

THE FUGELMAN



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SECOND WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY ASSOCIATION

THE BLACK HAT BRIGADE---THE IRON BRIGADE

1861-1865

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FEBRUARY, 2017

FU-GEL-MAN: A well-drilled soldier placed in front of a military company as a model or guide for others.

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PASS IN REVIEW

From the quill of Lt. Colonel Pete Seielstad



REPORT TO THE SECOND WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY ASSOCIATION

28 JANUARY 2017

Lieutenant Colonel Pete Seielstad

2nd Wisconsin

Certainly nothing can be accomplished without the individuals who make up the membership of the 2nd Wisconsin Vol. Inf. Association. Our members come to events, parades and school presentation with a confident attitude to

complete the task at hand. There is an understanding that each event should lend itself in promoting a reliable representation of the American soldier. To accomplish this, each individual is aware of his performance and his conduct and how it will affect those who are around him. This promotes the “Esprit de Corps” that I enjoy so much when we meet on the field.

Growth in membership is an objective that all of us should work on. By promoting the association and inviting the interested spectator to join, we can look forward to an increase in numbers.

National Alliance

Beyond our battalion there has been a driving force to bind the wounds that have separated re-enactors. Of major proportions were the 150 Gettysburg events in 2013. I am referring to the Blue/Grey Alliance vs. Gettysburg Anniversary Committee feud. (See: July 2013 Fugelman [Special edition] *AAR - 150 Gettysburg*). Believing that attrition has reduced the rank and file substantially, leading individuals began discussions in rebuilding a workable relationship with one another and promote quality events.



At the Perryville event in October 2016, I participated in a meeting with other officers of the Federal commands that were present; these are the same men that have been leaders of many of the national events that we attend. The result of the meeting was an agreement to cooperate with one another and move forward in creating a group of re-enacting units that will strengthen the hobby West of the Appalachians Mountains. In November, an official announcement was made. [Statements attached] In this agreement, we will work together and improve the over-all experience of our hobby.

2017 will offer the first test/challenge to this agreement. Shiloh, Tennessee April 6, 7 & 8th, 2017 will bring the newly formed GAR [Grand Armies of the Republic] under the command of Bob Minton onto the field. The Shiloh event is organized by Atlanta Campaign Inc. with Earl Zeckman [US] at the helm. It does promise to be well attended nationally.

Another national event to consider will be the 'On to Richmond' event which is being held June 2,3, & 4th, 2017 in Newport News, VA at the Endview Plantation. Our friends who brought us 'Maryland My Maryland', Mike Lavis [US] and Chris Anders [CS] are guiding this event.

By the end of the year the re-enactment community will be able to judge how effective the efforts of this new alliance have been. Continued conferences via meetings and telephone will keep the alliance of the GAR connected to one another to adjust, mend and provide constructive criticism to move the hobby forward.

As we begin the year, let us move forward and be the best on the field.

Respectfully submitted,

Lt. Col. Pete Seielstad

Below are photos from the annual Association meeting. The individuals being sworn in is Jared Alexander from Company B and Leonard Sedney from Company G.





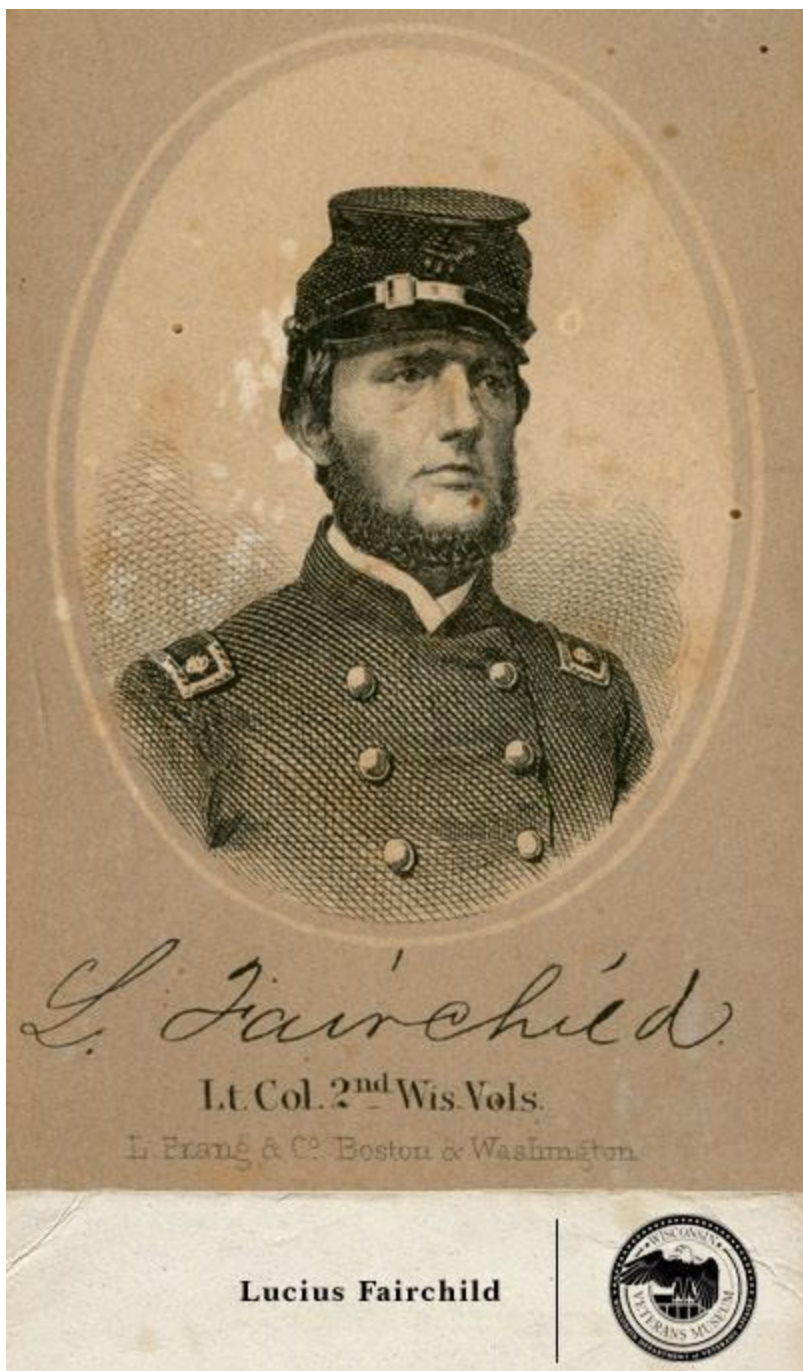
CAMPAIGN SCHEDULES OF THE COMPANIES AND ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY

Feb. 18 Company K spring drill

Waterloo, Wisconsin

REGIMENTAL DISPATCHES



***BEING PREPARED FOR THE UPCOMING
SEASON
DAVID DRESANG, JR.***

The season is about to begin in earnest, and I wish to address the company on the matter of being WELL prepared for the upcoming season. We have had some time off (since October for many, and for some, even longer). Much of your gear has been in storage for some time. You need (right now) to check that equipment to make sure that it has not fallen prey to winter storage.

Take your uniform out of mothballs and check it thoroughly. Check for tears, holes or bad odors, and get it cleaned and repaired. The season is long enough without having to run around showing off body parts that should remain hidden.

Check your Brogans, again, for holes, rips, and check the soles and heel plates, and if you haven't waterproofed them, do it! We march in all kinds of weather; in the rain, mud, sometimes in snow, and thick grass; you'll want to do the best you can to keep your feet warm and dry. If you have thin soles many shoe repair outlets can and will repair them saving you the expense of buying new ones, or waiting till the old ones fall off. Check your socks for holes, rips and thread bare, and if necessary go out and buy some new ones; you should have a couple of pairs with you at all times.

The most important piece of your equipment (and the one that can do the most harm) is your Musket. Make sure it is CLEAN!! Go to a sports store where they have specially designed solvents made for black powder muskets; it will help you greatly to get rid of unused powder that may be sitting at the bottom of the barrel. Make sure your Musket is free from rust; check ALL working parts, not just the ones you can see. Check your lock plate, hammer, and trigger, and take it apart to see if there is any rust inside the mechanisms. Make sure everything is free moving and lubricated (helps to keep the rust away and will extend the life of those parts). Make sure your ramrod is free of rust and that you can remove it freely; you don't want to struggle pulling it out or putting it back again. A dirty musket is an invitation to misfires and can become a danger, not only to you, but anyone around you.

Take your tent out, and check for mold. Remember, it has been in storage for a long time and that is an invitation for mold and mildew if stored improperly - or things could have moved in during the winter. If you have any of these problems, scrub your tent and get rid of it. You don't want to sleep in those conditions.

Check your bayonet and make sure it is also free from rust. Make sure it fits properly on the end of your musket and can lock into place properly.

If you have a haversack, get it out and air it out. Many (if not all of us) carry food in them and if you don't take good care of it, then you have a good chance of unwanted visitors of the type that could make you very sick. I like to wash mine out from time-to-time, just to make sure.

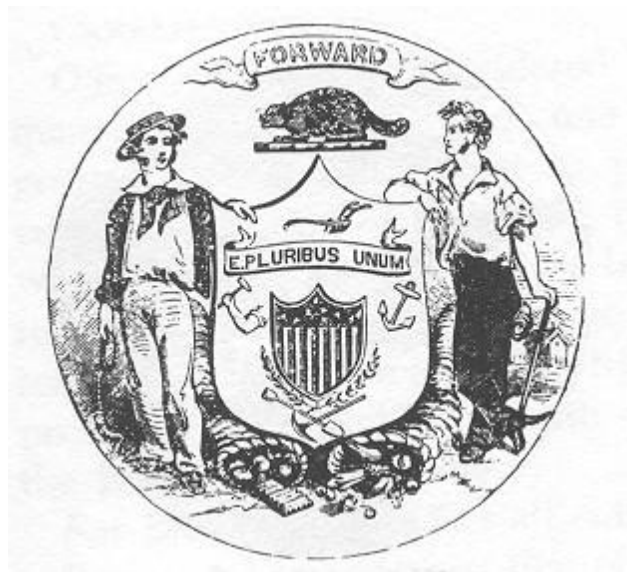
Lastly, check the rest of your equipment, such as eating utensils, cooking items, plates and especially your CANTEEN! If you see rust, again, get rid of it! Pour boiling water into your canteen to get rid of anything that might still reside in their. If you need to replace the outer covering of your

canteen (it acts as an insulator helping to keep your water cool, even on hot days), we use the brown covers that were common with the 2nd.

We all want to enjoy the season, but you can't do that if you become ill, or during inspection your equipment does not pass and you are forced to sit and watch instead of participate.

Your 1st Sgt and the rest of the NCOs will set an example for you, but you need to do your part and have every-thing ready to go and in working order.

Make sure you all do your job and the season will be a very enjoyable one.



BOSCOBEL CIVIL WAR EVENT TO BE RESURRECTED

Rumors have been flying about concerning a reconstitution of the Boscobel event which was always popular with civil war reenactors. Below is a dispatch from one of the organizers The editor was grateful for the opportunity to work on organizing an event in Evansville and he is aware of the challenges and effort necessary to create an event of this magnitude (and the expense). Hopefully the following information will be beneficial to our members in setting their schedules of events.

Happy New Year to All,

My name is Barbara Thyren, I am a member of Cushings Battery with my husband and we live in Boscobel. Ever since the Muskets and Memories

event in Boscobel was cancelled, people here have been trying to get something started here again. I started talking to local people and talked to the girl who coordinated M&M 4 years ago and did an excellent job. She was very excited and has since taken over the head position and we have been meeting and planning. I was able to obtain your name from a list of participants in 2013 so we are contacting you to let you know our plans.

We will be called "RELIVING OUR HERITAGE - A Living History Timeline" and are scheduled to debut on August 4-6, 2017 here in Boscobel. I am trying to contact as many people as possible to get our info out there so groups can put us on their calendars. For the time being we are planning a Living History but as the event grows that may change. Anyway, we are looking for more contacts for military groups from the 1700's to the present, to make our timeline. Civil War will again be the big attraction and we are planning a lot of the same things for the weekend but we are changing other things up a bit. The Saturday night Street Dance is being planned with the Pie Social.

If you have any questions or ideas or suggestions please contact me at the above email. I will try to answer all questions and will pass on any ideas and suggestions. Also if you know someone who is not included on the list above please pass this on to them, I took your name from a 2013 registration list we came up with.

If you can give me an idea of the possibility of your being able to attend this weekend please RSVP me at the above email. We need to have an idea of your interest in attending it would be a big help to us.

Thank you for your assistance.

Barbara Thyren

FORMATION OF A NEW UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION FOR MUTUAL SUPPORT IN REENACTING

The following information comes from the Army of the Wabash newsletter shared with this editor by Rob Van. It is noteworthy that Lt. Col. Seielstad represented the Second Wisconsin and the Black Hats in this effort.

MUTUAL SUPPORT IN THE HOBBY

By Rob Van

No doubt you have heard about a renewed spirit of cooperation between many re-enacting units to not only mutually support each other, but grow the hobby and plot out a plan for the future. I think everyone learned a lot about what NOT to do at a larger event from Perryville last year. To that end, I have included the 'Press Release' that went out (thanks to Ron Wilkins for lending his pen for this), as well as the signed Resolution that many folks came together to put their autograph on. To date, and there is room for more organizations, the following individuals agreed to support this renewed effort:

REPRESENTATIVE ORGANIZATION Rob Van

Cumberland Guard Earl Zeckman

Military Department of the Mississippi

Pete Seielstad 2nd Wisconsin / Black Hats

Mike Lavis 49th NY

Jim Trent US Territorial Battalion

Kevin Harris Western Artillery Reserve

Shane Miles Army of the French Broad

Jesse Poe Army of the Wabash (AOW)

Bob Minton First Federal Division (FFD)

James Crofutt Muddy River Battalion

Steve Fratt 1st Brigade Illinois Volunteers

Nathan Tingley Great Lakes Battalion

Mike Church Federal Cavalry Association

Jim Trent U.S. Territorial Battalion

Tim Bills Army of the Ohio

Mike Cheaves Division Cavalry Brigade

MADISON WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA EVENT

Lyle Laufenberg sent the following dispatch and photos from the Madison, Wisconsin, Wreaths Across America event. Thank you for sharing this event and details with the readers of the Fugelman!

Saturday, January 7, was bright and sunny, though bitter cold. About 35 were in attendance: Reenactors (WWII - 401st Glider Inf'y; Civil War - 6th Wis Lt Art'y, & Cushings' Battery), SUVCW, veterans, RWB members, and a groups of women and children.

Bill Raftery was in charge, and Tom Brodd was the Chaplain; the two buglers were from the Madison Veterans' Council (and were able to play & echo) despite the freezing valves. After ceremonies at Soldiers' Rest & Union Rest, 200 wreaths were laid at soldiers' grave markers.





The top two photos were taken at Soldiers' Rest at Forest Hills Cemetery during the wreaths Across America event.



Some cold reenactors at the January 7th Wreaths Across America event in Madison, Wisconsin.

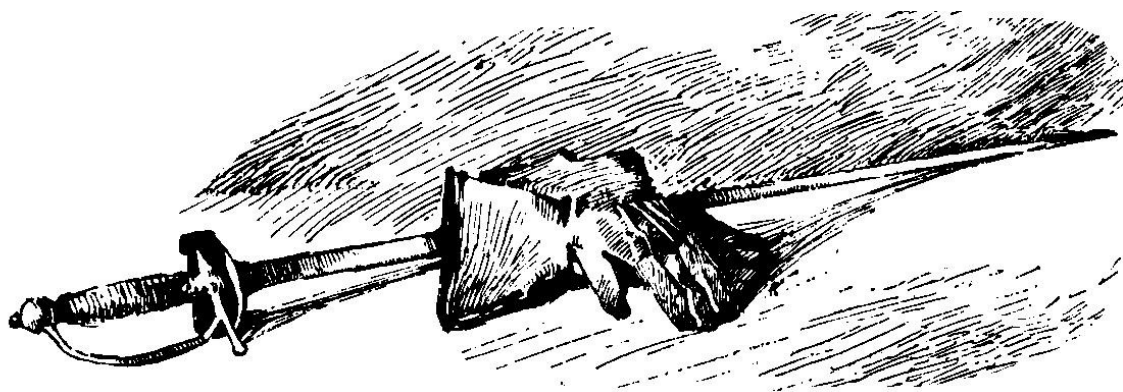


Bill Raftery presents the Wreaths Across America Certificate of Appreciation to a steadfast and dedicated volunteer with Wreaths Across America, Karen Sallander.





ATTENTION TO ORDERS



COME ALL!



**THE OFFICERS, LADIES AND SOLDIERS
OF
COMPANY E,
SECOND WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY,**

**INVITE ALL TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL SWEETHEART'S DINNER & DANCE
AT SWAN CLUB/LEGENDS**

**IN DE PERE, WISCONSIN
ON SATURDAY, APRIL 22^d 2017.**

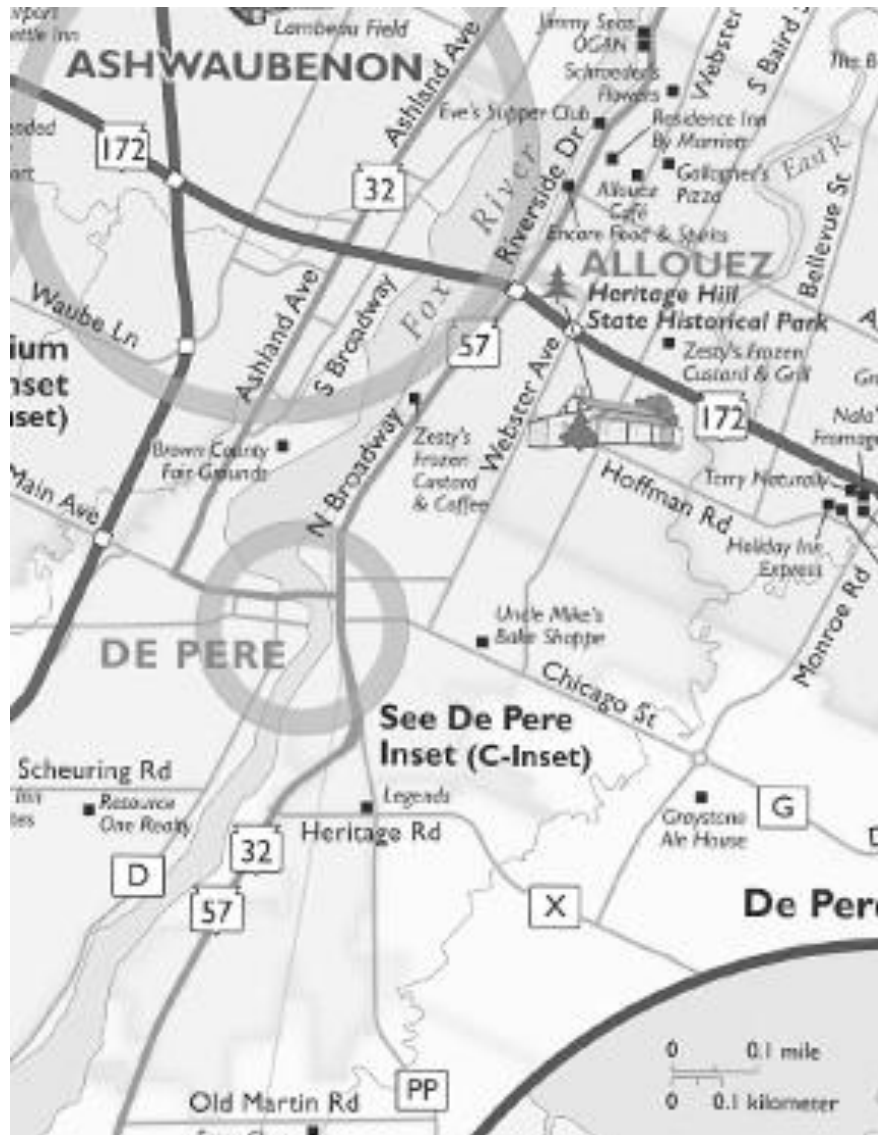
Cocktails will begin at 5:00 p.m. followed by a dinner of chicken and tenderloin tips, Mashed Potatoes, Vegetables, Coleslaw, Rolls, Dessert Bars and Kneecaps at 6:00 p.m.

**THE TWIN HILL STRING BAND WILL PLAY
FROM 7 P.M. UNTIL 10 P.M.**

**THE COST WILL BE \$18.00 PER PERSON, PAYABLE
BY CHECK TO
“COMPANY E, 2ND WISCONSIN,”
AND MUST BE RECEIVED BY MONDAY, APRIL 17TH
2017.**

**SEND PAYMENT TO DAVID SIELSKI,
2316 SERENADE LANE
GREEN BAY, WI 54301
QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO DAVID
SIELSKI AT EITHER
(920) 660-2449 or *dsielski@greenbay.gannett.com***

**Please Come and Celebrate
the Beginning of a New Season!**



From Highway 172 East/West—take the Riverside (Hwy 57) Exit. Turn left onto Riverside Drive—you will be going south towards De Pere.

In De Pere, Riverside Drive becomes North Broadway.

Go straight through the round-about in De Pere, staying on North Broadway, which remains Hwy 57.

Outside De Pere the road will split—stay to the left, taking County Rd PP.

Legends/Swan Club will be on your right at the corner of County PP and Heritage Road.

FROM THE CAMPS OF THE COMPANIES OF THE SECOND WISCONSIN

INFANTRY



COMPANY E



FIRST COMPANY DRILL OF 2017

TO ARMS! VOLUNTEERS! RALLY TO THE COLORS!

Company E will hold its first spring drill on March 11th, 2017. This drill is mainly intended for new members and non-commissioned officers, but all men of the company are welcomed to fall in with the fresh fish. The drill is scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m. Members are encouraged to arrive early so that drill can commence immediately at 10:30.

The men are encouraged to wear their uniforms, bring their rifled musket, bayonet, belts and a canteen with water. No brogans, however. You will need to wear soft soled shoes for drill. The directions to the location of the drill follow:

DIRECTIONS: Take Highway 41 South/North towards Green Bay and take the Lombardi Avenue exit.

Proceed *east* towards Lambeau Field, and turn *left* onto Oneida Street.

St. Mark's Church will be on the corner of Kenwood and Oneida Streets.

The Gymnasium is located on the lower level

COMPANY K

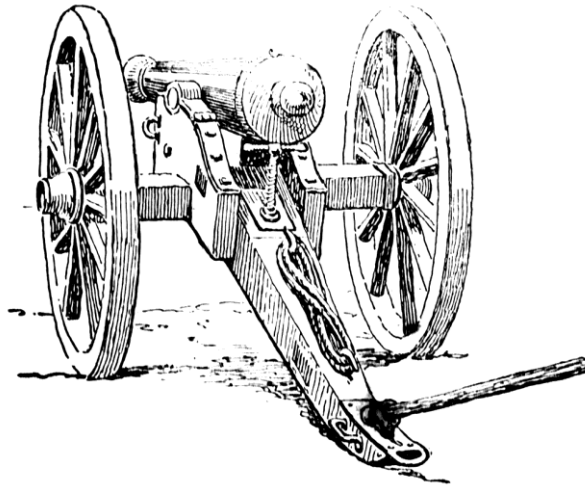
FALL IN FOR THE FIRST SPING DRILL!!

The volunteers of Company K, Second Wisconsin Regiment will gather on the commons of the Waterloo High School for their first drill of the 2017 reenacting season on February 18th, 2017. The drill is set to commence at 9:00 a.m. sharp. Roll call will precede the start of drill. It is essential that members attend drills to get ready for the upcoming season. Your execution of the school of the soldier is important and the members of the Second Wisconsin are noted for their superb manueve on the field at events. This is the result of the repetition of drill in the spring.

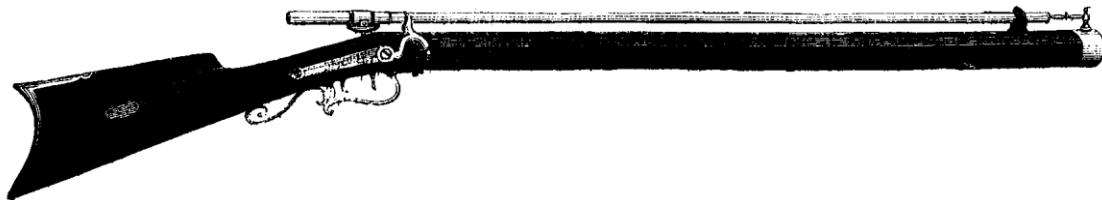
Those attending the drill should come in uniform. It is imperative that you bring your rifled musket and bayonet, as well as your leathers.

You will also need your canteen filled with water so you can hydrate during the drill. The drill will end around noon.

ARTILLERY



SKIRMISHERS



2nd WISCONSIN REGIMENTAL FIELD HOSPITAL



COMMON CIVIL WAR DISEASES

BY STAN GRAIEWSKI

DYSENTERY

Number 1 killer. Severe diarrhea with passage of mucous and blood. Various types of intestinal diseases with inflammation of bowels, abdominal pain and bloody diarrhea. Caused 45,000 deaths in Union and 50,000 in Confederate Armies. Spread rapidly due to lack of sanitation practices and contaminated water. Cleanliness after surgery was a mere afterthought. Surgeons often used same instruments without cleaning. Cross contamination was not known. No one considered washing and sanitizing instruments after use. No one knew better. No one knew about link between hygiene and health.

TYPHOID FEVER

Camp fever. Number 2 killer at 1/4 of deaths. Caused by any of several bacteria. Very severe. High fever and intense headache, rash and delirium. Resulted from contaminated water and food. Highly infectious. Acute infectious disease with continued rising fever, physical and mental depression, pink spots, loss of appetite, dry mouth with fur tongue. Killed approximately 35,000 Union and 30,000 Confederate troops. One of three contracting disease died from it. Transmitted by body lice., intense headache.

AGUE

Bad fever with chills and sweating. Known as Swamp Fever.

YELLOW FEVER

Caused by a virus carried by a specific mosquito. Sometimes fatal.

MALARIA

Shakes. Spread by mosquitoes. 3 million contracted disease. Killed 10,000 Union and 20,000 Southern soldiers. Quinine successfully prevented and treated disease.

SCURVY

Caused by lack of vitamin C. Gums become spongy. Teeth become loose. Mucous membranes bleed. Disease marked by debility (weakness), anemia (decrease in number of red blood cells), edema (dropsy, abnormal accumulation of fluid beneath skin), and ulceration (open sores on gums).

PNEUMONIA

Inflammation of lungs, especially the alveoli. Lungs fill with fluid. Killed approximately 20,000 Union and 17,000 Confederate soldiers. One in six contracted disease. Stonewall Jackson died from Pneumonia after being shoot by his men at Chancellorsville.

TUBERCULOUS

Contagious. Assumed to have been caused by bacteria. No known cause. Affects lungs. Infectious disease causing tubercules in lungs. Symptoms: fever, weakness, emaciation (weight loss) and chronic cough. Killed an estimated 7,000 Union and 7,000 Confederate soldiers. Could be treated but never cured. Once contracted, individual had it for life.

SMALLPOX

Extremely dangerous and contagious. Caused by specific virus. Causes fever and bumps similar to chicken pox. Killed an estimated 7,000 Union and 8,000 Confederate soldiers. Global vaccinations in 20th century allegedly wiped out disease. During Cold War, both United States and Soviet Union cultivated smallpox virus for possible use in germ warfare.

MEASLES

Killed approximately 5,000 Union and 6,000 Confederate soldiers. Spread rapidly with many troops heavily concentrated in small, confined areas. Approximately one in twenty died from measles.

SCARLET FEVER

Red skin rash. Flaking and peeling of skin. Epidemics late 1861-late 1862. Fredericksburg hard hit. Caused by exposure to those infected. Spread by sneezing, coughing, sharing drinking glasses and eating utensils.

MUMPS

Swelling of glands in jaw and neck. Chills, nausea and vomiting.

RHEUMATISM

Chronic inflammation of joints. Obsolete term for rheumatic fever.

Sources: Civil War Trust, Civil War Academy.

CIVIL WAR MILESTONES

FEBRUARY

Feb. 1, 1861	Texas secedes
Feb. 1, 1861	Gen. Sherman begins Carolina Campaign
Feb. 1, 1865	Illinois becomes the first state to ratify the 13th Amendment ending slavery
Feb. 1, 1865	Jefferson Davis accepts James A. Seddon's resignation as Secretary of War
Feb. 2, 1803	Gen. Albert S. Johnston, CSA, born
Feb. 3, 1807	Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, CSA, born
Feb. 3, 1864	Meridian Campaign begins
Feb. 3, 1865	The Hampton Roads Peace Conference

Feb. 6, 1833	Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, CSA, born
Feb. 6, 1862	Victory for Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in Tennessee, capturing Fort Henry, and ten days later Fort Donelson. Grant earns the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" Grant.
Feb. 6, 1865	Gen. Robert E. Lee takes command of all Confederate armies
Feb. 6, 1865	John C. Beckenridge (Buchanan's vice-president) becomes rebel Secretary of War
Feb. 7, 1865	Ratification of the 13th Amendment fails in Delaware, the same day it is ratified in Kansas and Maine
Feb. 8, 1820	Gen. William T. Sherman, USA, born
Feb. 8, 1862	Battle of Roanoke Island
Feb. 9, 1861	The Confederate States of America is formed with Jefferson Davis, a West Point graduate and former U.S. Army officer, as president.
Feb. 11, 1861	Both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis begin their journeys to their respective capitals. Davis begins his journey leaving Montgomery on the steamboat <i>Natchez</i>. Lincoln will board a train in Springfield on a rainy, chilly morning. From a rear platform of his rail car he will deliver his famous "Farewell Address".
Feb. 12, 1809	President Abraham Lincoln born
Feb. 13, 1862	Battle of Fort Donelson

Feb. 14, 1824	Gen. Winfield S. Hancock, USA, born
Feb. 17, 1865	Columbia surrenders to Sherman's troops
Feb. 17, 1865	Confederates evacuate Charleston
Feb. 18, 1865	Mayor Charles Macbeth surrenders Charleston, S.C. to Lt. Col. A. G. Bennet of the 21st U. S. Colored Troops
Feb. 20, 1862	President Lincoln is struck with grief as his beloved eleven-year-old son, Willie, dies from fever, probably caused by polluted drinking water in the White House.
Feb. 20, 1865	Confederate House of Representatives authorizes the use of slaves as soldiers
Feb. 22, 1865	Wilmington falls to Federal troops under Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield
Feb. 27, 1865	Gen. Sheridan begins a campaign in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley to destroy the Virginia Central Railroad and James River Canal

EDITORIAL

On February 12th, the United States will celebrate the two hundred and eighth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. It speaks to this man's importance to Americans that we remember Lincoln and honor him still over two centuries later. Enough books about this man have been written that they would constitute an entire library by themselves! We measure our leaders by the standard set by Lincoln as a politician and President.

We ask our leaders to be humble and Lincoln exuded humility. We want our leaders to be compassionate and demonstrate empathy just as Lincoln did. He was compassionate towards those who served in the Union armies and their families, towards his political opposition, towards the rebels and citizens from the South, and of course for the contrabands who fled from slavery with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Although Lincoln lacked a formal education, he worked hard throughout his life to compensate for this lack of education. And Lincoln respected educators and academic success. One of his overlooked efforts was the creation of land grant colleges. The story is legend that when early war efforts were unsuccessful Lincoln checked books on military strategy and tactics from the Library of Congress. During the course of the war Lincoln would become an excellent commander-in-chief. Lincoln was noted for his honesty, another characteristic Americans look for in their leaders. The nickname "Honest Abe" went back to his early career in politics on Illinois. Lincoln saw this as a "gem" of his personal character.

Lincoln was a politician. Today many see that as a negative appellation, but Lincoln saw politics as a noble calling. But Lincoln was proud of the role as a politician. Lincoln admired the law and saw it as the underpinning of American government. It brought order and stability to a republican form of government. Politics was a way of providing people with more opportunity and ability to succeed. Lincoln always argued that government should lift the burdens on everyone so that they could succeed in the race of life. This was how Lincoln viewed the profession of politics. Americans do value leaders they see as working for the best interests of the nation and Abraham Lincoln is one reason that view is sustained.

Lincoln rose from very humble beginnings. It is clear that Lincoln was reluctant to point out his early years and common background. A farm boy, laborer, flatboat worker, clerk in a store, store owner, surveyor, legislator, lawyer, Congressman, and ultimately President of the United States, Lincoln's story was of a man who raised himself up to success and achievement that many wonder at and respect. The Presidential campaign calling Lincoln the Railsplitter was not popular with Lincoln himself. He was not adverse to using the name during the campaign, however, because it was effective. Americans like to think that their leaders are much like them.

One can assume that Lincoln's popularity comes from his success as President. Lincoln preserved the Union, won the civil war, freed four millions of slaves, and advanced many projects (such as the Transcontinental Railroad) that benefitted the citizens of the United States. And yes, Americans like presidents who

are successful and we seek leaders who have a track record of success. Lincoln's iconic status may well come from the fact he was martyred by an assassin.

Overnight, after Lincoln's death, he became beloved by the American people. But that was not true up to that point in time. Lincoln was hated as much as loved by the people and the press. All those antagonisms were forgotten after his assassination.

Abraham Lincoln was an enigma. Maybe that is why so many books have been written about him in the years following his death. Letters between Abraham and Mary Lincoln are virtually nonexistent. Lincoln was away from home for long stretches at a time as a lawyer riding the circuit and as a politician. One would think that Lincoln must have written often to Mary. Maybe she didn't keep the letters or maybe he didn't write many. But such letters would have given the historian a wonderful window into his character and his marriage.

It can also be said that Lincoln had many acquaintances, but few close, intimate friends. People liked Lincoln, however, and supported his political activities. Joshua Speed was one of those close friends, but it does not appear Lincoln shared much about his early life with Speed. Billy Herndon was a law partner for 16 years before Lincoln became President, but again Lincoln did not share much of his personal life with Herndon. While Lincoln's life was not an open book, it did not hurt him politically. Modern voters expect more transparency from its leaders. Today's media and campaigning by candidates makes it imperative that candidates provide a clear biography. Voters today would have insisted on details about Ann Rutledge or the question of Lincoln's mother's legitimacy.

This editor has studied Lincoln for 50 years or more. Every time I begin to feel comfortable with the man Lincoln a detail arises that throws that understanding into question. That is, no doubt, why so many books have been written about the man. But I agree with a historian who said that if Lincoln had not existed Americans would have had to invent him. Lincoln is the quintessential American. Americans admire the character of the man as much as they do his success while President.

And so Mr. President we wish you a happy birthday! And we will continue to study you and try to find the real man under the myths that surround you.



Figure 1 Col. Robert Gould Shaw

A POEM FOR REENACTERS

The following poem was published in the 49th Indiana newsletter and this editor thought our readers might enjoy it.

T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE BATTLE

BY BILL COMBS

T'was the night before battle and all through the camp

Not a creature was stirring not even an ant.

Every guard stood his post

As the staff lifted a toast

I in my bedroll with my pard on the ground

**The crackling campfire the only sound
Out on the road there arose such a clatter
I jumped to my feet to see what was the matter
There in the glow of Humvee headlights
Stood a strange figure by all rights
It dawned on me suddenly as I woke my pard
This reenactment had just gained a farb
As he unloaded his gear
Out came a cot, gas lantern and coolers of beer
With plastic totes and teflan pans it became clear
It was the worst we could fear
His uniform was mixed with white tennis shoes
His breath reeked of cheap confederate booze
I asked him who he was with His answer Alabama volunteers – the 35th
With a gleam in my eye and hope in my heart I told him
Confederate camp was on the other side of the park
He collected his gear in the wink of an eye
It seemed strange to see him so quick and so spry
As he drove down the road into the night
He shouted “ Happy Reenactment and to all a good fight”**

FIFTEEN MONTHS IN DIXIE,

OR

**MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
IN REBEL PRISONS.**

BY W. W. DAY.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOOD BYE ANDERSONVILLE.

As related in the preceding chapter the fall of Atlanta, and the fear of rescue had obliged the Confederates to remove the prisoners from Andersonville to a safer place.

On the 11th of September the detachment to which I belonged was ordered out. We gladly left the pen and saw the ponderous gates close behind us. No matter to us where we went, we believed we had nothing to lose and much to gain. If we were to be exchanged, which we doubted, then good bye to all these terrible scenes of want and suffering. If another prison pen was our destination, then we hoped it would not be so foul and disease laden as the one we left, and in any case we had left Winder and Wirz and we knew that though we were to rake the infernal regions with a fine comb, we could not find worse jailors. With thoughts like these running through our minds we dragged our weak and spiritless bodies to the station, where we got into a train of freight cars as best we could. Our train was headed toward Macon and there was much speculation as to our destination. Somehow a rumor had got into circulation that a cartel of exchange had been agreed upon by the

commissioners of the two governments and that Savannah was to be the point of exchange. But we had been deceived so many times that we had taken a deep and solemn vow to not believe anything in exchange until we were safely transferred to our own lines; and this vow we kept inviolate.

Soon after passing Macon we entered the territory over which Stoneman's Cavalry had raided a few weeks before. Burned railroad trains and depots marked the line of his march. At one place where our train stopped for wood and water one of the guards was kind enough to allow some of the men to get off the train and secure a lot of tin sheets which had covered freight cars prior to Stoneman's visit. These sheets of tin were afterward made into pails and square pans by a tinner who was a member of an Illinois regiment, with no other tools than a railroad spike and a block of wood.

Two brothers, members of an Indiana regiment, and coopers by trade, made a large number of wooden buckets, or "piggins" while in Andersonville, and their kit of tools consisted of a broken pocket knife and a table knife, supplemented by borrowing our saw knife. With a table knife or a railroad spike and a billet of wood, we would work up the toughest sour gum, or knottiest pitch pine stick of wood which could be procured in the Confederacy. Time was of no consequence, we had an overstocked market in that commodity and anything that would serve to help rid ourselves of the surplus was a blessing.

Time solved the question of our destination. We went to Augusta again so that Savannah was out of the question. Then we crossed over into South

Carolina, after which the point was raised whether it was to be Columbia or Charleston. Many of us were of the opinion that Charleston was the point and that we were to be placed under fire of our own guns, as many prisoners had been heretofore, the rebels hoping thereby to deter our forces from firing into the city. Time passed and we arrived at Branchville. Here is the junction of the Columbia road with the Augusta and Charleston road, we took the Charleston track and arrived in Charleston about eleven o'clock p. m. having been two days on the road.

After leaving the cars we were formed in line, and, as we were marching away from the depot, a huge shell from one of Gilmore's guns exploded in an adjoining block. We were getting close to "God's country," only a shell's flight lying between us and the land of the Stars and Stripes. We were marched just out of the city and camped on the old Charleston race track.

In the morning we were allowed to go for water, accompanied by guards. before night all the wells in the vicinity were exhausted, and we were obliged to resort to well digging for a supply. Fortunately we found water at a depth of only four feet. The water was slightly brackish, but as we had been kept on short rations of salt it was rather agreeable than otherwise. Before dark there were more than fifty wells dug in camp and we had water in abundance.

Day after day brought train load after train load of prisoners from Andersonville until there were about seven thousand prisoners in camp at this place. There was no stockade, no fence, nothing but a living wall of guards around us, and that living wall of infantrymen aided and

abetted by a healthy, full grown battery of artillery, that was all.

Our rations here were of fair quality but small in quantity, consisting of a pint of corn meal, a little sorghum syrup and a teaspoonful of salt once in two days. Meat of any kind was not issued, from this time on it was relegated to the historic past. The weather was pleasant, the days not too hot and the nights not too cool. About nine o'clock a sea breeze would spring up which felt to us, after having lived in the furnace-like atmosphere of Andersonville, like a breeze from the garden of the Gods. About nine o'clock in the evening a land breeze would set in and would blow until sunrise then die away to give place to the sea breeze. I used to sit up till midnight drinking in the delightful air and watching the track of the great shells thrown by the "Swamp Angel" battery. Gilmore gave Charleston no rest day nor night. The "Hot bed of Secession" got a most unmerciful pounding. The whole of the lower part of the city was a mass of ruins, the upper part was then receiving the attention of our batteries on James Island. It was a grand sight at night to watch the little streak of fire from the fuse of those three hundred pound shells as it rose higher and higher toward the zenith and having reached the highest point of the arc, to watch it as it sped onward and downward until suddenly a loud explosion told that its time was expired and the sharp fragments were hurled with an increased velocity down into the devoted city. Sometimes a shell would not explode until it had made its full journey and landed among the buildings or in the streets and then havoc and destruction ensued. The most of the people lived in bomb proofs, which protected them from the fragments of the shells which exploded in the air, but were not proof against those which exploded after striking.

A little episode occurred one day that created quite a panic among both prisoners and guards. Suddenly and without warning, a large solid shot came rolling and tumbling through camp, from the north; this was followed by another, and then another. This was getting serious. What the Dickens was the matter? Where did these shots come from? were questions that any and all of us, could and did ask, but none could answer. But in this case, the rebel guard and officers, were in danger as well as Yanks, and a courier was dispatched in hot haste to inquire into the why and wherefore. It turned out that a rebel gunboat, on the Cooper River, was practicing at a target and we were getting the benefit of it.

Here at Charleston we were on historic ground. Just a few miles to the east of us Colonel Moultrie defended a palmetto fort manned by five hundred brave and loyal South Carolinans, against the combined land and naval forces of Sir Henry Clinton, and Sir Peter Parker, on the 28th of June 1776, and with his twenty-six cannons compelled the fleet to retire. There upon the palmetto bastion of old Fort Moultrie, the brave young Sergeant Jasper supported the Stars and Stripes under a terrible fire, and earned for himself an undying fame. Here and in this vicinity, Moultrie, Pickens, Pinckney, Lee, Green, Lincoln and Marion earned a reputation which will last as long as American history shall endure. But, alas, here too, is material for a history which does not reflect much credit on the descendants of those brave and loyal men. South Carolina was the first State to adopt an ordinance of Secession, Nov 20th, 1860.

Here in Charleston Harbor, on the 9th of January 1861, the descendants of those revolutionary heroes, from the embrasures of fort Moultrie, and Castle Pinckney, fired upon the Star of the West, a United States vessel sent with supplies for the brave Anderson, who was cooped up within the walls of Fort Sumter. From these same forts, on the 12th of April, was fired the guns which compelled the surrender of Fort Sumter, and was the beginning of hostilities in the War of the Rebellion. And all this trouble had grown out of a political doctrine promulgated by an eminent South Carolinian, John C. Calhoun.

But with all their bad reputation as Secessionists, the South Carolinians treated us with more kindness than did the citizens of any other States. I never heard a tantalizing or insulting word given by a South Carolina citizen or soldier to a prisoner. In the matter of low meanness, the Georgia Crackers and Clay Eaters earned the blue ribbon.

On the 1st of October the detachment to which I belonged, was marched to the cars, and we were sent to Florence, one hundred miles north of Charleston on the road to Columbia. On our route, we had passed over ground made sacred by Revolutionary struggles. At Monk's Corners, the 14th of April 1780, a British force defeated an American force. In the swamps of the Santee and Pedee Rivers General Francis Marion hid his men, and from them he made his fierce raids upon tories and British. Marion is called a "partisan leader," in the old histories, but I suspect that in this year of grace, he would be called a "Bushwacker," or "Guerrilla" leader. It makes a good deal of difference which side men are fighting on, about the name they are called. We arrived at the Florence Stockade in the afternoon and were marched in and assigned our

position in the northeast corner, the entrance being on the west side.

The Florence Stockade was about two or three miles below Florence, and half or three-quarters of a mile east of the railroad. It was built upon two sides of a small stream which ran through it from north to south, was nearly square in shape, and contained ten or twelve acres of land. It was built of rough logs set in the ground and was sixteen or eighteen feet high. There was no such dead line as at Andersonville, a shallow ditch marking the limits. The greatest number of prisoners confined here during the time of my imprisonment, was eleven thousand. In some respects our situation was better than at Andersonville. We had new ground upon which to live. We were rid of the terrible filth and stench, we were not so badly crowded, and we had more wood with which to cook our food.

The Post Commandant, Lieutenant Colonel Iverson, of the 5th Georgia, was an easy going, but not altogether bad man, except that he was possessed of an ungovernable temper, and when irritated, would commit acts of which he was, no doubt, ashamed when his pulse assumed a normal condition. Lieutenant Barrett, Adjutant of the 5th Georgia, was to Florence what Wirz was to Andersonville. He was a red headed fiery tempered, cruel, and vindictive specimen of the better educated class of Southerners. It seemed to be his delight to torture and maltreat the prisoners. If there was a single redeeming trait in his character, the unfortunate men who were under his care, never by any chance stumbled onto it. His favorite punishment was to tie the offender up by the thumbs so tightly that his toes barely touched the ground, and have him in this condition for an hour or two at a time. The tortures of such a

punishment were indescribable. The victim would suffer the tortures of the damned, and when let down would have to be carried to his quarters by his comrades.

The prisoners were organized into squads of twenty, these into companies of a hundred, and these into detachments of a thousand. As stated before my detachment was assigned a position in the northeast corner of the Stockade. When we arrived there was plenty of wood, small poles, and brush in the Stockade, and our first work after selecting our ground, was to secure an abundant supply.

My old “pard” Rouse, had died at Charleston, Ole Gilbert belonged to another detachment and did not come in the same train load with me, so I joined Joe Eaton, Wash. Hays and Roselle Hull, of my regiment, in constructing a shelter, or house, if you please. We first set crotches in the ground and laid a strong pole on them, then we leaned other poles on each side against this pole in the form of a letter A. This was the frame work of our house, which, as will be seen, consisted entirely of roof. On this frame work we placed brush, covering the brush with leaves, and the whole with a heavy layer of dirt. This was an exceedingly laborious job on account of the lack of suitable tools. Our poles were cut with a very dull hatchet and our digging done with tin plates. After we had constructed a shelter, our next work was to wall up the gables. This was done with clay made up into adobes. We could not build more than a foot in a day as we were obliged to wait for our walls to dry sufficiently to bear their own weight. We had taken great pains to make a warm rain proof hut, as we had arrived at the conclusion that we were destined to remain in prison until the close of the war.

Those prisoners who arrived later were not so fortunate in the matter of wood. The early settlers had taken possession of all of that commodity leaving others to look out for themselves. But the later arrivals made haste to secure poles for the purpose of erecting their tents and huts, that is, those who had blankets to spare for roofs; but many were compelled to dig diminutive caves in the banks which marked the boundary of the narrow valley through which ran the little stream of water.

Wood was procured from the immense pine forests in the vicinity. Details of our own numbers, chopped the wood, and others carried it on their shoulders a distance of half to three quarters of a mile, receiving as compensation an extra ration of food. In the matter of wood Iverson was more humane than was Winder, but in the matter of rations it was the same old story, just enough to keep soul and body together, provided a pint of corn meal, two spoonfuls of sorghum syrup and a half teaspoonful of salt daily would furnish sufficient adhesive power to accomplish that result.

There was rather better hospital accommodations here for the sick, than at Andersonville, but at the best it was miserably poor and insufficient. The worst cases had been left behind, but the stockade was soon full of men so sick as to be unable to care for themselves. The terrible treatment at Andersonville was telling on the men after they had changed to a more healthy location, and into less filthy surroundings.

Soon the fall rains set in and the cold winds, which penetrated to our

very marrow through the rags with which we were but partly covered, warned us that winter was approaching. We tried hard to keep up our courage amidst all these discouraging circumstances, but it was a sickly, weakly sort of courage. Cheerful, we could not be, even the most religiously inclined were sad and despondent. I am convinced that cheerfulness depends and must depend on outward circumstances as well as on an inward state of mind. Why not? We were men not angels, material beings, not spirits; we were subject to the same appetites and passions to which we, and others are subject, under better circumstances. Starvation, privation, misery and torture had not purged from us the longings, the hungerings and thirstings after the necessities, the conveniences, yes, the luxuries of life, but on the contrary, had increased them ten fold. How was this to terminate? Would our Government set aside the military policy of the Commander of the army, and take a more humane view of the question? Would the Confederates, already driven to extremes to furnish supplies for their own men, at length yield and give us up, to save expense? or, must we still remain to satisfy the insatiate greed of the Moloch of war? were questions we could and did ask ourselves and each other, but there was found no man so wise as to be able to answer them. Time, swift-footed and fleeting, to the fortunate, but laggard, and slow, to us, could alone solve these questions, and after hours of discussion, to Time we referred them.