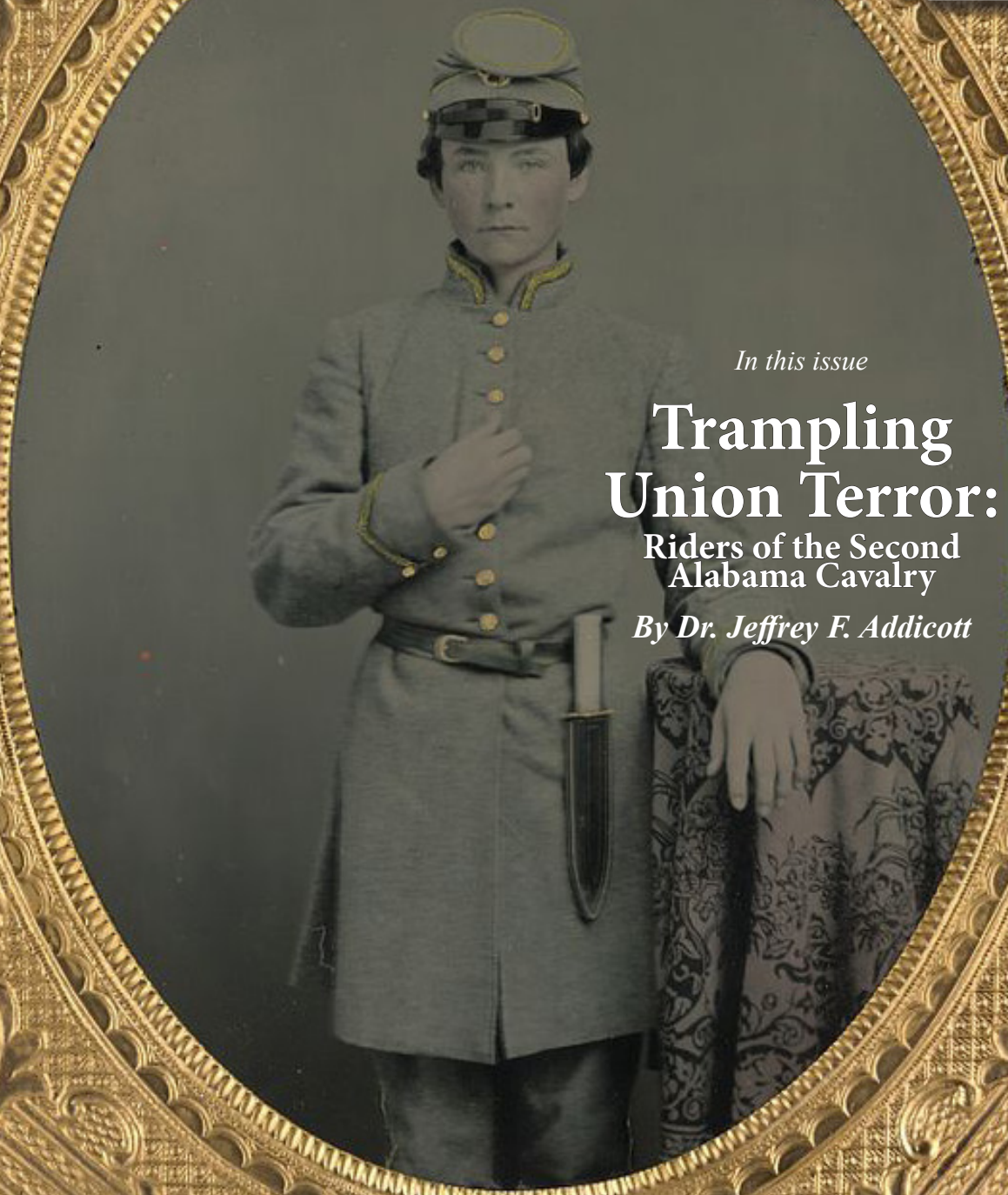


TEXDIV REPORTER

The Official Newsletter of the Texas Division



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Riders of the Second
Alabama Cavalry

By Dr. Jeffrey F. Addicott

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Editors note: The cover photo is of an unidentified confederate soldier with a Bowie Knife | Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

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Correspondence is welcomed and encouraged
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COMMANDERS ADDRESS TO THE DIVISION



Compatriots,

I am pleased to report the Texas Division remains strong and active. As your Commander, it has been a thrill to observe firsthand the incredible good done in our community in the name of our brave southern lineage. Here are a few essential items that I would like to mention as they relate to our work to keep "The Charge" of our organization.

Upcoming Texas Division Reunion in San Antonio - Our reunion is just around the corner, June 7-9, 2024. I have visited the hotel and sampled the food and hospitality. We are in for a great time of fellowship and fun, and we will conduct training and business of the Texas Division. Please make every effort to be there. I know you will find it and money well spent. If you still need to register, do it now, as the prices will be higher after April 1, 2024. Registering by April 1, 2024, will allow attendance at all events to cost \$85 per person.

Heritage Defense Seminar: Our first Heritage Defense Seminar was a huge success. Over fifty men and guests attended the meeting held at the Baylor Club in McLane Stadium on the campus of Baylor University on February 10, 2024. Practical information and breakout sessions provided inspiration and practical application in our efforts to defend our monuments, traditions, and culture as Southerners. We had an all-star lineup of excellent speakers, including Lt Commander In Chief Donnie Kennedy, Heritage Operations Chief Ronnie Kennedy, Texas Division 1st Lt Commander Shelby Little, and 3rd Vice President General of the U.D.C. Tami Hurley. A follow-up survey of attendees revealed overwhelming approval of the event and its value.

Hollywood Cemetery - Richmond, Virginia's famed Hollywood cemetery is the resting place of several hundred Texas soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of Texas. For the past 50 years, their graves have remained unmarked following the removal of the Texas marker. The Texas Division is working to replace the marker, with final designs and approval set to take place at the March DEC meeting. A time and dedication date will be announced, and all Texas Division members will be invited to its dedication. Watch your email for the date and time.

Reminder. I welcome invitations to speak at your local Camp or Brigade meetings; please contact me for availability.



W. Michael Hurley
Commander
Texas Division
Sons of Confederate Veterans

Trampling Union Terror: Riders of the Second Alabama Cavalry

By
Dr. Jeffrey F. Addicott
Lt. Colonel (US Army, Ret.) BA, JD, LLM (2), SJD

“The object of terrorism is terrorism. The object of oppression is oppression. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power. Now do you begin to understand me?”
– George Orwell

This work is a companion to the 2023 book, *Union Terror: Debunking the Justifications for the Union’s Use of Terror Against Southern Civilians*. *Union Terror* explored not only the legal and policy implications of the Lincoln Administration’s decision to employ a merciless scorched-earth campaign against large segments of unresisting Southern noncombatants, but also proved as absolutely false all of the so-called justifications for its use of terrorism with particular emphasis focused on the 1864 Union terror operation from Atlanta to Savannah, colloquially known as the “March to the Sea.”

While most mainstream writers about the American Civil War obfuscate and/or fail to condemn the raw atrocities committed by the Lincoln Administration, it is interesting to note that our enemies do not – they often make reference to the wide-spread Union war crimes for their own propaganda purposes. For instance, in 1944, the magazine *Signal*, a widely distributed German publication of the Nazi regime published in German, French, and Spanish, boasted a full length photo of General Ulysses S. Grant on its cover to introduce the reader to the main story called: *The Method of Warfare of the Americans*. The article spent five pages detailing the outrageous terror tactics by Federal military forces against an unresisting Southern civilian population designed to ensure maximum suffering on the noncombatants, just 80 years prior. With “D Day” and the arrival of U.S. troops into Europe, the Germans hoped to frighten civilian Europeans into believing that they could expect the same abusive treatment!

As the title of this work suggests, the prism employed to further explore the matter of Union terrorism centers around a storied Confederate cavalry command, the 2nd Alabama Cavalry Regiment. Not only did the 2nd Alabama actively contest numerous Federal terror raids in Mississippi and Alabama, the gray horse soldiers had the unique distinction of witnessing first-hand the crescendo of Union savagery during Sherman’s march across Georgia as they vigorously resisted the wrongdoers every step of the way. In fact, while serving both independently and under various larger commands, to include General Daniel Ruggles and General Samuel Ferguson, the riders of the 2nd Alabama Cavalry have the unique distinction of fighting Union terror raids – Sherman and others – more than any other cavalry regiment in the entire Confederacy!

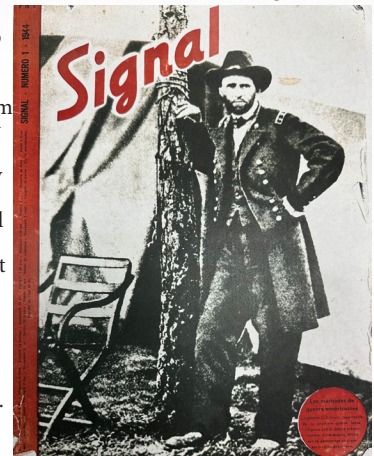
Simply put, the book is about “war crimes and warriors.” The war crimes recount the horrendous outrages on non-combatants which occurred during Union military strikes in the western theater of combat and the warriors describe the hard riding troopers of the Confederacy’s 2nd Alabama Cavalry Regiment, Southern men who valiantly defended their families, State, and country from the miscreants.

– Through Their Eyes –

The 2nd Alabama Cavalry Regiment was recruited from the fertile farmlands of south and central Alabama in the Spring of 1862, a year after the War began. The men that made up the regiment were homogenous in their backgrounds and all embraced an unflinching commitment to the instilled virtue of duty. Since no literary source exists to preserve the heroic accomplishments of this hard fighting regiment, this work attempts to pull the riders back from the vortex of time so that their service may be properly honored and hopefully assist in renewing a commitment by future generations to celebrate the essential qualities of duty and honor that have long formed an integral part of the American mosaic.

When properly lead, the 2nd Alabama was a brave and extremely capable fighting force with many skirmishes and battles to their credit. Participants in some of the key events of the Civil War, the men logged thousands of miles on horseback over inhospitable terrain, often in conditions of broiling heat and bone chilling cold, boldly confronting Federal cavalry terror raids in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia.

While the 2nd Alabama cut their combat teeth blunting Union cavalry strikes in Mississippi and Alabama in 1863, their most demanding service occurred during Sherman’s Meridian raid, the Dalton-Atlanta campaign, and the March to the Sea. They also saw action in the evacuation of Savannah and served as part of the final escort of President Jefferson Davis in 1865, as he fled into Georgia following the fall of Richmond. In this light, the 2nd Alabama Cavalry Regiment served to the very end, not because they viewed themselves as part of a great Greek tragedy “where you know what the outcome is bound to be,” but because they believed that they were in the right, fighting to ward off vicious invaders who terrorized the innocent.



After struggling through a first year of service marked by inaction and incompetent leadership along the Gulf Coast of Alabama and Florida, the 2nd Alabama proved themselves a sterling fighting regiment when assigned to independent duty in north Mississippi in the late spring of 1863. By the time that their incredible regimental commander, the gallant Colonel Richard Earle, was killed in action the next year, they had long since found their stride as the best regiment in General Samuel Ferguson's cavalry brigade. Ferguson, himself a brave and skilled leader who possessed no other ambition than to serve his country, relied heavily on the 2nd Alabama until the very end.

In 1862, the allocated slots in the 2nd Alabama were easy to fill as no branch of service was more appealing to recruits than the cavalry. Not only did the young men equate the job with stories of cavaliers and knights of old galloping about on high adventure, the aura of gallantry and independence offered by cavalry life also played directly to a certain "devil may care" attitude of invincibility. Further, such duty avoided the curse of the infantryman who was obligated to slog about on foot.

Surviving photographs of Rebel cavalrymen taken early in the War often reflect cocky troopers clad in spruced up hats and polished boots, with braces of shiny pistols tucked in wide leather belts. However, as the hardships multiplied subsequent images reveal that thousand-mile gaze born from the rigors of endless days of campaigning (see below photo provided by Shannon Pritchard, Old South Military Antiques). In many ways, while the draw to the cavalry was almost irresistible the grueling lifestyle could be far more debilitating than what the foot soldier ever experienced.



In the late spring of 1863, the troopers were ordered into northern Mississippi where they engaged in months and months of extensive combat blunting Federal terror raids swooping down from Union held Tennessee into north Mississippi. Their first encounter with Union raiders came from the Ninth (9th) Illinois Volunteer Infantry (mounted) and was typical of subsequent fights.

Separating from a larger Federal group of raiders camped at Pochontas, Tennessee, the 9th Illinois launched a smaller incursion into northern Mississippi to seize food and burn homes. Their commander was Lieutenant Colonel Jesse J. Phillips and he led about 300 mounted men with two pieces of light artillery. His mission also included specific orders to completely destroy the civilian town of New Albany. Along with this group of terrorists in blue rode the regimental chaplain, Marion Morrison, who chronicled the three-day raid in his diary.

On the morning of June 13, 1863, Phillips entered the town of Ripley and took possession without opposition. While the town was looted and a sizable group of black Southerners were impressed into labor, the place was not torched.

According to Chaplain Morrison: The town was searched, but nothing of a contraband nature [was found], except a number of negroes, who were confiscated for the Government [emphasis added]."

The next town hit that day was nearby Orizabo, which also offered no resistance. Unlike Ripley, however, Orizabo was completely burned to the ground under the absurd excuse that it "was a place of rendezvous" for the Rebels. Of course, under such distorted criterion for inflicting raw criminal violence, every Southern town would be subject to destruction, which was exactly what was taking place. In this light, the reason Orizabo was destroyed and Ripley spared was not because of any law of war or humanitarian concerns, but rather because Ripley was only a half-day's ride to their main target of New Albany and the arsonists would be returning through Ripley to rest up that night on their way back to friendly lines. They would burn it then.

Making sure that sufficient flankers were sent out to report on any lurking Confederate cavalry, the terrorists then moved with their loot to the south towards New Albany as fast as the heavily loaded wagons could travel. While enroute Morrison dryly recorded that the Yankees stopped a large family on the road and robbed them of all their property because in roughly searching the group's personal possessions they found a letter tucked inside an elderly woman's carpet-sack with a single Confederate postage stamp affixed to the outside. Naturally, the Yankees would have stolen the wagons and horses anyway – finding a Confederate stamp served as their so-called justification for highway robbery.

While stopping to feed, about four miles south of Ripley, a family moving to Ripley came along. Their wagons and carriage were searched, and a Rebel mail was found in the old lady's carpet-sack. Their horses and mules were all confiscated, except one old team of mules which they were allowed to keep.

By late afternoon of June 13, the Union horsemen entered New Albany which they promptly pillaged and then utterly burned. Chaplain Morrison gleefully

described the war crimes, justifying them with the perverted notion that since all Confederates were illegal guerrillas and should not be covered by the civilized rules of warfare, the Secesh civilians were equally guilty by "aiding" them and were thus fair game for robbery, arson, and pillage. Nevertheless, the goodly Chaplain was careful in his history of the regiment not to mention the horrible details of the wanton destruction of private homes, churches, or hospitals other than to dryly record, as in the case of his observations about New Albany, that the town was "entirely destroyed." In point of fact, the Union troopers had forced their way into every private dwelling rifling for valuables and stripping away what they could carry, then smashing all the windows, porcelain, and mirrors before applying the touch. Domestic animals which were not taken were slaughtered and left to rot. He wrote: The Regiment then proceeded to New Albany, reaching that place about 4 P.M. Finding the town nearly deserted by citizens, and used as a general Headquarters for guerrillas [Confederate cavalry forces], and a supplying point for them, it [New Albany] was entirely destroyed, after any stores of value [civilian and military property] that could be carried away were taken [stolen].

The Yankees then returned to base, although three days later the Phillips was ordered out on another raid and given command of an even larger body of Federal cavalry consisting of parts of four regiments – the 9th Illinois, 10th Illinois, 11th Missouri (some sources claim it was the 18th Missouri), and 5th Ohio. In addition, two full companies of Tories and several pieces of light artillery were assigned making this destructive body of about 1,000 a force to be reckoned with as it headed south on the main road straight towards burned out New Albany. This time Phillips was ordered to strike the strategic Mobile & Ohio Railroad and do as much damage to the locals along the route as possible.

Sundown of June 19, found the Federals bivouacked three miles south of New Albany on the road to Pontotoc. In a stroke of good luck, far-ranging scouts from the 2nd Alabama found the Yankees on the move and together with a sister regiment of Tennesseans the combined force followed the enemy for a full day and night straight into one of the many muddy cane-brake swamps of the "Atchchubby-paliah" about 15 miles due west of New Albany.

The bone-weary Confederates troopers dismounted, untied leather girths, and slid saddle blankets and saddles off the matted, wet backs of their mounts. No camp fires were allowed and after wolfing down cold rations most were soon stretched out on the warm ground, which after so much riding seemed as soft as goose feathers. Although the horses were unsaddled, they stayed hobbled close by as the men fell fast asleep perfectly indifferent to what tomorrow might bring.

Continued on page 14

1st Lt. Commanders Report Quarterly Report

Compatriots –

Current Heritage Defense Issues:

On 9 January, I appeared before the Williamson County Commissioners Court and announced that, after 43 straight months, the Williamson County Grays had voluntarily suspended our weekly vigil at the Williamson County Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Memorial on the Courthouse Square in Georgetown. I cited the dismissal of the federal lawsuit against us at both the District and Appeals levels as well as my belief that the “opposition” no longer constituted a viable threat to the Memorial. Subsequently, I made a similar announcement in the Williamson County Sun newspaper for the public at large. Except for a brief and uneventful appearance on President’s Day (19 February), the anarchists have kept a low profile. We will remain vigilant.



A Division-wide Heritage Defense Seminar was held at the Baylor Club in Waco on 10 February, promulgated and hosted by Division Commander Hurley. The event was headlined by the Kennedy brothers (Ronnie and Donnie) from the SCV National HQ along with Mrs. Tami Hurley representing the Texas UDC. With Division Videographer Johnny Anderson and a cast from the Williamson County Grays (Lee and Tracy Wallace, Billy Ayers, and Teresa Chapman), we presented an on-the-ground-focused program and physical demonstration of how to formulate and execute a Camp Heritage Defense Plan. A Heritage Defense Handbook based on our front-line experiences was issued to all attendees. Camp / Brigade Commanders and Heritage Defense Officers at those levels are strongly encouraged to read, discuss, and implement the Plan immediately.

In addition, Compatriot Anderson debuted his recent YouTube video, “The Untold Story of the Confederate Monument in Georgetown,” a professionally done and educational account of the history of the Memorial. The video can be viewed on YouTube at: www.bit.ly/georgetownmonument.

On another Front, I learned at the 3rd Brigade meeting in Fort Worth (24 February) that there may be a resurgence of the opposition in Weatherford to remove the Confederate Memorial there. I will explore this issue while attending an Iron Cross Dedication in Weatherford on 9 March.

Activities:

7 December, 4 January, and 1 February–Attended monthly meetings of the Williamson County Grays Camp #502 (Georgetown).

December–On the Square in Georgetown every Saturday plus Friday, 1 December, for the Georgetown Stroll.

4 December–Completed Phase II B of the re-installation of Williamson County Historical Memorial Bricks that had been removed by the City of Georgetown in February 2022 because of Confederate “affiliation”. Bricks were re-installed on County property.

12 December–Attended the Williamson County Historical Commission (WCHC) Holiday Party.

6 January–Attended the Quarterly DEC Meeting in Waco.

9 January–Appeared before the Williamson County Commissioners Court per the above.

11 January–Attended the monthly meeting of the Williamson County Historical Commission.

13 January–With Williamson County Grays 1st Lt Commander Billy Ayers, attended an organizational meeting of the proposed new camp in Lampasas.

19 January–Participated in the Observance of Texas Confederate Heroes Day on the Georgetown Square with members of the Williamson County Grays.

20 January–Attended the Annual Lee/Jackson Dinner in Temple at the invitation of 7th Brigade Commander James Bozeman and the Major Robert M. White Camp #1250. Guest speaker Susan Lee of the Virginia Flaggers gave an inspiring speech. I was honored to be presented the George Hugh Ballentine Memorial Service Award by Camp #1250 for actions in Georgetown. I remain humbled by such a recognition.

8 February–Attended the monthly meeting of the Williamson County Historical Commission.

10 February–With others, made a presentation at the Division Heritage Defense Seminar in Waco. See details in intro.

24 February–Attended 3rd Brigade business meeting in Fort Worth. Well-attended, well-conducted and informative.

Subject to your questions,
Respectfully submitted,

Shelby

Shelby K. Little
Lt Commander
Texas Division
Sons of Confederate Veterans

2nd Lt. Commanders Report Quarterly Report

Greetings Compatriots,

Hopefully your camp celebrated Confederate Heritage Month in April! The Albert Sidney Johnston Camp 983 was able to flag a rural cemetery with 10 confederate veteran's graves. I know the Division event at Blanco was a great success as well. Our camps can always "make a mark" in their respective communities by any action honoring our ancestors. Always take photos of your event and submit them to the local newspapers. These actions are great recruiting tools.

The Decatur Celtic Festival in Decatur turned out to be very successful in its second year. This event will continue to grow each year. The 3rd Brigade was well represented by the 34th Texas Calvary Camp #2283 from Palo Pinto, Robert E. Lee Camp #239 from Fort Worth, and the Albert Sidney Johnston Camp #983 from Decatur. The SCV is very involved with this festival and well received by the community.



The committee appointed by Cmdr. Hurley to examine the UCV flags met at the storage location on May 23rd. After a thorough examination by the committee, it was agreed that 2nd Lt. Cmdr. Cox would take possession of all but 3 of the flags to determine alternate means to preserve the flags. A full report of these flags will be presented at the DEC meeting on Sunday morning after the Reunion.

I will try to be accessible as time and distance permits for all camps. Please let me know if you are having an event, I can participate in with you or offer any other assistance.

Deo Vindice!

Jim Cox
2nd Lt. Commander
817-751-8202
Texas2ndltcommander@gmail.com



3rd Lt. Commanders Report Quarterly Report

Compatriots,

Over the past quarter, I've dedicated over 40 hours to the functions of the 3rd Lieutenant Commander position. In my last report, I discussed the imminent launch of the new Texas Division website. I'm pleased to announce that the website has been successfully launched. Although it is still a work in progress, new features will be gradually introduced. Initially, the website contained some outdated information, but this was promptly corrected. As of now, everything should be up to date, allowing me to focus on adding new features. One upcoming feature is a Donation Form, which will provide an interactive way for people to donate directly to the Texas Division. It will accept credit cards and offer an option for those who prefer to send checks.



The ability to digitally submit camp reports has been requested by multiple members. I have been dedicating significant time to this solution, although I do not have an ETA yet. I am committed to ensuring it is implemented correctly. I have been monitoring engagement with the forms published on the website. So far, the interactive forms seem useful and user-friendly, with many camp members using them to sign up for the email list or submit corrections for their camp.

The general contact form on the front page and contact page has also been effective, with over 25 entries submitted, demonstrating our ability to connect with our audience and convey information efficiently.

Website analytics for the past 90 days:

- Unique visitors: 1,000
- Page views: 1,300

Breakdown:

- Search engines: 859
- Direct visits: 648
- Referrals: 203
- Social/Other: 62

The website has seen 1,000 unique visits and 1,300 page views in the last 90 days. Approximately 900 views came from search engines like Google or Yahoo, 650 were direct visits, 200 were referrals from other websites, and the remaining views came from social media and other sources.

We rarely drive traffic to the website from our social media posts. By linking articles and stories from social media to our website, we could potentially increase our page views to approximately 2,500. If any writers would like to volunteer, please contact me at texas3rdltcommander@yahoo.com.

Regarding social media metrics for the past 90 days:

- Reach: 63,300 people
- Visits: 6,800 people
- Followers gained: 540

3rd Lt. Commanders Report Quarterly Report

continued

Our social media performance is now within the expected range for our size. We are just a few follows away from breaking the 20,000-follower barrier, which is a significant milestone. I anticipate even higher reach and follower counts next quarter.

The email list currently has 2,826 subscribers with an average open rate of 34%.

SCV130.com has been in development since the last DEC meeting. I am currently waiting for the developer to link the form to our Stripe account. All other updates to promote tours, forms, and schedules have been made

Some activities I've participated in this past quarter include:

In March, I attended the Old Spanish Trail Centennial in San Antonio, Texas, representing the Alamo City Guards and our organization.

In April, I participated in the La Vernia Blue Bonnet Parade, proudly flying the battle flag on top of a Lincoln Town Car in honor of our First Responders. Later in the month, my camp and I stayed overnight at Blanco State Park and participated in the Division Picnic the next day. We also took part in the King William Fair Parade, dressed in period clothing and carrying the six flags of Texas.

The most recent and significant accomplishment that I'm particularly proud of is successfully raising funds and commissioning our Tejano Confederate Memorial Statue. We held a Private Viewing Party recently, which was a tremendous success, allowing many people to see the statue up close. I am excited about what the next three months will bring and look forward to continuing to share our progress.

Sincerely,
Cody Crislip
3rd Lieutenant Commander
Sons of Confederate Veterans
Texas Division



ACROSS THE DIVISION



On April 28, 2024, members of Walker's Greyhounds Camp #2338 gathered to honor Confederate Heritage Month with the annual wreath-laying ceremony at the Confederate Monument in Oakwood Cemetery, Tyler, TX. This meaningful tradition continues to preserve and respect the legacy of our ancestors.

(above) Walker's Greyhounds
(left) Monument with Wreath

[YOUTUBE.COM/@TEXASDIVISIONSCV](https://www.youtube.com/@TEXASDIVISIONSCV)

ACROSS THE DIVISION

Texas Division Commander Michael Hurley represents the Texas Division at the Arkansas Division Annual Confederate Flag Day held on March 30, 2024, in Little Rock, Ark.



Texas Division Group Photo at the 2024 National Reunion held in Charleston SC July 17-20, 2024



ACROSS THE DIVISION



The first ever Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp Chartered in Boerne, Texas on May 7, 2024; 1st Lt. Jesse Page Camp #2351 held its Chartering Ceremony on July 27, 2024. The Camp chartered with 22 members, initiating 10 new members to the SCV.

Commander Hand of 1st Lt. Jesse Page Camp #2351, recognized at National Convention. He received the Meritorious Service Medal (Bronze) and a Dixie Club Certificate. The newly chartered Camp assisted in the Texas Division being awarded an A.P. Hill Award for Camp Growth.

ACROSS THE DIVISION



Commander Hand and 2nd Lt. Commander Hand were honored to participate in the Memorial Service on July 13, 2024 at Fort Belknap for Compatriot Bill McKee. Alongside fellow @nd Brigade Compatriots, they participated in the Canteen Ceremony and then served as members of the rifle squad, honoring Compatriot McKee with a 3-shot volley along with the Goods Light Artillery.

Trampling Union Terror

The sun was barely up on the morning of the June 20, 1863, when Alabama and Tennessee sergeants began kicking at booted feet and brawling hushed orders for the men to saddle up. The troopers did their toilets and gobbled down cakes of cornbread and salty pork while the horses hungrily consumed the remaining corn from the saddlebags. Once more, the trek resumed with hundreds of hoofs spattering red mud high in the air.

By early morning the advanced Rebel scouts hit pay dirt and engaged in a short but violent pistol battle with Union videttes causing the Union commander to quickly align his main body of over 600 dismounted men in a strong defensive posture with skirmishers hustled out to the front. The Rebel cavalrymen did likewise, sending a robust body of skirmishers picking their way forward with orders to open fire at anything they encountered.

It was not long in coming. One, two, three, in quick succession, and then like a thunderstorm, a swarm of bullets flew between the two opposing skirmish lines.

The plan to dislodge the enemy was simple and daring. In his after-action report the Confederate commander of the two regiments, General Daniel Ruggles, correctly observed that the conditions were greatly in favor of the Federal defenders since there was no way to flank them due to the thick terrain features on either side of the battlefield. The only option was to charge straight ahead. Ruggles noted: It only remained to accept battle in the midst of an extensive, dense cane-brake and impenetrable thicket, covering both banks of a deep, muddy stream, on the enemy's own terms.

In fact, the disjointed "open" ground over which the fight would take place consisted of nasty wetlands populated by head-high stalky cane-breaks, about a mile deep, thickly spread out on either side of a muddy creek meandering more or less parallel through the middle, with nothing to distinguish the ugly and snake infested landscape except for three widely spaced thickets of scrawny trees popping their heads above the tall vegetation. The Federals had taken up fairly good firing positions trampling down large swaths of the grasses and anchoring themselves along two out of the three aforementioned belts of thickets.

The 2nd Alabama Cavalry was finally facing its first full scale head-to-head engagement and as an added bonus they were squared off against a particularly despicable group of Yankee looters who demonstrated no moral reservations whatsoever about viciously abusing civilians. Correctly guessing that the enemy was not really anxious for a prolonged fight so deep behind Rebel lines, Ruggles made the necessary dispositions for a vigorous frontal assault. Besides counting on the sheer audacity of the move and the height of the thick reeds to conceal his true numbers, Ruggles' hope for success most certainly hinged on the aggressive spirit of the regimental and company commanders who were expected to exploit any weaknesses that might occur once things kicked off.

With the horses and horse holders were sent to the rear the company commanders remained mounted in front of their respective companies directing the Alabamians by troop to form up in two long battle lines.

In what seemed like the blink of an eye, the bugles sounded the advance and the move across the ground began in a slow methodical roll, with energy reserved for the final push. The only thing accompanying the stalwart Rebels through the wet mire were thousands of swirling misquotes and bugs. Reminded over and over by their line officers, the men were ordered to hold their fire as they advanced, leaving only the forward skirmishers to shoot at will with Union bullets returning the favor. At this early juncture of the contest, which was truly Indian-style, the Confederates were content to methodically trudge along through the cane-brakes with most of the Federal bullets missing flesh.

Mounted in front of the gray and snuff-colored uniforms in this unpleasant Mississippi marsh were the courageous company commanders of the 2nd Alabama. Brandishing drawn sabers and ignoring the zip zap of Union Minnie balls, the officers led their men across and around various hazards to include large puddles, watery logs, and stumps, doggedly keeping their companies together with words of encouragement.

A one-time stage coach driver known as the wildest man in Butler County, Alabama, Captain "Hell-Roaring" Bill

Allen of Company F, was particularly conspicuous in hurrying his men forward so that F troop soon bulged an already jagged line causing the two-tiered formation to badly curve even further. Then, more sensing than knowing that the time was ripe for a final charge to victory, the instinctively courageous leader clinched down hard on an ever-present cigar and spurred "his gray charger far in advance" of his own company in order to personally determine enemy dispositions. At a mere hundred yards out Allen thrust his legs straight in the stirrups and abruptly pulled his mount to a halt. Absolutely indifferent to the incoming rounds singing all around, he observed significant groups of Yankees shifting about, some on foot and some on horse. Understanding that fluidity was not a positive sign for soldiers preparing to receive an attack, this told the blue-eyed commander all that he needed to know. The time had come to surge his men forward and smash head-on into the enemy, what the old school British military affectionately termed the "forlorn hope," and he wasn't waiting for formal orders!

"Hell-Roaring" Bill Allen whirled his war horse about and sped pell-mell through the grasses back to his



astonished men. Accustomed to that well-known booming voice, the urgency of the waving motions from Allen's glittering saber left no doubt about his desire for swift action. "Company F, Form Up!" "Double Line!" "Prepare to Charge!" With rifles and pistols already primed and cocked the junior officers and men readily obeyed.

Trampling Union Terror

Positioned now at the head of his energized men, Allen theatrically eye-leveled the tip of his blade and pointed it directly at the Yankees. Turning around in the saddle, he bellowed: "Charge Them Boys, Kill the Damn Thieves!" Hearing the word thieves sent an electrifying adrenaline rush into the men. After all that's exactly what these Yankees were, thieves and arsonists who terrorized women and children. Scottish tempers exploded and all knew Yankee blood would mark this day.

As if hit by lightning, the sounds of the men, which had up to then consisted primarily of low grunts and curses as they groped through the grassy terrain, was now far different. Hundreds of voices mingled together in an ear shattering crescendo which one Union soldier said "the devil ought to copyright" – the exhilarating and unmistakable yelping screech universally known as the "Rebel Yell."

It was on. The screaming Alabamians bounded across the final yards of slashing reeds and soon thereafter their revolvers began popping off with loud bangs and black smoke. Throwing all caution aside, the Rebels literally crashed in amongst the Federals, dealing them dark death in close quarter combat. 2nd Alabama trooper Private Hunter was in the thick of it – "[o]ur boys went into the fight like tigers; yelling and whooping; all fought bravely."

The 600 plus men in blue were certainly not outmatched in numbers – the Rebel cavalry consisted of only about 400 men in the battle – but clearly outmatched in spirit (when dismounted for combat, one out of every 4 cavalymen were stationed to the rear to hold the horses). Even so, at first many held their ground and fought stubbornly, a few hand-to-hand, but the fury was with the attackers and the Yankees soon had enough and crumbled in disorder. Ignoring pleas from their officers to stand firm whole clusters of blue-bellies fled rearward for the cover and concealment offered by the pristine taller reeds behind them. Others ran directly for the horses, accelerating their escape by ditching arms and equipment.

The beautiful sight of so many Federals fleeing in wild panic further electrified the men of the 2nd Alabama who gave out excited shouts of triumph. It was now contagious and most of the dumb-struck Federals that had not surrendered were now gunless and hatless, running into the cane-breaks behind them. Directed by shouting mounted officers successive squadrons swept in to flush the enemy out of their hiding places. Union Chaplain Morrison wrote:
Men could not see each other more than a few feet. Our men could hear every command given by the Rebel officers, but

could not see the enemy.

Trooper W. G. Hunter of Company A proudly documented the participation of the 2nd Alabama in the rolling attacks that relentlessly pressed the fleeing enemy back towards Mud Creek. The Rebels only halted to reload before charging forth anew to pour horrendous convergent fires into any Federals they encountered. Hunter bragged: "It would have delighted you to see the gallant 2d make charge after charge, killing and driving the enemy from the brushwood and cane, in which they concealed themselves."

Ruggles likewise beamed in his after-action report that the "regiments of cavalry vied with each other in pressing the enemy home," with the fighting so up close and personal that the ground was literally painted red with blood. No quarter was given. In addition, because the tall reeds concealed all but their upper extremities many Yankees suffered horrific head wounds spraying the surrounding vegetation with mists of brain matter. Shouting and shooting, gore splattered horsemen flushed out both small and large pockets of the enemy, each encounter sending panicked Federals reeling further and further back. Hunter killed two of the Yankees himself and described the carnage.
Some estimate the loss of the Yankees in killed alone at 100. Our men would get their clothes and shoes or boots bloody in going through the woods [after them].

The Cane Break fight, also called the battle at Mud Creek, had lasted about three hours costing the Union well over 100 troopers in killed, wounded, or captured. The only favorable development for Colonel Phillips was that most of the 400 Rebels were still on foot allowing a significant portion of his bewildered men to scramble to their animals and ride pell-mell across Mud Creek to then make their way to the Little Tallahatchie River.

According to Private Hunter, the 2nd Alabama bore the heaviest of the fighting, having led the main charge, and was rewarded with a gruesome harvest of the enemy's silent stare of death. [The Second Alabama Cavalry Regiment] killed over fifty of the vandals, had buried thirty nine and still burying them; don't know how many were wounded, as the Yanks carried them to the rear as fast as they fell.

General Ruggles put the loss on the Confederate side as only "two killed and seventeen wounded in this day's fight." Amazingly his calculations were accurate. A careful review of the surviving company papers of the 2nd Alabama indicates that at least ten of the men were severely wounded (one subsequently died), which accounts for over half of the total casualties and confirms the leading

role which the 2nd Alabama played in the fight. Captain Allen recorded that "Private E. J. Lewis [Company F] was wounded in the leg which has since been amputated." After noting the death of a prominent officer in Company G of the 2nd Alabama (Lt. Gaddis was hit in the thigh by a Minnie ball), Hunter spoke of a disfiguring face wound to an officer in his own company.

[The Second Alabama] had eight or ten wounded. Lieut. Gaddis of Co. G, 2d Reg. of Ala. cavalry was mortally wounded and has since died from the effects of the wound. Lieut. Daniel Boyle of Co. I, same regiment, was wounded in the nose, a buckshot passing through it.

The Yankees also left behind several well stocked wagons loaded with commissary goods consisting of "bacon, crackers, corn, oats, etc.," which thrilled the always-hungry Rebels to no end. Private Hunter reported:

We captured seven wagons loaded with commissary stores, one piece of artillery and one caisson Our boys got some good eating, as they got sardines, crackers, sugar, coffee, etc.

Union chaplain Morrison admitted tongue-in-cheek that the Federals "fell back rapidly" and had to leave one of the artillery caissons stuck in the mud and "destroyed the five baggage wagons that were behind it, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy." Nevertheless, the rest of his spin on the battle to include the number of Confederates and the casualties sustained were self-serving nonsense. The chaplain wrote:

While we were preparing a crossing of Mud Creek, the enemy, 8,000 strong, under Gen. Ruggles, made a furious attack upon the rear guard, but were gallantly met and checked by the 5th Ohio Cavalry, held the enemy in check for two and a-half hours Our loss in this engagement, was 5 killed and 18 wounded. The loss of the enemy ... was not less than 200 in killed, wounded and missing.

On the other hand, Private Hunter noted with particular pride the observation of one Yankee prisoner about the coolness and battle courage of the 2nd Alabama.

But the Yanks that we captured wanted to know if the 2nd Ala. cavalry were not old and tried troops, as they said "the 2d went rushing into the fight like they were used to it," and when told that it was the first fight they had ever been in as a regiment they seemed to be surprised.

Trampling Union Terror

Without question, the battle of Mud Creek was a brilliant thrashing of a superior enemy force and a much-needed confidence builder for the 2nd Alabama. General Ruggles was fully impressed, remarking with high praise that the “2nd Alabama cavalry were the best fighting troops he ever saw [emphasis added].” Indeed, from that time until the very end of the War the 2nd Alabama Cavalry would live up to that reputation. They were hard fighting and patriotic men, the best of the best. The general wrote in his report:

In this crisis I relied with entire confidence on that undaunted bravery of those chivalric sons of the South, which, when skillfully directed, no enemy could resist.

– Heroes of History –

As Union atrocities reached a zenith in 1864-1865, the 2nd Alabama Cavalry was uniquely positioned to see more than their fair share of the suffering and waste it produced. What they lacked in arms, equipment, and supplies to resist the terrorists were made up for by an incredible sense of duty, courage, and perseverance. Many of the Alabamians that passed through this hard-fighting regiment poured out their life blood across the soils of Florida, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama, finding their final resting place in the ground they so valiantly defended.

Tragically, far too many also died of sickness, disease, starvation, and abuse at various POW camps in the North. One of those being Private Harry Harrison

Mosley (1841-1865), who served in E Company with his cousin Private Thomas Mosley. Harry was captured on December 3, 1863, near Grand Junction, Tennessee, as part of the expedition to screen Forrest into Tennessee. He was sent to Fort Delaware and perished there of “hepatic dropsy” on June 18, 1865, well after the close of the War, marking him the last casualty of the 2nd Alabama Cavalry, still being in uniform, to have died in the War.

And so, still wearing their tattered uniforms the weather-beaten sons, brothers, and fathers of the 2nd Alabama returned to destitute families and homesites ravaged by the Yankees. An Alabama wife recalled the scenes. The return of our soldiers after the surrender, in their worn and ragged gray, as they tramped home by twos, threes, and sometimes in little squads of half a dozen or more, was pitiable in the extreme. Some were entirely without shoes or hats; others had only an apology for shoes and hats. They were coming home with nothing; and we could almost say, coming home to nothing; for many verily found, when they reached the spot that had been to them a happy home, nothing save a heaped-up mass of ruins left to them.

– Monuments Worth Celebrating –
With the War ended and the 13th Amendment adopted (December 1865) to abolish slavery in the pro-Union slave States (slavery had already ended in the former Confederate States), the cancer of slavery was finally extinguished and America could embark with renewed vigor on becoming a beacon of freedom for the world. Striding down this new path, Southerners would not soon forget the heroism, patriotism, and loyalty of their soldiers along the way. Before the century turned, the individual Southern States set up modest pensions for the widows and disabled veterans (to include veteran black Southerners) and also erected grand memorials to their heroes, although the greatest monuments would always be the innumerable graves of those who gave their lives.

Image 3

Alabama Monument to Alabama’s Confederate Cavalry, State Capitol, Montgomery, Alabama.

Despite shrill voices that denigrate Confederate monuments as nothing more than symbols of racism, the truth-seeker understands that they are valuable reminders to each new generation of two things: (1) the indomitable grit and courage which immortalized the Confederate soldier who did his duty; and (2) the basics of what it means to be a Southerner – “agrarianism, close family ties, fundamental religion, chivalry, the honoring of womanhood, [and] paternalism toward the less fortunate.” For instance, at the 1890 unveiling of a magnificent Confederate monument in Jackson, Mississippi, a Southern Senator spoke eloquently of irreducible Southern

values.

Which makes our people once practical and sentimental – makes them good soldiers and good citizens, sustains them in every trial, adapts them to every changed condition and anchors them upon their honor as a rock: something that makes the men knightly in their deference for women, and makes the gentle woman strong when trouble comes.

While it is certainly a correct observation that Southern culture is marked by an allegiance to traditional conservative values, all Americans are made stronger by recalling a people who could not be terrorized by the specters of fear or terror. The eminent Civil War historian James M. McPherson’s study on Confederate motivation concluded that the most powerful force that kept Southerners in the fight was not States’ rights, maintaining the institution of slavery, or any other ideological purpose. It was “the defense of home and hearth against an invading enemy.”

In this vein, honoring the perseverance and sacrifice of these Southerners is not a brief objecting to the ultimate outcome of the conflict which was written long ago by the hand of Almighty God. At the time of the War, no one could know the future, it was enough to know duty. Much in line with the humility of modern combat soldiers who salute one another with an succinct understatement bound up in honor and duty – “Thank you for your service!” – General Lee, in his farewell address to the army closed by stating that the men could take with them “the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed.”

The story of how well they fought and how great was their suffering will never be adequately told, yet it is without debate that these Southern heroes did their duty against overwhelming odds. No nation could have asked more. It was only fitting, then, that the 2nd Alabama Cavalry was present as the Confederacy drew her last gasping breath. They helped close her eyes and held her cold hand.

Of what command were they who were thus faithful even unto the end, and who were to be the last Confederate soldiers into whose faces Mr. Davis was to look before he entered into his captivity? The answer is a matter of history of which they have a right to be forever proud!



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **September:** 1 PM Total Farm, 601 S Polk Street, Jefferson, Texas 75657
- **October:** 5:30pm San Antonio Genealogical Society Dwyer Building. Complimentary hors d'ouvres and drinks. \$10 donation. alamocityguards.com
- **November 10th, 2024 (Sunday) Tejano Confederate Memorial Commemoration:** 3:00pm Visit alamocityguards.com for more details.
- **November 11th, 2024 (Monday) Waco Veterans Day Parade:** 11:00am Austin Ave at 12th St. Waco, Texas 76707 Visit <https://scv-waco.org/> for more details.



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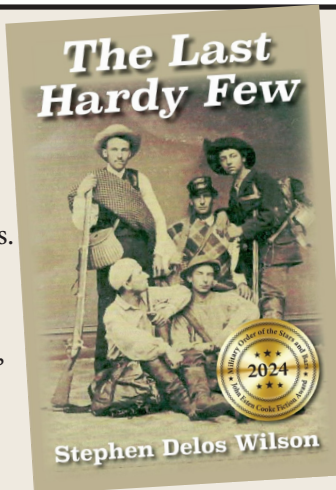
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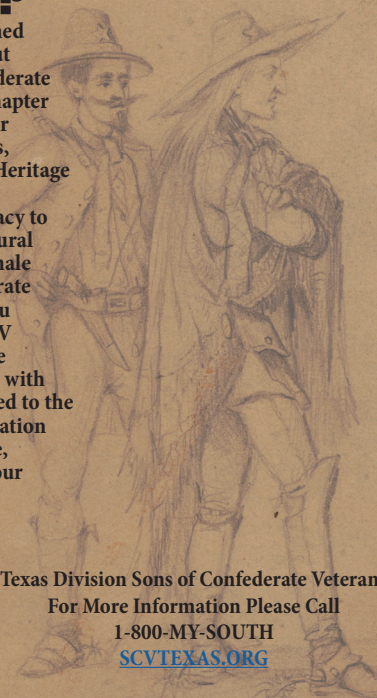
Of course, the South did not win the war, and most of what Americans think they know about that conflict has been passed down by the victors. Consider instead how the South could have won and that today's received wisdom on the war is fake history. This novel follows the path of a Texas Confederate through the War to Southern Victory.

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