

CONFEDERATE GAZETTE



Confederate Gazette

Is a monthly publication of the Major Robert M. White Camp #1250 Sons of Confederate Veterans Temple, Texas

Web Site:
www.rootsweb.com/~tx1250

George Ballentine
Camp Commander
2714 Phyllis Dr.
Copperas Cove, TX 76522

John C. Perry
Newsletter Editor
P.O. Box 794
Salado, TX 76571

© 2004, Major Robert M. White
Camp #1250
Sons of Confederate Veterans
Temple, Texas

Event on September 18th

HISTORY SYMPOSIUM SET FOR BELTON

The Central Texas History Symposium will be held on September 18th from 9:30 AM to Noon at the Old Commissioners Court Building in Belton.

The event will have two key speakers, David Paul Smith from Nacogdoches, Texas who will speak on "Defending the Texas Frontier, 1861-1865" and Brad Johnson from Rowlett, Texas who will do a first person portrayal of Leonard Gee of the 5th Texas Infantry.

David Paul Smith is the author of *Frontier Defense in the Civil War,*

Texas' Rangers and Rebels, published in 1992. He earned his doctorate from North Texas State University. Dr. Smith is a former history teacher at Highland Park High School in the Dallas area. His special interest include the American Civil War, the Antebellum South, and the Texas frontier.

Brad Johnson is an honorary member of camp SCV #1250. Johnson was born and raised in Temple and is a graduate of Temple High School and Texas Tech University. Johnson is a popular speaker on

both the Republic of Texas and the War Between the States. He will perform one of his most requested roles at the Symposium as he portrays Pvt. Leonard Gee as he served 5th Texas Infantry, part of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia during the horrific fight at the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864.

The Old Commissioners Court Building is located at 550 East Central in Belton. For any additional information on the event contact Camp Member Rocky Sprott at 939-6137.

Gettysburg College Attack

Gettysburg College, located in the historic Pennsylvania city is sponsoring an anti-Confederate art display.

The college initially announced that an artist would "lynch" the Confederate battle flag on a specially built 13-foot-high outdoor gallows at Gettysburg College on September 3rd. The lynching was originally set for the opening night of an exhibition called "Recoloration Proclamation: The Gettysburg

Redress" by artist John Sims. This lynching was entitled "The Proper Way to Hang a Confederate Flag," that was to run through an exhibition closing ceremony on Sept. 26th.

In response the SCV called for a boycott of Gettysburg. In a press release, Commander-in-Chief Denne Sweeney called on "all members, families, and friends to avoid Gettysburg and not to spend any money in the Gettys-

burg area. All people concerned with the anti-Southern bigotry of this area should alert friends, media, and anyone concerned with the growing problem in Gettysburg so that this boycott will become nationwide and not just regional."

Apparently due to an uproar of protests on August 31st Gettysburg College President Katherine Haley Will announced that the event would take place

(Continued on page 5)



CONFEDERATE PROFILE Not War, But Murder!

By: John C. Perry

He was an innovative developer of military ordnance, but he was less successful as a Confederate field commander. He was the inventor of the land mine. Union General William T. Sherman described combat deaths that were the result of land mines as, "not war, but murder."

Gabriel J. Rains was born in Craven County, N.C., June 4, 1803. He attended local schools before he went to the Military Academy at West Point, graduating in 1827. He had a most distinguished career in the U.S. Army serving in the infantry on the western frontier and in Florida fighting Indians. He was promoted to captain in 1837. He was brevetted a major for gallantry against the Seminoles in 1840.

During the Mexican War Rains was among some of the first troops deployed. As one of the defenders of Fort Brown, opposite Matamoros in May of 1846, he issued the deciding vote against the surrender of the American force there. He performed well at the Battle of Resaca de la Palma, May 9, 1846, after which he

was ordered back to the U.S. on recruiting duty. He achieved much success as a recruiter of troops to join the U.S. forces in the Mexican War.

After the Mexican War, Rains served on the Pacific coast where he earned the

Union General George McClellan invaded the Virginian Peninsula in 1862 Rains was in command of his brigade and was faced by overwhelming Union forces, as they withdrew away from Yorktown.

Using his experience as an old Indian fighter, Rains adopted the old Indian idea of booby-traps but incorporated the use of explosive ordnance. The result was the first warfare use of what today we would call a land mine, but was called the "torpedo" during the war.

Rains had eight inch and ten inch artillery balls with friction primers that would explode if stepped on. On May 4, 1862, while scouting along a road leading to Yorktown, a Union cavalryman activated one of the landmines thus becoming the first

person killed by a pressure-operated landmine. The result was panic among the advancing Federals as it slowed down their advance thus allowing Rains and his brigade time to orderly withdraw.

Rains later perfected his land-mine to be even more pressure sensitive. It did cost him his forefinger and thumb on his right hand as it attempted to get

(Continued on page 4)

The
Inventor of
the Land
Mine



Gabriel J. Rains

reputation as a successful Indian fighter.

By the time of the formation of the Confederacy Rains had achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel. He resigned his U.S. Army commission and offered his services to the Confederate Army. He was commissioned a brigadier general and was given command of a brigade under General D. H. Hill. When



Commander's Call

By: *George Ballentine*

The festival and reenactment season is upon us, and First Lieutenant Commander James Kinneer and I will be on the road every weekend this month.

We hope to raise a lot of Heritage Defense money for our camp. October will be almost as busy for us. Check our web site and, if possible, join us at an event. We can always use the recruiting help.

As your Camp Commander I would be remiss in my duties if I did not comment on the recent Heritage Defense Fund Raiser we conducted. As you recall, I asked for each member of our camp to donate only \$10.00 to the fund. The participation was not good. Had everyone donated just the \$10.00, we would have raised over \$600.00 for the Texas Division's Heritage Defense Fund. Several compatriots donated \$25.00, but we still only managed to raise \$191.00.

I have put \$59.00 from the camp store to make an even \$250.00, and gave it to Texas Division Adjutant Ray Satterfield on behalf of our camp. I know we can do better, and I sincerely hope those who did not participate this time will consider a donation directly to the Division.

Our next camp meeting is on Tuesday, Septem-

ber 14th and will feature Stephanie Turnham of the Bell County Museum. She will present a program on "Bell County Slave Narratives." We will meet at the Golden Corral.

If you would like to eat before the meeting, come a bit early and "pay as you go" through the buffet line. We would like everyone to be finished with the buffet before the meeting starts so as not to disrupt the meeting.

We also need to energize ourselves and get some serious recruiting done. We have been challenged by Brigade Commander Chad Weldon to increase our membership by five before the end of the year. I think we can do that, and more.

Every compatriot is a recruiter for the camp. Talk to people. Let them know about us and your Confederate Heritage. Invite them to a meeting, and, if necessary, pick them up and bring them. If you are too busy to help them get into the camp, contact Second Lieutenant Commander Gordon Mobley, our camp recruiter, and he will take over and help them.

I hope to see you all at the meeting. I will have a briefing on the recent Central Texas Brigade Meeting and our continuing plans for the 2005 Texas Division Reunion.

Camp Schedule

September 11-12, 2004

Fort Griffin Reenactment, Albany, TX. Camp Store to be set up—NEED VOLUNTEERS

September 14, 2004

Camp Meeting, Golden Corral Restaurant, Temple, TX. 7:00 PM. Speaker: Stephanie Turnham, Topic: "Bell County Slave Narratives"

September 17-19, 2004

Battle of Sabine Pass Reenactment, Sabine Pass, TX. Camp Store to be set up—NEED VOLUNTEERS

September 27, 2004

2005 Division Reunion Planning Meeting, 6:00 PM at Media Square, 1405 West Adams Ave., Temple

October 1-3, 2004

Granbury Reenactment, Glen Rose, TX. Camp Store to be set up—NEED VOLUNTEERS

October 9, 2004

Quarterly Dinner Meeting, Golden Corral Restaurant, Temple, TX. 7:00 PM. Speaker: TBA

October 16-19, 2004

Ogletree Gap Festival, Copperas Cove, TX. Camp Store to be set up—NEED VOLUNTEERS

October 22-24, 2004

Battle for Crockett Springs, Crockett, TX, Camp Store to be set up—NEED VOLUNTEERS

November 9, 2004

Camp Meeting, Golden Corral Restaurant, Temple, TX. 7:00 PM. Speaker: TBA

Next Camp Meeting:
September 14th
7:00 P.M. at
Golden Corral,
Restaurant,
Temple, TX

Not War But Murder



(Continued from page 2)

the ordnance to “explode from the slightest pressure.”

He eventually settled on an explosion at a pressure of about seven pounds. Rains’ concept was also used as sea mines, also called torpedoes back during the war. The fuse used was dubbed the Rains Fuse.

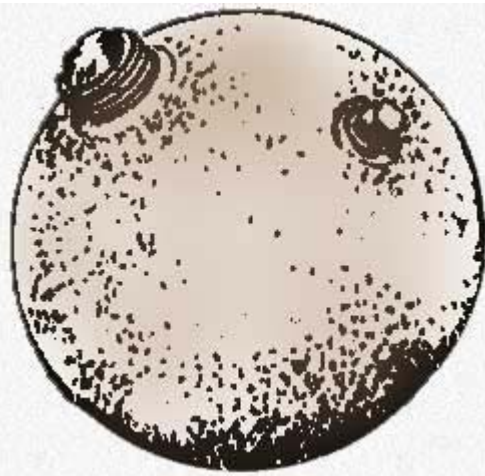
The use of land mines generated a fair amount of controversy. McClellan called the Confederates that used the land mines, “guilty of the most murderous & barbarous conduct.” He forced Confederate POWs to help clear areas infected with the land mines.

In addition to Sherman and McClellan’s comments, some in the Confederate Army also opposed the use of land mines as being an ungentlemen way of waging war. James Longstreet forbade their use as being, “not proper.” However, towards the end of the war the general perspective changed and the use of land mines was, for the most part, accepted as being a part of the warfare of the day.

Rains’ next field command was at the Battle of Seven Pines on May 31-

June 1, 1862. He earned the ire of Hill who faulted Rains for failing to do a flanking movement. He was severely castigated by Hill and transferred out of a field command.

For the rest of the war Rains remained in Confederate service but saw no direct action. He was for a while in charge of Confederate conscription efforts, but most of the time he worked on improving the “torpedo.” Rains worked to improve upon both land and sea versions of the deadly device. He also



Example of one of Rain’s land mines, a modified artillery shell

spent time arranging land and sea mines in such strategic Confederate positions as Richmond, Charleston, Savannah, and Mobile.

After the war Rains resided in Georgia for a time and then moved to Charleston, S.C. From 1877 to 1880 he was a clerk in the Quartermaster Department in Charleston. He died in Aiken, S.C. on August 6, 1881 and is buried in St. Thaddeus Cemetery there.

Bell County Museum Exec To Speak

Stephanie Turnham, the Executive Director of the Bell County Museum in Belton, is scheduled to speak at the September meeting of the Major Robert M. White Camp #1250. The regular monthly meeting will be held on September 14th at 7:00 PM at the Golden Corral in Temple. All camp members are invited to attend and bring a guest.

Ms. Turnham’s topic is “Bell County Slave Narratives.” The effort to collect the slave narratives was a project done by the Federal government during the depression years. Officially called, the Federal Writers Project, former slaves were interviewed by writers, employed by the government, so as to record their memories and impressions of their days as slaves. About three and a half million words were recorded as the recollections of former slaves. About two percent of the total slaves alive in the 1930s were interviewed.

Ms. Turnham will relate some of the experiences of former slaves in Bell County as described in the “Slave Narratives.”

The “Slave Narratives” were published in a series of books by state of residence of the former slaves.

The Bell County Museum recently completed a fund raising drive allowing the museum to expand. The building to the north of the museum has been acquired and the museum will be able to expand its services and displays.

Union Army
Used Confederate
POWs to Clear
Land Mines

NEW CONFEDERATE WIDOW FOUND?

In the July issue of the *Confederate Gazette* we reported the death and burial of Alberta Martin, recognized by most to be the "last Confederate widow." Following Mrs. Martin's death another woman has stepped forward claiming to be the widow of a Confederate veteran.

Meet Maudie Hopkins, age 89, of Lexa, Arkansas. Mrs. Hopkins claims to be the former wife of Confederate soldier William M.

(Continued on page 6)

Confederate Gazette Quiz Questions

By George Ballentine

QUIZ September 2004

True or False?

Regarding:
C.S.S. *Stonewall*

1. True or False: was first named *Prinz Adalbert*.

2. True or False: was sold the Japanese Shogun after the war.

3. True or False: was attacked by the U.S.S. *Niagara* and *Sacramento* when she first left France.

4. True or False: was commanded by Captain Thomas Jefferson Page.

5. True or False: was first sold to Denmark.

6. True or False: captured 26 Union merchant ships during its career.

7. True or False: by the time the *Stonewall* crossed the Atlantic, the war was over.

Answers:
F, T, F, T, T, F, T

Gettysburg College Attacks Confederate Flag



Battleflag hung on gallows

(Continued from page 1)

inside the art gallery due to safety and security concerns and to permit orderly viewing of the work. According to Haley the decision to move the work indoors followed extensive consultations with borough officials, state police, security professionals,

and other authorities.

As promised the exhibit opened on schedule

Confederate Flag," was moved inside and apparently scaled down in size.



One of the Confederate flags produced by "artist" John Sims

inside the College's Schmucker Art Gallery. On the opening night the anti-Confederate display debuted to about 250 people. "The Proper Way to Hang a

The artist, in protest, refused to attend the scaled down event. Outside there were SCV demonstrators who proudly

(Continued on page 6)

Gettysburg College Attack

(Continued from page 5)

waved the Confederate battle flag and voiced support of Confederate heritage. About 200 people attended an SCV sponsored prayer vigil opening night at the at the Peace Light Memorial on National Park Service property about a mile away from the college event.

About 30 people gathered near the College before the opening where H.K. Edgerton, a black honorary member of the SCV, led a reading of 3,712 names of Confederate soldiers who died on the Gettysburg battlefield in July 1863.

In addition to the "The Proper Way to Hang a Confederate Flag," on display are other Confederate flags that Sims has desecrated. Other Confederate flags are rendered in alternate colors, such as the black, red and green of the African liberation movement and two "drag flags" that are in lavender and pink with sparkles and fur.

Last Confederate Widow?

(Continued from page 5)

Cantrell who served in a Kentucky unit, the 7th Virginia Mounted Infantry until he was captured in April of 1863. Mrs. Hopkins married Cantrell in 1934 when she was 19 and he was 86.

Mrs. Hopkins was "discovered" by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The UDC has researched Mrs. Hopkins and confirms her status as a Confederate Veterans widow. When asked why she is just now coming forward a UDC spokeswoman said that Mrs. Hopkins was embarrassed over the large

age difference in her first marriage and vowed to never mention her marriage to Cantrell.

She met Cantrell after he moved to Arkansas. She was his house cleaner after Cantrell's wife died in 1929. As his health deteriorated he needed someone to cook and care for him so he proposed to her. Mrs. Hopkins who was very poor at the time accepted. She said, "My daddy couldn't make a living and I didn't have any shoes."

Cantrell died in 1937 at the age of 90. Mrs. Hopkins was widowed three more times.



Maudie Celia Hopkins of Lexa, Arkansas, former wife of Confederate soldier, William M. Cantrell.



Confederate Gazette

P.O. Box 794
Salado, TX 76571

Next Meeting:
Sept. 14th
Golden Corral
Temple
7:00 PM