

## NEWSLETTER JANUARY, 2009

### **New Year and Beyond**

Happy New Year ! Plans are well underway for the 2009 Congress in Tupelo, Mississippi over Labor Day Weekend. Reservations were made in September for most of the places we will be visiting. The draft Agenda can be read elsewhere on the Website. Additional reservations and details will be completed in the coming months. Vice President Harris Griggs and Harry Dellinger will be doing additional scouting work as we move closer to the date so that our time will be used to best advantage and so that we know exactly where to go, how to get there , where to park and turnaround and other details.

In 2010 we will be in Raleigh, NC to see the Bentonville battlefield and other sites in the area where our ancestors were in 1865. The draft agenda is already made and the details are being worked on. We need a guest speaker and need to determine which museum to visit on one of the afternoons.

My current plans for beyond 2010 include the defense of three bridges and Columbia in South Carolina in 2011, followed by the route taken by The Army of Tennessee between Resaca and Cassville and the trap that didn't work at Cassville in 2012. The next year, I would like to retrace the route between Florence, AL and Columbia, TN as the Army of Tennessee closed on Nashville and then retrace the retreat route from Columbia, TN back to Florence, AL. The routes are different and there are stories to tell along the way.

As Congress locations are discussed, perhaps you have wondered, as I did, why one location got picked over another and in what order. I have thought about that question and I believe the short answer is "Opportunity". When Stovall's and Barton's brigade fought in 17 major battles in 6 states, and marched over 5,000 miles, there is a lot to retrace at the beginning. One has to start somewhere and then pick another, and then another. Each location is a pioneering effort to retrace and absorb what happened there, to the degree of detail we want. It should be easier the next time we visit a location.

The Franklin/Nashville Congress in 2006 was picked that year because Vice President Harris Griggs lived in Franklin and knew some of the key figures in town and our cousin Charles Griggs lived in Nashville and could do detailed scouting work for the group. They were our local resources that had to be utilized. Perryville, KY was selected in 2007 because our Secretary David Richardson made a trip to that battlefield and the adjacent area in 2005. I didn't want the information he found to get too old and stale before being crafted into a Congress. Those are but two examples. Each Congress has a set of circumstances that influenced its selection and the conduct of the Congress in that location.

What I envision beyond 2013 is a schedule where we visit a battlefield in the order in which it was fought. The Congress location would follow in sequence , according to the month and year of events. That decision will be up to other leaders at the time, but I see that course as a logical development for the next series of Congresses.

Another comment on Congresses : One can't get blood out of a turnip. You have to work with what is there. The battles of Peachtree Creek, Atlanta and Jonesboro have been covered over by houses and other development. It might be possible to tour those areas to at least see the terrain, but it would take a great amount of work to establish what happened and where and then to visualize the action when standing among modern houses , streets, wires and noises.

### **Mail Order Catalog**

Founder Gary Goodson sent me information about a Civil War Catalog. The catalog is 48 pages in size and costs \$15.00 for three issues. If you are interested in learning more the contact information is [www.civilwarANTIQUE.com](http://www.civilwarANTIQUE.com) or (419) 842-1863. The mailing address: Dave Taylor,P.O. Box 87, Sylvania, OH 43560.

### **New Fuze Research**

I am including this news item because our ancestors were supported by artillery in most of their battles. This new research applies in a general sense.

The research found that fuzes made in Richmond burned at a different rate than fuzes made in Savannah. The artillery and ordnance officers did not know that at the time. They got used to using fuzes of a certain type. The author thinks that the shells that exploded beyond Cemetery Ridge, before Pickett's Charge, came from fuzes that burned longer than what they were used to. At a range of over a mile, it was hard for the gunners to see exactly where the shells were exploding and to make the adjustments.

The report was made in *Military History* magazine and somehow it got left in Bremerton over Christmas, so I can't quote exactly as I intended. The above is from memory and has the key finding. The Richmond fuzes probably went to the Army of Northern Virginia. One has to wonder if General Longstreet brought some with him when his Corps moved to Georgia in September, 1863. It is possible that Richmond fuzes got mixed in with Savannah fuzes in battles other than Gettysburg.

Fuzes were used with exploding shells. When firing grapeshot and canister at close range ( like at Kennesaw Mountain ), fuzes were not required.

### **Resaca Battlefield Visitor Center**

40<sup>th</sup> Georgia Historian Kay Borden sent me the following information on October 29, 2008, the exact day I left by car for the winter home in Palm Desert, CA. During the move and the Christmas vacation trip, and getting the laptop set up, this information got covered over – but delayed, not lost. Some of you got the information by e-mail. I include it here for members or potential members who may not be on her e-mail list.

State officials broke ground on a new historic site and information center at the Resaca battlefield in October. The Resaca Battlefield State Historic Site will open in 2010 and will include interactive displays, artifacts, retail and a theater. The project is funded with \$3 million in bond funds. During the ceremony, the Friends of Resaca Battlefield

presented a \$10,000 donation to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources for building the visitor center.

The history of this visitor center goes back to 2000 and 2003 when the Georgia Department of Natural Resources bought 512.85 acres of the battlefield site and obtained a conservation easement on an additional 61.74 acres. The Department of the Interior has recognized this battlefield as one of the 25 sites chosen by the Civil War Advisory Commission for funding under the American Battlefield Protection Program. Currently there is no public access to the site, which is close to I-75.

The Executive Director of the Dalton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau noted that the center will include maps and other materials tying Resaca into other Civil War sites. One of those sites has to be the fortifications on Rocky Face Ridge. Perhaps this new effort will help make those positions easier to visit.

Our Oakland Cemetery tour guides in 2008, Tommy Barber and Bob Price, attended the ground breaking ceremony. They were invited by the Governors Office.

### **A New Book about the 50<sup>th</sup> Georgia Infantry**

A new book, *Wiregrass to Appomattox: the Untold Story of the 50<sup>th</sup> Georgia Infantry Regiment, CSA* by James Parrish has been released. The book follows Confederate soldiers from Gettysburg, Savannah, Sharpsburg and Winchester, soldiers who joined the 50<sup>th</sup> Georgia from the counties of Decatur, Thomas, Colquitt, Brooks, Berrien, Lowndes, Echols, Clinch, Coffee, Ware and Pierce.

The book contains the discovery of many previously unpublished letters, diaries, and photographs and ensures that the 50<sup>th</sup> Georgia veterans never-before told story will finally have an audience. Another author said, “The book has an array of unpublished uniformed photos, excellent modern views of battlefields, and detailed maps augmenting the text. They combine to make a unit history well worthy of attention from students of Lee’s Army.”

A book summary said, “In the diaries and letters, the words of these men paint a vivid picture of war that extends beyond the battlefield. This story follows their sad trail as they dealt with illness, exhaustion, starvation and death. Yet, despite the problems and the difficult odds they faced, most of the soldiers refused to quit.”

Does this all sound familiar? What does this book have to do with our organization?

As I see it, the connection to our Association is that we may be able to assist them in starting another descendants group and they can learn from our experience. I will write a letter to the author. I’ll tell him what we do and can offer to send a speaker to their first organization meeting in order to give them a seminar/briefing on what we have done and how it was done.

We might as well be known as the leader in Georgia CSA descendant's organizations as we are already seven years down the road on that subject. They could even attend our Congresses if they wanted to see one in action. Once established, I envision an exchange of speakers, information, good ideas, identification of problem areas and solutions, and working together in various ways.

One of the ways of working together would be in sharing research. Another Georgia descendants group would increase the number of people searching for original information. When a 50<sup>th</sup> descendant found something about the 52<sup>nd</sup> Georgia, for example, it could be forwarded to us. If our members came across something about the 50<sup>th</sup> Georgia, we could forward it to them. Networking helps each other.

We can give pointers in how to find descendants. Once they have some descendants found, they can get organized and do what we do. They have the research in book form, they know the battles, they know where the men came from, they have an author who did the initial research and **they have our association as a model to follow**. So, they have the parts, they just need to assemble them.

### **Tupelo Congress Lodging**

The headquarters and base of operations at the Eighth Annual Congress in Tupelo, MS will be at the Hilton Garden Inn Tupelo. On October 7, 2008 I sent them a check for \$500.00 to secure the meeting rooms and an executed Group Room Reservation Agreement.

The hotel does not require a certain number of room nights to be filled. However, they want our business. They will hold a certain number of rooms at a group rate for us until a cut off date in the summer.

If you want to stay at the place where the meetings are held and where the bus will load, and in a hotel environment, please make your reservations at the Hilton Garden Inn Tupelo. **(662) 718-5500 [tupelo.stayhgi.com](http://tupelo.stayhgi.com)** The address is 363 East Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804

The group rate for a King or a Queen/Queen room is \$109.00 per night. Please identify that you are with the General Barton and Stovall group. Reservations must be received by **August 3, 2009**.

For those who may want a less expensive choice of lodging, I will obtain the phone numbers from the Chamber of Commerce and list them at a later time. Tupelo has a Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn and other chain motels.

The Hilton Garden Inn is a level below the Hilton Hotel, but I think you will find it to be very comfortable and convenient for your stay. It is adjacent to the Bancorp South Conference Center that specializes in corporate and social events. Our scouts, Harry and Becky Dellinger of Huntsville, AL, checked it out in August and gave their stamp of approval.

So – please make those reservations and I will make another report about the middle of February.

Mike Griggs  
President