

CONFEDERATE GAZETTE



Confederate Gazette

Is a monthly publication of the

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Sons of Confederate Veterans
Temple, Texas

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Sibley Exhibit Opened December 1st

NEW EXHIBIT AT HILL COLLEGE MUSEUM

The Hill College History Center's Confederate Research Center and Texas Heritage Museum recently

opened a major exhibit at the Texas Heritage Museum at the Hillsboro College. The new exhibit features artifacts from the Sibley/Green Brigade and formally opened on December 1, 2001.

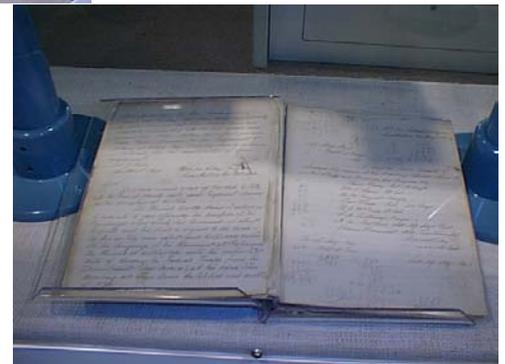


Above, Cannon tube used by Sibley's Brigade;

campaign, which led to the capture of Albuquerque and Santa Fe, the Texas Brigade ran low on supplies and retreated back to Texas. They buried eight of their cannons in Albuquerque to reduce their burden on the retreat. After fighting at the battle of Galveston on January 1, 1863, the Texas Brigade was sent to Louisiana for

more hard fighting. In 1863, General Tom Green became the commander of the brigade. In 1864, the brigade joined other Confederate troops in Louisiana at the battle of Mansfield, there the Union forces were defeated preventing them from invading East Texas. After the war, veterans of the Sibley/Green Texas Brigade, formed a life long alliance through their Brigade association. For many years the Sibley/Green Brigade Association held reunions in various towns in Texas, as was the custom

Right, Sibley's letter book used during the war.



of the day. In 1926, the Brigade Veterans, then few in number, joined with the veterans of another famous Texas brigade, Hood's, and from 1926 to 1933 they held joint meetings in Bryan Texas.

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CONFEDERATE PROFILE

HENRY H. SIBLEY

Leader of Texas Troops and Inventor

As Southern states began to leave the Union in 1861 so did many of the officers that commanded Federal troops in the southwestern Indian Territory. Men like Brigadier General Albert Sidney Johnston, Major James Longstreet, Captain Richard Ewell, and Lieutenant Joseph Wheeler were all Southerners, and they left Federal command positions in the southwest. One of the men that left the Federal army was Major Henry Hopkins Sibley, commander of the 2nd Dragoons in the New Mexico Territory. Sibley, an inventor and experienced Indian fighter, left New Mexico, but vowed to return to claim the territory for the newly formed Confederacy, telling the remaining Federal soldiers, "Boys, if you only knew it, I am the worst enemy you have."

Sibley was born in Natchitoches, Louisiana on May 25, 1816. In 1838 he graduated from West Point and began a long and varied career of military service. Almost immediately after graduation he saw combat in the Seminole War of 1838-39. He served in the Utah Expedition against the Mormons and was brevetted for gallantry in the Mexican War.

Sibley, utilizing his military experience invented the Sibley tent and the Sibley stove. He patented the designs in 1856.

The conical shaped tent was modeled after Sioux wigwams and was able to accommodate 20 men. The tent design was raised on an iron tripod and was supported by a center pole. One of its advantages was the ease in erecting the tent, which purportedly could be done in two minutes. The huge



Henry H. Sibley

tent was over 18 feet in diameter and 12 feet high. At the top was a one foot round opening for ventilation in warm weather and for a stove pipe in cool weather. Sibley also invented a type of stove pipe to be used in the tent.

The tent was adopted by the U.S. Army and was popular, in spite of its 73 pound weight, in service in the west before the War Between the States. During the War it is estimated that 43,000 Sibley tents were used, mainly in permanent camps, because its weight made it too heavy for field use. The

War Department paid Sibley a \$5.00 royalty for every tent manufactured. Payments, however, stopped when Sibley left the Union army. The tent was in regular U.S. Army issue until the 1890's.

His pre-War Between the States days were spent fighting Indians in what is today New Mexico and Arizona. As Southern states began leaving the Union, Sibley was the experienced commander of the 2nd Dragoons at Taos, New Mexico. He resigned from the U.S. Army on May 13, 1861, ironically, the very day that he received a promotion from captain to major. He immediately left New Mexico for El Paso, Texas, and there wrote a letter expressing his pro Southern feelings. "We are at last under the glorious banner of the Confederate States of America," Sibley wrote.

In El Paso, Sibley joined the Confederate Army as a colonel, and then made his way to Richmond, Virginia. There he was able to secure an appointment with Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Davis was anxious to meet with Sibley, who Davis knew as an experienced soldier with much knowledge about the southwest. Davis had long felt that the New Mexico Territory was strategically important to the South. Sibley convinced Davis to give him the authority to raise volunteer troops in

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Confederate Profile

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Texas. With the troops he would lead an expedition into the New Mexico Territory to rid the territory of Federal troops.

Sibley left Richmond in July as a Brigadier General and commander of the Department of New Mexico. Sibley raised an almost all Texas volunteer army, although it took him over four months to do so. Sibley had three complete regiments, the 4th, 5th and 7th Texas Mounted Volunteers, totalling about 3,700 men.

Sibley and his army first moved to the abandoned Federal outpost at Fort Bliss, Texas in December of 1861. In January of 1862 he then invaded the New Mexico Territory. They found a larger Federal force at Fort Craig, but was able to defeat the Federals at the Battle of Valverde. During the fight Sibley removed himself from command due to "illness." Many accused him of being drunk rather than ill during the battle.

Fresh from victory at Valverde Sibley's army then moved north and captured Albuquerque and the territorial capital of Santa Fe. In March, at a two day fight at Glorieta Pass, New Mexico, called by some, The Gettysburg of the West, a portion of Sibley's army was winning the battle, but in the rear having all its supplies destroyed. Sibley, with dwindling supplies, eventually was forced to withdraw and make a 700 mile march back to San Antonio, in what turned out to

be a death march for some through the desert. Sibley's casualties were estimated as high as 2,000, many dying on the return march.

As Sibley's men began to straggle into San Antonio, Sibley reorganized the brigade. He gave all the survivors a 60 day leave. Men continued to filter into San Antonio the entire summer of 1862.

Sibley spent the rest of the year regrouping his men and supplies. His goal was to lead them again out of Texas, but this time in a easterly direction. Before his 1,300 men could leave the state they were called in late December, 1862, to assist in the recapture of Galveston, Texas. This was accomplished on January 1, 1863 and Sibley's men performed well.

In early 1863 Sibley and his men, including the Valverde Battery, entered Louisiana. They joined Major General Richard Taylor's Confederate Army of about 6,000 men. Taylor was anything but impressed with Sibley's men. He described them as, "The men were hardy and many of the officers brave and zealous. but the value of these qualities was lessened by lack of discipline . . . Officers and men address each other as Tom, Dick, or Harry, and had no more conception of military gradations than that of celestial hierarchy of the poets."

Sibley and his men were first assigned along the Teche River. In fighting around Fort Bisland, Louisiana on April 13-14th Taylor's army was forced to withdraw. Sibley's old problem with too much drinking apparently con-

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Camp Schedule

December, 2001

December 7-9th: Annual Christmas at Old Fort Concho, San Angelo, TX.

December 10th: 10th Annual UDC District IV Confederate Christmas Gala, 5:30-11:00 P.M.

December 11th: Regular Camp Meeting, 7:00 P.M. at King's Daughters Hospital in Temple, TX. Speaker: John Larson.

January, 2002

January 12th: Annual Robert E. Lee-Stonewall Jackson Dinner Meeting, Inn at Scott & White, 7:00 PM.

February, 2002

February 12th: Regular Camp Meeting, 7:00 P.M. at King's Daughters Hospital in Temple, TX. Speaker: George Ballentine, "John Pelham: Lee's Boy Artillerist"

March, 2002

March 12th: Regular Camp Meeting, 7:00 P.M. at King's Daughters Hospital in Temple, TX.

April, 2002

April 13th: Quarterly Camp Dinner Meeting, 7:00 P.M., TBA

December Camp Meeting:

1. Election of Officers
2. Speaker: John Larson

Henry Sibley

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tributed to several poor judgment decisions. He received much of the blame for the Confederate failure. Taylor removed him as the brigade commander, putting him in charge of the baggage train. He also pressed charges against Sibley for disobedience and un-officer like conduct.

Sibley spent the remainder of the war doing virtually nothing. At his court martial trial in September of 1863 he was found not guilty, because of, "a train of circumstances." Apparently Sibley convinced Taylor that he was not incapacitated due to drinking, but rather due to illness. In March of 1865, General Kirby Smith reported that he was without a command and not on duty.

When the war was over Sibley went abroad. He served as a general in the Egyptian Army from 1869 to 1873. He then returned to the United States and lectured on his adventures in Egypt. In his final years he lived in poor health and poverty. Sibley died in Fredericksburg, Virginia on August 23, 1886, at the age of 70. He is buried in Fredericksburg.

Museum Exhibit

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The new exhibit features a Sibley Brigade reunion banner, donated to the museum by the Sibley family. Prior to this exhibit, this flag has never been on public exhibit. A Sibley stove is featured in this exhibit along with memorabilia from reunions including photographs and Green/Hood Brigade reunion broadsides.

General

Sibley's letter book, from the New Mexico Campaign, was loaned to the museum by the family of Captain T. D. Nettles. Nettles served in the 5th Texas Mounted Volunteer Regiment during the campaign in New Mexico, and then with the famous Valverde Battery. During the war, commanders did not have

photocopiers or even carbon paper. Their secretaries wrote copies of their communications in books designed for that purpose. This exhibit is the first public showing of the letter book, and it is a rare relic indeed! The Sibley Brigade cannons, which were buried in Albuquerque,



que, were recovered in 1889. Four of them now reside in the Colorado Historical Society Museum in Denver. The museum has graciously loaned one of them, tube only, to the museum for display in the current exhibit.

This is the very first time one of these Texas Confederate cannons has been in Texas since 1862!

The exhibit will be on display thru the fall of 2002. For more information call 254-582-2555 extension 295, or visit the Texas Heritage Museum in Hillsboro.

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**Next Meeting:
December 11th
King's Daughters Hospital
7:00 PM**