

# SWAMP ANGEL II NEWS

VOL 29, NO. 8

BUCKS COUNTY CIVIL WAR MUSEUM AND ROUND TABLE

JUL/SEPT. 2020

## NEWS AND NOTES

### CALENDER

**Cancelled and Closed:** The museum is closed for tours until further notice. The Executive Board does not anticipate it will open for several months at least. Our rooms are so small we can't keep the necessary spacing between visitors. We are going to take every precaution to keep docents and visitors safe. Our meetings with speakers are cancelled until further notice. **Notice of changes will go out in emails so please make sure we have your email address.**

Meetings are normally held the first Tuesday of each month at 7 pm at Doylestown Borough Hall, 57 W. Court Street unless otherwise noted.

The new parking garage across from the Museum is completed. At present, there is free parking in Doylestown for 3 hours at meters then you must move your car. When that ends, our understanding is that we will be able to park for free on the lower level of the new garage.

The planned 200th birthday celebration for W.W.H. Davis on July 25th is currently on hold. When the committee makes a decision an email will go out. We are working with the Doylestown Historical Society and Bucks County Historical Society on this.

Our membership renewal notices have been sent out. Please consider an extra donation. We do not receive any federal, state or local support money. Our year runs from June 30th to July 1st.

Thanks to Ron Rudy for a beautiful job repainting the exterior of the museum..

Thank you to Chelsea Daley for getting all the problems with Facebook and our web presence worked out. Please take a look. Jim Donovan will help keep an eye on postings.

## Message from the President

This will be my last Presidents Message as my two-year term is ending this month. It's hard to reflect on the past two years with everything that is happening in the world. I would be remiss if I did not thank all the volunteers, members, docents and board members who have made my job as president easier. You are what keeps our group viable and robust.

We had a very active schedule of events for this year, many great speakers scheduled and a lot of activity at the museum. The virus has forced us to re-schedule many events. We cancelled the July speaker at the Boro Hall and will communicate to everyone if we are having an August meeting. The museum continues to remain closed and we hope for an opening with strict guidelines in August or September.

Riots, demonstrations, political divisiveness, strong divided sentiments on the current president and a pandemic can feel overwhelming. Regardless of where you are on the political spectrum, we can learn much from the past (the previous sentence could describe the 1860's) but I ask everyone to learn from history, try and see the other person's view and please wear a mask.

Thanks again, it was my pleasure being President these past two years.

Jim Damon

THANK YOU, JIM. JOB WELL DONE!



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## LIFE OF A SOLDIER IN THE CIVIL WAR

by Marilyn Becker

When young men went into the service during the Civil War, all sorts of new ways of life confronted them. Many did not know how to take care of themselves in regards to discipline and regimentation, cooking the rations, maintaining their weapon and avoiding disease which caused many deaths and sickness in camp. Patriotism, adventure, glory and excitement drove them to volunteer. Four out of five were ages 18 to 29. If asked, some of the younger ones, ages 15 or 16, would reply yes they were over eighteen as they had printed the number 18 on paper and stuck it in their shoes.

Camp time consisted of drilling and marching, in order to turn these young and some older farmers and others of many different occupations, into good soldiers. Drilling was an important tool to form these men into disciplined troops and make them able to master the maneuvers so that they could overcome the enemy. Drilling in fact helped determine the outcome of success or failure on the battlefield. The guide used was Rifle and Infantry Tactics by William Hardee.

When the soldiers were not drilling in camp, card playing, letter writing, gambling, and listening to music of the regimental bands, helped to relieve their boredom. Gambling was not allowed, but soldiers would bet on cock-fights, ball games, wrestling matches, horse races, boxing matches, and just about anything else. Favorite games were dice, card games, and poker. Before battle, the soldiers would throw dice and decks of cards to the roadside. If they did not make it through battle, they didn't want to have these items found on their bodies.

Humor played a role in their lives also. They also adopted dogs as mascots. One such was a bull terrier named Jack. He was a favorite with the 102<sup>nd</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry who bought him a \$75 collar. When Jack died after a long time of service, he was given a funeral which many persons attended.

Military bands helped to keep morale up. Some songs were not allowed to be played because they could affect the morale of the soldier such as "Home Sweet Home" and "Auld Lang Syne." When not playing for parades or the soldiers, the band members became stretcher bearers or helped the surgeons in the field hospitals.

Food was not necessarily as good as home cooking for the soldiers. Having to march for days did not lend itself to the best meals. If the soldiers could forage, then meals were good, but often it was hardtack, rotten meat, and some kind of coffee, often with more water than coffee in the mixture. The soldiers took every opportunity to have a cup of coffee, making their fires first thing at night so they could have a cup of coffee. Fresh fruits and vegetables were often missing which led to scurvy. It seemed that everything was fried which did not help their general health. Sutlers sometimes provided items, but often overcharged the troops. Molasses cookies were a favorite item that the sutlers sold to the troops.

The life of a soldier was guided by bugle calls. The first in summer was at 5 a.m. and in winter at 6:00 a.m. The first call meant Reveille-rise and shine. The next call was Assembly and to form ranks for the first of 3 roll calls which were held during the day. Many other calls signaled other duties the soldiers faced. At 10 p.m., "Taps" meant lights out.

(continued on page 4)



1. What line of latitude was used for the Missouri Compromise?

- A. 26-30°N      C. 36-30°N  
B. 32-30°N      D. 40-30°N

2. What did the Missouri Compromise primarily state?

- A. Missouri was north of the compromised line, so it was given a special status as a slave state.  
B. Missourians would be able to vote on whether or not to allow slavery.  
C. Both Missouri and Kansas would be considered "sovereign states" in which they would vote yes or no to slavery  
D. Missouri would be admitted as a slave state as long as Maine could be a free state.

3. Speaking of the Compromise of 1850, where was slavery prohibited?

- A. District of Columbia      C. Texas  
B. Delaware      D. Virginia

4. Who was a hero in the North but a villain in the South in 1858?

- A. John Brown      C. Frederick Douglas  
B. Stephen Douglas      D. Abe Lincoln

5. What did the Fugitive Slave Act state?

- A. Runaway slaves could be kept  
B. Runaway slaves had to be returned to their rightful masters  
C. Runaway slaves were granted freedom  
D. Runaway slaves had the right to beat their masters if they came after them.

Answers on page 6



### Military Records, Returns Documents & Photos

Finding military records about your war hero can provide valuable details you never knew before. Many records on Fold3 feature multiple pages about the same individual, providing priceless information.

**FREE ACCESS AT THE MUSEUM LIBRARY!**

## **“I CAME OUT SAFE WITH A HOLE IN MY CAP”**

### **The 104th Pennsylvania at Seven Pines**

by Michael Campbell

The morning of May 31, 1862 found the 104th PA “unusually quiet.” According to their Colonel, W.W.H. Davis, the men were “lolling in the shade,” and “discussing the campaign... we did not expect a battle.” Advanced beyond Seven Pines in order to hold a large clearing south of the Richmond and York River Railroad, the men of the 104th and their IV Corps comrades waited on lunch and suffered in the Virginia heat. For two months the Army of the Potomac had toiled and miled its way up the Virginia Peninsula towards Richmond. So far today, aside from the lazy exchange of artillery, the situation was no different. “The day was clear and sultry... the country was flooded,” Davis wrote. “I received an order to march the Regiment nearer the Williamsburg Road to support a battery. This was but a short distance, and we formed on the battery’s right.” As the sun climbed past overhead the artillery duel swelled to a cannonade. “We were next ordered to advance 200 yards into a clearing... there was timber in front and nearly all around us... on our right and rear all movements were obscured by bushes and timber.” “Soon after forming our line in the clearing, the enemy was seen in the edge of the timber in front, and began coming out in great numbers, firing as they advanced. The regiment stood in line... the men were restive... I ordered them to load... the 104th had the honor of delivering the first fire... 400 bullets were discharged into the masses of the enemy in our front. This announced to the Army of the Potomac that the battle was on.”

The men attacking the 104th were soldiers of General Samuel Garland’s brigade, D.H. Hill’s division, two regiments each of North Carolinians and Virginians, previously under the command of a wounded Jubal Early. Aligning perpendicular to the railroad, Garland pushed east through the woods north of the Williamsburg Road, driving Federal pickets before him to the edge of the clearing. Here he came under artillery fire from Union guns arrayed in depth along the Williamsburg Road. “The Balls were flying around us as thick as hale all the time,” wrote Pvt. Leonidas Torrence of the 23rd North Carolina. Their flanks exposed without support - advancing Confederate brigades were behind schedule - Garland’s men came under fire from a detachment of the 11th Maine, which had come into line on the 104th’s right flank. “The action became general,” Davis wrote, “the fire grew hotter and hotter... we had now been under fire for more than an hour... the men stood up to their bloody work as cheerfully as on dress parade.” But Confederate reinforcements would soon join the fight.

After clearing a Union abatis at the edge of the timber - Hill’s third brigade under Robert Rodes was still lost in White Oak Swamp - General George B. Anderson’s brigade, led by the 27th Georgia, came down hard on Davis’ right, scattering the Pine Tree State soldiers and uncovering the 9 Mile Road in their rear. “At this crisis,” Davis wrote, “the enemy was pressing us in front and on the flank and threatened the battery we were supporting. The men were ordered to fix bayonets and charge. They sprang forward, with a tremendous yell, about 100 yards, across a piece of ground covered with low bushes.” Halting by a “worm fence... the four right companies, including the color company, springing over the fence... the color-bearers planting the flags in the soft ground, and laying down by them. Fire was reopened and the enemy checked for a short time... it was foolhardy but it had the desired effect.” This “desired effect” brought the battle to its bloody climax. The 23rd NC would suffer 169 casualties in the fight. “It did not look like there was a chance for a man to go through... without being hit,” Pvt Torrence would recall.

By now the 104th, “had been in action nearly three hours... many men had fallen... the enemy was already shooting down our battery horses some distance in the rear.” In the “confusion...a flag was sticking in the ground on the enemy’s side of the fence, the sergeant having been shot through the chest and had gone to the rear.” “The enemy,” Davis reported, “made a bold effort to capture it. I ordered those nearest not to retire without bringing the flag, when Major Gries, Orderly Sergeant Myers, and Color Sergeant Pursell sprang for it... all were wounded... the major dying a few days afterwards.” “Pursell” - he would be awarded the Medal of Honor in 1894 for his actions - “had already secured his own flag, with it in his hand, jumped over the fence, seized the other and pulled it from the ground... As Pursell mounted the fence to return... he was hit by two bullets, a third going through his blouse... and knocked over, carrying the flags with him. Regaining his feet, he handed one flag to Sergeant Myers and started for the rear with the other, but, becoming faint from loss of blood he gave it to Corporal Michener, who brought it off in safety.”

By then the retreat had become a rout. Emerging from White Oak Swamp on Garland’s right, Rodes’ brigade - (continued p. 4)

cont. from p. 3

the 6th Alabama, under Col. John B. Gordon, in the lead-swept the Federals off the edge of the clearing and back on their supports. "There was no order to retire," Davis remembered, "the men were literally pushed back by a the superior force of the enemy.

Funneling south onto the Williamsburg Road, the 104th joined the stampede rushing east towards Seven Pines. Amidst the cross-fire, company commanders frantically pleaded for a last-ditch rally around the artillery reserve, but the artillery chief was struck down commanding the front and his body abandoned by his panicked cannoneers, along with six guns. The jubilant Confederates quickly brought up batteries and began shelling Union forward positions, but the 104th was in no mood for rallying. Fleeing past fortifications they had sallied forth from that morning, some would stop and fight on with the rearguard on the outskirts of Seven Pines. Most would not.

Davis would never forget those moments, "A number of our wounded men were left on the field... Lieutenant McDowell was killed at this time... and was left lying there. He was stripped by the enemy." Lt. Ashenfelter spent the night in a "cabin in the woods... shot in the ankle." All the "camp equipment, baggage and personal effects of the officers and men fell into the enemy's hands." The division in full flight, Third Corps reinforcements were forced to fix bayonets in order to clear the road of stragglers. Davis would lament, "The loss of comrades and the reaction of the great mental and physical strain had a very depressing effect... the depression was aggravated by the bad weather."

Of the "500 present for duty," that day, "10 officers and 166 enlisted men were killed or wounded, and 61 captured on the picket line." "About sundown the regiment assembled at the rifle pits near the field hospital a mile in rear of where the battle began. It required considerable effort to be cheerful... the battle was now over - the weary lay down to rest and the wounded to die." In the sultry darkness, depression, like suffocating humidity, lingered; but soon news stirred the camp that scattered the anguish, leaving a fervent, newfound pride in its place: "Both flags were delivered to the regiment that evening after the battle and received the most cordial welcome."

Sources: *The Scranton Tribune*

*The Wilkes-Barre Semi-Weekly Republican*

To the Gates of Richmond: The Peninsular Campaign-Sears

The History of the 104th PA

A Story of One Regiment, the 11th Maine Volunteers

cont. from p. 2

Soldiers prayed to God to help their armies gain victory. Chaplains were important and religion flourished, especially in the South. Jefferson Davis, Confederate President, became a Christian during the war. Chalfont Borough's St. James' Lutheran pastor left the church to become a chaplain in the 12th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers.

Pay at the start of the war was \$11 per month for a Union private. Black Union privates were paid \$10 a month. Musicians received \$12 a month, corporals \$13, sergeants \$17, 1<sup>st</sup> sergeants \$20, and a sergeant major \$21. Confederates soldiers hired slaves to work on fortifications, but paid the \$30 to their owners. By May 1864, The Union privates' pay was \$16. Confederate privates were receiving \$18. By 1864, the Confederate economy was poor and a pair of shoes cost them \$125. Confederate officers received better pay: Confederate - 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.-\$80, generals received \$ 500 plus an additional 100 each month if a commanding general, and another \$50 for field service. Bonuses were paid for enlistments or reenlistments. Often the men were enlisted for quite a while before receiving pay. This led to some desertions because the men were supporting farms and their families were suffering due to no income.

Foremost in thoughts of a soldier during this civil strife was that it was a real possibility that he could die. Instead of a short war starting with ninety day enlistments, the soldiers found a long one, and they had four years to contemplate the idea. Up until this time, the men had thought that their death would take place at home surrounded by family. There they would follow the Good Death: die among family with a declaration of faith and words of comfort. Instead, they were absent from home and could die without anyone at home knowing. Soldiers attempted to deal with this idea by pinning their names to their clothes and asking comrades to inform family, since at that time identifying dog tags were not used. Declarations of faith were necessary to the belief in eternity which comrades would report to the families and this would give the soldier's family comfort when they could not be there with their loved ones.

This was a terrible war, but then again, any war is horrible. As General Sherman said, "War is Hell."

Sources: Civil War Soldier Reed Mitchell

The Fighting Men of the Civil War William Davis

"This is My Last Letter to You" Drew Gilpin Faust



## THE KANSAS JAYHAWK-MORE THAN A MASCOT

by Bill Hamill

As a college basketball fan, partial to Wake Forest and Villanova, I have always tried to watch ESPN when the University of Kansas was playing a game. Their home court is the Phog Allen Fieldhouse, that is referred to as “the Cathedral of Basketball” It is an old time facility, and on game day, the crowd atmosphere is electric and intense. It’s a place that I really want to visit some time soon.

The University of Kansas mascot is a Jayhawk. You cannot miss him, as his likeness is right on the basketball court. A big yellow billed bird, it has bright blue feathers and a perky red head. He appears to be a feisty bird and maybe even have a “chip on his shoulder.” You better beware. The University of Kansas website describes the Jayhawk as a fanciful combination of the blue jay and the sparrow hawk.

During the Civil War I learned, the Kansas Jayhawk had a different connotation, depending on what side you supported during the conflict. The Jayhawk was considered either a hero or a thief. Jayhawk first appeared in the 1850’s during the territorial conflict between anti-slavery Kansas and pro-slavery Missouri. Two free state supporters, James Montgomery and Charles “Doc” Jennison, said that the Jayhawker fights against “pro-slavery hellhounds” while in another version, the Jayhawk is a plunderer, making off with livestock and produce from Missouri farms.

Another version of the origin of the Jayhawk, is that it’s said to be an Irish bird, known for its fierceness. The name may have originated with an Irish immigrant, named Patrick Devlin, a soldier who fought with Doc Jennison. Devlin described it as a fierce bird from “ould Oireland” that tormented its prey.

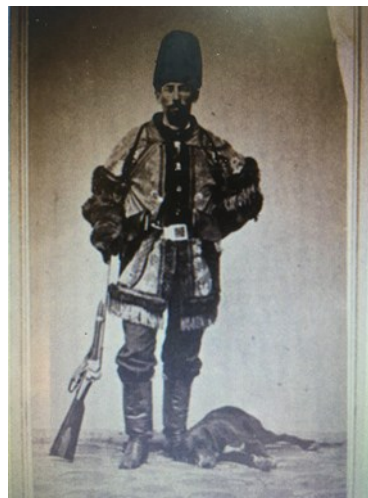
In November, the Round Table will be discussing Stark Mad Abolitionists by Robert Sutton. A book recommended by George Hoffman, it covers the violent and bloody struggle of the border wars over slavery in the 1850’s and 1860’s in Kansas and Missouri. Now, this is a significant part of the Civil War that I really did not know much about. For whatever reason, I skipped over reading and understanding this part of the struggle. I was familiar with Lawrence, Kansas, Quantrill’s Raiders, and the slavery issues, but that is about all that I knew. The book we will discuss will give us a better understanding about this time and even more insight into the Kansas Jayhawk.

The most notable leader of the Kansas Jayhawks was Doc Jennison. A staunch abolitionist, Jennison moved to Kansas territory in 1847, and became a member of James Montgomery’s anti-slavery guerilla band.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Jennison received a command in the Kansas militia and later was made a colonel in the 7th Kansas Cavalry, known as the “Independent Mounted Kansas Jayhawkers.” They were a ruthless and violent force on the Kansas-Missouri border. There was nothing that they would not do. The name Jennison and his Jayhawks were feared by all pro-slavery supporters. Jennison liked to boast that Missouri mothers hushed their children to sleep with his name.

The cavalry unit consisted mostly of anti-slavery soldiers. In the fall of 1861, its primary activities were fighting with Confederate guerillas and protecting wagon trains. Later, they began to retaliate against Missouri towns, suspected of supporting pro-slavery groups. Villages in the Pleasant Hill area were completely destroyed as pay-back for attacking a Union wagon train. The Jayhawk troops would carry off all the livestock, food, valuables as well as the slaves. Farms were burned, homes looted and set on fire.

In particular, the town of Osceola, MS was plundered and burned to the ground in September 1861. Over 200



Charles “Doc” Jennison

slaves were freed in an effort to push out pro-slavery elements. The Kansas Jayhawkers were getting quite a reputation. The burning and sacking of Osceola was the most significant reason for William Quantrill’s raid and destruction of Lawrence, Kansas.

Lawrence, Kansas is the home of the University of Kansas. For the 150th anniversary of the burning and destruction of Osceola, Missouri, the townsfolk asked the university to remove the Jayhawk as their mascot. The University refused.

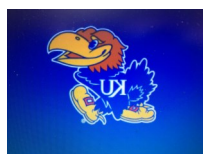
(continued p. 6)



cont. from p. 5

Jennison's Jayhawkers were a rough and forbidding group. The historian of the 7th, Stephen Starr, claims "no other regiment in the Union Army had so bad a reputation" or "worked so diligently to deserve it." The 7th Kansas brushed off their behavior claiming that they were fighting guerillas who were receiving support from the civilian population. Historian Clay Mountcastle states that "the use of military force for the sole purpose of punishment and retribution eventually became accepted practice, in all theaters of the war."

Nicole Etcheson, Jennison Jayhawkers Disunion New York Times



## Did You Know...?

May 1854 --The Kansas-Nebraska Act is passed by Congress. Reaction is swift and fierce. Anti-slavery Northern congressmen are outraged because the bill potentially opens up Northern territories to slavery. Furthermore, the bill repeals the Missouri Compromise, which for 30 years has preserved the balance of power between the North and South.

January 8, 1862 -- The battle of Roan's Tan Yard, Missouri. After days of reconnaissance, Union forces attack and rout a Confederate camp at Silver Creek in Randolph County.

September 18, 1862 -- In Missouri at the Massacre of Palmyra ten Confederate prisoners are executed in retaliation for the presumed murder of a local Union man.

September 27, 1864 -- The battle of Fort Davidson, Missouri takes place. A Confederate army aiming to capture St. Louis pushes federal troops into Fort Davidson. Although the fort is eventually evacuated, the Confederates lose too many men and too much time to its capture. The Civil War-Day by Day



Happy 200th Birthday  
Colonel Davis

## George's Book Corner

If we meet in November, the book will be Stark Mad Abolitionists. The book for a future book discussion will be The Peace That Almost Was by Mark Tooley. The book is available from Edward Hamilton Books or Amazon.

A new book he just read that he recommends is The Cornfield by David Welker which is about the battle of Sharpsburg (Antietam to most of us.) It is currently only in hardback, expensive form.

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### ANSWERS TO READER CHALLENGE

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1) C | 3) A | 5) B |
| 2) A | 4) A |      |

## SWAMP ANGEL II NEWS

Newsletter of the

BUCKS COUNTY CIVIL WAR MUSEUM/ROUND TABLE

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