



Vol. XXII. December 2023 Issue IV

### Captain's Column

Gentlemen,

Merry Christmas! It is getting close and the 2023 season is behind us. I had not gotten a report on Cedar Creek written and then Gettysburg was getting close so this is a combined report on both and the end of the year.

Cedar Creek was a smashing success this year. We had nine men in the ranks and were our own company on Saturday. That is the first time that has happened in a few years. Partly that was current F. Co members coming out, but we also had Bill Ward, a former member fall in with us and John Ledford, our newest recruit join us.

Most of us arrived on Friday eve and set up along our usual fence line. A bit farther up the hill than usual, a bit closer to the ANV than Longstreet's Corp but it worked. It may have made us some new friends, thanks to Greg's map reading. On Friday eve we went to Strasburg, met Kendall who had to fight traffic as usual, and had burgers at Old Dominion Doggery and Burger Shop. They were really tasty, and I think we need to remember it for another time. We had been watching the weather and on Friday it had rained off on on, with some sprinkles as we set up, but by the time we got back to camp it had cleared and was actually quite pleasant. We sat around the campfire a while catching up with everyone eventually hitting the hay, but I believe everyone slept under the stars as it was a nice night.

On Sat, Marcel and Tony joined us and we had a morning parade. Ray was the Sgt. for the weekend, and we formed the company and marched to the battalion. Ray informed me that he had read up on his duties and was raring to go. Greg informed me that he

was working on trying to be a better Private to make Ray look good. I am not sure which worked harder but I appreciated the esprit de corp. Morning parade was reasonably short, and the General did not do any battalion drill, rather had the companies do drill individually. That worked well as we were our own company. I saw the battalion return and I think we were the second largest individual company.

After drill we were free for the usual shopping at the sutlers, some lunch etc. till the battle. The battle was one of the better ones at Cedar Creek that I can remember. We started fairly low down the hill closer to the creek and then came up the draw towards the Yanks. The Yanks retreated in decent order till they then drove us back. It was a bit different than the usual Cedar Creek until I looked at the map and noticed it said "Cedar Mtn" I thought it was a typo till we found out that we had magically time warped not to Oct 1864, but August 1862. it was very surreal, and I don't know how the rest of the company felt but it was unusual being at Cedar Creek but fighting the Battle of Cedar Mt. As you probably know the 21st was pivotal at Cedar Mtn so the change in battles was fitting.

On Sat eve Greg cooked dinner and we enjoyed a company mess which is a nice touch rather than having a hot dog over at the Ruritan trailer. After dinner some beverages were enjoyed with Marcel bringing something homemade that seemed popular. John Ledford plays the harmonica and can sing a bit, so we had some music and singing which brought over Col. Morgan from the ANV as well as our friends from the 51st VA. I think it was the first-time people came to our fire and stayed while for entertainment! John and the Col. played the harmonicas, and we sang I think for at least a couple hours. Again, was it because it was Cedar Mtn? We will never know.....

Eventually we again hit the hay and most of stayed out under the stars a second night it was that pleasant. On Sunday Greg had breakfast for us again, and we had morning parade and I asked Major Austin if he might mention that our brother-in-arms Jack Alexander had passed away. He was good enough to do so and we had a moment of silence for Jack. Jack not being there was a big change, I have known him 33 years and will miss him greatly.

The afternoon battle was not quite as good as Saturday as we lost a few men but still it was a pretty day and since we somehow had transported back to Cedar Creek in 1864 all was right in the time warp world again.

After the battle we packed up and headed our separate ways till Gettysburg.

Gettysburg attendance was not high enough this year to march in the parade. We only had four members who could attend, with the First Sgt being a fifth if we were to march. As the numbers were short The Hansens, (is that a band?) Kendall Chapman and myself met up at Camp Hansen on Friday eve and then drove to Gettysburg on Sat morning to

watch the parade. Greg and Kendall were planning on staying the evening so had quarters arranged for Sat eve so we stayed in Gettysburg after the parade, toured Culp's Hill, the Cyclorama and a few other sites. Watching the parade verses being it it was a new experience and one I am glad we did, but next year I want to be marching again. It is not the same to watch after knowing the feeling of carrying the flag proudly down the streets of Gettysburg.

That is the report on the final events of the year. Next up will be the company meeting. I just got word that Longstreet's Corp meeting will be Jan 20th and we want to be after that, so I am looking at Feb 3rd or 10th for our meeting. If you can or cannot make one of those dates let the Sgt or myself know and maybe we can do the other weekend. We could even do the 17th so if you have a preference let us know, we have some time. Numbers are what we want, and I know the Hansens are going to a wedding toward the end of Jan. so the 10th may be the best for them.

Thank you for a good year, and I hope to see everyone (and many new recruits) in this next season.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Remember Jesus is the reason for the season.

Travis Clements

Capt. F. Co, 21st VA

### **1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant's Column**

Gentlemen,

I want to personally thank all of you who attended the celebration of life and sent letters of condolences to our family after the passing of my father. This being the first Thanksgiving and Christmas season without him has been bittersweet. The stories that I was able to hear of the impact my father made as a member of F Company as well as other activities he had been involved in helped the family to think fondly about his life. I appreciate the moment of silence that the Corps did at Cedar Creek and for those of you that have never experienced the loss of one of your comrades in arms, maybe you have developed a new understanding of what it may have been like for those men who had to push forward with the war after one of their own had fallen in battle.

As my father is no longer the treasurer, I have assumed his duties for the remainder of the season and to the next annual meeting. As I told you all at the last annual meeting

that I would be stepping aside as F Company's 1Sgt. That leaves two more executive vacancies that need to be filled. I encourage members that have not taken on a leadership role in the company before to contact the captain or myself with any interest you may have to fill these roles or others. The life blood of F Company depends on it.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy new year. Again, I thank you all for the wonderful memories. I look forward to upcoming events around the campfire and singing songs once again.

Sincerely,

Johnathan Alexander

1Sgt. F. Co, 21st VA



In Loving Memory of Jack Alexander

**Ode to Joe**

