



The Hancock Rebel



Winner of the 2016-17 Small Camp Newsletter Award from the Mississippi Division SCV

THE SHIELDSBORO RIFLES CAMP #2263 NEWSLETTER

BAY ST. LOUIS, MS

ISSUE #26

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The Charge

"To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish.

Given at New Orleans, LA in a speech on April 25, 1906 to the SCV National Convention by Lt. Gen. Stephen D Lee.

From the Commander's Desk

By: Camp Commander Don Green

Greetings Compatriots, DUES! DUES ARE DUE!! Please see me or Adjutant Ladner to get them in before September 30, 2017.

You may have noticed, the date has changed for our dues to be sent in. The National Office has granted the Mississippi Division a one month grace period to have dues sent in since all renewal statements were lost in the mail. We are looking good for our membership as we should double our numbers from last year. This is reflective of you the membership bringing in new members to join us; Thanks so much for your diligence in recruiting. Activity wise, we have set a date for our Victor Ladner Dedication/Memorial for Sunday October 29, 2017 at 2pm. We will get the directions and other information to you as it comes available. We really want to have a good showing for our first Camp Dedication for this Honorable Soldier. Also, we hope you all will be at Beauvoir October 20-22, 2017 to help the site with its largest fund-raiser of the year. The 3rd Miss Inf looks to have 20 or more in line for the weekend. Commander Oran Thomas from the Live Oak Rifles Camp presented on his ancestor and the 36th Ala Inf. at last month's meeting on Tuesday August 29, 2017. This month, we have former Division Commander Allen Terrell who will do a presentation on The Confederate Territory of Arizona. So make plans to come to the American Legion in Bay St. Louis, MS. on this Tuesday September 26, 2017 at 6pm and bring a recruit.

Camp Photos



Camp #2236 Commander Oran Thomas presented on the 36th Ala. Inf. and his ancestor at our monthly meeting held at the American Legion in Bay St. Louis on Tuesday August 29, 2017. It was heartfelt and we enjoyed it.



The Confederate Monument in Oxford, MS. was ran into by a drunk driver on September 16, 2017. Charges are pending as the “victim” was hospitalized after the incident. The monument still stands, but is unstable.



Commander Green and Associate Members Jim Huffman and Daryl Ladner attended the kick-off meeting for the chartering of the Marion’s Men Camp soon to be chartered in Columbia. Councilman Schmitz attended also.

Fall Muster Work Days



Camp Members Don Green and Nathan Cothorn work with other Compatriots on September 9, 2017.



Members Don Green & Nathan Cothorn work with a host of other Volunteers on September 16, 2017.



Compatriot Alan Spence brought his tractor dor the work day on September 23, 2017.

Upcoming Events

September 1-3, 2017 Battle of Decatur Reenactment
Point Mallard Park; Decatur, AL.

September 8-10, 2017 Tunnel Hill Reenactment
Tunnel Hill, GA.

September 16, 2017 3rd Saturday Living History at Beauvoir
Biloxi, MS.; 9am

September 30, 2017 McRaven Living History
Vicksburg, MS. 9am-4pm

October 5-7, 2017 Battle of Baton Rouge Reenactment
St. Francisville, LA.

October 20-22, 2017 Fall Muster at Beauvoir Reenactment
Biloxi, MS. (3rd Miss MAX EFFORT)

October 28, 2017 Deason House Historic Tour
Deason House; Ellisville, MS.

October 29, 2017 Victor Ladner Dedication/Memorial
Hancock County, MS. 2pm

November 10-12, 2017 Wirt Adams Raid Reenactment
Jefferson College; Washington, MS.

November 10-12, 2017 Battle's for the Armory Reenactment
Tallassee, AL.

November 17-19, 2017 Camp Moore Reenactment
Camp Moore Historic Site; Tangipahoa, LA. (3rd Miss MAX EFFORT)

November 25, 2017 Landrum's Reenactment
Landrum's Homestead; Laurel, MS.

December 1-3, 2017 Pea Ridge Reenactment
Pea Ridge, AR.

December 8-9, 2017 McCloud's Mill Reenactment
Leakesville, MS. (3rd Miss MAX EFFORT)

Call to Arms

We have successfully formed our own unit the 3rd Mississippi Infantry Company F, Shieldsboro Rifles for Memorial Services and Reenactments here locally. This is an idea we have had for sometime now and other members are showing interest. We want to be able to field our own unit to participate in events to honor our ancestors, as well as the namesake for our Camp. We will welcome others to fall in with us to form a good, diverse Confederate Company. The impression will be coastal defense which will allow for a mixture of branches ranging from dismounted cavalry to artillery. The main drill will be Hardee's Tactics which will mainly put us as infantry. But, my experience will allow us to have flexibility for the impression we want to use for that event. We want to be able to outfit the unit with uniforms, camp all weekend if need be, and enjoy the comradery that has brought us all together. Between Beau, myself and some others who will join us along the way, we can supply uniforms and gear to get started. If you do not have any gear, or have partial gear, come anyway and we will finish supplying you with the necessary items. If we can not complete your uniform, we will borrow from others at the event. This unit will be based out of Beauvoir and will form there for drill each month as a part of the 3rd Saturday Living Histories to support the crown jewel of the Coast. We completed our first drill at the Third Saturday Living History at Beauvoir Saturday February 18, 2017 with success. We have formed up at Confederate Flag Day on March 4, 2017, set up a Living History March 18, 2017 both at Beauvoir, and formed up at Gautier Cemetery for the Live Oak Rifles Memorial on Saturday April 15, 2017. The unit had a very successful weekend at Beauvoir with a gathering the Friday night of Confederate Memorial Weekend at Beauvoir and a full day of events on Saturday April 22, 2017 including drill and the Memorial. We have also participated in the Surrender Oaks Festival in Citronelle, AL. on May 6, 2017 where Gen Taylor's Troops were paroled and had a good weekend at Fort Gaines for Thunder on the Bay on May 21, 2017. We were able to garrison inside the Fort along with our parads the 7 Stars Artillery. On June 3, 2017, the 3rd Miss formed up at Beauvoir for the Pres. Davis 209th Birthday Celebration. On June 10th, members formed up as the Division Color Guard in Oxford to post colors. On June 16-17, 2017, the 3rd Miss Inf participated out at Ship Island for a very special weekend of events. The unit has formed up in July & August at Beauvoir's 3rd Saturday Living History and helped out at Fort Morgan's Commemorative Day Aug. 5, 2017. Color Bearer Oran Thomas has made the unit a beautiful regimental flag shown in many of our photos and we have started a Facebook page to communicate with one another. The latest news on the 3rd Mississippi is that Co. K has formed from the central part of the state under the command of the Regiment, Co. F is now a member of the Gulf Coast Battalion of Reenactors and I was officially elected Captain. Photos of the 3rd can be seen below and the schedule can be seen in the Upcoming Events section above. Exciting opportunities are coming for the 3rd Miss Inf to participate in events along the Gulf Coast. Next month we will have our last drill before Fall Muster the 3rd Saturday in September. We have the possibility to help out at McRaven House in Vicksburg Sept. 30, 2017 where the 3rd Miss Inf were garrisoned in 1862-63. Of course, we look to be at Company strength at Fall Muster in October and will form up at historic Camp Moore where the 3rd Miss Inf drilled, trained, and was reorganized in May of 1862. All who are interested in joining and participating, contact Commander Green for more planning of the 3rd Miss. Inf.

I Beg to Remain Your Obedient Servant.

Capt. Don P, Green, Jr.

Co. F, Shieldsboro Rifles

3rd Mississippi Infantry Reg't

3rd Mississippi Infantry Co. F in Action



3rd Miss Inf Reg't Flag.

3rd Miss Inf forms for first drill.

3rd Miss Inf with 7 Stars Artillery.



3rd Miss Inf Living History at Beauvoir.

Live Oak Memorial-Gautier.

3rd Miss Inf at Beauvoir CMD.



3rd Miss Inf drills at Citronelle.

3rd Miss Inf at Fort Gaines.

3rd Miss Inf at Beauvoir for Pres. B-day.



Div. Color Guard

3rd Miss Inf at Ship Island

9th Conn Inf at Ship Island

Drill with 24th Miss Inf.



Fort Morgan



3rd Saturday Living History



3rd Miss Inf Co F Sign made by Steve Thoms

Fall Muster 2017

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**CONTINUE THE
TRADITION**

HISTORICAL REENACTMENTS
31ST ANNUAL FALL MUSTER
LIVING HISTORY



OCTOBER 20-22, 2017
9:00 AM—5:00 PM

WWW.VISITBEAUVOIR.ORG
Biloxi, Miss.

Owned and operated by Mississippi division sons of confederate veterans

Media Pages Update

We are looking at creating a new website for a minimum fee, possibly free, for the Camp. Our original website was a bit costly and has not been renewed as of yet. 2nd Lt. Commander J. P. is looking at this for us and will report to us in the very near future with possible options .

Camp Website: In Progress

Brigade Website: www.dgreen1865.wix.com/5th-brig-ms-div-scv

Division Website: www.mississippiscv.org

Beauvoir Website: www.visitbeauvoir.org

National Website: www.scv.org

Upcoming Speakers List

Tuesday September 26, 2017 – Past Division Commander Alan Terrell; Condeferate Territory of Arizona

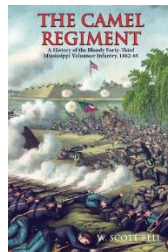
Tuesday October 24, 2017 – SPARS Paranormal Group; Haunted Historical Places

Tuesday November 28, 2017 – Camp Show & Tell; Everyone bring something Historical to show

December 2017 – No meeting due to the Holidays; No Presentation

Saturday January 20, 2018 – Lee-Jackson Baquet; TBA

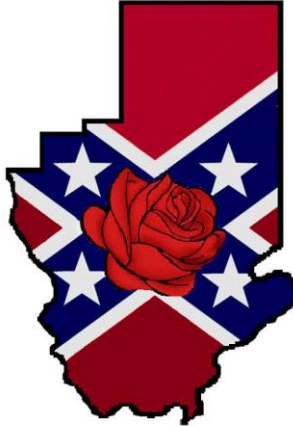
Future Presentation - Jim Huffman; “ The Camel Regiment: A History of the Bloody 43rd MS Infantry, CSA.”



The 43rd Mississippi Infantry of the Confederate States of America is the only regiment to have used a camel militarily east of the Mississippi. Referred to as the Camel Regiment, it was organized in 1862 and surrendered in 1865. Using a variety of resources, the author provides a roster of the regiment along with detailed information on the formation, battles, and controversies surrounding the men. From the acquisition of the African dromedary Old Douglas to carry baggage and musical instruments through his death at Vicksburg and the fate of his fellow soldiers, Bell provides an entertaining historical narrative of this little-known chapter in American history.

Order of the Confederate Rose

ORDER OF THE CONFEDERATE ROSE



HANCOCK COUNTY CHAPTER,
HANCOCK COUNTY, MS

Camps #2263 and 373 will be helping to start an OCR Chapter in Hancock County. All ladies 12 years and older are eligible to join. We had a lot of interest this year and feel like 2017 will be the year to charter this wonderful organization. Contact Breezy Bice at blbice@live.com for more information.

Camp Charter



New Division Officers Elected

The 122nd Mississippi Division, SCV, and 23rd MSOCR Reunions was held this weekend In Oxford. Thanks to everyone who traveled to the reunion from across the state. Special thanks to the University Greys Camp for the excellent job hosting this year's outstanding reunion.

Elections were held and elections were held and the division's the new officers are as follows:

Mississippi Division Commander

Mr. Jeff Barnes

1st Lieutenant Commander

Mr. Conor Bond

2nd Lieutenant Commander

Mr. Carl Ford

Mississippi Division adjutant

Mr. Dan McCaskill

1st Brigade Commander

Mr. Stan Rhoda

1st Brigade Councilman

Mr. Stuart Denman III

2nd Brigade Commander

Dennis Brown

2nd Brigade Councilman

Bill Latham

3rd Brigade Commander

Trent Lewis

3rd Brigade Councilman

John Evans

4th Brigade Commander

Bill Hinson

4th Brigade Councilman

Patrick Charlton

5th Brigade Commander

Jason Smith

5th Brigade Councilman

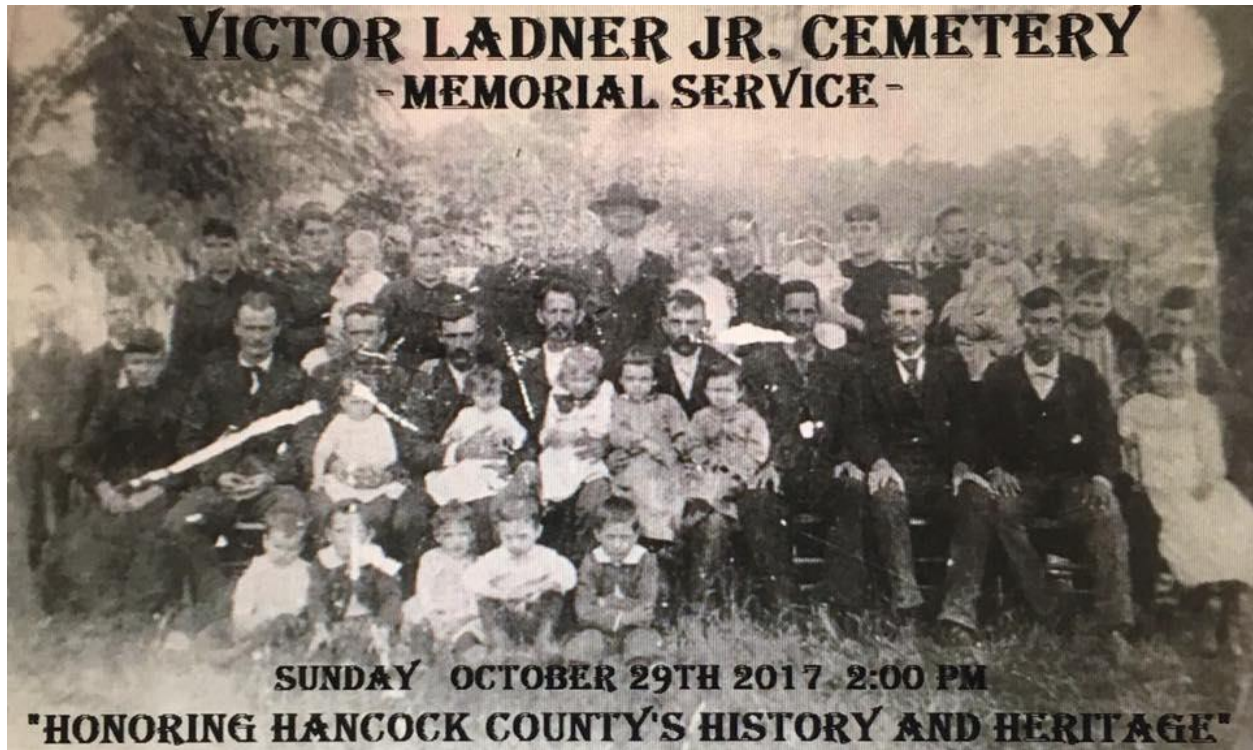
Charlie Schmitz

Congratulations to the new leadership.

The members of the Mississippi Division look forward to your leadership as we all continue our duty to follow the Charge!

Deo Vindice!

Victor Ladner Memorial



What: Victor Ladner, Jr. Cemetery Memorial Service

When: Sunday October 29, 2017; 2pm

Where: Lauren Reed Rd. off of Lower Bay Rd. in Lakeshore, MS.

Speaker: Commander Joe Abbott; Camp #1681 Stocksdales Rangers, McComb, MS.

Hosted By: Shieldsboro Rifles Camp # 2263; Bay St. Louis, MS.

Who: All are invited to attend.

Battle of Harper's Ferry

6/12/2006 • AMERICA'S CIVIL WAR, MILITARY HISTORY

Harpers Ferry, W.Va., that tranquil little town nestled at the base of a small mountain, at the point where the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers meet, often is afforded a mere mention in today's Civil War histories. In 1862, however, this small town played a very important and strategic part in the schemes of generals who commanded armies on both sides.

By the end of August 1862, General Robert E. Lee and his principal lieutenants, Maj. Gens. Thomas J. 'Stonewall' Jackson and James Longstreet, had displayed their brilliance as strategists. They had successfully outmaneuvered and thoroughly defeated the much larger Union Army of Virginia at Second Manassas (Bull Run), thereby crushing any hopes that Maj. Gens. John Pope and George B. McClellan had of capturing Richmond that summer.

Disgusted and worried, President Abraham Lincoln watched as the shattered Army of Virginia straggled back to the vicinity of Washington. After relieving Pope, Lincoln asked General McClellan to reassume command of a reconstituted Army of the Potomac, into which was incorporated the mauled remnants of the short-lived Army of Virginia. To McClellan thus fell the manifold tasks of defending Washington, reorganizing his battered army, keeping an eye on Lee's movements, and pleasing the victory-hungry Washington politicians.

McClellan often has been criticized for his slow and cautious movements, but one must remember that he was dealing with meddling politicians, poor to nonexistent military intelligence, and an army that had been devastated by the course of events that summer. As McClellan himself wrote to the Union Army's chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck, on the eve of September 16, 1862: 'I left Washington on the 7th of September. At this time it was known that the mass of the Rebel Army had passed up the south side of the Potomac in the direction of Leesburg, and that a portion of that Army had crossed into Maryland; but whether it was their intention to cross their whole force with a view to turn Washington by a flank movement down the North bank of the Potomac, to move on Baltimore, or to invade Pennsylvania were questions, which at the time, we had no means of determining. This uncertainty as to the intentions of the enemy obliged me up to the 13th of September to march cautiously and to advance the army in such order as continually to keep Washington and Baltimore covered, and at the same time to hold the troops well in hand, so as to be able to concentrate and follow rapidly if the enemy took the direction of Pennsylvania or to return to the defense of Washington, if as was so greatly feared by the authorities, the enemy should merely be raising a feint with a small force to draw off our army, while with their main forces they stood ready to seize the first favorable opportunity to attack the Capital.'

'Little Mac' added that, in the meantime, 'the process of reorganization rendered necessary after the demoralizing effects of the disastrous campaign upon the other side of the Potomac was rapidly progressing. The Federal troops were gaining confidence, and their formerly soldierly appearance and discipline were fast returning.'

Although McClellan did have his critics, few could dispute his talents as an able administrator or the fact that he was worshiped by his troops. After Second Manassas, as the Union army limped back to Washington, McClellan rode out to meet it. A great shout went up among the men, and many of them flocked to the little general as he sat upon his horse.

Meanwhile, General Lee had begun moving his army northward. From the 4th to the 7th of September, Lee and the bulk of his army crossed the Potomac near Leesburg and from there marched to Frederick, Md. On September 9, 1862, Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia made camp outside Frederick. Lee then called together his two corps commanders, Generals Jackson and Longstreet, and together they began to plan their strike to the north.

Lee's strategy was to move the Army of Northern Virginia to the vicinity of Hagerstown, Md., where he would pause briefly to seize Federal supplies stored there and then push northward into Pennsylvania. But he faced a double-barreled problem. Both Martinsburg and Harpers Ferry (in what was then still Virginia) held substantial garrisons of Federal troops. The garrison at Martinsburg numbered about 2,500, under the command of Brig. Gen. Julius White, while the troops at Harpers Ferry numbered about 10,000, commanded by Colonel Dixon S. Miles. Lee realized that as long as Union forces occupied those strategic points, his army's vital lines of supply and communications through the Shenandoah Valley could easily be cut, which would effectively isolate him from Richmond and his supplies.

To counter that possibility, Lee devised a plan for the capture and occupation of Martinsburg and Harpers Ferry. He would divide his forces by ordering Jackson and his three divisions to march to Williamsport, Md., cross the Potomac and capture the Federal garrison at Martinsburg; then make a lightning thrust upon Harpers Ferry from the rear, via Charlestown. Another division was to occupy Maryland Heights, which overlooks Harpers Ferry from north of the Potomac, while a fifth division was to claim Loudoun Heights across the Shenandoah and thus subject the town to a triple fire.

Once all those objectives were attained, Jackson's forces were to rejoin the main body of Lee's army at either Boonsboro or Hagerstown by September 16. The rather elaborate and risky plan was devised on the evening of September 9, and Jackson and his three divisions were on the move the very next morning. His route took him north through Middletown, across South Mountain at Turner's Gap and to an encampment at Boonsboro, for the night.

The next morning, September 11, Jackson's force pressed on and that afternoon crossed the Potomac at Williamsport. As Jackson then advanced on Martinsburg, from the west, Union scouts alerted the Federal commander there, General White, of Jackson's movements—whereupon the Union general withdrew his forces during the night to join the garrison at Harpers Ferry.

On September 12, Jackson entered Martinsburg, whose citizens gave 'Old Jack' such a reception that the taciturn general remarked, 'This is the height of happiness; these are the most delightful moments of my life.'

Upon discovering that General White had withdrawn, Jackson ordered his troops to seize any supplies the Federals had left and to make camp. The next day, September 13, Jackson and his men resumed their march toward Harpers Ferry. It was now that a soldier of the Union Army happened to discover the famous Special Order No. 191 from General Lee, dated September 9. It specifically stated Lee's intentions in regards to military movements in Maryland, how his forces would be divided, and where they would rendezvous after accomplishing their respective missions. How the order was lost still remains largely a mystery. It was found by Private B.W. Mitchell, a soldier of XII Corps, 27th Indiana Volunteers. His regiment had stacked arms on the same ground that Confederate Brig. Gen. D.H. Hill had occupied the evening before.

The story goes that Hill, who was part of Jackson's corps but for the time being had been attached to Longstreet to cover the Confederate rear, received Special Order 191 from Lee. Jackson, who was Hill's commander, did not know of this and himself sent Hill a copy of the order. Therefore, Hill presumably received two copies of the same order (although after the war Hill denied having been given two copies).

When the 27th Indiana camped near Frederick the next day, Private Mitchell found a copy of the order wrapped around three cigars. The discovery was of great value to McClellan, because it enabled him

to position the Army of the Potomac in front of Lee, thus forcing the bloodbath of Antietam (Sharpsburg), which was to erupt on September 17.

Meanwhile, two other key Confederates, Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws and Brig. Gen. John G. Walker, were making their move on Harpers Ferry. Walker was to take his division across the Potomac at Cheek's Ford. Upon making a reconnaissance of the area, however, Walker's scouts discovered a superior Federal force at Cheek's Ford, so Walker marched his men to Point of Rocks, Md., and crossed the Potomac there. This was all accomplished on September 11.

On the 12th, Walker's forces reached Hillsboro, Va., and halted for the night. By 10 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, Walker arrived at the foot of Loudoun Heights. He detached two regiments the 27th North Carolina and the 30th Virginia under Colonel J.R. Cooke—to climb the heights and take possession of them but not to reveal the Confederate presence to the garrison at Harpers Ferry if he found the heights unopposed.

At 2 p.m., Cooke reported that the heights had been taken with no opposition. Walker now set up lines of communication in order to inform Jackson of his position and readiness to attack. By 8 o'clock the next morning, the 14th, Walker had placed five long-range Parrott rifled cannons on the mountain, and by 10:30 he had informed Jackson of that accomplishment.

While Walker was taking possession of Loudoun Heights, General McLaws was making his way toward the Maryland Heights, directly across the Potomac from Harpers Ferry. And upon McLaws fell the most difficult tactical operation in the effort to capture Harpers Ferry. His mission was twofold. One, he was to occupy the Maryland Heights in order to prevent the Federals at Harpers Ferry from escaping westward into Maryland; and two, he must guard his rear so that the Federals would not attack and defeat him, thereby dividing the Confederate forces north and south of the river.

McLaws was assigned 10 brigades, and by Friday morning, September 12, he hoped to be in possession of the Maryland Heights and ready to seize Harpers Ferry. After capturing Harpers Ferry, he, too, was to rejoin the main body of Lee's army at either Sharpsburg or Boonsboro.

With all that in mind, McLaws went out early in the morning of September 10. By the end of his first day's march, McLaws and his division were just east of Brownsville Gap at South Mountain. Most of the day of the 11th was spent crossing South Mountain, a delay that presented McLaws with a difficult problem. Lee's plan had called for McLaws to close on Harpers Ferry on the 12th. However, nightfall of the 11th found McLaws in the vicinity of Brownsville, with Harpers Ferry still six miles away.

With McLaws himself leading, the bulk of his force arrived at the Potomac three miles downstream from Harpers Ferry before nightfall on the 12th. Upon his arrival, McLaws ordered Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw and his brigade of South Carolinians, with support from Brig. Gen. William Barksdale's brigade of Mississippians, to take the road to Solomon's Gap to the summit of Elk Ridge and occupy the Maryland Heights. As Kershaw and his South Carolinians advanced upon the heights, they came under fire from three companies of Union cavalrymen. Captain James Cuthbert of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment, also commanding a line of Confederate skirmishers, returned fire, and the Yankee troopers retreated with some loss.

At about 6 p.m. that evening Kershaw, Barksdale and their soldiers were struggling along the narrow path to the summit, still lying about a mile ahead, when they encountered a Union defended abatis. After a sharp exchange of gunfire, Kershaw withdrew his skirmishers, deployed his forces in two lines across the mountain, and then encamped for the night.

Renewing their assault early the next morning, Kershaw's men took less than 20 minutes to overrun the abatis—only to encounter a second one, behind which lay a hastily prepared breastwork of stones and logs defended by 1,200 Union troops. At 6:30, Kershaw mounted a frontal assault while Barksdale led his Mississippians around the Union right flank. Courageously led by Colonel Eliakim Sherrill, a former congressman and militiaman, the Union troops held their own—even the 126th New York, which

had only been raised three weeks earlier. After driving back two Rebel assaults, however, Sherrill was struck in the face by a Minie bullet. As he was being carried from the field, Kershaw's troops advanced again.

Meanwhile, Barksdale's troops had gotten into position on the Federal flank when a regiment of Mississippi riflemen commanded by Colonel John Fiser fired prematurely at a nest of Union sharpshooters. The Union skirmishers ran, and rumors of a retreat traveled along the Federal line. The green 126th New York troops began to break and run. By the time order was restored, the Maryland Heights had become untenable for the Union forces, the remainder of which were withdrawn, leaving behind three spiked guns. By 4:30, Kershaw and Barksdale had occupied the heights. McLaws, meanwhile, had occupied the village of Sandy Hook, cutting off all northern retreat routes from Harpers Ferry.

McLaws spent the early morning of the 14th cutting a road by which artillery could be pulled up the mountain and placed. He also took the precaution of protecting his rear by deploying some of his forces in strategic locations in Pleasant Valley. Brigadier General Howell Cobb was instructed to take command of Crampton's Gap, a passage through South Mountain whose existence had just come to McLaws' attention. Brigadier General Paul J. Semmes was instructed by McLaws to leave a small guard at Solomon's Gap and send the rest to join Cobb at Crampton's Gap, while Maj. Gen. Richard H. Anderson was situated at Weverton. The deployment of those troops proved to be of vital importance later that day, when those at Crampton's Gap managed to slow the progress of Union Maj. Gen. William B. Franklin's VI Corps just long enough to prevent his coming to the timely relief of Harpers Ferry, and thus saved Lee's army from being further divided. By 2 p.m. on the afternoon of the 14th, McLaws had four artillery pieces in position overlooking Bolivar Heights and adjoining Harpers Ferry. McLaws ordered the pieces to open fire on the enemy works.

As McLaws' artillery began firing, General Walker also ordered his batteries to open fire. The fire was effective, and the Union troops were driven from their works and into the town. Jackson, meanwhile, had resumed his march toward Harpers Ferry on September 13, and early that afternoon he and his division camped in the vicinity of Halltown, about two miles from Bolivar Heights.

At about that time, Maj. Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill (who had been under arrest since the crossing of the Potomac in early September for having been a half-hour late marching his troops) asked a member of Jackson's staff, Lieutenant Henry Kyd Douglas, to plead Hill's case before Jackson and ask for reinstatement until the pending action was over, at which time he would report himself under arrest again. According to Douglas, Jackson would not refuse a request to be permitted to fight, and Hill was directed at once to take command of his old division.

Jackson spent Sunday the 14th opening communication with Walker and McLaws and coordinating commands for the attack on Harpers Ferry the next day. By now, Jackson had realized the Federals were trying to advance through the South Mountain gaps to relieve Harpers Ferry—time was of the essence! His work at Harpers Ferry had to be accomplished speedily to enable the Confederate forces at Harpers Ferry to rejoin Lee in Maryland.

At daylight on September 15, accordingly, both McLaws and Walker opened fire on the town itself, while A.P. Hill's division advanced from the rear upon Bolivar Heights—along the west bank of the Shenandoah River. The Confederate artillery from both the Loudoun and Maryland heights was especially effective because of their elevation. As the Confederate guns dropped their shells on the garrison, several parts of the town itself were subjected to the devastating hail of fire. A distant relative of the author, Mrs. Jessie (Engle) Johnson, was witness to the scene. She later wrote: 'Several houses in Bolivar had been struck and were burning. Women and children were running in danger of being struck, some fainting, all crying. Major Young's house next to ours was hit with a bomb which tore up three rooms. Our dining room, in the basement, was full of women and children; we had to

keep it dark for a fear of light would draw fire from the mountain on the Maryland side. One cannot portray with words this awful scene.'

The shelling made it difficult for the Union guns to make an effective reply. After about an hour the Union artillery had been all but silenced, and Hill's infantry was ready to storm the town. As Brig. Gen. William Dorsey Pender then advanced at the head of Hill's division, the Federal batteries reopened. Hill then moved Captain William J. Pegram's and Captain Carpenter's batteries to within 400 yards of the Federal works and poured a furious rain of enfilading fire into the Union positions.

Confusion reigned in the Federal garrison. Union General White had taken over the command just moments before when Colonel Miles fell, mortally wounded. White now realized that defeat was imminent. He gave the order to surrender. And so, about 8 o'clock on the morning of September 15, the Federal garrison at Harpers Ferry capitulated and the Confederates occupied the town.

At little cost to Jackson and his men, the Federals surrendered about 11,500 men, 13,000 stacked arms and 73 pieces of artillery. About 1,300 Union cavalrymen under the command of Colonel Benjamin Franklin Davis were the only Federals to escape. They had left Harpers Ferry during the night of the 14th and had made their way along an unguarded road at the base of Maryland Heights. That outfit, the 8th New York, along with a company from the 12th Illinois and two companies of Rhode Island and Maryland Cavalry, made its way toward Hagerstown and, on the 15th, attacked a part of Longstreet's wagon train, destroying about 40 wagons, before eventually rejoining the Union Army near Sharpsburg, Md.

The surrender of Harpers Ferry left many questions to be answered by the Union side, the two most important being why had U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Henry Halleck insisted on holding Harpers Ferry against McClellan's advice, and why had Colonel Miles not concentrated on holding Maryland Heights and putting up a more spirited defense? On September 23, an official inquiry was launched concerning the surrender. The commission found Colonel Miles, General White and Colonel Thomas H. Ford (the Union commander on Maryland Heights) guilty of 'improper conduct that led to the shameful surrender of Harpers Ferry.' Since Miles was dead, General White and Colonel Ford were both arrested and dismissed from the service by order of the president.

The fact is, they had been defeated by a master tactician at his best—although Stonewall Jackson still is better known for his Valley campaign than his equally brilliant tactics at Harpers Ferry. The Confederates now were able to consolidate their forces with Lee just in the nick of time to save the Army of Northern Virginia from being split and shattered at the bloody Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862. Lee's lieutenants had done the job for him once again by capturing Harpers Ferry with a minimum of Confederate bloodshed, thus keeping open his vital lines of supply and communication.

Today, Harpers Ferry lies still and serene along the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers. The scars of war have healed now, and instead of the thunder of artillery, you are more likely to hear only the excited voices of the tourists as they peer into the past in this little town. If you stand quietly some late summer evening on the steps of St. Peter's Cathedral, however, and view the two rivers and their respective heights, you may once again return to that late summer of 1862 and in fantasy hear the whistle of shells, the crack of rifles, and the creak of cannons being pulled up those steep slopes. With just a touch of imagination, you can be a quiet witness yourself to this significant action, which came just before the far better known Battle of Antietam.

*This article was written by E. Prescott Engle and originally published as Stonewall's Forgotten Masterpiece in the August 1995 issue of Military History magazine. Courtesy of:
<http://www.historynet.com/battle-of-harpers-ferry.htm>*

