



The Tyrants' Foe



Volume XXXVII

Newsletter of the Texas Rifles
Celebrating 31 Years of Excellence

January 2018



A New Beginning

It seems like just yesterday I was elected to the position of your leader. When I accepted the nomination, I knew I had some very, very large shoes to fill. I recently read down the list of former Commanders of the Texas Rifles and it was like a "Who's Who" in our hobby. Some of them have moved on to different paths in their lives and some have remained here in our hobby.

Like it or not, I myself plan to remain with the group. I have never been with a group of people who shown such togetherness. Yes, we have had our disagreements. Yes, sometimes some tough choices have been made which some may not have agreed with. Yes, frustration and anger may have set in. Being from all walks of life, and areas of Texas, I guess that is somewhat natural? However, when real life problems arose, when we needed each other the most, we rose up together and supported each other. When real life problems arose, we banded together.

I like you have a great love of history and always will I guess. I want to continue to share that love with you as long as possible. I see people coming back into the hobby who have been absent for a few years. I see others on social media posts talking about how they miss being in our hobby. Not so much for the reenactments but for the togetherness. I want to continue to have that in my life.

As I reflect back upon this hobby, I think some of the happiest moments I have ever had have been arriving on the site the first day and seeing people I have not seen in a while. To catch up on what is new in their lives, to see any new items they have brought.

Making that first fire of the event, has always meant, "My other family is together". Naturally leaving an event has always been hard for me.

With the world changing around us, certain words, actions, and even scenarios at events have brought about great changes. I cannot predict what our future may hold for this portion of our hobby. I do know regardless of what the future holds, our family will remain strong through it all.

I have been honored, humbled, and proud to join the ranks of Commanders of the Texas Rifles. It shall be an honor I shall greatly cherish forever. I wish to thank you all once again for your faith in me, as your, Commander of The Texas Rifles.

I Remain Your Humble and Obedient Servant
Captain Dusty Lind



The First Sergeant Says So

For the 31st time, the Texas Rifles will conduct annual muster as we begin our fourth decade. This is quite an accomplishment for a history group to remain active for such a time, as I can think of only a handful of groups able to maintain such longevity. It is a tribute to the members, and those who have filled the various offices of the organization over time that have kept history alive.

One of the unique aspects of the Texas Rifles is that we have a tradition of not having group leaders that remain in office for perpetuity. After serving, most return to the ranks to enjoy the hobby without the grind of additional responsibility. However, it should be noted

that some members have given years of their talents far exceeding the norm of Rifles tradition, and are worthy of recognition. Frank Marek has put in seven years as First Sergeant, in addition to three years as Lieutenant, and two years as Captain. I may rank next with four years as First Sergeant, two as Lieutenant, and three as Captain. Rick Hall owns the Newsletter editor position thanks to his Photoshop talent. Of the fifteen men who have commanded the Texas Rifles, five have served with the Rifles in the field in the past year.

I mention this not only for the sake of documenting the past, but as a guide post to those who have recently joined us, and represent our future as an organization. These traditions will also be your traditions as part of your life with the Texas Rifles. Let us also reflect on past musters and the traditions associated with them.

For just over half of our history, annual muster was held at Winedale. The site is owned by the University of Texas, and as political correctness spread across the land, Confederates were no longer welcomed there. Because the facility was heated, and meals were served on site, we were not troubled by the variability of weather. The center had a room that could be used for limited indoor drill and accommodation, in addition to the main building having room for our Saturday morning meeting. We held contests for proficiency in individual drill, fastest to fire four rounds from the three firing positions, and fastest to stack muskets. We skirmished platoon on platoon, and various members prepared classes and demonstrations of period skills.

We moved muster location of Round Top into a collection of period structure, with the exception of the barn, which had electricity and could support some of our weekend's activities. While this location offered a more period setting, spreading the members across the various buildings had an adverse impact on our scheduling and keeping to event sequencing. Muster now became more weather dependent, as we needed to conduct activities outside, as the barn was the storage area, and we did not have a site that we rented and was set up for conducting meetings. The sales of that property meant that we needed to find another home for muster.

Pioneer Farms has been the muster location for the past few years. We have had many of the same issues as with Round Top. The Executive Board has been looking at moving the muster location in hope of finding an accommodation that will better suit the purposes of conducting our annual muster, and will allow our traditions to continue.

Tommy Attaway,
1st SGT





A VISIT TO THE HUNLEY

I was in Charleston, South Carolina recently as part of a family trip. It was the first time I had ever been there. Interesting place. Lots of colonial and Federalist architecture plus the whole area is littered with Civil War sites. If you are an artillery fan (I am not), there are more siege caliber original artillery tubes scattered around Charleston than I have ever seen. Many are unique. One was a Confederate piece which had been struck by a Federal shell and had a trunnion broken off. That meant that it could no longer be fired, but General Beauregard thought differently and ordered it to be repaired and upgraded. So, a new trunnion was forged on and a wrought iron jacket placed around the breech end for extra strength. This unique piece of rebel improvisation was then returned to Confederate service at Fort Moultrie. When Fort Moultrie was turned-over to the National Park Service by the US Army in 1958 for use as an historic site, this piece was simply lying on the ground outside the pre-Civil War brick fort where it had been dumped in 1865. That is the sort of place Charleston is; nobody thought to haul it off for scrap metal.

By the way, Charleston is politically incorrect. Confederate statues abound and one of the harbor islands flew a 1st National Confederate flag. John C. Calhoun has his own street named for him, a park and statue on a tall column. Pride in the past is encouraged, and NOBODY in Charleston talks about removing the emblems of secession. My kind of place.

The Hunley is in North Charleston. For those of you who don't know about the Hunley, it was a small human powered submersible. Its mission was to sink or drive off Federal ships blockading Charleston harbor. The Hunley sank three times and killed 21 of its 24 total Confederate crew members plus 5 Federal sailors. There is some circumstantial evidence that one member of the submersible's first crew was an African American. It did sink a Federal warship on its last voyage. Nobody on either side knew what happened to it after this exploit, or where it was until adventure novelist Clive Cussler went looking for it in 1980 totally at his own expense. His team finally found it 12 years later four miles outside the harbor in thirty feet of water beneath four feet of silt. Since then

it has been raised and is still being restored for display in a museum in Charleston. The remains of its last crew were still onboard. They have since been interred beside the other Hunley crew members in a local cemetery.

Two key facts I learned on the Hunley tour from the docent; first, was that the Hunley was not a submarine, it was a submersible. A submarine by the modern definition can regenerate its own air supply while submerged. A submersible can submerge, but must surface for a fresh air supply. The Hunley could submerge for as long as two hours, but by then its single source of light, a candle, would go out due to lack of oxygen and the crew would be near suffocation. It had dual snorkels and an interior bellows air pump, but apparently that system did not work well and was not used.

The second fact was that the Hunley was never in the Confederate Navy; in period terms it was a privateer and sailed for profit. Its owners expected to collect a large bounty from the Confederate Government when it sank Federal warships. There never was a C.S.S. Hunley; it was privately owned by a group of investors. This fact, 131 years later, had a legal impact on who "owned" the vessel.

The Hunley was designed and built in Mobile, Alabama and was the third submersible associated with builder/designer James McClintock and investor H. L. Hunley. None of these boats worked very well, but these men were on the cutting edge of a new technology. The third boat was an improvement and was sent to Charleston by railroad. There it was looked upon as a secret weapon and hopefully a blockade breaker. All the major southern ports were blockaded by Federal ships to prevent cargoes going out or coming in. The Hunley might change that situation, or at least force the Federal ships to stay so far offshore to avoid submersible attack that the blockade running ships could enter port more easily.

The Hunley is made of iron plates riveted to an iron frame. It was built to order and not made from an old ship's boiler as some authors suggest. It is currently kept in a concrete tank submerged in fluid to prevent corrosion. The Hunley is 37.5 foot long tapered oval tube and only 4'2" high inside and even less in width. It had no defensive armor or arms. Its only protection was the water around it, stealth and darkness. Lacking a periscope, the Hunley had to keep its top awash and the two tall hatches above water in order to navigate. Each hatch had multiple glass ports, but the officer stationed at the forward hatch did not lock it because a head could not fit inside the hatch with the locking mechanisms in use. It had a crew of eight men. One member of crew #3 was 6'1" and had to bend double over the crank used to power the boat.

A museum has grown around the conservation lab and has a section of a TNT movie replica in which you can sit and turn a crank. Claustrophobic does not beginning to describe the experience. I like boats, but to get into that contraption and take it to sea was an act of bravery difficult to comprehend. To do it after it sank twice and killed most of the crew members in a horrible manner is unfathomable. I have visited many battlefields from several wars and stood upon ground where heart stopping acts of bravery took place. But in most cases it was in the open, under the sky with air in your lungs and your enemy in sight. It was not folded over a crank handle in the dark breathing stale air, knowing that if ANYTHING goes wrong you will suffocate slowly or drown. Crew #2 died like that, and

after the Hunley was found and raised their tangled bloated bodies had to be cut-up to be removed from the submersible.

The Hunley's sole weapon was 116 pounds of black powder in a copper barrel on the end of a sixteen foot long metal shaft. It was designed to be exploded against an enemy hull. By comparison, full scale Civil War field artillery used at reenactments typically fire a one or two pound charge of powder. So success in an attack meant that an explosion of 116 pounds of powder took place sixteen feet in front of you. And the Hunley had success. On the night of February 17, 1864 it attacked and sank a wooden hulled Federal sloop of war, the U.S.S. Housatonic. The submersible actually survived the mission and signaled for onshore Confederates to light fires to guide the Hunley back to base on its return voyage. But, it never made it. It was probably struck by a Federal vessel coming to rescue the Housatonic sailors; there are reported scars from propeller strikes and the rudder was found beneath the Hunley's hull. Yet as to why the submersible stayed submerged may never be known. The crew remains were found at their bench positions, not after desperate attempts to escape like crew #2. They met death seated at their stations.

There are lots of reasons to visit the Hunley, it is an interesting artifact from an endlessly fascinating war. But the foremost reason to see it is to contemplate the courage of which human beings are capable and pay homage to that courage.

Jmk, 11/23/2017



A VIST TO FORT SUMTER

For anyone with an interest in the American War Between the States, Fort Sumter is where it all began. This where the first shots were fired to begin the worst war in our nation's history. I was both pleased and surprised to discover that the average Charlestonian is not ashamed of this fact. Fort Sumter is better known to Charleston residents as its war time shield; a prominent statue in the Charleston Battery, the most exclusive residential district in a very exclusive town, is dedicated to the Confederate defenders of Fort Sumter.

Then as now, Fort Sumter can only be reached by boat. It was built to protect the very rich port of Charleston from invasion by sea. Charleston has always been a rich person's town, where wealthy planters built their "in town" winter homes. In summer everyone who could leave Charleston for higher ground to avoid the heat, disease and mosquitoes. The British attacked Charleston twice during the Revolution and captured it on their second try. It was blockaded but not aggressively attacked during the War of 1812. But the United States had learned that, lacking a navy equal to the Britain's Royal Navy to protect its coastal cities, the next best (and cheaper) thing to a strong navy was coastal

fortifications at key points. Surveys were done and recommendations made to Congress. Along with other east coast and Gulf coast cities, Charleston would be fortified with brick forts designed to thwart seaborne attackers. Near the harbor entrance was a shallow spot upon which the future Fort Sumter would be built.

Beginning in 1829, 50,000 tons of rough New England granite blocks were dumped on the shoal in Charleston Harbor until the pile rose above the highest tides. Then the masons went to work. The goal was a five sided fort made of thick brick walls with two tiers of heavy cannon in casements (arched ceiling rooms which were open in the back) topped by a third tier of cannons firing over the top of the walls. This should have been enough firepower to sink any enemy vessel entering Charleston harbor. Originally designed for over 135 cannons, Fort Sumter never was fully armed and the second tier of embrasures were bricked shut. At the time of the 1861 secession crisis, it was still not finished, held 78 cannons of which only 15 of which were mounted on carriages.

Major Robert Anderson commanded the Federal troops in the Charleston area. He was a political choice as he was from Kentucky, owned slaves and was wealthy. It was thought that he could speak "southern" and communicate more easily with Charlestonians in this time of crisis. He was all those things, but above all else he was a Unionist. He moved the various small caretaker garrisons scattered around Charleston into Fort Sumter so that they could not be overwhelmed by South Carolinian troops on land. Guns were mounted and Fort Sumter prepared for defense. Lacking warships, the Confederates took over or built batteries on every side of the harbor facing Fort Sumter. Charleston is situated on a peninsula between the Ashley and Cooper Rivers. By modern standards its harbor is small and shallow. Fort Sumter was within cannon range from Confederate artillery at Fort Moultrie, a floating armored battery, the Charleston waterfront (the Battery), Castle Pinckney, Fort Johnson, and Cummings Point. Ironically, the only side which could not be shelled by Confederate guns was the side facing the sea; the direction of attack the fort was built to repel.

The bombardment of Fort Sumter by the Confederates under General Beauregard began 4:30 a.m. April 12, 1861 and lasted 36 hours and resulted in Major Anderson's surrender of the fort. No one died in the bombardment, but Anderson was out of food, low on water, the quarters for officers and enlisted men had burned down, the magazine was in danger of exploding and he was cut-off from any help. He was allowed to evacuate after saluting his flag. Fort Sumter was now a Confederate installation. The structural damage to Fort Sumter was light. Beauregard noticed that the deepest gouges in the brick walls were caused by the one rifled English cannon he had. The future lay in that observation.

The Federal government appeared to have an obsession about punishing Charleston. This was the city where the South Carolina Ordinance of Secession was passed, dissolving the Union in December of 1860. Beginning in July of 1863 the city was not just blockaded by the US Navy, but under continuous siege. The Federal government was determined to capture the symbol of secession, Charleston, and to re-capture Fort Sumter where the US flag was first hauled down. The sieges of Vicksburg and Petersburg were nothing compared to the 18 months of siege to which Charleston was subjected. In no other siege was a civilian population deliberately targeted. Almost surrounded by brackish water swamps, Charleston is a difficult place to attack from the sea. Battery Wagner on Morris

Island was repetitively besieged and attacked. One such failed assault led by the 54th Massachusetts was the climax of the movie, "Glory." Wagner was wanted because holding it meant that heavy cannons could be brought to bear at short range on Sumter. Capture Fort Sumter and Siege of Charleston was won. The Federal fleet of ironclads repetitively attacked Sumter, Sumter was bombarded day and night for months by large caliber cannons and its walls reduced to rubble. Every large cannon in the fort was dismounted, but the stubborn defenders kept the flag flying until the approach of Sherman's army in February 1865 forced the Confederates to evacuate the forts and city. The US flag was raised again at Fort Sumter by Anderson himself, but Sumter was a wreck. It was a five sided pile of brick debris inside and out. The only remnants of the classic pre-war structure were the lowest tier of casements buried beneath the rubble of the upper tiers.

Only half-hearted attempts were made to re-condition Fort Sumter and the other Charleston defenses until the Spanish-American War of 1898. The US east coast cities were fearful that the Spanish fleet would attack them. Forts were reconditioned along the entire east coast and more modern artillery emplaced. Fort Sumter was rearmed and its entire seaward half filled with sand as a defense against modern battleship guns. The remains of the upper tiers were removed. That is what remains of Fort Sumter today; the exhumed lower tier casements and half the fort filled-in with sand and concrete. It is a fragment of its pre-Civil War former glory. Modern jetties were built out of the harbor entrance to help maintain the deep water channel into Charleston long after the Civil War. These had the effect of interrupting normal alongshore sediment movement and altering the Charleston seascape. The accumulating sand north of the jetties closed the inlet used by the Hunley to reach the sea. To the south of the jetties there was a sand deficit, which nature filled by eroding away the part of Morris Island where Battery Wagner and the Cummings Point Battery had stood. Mass graves which had held the bodies of Federal soldiers killed while attacking Wagner were transferred to the Beaufort National Cemetery after the war, so the known war dead were not affected by nature's transfer of the island. The Morris Island Lighthouse stands now in the water at high tide.

Fort Sumter is where it all started and the fort fulfilled the mission for which it was built; protecting Charleston from invasion by sea. Housed in the fort are casements with cannons, various artillery tubes and the original flag hauled down in 1861 and raised again in 1865. It is worth the boat trip and it is worthwhile to study the ring of forts surrounding it from the defender's perspective.

There is an 1865 photograph showing part of the battered outer wall. Mounted on top of the wall is the only working cannon left in Sumter after the bombardment by the Federals; a small howitzer. In spite of all the changes that have taken place, there is a howitzer in the same place today guarding the fort.

Jmk, 11/25/2017



CHALMETTE 2018

I made my annual pilgrimage to the “Plains of Chalmette” for the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans. This battle between a diverse American Army under General Andrew Jackson and a British force sent to capture the city under General Sir Edward Pakenham took place on January 8, 1815. This observance is held on the actual battlefield, now a National Park. Chalmette is located on the northern bank of the Mississippi River about ten miles downstream of downtown New Orleans.

Three years ago this commemoration was an international event. Napoleonic reenactors came from Germany, Australia, Canada, and the northern US to participate. Several days of battles took place on private land away from the National Park. The NPS made it clear that if you were a reenactor, then you were not wanted at THEIR park. Thousands of appropriately scummy Americans cowering behind a breastwork managed to repel a noble British attack by a full scale red coated regiment preceded by 95th Rifle Regiment skirmishers dressed in green (no, I am NOT biased). It was great fun and a wonderful boost to the local area still recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

That was then. Since that time the National Park Service (NPS) has retreated behind its bureaucratic ramparts and funding for another off-park reenactment somehow went elsewhere; a great Louisiana tradition. The living history event is still worthwhile and the public is educated, but my mind still resonates with the scenes from 2015. As in 1815, early January is on record as the time for the worse weather in the New Orleans area. Historically, it has rained for 20 times out of 30 on January 8th. This year it was cold again on Saturday, with only a fun run scheduled on Sunday. The rain started Sunday and lasted through Monday, the actual anniversary. I always camp on the field; the river traffic is endlessly fascinating, sunsets and sunrises glorious. Straw and firewood is provided along with a refreshment tent where hot coffee and cocoa are available. The bathroom is heated and I had thoughts of sleeping there Friday night. Most of the time is spent talking to hundreds of visitors who arrive by bus and boat. I am now cleared to do firing demonstrations under NPS supervision and using NPS ammo. I was exactly ½ of the British Army; the other half was a piper from the 93rd Regiment. The Americans were represented by US regulars, sailors, miscellaneous militia, artillery and (wait for it), a four man unit of Napoleon’s Old Guard wearing suspiciously thin fabric uniforms complete with bearskin shakoes.

I had planned to participate Saturday, Sunday and Monday, but was informed by the NPS that as no activities of an historical nature were planned for Sunday and as it was predicted to heavily rain Sunday night, my camping on the park grounds was no longer allowed. No offer of shelter was made. The general impression I get from the NPS at Chalmette was that they are, more or less, ashamed to be interpreting a battlefield to the

public and preferred to promote the park more for its natural setting. When I worked at the park as a volunteer in the 1970's, it was considered to be a dumping ground for the unwanted in the NPS system and none of the rangers were trained in history; they were all frustrated biologists. Maybe things have not changed much. Admittedly, the sunrise was beautiful and silhouetted the adjacent refineries nicely.

Perhaps I am being too hard on the NPS. Saturday was a good day and made the drive from Houston worthwhile. With so few living history attendees, everyone counts. While there I enjoyed a conversation with a Saint Bernard Parish official and the head of the Saint Bernard tourism bureau. They both wanted to hold another multi-day reenactment and realized that it would have to be held off-site from the National park. They have the site already. What they need is money and organization. There is hope for the future in those words.

Jmk, 1/15/2018



James Iredell Waddell
Captain, CSS Shenandoah

The CSS Shenandoah

She circumnavigated the globe



CSS Shenandoah (1864-1865) Hauled out for repairs at the Williamstown Dockyard, Melbourne, Australia, in February 1865. Note Confederate flag (possibly retouched) flying from her mizzen gaff, and fresh caulking between her planks.

Photo: Courtesy of Martin Holbrook, 1977. U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph.

CSS Shenandoah, a 1160-ton screw steam cruiser, was launched at Glasgow, Scotland, in August 1863 as the civilian steamer Sea King. After the Confederate Navy secretly purchased her, she put to sea in October 1864, under the cover story that she was headed for India on a commercial voyage. Sea King rendezvoused at sea off Madeira with another ship, which brought Confederate Navy officers, some crew members, heavy guns and other equipment needed to refit her as a warship. This work was completed at sea

under the supervision of C.S. Navy First Lieutenant (later Commander) James Iredell Waddell, who became the cruiser's first Commanding Officer when she was commissioned as CSS Shenandoah on 19 October.

Waddell took his ship through the south Atlantic and into the Indian Ocean, capturing nine U.S. flag merchant vessels between late October and the end of 1864. All but two of these were sunk or burned. In late January 1865, Shenandoah arrived at Melbourne, Australia, where she was able to receive necessary repairs and provisions, as well as adding more than forty "stowaways" to her very short-handed crew. Following three weeks in port, the cruiser put to sea, initially planning to attack the American south Pacific whaling fleet.

However, discovering that his intended targets had been warned and dispersed, Waddell set off for the north Pacific. He stopped in the Eastern Carolines at the beginning of April, seizing four Union merchantmen there and using their supplies to stock up for further operations. While Shenandoah cruised northwards in April and May, the Confederacy collapsed, but this news would spread very slowly through the distant Pacific. Following a month in the Sea of Okhotsk that yielded one prize and considerable experience in ice navigation, she moved on to the Bering Sea. There, between 22 and 28 June 1865 the now-stateless warship captured two-dozen vessels, destroying all but a few. Soon afterwards, Waddell started a slow voyage towards San Francisco, California, which he believed would be weakly defended against his cruiser's guns.

Though Shenandoah's late June assault on the whaling fleet was accompanied by many rumors of the Civil War's end, she did not receive a firm report until 2 August 1865, when she encountered an English sailing ship that had left San Francisco less than two weeks before. Waddell then disarmed his ship and set sail for England. Shenandoah rounded Cape Horn in mid-September and arrived at Liverpool in early November, becoming the only Confederate Navy ship to circumnavigate the globe. There she hauled down the Confederate Ensign and was turned over to the Royal Navy. In 1866 the ship was sold to the Sultan of Zanzibar and renamed El Majidi. She was variously reported lost at sea in September 1872 or in 1879.

Courtesy <http://publicdomainclip-art.blogspot.com/2010/08/css-shenandoah-1864-1865.html>. A World Wide Web site for official information about the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) and naval history. It is provided as a public service by the NHHC. The purpose is to provide information and news about the Naval History and Heritage Command and naval history to the general public.





Thanks to everyone who contributed to the making of this edition of the Tyrants' Foe Newsletter. Without you it would be nothing. Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is tentatively scheduled for, April 1, 2018.



To Tyrants Never Yield

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 20, 2018	Annual Muster	Austin, TX	MAX	CS
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