



Vol. XVI. May/June 2017 Issue IV

This newsletter issue is combined for May and June w/report on Camp of Instruction; Clements wedding as well as cancelled events. A separate dispatch will be sent out shortly dealing w/upcoming On to Richmond (2-4 Jun 2017) as the planning for this event has been coming together at the last moment.

Captain's Column

I would like to thank everyone who made it to the Camp of Instruction. We had a good turnout of 14 guys which included the four new recruits. Most everyone came in Friday afternoon/evening. We got the tents set up and sleeping arrangements made. The forecast for the weekend was somewhat questionable if not threatening. We made it through Friday night without incident but with the usual camp comradery.

Saturday began well enough with a superb breakfast prepared by F Company's expert chef, Mark Riemer. This was followed by the company "pep talk" (so to speak) and then it was time for drill, drill, and more drill. After a haversack lunch we proceeded to the live fire portion of the schedule. We had a few glitches here because of issues with the live rounds and ammo. In fact we halted platoon firing competition because of them. Once back in camp, during the preparation and serving of supper meal the skies opened up for what turned out to be an extended period of rain which lasted throughout the night. Thank goodness for the tentage and the tarp that Private Greg Hanson provided for us although it took an engineering degree to put it up. (You had to be there.) Anyway, we stayed relatively dry during the course of the night.

In the morning the rain had pretty much stopped but everything was soaked and more rain was in the forecast. So after breakfast and a brief church service we decided to break camp. With the tents being as wet as they were we decided to leave most of them up to give them a chance to dry. Private Nick King and myself would come back later in the week to retrieve

them. So camp was cut short but at least we got in one good day of drill and now the new recruits can take the field with some degree of confidence.

With the completion of the COI, we have a lull in the schedule. We have no event in May so next up for us is the Road to Richmond reenactment. This is the first weekend in June, 2-4, and it is at Endview Plantation in the Newport News area. This will be our first major reenactment of the year so come prepared. The 1st Sergeant will fill you in with all the details and everything you need to know about the event.

In Company News: Please keep Eldridge and Nancy Firth in your prayers. Eldridge is our 2nd Sergeant and Nancy is his wife. Nancy fell and broke her wrist and shoulder. She has multiple breaks and faces a long healing process. Please pray the good Lord will them patience and endurance and speed the recovery as much as possible.

Well there it is for me. I will see everyone at Endview!

With kindest regards,
Captain Turley

1st Sergeant's Column

Camp of Instruction (21-23 Apr 2017)- As everyone who attended the COI is aware, weather proved to be the big factor in our training. Friday was clear and sunny which made set-up the camp an easy issue. I arrived in the afternoon w/two of our NEC members, Mark Riemer and Bob Gorgone. We worked on getting all the mess gear and our personal gear unloaded and into Fort as well as assisting Pvt King w/firewood and Pvt Hanson w/hay for bedding. Some fixed a supper meal in camp, but others of us went up the road to a little local German restaurant for our evening meal.

The weather report wasn't good, but by dawn the next morning we had a camp full of soldiers including Adams, the Alexander's; Brooks, Clements, Gorgone, the Hanson's; King, Riemer, Touart, Turley, Vice, and Villanueva. The new recruits found a whole new lot of material being thrown at them in drill, while veterans refreshed themselves on needed skills. While the weather held off, unfortunately, we encountered problems w/our ammunition during the live musket firing w/three fouled muskets which couldn't be cleared. We flooded the barrels w/water to kill the charge and ended the musket firing early to prevent any further fouled weapons. As a sidelight I took these muskets home w/me and had the muskets cleared by Gettysburg musket barrel maker Bob Hoyt which required removal of the breech plugs and driving out lodged bullet from the muzzle w/a iron rod and heavy hammer. As the Captain already pointed out as the cook prepared the evening meal of spare ribs, the sky began to open up w/everyone diving for cover. Pvt Greg Hanson saved the day by coming up w/a large canvas tarp and needed rope to get it up for us to "refuge" under, however, watching it going up was both laughable as well as painful to watch! Most everyone was able to stay relatively dry

while eating the hot evening meal which did improve morale. It continued to rain off and on throughout the night.

As the Captain noted in his report the morning weather report was poor, so we broke camp early. Pvt King proved to be a “life saver” by hooking up an open trailer to his four wheel drive truck, we were able to clear the Fort in two trips w/o getting stuck and move all our company and personal gear to parking area at the head of the roadway. Reloading all our gear, most of us were on the road by late morning.

This won't be the first or last time we've had to contend w/weather as a major factor in our training, but everyone's morale remained good and worked together to overcome weather related obstacles.

Cancelled Events- It was felt necessary by the Executive Committee to cancel our participation at the Battle of McDowell (5-7 May) and Battle of New Market (19-21 May) due to the fact that 4 soldiers or less signed up for these events.

Clements Wedding (13 May 2017)- Yes, Travis and Courtney tied the knot! F Co participated in their wedding at Port Republic, VA in the Shenandoah Valley w/a F Co uniformed honor guard consisting of the Alexander's; the Hanson's; Turley and Vice. Additionally Touart also attended w/his lady friend. The late afternoon wedding service was held at Bradburn Park in the very scenic Port Republic, a true CW site, w/reception being across the road at the Olde Towne Hall. The weather was excellent and the bride was lovely! There were around fifty persons in attendance w/an excellent reception following the wedding service including libations plus a nicely catered BBQ dinner. F Company's very best to the newly married couple!

On to Richmond (2-4 Jun 2017)- This event has been coming together at the last minute, so a separate information email will be sent shortly to those participating. This event is being put together w/an all volunteer re-enactor staff w/original scenarios so it's taken time to get it together. Remember this is not your typical reenactment as only those registered will be allowed on the field, that is, NO walk-on registrants are permitted due to logistical requirements.

Comments on Camp of Instruction from Two New Recruits- Two of our new recruits, Steve Adams and Jeremy Villanueva provided the following comments on their first experience w/F Co at the COI.

Private Steven Adams

The level of excitement leading up to the camp of instruction were very high. After the annual meeting I knew I had found something amazing. In the weeks after the meeting and leading up to the COI, I spent my days waiting for every shipment bringing me my next piece of gear. I was beside myself when I got the call to try on my uniform and my musket finally arrived. Every day my anticipation grew as the COI neared.

I was very excited and a little nervous, because at first I didn't know what to expect. But after a while in camp I felt right at home. I was astounded at the authenticity of the entire camp. From the sleeping arrangements to the food and all the way to the outhouse, I could feel the past coming alive all around me. I felt a sense of pride standing in the ranks of F Company learning drill and manual of arms. The shooting range was extremely helpful for me in furthering my knowledge of the era weapons. The discussions I was able to have with the more experienced shooters intrigued me even more.

The evenings in camp were quite the experience as well. Talking to members about experiences they've had with the company and singing songs around the campfire. Even when the rain poured down it could not put a damper on such amazing experience. I look forward to my first battle and many more adventures with F Company.

Private Jeremy Villanueva

Being a new comer to F Co. and being out of re-enacting for some time, I was apprehensive about joining any organization that I had only heard about through the website. This apprehension, however, proved to be unfounded as I was welcomed right away and immediately felt as if I was among friends. Each individual I met with was welcoming, helpful, and a historian whose one goal was to help you achieve what every re-enactor who passionately about the art seeks, authenticity in look and action. I could not be happier with the initial event and look forward to many more to come.

I expect that every F Company member appreciates the kind remarks expressed by Steve and Jeremy about their experience w/the company.

Your Comrade,
1st Sergeant Vice
F Co, 21st VA Infantry

Ode to Joe

