

August 2014



## The Admiral's Log

Sons of Confederate Veterans

1211 Government St., Mobile, AL 36604

Raphael Semmes Camp 11



Dear Friends and Compatriots of Camp 11,

Greetings and salutations from Camp 11. I certainly hope and pray that this edition of the Log finds all of you doing well.

The big news this month was the Sesquicentennial of the Battle of Mobile Bay. Several of our camp members attended and participated. Claude and Michelle Turberville, Mr. Jesse Taylor, Donovan Holifield and family and Matilda were at Ft. Gaines. Dustin Marshall and I were at Ft. Morgan for the event. I am sure a number of you visited as I did see Dave Brasell at Ft. Morgan.

For the most part I think the event went quite well. It was fun to spend a weekend at the forts and to visit with the reenactors and attendees. But the best part was getting acquainted with other SCV members and there were a lot of them there.

I do not think you will want to miss our meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Lonnie Burnett of the University of Mobile will have a presentation about Mobile during the WBTS. See ya at the Dew Drop Inn at 6pm. Our meeting starts at 7pm.

Please continue with your prayers for our camp and its membership.

Best regards,

Terry W. "Beetle" Bailey

Editor, The Admiral's Log

Minutes 28 July 2014

Admiral Semmes, Camp 11

Sons of Confederate Veterans

The meeting was called to order by Commander Joe Ringhoffer.

The invocation was given by Assistant Chaplain Sid Phillips, III.

Following the pledge and salutes to the flags, the program was given Ed Miller. He discussed the Mobile and Ohio Railroad which was 499 miles long and ran from Mobile to Columbus, KY. He compared information on the locomotives and cars that existed at the beginning and the end of the War of Northern Aggression.

Boatswain Tom Root read a selection from Admiral Semmes memoirs. The selection was the observation of the Admiral of the changes in attitude about the federal government from the time it was founded as a servant of the states to the power and control it exercised over the states by 1860. Tom then commented on how much more powerful the federal government is today than it was in 1860. And how much less power the states have relinquished to it over time.

Commander Ringhoffer:

Guests were recognized. They were Dr. Mike Besh of the National Surveyors Association and membership applicants Terry Mai and his son William.

The memorial stamp of the Battle of Mobile Bay will be released at 10:30 am, July 30, at the City of Mobile Museum on Royal Street.

Commander Ringhoffer, Paymaster Christmas, Compatriots DuPree and Riley represented the Camp as delegates to the National Convention in Charleston, SC. Compatriot John O'Donnell-Rosales received approval to form a new camp, Spanish Rifles. Also from the Convention, an autographed copy of *The South Was Right*, the latest book by the Kennedy brother of Louisiana, was given to Compatriot Powell Hamlin as a token of appreciation for opening the Dew Drop Inn each month for the Camp's meeting.

The underbrush at Ft. McDermott has been sprayed and the building of the second bridge is scheduled to begin in August. To assist with the expenses in rehabilitating the site, the Alabama Division sent the Camp a check for \$750.00. More financial support from the Division is expected.

Thanks were extended to Compatriot Gordon Cook for informing the Commander about the grants from the Order of the Southern Cross. The Camp will file a proposal seeking funds to help finish the work at Ft. McDermott.

A possibility exists for Mobile hosting the 2018 National Convention. If selected the Camp will take on the responsibility for manning the event. By a show of hands, the men of the Camp committed to extending a bid.

New flags are being flown at Confederate Rest.

1st Lt. Commander Bailey reported that the financial situation at Beauvoir is improving. Greg Stewart has stepped in as Acting Director and has applied for the permanent position. He is not taking a salary and if selected as Director. The activities related to the commemorating the Battle of Mobile Bay 150 years ago are expected to draw at least 20,000 people at Ft. Morgan alone. Compatriot DuPree introduced Dr. Mike Besh. The National Surveyors Association will hold its annual meeting in Mobile later this summer. Compatriot DuPree has been working with Dr. Besh in planning a session at Ft. McDermott as well as a power point presentation at the meeting site. Under New Business Terry and William Mai were unanimously elected for membership. Following the benediction by Assistant Chaplain Sid Phillips, III, the meeting was adjourned.

#### Admiral Semmes' Commentary on the Atrocity of Yankee Prisons

"The enemy, since the war, has become alarmed at the atrocity of his conduct, and at the judgment which posterity will likely pass upon it, and has set himself at work to falsify history, with his usual disregard of truth. Committees have been raised, in the Federal Congress, composed of unscrupulous partisans, whose sole object it was, to prepare false material, with which to mislead future historians. Perjured witnesses have been brought before these committees, and their testimony recorded as truth. To show the partisan nature of these committees, when it was moved by some member--Northern member, of course, for there are no Southern members, at this present writing, in the Rump Parliament--to extend the inquiry, so as to embrace the treatment of Southern prisoners, in Northern prisons, the amendment was rejected! It was not the truth, but falsehood that was wanted. Fortunately for the Southern people, there is one little record that is impossible to obliterate. More men perished in Northern prisons, where food and medicines were abundant, than in Southern prisons, where they were deficient---and this, too though the South held the greater number of prisoners. See report of Secretary Stanton." [From "Service Afloat]

#### A Sesquicentennial Moment: The Battle of Mobile Bay

By the summer of 1864, Mobile, Alabama was one of only two major Confederate ports still open (the other being Wilmington, North Carolina), making the city a vital lifeline for supplies from the outside world. While the Union Navy had established a blockade at the port, Mobile Bay's formidable

defenses prevented the navy from closing the net too tightly, and rebel smugglers continued to slip in and out.

The bay had two main channels of entry defended by three forts, the largest being Fort Morgan – a 45-gun, star-shaped fortification protecting the largest channel. To supplement these defenses, the Confederates had filled parts of the channel with torpedoes (which today would be called sea mines), and assembled a small flotilla of one ironclad, the C.S.S. *Tennessee*, and three gunboats. The fleet was commanded by veteran seaman Adm. Franklin Buchanan – who had earned his place in history commanding C.S.S. *Virginia* on the first day of the Battle of Hampton Roads. Tasked with closing the port was David G. Farragut, who had become the United States' first admiral after his capture of New Orleans two years previous. Farragut assembled a fleet consisting of four ironclad monitors and more than a dozen wooden ships. At 7:00 a.m. on August 5, 1864, the Federals rushed into the harbor. Farragut split his fleet into two columns – the ironclads sailing nearest Fort Morgan, and the wooden ships on the far side. Farragut ordered the larger wooden ships lashed side by side to a smaller ship so that the bigger vessels could serve as a shield, and so the ships would be able to tow each other if one became crippled. Farragut personally observed much of the battle while lashed to the rigging on his flagship U.S.S. *Hartford*.

Initially, the ships began sailing through the narrow width of the channel that had not been mined – passing under the guns of the fort. But as the columns maneuvered, the ships found themselves drifting into the edge of the minefield. The ironclad U.S.S. *Tecumseh* struck a torpedo, and sank almost instantly, and cautious Union captains began stopping their ships while still within range of Fort Morgan.

Although they faced bombardment from the fort and the Confederate ships, Farragut's flagship made it through the minefield in one piece, with the rest of the fleet following his path. Once into the expansive bay, the fleet could easily move out of range of Fort Morgan's guns, leaving only the Confederate ships to contend with. The Federals quickly captured or drove away the Rebel gunboats, but despite the overwhelming odds the *Tennessee*, Buchanan's flag ship, raced out to meet the Northerners head on.

Buchanan was soon surrounded by the Union ironclads as he steered for the *Hartford*, *but the Tennessee's armored plating protected her as she was repeatedly rammed and pounded with shot. However, the ship's weak engine – a product of the Confederacy's limited industrial capacity – made her too slow to outmaneuver her adversaries, and prevented her from successfully ramming any of the Union ships – although she came close, sliding alongside Hartford as the two crews fired at near point-blank range.*

Eventually, however, the Rebels' slow engine, bad gunpowder, and numerical disadvantage took their toll. Buchanan was injured and the ship's rudder chains were cut – preventing her from steering, and allowing the Federals to move away from her guns and continue pummeling the *Tennessee* in relative safety. Three hours after the fighting had started, C.S.S. *Tennessee* surrendered, leaving the harbor in Union control, and closing the port to Southern blockade runners. The city of Mobile itself was too well defended to capture, but several weeks of joint Army-Navy operations managed to capture Fort Morgan and the other forts protecting the harbor. All told, the Union suffered over 300 casualties in the fighting compared to less than 50 for the Confederates, although by the time the forts surrendered, 1,500 Southerners had been captured.[Source: The Civil War Trust]

### The Unsung Yankee Hero of the Battle of Mobile Bay

Often throughout the course of history a character steps onto the stage, performs his part, and then steps off the stage into obscurity. There was one such character at the Battle of Mobile Bay.

Farragut needed a bar pilot and Martin Freeman was his man.

Freeman was a fisherman in Pascagoula and was familiar with the local waters. Freeman and Farragut were acquainted. Before the battle Freeman joined Farragut on board the USS *Hartford*.

There is still controversy today in Freeman's family as to whether or not he joined Farragut of his own free will or was coerced. The portrait of Farragut in the rigging of the Hartford is not completely accurate as Freeman was in the rigging with him.

After the war Freeman became a light house keeper and little was heard from him. Freeman earned a Medal of Honor for his service to the US Navy. He is buried in the Greenwood Cemetery at Pascagoula, Mississippi. Martin Freeman has a military marker which lists him as an Acting Volunteer Lieutenant to the US Navy.

### Confederate Birthday

General William Barksdale was born in Smyrna, Tennessee, on August 21, 1821. Barksdale died on July 23, 1863, from wounds he received at the Battle of Gettysburg. He was a lawyer, newspaper editor [Columbus, Miss.], and a staunch secessionist. While serving in the US House of Representatives he was closely aligned with the Fire-Eaters. Barksdale was standing beside Rep. Preston Brooks when he whipped Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner. Barksdale was also a veteran of the Mexican War. In one engagement "Barksdale appeared on the scene in his shirt sleeves at a battle line at which I was present", said Davis. "When I asked why he was there at the front instead of in the Quartermaster's office, and why he was so dressed, he responded 'I thought you lads were in for some warm work presently, and, as it is a hot day, I thought I could do better without my coat!'" At the beginning of the WBTS Barksdale was quartermaster general for the Mississippi Army. In March of 1861 he became a colonel in the 13<sup>th</sup> Mississippi Infantry Regiment. At the Battle of Savage Station the commander of the Mississippi brigades was mortally wounded and Barksdale was placed in command of the brigades. The Mississippians gained a reputation for cool level-headed and reliable service under the command of Barksdale through the Peninsular campaign. Barksdale at Gettysburg:

Barksdale's impetuous nature and desire for ending the nagging inconvenience of the Federal Battery in the Peach Orchard had him asking repeatedly of McLaws for permission to charge the battery. Longstreet rode to Mc Laws line and Barksdale saw the opportunity to lobby for his cause. He implored "General, I wish you would let me go in, I could take that battery in five minutes!" "Wait a little," Longstreet responded, "We shall all be going in presently."

Finally, as J.C. Lloyd of the 13th Mississippi remembered it, "Directly in our front, only a few steps, are Generals Longstreet, McLaws, Barksdale, and our beloved Colonel Carter, with their glasses, taking a last look over the field". At this point, two men of the 17th Mississippi were ordered forward to remove the rails from a fence, so the line could charge unbroken across the field.

Barksdale called all of the commanders of his regiments together to issue the orders he had just formulated with Longstreet and Mc Laws, and, referring to the Federals some 600 yards in front, said "The line in front must be broken. To do so, let every Officer and man animate his comrades by his personal presence in the front line." Barksdale mounted a fine White charger, and rode across the rear of his line as the drums beat assembly, and each officer moved to the front and called his line to attention." As he received the order, Barksdale was "radiant with joy. He was in front of his men with his hat off, and his long, white hair reminded me of the white plume of Navarre."

Pvt. T. M. Scanlon of the 17th Mississippi recalls Barksdale's speech to his men prior to the charge: "These were his commands: Halt! Front! Order Arms! Load! Fix Bayonets! The entrenchment 500 yards in front of you at the red barn, and that park of artillery as well as the cone mountain (Little Round Top), which is covered with riflemen screened by huge boulders, and beside that entrenched line there is another 200 yards beyond which we are also expected to take. This is an heroic undertaking and most of us will bite the dust making this effort. Now if there is a man here that feels this is too much for him, just step two paces to the front and I will excuse him. We will proceed to within 75 yards of the entrenchment withholding our fire. There you will receive the command, Halt! Ready! Fire!, after which, without command you will charge with the bayonet."

Barksdale then snapped out his order "**Attention, Mississippians! Battalions forward! Dress to the colors and Forward to the foe! Onward, Brave Mississippians, for Glory,!**" and rode out to lead the charge, as far as fifty yards in front of his men.

The Mississippians showed their veteran strength and determination as they swept forward, through the fire of the artillery rending huge gaps through them that would immediately close as the Mississippians drew together and forward through the fields. Barksdale's men simply overran the Federal troops going forward to the Peach Orchard, capturing at least fifty Union Infantry men, including General Graham.

By this time, Barksdale and his men had reached the Emmitsburg road and, gaining the high ground, Barksdale wheeled the 13th, 17th and 18th to the left up the road, as the 21st continued deeper into the Peach Orchard then followed the line to the left.

In front of the 21st, Colonels Holder and Griffin of the Mississippians (17th and 18th) implored Barksdale to stop and reform, to which Barksdale replied "NO! Crowd them now; we've got them on the run! Move your regiments!"

Barksdale barked at his men in a gruff authoritarian manner "**Advance, advance! Brave Mississippians, one more charge and the day is ours!**" This statement brought cheers from his men, according to J. S. McNeily, who chronicled the charge at the Peach Orchard in Barksdale's Mississippi Brigade at Gettysburg: Most Magnificent Charge of the War in 1913. He goes on : "Barksdale moved bravely on, the guiding spirit of the battle."

When he was wounded in the area of Plum Run, North and East of the Trostle Farm, he saw his courier, W.R.Boyd and said "I am killed! Tell my wife and children that I died fighting at my post." Boyd closes his report by saying "The last words of this ardent patriot, gallant man and dying hero that ever fell upon the ears of his own countrymen should nerve and incite them to his highest standards of duty. The ordeal through which his brigade passed in this fight may be judged when it is told that of the 1,420 bayonets carried into it, 730 were lost in Killed, Wounded and Missing."

General William Barksdale is at rest in the Greenwood Cemetery at Jackson, Mississippi. The General William Barksdale SCV Camp 1220 is located in Columbus, Mississippi. [Source <http://www.genbarksdale.org/>]

What Is In a Name?

"By some it has been called "The War of Secession. "The objection to this name is that it implies that the South was responsible for the war, and this is not true. The North was the aggressor from first to last. For years before the war, it began and carried on an agitation hostile to the South, and when the South sought to protect itself by peaceable withdrawal, it invaded the South with fire and sword. That name is misleading. The name most generally used, and which Congress has decided shall be the official name, is the "Civil War. "I cannot agree with Congress. A civil war is a war between two factions contending for the control of the same government, like the war between Caesar and Pompey in Roman history, or the war between the Houses of Lancaster and York in English history. It is evident that this was not the character of our war. If the Southern States had fought "in" the Union it would have been a "civil war;" but they withdrew from the Union, and organized a separate government."

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Editor's Commentary: I prefer the name "Second American Revolution".

Some Food for Thought

It is not news that our Heritage has come under relentless attacks lately. Recently Bobby Edwards offered a commentary on how we have gotten to this point. Compatriot Edwards is an active member of the Robert E. Lee Camp in Richmond, Virginia.

### "First Invasion

A Northern Army of almost 3 to 1 against what the Confederates could put up against them. [Total enlistments in the federal forces are officially put at 2,778, 304; including in the army 2,489,836 whites, 148,975 Negroes, 3530 Indians, and 105,963 in the navy and marines.] Total Confederates: 600,000-700,000. Marauding troops and Yankee thieves robbed the wealth of ordinary citizens; silverware, artifacts, and personal belongings were there for the taking by Yankee thugs.

### Second Invasion

A wave of carpetbaggers, scalawags, scoundrels, and opportunists in the period of DE-construction, or the Second War of Northern Aggression. The vote and the ability to participate in the government and society were denied for years. The Yankee crooks arrived in waves, infiltrating themselves into government and positions of power. They were put there with the military authority of giving prior slaves the right of the vote while denying this right to the women and blacks of the North. For years as property taxes exploded to criminal levels, wealth and property were removed from land owners. Books, print, government, and newspapers were controlled by the Northern carpetbag interests. A determined fight by ex-Confederates, who were often involved with the first KKK, sent many of the corrupt and criminal carpetbaggers fleeing to the North. The Southern Democrats cleansed the politics of Northern influence, regained power, and returned Southern government to a civilized form.

### Third Invasion

Northern socialists calling themselves liberals at first and later progressives were determined to infiltrate and take over academics and universities. Local and state governments have also fallen under their control. Printing, publications, and the media have become the dominant domain of the Northern progressives. These groups are now the modern day carpetbaggers. They are your smiling next door neighbors. They are nice people until they remove Confederate history from the schools and decide to deny religion's place in Southern culture. As our symbols, our heritage, our Confederate heroes, our flags, our religion, and our societal strengths are continuously attacked we search for a strategy to regain what we once loved and respected. Most have simply forgotten how to fight against an all-out assault against our Southern fabric. Intelligence, strength, creativity, knowledge, and passion are needed to defeat the third invasion. You are the first line of defense. The good name of your Confederate ancestor is critical and your fight is important."

### Coming Attractions

August 30 & 31: Ft. Mims Massacre Commemoration in Tensaw, Alabama. [North Baldwin County off of Ala. 59]

Sept 6<sup>th</sup>: Arts and Crafts Under the Oaks at Beauvoir. 9am-5pm.

### Charge to the Sons of Confederate Veterans

*To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the Cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish. Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations.*

**Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee  
Commander-General  
United Confederate Veterans  
New Orleans, 25 April 1906**