who fought for the South are as follows:

Old Dick, a freeman: Old Dick had served in the Mexican War as a musician in South Carolina's Palmetto Regiment. When the Civil War broke out he enlisted as a drummer in the 18th Virginia. At First Bull Run he picked up a musket, joined the firing line, and was credited with the capture of several Union prisoners, including Colonel Alfred

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

July 18, 2017

Commander Schneider called Camp #18 to order at 7:05 PM. In attendance were Brothers Erder, Gates, Johnson and Zook.

Brother Johnson offered an opening invocation.

Commander Schneider then led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and The American Creed.

## **Introduction of Guests and New Members:**

None.

## **Secretary/Treasurer Report:**

Brother Gates reported that the minutes from the April meeting were included with the meeting invitation for all to see or comment. Brother Gates noted that no comments or corrections were received. Brother Zook moved that the minutes be accepted as printed. The motion was seconded by Brother Erder and it was carried unanimously.

Brother Gates read the Treasurer's report for May. There were no comments or corrections. Brother Zook moved that the Treasurer's report be accepted as read. The motion was seconded by Brother Erder and it was carried unanimously.

## **Patriotic Minute:**

Brother Johnson talked about the origins of the Battle Hymn of the Republic.

## **Guest Speaker:**

A technical problem prevented Brother Zook from presenting his program on the "Camel Corps".

## **SVR/1<sup>st</sup> US Business:**

None

## **Old Business:**

Commander Schneider provided an update on the planning for an initiation/social event in the fall. He indicated he would be reserving the Outback Steak house in Plano for the event on October 14, 2017.

## **New Business:**

None

## **Closing Announcements:**

The next monthly meeting will be on Tuesday, August 15, 2017.

There being no further business before the camp, Commander Schneider declared the meeting closed at 7:44 PM.

## **Closing Benediction:**

Brother Johnson conducted the Benediction.

Respectfully Submitted,  
In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Don Gates, PDC  
Secretary/Treasurer