

COMPANY FRONT

THE SOCIETAL MAGAZINE OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH NORTH CAROLINA

ISSUE 1, 2006

PHOTOGRAPHIC
UNIFORM
STUDY

NC SOLDIER'S
WARTIME DIARY

PLUS

PART I

GEN. BRYAN GRIMES LETTERS PART II
NEVER BEFORE SEEN TARHEEL IMAGE

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COMPANY FRONT

THE SOCIETAL MAGAZINE OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH NORTH CAROLINA

ISSUE # 1, 2006

Company Front is the newsletter of
The Society for the Preservation of
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Editor and Chief
Jason Goodnite
140 Huntseat Ln.
Kings Mountain, NC 28086

Assistant Editor
Randal Garrison
300 Inglewood Dr.
Morganton, NC 28655

Copy Editor
Al Leonard
941 Braewick Rd.
Tryon, NC 28782

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Front Cover

Captain Melchizedeck Chandler of Yancey County, NC
29th North Carolina Co. G

Army of Tennessee.

Provided By
Cody Fox

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Confederate Defensive Works
Yorktown, VA 1862

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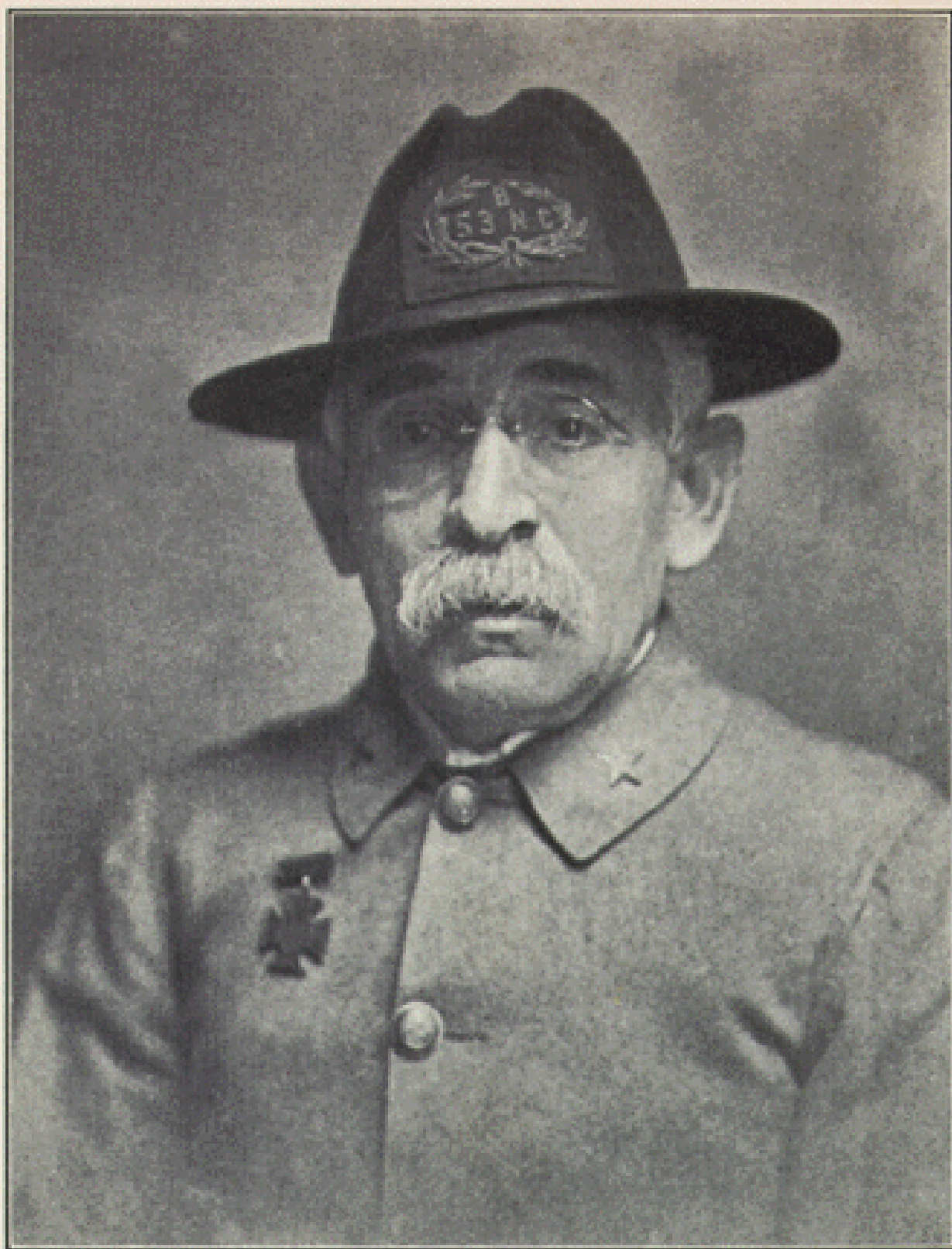
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L. LEON

DIARY OF A TARHEEL CONFEDERATE

THE BEGINNING: 1861-1862

**By Louis Leon Co. C, 1st Regiment North Carolina Infantry (6 Months, 1861) and Co. B, 53rd NCT
From *Documenting The American South*, University of North Carolina
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/index.html>**

This diary was commenced for the fun of writing down my experience as a soldier from the Old North State. I never thought for a moment that I would put it in print; but now that I am getting old and have read so many histories written by our officers, but have never seen in print a history written by a private.

I know that my diary is truly the life of the man behind the gun, therefore I make bold to publish it. I am sure my experience was that of other privates, and a true history of my companies and regiments, as well as the Brigade, Division, and even Corp that I belonged to. I am certain that the men of '61 to '65 who read this will recall most vividly the camping, marching, fighting and suffering they endured in those never-to-be-forgotten days of long ago. And to the younger generation

of Southern-born it will show how we endured and suffered, but still fought on for the cause we know was right.

L. LEON.

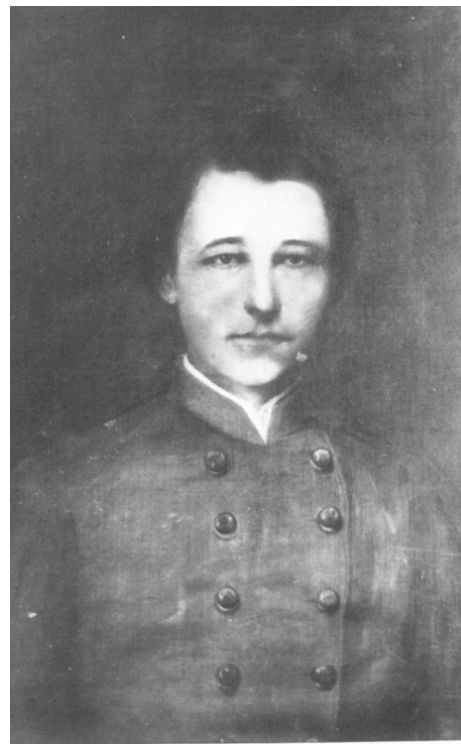
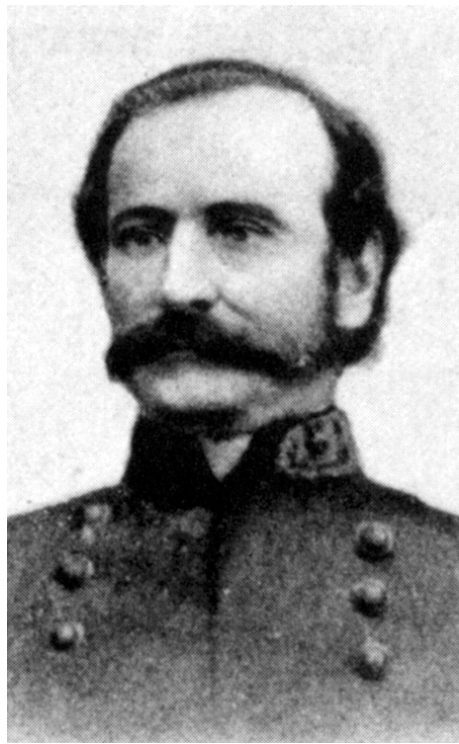
April 25, 1861 - I belong to the Charlotte Grays, Company C, First North Carolina Regiment. We left home for Raleigh. Our company is commanded by Capt. Egbert Ross. We are all boys between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. We offered our services to Governor Ellis, but were afraid he would not take us, as we are so young; but before we were called out our company was ordered to go to the United States Mint in our town and take same. We marched down to it, and it was surrendered to us. We guarded it several days, when we were ordered to Raleigh, and left on the above date.

Our trip was full of joy and

pleasure, for at every station where our train stopped the ladies showered us with flowers and Godspeed. We marched to the Fair Grounds. The streets were lined with people, cheering us. When we got there our company was given quarters, and, lo and behold! horse stables with straw for bedding is what we got. I know we all thought it a disgrace for us to sleep in such places with our fine uniforms - not even a washstand, or any place to hang our clothes on. They didn't even give us a looking-glass.

Our company was put in the First North Carolina Regiment, commanded by Col. D. H. Hill, Lieut.-Col. C. C. Lee, and Maj. James H. Lane.

We enlisted for six months. Our State went out of the Union on May 20th, and we were sent to Richmond, Va., on the 21st. Stayed there several days, when we were ordered to Yorktown, Va. Here they gave us



Generals D.H. Hill (Left) and John B. Magruder (Center) were the principal Confederate commanders at the Battle of Big Bethel. Henry L. Wyatt (Right) of the 1st NC Volunteers was the first Confederate soldier killed in battle.

tents to sleep in. This looked more like soldering, but we would have liked to have had some of that straw in Raleigh.

The day after we got here our company was sent out with spades and shovels to make breastworks - and to think of the indignity! We were expected to do the digging! Why, of course, I never thought that this was work for soldiers to do, but we had to do it. Gee! What hands I had after a few days' work. I know I never had a pick or a shovel in my hand to work with in my life.

A few days after that a squad of us were sent out to cut down trees, and, by George! they gave me an axe and told me to go to work. Well, I cut all over my tree until the lieutenant commanding, seeing how nice I was marking it, asked me what I had done before I became a soldier. I told him I was a clerk in a dry-goods store. He said he thought so from the way I was cutting timber. He relieved

me - but what insults are put on us who came to fight the Yankees! Why, he gave me two buckets and told me to carry water to the men that could cut.

We changed camp several times, until about the 3d of June, when we marched fifteen miles and halted at Bethel Church, and again commenced making breastworks. Our rations did not suit us. We wanted a change of diet, but there were strict orders from Col. D. H. Hill that we should not go out foraging. Well, Bill Stone, Alie Todd and myself put on our knapsacks and went to the creek to wash our clothes, but when we got there we forgot to wash. We took a good long walk away from the camp, and saw several shoats. We ran one down, held it so it could not squeal, then killed it, cut it in small pieces, put it in our knapsacks, returned to the creek, and from there to camp, where we shared it with the boys. It tasted good.

Our comrade Ernheart did not fare so well. He went to a place where he knew he could get some honey. He got it all right, but he got the bees, also. His face and hands were a sight when he got the beehive to camp.

June 10 - At three o'clock this morning the long roll woke us up. We fell in line, marched about five miles, then counter-marched, as the Yankees were advancing on us. We got to our breastworks a short time before the Yankees came, and firing commenced. We gave them a good reception with shot and shell. The fight lasted about four hours. Our company was behind the works that held the line where the major of the Yankee regiment, Winthrop, was killed. After he fell our company was ordered to the church, but was soon sent back to its former position.

This is the first land battle of the war, and we certainly gave them a good beating, but we lost one of

our regiment, Henry Wyatt, who was killed while gallantly doing a volunteer duty. Seven of our men were wounded. The Yankees must have lost at least two hundred men in killed and wounded. It was their boast that they could whip us with corn-stalks, but to their sorrow they found that we could do some fighting, too. After the fight some of the boys and myself went over the battlefield, and we saw several of the Yankee dead - the first I had ever seen, and it made me shudder. I am now in a school where sights like this should not worry me long.

Our commander in this fight was Col. Bankhead Magruder. The Yankee commander was Gen. B. F. Butler.

From now on I will never

again grumble about digging breast-works. If it had not been for them many of us would not be here now. We returned the same night to Yorktown, full of glory.

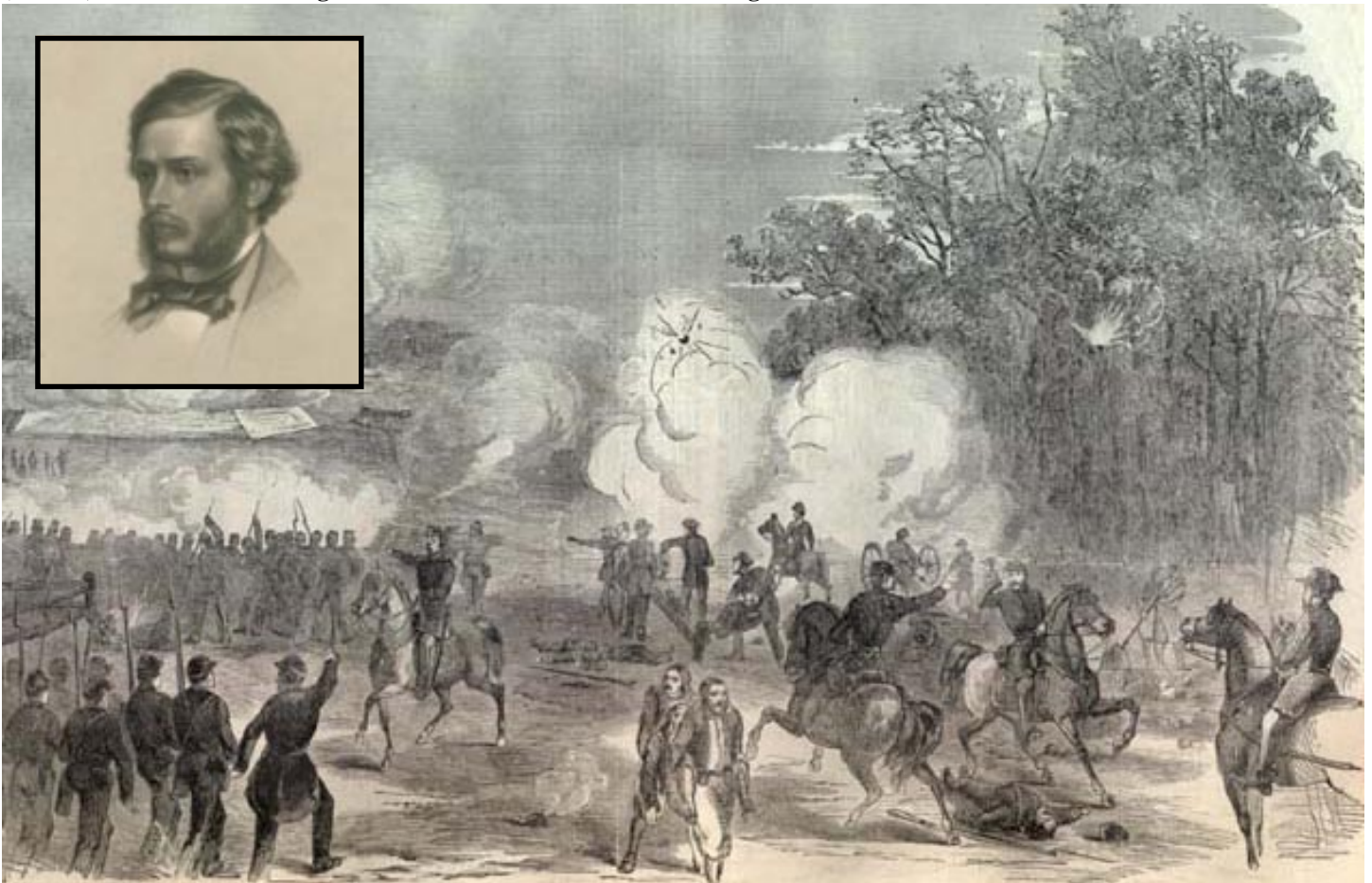
On July 18 we heard that our boys had again whipped the Yankees at Bull Run. Also, on July 21, again at Manassas.

We changed camp a number of times, made fortifications all around Yorktown, and when our six months were over we were disbanded, and returned home. So my experience as a soldier was over.

I stayed home five months, when I again took arms for the Old North State, and joined a company raised by Capt. Harvey White, of Charlotte, and left our home on April 23, 1862, at 6.30 P.M. I stayed in

Salisbury until next night, when I, with several others, took the train for Raleigh, where our company was. We went to the insane asylum to see Langfreid, who wanted to go home by telegraph to see his cotton and tobacco. After spending most of our day in town we went to camp four miles from Raleigh. We stopped a carriage, and the driver said he would take us to camp for three dollars. We halved it with him and he drove us there. We reported to Captain White, and he showed us to our hut. We were surprised to find it without a floor, roof half off and "holey" all over. We commenced repairing, and went to the woods to chop a pole for a part of the bedstead. We walked about a mile before we found one to suit us. It was a hard job to get it to

Alfred Waud sketch, The Battle of Big Bethel, Virginia 1861. Leon most likely witnessed the death of Major Theodore Winthrop (INSET) who was the most significant Federal loss at the Battle of Big Bethel





In June of 1862 Leon and the 53rd NCT were placed in Brigadier Junius Daniel's Brigade

our hut. We put it up and put boards across and then put our bedding on it, which consisted of leaves we gathered in the woods. And now it is a bed fit for a king or a Confederate soldier.

It commenced raining at dark, which compelled us to cover with our oilcloth coats. We did not get wet, but passed a bad night, as I had gotten used to a civilian's life again.

May 31 - Up to date nothing transpired worth relating, but this morning got orders to leave. Left at 6 A.M. Our company got passenger cars, and the balance of our regiment had to take box cars.

June 1 - Arrived at Weldon, North Carolina, at 7 o'clock. We set up our tents at Gerresburg, a short march from Weldon. Our company is close to the railroad track. We collected broom straw and made a bed of down of it.

June 2 - We received some visitors from home.

June 3 - Raining all day, but have a good time with the ladies in this neighborhood. They treated my comrade and myself only as Southern ladies know how to treat their soldiers - with respect and something good to eat.

June 4 - Still raining, and the roads are very muddy.

June 5 - We were marched to town and received our arms - Springfield muskets. Next day went off very quietly.

June 7 - At 11 o'clock to-night we were roused out of our sleep and marched to Weldon Bridge, as the river was so swift that it was thought the bridge would wash away. We went there to knock the sides off, so that the water could run over it, but we got there without tools. When they came the water was receding, so we returned to camp.

June 8 - I am very tired from our first night's march.

June 20 - Up until this date there has been nothing worth recording, but today got orders to fall in line with two days' rations cooked. Left at 12 M. in box cars. We knocked holes in them to get fresh air. We laid over six hours eight miles from Gerresburg in order to let the passenger cars pass us. Several of our company left the train in quest of supper. We found a house where a lady promised to give us supper for fifty cents each. As we were doing full justice to her supper the train started, we left in a hurry, and did not have time to pay for our meal. I

don't suppose she gave us her blessing.

June 21 - We reached Petersburg, Va., this morning at half-past two, and had barely laid down with a brick wall for my pillow when breakfast was announced in the shape of Mack Sample, who told us where we could get it. I ran the blockade with Katz, and went to see Mike Etlinger. He was not at home. Afterward we met Wortheim, and we all went again and got something good to eat. We then returned to our regiment, which is the 53d North Carolina Regiment, infantry, Col. William Owens, commander. We are enlisted for three years, or the war. We fell in line and marched to our camp, which is on Dunn's Hill, just outside of the city.

June 22 - Nothing new.

June 23 - Moved our camp two miles up the road toward Richmond. It is a very bad camp - low ground and muddy. But there is a factory here, and plenty of girls to make up for the damp ground.

June 24 - We had a drill to-day, and went to town to see some friends.

June 25 - Reported fighting near Richmond.

June 26 - We received marching orders this morning. The long roll beat at one in the night. We marched four miles on to Richmond, where we met some wounded of our army that had been injured at the Point of Rocks. We got to this place after marching all night, too late for the Yanks - they had gone. We stayed here until the 28th, then marched to Drewry's Bluff, twenty miles from Petersburg.

June 29 - Arrived at Drewry's Bluff this morning. Here we met our brigade, commanded by General Daniels. The brigade has five regiments, all North Carolina troops, composed of the 43d, 53d, 32d, 45th and the 2d North Carolina battalions. When we got to our brigade we were left at Drewry's Bluff and the brigade marched on to Richmond, and we stayed here until the 30th.

June 30 - Heard firing at Richmond. We are eight miles from there, and in reserve.

July 1 - There is nothing new, only we can see the lines of battle over the river. They are still fighting around Richmond.

July 4 - This is the day the Yankee

general, McClellan, promised to eat dinner in our capitol. He did not, but numbers of his command did - that is, in our prisons. But they did not get any turkey.

July 6 - We got orders to march this morning. Left here with two days' rations of corn meal and bacon in our haversacks. We got to Petersburg in the evening - fifteen miles - after a hard march. It is very warm, and we did not rest on the way, as it was a forced march. We camped on Dunn's Hill.

July 7 - We return to our factory girls again - all O. K., you bet.

July 27 - Had a few friends visit us from home, and moved camp twice. To-night we were ordered to fall in

line. Went to Petersburg, and there took the cars for Weldon. On the road a dreadful accident occurred. On the flat car that we were on, a captain of the navy with us had his leg cut off by a sheet of iron flying off the flat. Lieutenant McMatthews, Henry Wortheim and myself were knocked down, but not badly hurt. The captain died two days after.

July 31 - Up to this time there is nothing new. We are camped at Weldon.

August 1 - From date to the 4th - nothing. We have a good camp.

August 5 - We received marching orders to-day. We embarked on the train at Weldon, went down the Seaboard road a distance of twenty-five miles, and marched from there to

For a large portion of time Pvt Leon and the 53rd NCT stayed in and around Petersburg, VA



Roberts' Chapel. Our company and Company D were the only ones that went. We got there at 10 o'clock at night and laid in the woods until morning.

August 6 - We fell in line and returned. We marched to Boykins and took the cars to our regiment again. This expedition was to capture Yankees that are stealing negroes. When we got there they had left.

Up to August 19 - Nothing new. We have a very good time here by ourselves - get plenty to eat from the ladies and visit them whenever we can get out of camp.

August 20 - Left here at 6 P.M. and arrived at Petersburg at 3 o'clock in the morning. Took the same bed that I had the last time - the sidewalk - and the wall for my pillow. Katz, Hugh Sample, "Bat" Harry, Lieutenant Belk and some others were left behind, sick.

August 21 - Left at 4 A.M. and arrived in Richmond at 6 P.M. Marched to Camp Lee, two miles from the city, and put up any tent we could get hold of, as it was raining very hard and too dark to see. We are all O. K. now.

August 22 - Sam Oppenheim, of the 44th North Carolina Regiment, an old comrade of the 1st North Carolina Regiment, came to see me. He is stationed on the other side of the city.

August 23 - Went uptown to see my brother, Morris, of the 44th Georgia Regiment; but his regiment had already gone to Gordonsville, so I returned to camp.

August 26 - Up to date did not get half enough to eat.

August 27 - Three of our companies got Enfield rifles to-day.

August 28 - Ordered to Drewry's Bluff. We left Richmond at 8 P.M. and got there at 2 A.M. We are camping on the old oat patch, near our former camp.

August 29 - Lieutenant Belk, whom we left at Weldon, sick, returned to us to-day.

August 30 - Our company went to work to-day throwing up breast-works.

August 31 - Still digging dirt.

September 1 - Wortheim and myself went to Half-way Station, to get a box that was sent to us from home, but it did not come.

September 9 - Up to to-day nothing new. Our regiment was paid off to-day, we receiving one month's wages - eleven dollars for a private, which I have the honor to be.

September 18 - Nothing new, only plenty of bad weather and hard work. We received marching orders at 9 A.M. We arrived in Petersburg at 5 P.M. Saw several friends there. Left Petersburg at 8 o'clock that night in cars for Wakefield. Arrived there at 11 A.M.

September 19 - Left Wakefield at 9 P.M. and marched twenty miles - laid in the woods without shelter and it raining very hard. Therefore did not need to wash myself in the morning.

September 20 - Resumed our march

at 6 o'clock this morning. Arrived at Blacks Church after three hours' march, then turned about and tramped nine miles and camped for the night at Joyner's Church.

September 21 - Left here at 6 P.M., marched nine miles, and halted for dinner. Our company being rear guard of the brigade, we had a hard time of it, as the roads are very muddy and we had to keep up all the stragglers. We reached Wakefield at 5 A.M., and laid in the woods and mud for the night.

September 22 - We laid here all day. Cars came for us from Petersburg to-night and took us back. Got there at 12 at night, marched one mile and camped for the night.

September 23 - Left here this morning at 10 o'clock and got to our old camp at 4 o'clock this evening. This expedition was to strengthen Longstreet's forces near Suffolk. We got there after he was relieved and the siege of Suffolk abandoned.

September 27 - Up to to-day nothing new, only today is my New Year (the Jewish New Year).

October - This month passed off with nothing new, except Katz returned on the 7th, and Donau was discharged. We are still on our old camp.

November 5 - There is nothing for me to write. To-day Wortheim and myself went to Petersburg to get a box that was sent from home, and while there we had a very good time.

November 6 - We commenced to put up winter quarters to-day. It is very cold and sleeting.

November 7 - It commenced to snow this morning at 6 o'clock, and continued until one in the afternoon. It is three inches deep. We got some whiskey into camp, which tasted very good and made us forget the cold. The balance of this month passed off very quietly. We are hard at work on our winter huts.

December 1 and 2 - We moved into our winter quarters. They are very good and strong. There are ten men in each hut.

December 3 - Katz and myself went to Petersburg to-day. We met with friends, and the consequence you can imagine. The headache we had next day was caused by too much whiskey.

December 8 - My birthday to-day. I am a man twenty-one years old, but I must say that I have been doing a man's duty before I was twenty-one, providing a soldier's duty is a man's. I spent to-day in bringing mud to our palace for a fireplace.

December 13 - There was nothing to record up to the 13th, but to-day had division review from 9 A.M. until 5 P.M.

December 14 - Rumored that we will leave Virginia for North Carolina.

December 15 - Sure enough. Got orders to cook five days' rations. We started at 2 A.M. and got to Petersburg at 8 o'clock that night. I ran the blockade, and went uptown and stayed all night and had a very good time.

December 16 - I returned this morning and was not missed. We left here

with the cars at 8 A.M., and got to Weldon at 3 P.M. on the 17th.

December 17 - Laid in an old field until 8 P.M., and suffered a great deal from cold. We left here on flat cars and rode all night on them. We arrived at Goldsboro at 10 A.M. on the 18th. The ladies on the road, especially those at Wilson, were very kind to us. They gave us plenty to eat, which we were very much in need of.

December 18 - We marched through town and lay all night in an open field without tents. It is certainly bitter cold. The only fires we could make were from the fence rails, as the woods were too far for us to get to.

December 19 - We got away from the open field at 12 M., and went two miles out of town, and camped in the woods. We met the Bethel regiment to-day. I met quite a number of old friends and comrades of my old company. We compared notes on soldiering. We came to the conclusion that at Yorktown we were playing soldier, but now there is no play in it. We are expecting a fight every hour.

December 20 - Went uptown to-day on French leave, and when I returned was put on guard duty for going.

December 21 - I went to the creek to wash my clothing and myself, and when I got back the water had frozen on my head so that I was obliged to hold my head by the fire so as to thaw it out. Wortheim's eyes are so bad that he can hardly see. Sam Wilson broke his shoulder blade.

December 25. - There is nothing new up to to-day, Christmas. We moved

our camp a little piece. Eigenbrun came to see us to-day from home, and brought me a splendid cake from Miss Clara Phile. This is certainly a hard Christmas for us - bitter cold, raining and snowing all the time, and we have no tents. The only shelter we have is a blanket spread over a few poles, and gather leaves and put them in that shelter for a bed.

December 26 - I got vaccinated to-day by Capt. Harvey White. It was raining very hard, and we all are as wet as dish rags.

December 31 - All is quiet up to to-day, the last of the year. It is still very cold.

NOTES ON THE DIARY OF PRIVATE LOUIS LEON

By Al Leonard

LOUIS LEON was born November 27, 1841 in the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg, Germany, and immigrated with his parents to New York City. In 1858 he moved south with his brother Morris to Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, where they worked as dry goods clerks. Private Leon enlisted at age 19, on April 20, 1861, in the "Charlotte Grays," one of the first companies raised in Mecklenburg County, which became Company C, 1st Regiment North Carolina Infantry (6 month, 1861) [hereinafter referred to as "1st NC"], Colonel (later General) Daniel Harvey Hill, commanding. After serving his six month enlistment with what came to be known as the "Bethel Regiment" because of its involvement in the first

pitched land battle in Virginia, Private Leon joined Company B of the 53rd North Carolina Troops [hereinafter "NCT"], also formed in Mecklenburg County, on April 14, 1862. He was captured at the Battle of the Wilderness in May, 1864 while functioning as a sharpshooter, and was held prisoner at Point Lookout, Maryland, and then at Elmira, New York, until the end of the war. After taking what he termed "the cursed oath," Leon was released and joined his parents and siblings in New York City.

Like many Confederate veterans Louis and Morris Leon went west to take advantage of economic opportunity and probably to avoid the worst of the Reconstruction Act. In 1870 they were merchants in

Westport, Missouri (now part of Kansas City). By 1880 Louis had returned to Charlotte, owned a store, and resided with his wife Sarah, a native of New York City and daughter of German (Prussian) Jewish immigrants, and their children, Rebecca, age 6, and 3 year old Harry. He was an officer in the United Confederate Veterans, became commander of the Charlotte camp, and was active in the placement of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence Monument in 1898. Louis and Sarah later moved to Wilmington, North Carolina, where she died in 1908. The 1910 New Hanover County Census lists his employment as "Register of Deeds." Private Louis Leon, age 77, died "unreconstructed" at a Confederate

veteran's home, on June 28, 1919. In his photograph he wears the Maltese Cross of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and a star on each collar, probably indicating the rank of major in the U.C.V. He is buried beside Sarah in the Hebrew Cemetery on Statesville Avenue in Charlotte.

Private Leon was one of the estimated 2,000 to 3,000 Jewish soldiers who served the Confederacy. In his diary he mentions German-Jewish friends from Mecklenburg County that he served with, including Sergeant Major Aaron Katz, First Sergeant Simon Oppenheim, Corporal Henry Werthiem, and Private Jacob Donau. For further reading on this subject see Robert N. Rosen's book *The Jewish Confederates* (2000).

Louis Leon's *Diary* was among the first published histories "written by a private," and has been widely quoted. It was used as a source by Colonel James T. Morehead in writing his 1901 sketch of the 53rd NCT for Clark's *North Carolina Regiments*, and in 1913 Leon's account of life in the ranks was put in print by Stone's Publishing of Charlotte under the title *Diary of a Tar Heel Confederate Soldier*.

"Our company is commanded by Capt. EGBERT ROSS."

EGBERT A. ROSS had attended the North Carolina Military Institute in Charlotte where his cousin D. H. Hill was superintendent, and in 1861 was a cadet at the Hillsboro Military Academy. At age 19 he enlisted in the Charlotte Grays, labeled the "boy company" due to the overall youth of its members, and was elected captain. He later served as major in the 11th NCT (1st Regiment North Carolina Volunteers), and was mortally wounded by a grape shot to his right side in the attack by Pettigrew's Brigade on McPherson's Ridge at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on July 1, 1863. He was buried on the field. An image of Captain Ross, made while he was with the 1st NC, can be seen at page 29 of Greg Mast's *State Troops and Volunteers*.

"BILL STONE, ALIE TODD and myself put on our knapsacks and went to the creek to wash our clothes..."

Private **WILLIAM D. "BILL" STONE**, age 25, served a six month enlistment with the Charlotte Grays. Many veterans of that regiment quickly joined the local company of the 11th NCT

that inherited the title "Bethel Regiment." Stone, Leon, and others later joined Company B, 53rd NCT, in March, 1862 "for the war." He was promoted to corporal and was wounded in the hip at Gettysburg on the first day of the battle. Corporal Stone was captured four days later and was confined at Fort Delaware and Point Lookout until he was exchanged after sixteen months as a prisoner. After a period of "French leave" he returned to duty only to again be captured near Petersburg, Virginia in the last days of the war. He took the Oath of Allegiance and was released on June 3, 1865.

"ALIE" TODD likely refers to Private S. ELY TODD, who also served a six month enlistment with the Charlotte Grays, and then joined Company B, 53rd NCT. He was wounded in the right arm at Spotsylvania Courthouse, Virginia on May 8, 1864. In September of that year he returned to duty only to be wounded a second time at Winchester, where the regiment sustained high casualties, or at Fisher's Mill. Private Todd soon rejoined the ranks, is accounted for until February, 1865, and survived the war.

“Our comrade ERNHART did not fare so well...he got the bees also.”

Private **JOSPEPH M. EARNHARDT** of the 1st NC later served as a sergeant in Company A, 11th NCT. He was wounded in the side at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania during the Pickett-Pettigrew assault against the Federal center on July 3, 1863. He was captured at Petersburg on April 2, 1865, held prisoner at Fort Delaware, was paroled shortly thereafter, and survived the war.

“Our company was behind the works that held the line where ...WINTHROP was killed.”

Major **THEODORE WINTHROP** of New Haven, Connecticut, was a blue-blooded Yale graduate (Class of 1848), world traveler, lawyer, and a rising literary star of the day. He served as a private with the 7th New York State Militia in answering President Lincoln’s call in April, 1861, and wrote a popular essay about the experience titled “Our March to Washington.” He later became aide-de-camp to General Benjamin Butler, commander of the Department of Virginia headquartered at Fort Monroe. At the Battle of Big

Bethel on June 10, 1861 he volunteered for General Ebenezer Pierce’s staff and drew up a crude plan of battle for the Federals (“If we bag the Little Bethel men, push on to Great Bethel, and simultaneously bag them. Burn both Bethels, or blow up if brick”). After a Federal attack to the enemy right flank was foiled Major Winthrop lead an ill-fated assault on the Confederate left held by four companies of the 1st NC under the command of Colonel Hill. Winthrop leaped onto the trunk of a fallen tree and yelled, “One more charge boys, and the day is ours.” He was killed by a Tar Heel musket ball to the heart and became the premier casualty for the northern side that day. Several North Carolinians claimed to have fired the fatal shot, among them the “negro servant” of Chapel Hill resident R. J. Ashe, Captain of the Orange Light Infantry, Company D, 1st NC.

“We certainly gave them a good beating.”

Of the estimated 4700 combatants at Big Bethel (3500 US and 1200 Confederate), recorded losses were 8 Confederate (1 killed, 7 wounded) and 71 U.S. (18 killed and 53 wounded).

Rightly or wrongly, the engagement has become known as “the first land battle of the war” because of the overwhelming reaction to the small Confederate victory in northern and southern newspapers.

“...but we lost one of our regiment, HENRY WYATT..”

The only Confederate killed at Big Bethel was **HENRY LAWSON WYATT**, a native of Richmond, Virginia, who moved to Tarboro, Edgecombe County, North Carolina in 1856 and worked as a carpenter. He enlisted at age 19 in the “Edgecombe Guards” which became Company A of the “Bethel Regiment.” At the battle Private Wyatt and four other North Carolinians from his company volunteered to set fire to a house that afforded protection to the enemy. He received a mortal wound to the head in the attempt and died at Yorktown on the evening of June 10, 1861, thus becoming the first Confederate soldier to die as a result of enemy action in pitched battle. His remains were buried in the soldier’s section of Hollywood Cemetery at Richmond after an elaborate military funeral. Private Wyatt is memorialized by a statue on the grounds of the

State Capitol in Raleigh, North Carolina.

“I...joined a company raised by Capt. HARVEY WHITE...”

JOSEPH HARVEY WHITE, a South Carolina native and a graduate of Davidson College, was a Mecklenburg County planter when he raised what became Company B, 53rd NCT, and was elected captain. He was wounded at Gettysburg in July, 1863 and upon returning to duty acted as Assistant Adjutant for Daniel’s Brigade of Rodes Division. He was killed in action at Spotsylvania Courthouse, Virginia on May 12, 1864.

“...When breakfast was announced in the shape of MACK SAMPLE...”

Quartermaster **Sergeant JAMES McCAMIE** **“MACK” SAMPLE** enlisted in the 53rd NCT when the regiment was at Drewry’s Bluff, Virginia in January, 1863. He was one of the 105 men of the 53rd captured at Gettysburg (many after being wounded) and was imprisoned at Fort Delaware and Point Lookout, during which time he was transferred to Company B as a pri-

vate. He was eventually exchanged, hospitalized at Richmond with typhoid fever, and in February, 1865 was given a furlough to return to his home in Mecklenburg County.

“I ran the blockade with KATZ, and went to see MIKE ETLINGER. He was not at home.”

Private **AARON KATZ** was a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a resident of Charlotte, and a clerk, when he enlisted in Company B, 53rd NCT, at age 18 on March 14, 1862. Late in that year he was detailed as an orderly to General Junius Daniels, and on January 15, 1863 was promoted to sergeant major and transferred to the field and staff of the regiment. During a Federal bombardment of Confederate positions at Gettysburg on the night of July 2nd he was hit in the side by a shell fragment and became one of the many “wounded captured.” Private Katz was confined at Fort Delaware, then transferred to a hospital at Chester, Pennsylvania, and was released on August 7th, 1863 after taking the Oath of Allegiance.

Private **MIKE ETLINGER** served in company B (raised in

“Petersburg City”) of a short lived early war unit, the 39th Virginia Militia.

“Afterward we met WORTHIE, and we got...something good to eat.”

Corporal **HENRY WERTHIEM** was a Jewish immigrant from Germany (Bavaria) who also worked in Mecklenburg County as a clerk. He enlisted in April, 1862 as a private in the 53rd NCT, was hospitalized in Goldsboro, North Carolina early in 1863, and died at Charlotte on March 30.

“...Our regiment, which is the 53rd North Carolina Regiment, infantry, Colonel WILLIAM OWENS, commander.”

WILLIAM ALLISON OWENS, a Mecklenburg County attorney and former mayor of Charlotte, was a graduate of the University of North Carolina (Class of 1852). He had served as first lieutenant and captain of Company B, 1st NC, the “Hornet Nest Rifles,” and thereafter as a major in the 34th NCT and lieutenant colonel in the 11th NCT. At age 28 Owens was elected colonel of the newly

formed 53rd NCT. He was wounded in the side and hand while his unit was defending the "Mule Shoe" salient at Spotsylvania Courthouse, Virginia. On the day that he returned to duty, July 18, 1864, he was "shot through the bowels...by a stray shot after firing had ceased" while commanding Grimes Brigade at Snicker's Ferry, Virginia. Colonel Owens died two days later of his wound, and was recorded as being "a good officer, brave, humane, social, and popular with both men and officers."

" L i e u t e n a n t McMATTHEWS...and myself were knocked down..."

Second Lieutenant **WILLIAM MCGILL MATTHEWS** was a Mecklenburg County farmer when he enlisted in the Charlotte Grays as a corporal at age 20. He was mustered into Company B, 53rd NCT as first sergeant and was elected to a lieutenantancy in June, 1862. He was wounded in the right side of the face at Gettysburg on July 1, 1863, and was captured two days later. He then was confined at Fort Delaware and was quickly transferred along with other officers to imprisonment at Johnson's Island in Lake Erie off of Sandusky, Ohio. Second Lieutenant Matthews was pa-

roled and exchanged in March, 1865 and returned to reside in Mecklenburg County until his death on February 2, 1908. He is buried at Providence Presbyterian Church in Charlotte.

"KATZ, HUGH SAMPLE, "BAT" HARRY, Lieutenant BELK...were left behind sick."

Sergeant **HUGH B. SAMPLE** was a Mecklenburg County resident and "laborer" when he enlisted in Company B, 53rd NCT, as an 18 year old private. He was promoted to sergeant in June, 1862, and was captured at Spotsylvania Courthouse on May 8, 1864. He survived imprisonment at Point Lookout and was paroled and exchanged in March, 1865.

Private **WILLIAM B. "BAT" HARRY** was a farmer in Mecklenburg County when he was mustered Into Company B, 53rd NCT at age 28. After June, 1863 he had a series of sicknesses and furloughs and returned to duty in late March, 1865. He was then wounded in the leg and it was amputated. He survived the war.

First Lieutenant **SAMUEL E. BELK** was a South Carolina native who worked in Charlotte as a bank teller. He enlisted in Company B, 53rd NCT at the

advanced age of 48 and was elected an officer. He was wounded in the left arm and captured on the last day of the Battle of Gettysburg. His arm was amputated a week later in a Federal hospital. He was then hospitalized at Baltimore and at Fort McHenry, Maryland where he recovered well enough to be transferred to Point Lookout as a prisoner of war in January, 1864, and was exchanged the following March. First Lieutenant Belk resigned from the army in January, 1865 by reason of the loss of his left arm, and rheumatism in his shoulder, hand, and knee.

"SAM OPPENHIEM, of the 44th North Carolina Regiment...came to see me."

SIMON "SAM" OPPENHIEM served in the 1st NC, and later went to Rowan County and enlisted in Company I, 42nd NCT as a sergeant. He was promoted to first sergeant in the summer of 1862, and was reported as "away without leave" in the winter of 1864. He deserted to the enemy in July, 1864, and was confined at Fort Monroe, Virginia. He was released at the end of that month after taking the Oath of Allegiance.

“Went uptown to see my brother MORRIS of the 44th Georgia Regiment.”

MORRIS LEON came to Charlotte in 1858 with his brother Louis. By March, 1862 he had located in Georgia and in that month enlisted at Madison, Morgan County, as a private in the “Morgan and Henry Volunteers,” which became Company I, 44th Georgia Infantry, a bedrock regiment of the Army of Northern Virginia that fought in the Seven Days Battles and at Sharpsburg, and in most of the remaining major engagements of the war while assigned to the Doles-Cook Brigade. By May, 1863 both Leon brothers were serving in brigades in Rode’s Division of Ewell’s Corps and saw each other frequently. Morris Leon was captured at Spotsylvania Courthouse, imprisoned at Fort Delaware, took the Oath of Allegiance on February 13, 1865, and eventually went west with Louis. He later returned from Missouri to reside in Augusta, Georgia.

“DONAU was discharged.”

JACOB DONAU was born in Munchweiler, Germany (Alsace), and worked as a clerk in Charlotte when he enlisted in

Company B, 53rd NCT at age 21. He was “absent sick” during the summer of 1862 and on October 27th was discharged by

reason of “debility from constitutional syphilis as well as chronic gastritis and diarrhoea.”

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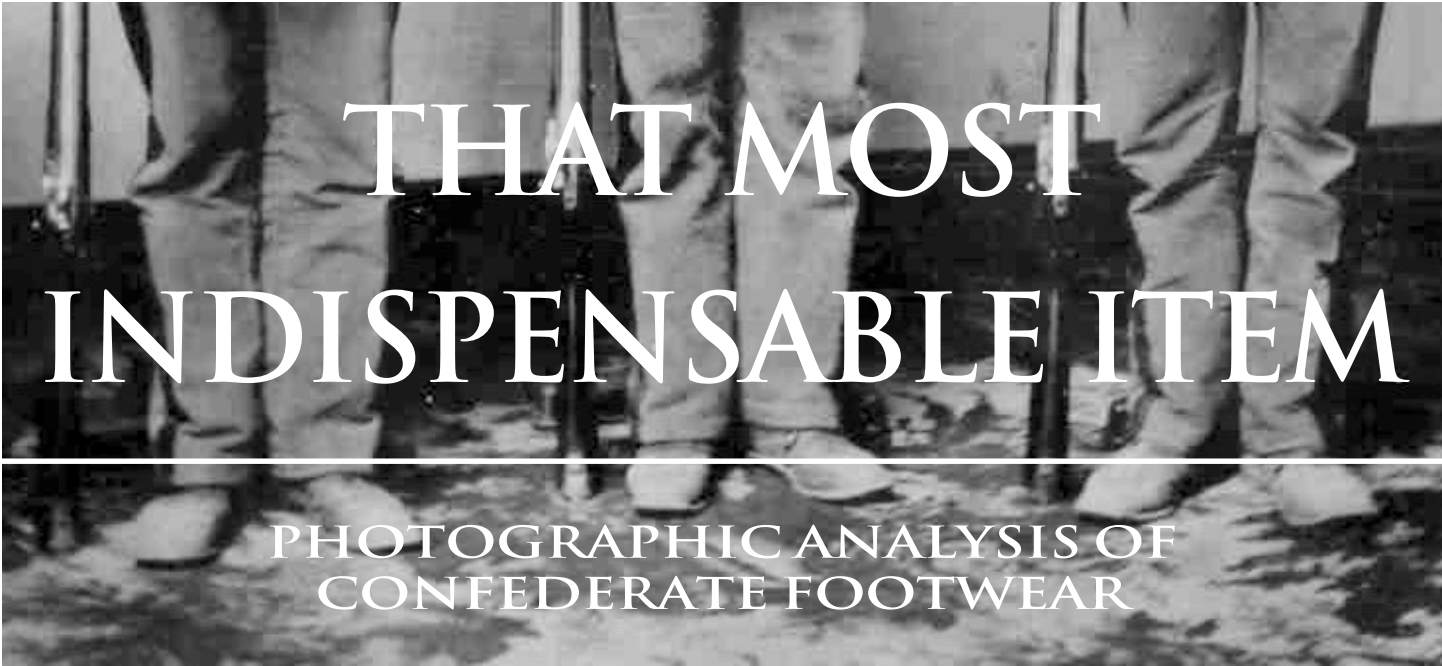
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THAT MOST INDISPENSABLE ITEM

PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF CONFEDERATE FOOTWEAR

By Bob Williams

At no point during its illustrious career was the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in more wretched condition than following the Maryland invasion of 1862. On October 9, 1862 the Richmond Daily Dispatch made editorial comment on this subject: "Posterity will scarcely believe that the wonderful campaign which has just ended with it's terrible marches and desperate battles, was made by men, one-fourth of whom were entirely barefooted, and one-half of whom were ragged as scarecrows . . . We cease to wonder at the number of stragglers, when we hear how many among them were shoeless, with stone bruises on their feet." Indeed, even before General Robert E. Lee began his northward march a Maryland newspaper correspondent reckoned that the army was already short 40,000 pairs of shoes. Whether or not this estimate is exaggerated, it does serve to highlight a basic fact: keeping the troops adequately shod was a problem that plagued Confederate authorities from first to last.

As early as August 1861 Acting Quartermaster-General A. C. Myers was struggling to meet demands from troops in the field. To General Joseph E. Johnston at Manassas Junction he wrote: "We have sent to Europe for shoes, and I have officers all over the Confederate States purchasing shoes, making contracts with tanners for leather and with manufacturers for making leather for shoes." Yet, since army regulations specified the issuance of four pair of shoes per year, Myers wryly added: "The resources of our country are far too limited for the great demand an immense army creates for supplies of every kind. The demand is double what it would be from the same population in times of peace."

Initially, Myers' words rang only too true. But as the war progressed the Confederate shoe industry gamely managed to limp along. In October 1862 Congress gave President Jefferson Davis power to detail as many as 2,000 "skilled" men then serving in the ranks to the

quartermaster department for shoe manufacturing. Yet, shortages were often more an issue of logistics than supply. Since marching wore out sole leather, acute deficiencies in shoe stocks coincided directly with seasons of active operations. Through a combination of heroic state and central government production efforts, importations, battlefield gleanings, civilian confiscations, and sheer improvisation measures including canvas shoes and rawhide moccasins, periods of abject need among the soldiers were usually of short duration.

What type of foot covering did the average Southern fighting man wear in the field? Clothing accounts of the 7th Louisiana Infantry, kept during the winter of 1862-63, list a combination of "English shoes," "canvas shoes," "Confederate shoes," and "wood sole shoes." For a unit that had seen as much close combat as the 7th, the absence of "Federal shoes" is noteworthy.

In a continuation of our close-up photographic analysis se-

Image 1



Image 12



Photos Provided by Library of Congress: American Memory program

Image 7



Image 10



Image 2, 5

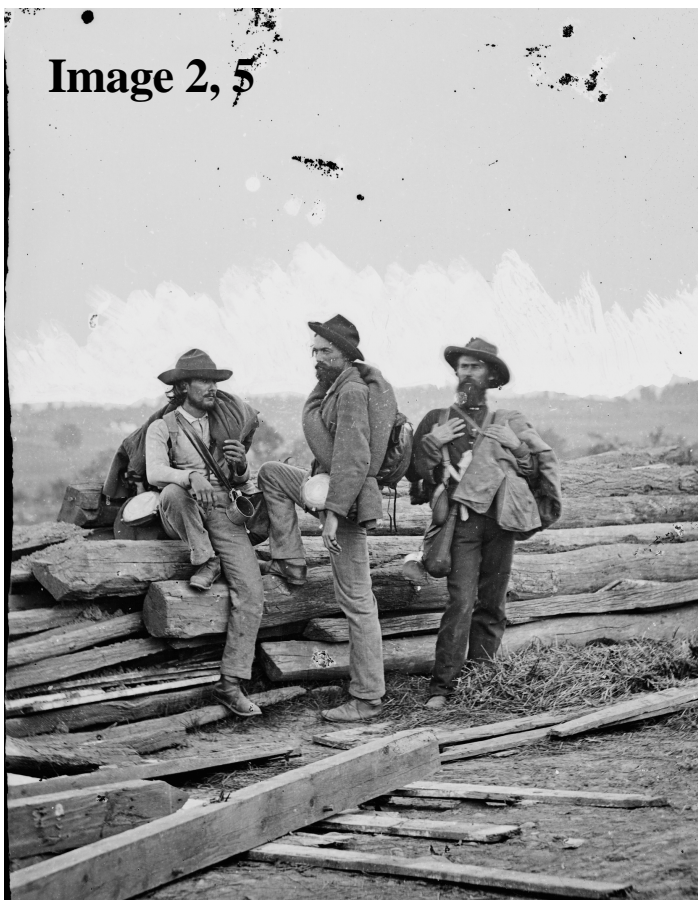


Image 4



Image 3



Image 6



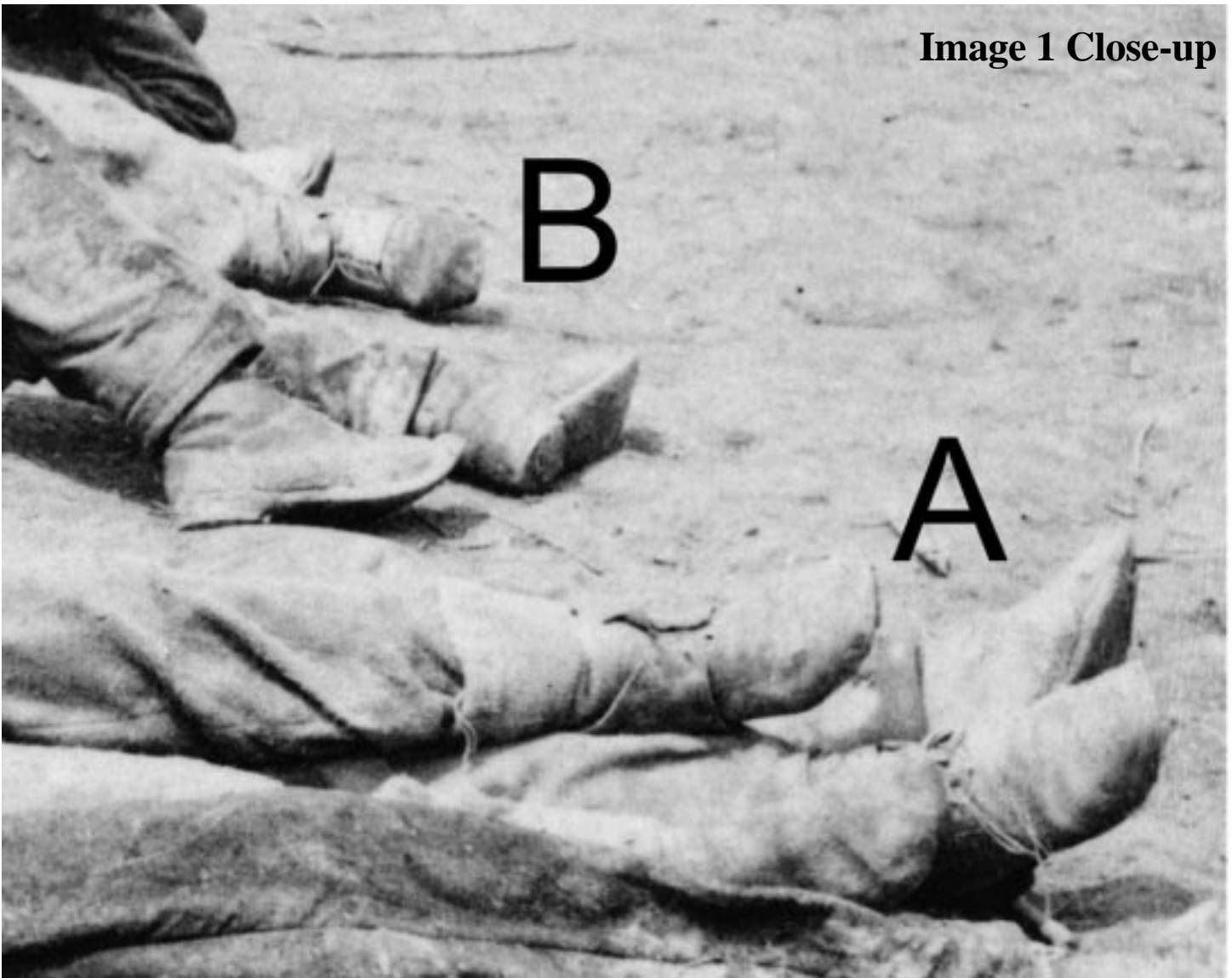
Image 13



Image 9



Image 1 Close-up



ries, this article will focus on Confederate shoes as seen in many well-known contemporary images, mostly battlefield death studies. While not meant to be a statistically valid interpretation, interesting insight into the most common patterns and styles worn by CS soldiers is gained through their scrutiny. Those photo groupings studied are familiar ones. They include scenes recorded at Antietam, Gettysburg, Spotsylvania and Petersburg. This sampling therefore provides a representative view of Confederate footwear throughout most of the war.

Photographic evidence demonstrates conclusively that the aver-

age Southern fighting man wore shoes of Confederate manufacture. While the variety of types are endless, their production characteristics generally follow two main patterns as illustrated in **Image 1** [Spotsylvania]: (A) a low quarter civilian style of inferior make, generally roughly finished, and (B) a high quartered Oxford shoe of solid construction of the style worn by laborers of the period.

Based upon the numbers seen in photographs, low-quartered shoes may have been the most common style of Confederate shoe. They generally sported only 2-3 rows of eyelets and often had only a single sole.

While some collectors call these “Georgia shoes,” that is probably an oversimplification. They were likely produced throughout the South. An extremely low-cut version of one of these is shown in **Image 2** [Gettysburg]. The rough construction methods and the effects of the elements on such footwear can be graphically seen in **Image 3** [Petersburg].

The higher quartered Oxford shoes are also commonly seen, although not in as great number. These brogans exhibit a somewhat rounded toe and 4-6 pairs of eyelets. Vamps are usually sewn over the quarters



Image 2 Close-up



Image 3 Close-up



Image 4 Close-up

with two rows of stitching. Their double soles are held together by two rows of wooden pegs. **Image 4** [Gettysburg] further illustrates some of the characteristics of this durable shoe. An excellent example of Confederate Oxfords exists in the Museum of The Confederacy in Richmond. They are identified to Private M. Page Lapham of the Washington Artillery of New Orleans.

Concerning the quality of shoes furnished to his army General Robert E. Lee had this to say in January, 1864: "The Chief Quartermaster of the Army brought me this morning a sample of shoes recently sent from Richmond. One pair was of Richmond manufacture and another from Columbus, Georgia. They were intended to be fair samples of each lot and were selected with that view. . . . In the Richmond shoe the face of the skin next [to] the animal was turned out, which is contrary to the practice of the best makers and

contrary to the arrangement of nature . . . The Columbus shoe was not half tanned and the shoe was badly made. The soles of both [pair were] slight and would not stand a week's march in mud and water." Little wonder that one Rebel soldier concluded that his government-made shoes were "pitiable specimens indeed."

As indicated above, Great Britain was also a major shoe supply source beginning as early as late 1861. While some recipients complained about the quality of imported footwear, surviving examples are generally well-made and suited for hard service. A common style English shoe is known as the Blucher pattern brogan. Made of fine leather, it boasts two pair of brass eyelets, sewn soles, and herringbone twill "pull loops." They were often adorned with hobnails to increase mileage. English shoes are also frequently noted in battlefield studies from 1863 onward. **Image 5**

[Gettysburg] illustrates just such a shoe on the foot of a Confederate prisoner, with metal eyelets and hobnails evident. A close-up of the eyelets and the stout nature of the English made Blucher shoe is also depicted in **Image 6** [Petersburg]. By late war, many, many Confederates were wearing English made shoes (and uniforms as well.)

Another expedient to relieve the acute shortage of footwear in the Confederacy was the introduction of canvas shoes. First issued in late 1862, these innovative foot coverings were the forerunner of the modern day jungle boot. They were made of two layers of sewn canvas with leather reinforcements on the toes and tops. A member of the 63rd Virginia who received such a pair in February 1863 opined: "The government has lately furnished - for the lack of leather no doubt - canvas shoes. The soles are good, and they would answer very admirably for

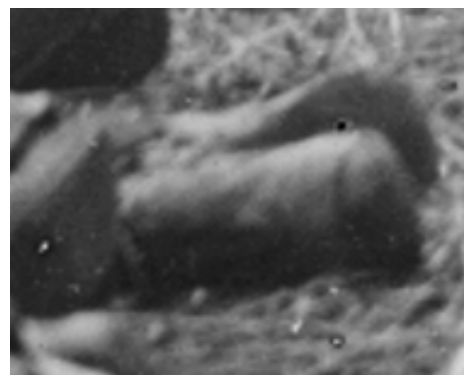
Image 5 Close-up



Image 6 Close-up



Image 7 Close-up



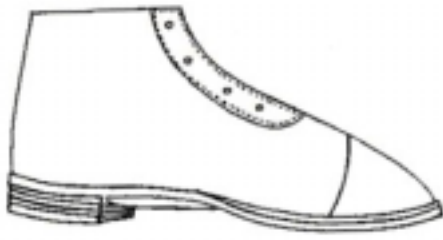


Image 8 Close-up

summer wear, but it will readily appear how insufficient they must be at this season.” A deserter notice later that year for a soldier in the 42nd Virginia also provides the following description: “[Private Samuel H.] Peay [of Company F] is about 6 feet high 28 years old, auburn hair, blue eyes, pale complexion; had on when he left grey jacket and pants, broad brim straw hat covered with black cloth, and CLOTH SHOES.”

At least one pair of canvas shoes was discerned among the battlefield photographs studied and is shown in **Image 7** [Gettysburg]. Since clarity is lacking in the actual photograph, a line drawing of this shoe is provided in **Image 8** to provide further details on its appearance and construction.

A distinctly “colorful” side note to the lore of cloth shoes is provided by Richmond hospital matron Phoebe Pember: “When the quartermaster-general issued canvas shoes



Image 9 Close-up

[to the recovering patients] there was a loud dissatisfaction expressed in constant grumbling, ‘till some genius dyed the whitish tops by a liberal application of pokeberries . . . and for many months crimson shoes were the rage and long rows of unshod men would sit under the eaves of the wards, all diligently employed in the same labor and up to their elbows in red juice.”

No study of Confederate footwear would be complete without acknowledging the vital contributions of the United States Quartermaster Department. That Southern soldiers gleaned much-needed shoes from many a battlefield and captured Federal supply depots has been stated too often to bear repeating here. Yet, the photographic evidence indicates that liberated Union shoes were not as commonly worn as one might expect. Often, it was a matter of “time and place.” **Image 9** [Antietam] is of particular interest since all of the



Image 10 Close-up

shoes shown on these Confederate dead are Federal brogues in near-new condition. Likely, they are part of the large shoe stocks acquired with “Stonewall” Jackson’s capture of Harper’s Ferry. **Image 10** [Petersburg] provides an additional view of Federal contract brogues on a Confederate casualty.

Our photographic study also provided some additional random insights into Confederate footwear that may be of interest. While hobnails were fairly standard on English shoes, they are also frequently noted on more generic shoe types, as is well illustrated in **Image 11** [Gettysburg]. Additionally, shoes were not only tied with leather thongs, but frequently with ribbon or lace. **Image 12** [Gettysburg] clearly shows just such an improvisation being used. And lastly, Confederate soldiers did blouse their trousers on occasion, as depicted in **Image 13** [Petersburg].

Image 11 Close-up



Image 12 Close-up



Image 13 Close-up



“IN OBEDIENCE TO ORDERS”

THE AFTER ACTION REPORTS OF GENERAL BRYAN GRIMES

From Documenting The American South, University of North Carolina

Editor's Note: All bold faced names have endnotes containing more detailed information

REPORT OF THE FOURTH REGIMENT. Gettysburg, July 1-3, 1863

In compliance with orders, I have the honor of submitting the following report of the part taken by the 4th Regiment N. C. State Troops in the engagements around Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. On Wednesday, the 1st of July, we were encamped near Heidelberg, and were under arms and on the march by sunrise. About 4 p. m. arrived near the battlefield, and formed in line of battle, being on the left of our Brigade. After waiting a few minutes, were ordered to advance in line of battle, which was soon countermanded, and then moved by the right flank. After proceeding a few hundred yards, this Regiment, together with the 2nd Regiment were recalled by Maj. Gen. Rodes and fronted on a hill to repel

any attack from that quarter, as at that time there were indications of an advance on the part of the enemy. This position was parallel with the road down which the other two Regiments of our Brigade had moved. After a very few minutes, the enemy not advancing, and a Brigade of theirs heretofore obliquing to the left instead of advancing towards us, Gen. Rodes ordered me with the 2nd Regiment to advance. After getting from under cover of the hill, we were exposed to a severe, galling and enfilading fire from a wood to our right, which compelled me to change front towards the right. We then advanced upon the enemy, joining our Brigade, and driving them in great confusion, and but for the fatiguing and exhausting march of the day would have succeeded in capturing a very large number of prisoners. As it was, we captured more by far than the number of men in our command, but the troops were too exhausted to move rapidly, as they otherwise would have done. We were the first to enter the town of Gettysburg, and halted to rest

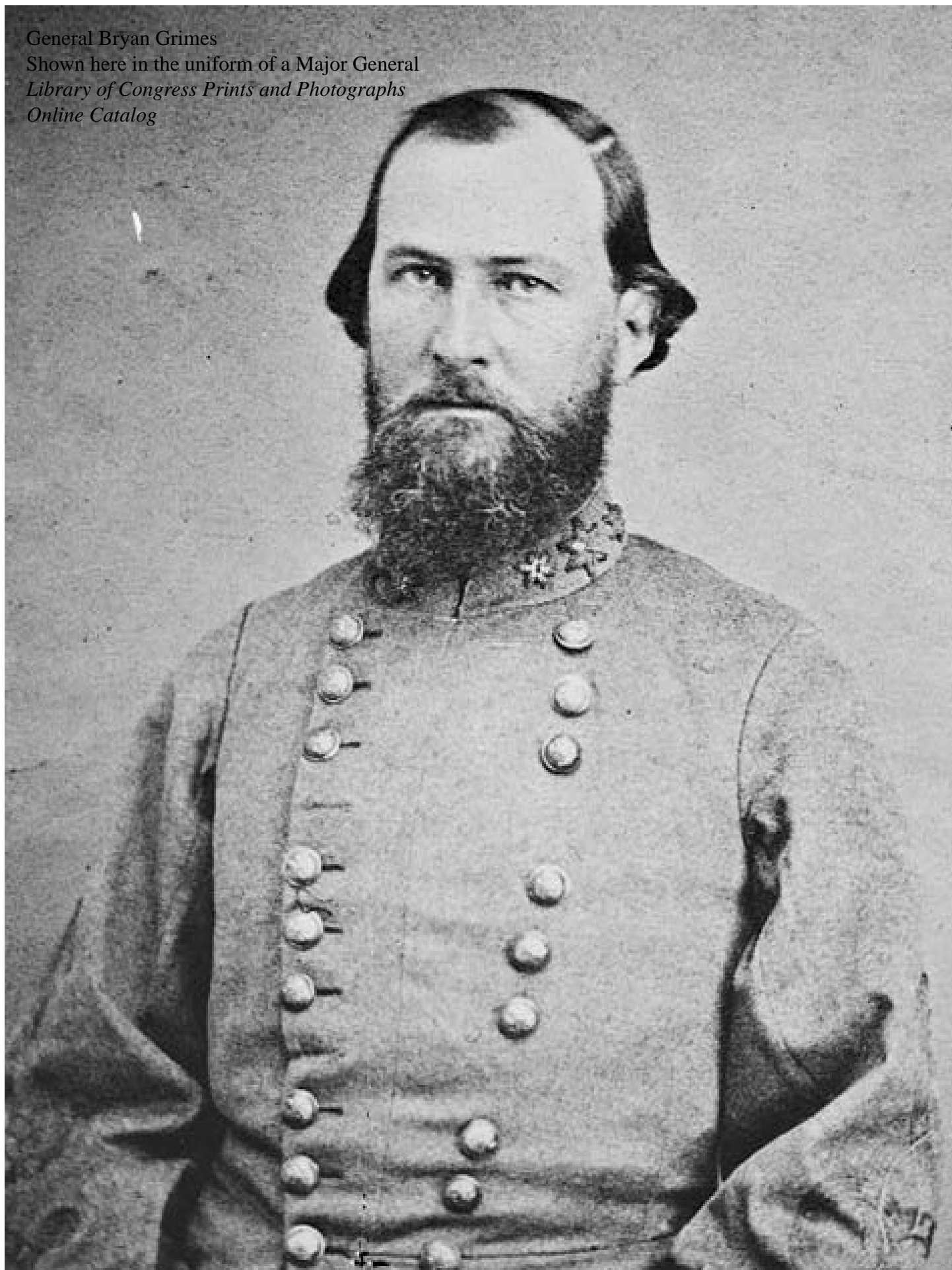
on the road leading to Tomsfield.

We remained in that position during that night and Thursday. On Thursday evening about dark we advanced to make a night attack upon the enemy's works, but when we had approached to within a few hundred yards, and drawing the fire of their pickets, which wounded several of my men, we were recalled and placed on a road, where we remained until 3 a. m. Saturday morning, at times subjected to severe cannonading. We were then taken to the crest of hills in our rear, which position we retained until Sunday morning, when we were withdrawn. Appended is a list of casualties during this engagement. (Omitted.)

Two much cannot be said in praise of both officers and men of my command, all conducting themselves most admirably.

I am, Major,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant
BRYAN GRIMES,
Col. 4th N. C. State Troops.

General Bryan Grimes
Shown here in the uniform of a Major General
*Library of Congress Prints and Photographs
Online Catalog*



(Report of the part taken by Rodes' Division in the action of October 19th, 1864, the Battle of Cedar Cree, Virginia.

**HEADQUARTERS
RODES' DIVISION,
October 31st, 1864.**

Capt. SAM'L J. C. MOORE, A. A. G.:

CAPTAIN: In obedience to orders from Corps Headquarters, I have the honor of submitting the following report as the part taken by Rodes' Division in the action on the 19th October, 1864:

About dark on the evening of the 18th the Division moved from camps on Fisher's Hill and was halted for an hour or more near the pike, in order that Maj.-Gen. Gordon in command of the force, who was to move to the enemy's rear, could communicate with Lieut.-Gen. Early.

This halt was caused, as I unofficially learned, in consequence of information received that the enemy were fortifying that evening on their left flank. About 8 P. M. the march was resumed and after passing the stone bridge filed to the right and passed by a circuitous route around the base of Fort Mountain, by a blind path, where the troops had to march in single file. The order of March was Gordon, Rodes, Pegram. Upon reaching the Shenandoah, where crossed by the Manassas Gap Railroad, the column was halted and massed for the rear to close up. So soon as this was done, about 1 A. M., we again moved forward, following the track of the railroad until near Bucktown Station, where we again halted for an hour and a half waiting

the arrival of the cavalry, who crossed the river in advance and drove in the enemy's pickets. About four and half A. M. the infantry commenced crossing the Shenandoah near Col. Bowman's house in two columns. The passage was effected with great rapidity and in good order though the rear necessarily had to doublequick for some distance to close up. The order of march was as follows: Battle, Cook, Cox, Grimes. On arriving within a half a mile of the Valley Pike, Battle's Brigade was formed parallel with the same, and moved forward in line of battle. The other Brigades continued moving by the flank for about three hundred yards, when they were faced to the left and ordered forward changing direction to the right. Battle soon struck the Eighth Corps of the enemy, and charging, gallantly drove them in great confusion but was himself seriously wounded whilst nobly leading his Brigade, the command of which then devolved on Lieut.-Col. Robeson, 5th Alabama. Cook and Cox continued to advance, swinging to the right, driving the enemy in their front with but slight resistance for upward of half a mile, when Gen. Cox reporting that he was flanked on the left, a temporary halt was made until reinforcements were sent forward, when these two Brigades again advanced, Cook capturing, several cannon, caissons, ammunition, wagons, &c. This movement left a wide interval between Cook's right and Battle's left, which was subsequently filled by Pegram's Division. In the meantime Grimes' Brigade was recalled from the left and moved by the right flank through the abandoned camp of the Eighth Corps, which had been completely routed, faced to the front, and advanced to the pike, con-

necting with Battle's right. This formation was perfected about sunrise.

The enemy being then in position on a small creek to the left of the Pike, with their artillery on a high ridge in their rear, and firing into our line of battle, but the smoke and fog obscured the troops so that their fire was inaccurate. Here Major-Gen. Ramseur had skirmishers thrown to the front and to the right driving the sharpshooters of the enemy from Middletown. The Division remained here perhaps half an hour, until a battery was brought into position on the right of the Pike, when Gen. Ramseur again ordered an advance, which was made in good order, and with a gallantry never exceeded. In this advance Battle's Brigade charged a battery in its front, capturing in addition to six guns many prisoners and a flag. The Sixth Corps was found posted on a hill in rear of this battery, and made a most stubborn resistance. Grimes' Brigade was ordered forward and charged them most gallantly, but being greatly overlapped on both flanks was forced to fall back and reform after advancing as far as the cemetery. At this time there was an interval of three hundred yards between this and Battle's Brigade. Colonel Smith's Brigade of Wharton's Division was now brought into action on Grimes' right and charged the same wooded hill, but was likewise repulsed, when Wofford's Brigade of Kershaw's Division, which had been ordered to report to Major-Gen. Ramseur, arrived on the ground and was posted behind a stone fence to the right of Grimes, it not being thought advisable to move against the strong position of the enemy.

The artillery was at this time, about 8 A. M., massed on the hills

near the Pike and the infantry remained quiet until by a concentrated fire from the artillery the Sixth Corps was dislodged from its position, where they had erected temporary breastworks of rails, stones, &c. Upon this hill the Division was reformed, cartridge boxes refilled and rested upwards of an hour. During this time skirmishers were advanced and found that the enemy had again made a stand at the edge of the woods, about three fourths of a mile in advance. We then moved forward and joined our left to Kershaw's right, halting in the road leading from Middletown and at right angles to the Pike. Here again we halted perhaps for an hour, and then moved forward in echelon by Brigade from the left, which was occupied by Cook with Cox's Brigade in reserve, and took position behind a stone fence. During this time the enemy were firing from their artillery, engaging ours on the hills in our rear. Our skirmishers all the while were engaged with those of the enemy and who had driven in our left, but they in turn were repulsed by our line of battle. In this position Grimes' Brigade was about one hundred yards to the right and rear of Battle's with an interval of from two to three hundred yards between his right and Pegram's left. At half past three P. M, our skirmishers were driven in and the enemy advanced their line of battle. Grimes' Brigade was "doublequickened" upon the line with Battle to meet this advance on the part of the enemy, and Cox moved up on a line with Cook and to his left, which advance was repulsed most gallantly, the enemy fleeing in disorder and confusion, throwing down their arms and battle flags in their retreat. The musketry on our left still continued to increase

and at the time our troops were cheering for this repulse of the enemy, the line on our left was seen to give back, and the troops to retreat without any organization. Gen.- Ramseur then ordered the different Brigades of this Division to fall back and form on a stone fence about two hundred yards in rear, which was promptly done, and the advance of the enemy in our front prevented. While holding this position, the gallant and chivalrous Gen. Ramseur was mortally wounded and brought from the field. The troops on the left had by this time entirely given way, and were running to the rear in great confusion. The enemy were then in front and to the left and rear of the left flank of this Division, when they began to fall back in the same disorderly manner as those on the left.

Our organization up to this time was intact. Upon the order being given to retire, did so, but the stampede on left was caught up, and no threats or entreaties could arrest their flight. Great and repeated exertions were made by the officers of the higher ranks to check the men, but all their exertions were unavailing.

Upon reaching the south side of Cedar Creek, a few, perhaps to the number of two hundred, from Cook's and Grimes, Brigades, formed on the right of the Pike near Hupp Hill, but when the stream of stragglers came running over the hill, with the cry that the cavalry were across the creek, and prepared to charge, these few likewise scattered, and could not be kept together. Up to the hour of 4 P. M., the troops of this Division, both officers and men, with a few exceptions, behaved most admirably, and were kept well in hand, but little plundering, and only a few shirking

their duty. After that hour, all was confusion and disorder. The Brigade commanders conducted themselves, each and all, with great coolness and judgment, and are deserving of especial mention, using all possible efforts to check their troops, but without success.

The death of the brave and heroic soldier, General Ramseur, is not only a loss to this Division, but to his State and the country at large. No truer or nobler spirit has been sacrificed in this unjust and unholy war.

The conduct of the officers composing the staff of this Division cannot be too highly lauded for their gallantry and efficiency: Major Peyton for the coolness and promptness with which he conveyed orders on the field; Major Hutchinson for his efficiency, who was captured, escaped from the enemy, and again captured late in the evening; Captain Randolph displayed his usual daring; Major Whiting, Inspector, rendered signal services by preventing all straggling and plundering; and Lieut. Richmond, A. D. C., for his assistance and alacrity in transmitting orders.

For the conduct of others who deserve especial mention, you are respectfully referred to reports of Brigade commanders herewith transmitted.

I am, Captain,
Very respectfully, Your obedient servant,

BRYAN GRIMES,
Brig. Gen. Command'g Division.

**NEAR WASHINGTON, N. C.,
Nov. 5th, 1879.**

MAJOR JNO. W. MOORE,

Dear Sir: In compliance with your request, I herewith transmit my recollections of the circumstances attending the last days of the existence of the Army of Northern Virginia, embracing several days previous to the final surrender at Appomattox Court House.

On the night of Saturday, April 1, 1865, my Division occupied a portion of the defences around the city of Petersburg, my left resting on Otey's Battery, near the memorable Crater, my right extending to the dam on a creek beyond Battery 45, Ramseur's old Brigade of North Carolinians being commanded by Col. W. R. Cox, 2nd North Carolina, holding appointment as temporary Brigadier; on their right Archer's Brigade of Virginia Junior Reserves, Grimes' old Brigade of North Carolinians, commanded by Col. D. G. Cowand, of the 32d North Carolina, Battle's Brigade of Alabamians, commanded by Col. Hobson of 5th Alabama, Cook's Brigade of Georgians commanded by Col. Nash, extending to the left in the order above named, numbering for duty about 2,200 muskets, covering at least three and a half miles of the trenches around Petersburg, with one third of my men constantly on picket duty in our front, one third kept awake at the breastworks during the night, with one third only off duty at a time, and they required always to sleep with their accoutrements on and upon their arms, ready to repel an attack at a moment's warning.

About 10 o'clock on the night of April 1, 1865, the cannonading from the artillery and mortars in my front became unusually severe, and at about 11 o'clock the Federals charged, capturing my picket line, which consisted of

pits dug in the earth for protection from sharp shooters, and occupied by my soldiers varying in distance from 150 to 300 yards in front of our main breastworks. I took measures immediately to re-establish this line, which was successfully accomplished, and our pits re-occupied. About daylight of the 2nd the enemy again drove in our pickets and charged Rune's salient at the point where Battle's Brigade was posted, carrying the works for a few hundred yards on each side of that point, doubling and throwing Cook's Brigade back a short distance. I hurried the commands of Cols. Cowand and Archer to the point of attack as rapidly as possible, charging the enemy who were in possession of and protected by our traverses and bomb proofs (which were erected to prevent our line being enfiladed, and also as a place of refuge from their perpendicular mortar fire), and continued gradually to regain traverse after traverse of our captured works.

I then secured four pieces of artillery which were placed in our second line of works, whose services were invaluable in checking the advance of the enemy, thus confining them by grape and canister to this particular point at the salient, preventing their advancing to attack our lines in flank or rear; Cook and Battle holding them in check on the left, and Cowand and Archer on the right of the captured works, their only point of egress being exposed to the fire of the artillery.

I regret my inability to recall the names and thus give honorable mention to those gallant artillerists who rendered me such effective service.

During the forenoon Brigade, under command of Col. , reported to me for duty and were placed near the artillery in this second line of earthworks (which had been constructed to fall back upon in case of disaster) to our first line. My dispositions were soon made to attack the enemy simultaneously at all

points - Cowand and Archer on the right, Cook and Battle on the left, who were to drive them from the protection of their traverses. Col. commanded in front with a heavy line of skirmishers connecting his left with Cook and his right with Cowand. My four pieces of artillery poured grape and canister into the enemy, and I gave the signal for the infantry advance, when a general charge was made, but through a direct violation of orders on the part of Col. , this attack only partially succeeded, capturing that portion of the line alone upon which the skirmishers advanced, Col. having changed the direction of attack, and charged the point assigned to the skirmishers on the right, thereby leaving a space of three hundred yards unassailed. There is no doubt in my mind if Col. had attacked with vigor at that time, we could have driven the enemy entirely from our works. After the lapse of an hour, during which time the enemy were heavily reinforced, I ordered another attack from the second line in which Col. participated, but by again diverting his Brigade in the direction of Cowand's Brigade, instead of towards the salient, the enemy were dislodged from only a small portion of the lines.

Subsequently sixty men of Johnston's North Carolina Brigade, under command of Capt. Plato Durham, recaptured Fort Mahone, which for an hour had been so covered by our fire as to forbid their showing themselves. In taking this fort a large number of prisoners were captured; so many in fact, that when I first saw them skulking behind the earthworks for protection against the fire of their own men, I feared it was a ruse on the part of the enemy to surprise us, they having secreted themselves for safety in this work, and we in our charge had taken the only outlet. After this no general attack was made, though we continued slowly but gradually to drive them from traverse to traverse.

About nightfall the enemy occupied some two hundred yards of our breastworks - through no inefficiency or negligence on the part of the officers and men were the works carried, but owing to the weakness of the line, its extreme length, and the want of sufficient force to defend it, for they acted most heroically on this trying occasion. Only one unwounded man (an officer) did I see seeking the rear, and he one whom I had the previous day ordered under arrest for trafficking with the enemy (exchanging tobacco for coffee). Him I hailed and inquired where he was going, when he recalled his arrest the previous day, from which I immediately released him and sent him back to his command.

I had a verbal conference with Gen. Lee and afterwards officially reported my inability to hold this point against any vigorous attack. In consequence of this report, Lieut. Col. Peyton, the Army Inspector was sent the day before to examine this line, who coincided with my views and so reported, to Gen. Lee. On an average throughout the space from man to man was at least eight feet in the line of trenches. I doubted not that with a reserve of five hundred men I could have driven the enemy, from any point which they might capture, and repeatedly urged that such an arrangement be made, knowing well that the enemy by concentrating a large force on any given point could press their way through the line, and my only salvation was in having the means at hand of driving them back before large numbers could enter. Our left was the post of greatest danger, there should the reserve have been placed; but Gen. Lee informed me that every available man was on duty, and I must do the best I could.

On Sunday night of the 2nd we had orders to abandon the works, and without the knowledge of the Federals we withdrew to the north side of the Appomattox river, following the

Hickory road to Goode's bridge, where we recrossed the Appomattox, proceeding towards Amelia C. H., which we reached on the morning of the fifth. Wednesday we remained stationary in line of battle, confronting the enemy until about dark, when we followed the army, bringing up the rear, being very much impeded on the march by the wagon train and its most miserable mismanagement, which, as I apprehended, would cause us some disaster. The enemy showed themselves on Thursday about 8 o'clock A. M. in our rear and on our left flank when near Amelia Springs, and in a short time began to press us vigorously.

I then formed Cox's and Cowand's Brigades in line of battle, with a heavy skirmish line in front to impede their progress and to cover our rear, sending Battle's, Cook's and Archer's Brigades forward for one half mile to form there, across the road, in line of battle, in order to allow Cowand and Cox to retreat safely when the enemy had deployed and prepared to attack; our right flank being protected by a North Carolina Brigade of cavalry under General Roberts. In this manner alternating the Brigades throughout the day we continued to oppose the enemy and retreat, endeavoring to protect the lagging wagon train, which was successfully done up to about 4 o'clock P. M., when we approached Sailor's Creek, and upon the ridge running parallel with that stream we made the final stand of the day, the wagons becoming blocked up at the bridge crossing this stream. At this point Gen. Lee ordered me if possible to hold this line of hills until he could have artillery put in position on the opposite hills over the creek parallel with those I occupied.

The enemy pushed on rapidly, attacking us with very great pertinacity. We here repeatedly repulsed their assaults, but by turning both of our flanks they succeeded in not only dislodging

but driving us across the creek in confusion. About now the artillery from the heights, occupied by Gen. Lee, opened upon the enemy, and the sun being down they did not cross the creek. After we broke, personally I was so pressed that the space between the two wings of the enemy was not over two hundred yards when I sought safety in retreat. I galloped to the creek (the bridge being in their possession) where the banks were very precipitous, and for protection from their murderous fire concluded to jump my horse in, riding him through the water and effect my escape by abandoning him on the other side, the bullets of the enemy whistling around me like hail all the while. By great good fortune the opposite banks proving not so precipitous and my horse seeming to appreciate the situation, clambered up the height, starting off in a run, thus securing my safety. This same animal, Warren, I still own and treasure for his past services. That night we took the road for Farmville, crossing the Appomattox at High Bridge, posting guards at the south side, thus collecting all stragglers and returning them to their commands.

The next morning (Friday) we continued our march down the railroad and formed line of battle on the Lynchburg road, still endeavoring to preserve that "impediment of Caesar's" - the wagon train - marching by the left flank through the woods parallel to the road traveled by the wagon train, and about one hundred or so yards distant from the road. Upon reaching the road and point that turns towards Lynchburg from the Cumberland road, three of my Brigades, Cook's, Cox's and Cowand's, had crossed the Cumberland road and were in line of battle, and at right angles with Battle's and Archer's Brigades, who were still parallel with the Cumberland road. Heavy firing was going on at this point, when Gen. Mahone came rushing up and reported that the enemy had charged, turning his flank, and driving

his men, from their guns and the works which he had erected early in the day for the protection of these cross roads. I then ordered my three Brigades, Cook's, Cox's and Cowand's at a doublequick on the line, with Battle and Archer, charging the enemy and driving them well off from Mahone's works, recapturing the artillery taken by them and capturing a large number of prisoners and holding this position until sent for by Gen. Lee, who complimented the troops of the Division upon the charge made and the service rendered, ordering me to leave a skirmish line in my front and that Fields' Division would occupy my position, I to hurry with all possible dispatch to the road which intersected the Lynchburg road, as the enemy's cavalry were reported to be approaching by that road.

We reached this road, halting and keeping the enemy in check until the wagons had passed, and then continued the march parallel with the road travelled by the wagon train, continuing thus to march until night, when we took the road following to protect the trains.

On Saturday the 8th no enemy appeared, and we marched undisturbed all day. Up to this time since the evacuation of Petersburg we had marched day and night, continually followed and harrassed by the enemy. The men were very much jaded and suffering for necessary sustenance, our halts not having been sufficiently long to prepare their food, besides all of our cooking utensils not captured or abandoned were where we could not reach them. This day Bushrod Johnson's Division was assigned to and placed under my command by order of Gen. Lee. Upon passing a clear stream of water and learning that the other Division of the Corps had gone into camp some two or three miles ahead, I concluded to halt and give my broken down men an opportunity to close up and rejoin us, and sent a mes-

sage to Gen. Gordon, commanding the Corps, making known my whereabouts, informing him I would be at any point he might designate at any hour desired.

By dark my men were all quiet and asleep. About nine o'clock I heard the roar of artillery in our front and in consequence of information received I had my command aroused in time and passed through the town of Appomattox C. H. before daylight, where, upon the opposite side of the town, I found the enemy in my front. Throwing out my skirmishers and forming line of battle, I reconnoitered and satisfied myself as to their position, and awaited the arrival of Gen. Gordon for instructions, who awhile before day, accompanied by Gen. Fitz. Lee, came to my position when we held a council of war. Gen. Gordon was of the opinion that the troops in our front were cavalry and Gen. Fitz Lee should attack. Fitz Lee thought they were infantry and that Gordon should attack. They discussed the matter so long that I became impatient, and said it was some one's duty to attack, and that immediately, and I felt satisfied that they could be driven from cross roads occupied by them, which was the route it was desirable our wagon train should pursue, and that I would undertake it; whereupon Gordon said, "Well, drive them off." I replied, "I cannot do it with my Division alone, but require assistance. He then said, "You can take the other two Divisions of the Corps." About this time it was becoming sufficiently light to make the surrounding localities visible. I then rode down and invited Gen. Walker, who commanded a Division on my left composed principally of Virginians, to ride with me, showing him the position of the enemy and explaining to him my views and plan of attack. He agreed with me as to its advisability. I did this because I felt I had assumed a very great responsibility when I took upon myself the charge of making the attack. I then made dispositions to dis-

lodge the Federals from their position, placing Bushrod Johnson's Division upon my right, with instructions to attack and take the enemy in flank, while my Division skirmishers charged in front where temporary earthworks had been thrown up by the enemy their cavalry holding the crossings of the road with a battery. I soon perceived a disposition on their part to attack this Division in flank. I rode back and threw their right so as to take advantage of some ditches and fences to obstruct the cavalry if they should attempt to make a charge. In the meantime the cavalry of Fitz Lee were proceeding by a circuitous route to get in rear of them at these cross roads.

The enemy observing me placing these troops in position fired upon me with four pieces of artillery. I remember well the appearance of the shell, and how directly they came towards me, exploding, and completely enveloping me in smoke. I then gave the signal to advance, at the same time Fitz Lee charged those posted at the cross roads, when my skirmishers attacked the breastworks which were taken without much loss on my part, also capturing several pieces of artillery and a large number of prisoners, I at the same time moving the Division up to the support of the skirmishers in echelon by Brigades, driving the enemy in confusion for three quarters of a mile beyond a range of hills covered with oak undergrowth. I then learned from prisoners that my right flank was threatened. Halting my troops I placed the skirmishers, commanded by Col. J. R. Winston, 45th N. C. Troops, in front about one hundred yards distant, to give notice of indication of attack. Placed Cox's Brigade, which occupied the right of the Division at right angles to the other troops to watch that flank. The other Divisions of the Corps (Walker and Evans) were on the left. I then sent an officer to Gen. Gordon announcing our success and that

the Lynchburg road was open for the escape of the wagons, and that I awaited orders. Thereupon I received an order to withdraw, which I declined to do, supposing that Gen. Gordon did not understand the commanding position which my troops occupied. He continued to send me order after order to the same effect which I still disregarded, being under the impression that he did not comprehend our favorable location, until finally I received a message from him with an additional one as coming from Gen. Lee to fall back. I felt the difficulty of withdrawal without disaster, and ordered Coil J. R. Winston, commanding the skirmish line which had been posted in my front on reaching first these hills, to conform his movements to those of the Division, and to move by the left flank so as to give, us notice of an attack from that quarter. I then ordered Cox to maintain his position in line of battle, and not to show himself until our rear was 100 yards distant, and then to fall back in line of battle, so as to protect our rear and right flank from assault. I then instructed Major Peyton, of my staff, to start the left in motion, and I continued with the rear.

The enemy, upon seeing us move off, rushed out from under cover with a cheer, when Cox's Brigade lying concealed at the brow of a hill, rose and fired a volley into them, which drove them back into the woods, the Brigade then following their retreating comrades in line of battle unmolested. After proceeding about half the distance to the position occupied by us in the morning, a dense mass of the enemy in column (Infantry) appeared on our right, and advanced without firing towards the earthworks captured by us in the early morning, when a Battery of our artillery opened with grape and cannister, and drove them under the shelter of the woods.

As my troops approached their position of the morning, I rode up to

General Gordon and asked where I should form line of battle. He replied, "Anywhere you choose." Struck by the strangeness of the reply, I asked an explanation, whereupon he informed me that we would be surrendered. I expressed very forcibly my dissent to being surrendered, and indignantly upbraided him for not giving me notice of such intention, as I could have escaped with my Division and joined Gen. Joe Johnston, then in North Carolina. Furthermore, that I should then inform my men of the purpose to surrender, and that whomsoever desired to escape that calamity could go with me, and galloped off to carry this idea into effect. Before reaching my troops, however, General Gordon overtook me, and placing his hand on my shoulder, asked me if I were going to desert the army, and tarnish my own honor as a soldier; that it would be a reflection upon General Lee, and an indelible disgrace to me, that I, an officer of rank, should escape under a flag of truce, which was then pending. I was in a dilemma, and knew not what to do, but finally concluded to say nothing on the subject to my troops.

Upon reaching them, one of the soldiers inquired if General Lee had surrendered, and upon answering I feared it was a fact that we had been surrendered, he cast away his musket, and holding his hands aloft, cried in an agonized voice, "Blow, Gabriel, blow! My God, let him blow, I am ready to die!" We then went beyond the creek at Appomattox Court House, stacked arms amid the bitter tears of bronzed veterans regretting the necessity of capitulation.

Among the incidents, ever fresh in my memory, of this fatal day to the Confederacy, is the remark of a private soldier. When riding up to my old regiment to shake by the hand each comrade who had followed me through four years of suffering, toil, and privation often worse than death, to bid them a

final affectionate, and, in many instances, an eternal farewell, a cadaverous, ragged, barefooted man, grasped me by the hand, and choking with sobs, said: "Good-bye, General; God bless you, we will go home; make three more crops, and try them again." I mention this instance simply to show the spirit, the pluck, and the faith of our men in the justice of our cause, and that he surrendered more to grim famine than to the prowess of our enemies.

That day, and the next, the terms of surrender were adjusted: the following day our paroles signed and countersigned; and on Wednesday, April 12th, 1865, we stacked arms in an old field, and each man sought his home as best he might.

I have given in the above a simple, true; and unvarnished statement of facts, occurring during the dying struggles of the Army of Northern Virginia, in so far, only as I was an eyewitness and participant in those events; with no view to laud my own achievements, or seeming to seek an undeserved honor, or to take the least sprig of laurel from another's brow, but simply in the interest of the truth of history.

I assert that I was at Appomattox, and that I commanded my own Division at Appomattox; and General Gordon, the Corps commander, bears me out in this assertion, and, moreover, states that I volunteered my services, and did make the last charge made by the Infantry at Appomattox.

Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
BRYAN GRIMES,
Major-General in late P. A. C. S.

RALEIGH, N. C., December 20th, 1879.



CAPTAIN MELCHIZEDECK CHANDLER

CO. G, 29TH NORTH CAROLINA TROOPS

Provided By: Cody Fox

Bio Provided By: Al Leonard



Mechizedeck Chandler was born in Cleveland County, North Carolina on February 11, 1820, and by the fall of 1843 had moved to Yancey County where he farmed. His interest in public affairs and his political leanings are illustrated by the fact that his twins, born in 1858, were named Zebulon Vance Chandler, and Vivian Vance Chandler, in honor of newly elected Congressman Zebulon Baird Vance, Democrat of Buncombe County, who later became Colonel of the 26th NCT and Governor of North Carolina. Mechizedeck Chandler enlisted in what became Company G, 29th North Carolina Troops, at age 41 on July 26, 1861 and was appointed Captain. He was not re-elected on May 2, 1862 and returned to Yancey County where he served as 3rd Lieutenant in Company H, 4th North Carolina Senior Reserves. During his service with the 29th NCT that regiment operated in East Tennessee and fought at Cumberland Gap. After 1870 he moved west and lived in Arkansas, California, and Oregon. Captain Chandler outlived two wives, and married a third, and was he father of 16 children, the last born when he was 60 years old. He died on October 2, 1903 in Portland, Oregon and is buried in Lone Fir Cemetery in that city.

