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Gen. Felix H. Robertson Camp 129
Waco, TX

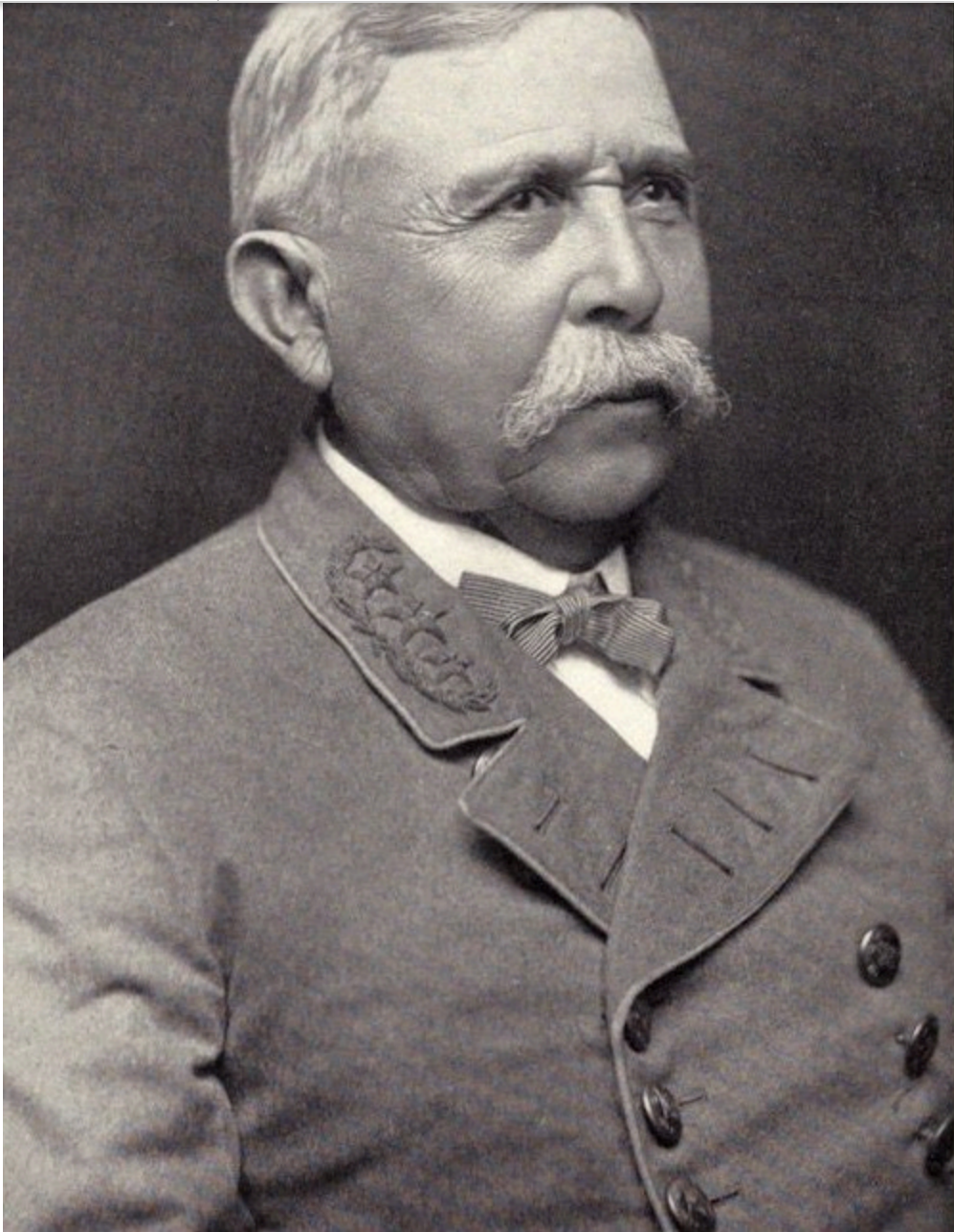


December 2024 Newsletter

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"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 the war in Texas. He was the only general who was a native-born Texan. Not only that, but he and his father, Jerome Bonaparte Robertson, were the only other father-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 20, 1928, and was buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Waco. He left behind one last legacy as being the last surviving Confederate General.



by Bobby Fears

Merry Christmas and a Happy Yuletide!

Wow, December! Sometimes, it drags, and sometimes, it flies. My dad was right: the older you get, the faster it goes!

Good folks, I sincerely hope you make it out to our meeting on Tuesday, December 10th. Last year, we were at the Texas Civil War Museum, and the year before, we did the Bingo game. This year, we are revamping the bingo game and a few extras.

Door prizes! Bingo for three different gifts! Lastly, I humbly ask you to bring a \$15-\$20 gift to be exchanged with other folks who partake in this gift exchange event—rules, details, and all that will be reviewed at the meeting.

Lastly, elections for officers and other camp business issues will be addressed.

Anyhoo, come on out, have a good little Christmas party Confederate style, see yall there!

DEO VINDICE! SIC SEMPER TYRANNIS!

Lt. Commander's Comments

by Markham B. Dossett

I attended a high school called Woodberry Forest School in Orange, Virginia, from 1968-1971. Woodberry is on a thousand-acre estate along the Rapidan River 40 miles north of Charlottesville. After the Battle of Gettysburg in July of 1863, GEN Lee moved his army to the Orange area to rest and recuperate. They spent the winter of '63 and '64 on the Woodberry campus. ST. THOMAS Episcopal Church is in the small town of Orange, founded in 1740. ROBERT E. Lee was an Episcopalian and attended services there over that winter of '63. The church has preserved the pew that he sat in and has two pictures of Lee above it. I have attended services there every time I have visited Orange for 40 years. It snows a lot in December and January around Orange. As a matter of fact, it is very cold there right now. So, as we give thanks for this week and prepare for Christmas in three weeks, let us give thanks to our Confederate ancestors who fought so bravely in 1863 and then suffered a very cold winter

Rights and our Southern Culture.

2nd Lt. Commander's Comments

by John Dickey

THANKSGIVING 1863

Thanksgiving became a national holiday in the United States on October 3, 1863, when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed it to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November: Lincoln's proclamation was issued during the Civil War to unify the country and to comfort those who had suffered losses. The holiday has been celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November since 1942 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint resolution passed by Congress in 1941. Before Lincoln's proclamation, George Washington issued a Thanksgiving proclamation in 1789, designating November 26 as a day of public thanksgiving. However, subsequent presidents did not maintain the tradition.

Southerners were slow to adopt a New England custom, and others took offense over the days being used to hold partisan speeches and parades. A national Thanksgiving Day seemed more like a lightning rod for controversy than a unifying force.

So, what was a customary Thanksgiving Day dinner in the South during the War? Civil War diaries show us what the troops ate generally and on special occasions. Various organizations solicited holiday food donations, including poultry, mince pies, sausages, and fruit. One account notes that the Sanitary Commission (President Davis' Office) put on a feed in the field that consisted of Turkey, Chicken, and Apples—but a day late. A soldier noted, "It isn't the turkey, but the idea that we care for."

The Confederate soldier's rations consisted of cornbread, mule meat, or a meat substitute of "rice and molasses." There are reports of men existing for days on handfuls of parched corn or field peas. "Cush" or "slosh"—a dish of necessity—was made by putting small pieces of beef in bacon grease, then pouring in water and "stewing it." Next, cornbread was crumbled, and the

seasoned with onions. Yet another dish, Slapjack, consisted of a thick mixture of cornmeal or flour and fried in Bacon grease until it was brown. Other delectable delights included:

- Ashcakes--cornmeal mixed with salt and water, wrapped in cabbage leaves, and cooked in ashes until firm.
- Baked beans--baked in a kettle placed in a hole in the ground, covered and baked with hot coals, and allowed to cook overnight. Sometimes, salt pork is added.
- Hardtack Pudding--Hardtack is pounded into a powder, mixed with water and flour if available, then kneaded into dough, rolled out like a pie crust, and filled with apples or anything else available. Finally, it is wrapped in a cloth and boiled for an hour.
- Hell-fire stew--hardtack boiled in water and bacon grease.
- Lobscouse (lob scowz)--a stew of pieces of meat, vegetables, and hardtack.
- Milk toast--hardtack soaked in condensed milk (Borden had just started to can).

I hope everyone had a fun and flavorful Thanksgiving and that your TEAM won. Realize, however, that on Thanksgiving Day, there were almost as many fans in the stands at Kyle Field at Texas A&M as there are citizens in the City Limits of Waco!



Book Reviews

by Cary Bogan

“Decision at Tom’s Brook: George Custer, Thomas Rosser, and the Joy of the Fight”, by William J. Miller, published by Savas Beatie. This book is about a lesser known cavalry battle that took place ten days before the Battle of Cedar Mountain in the fall of 1864. The Confederate force was commanded by Thomas Rosser, the Union force by George Armstrong Custer. These two men not only knew each other each other well at West Point, but also were friends. . Rosser was overwhelmed, and his force was badly defeated, and he, personally, was humiliated. This book delves deeply into the personalities of the two commanders to explain why the engagement turned out the way that it did. Ironically, the two reconciled and remained friends after the war. This book is highly recommended.

essays on the WBTS by noted Civil War academics—all of the authors are listed as either professors or PhDs. The subjects are: Origins of the Civil War; Governing the War; Leadership on the Battlefield; The Men Who Fought the War; A People's War; Winning the War at Sea; The Civil War in the West; Espionage, Covert Action, and Military Intelligence; The Home Front; Emancipation; Europe and the Civil War; and The Legacy of the Civil War. Unlike some of these put together, “edited”, books, I think this one actually works. I recommend it.

“Voices of the Civil War: The Peninsula”, by the Editors of Time-Life Books, published by Time-Life Books. Like the other volumes in the “Voices” series this book uses personal accounts to tell the story of the fighting on the Virginia Peninsula prior to Robert E. Lee’s assumption of command. This book begins with McClellan taking command to the landings of the Army of the Potomac at Fortress Monroe to the Battle of Seven Pines where Confederate General Joseph Johnston was wounded and Robert E. Lee took command.

“1941: The Year Germany Lost the War”, by Andrew Nagorski, published by Simon & Schuster. This book is an excellent look at the pivotal year of 1941. At the beginning of the year Germany was at war with a beleaguered Great Britain, alone. At the end of the year Germany was at war with the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union as well. American industrial might coupled with Soviet manpower spelled doom for Nazi Germany. The book looks into the Why of how this happened. This is an excellent book.

“The End of Everything: How Wars Descend into Annihilation”, by Victor Davis Hanson, published by Basic Books. This book, generally, looks at why societies were utterly wiped out in a military campaign. The four topics are: the Destruction of Classical Thebes; The Destruction of Carthage; The Fall of Constantinople; and the End of the Aztec Empire. Like everything that Mr. Hanson writes, this a thought provoking read.

“Operation Bagration: The Soviet Destruction of Army Group German Center, 1944”, by Ian Baxter, published by Casemate Illustrated. This fine book is a thumbnail history of the worst German defeat of World War II. Operation Bagration occurred roughly at the same time as the Battle of Normandy. Due to clever deception measures the German Army in White Russia, the area around Minsk, was caught unprepared and off balance. The result was the loss of

Upcoming Events!

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