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Captain's Column

November has been a very busy month for F Company. We had the Civil War Show at the Richmond Raceway Complex 12 & 13 November and the following Saturday, 19 November, we marched in the Gettysburg Remembrance Day Parade. As of this writing there is one more activity for the unit this month and that is the fort work day on Wednesday, 30 November. Yes it is in the middle of the week but about 4 or 5 of us are scheduled to complete the replacement of the old boards on the bridge to the fort. By the time you read this and if the weather holds out, that will have been accomplished. I will let the 1st Sergeant's report update you on this.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Civil War Show. They included Mike Vice, Jack Alexander, Greg Hanson, Ray Hanson, and Eldridge Firth. We got several good prospects. Hopefully, some of them will turn into new recruits. Thanks also to everyone who marched in the parade. We had nine participants. They included Mike Vice, Jack Alexander, Travis Clements, Greg Hanson, Ray Hanson, and Mark Reimer. We had two very special guests, not that you all aren't special. One was a former F Company member known as the "Woodburner", Mr. "Ode To Joe" himself, Joe Pearson. It was great to have him in the ranks once again even if it was only for a short time. The other guest was my very own nephew, Alex Turley. I must say, not that I am prejudice in his favor, but he did make a picture perfect Confederate. The loaner uniform fit him well and he had the Confederate facial hair to go with it.. Thanks guys for a great turnout.

Note that this is a December / January newsletter. There are no scheduled company activities for

either month. We are in Winter Quarters. The next newsletter will be February 2017. One date to keep in mind is Saturday, 18 February. That will be our annual business meeting. It is not yet confirmed but it will probably be at the same place as last year, the National Park Service Maintenance Building at the Fort Harrison site. We will let you know for sure once this has been confirmed.

At the conclusion of the 2016 Reenactment Season I just want to say a few things. I want to thank the unit for letting me serve as your Captain. Even though for most of the events I fell in as a private, this year has helped rejuvenate my interest and love of the hobby. There is nothing quite like it. I especially want to thank Mike Vice, Jack Alexander, and Greg Hanson for all they have done in keeping the unit functioning like a well oiled machine. I think we had a nice mixture of activities throughout the year, from the march and reenactment at Port Republic / Cross Keys to the demos at the Manassas Winery and everything else thrown in. I truly believe that we are among the best Civil War reenactment units in the hobby today. There is life after the one-fiftieth. I thank everyone for making this such an enjoyable and inspiring reenacting season. Now let's look forward to 2017 and make it even better!

Have a "Happy Holiday Season" and I look forward to seeing everyone next year and doing it again.

With kindest regards,
Captain Turley

1st Sergeant's Column

Capital of the Confederacy Civil War Show (12-13 Nov 2016) - Members of F Co, 21st VA participated in what is the oldest CW collectors show in America manning a recruiting booth in the exhibit hall. With the backdrop of the 21st VA's Confederate battle flag and the militia colors of the 1st VA Regiment, we sought individuals w/a desire to take-up CW military living history. We came away w/one serious potential member taking away our enlistment package, and two other very good prospects for membership, all of which was very heartening in the world of today!

We had a good turnout of members to man our recruiting booth including Jack Alexander, Eldridge Firth, the Hanson brothers, Tony Turley and myself. This show brought out all kinds of folks this year including John Griffith, the great - great grandson of Ulysses S. Grant; Dick Cheatham, the principal of Living History Associates; and Don Polifka, the individual who originally made the CS wood canteens used by F Co years ago more than 20 years ago. We had a Bob Baird "sighting" on Sun, after going thru the entire show on Sun he did manage to spend a whole 4 minutes at the F Co recruiting booth! Incidentally, I forgot to mention in last month's newsletter that I spent time w/Skip Tyler at the Autumn CW Show in Gettysburg, PA who wanted me to pass on his greetings and best wishes to all the members of F Company!

Now to the great Greg Hanson gun deal! On Sat, Greg got that “look in his eye” as he was checking out all the tables at the CW show and just had to make a purchase! He’d spotted a modern Browning Auto 5 12 gauge magnum shotgun w/32 inch barrel and just had to have it! Says it’s a great deal and all the sort of stuff you tell yourself when you just know you’ve found a great bargain! Yes, it really is a good modern duck gun, so when he left the show on Sat afternoon at closing he had the shotgun w/him, but by not coming back on Sun he missed out on the truly great Civil War cheap gun purchase!!! Sunday afternoon as the show is starting to wind down, a dealer we’d got acquainted w/approached us w/a P53 British Enfield Rifle-Musket dated 1862 which had a number of subcomponents which had been manufactured by White, which had made parts for Confederate supplied Enfield's. While it might not have been in the finest condition all he wanted was \$500.00 cash for it which was a real deal! While I might have liked to have it I didn’t have \$500.00 cash on me so had to pass. The dealer sold it within 15 minutes of offering it for sale! Yes, gentlemen poor Pvt Greg Hanson missed out on what was very likely a real Confederate musket for a cheap price and the true bargain of the Capital of the Confederacy Civil War Show!

Remembrance Day Parade (19 Nov 2016) - It dawned nice and clear for the Remembrance Day Parade in Gettysburg which always makes the day much more enjoyable. Visiting house guest and F Co. member Mark Riemer and myself got to our assembly point at Unity Park about 1130 and found several members of the co already in place. First time visiting marcher w/us was Tony Turley’s nephew Alex plus former member Joe Pearson was on hand as well. I certainly appreciated the willingness of both these individuals to muster w/us for the parade. Other members participating included Jack Alexander, Travis Clements (color bearer), and the Hanson brothers, all for a total of nine F Co soldiers. We set out marching at about 1330 w/the drummers to our front engaging most of the time in reasonable drum cadence. With the excellent weather there was a large turnout of visitors throughout the entire parade route. Once again w/our neat appearance and white gloves we garnered many positive comments from the spectators. Literally as we approached the final release point at Gettysburg National Military Park the predicted weather front blew in w/brisk wind gust and growing overcast skies, but we’d lucked out w/the weather and got thru the parade undamaged! All in all another good parade in Gettysburg where Confederate flags are flown and no one loses their minds over its display!

By the way, the Riemers and I went looking for a snack after the parade and wound up at Ruby Tuesdays up on Hwy 30 where the manager wanted to take a photo of Mark and myself in uniform for his daughter, but remember this guy is from New Jersey! Another example of why gray clad Rebs aren’t evil even to many Yankees!

Special Fort Work Day (30 Nov 16)- I’m now happy to report that the bridging project at Fort Harvie is now completed! A special work crew consisting of the Hanson brothers, Tony Turley, myself and our latest recruit Nick King, who incidentally lives in Amelia County and close to Fort, all completed the project in the period of 1 ½ hours which demonstrates how organization and planning along w/right tools can get the job done! My personal thanks to all the F Co members who participated in this effort for your hard work.

Upcoming Key 2017 Event Dates- Put these dates on your calendar and make plans to participate during the first part of 2017:

Annual Membership Meeting- Saturday, 18 February 2017

Fort Clean-up Day- Saturday, 4 March 2017

Appomattox CH (NPS)- Friday-Sunday, 7-9 April 2017

Camp of Instruction- Friday-Sunday, 21-23 April 2017

Utilization of Time in the Off Season- The next two months or so are going to be “quite” so to speak for living history, but it’s not the time to sit on your hands!!! Need to be looking at your clothing and equipment to insure its ready for the 2017 campaign season. As examples, if your brogans need new soles and heels then you need to send them off immediately to MO Boot and Shoe so you can have them back just in time for the COI in April. It’s time to send your uniform to the dry cleaners for its annual cleaning (But no pressing!!!) as well as sewing up or patching clothing items like your shirt; order or buy that missing piece of equipment from F Co Inventory at the Annual Meeting in Feb; and in general make sure your ready to face the new season fully ready to take to the field.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!!

Respectfully,
Michael L. Vice
1st SGT, F Co,
21st VA Infantry





Ode to Joe

