

53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Company C

"The Sentinel" October 2021

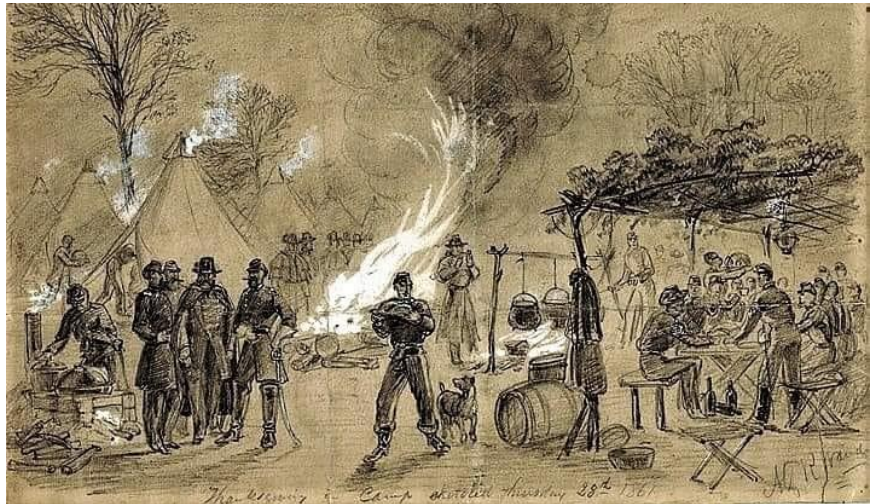
Newsletter of The James Creek Guards



"Clubs Are Trumps!"

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I am always looking for newsletter content, so please forward your articles, book reviews, event summaries/photos, stories, etc.) to me for inclusion in a future edition of "The Sentinel". – Matthew Steger, editor

BOOK REVIEW - GRANT TAKES COMMAND

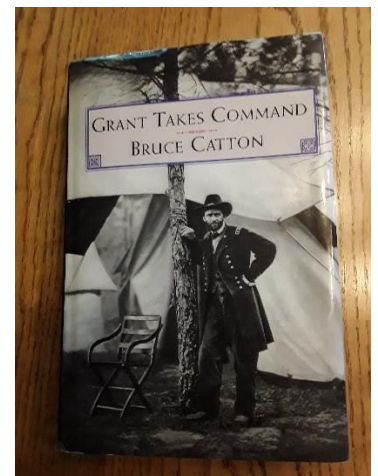
Author: Bruce Catton

Reviewed and Submitted by Mike Espenshade

Hardback; 1969; Little, Brown and Company, Inc.; 492 pp.; an additional 64 pages of notes, bibliography, index, etc. 8 maps, no pictures. \$3.00 at used book sale at McConnellsburg, Pa. Public Library.

I really enjoyed this book! Bruce Catton gives us invaluable assistance in untangling the enigma of this remarkable Union warrior who has puzzled so many for so long. Using a wide span of many first hand letters, telegraph messages, etc., the author gives you a much better understanding of Ulysses Simpson Grant, the man, during the last year and a half of the war. Moreover, it gives you a finer perception of those personalities in Grant's world (such as Lincoln, Stanton, Hallock, Sherman, Meade, Thomas, etc.) and how he/they dealt with one another.

Because he was made commander in chief of all Union armies after his decisive victory at Chattanooga, the account of his activities during this period becomes in essence the story of how the war was won. This smooth-flowing record shows why Lincoln concluded that this was the one general who could win the war for him. It shows how Grant kept his footing amidst the tangle of political snares that had brought many of his predecessors (and Lincoln) to grief. Catton shows how Robert E. Lee was unable to break out of this Yankee's grip or frustrate Grant's aim – as he had done so successfully to previous Federal commanders. All the while, Catton deftly blends the conditions experienced by the fighting men with a concise telling of the campaigns. You clearly understand the environment around why decisions were



made the way they were and the consequences of those decisions. Thus, the book shows what sort of man it was whom Lincoln took into partnership and what that man did with his share of the responsibilities.

Mr. Catton, as always, provides a rich harvest of primary sources and the accompanying insight and story-telling that makes him, in my opinion, a leader among many fine Civil War historians.

This book is worth your time.

HONORING THE ORIGINAL 53RD PVI

(provided by Marc Benedict)

Freeman C. Evans - born in Monroe Township, Wyoming Co., PA on April 4, 1843. At 19, he enrolled on Sept. 10, 1861 in Monroe, PA for 3 years in Co. F, 53rd PVI. He was mustered in on Oct. 12, 1861 in Harrisburg, PA. He appears to have been discharged on or before Aug. 20, 1863. He died on Sept. 20, 1894 and is buried in the San Miquel District Cemetery, San Miquel, California.



THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF LEVI J. FRITZ

(thank you to Rich Sauers for providing this series)

[Note – any grammatical and typographical errors were kept intact as they are original to the letter - editor]

Levi J. Fritz served in Company A, 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. He enlisted in 1861 and was mustered out with the regiment in July 1865. During the course of the first three years of the conflict, Fritz wrote a number of lengthy missives to the *Montgomery Ledger*, a Pottstown newspaper.

Headquarters 53d Regiment P. V.,
Falmouth, Virginia.
Wednesday, Feb. 11th, 1863.

Messrs. Editors:—It is nearly two weeks since we last wrote you, and we write now, not because there are any matters of interest to record or events of momentous importance transpiring, for things here are as dull as dishwater, but merely for the purpose of informing our gentle readers, that we are still “upon the carpet,” and eager to flourish our steel pen.

We moved into our present camp on the 1st inst., and by this time the quarters are all up and large fatigue parties have neatly cleaned off the company streets, drill ground, &c. The camp is laid out according to the plan required by the Army Regulations. The huts are constructed of logs, built up about five feet high and *shingled* with shelter tents. Each one has a large fireplace and chimney attached. The huts are fourteen by eleven feet and as but two or three men are quartered in each one there is plenty of room. In the entire camp there is perhaps seventy of these log structures. To construct these at least eight hundred trees were felled, and then it was necessary to cut them the required length, and notch them at the ends. To make the building warm and airtight, the space between the logs was first *chunked* with odd pieces of wood and then *chinked* with mud. We do not know whether all our readers will understand the word chunked and chinked—we know very well that we did not know a few weeks ago. Doors and windows were put in—doors furnished with wooden hinges, and the good old-fashioned kind of latches, with the unpretending latchairing always hanging out. To do all this in four or five days you will at once see required work.

To accomplish all this required the more labor and ingenuity from the fact that we had no proper tools except axes. An old two-inch rusty augur and a dull saw without a handle—was made to do noble service—but just think of the idea to use a two-inch augur to bore a hole through a door to let a

diminutive latch string through. And then to use a handleless saw by tying old rags around one and to keep the teeth from *biting* your hand, while the deuced old rip was so dull that if you would shake it at a piece of wood, old mister wood would groan and try to roll away. We never did see such a *saucy* saw; we never *saw* the like and at the same time found it almost impossible to *saw* the wood. You perhaps think it time that we change our subject, so do we; but we must remark, by way of easing our feelings, that an old saw with three teeth looks as unpromising as a tadpole without a tail!

The new commander of the army of the Potomac is apparently doing his best to win the confidence and good will of his soldiers, and he is succeeding in his laudable object. General Hooker knows full well that he must have influence in the hearts, as well as command over the actions of his men, ere he can feel assured of victory. In battle soldiers will go a certain distance because they are commanded to do so, but if they have confidence and love their General, they will go a little farther on their own account; and it is this going a little farther that turns the tide of the conflict and wins the victory. General Hooker is aware that there is an intense desire on the part of the soldiery to get leaves to go home—many of them were told when they enlisted that they could get a furlough every three or six months—and he at once issues his General Orders No. 3, giving a certain number of enlisted men out of every hundred a ten day furlough.

Although by virtue of this order but comparatively few will have an opportunity of getting home—yet it shows to all that our General commanding wishes to please us, and the desire on his part is accepted for the deed. Again, the General knows that that adamantine rations called hard bread or crackers, is the cause of more cursing than is manifestly for the good of the service, and consequently he issues his orders that four days in a week soft bread, potatoes and onions shall be issued to the troops. This is a delicate way of winning the soldier's heart, by substantially filling his stomach. This one order has made Hooker more friends among his command than a thousand "highfalutin" addresses of heroic composition. It was the close attention he gave to these apparently little things, that in part caused McClellan to be such a favorite, and General Hooker is endeavoring to profit by his example. If he exhibits the skill necessary to command such a large army as this, we have reason to believe, that we will open the next campaign by a victory that will thrill the hearts of the freemen of the world.

The weather here for the past week has been truly delightful—but the mudified sacred soil prevents any movements. The boys are well and we must go to dinner.

Yours, &c,

L. J. F.

[*Montgomery Ledger*, February 17, 1863]

A SOLDIER'S STORY: TRUTH OR FICTION?

By S. Waite Rawls III, April 27, 2020
blueandgrayeducation.org

This is the story about an artifact that is in the collection of the Confederate Memorial Literary Society, more commonly known as the Museum of the Confederacy and now the American Civil War Museum in Richmond.

I have learned over the years that Civil War buffs come in many stripes. Some love tromping around battlefields; others get their kicks from collecting artifacts; a few would rather spend their weekends reenacting and working to ensure that their personal appearance is more authentic than anyone else in their group.

Me? In my heart, I'm a book guy. My personal collection numbers well over a thousand books, and I've actually read almost all of them. Well, over half of them are first-edition tomes written in the 19th century—many by the participants themselves in blue and gray. Many are memoirs, but there are also edited diaries and letters. I believed that what was written in all of them (or most of them) to be good history, as they were the records of the men and women who lived the experiences, not just studied the experiences of others.

As my reading experience grew, and especially after spending 16 years sharing space with the museum's great historian, John Coski, however, I began to realize that all those written words needed to be approached differently. Letters and diaries are closer to real history, because they were written by people who did not know what was going to happen tomorrow, or next month, or next year. And they certainly did not know how the whole "recent unpleasantness" would turn out. Memoirs, on the other hand, contain a whole lot of Monday morning quarterbacking.

The memoirs of leaders—politicians and generals—are usually packed with what we might call "spin." Those writers often had a wide view of events as they happened, but their memoirs are too often history as the writer wished it had been. (See, for example, Bill Clinton's memoir. Oops, wrong era. See, for example, Joe Johnston or John Gordon.) The generals often take credit for all

the victories and blame somebody else for defeats, and the politicians rationalize away the mistakes they previously made or speeches they formerly gave. On the other extreme, enlisted men had a very narrow field of view. In battle, the noise and confusion obscured their ability to see much. On the march, they mostly saw the backside of the guy in front of them more than anything else, and didn't know where they were going until they got there. But the enlisted men's memoirs are filled with great anecdotes which I love. (See, for example, Carlton McCarthy or David Holt.) The best memoirs, to me, are those written by educated staff officers, who saw and heard a lot but whose personal responsibility was more limited. (See, of course, Porter Alexander or McHenry Howard.)

But, what to believe? And this piece is supposed to be about an artifact!

One of the best memoirs of all is John O. Casler's *Four Years in the Stonewall Brigade*, which was published in 1893. Casler had served in the 33rd Virginia, part of the Stonewall Brigade, and his personality as a soldier really comes out in his book. He was irreverent, humorous, and full of adventure. He claims to have been a solid fighter, but his respect for discipline and those who tried to impose it was—shall we say, “somewhat limited.” So the question is, do we believe all of the things that he said?

Finally, let's get to the artifact. In 1894, Casler donated something to the museum. It is a very nice blue leather snuff box.



When he donated it, he told the ladies of the museum (and they recorded it) that he was often appalled at the behavior of soldiers after a battle. Before they began the laborious duty of burying the fallen, many soldiers would steal their shoes or clothing. And some would actually go through the pockets to steal personal items. Casler related that he never succumbed to such behavior—except for once. He took this snuff box from a dead Yankee after the battle of Chancellorsville, which he duly recorded on its back.

[editor - The photo below shows the underside of the snuff box.]



But he justified his behavior by telling the ladies that he only took it because, written in gold letters on the top, were the words “Help Yourself.” So, again, the question is, do we believe him? When the snuff box was on display several years ago, I was with Gary Gallagher. As we looked at the snuff box, I told him the story of its provenance and put the question to him.

Gary laughed and replied, “Absolutely not!”

I think I believe Gallagher more than Casler.

EXPERIENCES OF THE CIVIL WAR (PART 1)

By Leavitt W. Cushing (a member of the original 53rd PVI, Co. G)

(supplied by Tom Kear, a decedent of an original 53rd member. Typos and grammatical errors were left ‘as is’)

On June 21, 1864, the 2d Army Corps was moved to the left of the army operating south of Richmond and Petersburg and took up a position some distance south of Petersburg, built some breastworks and lay there through the night. The next day in the forenoon the Fourth Brigade of the First Division and how many more I do not know were ordered to fall in and were soon moved or marched out into the woods in front of where we were. We marched down an old wood road a hundred rods or more, the filed to the left into the woods and brush and formed in line of battle. After standing there some time and receiving no further orders the soldiers sat or lay down on the ground. We supposed the officers were trying to establish or form a line of battle. There were no regiments joining us the 53d PA, either on our right or left that I knew of. While lying there the enemy, it would seem, had come out into the woods to learn

our position in order to meet attack from us or make one. It would appear they marched through where our line was not connected and got in our rear or nearly so, and when they discovered our position opened fire on us. We sprang to our guns were ordered to about face and marched back to the right of where we came in in order to pass the Rebs and reach the line we left. The brush and small timber were so thick it was impossible to keep in line, and were soon entirely broken up, and every man got back the best way he could.

When we got back to the breastworks we found them occupied by some of our troops, and as our ranks were so entirely broken up we did not try to reform our line there, but went farther to the rear. As I came over the works and started on, an officer of the men in the works called to the men to stop and form a line on their left. I thought the enemy would not be able to drive us out of these breastworks and I went back and took a position on the left of the men that were there. At this time the firing was quite heavy a little farther up the line and kept coming nearer us, and soon we heard some one coming in front of us but could see no one as the bushes were so thick. Some said they thought they were our men coming in and not to fire. I did not think they were, but to be sure I went out in front of the line until I could see them quite plain and found they were dressed in grey and what we called Rebs, came back and told them they were "Rebs" and not our men.

The bushes were so thick we could not see more than four or five rods, but when they came near enough so we could see the bushes move as they made their way through them, opened fire on them. They stopped a half-minute or less, and then began to yell and came on. I had not fired more than twice and got my gun loaded when I noticed a big Reb about sixty feet away at my left. He stood behind a clump of tall bushes as large as my wrist. I sighted my gun for him which he noticed and jumped about to avoid my getting a good aim, but I fired, did not have time to note the effect, for just then a few bayonets were pushed over the works near my head and as many more were behind, with the order to surrender. They had gone around our left and come up behind us while we were engaged with those in front. We were ordered to put down our guns, and were taken back through the woods nearly a half mile where there was a large farm with a fine house around which were quite a number of officers on horseback. Our guards took us "prisoners," of which there were a dozen or more in our squad, near them and reported to one of them, then took us off to the right through their works and marched us towards Petersburg, we were several miles south of it. I think the firing had ceased entirely before this. After the prisoners were all brought in and got together there were some 1500 in all. I wish to say right here that this whole affair seems to have been a stupid blunder on the part of some of our officers. There should have been a heavy line of Skirmishers sent out in advance of us to have given the alarm of the enemies' approach, and held them in check till we could have got in position to meet their attack.

Perhaps some of the officers were drunk, for I remember the previous evening the soldiers had a ration of whisky given to them, and as many in Co. G, did not drink the stuff, those that did drink had enough to get very drunk, and a few were left behind on that account when we went into the woods. It was very seldom that whisky was given the soldiers, at least in our brigade or regiment. Sometimes those of us who did not drink would take it and throw it away to keep those that were very fond of it from getting too much for their good. It was kept in the commissary department, and officers could buy it any time they wished, and when in camp would sometimes give a private an order for a canteen. Then some of them would have a gay old time, but to return to the subject. We marched to Petersburg that night and camped, the next day marched to Richmond about 25 miles and were put in Libby Prison. We were obliged to go in single file before a man who searched our pockets, clothing and haversacks for money, watches, or anything of value; were obliged to strip off our clothing for them to examine. We were told if we had any money and would give it to them we would be given credit for it, and when exchanged it would be returned to us.

We did not place much confidence in their promises and some in devious ways hid their money so it was not found, but they secured quite an amount of money from the men, and I'll warrant none of them ever saw it again. I had a little of what we called script, 5, 10, 25 or 50 cents paper money, which they did not care for. They had quite a long table or bench on which the contents of our haversacks were emptied and sorted over. All the coffee we had in little sacks they took and threw in a pile in the corner of the room near the end of the table around which we passed when they were through with us. I had nearly a pint in my sack, and as they threw it on the pile it rolled under the edge of the table, and the next one that passed along gave it a kick, that sent it to the other side where I was still standing. So I had my coffee again. The building was a large brick warehouse three stories high. Were kept there some three days.

It being warm weather we had no blankets, and I can't say now whether we had our shelter tents, and gum blankets. If we had anything that would be of any service to their men they took it. Our food or rations consisted of corn bread baked in large tins about 1½ inch in thickness, cut in squares about four inches and nearly a pint of beans and soup together; this for one day. Many of the boys would eat it all at one time and have no more till the next day. I always divided mine, eating half in the forenoon and the balance at night. Their were only 7 men that belonged to the 53d Regiment, myself the only one from Co. G, one from Co. K, Corporal Hays, 2 or 3 of Co., E, and others. Some I knew quite well others only by sight. We were taken from Libby onto Bell Island in the James River had tents for shelter, the men of 53d were in one tent together. For all we were prisoners and not very well fed, I remember one night we got to singing some old hymns and camp-meeting pieces. One of them the others sang was new to me, the chorus was "If you belong to Gideon's band." We made so much noise the guard called to us to make less noise in there. Being soldiers we quickly obeyed.

We were kept prisoners on Bell Island three days, then were put aboard the cars and started for Lynchburg, where we arrived about 4 P.M. Three days' rations were issued to us consisting of seven brown crackers about 4 inches square and a little more than ½ inch thick and a few ounces of bacon. These were to last till we got to Danville where we were able to take the cars for Andersonville, GA. I began to watch for opportunities to escape. As soon as we left Richmond, the car windows were up and the doors open with a few guards at each door and a few on top of the car. I thought when it came dark would let myself down out of a window drop down on the ground and lie still till the train passed by; but someone tried it before it was fairly dark and ran for the woods nearby. The guards saw them and ordered them to halt, but did not fire. (The guards were boys and old men, too young and too old for active service.)

As soon as this happened they closed all windows. I see by this incident we must have been on the cars all night and part of next day. The road was very rough and there were many stops. After drawing rations, we were marched up through Lynchburg (the city is built on a side hill) and about five miles out in the country and camped in a meadow by a small creek where I could see no chance to hide or get away. In the morning took up our march again for Danville, some 70 miles away. There was a chance through the day, by running some risk of being shot, by skipping into the woods by the side of the road when the guards, who marched on each side of us, left quite an open space between them, and it was said two boys did get out in that way. Just at night we crossed the Staunton River went into camp on the south side. There was a strip of brush and small trees along the river and a steep bank up to the cleared field. The guards were placed along this bank and down the river above and below us, with some on the spirate of the river. Had told the boys I was acquainted with, I should get away if I saw a chance. After dark I began to look around to find a place to hide. There was quite a pile of flood wood nearby.

I found a hole on one side, where by backing in managed to push the brush and dirt away so I got entirely inside. There was a small log bedded in the sand, and one lay above it, could just crowd myself through by lying flat. After getting it fixed as good as I could, went and lay down with the rest of the boys; did not sleep much; was awake about 3 o'clock in the morning; went to the river and got my cup full of water and set it inside of my hole, then crawled in backward, put out my hand and pulled all the brush and leaves I could reach to stop up the hole near my head. Soon after light guards called prisoners up to get their breakfast and be ready to march in. Gathering wood to make a fire they got on the pile over me and one of them broke through and stood on me. He did not know it and I said nothing. I heard my comrades talking about me and wondering where I was. It seems strange now that I did not tell them all about it; but did not want the responsibility of looking after anyone but myself.

About 6 o'clock or sooner the guards told the men to move out and get ready to march. One of them passed along within a few feet of me, but was not looking so low for men and did not see me. My position was not very comfortable, and after the men were all gone, I twisted around some to relieve my aching body. When the men broke in the brush over me, the dirt and sand rattled down in my neck, so took a red handkerchief and put over my head and neck. After an hour or more two boys about 10 years old, one colored, came down in where the men camped, looking around to see what they might find, probably. They came toward me. I drew my hand up toward my body. They saw the motion threw up their hands exclaiming "What have I found." I heard a guard say to the one in command that there were three or four men sick. He told him to take them up to the house and leave a guard with them. The thought flashed through my head they would run and tell there was a man down there and they would be after me. So the boy had no more than got the words out of his mouth than I said, "Nothing that will hurt you," and began to work myself out.

When out and on my feet the boys were out of sight. I took my sack that held my few things and started down the river near the edge of the water where there were no brush to hinder, hardly think the grass grew under my feet. On my way I passed under a small tree that had blown over. The but lay on the stub 8 feet from the ground. Glancing up under the top I saw two comrades lying up under it. I scarcely halted, but said to them—"I got discovered and had to dig out." My thought was, if anyone tried to catch me, they would have a better chance to escape. I ran down one-half mile then turned into a little hollow into the woods to the top of the hill. Being out of breath and seeing no signs of being followed sat down to rest and think. Had expected when I hid that morning to lie there all day or till dark. Soon made up my mind to take a north-west course and try and get into West Virginia. I knew from the study of geography that if I could get over the Blue Ridge Mountains on to the streams that run in the Ohio River I would be all right.

Proceeded to cut a good heavy walking stick, thinking at the same time it might come handy as a weapon of defense if there would be an occasion for it. Will give a list of my outfit. The inside of my haversack, a stout factory cloth sack about 12 inches wide and 14 inches deep, the little sack of coffee, a handful of salt tied in a rag, a few ounces of meat, my quart cup, four or five crackers, a few sheets of letter paper, and old pocket knife. It was a fine summer morning. Took my course northwest by the sun, and started traveling only in the woods or old fields back from the houses or roads. Soon crossed the road (the other boys went south) went on my way. Nothing of interest happened that day. When night came, lay in the woods and slept till day light. This was the 2d day of July 1864, at night. The next morning was not feeling very well, but soon started on my way.

Came out into a field and saw a small river in front of me. Was favored in finding a small boat nearby in which I pushed across with a pole, (part missing). Went on, crossed a large farm and took a road that went into the wood and up a little valley.

After going about a mile saw a log house across the brook in a small clearing. As I had no matches or any way to start a fire thought I would sit down till the folks came out and see if it looked safe to make a call. In a short time smoke came out of the chimney, then a woman opened the door. In a short time, several children came out the largest about 12 years old. After waiting longer and seeing no man appear, went over to the house, knocked at the door. I said good morning, and asked if I could get something to eat or breakfast. She said I could, such as they had. Told her had just come from Lee's Army and was heading home. She said her husband had been in the army. Was at home, but did not stay around the house. He had come without leave or deserted. He had been up in Pennsylvania, probably at Gettysburg and had told her how better it appeared than in the South-nice houses, farms and barns, seemed so much better in every respect.

She said when he first went into the army he drew some pay and sent her; then he did not get any pay, and the town officials helped her to provide for her family, then they failed to help. There were six children. That was why he came home. Said she made some of the folks mad at her by saying she didn't care much if the yanks did beat the South if the war would stop. Concluded she was not one of the radical Secesh women we had read about, and told her I was a Union Soldier taken prisoner; got away and wanted to go through Western Virginia to our lines. She said well, I would give one soldier something to eat as soon as another. Our breakfast consisted of corn bread baked in a kettle with heavy iron lid covered with hot coals and ashes, and new potatoes boiled, with little if anything else but salt to eat with them. I asked if she could give me a few matches. She said she had none, but would give me a piece of punk they started a fire with if it went out when they covered up coals in the fireplace. She gave me a piece about one inch square and ½ inch thick. There were plenty of white flint stones. Found one that was much like an Indian Arrow, sharp on each edge. With that and my old knife and the dryest of rotten wood could start a fire. She gave me a piece of bread to take with me. I gave her a few sheets of letter paper. Her name was Susan Leffrage.

After breakfast I went on my way traveling over hills and through valleys. Sometimes following old log roads when they went the way I wished to go. In following a footpath along a brook I very unexpectedly met two ladies, to whom I bowed and said good morning. I began to find some ripe dewberries which I was glad to pick and eat. I cannot keep track of the days from now on, but will give the incidents in order they happened as near as possible. The first man I spoke with was a slave. I met him in the wood as I crossed a road, talked with him some. He said the colored folks would befriend me if they could (unless it was one sat a good deal on by his master). He advised me if I made any arrangements to meet any one to bring me food not to be just in the place named but a little way off to see if any one else came. As I seldom saw a man in the roads or fields I began to be more bold and traveled in the roads. One day I passed a gristmill. It was not running; the door was open and no one in sight. I went in and looked around, found some ground feed, put some in my sack to make a pudding of. I was following a small stream up into the mountains. I was in the road and met an old man with a gun; did not stop to talk with him. I soon came to the end of this road at the mouth of a deep gulf the little stream came down, but found a footpath that went up the hill through the woods quite steep and nearly a mile to the top of it, came out to a large farm. It appeared to be the top or summit of the Blue Ridge Mountains. I saw a man in a hay field and concluded to go and talk with him. He looked like an invalid, I told him I had been in the army.

He said the report was there were hundreds of Confederate soldiers passing through that section that lived in that mountain country, deserters from the Rebel army. In this section I saw a sign to the Natural Bridge, one to Blue Sulphur Springs and one to White Sulphur Springs. One day I passed three log cabins in the edge of the woods. I went to the door of one and looked in, there were two of the largest colored women I ever saw. I asked if they could give me something to eat. They said they had nothing in the house to eat. When I came out of the woods I saw a large farm and a number of slaves harvesting wheat, with an old man as overseer. About this time I came across the trail where some of the army of West Virginia that had tried to capture Lynchburg had gone back. Thinking if this trail were followed it would take me where I wished to go I concluded to follow it, but as I did not dare follow the main road I soon got off the trail. When I arrived at the mouth of the stream, after dark, where I supposed it emptied into a larger one, I waded across, went a little farther and lay down for the night. In the morning I started and after walking some time came to a small farm with a log house. Being out of provisions thought best to try and get something to eat.

(end of part 1 – check out part 2 next month)

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Hello Pard,

As we roll into October, there's a fair amount of unit business to prepare for.

First, nominations for this year's election are due. The civil office of the President and all NCO's will be on the ballot at this year's business meeting. Please send your nominations to me no later than October 15. As a reminder, please make sure that anyone you're nominating is fully aware of the position's responsibilities and that they're willing to accept the duties for a term of two years. Nominees will be posted in the November newsletter and the election will take place at the meeting in December.

Landis Valley is a GO for November 6-7. This is a max effort event each year on our schedule and I'm counting on the 53rd to have a strong showing. We'll be supported by ELF as usual and I've extended the invitation to our friends in the NR. I have confirmation that members of the 8th OH, 1st PA Reserves and Sykes Regulars will be in attendance. Landis Valley has suffered greatly over the past year and a half with the loss of many special events. We have an opportunity (and in my opinion) a responsibility to help them rebound before the end of their season. We have our traditional Saturday evening meal, Sunday's breakfast, and a tavern impression for Saturday night planned. Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks.

Cedar Creek seems to be a bust for the 53rd. If you're registered, I need to know ASAP. You will most likely be attached to the 8th OH.

I'm working on the event schedule for 2022. Please let me know if anyone has suggestions. I'm particularly interested in avenues for recruiting. Where can we hold these events and does anyone have contacts at local Scout troops, historical societies or schools (including universities)?

Finally, I have already been nominated for another term as the unit's President. Serving the 53rd in this capacity has been and is still an honor. I'm truly humbled by everyone's faith and trust in me. I do what I do for the unit's benefit and proudly accept the nomination.

See y'all at Landis Valley!

Eric

THE CIVIL WAR MERCHANT

(if you have something for sale or are looking for something, email me to include it in a future edition of "The Sentinel")

For Sale –

(1.) Listed by Rick Kramer for a friend. All items are in good shape unless noted otherwise. Contact Rick directly for any inquiries/questions - auktion8@comcast.net

Keune McDowell Kepi - some brim cracking \$20.00

Grey Blanket with black stripe \$35.00

(2.) Kerry Williard is handling the selling of Dave Swigert items for Dave's wife. Marc and I met several months ago to look at the items, give them descriptions, and give approx. values. Several of the items have been sold yet some remain. The list is current as of 6 July 2021. Contact Kerry directly with any and all inquiries: shamokin71@aol.com (see the updated list below)

Uniform Clothing			Misc Items				
Quantity	Item	Item Description	approx. value	Quantity	Item	Item Description	approx. value
1	Sack Coats - Assume Size 42 Dk Blue Wool	unlined faded course wool	20	1	Tin Cup	sturdy	5
1	Trouser - Steel Blue each with suspenders	34 min waist/27" inseam - avg. condx and a little dirt w/ braces no watch pockets	25	1 can	sno-seal (half full)		1
1	Trouser - Steel Blue each with suspenders	36 min waist/27" inseam - avg. condx and a little dirt w/ braces no watch pockets	25	1	Wood Mirror - Haversack filler	sliding cover	3
1	Dk Blue Vest Size 42	3 pockets - light wear	20	1	Wood Comb - Haversack filler		1
3 pairs	Grey Wool Socks	modern	2/pair	1	Wooden button board		1
2	Hats - Union & Confederte for children		1	2	Coin Purses - Made from Tic Material		1/each
1	Light Brown Scarf	acrylic - for modern use	1	1	Cloth ditty Bag	used (1 left, 7 sold)	1/each
1	Havelock - White - VG condx		2	1	Bag with Coffee	brown coffee	1/each
1	Underpants - Night Pants - White	36" waist - knee stains - 25" inseam white muslin - rear repair	3	1	shoe lace - undied		25/each
1 pair	Woolen Grey Gloves	modern - right hand is fingerless	2	2	Soap Bar		1/each
Accoutrements				6 1/2	Wax Candles		0.5
1	Cap Box with Caps w/ pick		20	1	pocket sharpenig stone	new	2
1	Haversack - tarred Black	w/ liner - paint beginning to flake. holes at strap connections.	10	3	box rifle cleaning kit	pads, steel wool, rags, etc	5
1	Scabbord	late war 7 rivet	15	1 Pair	match boxes w/ matches		0.25/each
1	Cartridge Box with Tin Inserts	w/ sling and brass and late war plate - tools, cone, etc.	35	1	shoe tree		3
1	Haversack - tarred Black	brittle strap, open seam	5	1	Green Army Duffle Bag		3
1	Shelter Tent - Both Halves	heavy canvas with loops w/ mildew	35	1	drawers for use as patches		1
1	Bag of 7 wooden Tent Stakes	with rope	3	1	large shite cotton sheeting		1
1	Blue Cloth Bulls-Eye Canteen	w/ chain stopper needs new sling	20				
1	Grey Smooth Face Canteen	leather sling satinette cover w/ corded stopper with light wear	20				

2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS - *due to covid, all events are tentative as of right now.*



- ~~27-28 March - NR School of Instruction - Virtual~~
~~1-2 May - Camp of Instruction - Gruber Wagon Works (Reading) - POSTPONED~~
~~15-16 May - USAHEC Event - cancelled~~
~~31 May - Hummelstown Memorial Day Parade - CANCELLED~~
~~12-13 June - Fenian Raid (8th OH) - Fort Erie, Canada - contact Tom Downes for more info.~~
~~19-20 June - Ft. Mifflin (Philadelphia)~~
~~17-18 July - Drill at Gruber Wagon Works (with ELF and NR)~~
~~31 July - Company Picnic - Denver Park~~
~~7-8 Aug. - Cedar Mountain Re-enactment - contact James Owens (1st MN) for more info.~~
~~28-29 August - 53rd PVI Living History w/ ELF - Spangler's Spring - Gettysburg NMP - CANCELLED~~
16-17 Oct - Cedar Creek Re-enactment (NR Max Effort)
6-7 November - Civil War Days at Landis Valley - Lancaster **53rd MAX EFFORT**
20 November - Remembrance Day Parade/NR Meeting - Gettysburg
4 December - Annual business meeting

Other events -

- ~~12 - Newville (with 1st MN) - CANCELLED~~
~~10-11 July 1st MN's Living History @ PA Monument (the 53rd PVI is invited) - CANCELLED~~

53rd PVI Contacts

President: Eric Ford (reenactor53@gmail.com)
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Webmasters: Steve Dillon (steve@gofoxpro.com) and Matthew Steger (n3ntj@comcast.net)
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Corporals: Mike Espenshade and Matthew Steger
53rd PVI Member Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/53rdPVI>
National Regiment Phone line: 800-777-1861 (code 61)
New National Regiment Website: <https://www.thenationalregiment.com>

