

The Gray Line News



High Bridge



High Bridge Camp #1581

April 2024

Sons of Confederate Veterans

Camp Commander: Whit Morris

1st LT. Commander: Chris Burks

2nd LT Commander: Don Reynolds

3rd LT. Commander: Zach Morris

Treasurer: Shane Newcombe

Adjutant: Dan Johnson

Chaplain: Ned May

Judge Advocate: Kenny Barnard

Quartermaster / Historian: Tom Haake

Sargent at Arms: Trey Capps

Surgeon: Gene Kirkman

Camp Sutler: Greg Finn



“DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF OUR SOUTHERN HERITAGE”



APRIL IS CONFEDERATE HISTORY MONTH!!!!!!!



COMMANDERS CORNER:

Dear Compatriots,

It has been 2 years since I wrote the below intro to our newsletter, and the fight continues. I said then that there would be “pleas and intimidation for its removal” but I had no idea at the time what lengths people would go to try and have this memorial removed. Another court case will be held April 9th at 10 AM in Farmville. If at all possible, I hope you can be there to show your support.

I can't think of a better way to celebrate Confederate History and Heritage month, than raising a battle

flag in memory of those who gave their all fighting for their rights and in defense of their homes and homeland. In partnership with The Virginia Flaggers, that's exactly what we did in Farmville on Saturday April 2nd. It is only fitting that a soldier's flag stands in memory of the brave warriors who for fought and died under the shadow of that same flag. If you haven't seen it, please take a drive on 460 West from Rice toward Farmville and look to your right before the first Farmville exit – you can't miss!

We all know there are those who have been brainwashed, and outright lied to, that will see this memorial as symbol of racism and hate. We also know there will be pleas and intimidation for its removal. It takes great courage in today's world to put up such a memorial on your property, especially if you own a local business. If you know the landowner, Carolyn Bowman, please take a moment to tell her thank you for taking a stand and supporting her business. May we never forget the sacrifices made by our forefathers who bravely stood for their freedoms and fought tirelessly to defend their home!

Let's pack the courtroom!

Deo Vin dice

Whit Morris

Battles in April 1863

Apr. 7 th	SC	Battle of Charleston Harbor	Apr. 17 th	LA	Battle of Vermillion Bayou
Apr. 10 th	TENN	Battle of Franklin	Apr. 26 th	MO	Battle of Girardeau
Apr. 11 th	VA	Battle of Suffolk (Ft. Huger)	Apr. 29 th	MISS	Battle of Grand Gulf
Apr 11 th	VA	Battle of Suffolk (Norfleet House)	Apr. 29 th	MISS	Battle of Snyders Bluff
Apr. 12 th	LA	Battle of Fort Bisland	Apr. 30 th	ALA	Battle of Day's Gap
Apr. 14 th	LA	Battle of Irish Bend	Apr. 30 th	VA	Battle of Chancellorsville

Welcome New Members!!!!!!

It is always great to Welcome new members to our camp! Welcome to Mark Condrey who is shown being sworn in by Chaplain Ned May and Commander Whit Morris at our March meeting. Please welcome him at our next meeting!



Roadside Clean-up 3/30/2024

We had to use our rain date for our roadside cleanup, as the weather on 3/23 did not cooperate until late afternoon on that day. Needless to say, we had 9 members report for duty and the effort went quickly from Marshalls Crossroads to Route 307 on Saylor's Creek Road. Thanks to all that pitched in on this effort!



WSVS and WVHL Confederate History Months Ads

WSVS 97.1 FM & 800AM the Classic Country station in Crewe, Virginia and WVHL Kick'en Country, 92.9 FM out of Farmville, Virginia are running our camp ads for Confederate History Month. These ads will specifically reference our camp so tune in and listen for them!

The Last Salute of the Army of Northern Virginia

Note from the Editor.....Many of you that have seen the movie Gettysburg remember Joshua Chamberlain from his performance there, however he was a large part of the Appomattox Campaign which this article covers. I hope you enjoy the article.....



General Joshua L. Chamberlain photographed by Matthew Brady. *Library of Congress*
The following is an article which provides General Joshua Chamberlain's comments and memories concerning the Army of Northern Virginia's Surrender at Appomattox.

It is an astounding fact that among the thousands of official documents bearing upon the Civil war in the National Archives at Washington there is absolutely nothing dealing with one of the most dramatic features of the great four years' internal struggle--the actual ceremonies attendant upon the formal surrender by General Lee's army of all Confederate property in their possession at Appomattox Courthouse thirty-six years ago. When General Lee surrendered to General Grant, April 9th, 1865, the war was virtually over, but of the details of the surrender, the pathetic sadness on the one side, the jubilant satisfaction on the other, and, more particularly of the precise arrangements, the mode of procedure and the Northern army officer whose duty it became to take charge of the rebel arms and the rebel battle flags as they were given up--of all this our official war records tell not a word.

Why this is so the chief actor in the closing scene of the bloody drama, General Joshua L. Chamberlain, of Brunswick, Me., set forth in a pithy sentence to a *Boston Journal* writer the other night: "The war was over when Lee signed the terms of surrender, and with the closing of the war all official record-writing ceased." And just as it is true that there are no official records bearing upon this notable surrender scene, so also is it true that there are no official records describing the really remarkable disbandment of the Southern military and its

departure in fragments for home. Only recently, in fact, has this matter been treated of, and that by a magazine almost four decades after the event!

Truly, some of the most absorbing history is, in the minting, slow quite beyond belief. Passing strange it seems almost that upon a writer of a generation which has no intimate connection with the Civil war should devolve the not unpleasant, nor in the light of facts, ill-timed, task of setting down in complete detail that story which long ago should have had a full official telling.

In that great national tragedy of the Civil war there has been for years much effort, always in a more or less unostentatious and secretive way, to eliminate the merit which was due to prominent actors. It has been said recurrently that officers other than the actual one who commanded on the impressive occasion, and, to cite one case, a general officer, who, from 1863, was never connected with the Army of the Potomac, was frequently banqueted and toasted as the soldier who received the surrender of General Robert E. Lee. This was, to be sure, an unfair acceptance, but it was accepted in silence, and even at later times assented to in subsequent remarks. But, be it said, such pretense of merit deserves and surely ought to receive the censure of every loyal comrade.

The man who did command the Union soldiery that stood immovable for hours near Appomattox Courthouse on that eventful day while Rebel arms and colors nodded "conquered" has never sounded in public or in private his own acclaim. Major-General Joshua L. Chamberlain, of Maine, he was in the old days, and still he bears that honorable title.

As a conspicuous New Englander whose life has been an integral part of the educational history of his beloved Pine Tree State, which he has represented as Governor as one of the legislators, as President of Bowdoin College, and particularly as a soldier, his long and eventful life has come to be well known to the people of the entire country--his life excepting that part he played in the last act of the war.

This is somewhat in detail the entire story as summarized by General Chamberlain:

"The **Battle of Five Forks**, which occurred on the 1st of April, 1865, served to prove to General Grant the fact which General 'Phil' Sheridan had advanced that the cutting of railroad lines between Petersburg and the South had made exceedingly difficult, if not practically impossible, the provisioning of the Confederate army, and that the departure of that command and its march toward Lynchburg might soon be expected.

"The victory of Fire Forks was so complete in every way as to wholly paralyze General Lee's plan for further delay, and it is not too much to say that the decision was at once made for the western movement of the Army of Northern Virginia toward a new supply base.

The battle of Sailor's Creek, with Ewell's surrender, and that of Farmville, followed quickly after, the Confederates being hard pressed on their left flank, and for them there was little rest owing to the continual hounding by Sheridan's forces which seemed quite eager for constant combat.

"The Fifth Army Corps had been detailed to work with Sheridan's cavalry division. The subsequent relief of General Warren is a matter of history, which there is no need of repeating.

"General Griffin succeeded to command, and aided by the 6th, the 2d, and portions of the Army of the James, with other corps as fast as they could get to the scene, the military movements of that time form some of the most absorbing chapters of the Civil War which history has placed on record. Since the approach to Appomattox--for a hundred miles or more along this stream there had been terrible fighting--brought the head of each army very frequently in view, the strange spectacle of one army pressing with all energy in pursuit, while its antagonist was using its best efforts to get away and reach its delayed base of supplies, was presented to both sides.

"On the terrible march to Appomattox Courthouse the Federal troops were ever shrouded in smoke and dust, and the rattle of firearms and the heavy roar of artillery told plainly of the intense scene which threatened to bring on yet one more general engagement.

"Then came a moment which to me, at least, was more thrilling than any that had gone before. As we were hurrying on in response to Sheridan's hastily scribbled note for aid, an orderly with still another command from 'Little Phil' came upon our bedraggled column, that of the 1st Division of the Fifth Army Corps, just as we were passing a road leading into the woods. In the name of Sheridan, I was ordered to turn aside from the column of march, without waiting for orders through the regular channels, and to get to his relief.

"The orderly said in a voice of greatest excitement that the Confederate infantry was pressing upon Sheridan with a weight so terrible that his cavalry alone could not long oppose it.

"I turned instantly into the side road by which the messenger had come, and took up the 'double-quick,' having spared just time enough to send to General Gregory an order to follow me with his brigade.

"In good season we reached the field where the fight was going on. Our cavalry had even then been driven to the very verge of the field by the old 'Stonewall' Corps. Swinging rapidly into action the first line was sent forward in partial skirmish order, followed by the main lines, the 1st and 2d brigades. Once, for some unknown reason, I was ordered back, but in the impetuosity of youth and the heat of conflict, I pushed on, for it seemed to me to be a momentous hour. We fought like demons across that field and up that bristling hill. They told us we would expose ourselves to the full fire of the Confederate artillery once we gained the crest, but push on we did, past the stone wall behind which the 'Stonewall Corps' had hidden, driving them back to the crest of the ridge, down over it, and away.

"We were gathering our forces for a last final dash upon the enemy. From the summit of the hill we could see on the opposite ridge a full mile across the valley the dark blotches of the Confederate infantry drawn up in line of battle; the blocks of cavalry further to our right, and lower down more cavalry, detached, running hither and thither as if uncertain just what to do.

"In the valley, where flowed the now narrow Appomattox, along whose banks we had fought for weary miles, was a perfect swarm of moving men, animals, and wagons, wandering apparently aimlessly about, without definite precision. The river sides were trodden to a muck by the nervous mass. It was a picture which words can scarcely describe.

"As we looked from our position, we saw of a sudden a couple of men ride out from the extreme left of the Confederate line, and even as we looked the glorious white of a flag of truce met our vision. At that time, having routed the Confederate forces on the hill, my brigade was left alone by Sheridan's cavalry, which had gone to the right to take the enemy in the flank.

"I was on the right of the line as we stood at the crest of the hill. Near by us was the red Maltese cross of the Hospital Corps, and straight toward this the two riders, one with the white flag, came.

"When the men arrived, the one who carried the flag drew up before me, and, saluting with a rather stiff air--it was a strained occasion --informed me that he had been sent to beg a cessation of hostilities until General Lee could be heard from. Lee was even then said to be making a wide detour in the hope of attacking our forces from the rear. The officer who bore the flag was a member of the Confederate General Gordon's staff, but the message came to me in the name of General Longstreet.

"At that time the command had devolved upon General Ord, and I informed the officer with the flag--which was, by the way, a towel of such cleanliness that I was then, as now, amazed that such a one could be found in the entire Rebel army--that he must needs proceed along to our left, where General Ord was stationed. With another abjectly stiff salute the officer with his milk-white banner galloped away down our line.

"It was subsequently learned that General Ord was situated some distance away at my left with his troops of the Army of the James, comprising Gibbon's Second Army Corps and a division of the Twenty-fifth Army Corps. His line quite stretched across the Lynchburg road, or 'pike,' as we called it then.

"Well, as I have said, the flag of truce was sent to Ord, and not long afterward came the command to cease firing. The truce lasted until 4 o'clock that afternoon. At that time our troops had just barely resumed the positions they had originally occupied when the flag came in. They were expecting momentarily to be attacked again, and were well prepared, yes, eager, for a continuance of the battle.

"And just then the glad news came that General Lee had surrendered. Shortly after that we saw pass before us that sturdy Rebel leader, accompanied by an orderly. He was dressed in the brilliant trappings of a Confederate army officer, and looked every inch the soldier that he was. A few moments after that our own beloved leader, General Grant, also accompanied by an orderly, came riding by. How different he was in appearance from the conquered hero. The one gay with the trappings of his army, the other wearing an open blouse, a slouch hat, trousers tucked into heavy, mud-stained boots, and with only the four tarnished golden stars to indicate his office! They passed us by and went to the house where were arranged the final terms of surrender. That work done neither leader staid long with his command, the one hurrying one way, the other another.

"That night we slept as we had not slept in four years. There was, of course, a great deal of unrestrained jubilation, but it did not call for much of that to be a sufficiency, and before long the camp over which peace after strife had settled was sleeping with no fear of a night alarm. We awoke next morning to find the Confederates peering down into our faces, and involuntarily reached for our arms, but once the recollections of the previous day's stirring events came crowding back to mind, all fear fled, and the boys in blue were soon commingling freely with the boys in gray, exchanging compliments, pipes, tobacco, knives and souvenirs."

In the last days of fighting, which ended in Lee's surrender, General Chamberlain was wounded twice. That his service was gallant in the extreme may be judged when it is told that both General Sheridan and General Grant commended him personally. This the General cared to dwell on but little. But when it came to describing the final scenes of the war, the gray-haired army leader grew ardent with enthusiasm for his subject:

"On that night, the 10th of April, in 1865, I was commanding the 5th Army Corps," he said. "It was just about midnight when a message came to me to report to headquarters.

"I went thither directly and found assembled in the tent two of the three senior officers whom General Grant had selected to superintend the paroles and to look after the transfer of property and to attend to the final details of General Lee's surrender. These were General Griffin of the 5th Army Corps and General Gibbon of the 24th. The other commissioner, General Merritt of the cavalry, was not there. The articles of capitulation had been signed previously and it had come to the mere matter of formally settling the details of the surrender. The two officers told me that General Lee had started for Richmond, and that our leader, General Grant, was well on his way to his own headquarters at City Point, so called, in Virginia. I was also told that General Grant had decided to have a formal ceremony with a parade at the time of laying down of arms. A representative body of Union troops was to be drawn up in battle array at Appomattox Courthouse, and past this Northern delegation were to march the entire Confederate Army, both officers and men, with their arms and colors, exactly as in actual service, and to lay down these arms and colors, as well as whatever other property belonged to the Rebel army, before our men.

"I was told, furthermore, that General Grant had appointed me to take charge of this parade and to receive the formal surrender of the guns and flags. Pursuant to these orders, I drew up my brigade at the courthouse along the highway leading to Lynchburg. This was very early on the morning of the 12th of April.

"The Confederates were stationed on the hill beyond the valley and my brigade, the 3rd, had a position across that valley on another hill, so that each body of soldiers could see the other. My men were all veterans, the brigade being that which had fired the first shot at Yorktown at the beginning of the war. Their banners were inscribed with all the battles of the army of the Potomac from the first clear through the long list down to the last.

"In the course of those four eventful years the makeup of the brigade had naturally changed considerably, for there had been not alone changes of men, but consolidations of regiments as well. Yet the prestige of that history made a remarkably strong *esprit du corps*.

"In that Third Brigade line there were regiments representing the States of Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, regiments which had been through the entire war. The Bay State veterans had the right of line down the village street. This was the 32d Massachusetts Regiment, with some members of the 9th, 18th, and 22d Regiments. Next in order came the First Maine Sharpshooters, the 20th Regiment, and some of the 2d. There were also the First Michigan Sharpshooters, the 1st and 16th Regiments, and some men of the 4th. Pennsylvania was represented by the 83d, the 91st, the 118th, and the 155th. In the other two brigades were: First Brigade, 198th Pennsylvania, and 185th New York; in the Second Brigade, the 187th, 188th, and 189th New York.

"The First and Second Brigades were with me then, because I had previously commanded them and they had been very courteously sent me at my request by my corps and division commanders.

"The arrangement of the soldiery was as follows: The Third Brigade on one side of the street in line of battle; the Second, known as Gregory's, in the rear, and across the street, facing the Third; the First Brigade also in line of battle.

"Having thus formed, the brigades standing at 'order arms,' the head of the Confederate column, General Gordon in command, and the old 'Stonewall' Jackson Brigade leading, started down into the valley which lay between us, and approached our lines. With my staff I was on the extreme right of the line, mounted on horseback, and in a position nearest the Rebel soldiers who were approaching our right.

"Ah, but it was a most impressive sight, a most striking picture, to see that whole army in motion to lay down the symbols of war and strife, that army which had fought for four terrible years after a fashion but infrequently known in war.

"At such a time and under such conditions I thought it eminently fitting to show some token of our feeling, and I therefore instructed my subordinate officers to come to the position of 'salute' in the manual of arms as each body of the Confederates passed before us.

"It was not a 'present arms,' however, not a 'present,' which then as now was the highest possible honor to be paid even to a president. It was the 'carry arms,' as it was then known, with musket held by the right hand and perpendicular to the shoulder. I may best describe it as a marching salute in review.

"When General Gordon came opposite me, I had the bugle blown and the entire line came to 'attention,' preparatory to executing this movement of the manual successively and by regiments as Gordon's columns should pass before our front, each in turn.

"The General was riding in advance of his troops, his chin drooped to his breast, downhearted and dejected in appearance almost beyond description. At the sound of that machine like snap of arms, however, General Gordon started, caught in a moment its significance, and instantly assumed the finest attitude of a soldier. He wheeled his horse facing me, touching him gently with the spur, so that the animal slightly reared, and as he wheeled, horse and rider made one motion, the horse's head swung down with a graceful bow, and General Gordon dropped his sword point to his toe in salutation.

"By word-of-mouth General Gordon sent back orders to the rear that his own troops take the same position of the manual in the march past as did our line. That was done, and a truly imposing sight was the mutual salutation and farewell.

"At a distance of possibly twelve feet from our line, the Confederates halted and turned face towards us. Their lines were formed with the greatest care, with every officer in his appointed position, and thereupon began the formality of surrender.

"Bayonets were affixed to muskets, arms stacked, and cartridge boxes unslung and hung upon the stacks. Then, slowly and with a reluctance that was appealingly pathetic, the torn and tattered battle flags were either leaned against the stacks or laid upon the ground. The emotion of the conquered soldiery was really sad to witness. Some of the men who had carried and followed those ragged standards through the four long years of strife, rushed, regardless of all discipline, from the ranks, bent about their old flags, and pressed them to their lips with burning tears.

"And it can well be imagined, too, that there was no lack of emotion on our side, but the Union men were held steady in their lines, without the least show of demonstration by word or by motion. There was, though, a twitching of the muscles of their faces, and, be it said, their battle-bronzed cheeks were not altogether dry. Our men felt the import of the occasion, and realized fully how they would have been affected if defeat and surrender had been their lot after such a fearful struggle.

"Nearly an entire day was necessary for that vast parade to pass. About 27,000 stands of arms were laid down, with something like a hundred battle flags; cartridges were destroyed, and the arms loaded on cars and sent off to Wilmington.

"Every token of armed hostility was laid aside by the defeated men. No officer surrendered his side arms or horse, if private property, only Confederate property being required, according to the terms of surrender, dated April 9, 1865, and stating that all arms, artillery, and public property were to be packed and stacked and turned over to the officer duly appointed to receive them.

"And right here I wish to correct again that statement so often attributed to me, to the effect that I have said I received from the hands of General Lee on that day his sword. Only recently, at a banquet in Newtown, glass., of the Katahdin Club, composed of sons and daughters of my own beloved State, it was said in press dispatches that a letter had been read front me in which I made the claim that I had received Lee's sword. I never did make that claim even, as I never did receive that sword.

"As I have said, no Confederate officer was required or even asked to surrender his side arms if they were his personal property. As a matter of fact, General Lee never gave up his sword, although, if I am not mistaken, there was some conference between General Grant and some of the members of his staff upon that very subject just before the final surrender. I was not present at that conference, however, and only know of it by hearsay.

"But, as I was saying, every token of armed hostility having been laid aside, and the men having given their words of honor that they would never serve again against the flag, they were free to go whither they would and as best they could. In the meantime, our army had been supplying them with rations. On the next morning, however, the morning of the 13th, we could see the men, singly or in squads, making their way slowly into the distance, in whichever direction was nearest home, and by nightfall we were left there at Appomattox Courthouse lonesome and alone."

Source: Southern Historical Society Papers, Vol. XXXII, Richmond, Va., January -December. 1904.

Confederate Veteran Letter Home



Editor's Note: A lot has been written as to the cause of the War between the States and there seems to be no real agreement on the subject. Well, this gentleman almost sounds as if he had seen the future while he explains exactly why he fought in the war.

This gentleman served in the war under N.C. General J. Johnston Pettigrew. He fought at the Battle of Gettysburg, which was where he died. He had written this letter about two to three weeks before that battle.

To My Lovely wife,

I do so miss you, and the life we have there on the small plot of land God has given us. More and more it seems that my thoughts are drifting back there to reside with you. Yet, as badly as I desire to be back home, it is for home that I deem it best that for my presence here with these other men.

The proclamation that the Lincoln administration made six months prior may appear noble. Were I here in these conditions simply to keep another man in bondage, I would certainly walk away into the night and return unto you. God knows my heart, and the hearts of other men amongst me. We know what is at stake here. And the true reason for this contest, that requires the spilling of blood of fellow citizens. Our collective fear is nearly universal. This war, if lost, will see ripples carried forward for five, six, seven or more generations. I scruple not to believe, as do others that the very nature of this country will be forever dis-spirited.

That one day our great great grandchildren will be bridled with a federal bit, that will deem how and if they apply the gospel of Christ to themselves and their communities. Whether or not the land of their forefathers may be deceitfully taken from them through taxation and coercion. A day where only the interest of the northern wealthy will be shouldered by the broken and destitute bodies of the southern poor.

This, my darling wife, is what keeps me here in this arena of destruction and death.

Your Loving Husband,

Jefferson

It really seems to me, that here lies the reason these men were fighting in this war. Of course, this fits no narrative that is used today to describe the war. When asked why I am proud of my ancestors, I think of men such as this, and appreciate them more when you can see their true feelings, written by their own hand, and how they viewed what was important to them.

Robert E. Lee Quote of the Month

“The best troops are ineffective without good Officers.”

— **Robert E. Lee, December 24th, 1861**, in a letter to Andrew Gordon McGrath, Judge, Confederate States Court

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

April 7th Appomattox UDC Ceremony at Appomattox Confederate Cemetery

April 19th 20th & 21st: Virginia Division SCV Convention Bristol, VA Delta by Marriot, Bristol VA

April 25th 7:00 pm @ Charley's Café: Camp Meeting

May 11th Amelia Days

May 23rd 7:00 pm @ Charley's Café: Camp Meeting

May 27th Memorial Day Flag Placement & Service at Confederate Cemetery in Farmville

June 23rd – 29th Sam Davis Christian Camp

June 27th 7:00 pm @ Charley's Café: Camp Meeting

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