



*The* **Sentinel**

Newsletter of The James Creek Guards

March 2016



Private William Sergeant, Co. E, 53rd P.V.I. Wounded at the Battle of Seven Pines June 1, 1862 with a shot fracture of both arms resulting in a double amputation

# THUNDER IN THE VALLEY UPDATE



**Tom Carlson**  
March 11 at 12:00am

Thunder in the Valley update from Captain McNerney:

The web site for the event is excellent. Keith Murray designed it. The site is: [www.crosskeysreenactment.com](http://www.crosskeysreenactment.com)

The Boys should go to it and register either PayPay or check and do so before May 1st. The price is 25.00, but it is for preservation. After May 1st the price goes up. The site answers most questions, directions, etc. After registering it would be very helpful if the men emailed me, so we can begin to form Companies. If you can also put this out on Facebook, it would be great. Again, many thanks in this regard.  
Your Brother in Arms, Mac



**Thunder in the Valley - A Shenandoah 1862 Event, The Battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic**

[www.crosskeysreenactment.com](http://www.crosskeysreenactment.com)

## ON TO RICHMOND RELEASE

March 9, 2016  
For Immediate Release

On to Richmond, the 155th Anniversary Reenactment of the Seven Days Campaign Site Announcement

Lovettsville, Va- Rear Rank Productions, the City of Newport News, Endview Plantation and Lee Hall Mansion announce a new location for the 2017 reenactment.

Held on the Virginia Peninsula, "On to Richmond" is the 155th Anniversary Re-enactment of the Seven Days Battles.

This event will feature unit specific detailed battle scenarios, even handed rule enforcement, correct force ratios, including artillery and mounted forces by invitation only, both campaign and garrison camping and unit specific impressions.

Henrico County decided that they were not able to host a Civil War reenactment due to various issues. "On to Richmond" is now set to be held at Lee Hall Mansion and Endview Plantation June 2-4, 2017.

"The Peninsula Campaign and the Seven Days battles are often forgotten but played a huge role in setting the stage for the rest of the war. Instead of capturing Richmond quickly and possibly ending the war soon, the Army of the Potomac was instead introduced to Robert E. Lee, whose aggressive fighting style helped propel the war for another three years. Many soldiers and leaders were first introduced to battle in this campaign and it shaped their experience in the army for the rest of the war. We are grateful for the opportunity to host this event and gain a better appreciation of the sacrifices made by soldiers on both sides." said Tim Greene, Education Coordinator of Endview Plantation.

Endview Plantation was built in 1769 and was used as a Confederate Hospital during the 1862 Peninsula campaign, while Lee Hall was the Headquarters of both Confederate Generals Magruder and Joseph Johnston.

Using both locations, each scenario will be held on a different portion of the Endview and Lee Hall properties.

Scenarios we are looking at are Seven Pines, Gaines Mill, Glendale and Malvern Hill.

Mike Lavis is leading the Federal forces, S. Chris Anders will be leading the States Rights Forces and Todd Harrington is the Sutler Coordinator.

The Rear Rank Productions team is excited about it's new partnership with Endview Plantation. All parties are anxious to continue on with the series of exceptional Civil War events that have included Balls Bluff, At High Tide, New Market Heights, and Maryland My Maryland. As always, the objective of each Rear Rank Productions event is to provide an exceptional experience for each participant. "On To Richmond" will be working to continue with that tradition.

Registration will open in June of 2016 and is limited to 3,000 participants.

## FENIAN RAID UPDATE!

Brothers In Arms,

Here is some more updated information on the Fenian Raid, June 10, 11, 12, 2016 in Ridgeway, Ontario.

### REGISTRATION

All the event is requiring from us is a list of names. For simplicity's sake, just send the names of men from your unit who area participating to me at: 8thovi@att.net.

We will then register ALL NR participants as the 18<sup>th</sup> Ohio, which was a participant in the original raid.

We will also have liability insurance on this unit to satisfy Parks Canada requirements.

### UNIFORMS

**Pants:** Any correct period style, either military or civilian.

**Shirts:** The original 18<sup>th</sup> Ohio wore green shirts with brass buttons and green caps. No more detailed description has been found.

I would LIKE all NR participants to wear a green shirt, any period correct style.

You can get a passable one from Milk Creek Sutlery for \$35 for the fireman's style. I believe the regular shirt style is a little less. Also, you can buy an unbleached muslin shirt from ANY sutler, get a package of DARL GREEN RIT dye at your local supermarket and dye your own.

[http://milkcreek.com/shop/index.php?main\\_page=product\\_info&cPath=55\\_56&products\\_id=120](http://milkcreek.com/shop/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=55_56&products_id=120)

**Headgear:** Any period correct military or civilian style hat is acceptable. I suggest a green ribbon wrapped around the cap/hat to signify identity. The 18<sup>th</sup> Ohio is documented as wearing green caps. If you like, you may buy one at below.

**Green cap:** The below site is for the Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot. They're not the best quality, but they're only \$25 and with a little effort they can be made to look passable.

<http://www.ebay.com/itm/Berdans-Sharpshooters-Forage-Cap-Highest-Quality-S-M-L-XL-or-XXL-/390707301502>

**Other Gear:** Standard event equipment, tent, canteen, rifle, leathers, etc.

**We will have auto passes, for those going across the border of Canada and then back to the USA. You will need either a Passport, a Passport Card or an Enhanced driver license.**

You can copy the attached passes **IN COLOR** and pass them out to your members who are attending.

**THE BEST SITE FOR CROSSING THE BORDER WILL BE THE PEACE BRIDGE AT BUFFALO.**

**THE PARKS CANADA COORDINATOR WILL CONTACT THIS SITE DIRECTLY TO ALERT THEM TO OUR COMING.**

More information will be forthcoming.

Tom

# LETTER FROM

PRIVATE THOMAS TRACY CO C 53<sup>RD</sup> PVI

July 25, 1862, in Camp near Harrison's Landing.

"Dear Brother

"I received your letter today and glad to hear that you was well and your family and your little Soul. I have but little news at present to rite to you but today the Army of the Potomac had a large review before General McClellan but we did not enjoy it much because it was so warm here...I wish you would tell Rufus that he had better volunteer. If they went to drafting, you had better if you have to come you had join...in to E. P. Pelets company for he is a good fellow for he belonged to our company once but tell him not to be afrade...for they may not draft at all...He will not find it play at all in the army. Edward is in the hospital sick but is better now but he never will be tuf as I am. Don't let Mother know he is very sick for she will feel bad. But I think he will get better...as soon as the hot weather is over. I should have riten before but in the field I lost all of my paper and stamps you sent me and my clothes to and your picture and now the rebels are looking at you now but I have got some of their things to in exchange. I have got a very nice blanket that they used to have...burnt lots of guns and took lots of them...We don't expect to have any more fighting to do before October but I hope not for I have seen enough of it at present...We have not got enough men here in front of Richmond. We have to drill an hour and a half a day and then we go down to the river and swim a while but we can't all be gone at a time. But we have some fun...I was on guard at a Sutter Tent the other night and battery fellows tore down the tent and I got about a dollars worth of stuff I sold for the cash...from your Brother T. R. Tracy"

your letter  
I am sorry to hear that  
you will not be able to  
visit the army of the  
North but I hope you  
will be able to visit  
the army of the South  
I am sure you will  
enjoy it very much  
I wish you would tell  
me what you think  
of the matter  
I am sure you will  
enjoy it very much  
I wish you would tell  
me what you think  
of the matter



Articles are being at you  
were but I have got some  
of these things to in a day  
I have got a very nice  
blanket that they used to  
have some kind of 75 of yours  
and had 1/2 of the and  
was with them and was  
out of yours you may think  
this is a long story but it  
is true and we filled up  
with the out of our yours  
we don't expect to have any  
more filling I do hope to hear  
but we can't get for more  
but I hope to see you  
soon enough of it at present  
for we have not got nearly  
enough here in fact at present  
we have to still have around  
a half a day and then we  
go down to the river and  
swim a while but we

I can't at be gone at a time  
 but I will have done soon  
 at all I was ever quiet at  
 an other time. The other  
 will not be long. I'll be  
 here about the first of  
 Sept about 4 miles north  
 of the city I shall be. The  
 cause I can't think  
 of much to write now you  
 must excuse the possibility  
 for I must be off to see  
 the ground to write  
 give my best  
 respects to all the  
 about all the rest  
 Mr. Kany to write for  
 I can't get time to do  
 but I will try and  
 answer his letter if he  
 will still let me get to see it does  
 through my hands. I'll be  
 home again. I'll be  
 home again. I'll be

Mr. Kany to write for - being to see

# NATIONAL REGIMENT APPROVED

## VENDORS LIST 2016

As per Col. Downes request; revised NR Sutler/merchant list

N. J. Sekela UNIFORMS <http://www.njsekela.com/>

Stony Brook Company - Chris Sullivan TROUSERS <http://stonybrookcompany.com/page2.html>

The Sutler of Fort Scott - Steve Dunfee ALL MANNER OF VERY UNIQUE SUNDRY ITEMS (click on authentic reproductions) <https://www.sutleroffortscott.com/>

South Union Mills - Chris Utlely HANKERCHIEFS AND RAIN GEAR  
<http://www.southunionmills.com/>

Button Baron - John Zaharias and Janet Smith BUTTONS AND COUNTLESS OTHER SINGULAR PERSONAL AND TIN ITEMS <http://buttonbaron.3dcartstores.com/>

TP & H Trading Co. - Tim Bender SLOUCH HATS <http://benderhats.com/>

Crescent City Sutlers (CORP BADGES and CASEYS INFANTRY TACTICS ONLY)  
<http://www.crescentcitysutler.com/>

Sullivan Press - Bob Sullivan ALL MANNER OF EPHEMERA <http://sullivanpress.com/>

Blazing Star Press - Jason Wickersty ID STENCILS <http://www.newblazingstarpress.com/>

C & D Jarnagin LEATHER GOODS AND OFFICERS TIN LANTERNS ONLY PLEASE  
<http://jarnaginco.com/catframe.html>

Patrick M. Cunningham TINWARE  
[http://www.cunninghamtinner.com/archives/cat\\_mid\\_19th\\_century.html](http://www.cunninghamtinner.com/archives/cat_mid_19th_century.html)

Wambaugh, White & company UNIFORMS <http://wwandcompany.com/>

Greg Starbuck FORAGE CAPS & KEPIS <https://www.facebook.com/Kepis-by-Starbuck-1495997197355435/>

Missouri Boot & Shoe <http://missouribootandshoe.tripod.com/>

Tim Sheads UNIFORMS, WEAPONS, BUTTONS ETC. <http://www.ss-sutler.com/>

Regimental Quartermaster (CAMPAIGNER CORNER ONLY!) <http://www.regqtm.com/>

Lodgewood Mfg. DEFARHING MUSKET <http://www.lodgewood.com/>

Dells Leather Works ALL MANNER OF LEATHER GOODS

<http://dellsleatherworks.com/welcome.htm>

Dirty Billy Dirtybillyshats.com (MILITARY AND CIVILIAN HEAD WARE)

NJ Sekela

[www.njsekela.com](http://www.njsekela.com)

Uniforms

# 2016 UPCOMING

# EVENTS

## 1<sup>ST</sup> MINNESOTA

## CAMP OF INSTRUCTION

**DATE: 2 APRIL 2016**

**TIME: 09:00**

**PLACE: SPIROS MARINOS FARM**

**CIVIL WAR LANE**

**GETTYSBURG, PA**

**COST: \$5.00-\$10.00**

This event will not be an official event, however members of the 53<sup>rd</sup> are welcomed to join our parades of the 1<sup>st</sup> Minnesota and others in a Camp of Instruction. Food will be provided by the Veteran Reserve Corp. Events organized by James Owens have always been beneficial.

# 53<sup>RD</sup> PVI SPRING

## MONUMENT CLEANUP

**DATE: 9 APRIL 2016**

**TIME: 09:00**

**PLACE: THE 53<sup>RD</sup> PVI MONUMENT**

**BROOKE AVENUE**

**GETTYSBURG, PA**

**(39.7915 N, 77.24070 W)**

Dedicated 11 September 1889 the monument consists of an 8'7" tall statue of a fully equipped infantryman supported by a 9'7" tall granite base. The members of the 53<sup>rd</sup> tend to the grounds around our monument removing any branches, trash and other unsightly debris. Mild gardening tools are advised and a trash collection bag. The day generally will dissolve into battlefield tours and other historic activities.

## ENDVIEW PLANTATION LIVING

### HISTORY

#### **CIVIL WAR LIVING HISTORY: ON THE WARWICK LINE**

**April 23-24, 2016**

Endview Plantation

362 Yorktown Road

Newport News, VA 23603

Stretching across the Peninsula from the James River to a spot just outside of Yorktown, the Warwick River was used by General John B. Magruder's Confederates to stop Union forces under General George B. McClellan. As Confederates dug fortifications, Union troops moved forward to discover what forces lay ahead of them and began to dig their own defenses. See living historians portraying Union and Confederate troops as they searched out each other's defenses and fortified their own. Free with regular admission. Join us Saturday from 10 AM - 5 PM and Sunday from 12 PM - 5 PM.

# **NATIONAL REGIMENT**

## **CAMP OF INSTRUCTION**

**PLACE: PA MONUMENT GETTYSBURG, PA**

**DATE 14-15 MAY**

**MORE INFO TO FOLLOW**

We will be putting into practice the new things learned at the School of instruction. We will also be doing 2 demonstrations Saturday and 1 Sunday. Maybe now we will have evenly placed distance between tents.

# THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS

OF

LEVI J. FRITZ

THIS INSTALLATION TRANSCRIBED BY JOEL PETERSON

Army Correspondence  
Headquarters, 53d Regt, P.V.  
Falmouth, Opposite Fredericksburg  
Va, Sunday November 30, 1862

Messrs, Editors – Major Gen. Sumner's command, forming the Right Grand Division of the Army of the Potomac, remained in camp at Warrenton six days. Nothing of more than passing importance transpired during our stay. Our last letter to the Ledger we wrote at the above place, but owing to the uncertainty of the mail for the last few weeks, we feel somewhat doubtful of your receiving it. According to orders, we broke camp at Warrenton early on Saturday morning the 15th inst. We were supplied with three days rations. At seven o'clock, A.M., the column began to move off. Bringing up the rear of our division we passed through Warrenton at 11 o'clock, by Court House time. Just beyond the town we were halted half an hour. The troops moved to three columns – infantry on the right and left and the artillery and teams on the road. Our regiment was the rear guard to four batteries. We marched towards Warrenton Junction following the line of railroad. The weather was favorable. The general appearance of the country through which we passed was cheerful; although there was but few houses, none of which were beautiful, several deserted, and most them much dilapidated. We reached the Alexandria & Orange railroad, and bivouacked immediately beyond; about a mile below the Junction (Warrenton). This day we marched ten miles.

The next morning (Sunday) the reveille was sounded at 4 o'clock, and roll called as usual. Knapsacks were re-packed, breakfast cooked, and eaten. At seven we commenced moving. Our division moved on the right of the road; the Irish Brigade in the advance, ours in the center, and Caldwell's in the rear. By noon, we had marched about ten miles when we were halted half an hour, to swallow a bite of dinner. This was at a place where there were two houses, and was no doubt dignified by being called a town or ville, but what was its name we did not ascertain. The country was not as fine as that through which we passed yesterday. At dusk we went into bivouac in a woods near Acquia Creek, having marched eighteen miles during the day. As a matter of course the boys were fatigued, but if you would have seen them running races for

rails, and chasing up rabbits, you would not have thought so – the scene bore more resemblance to boys just let loose from school, then that of soldiers, that had just accomplished a day of weary marching. To the soldier rails are a glorious institution. A good fence and plenty of it is a grand desideratum. When the day's tramp is about ending, and the soldier is about "being up" for the night, he keeps a sharp eye to the fences. And if it is his good fortune to be quartered for the night, within a reasonable distance of the article in question he considers himself lucky. How quickly they make a cheering blaze and how it saves labor in cutting wood. According to orders, while on the march, each company commander must hand in a report of the number of rails burned by his command; but as a rail by any other name will burn as well, you may well believe that according to official report but few rails are destroyed.

The next day (Monday) found us up at early dawn – packed up and ready to march before sunrise. This day our division, which had the advance of the column moved as follows; Our Brigade in front, Caldwell's in the center and the Irish Brigade in the rear. The 53d Pa and the 57th N.Y. under the command of Col. Brooke was sent ahead as the advance guard. We had made about five miles when the Column was informed that the cavalry pickets of the rebels were about a mile in our front. The command was halted and the boys loaded their muskets. Here a squad of cavalry galloped up and passed to the front. Half an hour after, cannonading was heard in the front, and a short time after the dragoons came back. They stated that they came up with the enemy's cavalry, and drove them across the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg. We went on until we arrived near Falmouth.

The 53d formed line of battle on the left of the road and the 57th N.Y. on right. Company I, of our regiment, was advanced as skirmishers. We remained in this position but a short time when Gen. Sumner and Gen. Hancock and staffs came up and surveyed the vantage of the ground. We advanced several hundred yards further on and took position on the right of the road. Here we waited for several hours – in the interim the artillery came up and was put in position. Our regiment moved to the left to the support of a battery. A and I, remaining as pickets and skirmishers on the road. The enemy had a battery of four guns on the other side of the river near Fredericksburg. Our guns on this side opened upon them at 4 o'clock, P.M. A brisk fusillade was kept up for half an hour. So well directed were the shells from our pieces that the rebels were several times driven away from their guns. From a tree, we could plainly discern the rebel battery, and the explosion on effect of Pettit's well directed shells. Our regiment was under artillery fire, but there were no casualties. About 10 o'clock at night, A and I Companies were moved down the road and put on picket along the river at Falmouth. We were along with Company A. The night was dark and cloudy. The rebel pickets were along the river shore on the other side. We could hear them talk and even spit. Occasionally we heard the rumbling of moving artillery and the clashing of cavalry sabers. Before daybreak the picket line was drawn in. At daybreak we could discern the rebels plainly on the opposite side of the river, but as they did not fire on us we did not fire on them. The regiment had been on picket further down the river, was moved back of a knoll and went into camp. The

following day it was ordered into Falmouth to act as Provost Guard. The companies are quartered in houses. Three companies (A,F, and B) are in an old Lutheran Church, standing on a high bank, near the river and not more than 150 yards from the rebels picket line. The rebels have strongly fortified the hills near Fredericksburg, and their camp fires show that they must be there in force. One battery of seven guns we can plainly see. Yesterday it was expected that we would open our batteries on them, but for some reason or other, the affair failed to come off – the ball, however, may be expected to open every moment. They have a heavy picket line along the Rappahannock and so have we; at some points the lines are only fifty yards apart, and our boys and the rebs kept up quite an interesting conversation until holding communication with the enemy was prohibited. Yesterday afternoon we were at the river when some twenty of the rebels were on the other side. One reb desired to know why we did not come over the river. Our boys answered that they would as soon as they were ready. An officer of ours had a New York paper which he wished to exchange for a Richmond one. A rebel hollered over, “What regiment do you belong to?” The officer not understanding him and thinking that he wished to exchange, answered, “New York Herald!”

The majority of the people of Falmouth were glad to see our army here again as it would once more in a measure open the place to Northern trade. When we arrived here the necessities of life were selling at ruinous prices. Shoes, \$10 per pair, coffee, \$3.00 per pound, sugar, \$1.00 per pound, butter, \$1.00 per pound, tea, \$10.00 per pound, eggs, .30 cents per dozen. Salt, there was none in market. A box of matches cost .25 cents.

Capt. Mintzer of the Pottstown Company, who had been absent for several weeks on official business, returned yesterday. The boys welcomed his return by three rousing cheers. They were good boys while he was away, for coming back he found them all in church. During his absence the company was under the command of 1st Lieut. Potts.

Yours &c. L.J.F

~~Jan 30 Winter Drill Landis Valley Museum, Lancaster Pa~~

~~Feb 27 & 28 - National Regiment School of Instruction; Gettysburg, Pa~~

Apr 2 1<sup>st</sup> Minn Camp of Instruction (voluntary)

April 9 Monument Cleanup Gettysburg, Pa

Apr 23 & 24 - Endview Plantation Living History; Richmond, VA

May 14-15 - National Regiment Camp of Instruction; Gettysburg, PA

May 20-21 AHEC Timeline Carlisle, Pa **PAID EVENT**

June 10 & 12 - Battle of Ridgeway/ Fenian Raid; Fort Erie, Ontario

June 10 & 12 - Thunder in the Valley/Cross Keys Reenactment; CrossKeys, VA

June 25 & 26 - Gaines Mills Living History; Richmond, VA

July 1 to 4 - Gettysburg Reenactment; Gettysburg, PA

July 23-24 155th Anniversary Reenactment of First Bull Run at Cedar Creek (POC Col. Downes)

July 30-31 Reamstown LH and Gruber Wagon Works LH

Aug 20-21- Cedar Creek Living History; Middletown, VA

September 10-11 Gettysburg Living History

Oct 7 to 9 - Perryville Reenactment; Perryville, KY

Nov 19 - NR Meeting & Remembrance Day Parade; Gettysburg PA

## 53<sup>RD</sup> PVI CONTACTS

**President:** Eric Ford reenactor53@gmail.com

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**Facebook Page:** [www.facebook.com/groups/104683042990](http://www.facebook.com/groups/104683042990)

**NR Phone line:** 800-777-1861 (code 61)

**NR Website:** [www.cwreenactors.com](http://www.cwreenactors.com) nr password is campfire

**Dues may be sent to:**

Pat Rose

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Reading, Pa 19606

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