

The Fighting Joe Wheeler Dispatch



Volume XLVI, Issue 2

February, 2026

Camp Officers:

Commander: Spencer Harris

1st Lt. Commander: Barry Cook

2nd Lt. Commander: Joe Payne

Adjutant: Dave McCombs

Chaplain: Tim Whitfield

Color Sergeant: Pat Acton

Quartermaster: David Knight

Sergeant At Arms: Pat Acton

Camp Surgeon: Dr. Rick Price

Dispatch Editor: David Fisher

Commander Emeritus: Dr. Ira West

Fighting Joe Wheeler Camp 1372,
Inc. C/O Adjutant
P.O. Box 43362
Vestavia Hills, AL 35243

Please send articles or other
information for inclusion in
"The Dispatch" to
David Fisher
810 Saulter Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35209
Or e-mail fisherda@mac.com

Tuesday, February 10th, 7:00 pm

Battle of Ft. Blakely

Speaker: Hank Arnold

4248 Oakview Lane Birmingham 35243

Lat. 33.452914 Long. -86.737261

Coming from Hwy. 280, take the first road after the New Merkle House off Dolly Ridge Road. Heights Dermatology and Aesthetics will be on your left. Follow this road to the end by the park and baseball fields. We will be meeting in the small gray building.

Hope to see you there!!

This Month During the War Between the States (1861-1865)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| February 4, 1861 | Delegates from the seceded states meet to establish the Confederate government |
| February 9, 1861 | Jefferson Davis elected provisional Confederate President |
| February 3, 1862 | President Lincoln declines an offer of war elephants from the King of Siam |
| February 14, 1862 | Union ironclad gunboats attack Fort Donelson, TN |
| February 22, 1862 | Jefferson Davis inaugurated as President of the Confederacy |
| February 18-21, 1863 | The Cherokee National Council meets at Cowskin Prairie to disavow Stand Waite's pro-Confederate faction and abolish slavery |
| February 17, 1864 | Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley sinks the USS Housatonic |
| February 29, 1864 | George Custer's cavalry fights skirmishes during a raid on Albermarle County, VA |
| February 3, 1865 | Union and Confederate officials meet to discuss peace |

 <http://www.fightingjoewheelercamp.org>



SCV Fighting Joe Wheeler Camp 1372



FJWCamp1372@yahoo.com

Alabama: We Dare Defend Our Rights

"The principal for which we contended is bound to reassert itself, though it may be at another time and in another form." - Jefferson Davis, May 1865

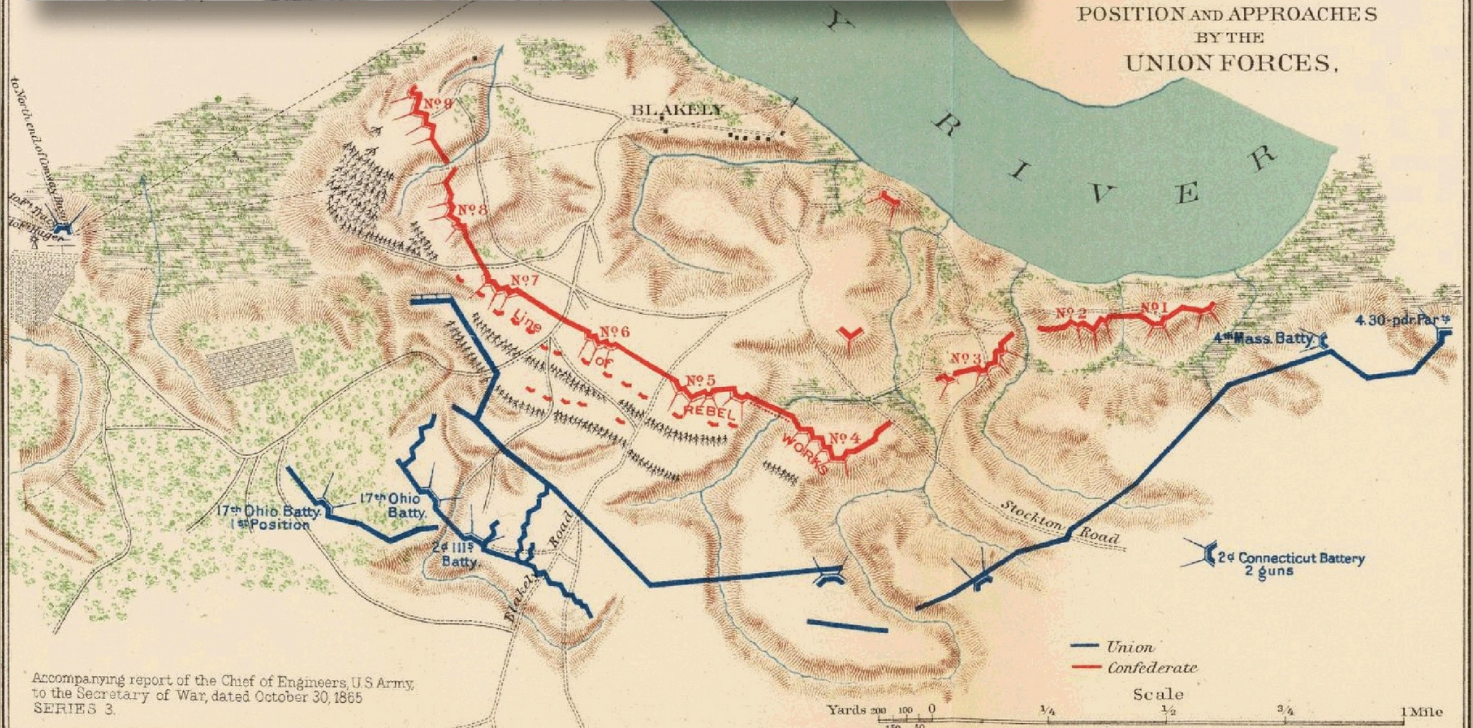
THE BATTLE OF FORT BLAKELY

APRIL 2-9, 1865

*Presented by Hank Arnold
Fighting Joe Wheeler Camp 1372*



REBEL LINE OF WORKS
AT
BLAKELY, ALA.,
CAPTURED BY THE
ARMY OF WEST MISSISSIPPI,
April 9, 1865.
POSITION AND APPROACHES
BY THE
UNION FORCES.



Please join us February 10, 2026
7:00 pm at the New Merkle House
in Vestavia.



-Deo Vindice



Commander's Report



February 2026

Compatriots, Friends, Brothers,

It is with a heavy heart that we note the passing of one of the greatest men who has supported our cause for many years, H.K Edgerton. H.K. passed on the 18th of January just one month prior to bringing him to our camp to speak. I personally never heard H.K. talk in person and count myself the lesser for having missed out. I am confident that he is with our Heavenly Father right now and as such I know that he is enjoying his new Heavenly body and praising Christ. We who are left behind do mourn his passing. We must remember the sacrifice that he made and ensure that we honor his life and his mission by picking up his battle flag and carrying it forward just as our mutual ancestors did.

Many thanks for our esteemed brother, Hank Arnold for stepping up and taking the reins as our speaker this month.

I'll again note that I sincerely appreciate the honor of being your camp commander even if work, ministry school, and commitments to my girls prevent me from attending from time to time. Just know that I'm with you at heart and working for you in the background.. To this end the first Officer's Mess was a success. Much camp business was discussed, many decisions made that I believe will move our camp forward and engage the crowds better than they have in the past at the gun shows. I'll cover these at the camp meeting, but I'd like for each of you to mark your calendars with the following dates for camp events:

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- Gun Show – March 7-8
- Confederate Memorial Day Weekend
 - Montgomery March 25
 - Elmwood March 26
- Gun Show July 25-26
- Gun Show October 10-11

We have a very exciting Spring through early Summer speaker schedule as well with Leigh Ann coming to talk about life in the 1800s in March, John McGraque talking about Admiral Semmes in April, Calvin Chappel of the Confederate Memorial Park coming back to talk about the use of the Fife and Drum in battle, and Amanda Warren speaking on General Polk in June. I'll continue to work on additional speakers for the rest of the year but would love to add some of your names to the list in July through November if you have a topic that you'd like to cover. Just let me know.



Commander's Report



And for my sign off this month I'll apologize that I didn't get to tell each of you this personal news of mine in person at our January meeting, work got in the way, but on December 21st I asked Amy to marry me and she said yes. We plan to get married on June 13th of this year. I'd love for each of you to mark your calendars and attend if possible. It will be at the Oak Island Plantation home in Columbiana. When possible I'll get her to one of the meetings so that you can all meet her. Thank you all for your support for the rough times that I went through over the last few years and I look forward to celebrating the good times going forward as God has blessed my life with such abundance.

Deo Vindice brothers,

Spencer Harris

Commander Fighting Joe Wheeler Camp 1372



Chaplain's Report



Reading from Ephesians Chapter 2 Verse 10: "For we are God's handiwork, created in Jesus Christ to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do".

I had prepared a different Chaplain's report for February, but decided on January 19 to go in a different direction because of the passing of a very well known member across the SCV. Compatriot H.K. Edgerton passed away on January 18, 2026 in Asheville, NC. Some of us got to meet H.K. last spring at the Confederate Memorial Park and in Montgomery. That was a real treat given H.K's dynamic personality.

Besides his tireless efforts promoting Southern Heritage and the Confederate Flag as an African American member of the SCV, there are many other things he did in his life for good causes. A lot of us know his story, but I'll recap a few things he did outside of the SCV for those who aren't aware. The son of a Baptist Minister H.K. was born in 1948 in Asheville, NC. He has served as a United Way Chairman. He was a supporter and leader of youth sports and education, including being a volunteer and founder of the Boys and Girls Golf Team at Shiloh Community Center in Asheville. He also served in the Asheville school system as a volunteer teacher's aide and volunteer coach. He was an outspoken advocate for keeping atheists off of the Asheville School Board.

H.K. also worked to improve race relations between blacks and whites. He served in the Army during the Vietnam War as a Signal Corp instructor. But he was best known as an advocate of Southern Heritage. He thought it ridiculous that monuments were being taken down, the Confederate Flag was being disparaged and he took action tirelessly.

H.K. was scheduled to come down from Asheville and be our February Fighting Joe Wheeler Camp speaker. He even wanted to get up a round of golf with us while here. I love a round of golf anyway and that would have been memorable. Sadly it didn't happen. Looking through our magazine I always feel sad when I read "The Last Roll" of SCV members that recently passed and I'll be sad when I see the next one. We salute your life, your passion and.....as Ephesians 2 points out.....your "good works" H.K. Rest in peace brother.

Deo Vindice
Tim Whitfield,
Chaplain FJW Camp 1362



Reader's Corner



Why Forrest Encouraged an End to Racial Conflict

by **Wanjiru Njoya**

There is no better place to begin understanding the party politics of the post-reconstruction South than with the Fourth of July celebrations organized by the Independent Order of Pole-Bearers in Memphis, Tennessee, 1875. The Pole-Bearers were a “fraternal society,” or mutual aid society, for the welfare and defense of black people. In attendance at this event were various former Confederate generals and Southern Democrats, who had been invited by the black leaders for purposes of celebration, reconciliation and, indirectly, to try and persuade their members that they would be better off voting for the Democratic party and not the Republican party. The black leaders expressed a wish to “reconcile” with white Southerners as they felt betrayed by their experience of the previous ten years with the Radical Republicans, whom they accused of treating black people as mere tools for their political games.

Nathan Bedford Forrest seems to have been essentially the guest of honor at this event. He was certainly the star of the show. He was presented with a bouquet of flowers by the black ladies, which strikes modern readers – who know nothing of Forrest’s popularity – as astonishing. Forrest delivered a brief but now well-known speech in which he encouraged an end to racial conflict. The event was covered at the time by the *Memphis Daily Appeal* and another local newspaper.

Continue reading HERE: <https://www.abbevilleinstitute.org/why-forrest-encouraged-an-end-to-racial-conflict/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=2d7375b0-926f-4e31-bfd1-027b745c1886>



Reader's Corner



Uncomfortable Truths for the Righteous Cause Myth by Brion McClanahan

The following are uncomfortable truths for “Righteous Cause Mythologists:”

1. Africans created, organized, and supplied the international slave trade without any European involvement or direction, and Northerners profited heavily from the institution.
2. Southerners established most of the early abolition societies in the United States.
3. “Jim Crow” segregation developed in Connecticut and was pervasive in New England in the 1830s.
4. Northern commitment to “anti-slavery” was mostly political and not principled.
5. The Confederate war effort would have been impossible without “Black Confederate” support.
6. Northerners espoused “white-supremacist” and “racist” attitudes more frequently and fervently than antebellum Southerners, and most Southerners rejected anthropological racism as being anti-Biblical.
7. The “Underground Railroad” was a myth created by self-righteous Northerners.

Critics might charge me with engaging in “whataboutism.” But that misses the point.

Continue reading HERE: <https://www.abbevilleinstitute.org/uncomfortable-truths-for-the-righteous-cause-myth/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=dab20e27-1c96-4ca6-9dcd-9a385108e8de>