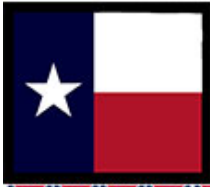


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Gen. Felix H. Robertson Camp 129
Waco, TX



April 2025 Newsletter

IT'S CONFEDERATE HISTORY MONTH!

Commander Bobby Fears and Camp Member Koby Westbrook. Koby was presented with a Certificate of Recognition for his contributions to the Camp with our website and newsletter subscriptions.



Birthdays

April 1, 1823, Lieutenant General Simon B. Buckner

April 10, 1806, Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk

April 21, 1816, Brigadier General Louis Wigfall

Battles

April 1, 1865, Battle of Five Forks

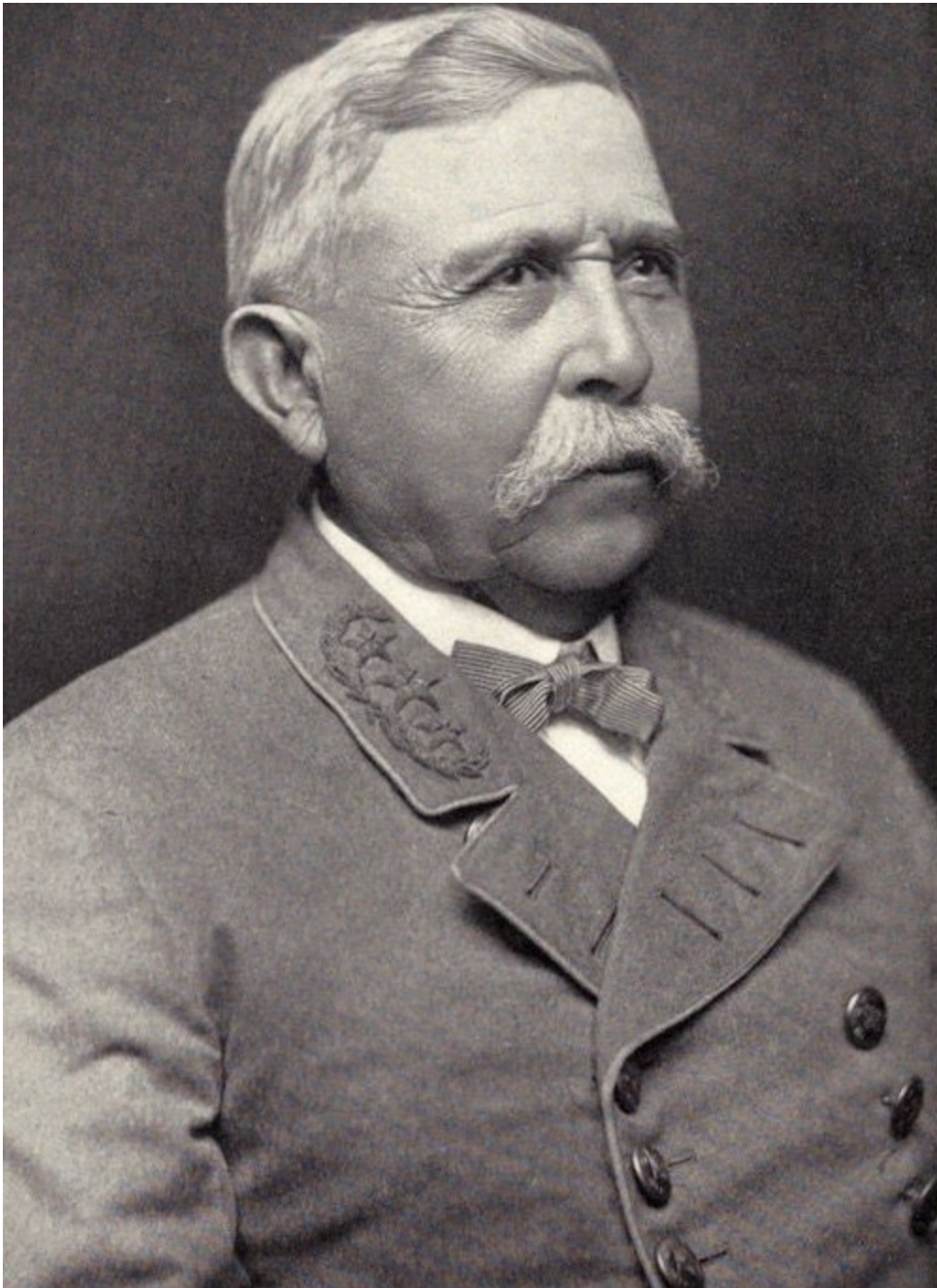
April 2, 1865, Battle of Petersburg

April 3, 1865, Battle of Richmond

April 6-7, 1862, Battle of Shiloh

"To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish."

Lt. Gen. Stephen D. Lee



Pictured above is the namesake of our Great Camp, Brig. Gen. Felix Huston Robertson. Much can be said about this great general in his service during and after

son generals on either side of the war besides Gen. Robert E. Lee and his sons. After the war, Robertson chose Waco as his permanent home. He began to study and practice law, while also being inspirational in the area to stand up against the Yankee invasion known as Reconstruction. He passed away on April 20th, 1928 and was buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Waco. He left behind one last legacy as being the last surviving Confederate General.



Commander's Comments

by Bobby Fears

April is...CONFEDERATE HISTORY MONTH!!!

In these parts, every second, minute, hour, day, week, month, and year is Confederate History Month! The more I learn, the prouder I become of 'ol Dixie!

This month's speaker is Mr. Johnny Anderson of the Georgetown camp. He also produces videos for the TX division. A true patriot, an asset to us, and honor to his people, he will talk to us about Texas troops at Shiloh and updates on Monument preservation. I can't wait to hear it!

In addition to our meeting this month, there is the Division picnic at the Confederate Reunion Grounds on the 19th. It will be good food, good camaraderie, and at a historical Confederate site! On the 26th, there will be a highway clean-up. If you can make it, come on down!

Good folks, I'll see you at the meeting!

DEO VINDICE!!!

Lt. Commander's Comments

by Markham Dossett

April is Confederate History Month. We should increase our efforts to educate our families and friends on the real issues that caused the creation of the Confederacy. Study the Tariff

the only issue.

The Republican Party of the 19th century is different from the Republican Party of the 21st century. Our new President, a Republican, has decreed that all monuments that were destroyed or removed over the last 20 years should be restored and reinstalled. The crazy protestors and violent thugs defaced statues of Robert E. Lee, Nathan Bedford Forrest, Thomas Jefferson, Stonewall Jackson, and many other leaders of both the War for Southern Independence and the Revolutionary War. To make matters worse, compliant, weak city councils and legislatures knuckled under the protestors and illegally removed many statues and flags. I believe the momentum has changed in the battle to preserve our Southern history, and we should all thank God and Donald Trump for that new direction. Our children and grandchildren should see statues of our Confederate Heroes and learn about their acts of bravery and sacrifice for state's rights.

2nd Lt. Commander's Comments

by John Dickey

Greetings Compatriots!

Recently, I came across an interesting article written by a geology professor at UNC. With his being a professor at a somewhat progressive college, after reading the article, you can guess what resulted from my conclusion! One of his fields of study is "MILITARY GEOLOGY."

The Myth of the Civil War Sniper

BY: Scott Hippensteel

A CONFEDERATE SHARPSHOOTER

What do Union generals John Reynolds, William Sanders, Stephen Weed, and John Sedgwick have in common? According to traditional historiography, each man was killed by a sharpshooter who targeted him, often firing from more than a half-mile away.

Let's start with the killing of Major General John Sedgwick at Spotsylvania. A review of standard military history books and sniper compendiums indicates a consensus about two aspects of Sedgwick's death: 1) He was walking among the men of his VI Corps, gently scolding them for taking cover from the bullets from a far-off Rebel sharpshooter, one he is

from twice that distance.

Most military historians agree that an extraordinary weapon would be required for such a high-value target at such a great distance. Thus, it is generally understood that a relatively rare weapon from the Confederate arsenal, a Whitworth rifle, would be used.

Whether fired from a rifle or dropped from a hand, a bullet falls because of gravity at a rate of around 32 feet per second². So, one requirement for a gun capable of accurate fire from a tremendous distance is an exceptionally high bullet velocity—the faster the bullet, the less time it will be in the air and fall to earth. Most modern rifles designed for sniper use have a muzzle velocity that approaches 3,500 feet per second. A bullet from such a rifle can cover a half-mile in under a second and, for more realistic targeting, will fall only 24 inches in 400 yards, requiring only a relatively small holdover by the shooter.

To kill a man with a targeted headshot at 800 yards with a Whitworth would, however, require several challenges to be satisfied, all at the same time. First, the bullet would be in the air for almost two seconds, so the target had to remain perfectly stationary. Next, because of the parabolic path of the bullet, the shooter would need to aim almost 15 feet over the target's head and, most importantly, estimate precisely the distance between him and his target. Finally, if there was even the slightest breeze—say, 2 miles per hour—the shooter would have to adjust for the wind direction and speed. Also, at a half-mile distance, the general would appear to be the same size as the period at the end of this sentence. If the sniper calculates that his target is 2,400 feet away, but in actuality, he is only the slightest bit farther at 2,440 feet, the bullet sprays dirt on Sedgwick's boots. Suppose the shooter overestimates the distance by 10 feet; the round sails over his target's head. He misses if the wind is blowing two mph faster downrange than where he is firing from or from a slightly different direction. If Sedgwick moves in any direction during the two seconds after firing, the bullet falls harmlessly. In short, for a bullet from such a reputed distance to have felled Sedgwick on May 9, 1864, the shooter needed to aim precisely 13.8 feet above and 10 inches behind the momentarily frozen general, all after estimating his range with 98.4% accuracy. That did not happen.

Gettysburg is the battle most written about in history, and most detailed volumes convey an even more impressive sniper story from Little Round Top. A Confederate sharpshooter, positioned in Devil's Den, hit Brigadier General Stephen Weed from about 550 yards away. When Lieutenant Charles Hazlet rushed to take in the mortally wounded commander's last words, he, too, was cut down by the marksman. Astonishing—two consecutive shots, at a 5-degree angle uphill, from more than 500 yards away, with a rifle-musket.

With a muzzle velocity of around 900–950 feet per second propelling a broad, much less aerodynamic minie ball, the round will be in the air for two full seconds, and the

the four seconds the bullets are in the air. And, once again, this historical sniper must know the distance to his targets within a dozen feet (at 550 yards). The story, as long told, had no scientific underpinnings. Most sharpshooters during the Civil War were selected because they were gifted marksmen who usually operated as elite skirmishers. Distant shots were occasionally successful, often taken from longer than 100 yards, but these soldiers were not operating as snipers as we think of them on modern battlefields. The term “sniper” only gained popularity much later in World War I.

For decades, Civil War writers and interpreters have been relating sniper stories in a manner that would have the Whitworths, Springfields, and Enfields performing with the ballistics of a modern high-power rifle. Instead, those weapons had the muzzle velocity and bullet shape of a 9 mm handgun, a weapon that, even with a preposterously long barrel, would be a ludicrous choice for a 400-yard shot. What is more probable is that these unfortunate generals were cut down by *area fire*—a sharpshooter was aiming in the vicinity of the general, hoping an exceptionally auspicious shot might strike a high-value target.

DISCUSSION NOTES:

The author of this article provided a scientific description that was slightly biased in claiming these events could not be done, and he reached that conclusion based on today’s standards and techniques. He has a difficult time accepting that these soldiers could make those shots, trivializing their expertise. In his opinion, as is so familiar with today’s analysts, the “science” didn’t add up. But in the end, the hard, cold facts were that both the Union and the South had their experts who could regularly perform their jobs as SHARPSHOOTERS. As stated, the term SNIPER did not become a standard until WWI. Still, these soldiers at the time were expert riflemen like today’s shooters with all their accessories, technology, scopes, and rifles.



Book Reviews

by Cary Bogan

Note: Your book reviewer has been reading extensively in preparation for an end-of-World War II cruise along the Elbe River in Europe. To my surprise, I discovered that the vast majority of books that I have read recently are NOT about the WBTS. So, I'd like to ask you to indulge me in my reviews of numerous non-WBTS books.

“The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864”, by John Horn, published by Savas Beatie. This book covers what is officially known as Grant’s

Ultimately, the Yankees succeeded, though at an extremely heavy cost. The result was that Lee had to offload supplies from the cut Weldon Railroad and drive them into Petersburg by wagon. Or, he had to resort to using the longer route of the Southside Railroad to the west to supply his forces. The big takeaway from this book is the Southern troops' vastly superior fighting ability over their Northern counterparts. Time and again, smaller, better-led Confederates appeared suddenly at places where they were not expected and routed far larger U.S. forces, sometimes with very few casualties. The Army of the Potomac was composed of battle-weary troops who had suffered through many failed assaults with many casualties. Morale was low, and the ranks were full of less than enthusiastic volunteers. At the end of the book, the author has an appendix that quantifies the relative fighting abilities of the two sides. The Yankees eventually succeeded due to the numerical superiority which they enjoyed. This book is a tribute to the fighting ability of the soldiers in the Army of Northern Virginia.

“Holding the Line on the River of Death: Union Mounted Forces at Chickamauga, September 18, 1863”, by Eric J. Wittenberg, published by Savas Beatie. Yes, this is a book about two Yankee cavalry brigades at Chickamauga. I get that. However, I found this to be a worthwhile book because it discusses why Bragg’s plan to get his army across Chickamauga Creek and block the Union Army of the Cumberland’s line of retreat/supply back to Chattanooga was seriously delayed. The delay allowed Rosecrans to sidestep his men to his left and block the Confederate move to remove him from Chattanooga. By the time Confederate forces were across the creek, Yankees were in place to stop them, thus leading to the bloodbath at Chickamauga.

“Voices of the Civil War: Chickamauga,” by the Editors of Time-Life Books, published by Time-Life Books. This is another excellent volume in this series by the now defunct, greatly lamented Time-Life Books. Like the others I have reviewed, this book has excellent first-person accounts, great illustrations, and maps from the great Time-Life series “The Civil War.”

“A World Undone: The Story of the Great War, 1914-1919”, by G.J. Meyer, published by Bantam Books. This is a history of the First World War, which I purchased at the National World War I Museum and Memorial. This is a big book (over 700 pages), but I would still consider it a book for beginners and more seasoned readers of the First World. What is unique about this volume is that most chapters are followed by a background “chapter,” which does an excellent job of covering some of the details of some aspects of the war covered in the preceding chapter. Some of these are The Hapsburgs, The Romanovs, The Ottoman Turks, The Jews of Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II, The Gardeners of Salonika, and

“Return to the Victory: MacArthur’s Epic Liberation of the Philippines,” James P. Duffy, published by Hachette Books. This book is a medium-sized history of the Philippines Campaign in 1944. My late great-uncle was there, serving in the 167th Infantry Regiment of the 31st Division. This is a good introductory history of the campaign with an insert of photographs and nine maps, which are adequate. Ultimately, I plan to tackle the Green Book, the U.S. Army’s Official History of the Battle, for the final word.

“U.S. Army in the Korean War: South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu,” by Roy E. Appleman, published by the U.S. Army. This weighty book—over 800 pages total—covers in exhaustive detail the Korean War from its outbreak in June 1950 to the Chinese First Phase Offensive in late October 1950. At this point the disastrous Chinese Second Phase Offensive was just weeks away, and with it General MacArthur’s proclamation of an “entirely new war”. This is a great book, but it is for the hardcore Korean War buff. And make sure that you get a copy of the books that has the fold out maps at the back, otherwise you will be lost when starts describing troop movements.

“Soviet Tanks in Manchuria 1945: The Red Army’s ruthless last blitzkrieg of World War II”, by William E. Hiestand, published by Osprey Publishing. This is an Osprey Vanguard Series book on the Soviet employment of tanks in Operation August Storm against the Japanese at the end of World War II, about the same time that the Atomic Bombs were being employed. This book has the usual Osprey standards of documentation and illustrations.

“War Dogs: A History of Loyalty and Heroism”, by Michael G. Lemish, published by Potomac Books. This is a book I purchased at the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas. As a dog lover, I loved this book for obvious reasons. It covers military working dogs during the 20th Century from World War I through Vietnam.



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