

# The Shoulder Arms

Volume 18, Number 4

September/October 2013



## Hawes Ranch Event

September 26-29 will see the inaugural of what looks to be a large and interesting event sponsored by the RACW and the Hawes Ranch near Anderson, CA. The ranch, like the Battle of Gettysburg and Fort Klamath, is celebrating its sesquicentennial this year marking 150 years since its establishment.

As of this writing it looks promising that members of several reenacting organizations will be taking part, among them being members of the BBCWR, NCWV, NCWA, NCWC, CCWS, ACWA and others. Several guns from neighboring artillery units have also committed to taking the field.

On Thursday and Friday, September 26 and 27 there will be School Days with hundreds of students in attendance. Event coordinator, Pappy Walton, indicates that lunch will be provided all school days presenters on both Thursday and Friday. Dinner will be provided on Thursday. Additionally, there will be a BBQ dinner for all reenactors on Saturday.

The RACW, wishing to honor the service of all military veterans, has decided that the Hawes Ranch Event will be free

of charge to spectators who have served in our armed forces.

Located near Anderson, CA, you can get there by taking the I-5 Freeway to Anderson Exit 667, to Deschutes Rd about 4.5 miles to intersection of Deschutes Rd and Dersch Rd. [Click Here](#) to see the map on our website.



## Communiqué from the Union Commander

### Greetings to the Union Army,

First off, hope to see all of you at the Hawes Farm School Days and Civil War Days in September. The Treasurer (Nancy) and I plan to be there Wednesday evening with the RACW trailer. While at B&G 150th Gettysburg event, I was informed by several different NCWA soldiers that their club plans to be at our event. It is looking like this event is shaping up to be big!

As many of you know, the Confederate enlistment this year is down. The RACW has been fortunate to have units to galvanize, such as the 72nd NYVI and the US Sharpshooters. (Just as a side note, the 72<sup>nd</sup> NYVI galvanized at Duncans Mills for ALL the battles for the entire weekend – Huzzah!) Per its members, the US Sharpshooters – Company F is being re-designated a dual unit, the USSS – Company F and the CSA-8th Alabama – Company I “The Emerald Guard.” They plan to be the CSA unit at the Hawes event.

For those who were unable to attend either of the 150th Gettysburg events, I wanted to make you feel better by saying that it was humid, rained almost every evening, and the canvas was never dry. I hope this makes you feel better and you should not read any further in this letter.

The first event, Joe Allison, my daughter (Mary) and I were with the US Sharpshooters both in Berdan green and Wisconsin blue. It was a fun event, although we missed a few battles. During Pickett’s Charge, I was part of the skirmish line at the Emmetsburg road/rail fence. What a view! We really enjoyed the second event, where we were part of Hurt’s Alabama “Horse-Drawn” Battery. It was a hoooot! One of the battles that

Hurt's wasn't in, I was able to hoof it across the fields and join the 72nd NYVI as a pennant bearer. Thank-you 72nd for the opportunity and the hospitality you extended to all of the RACW members that stopped by your camp. The 72<sup>nd</sup> NYVI had the honor of being the unit at the angle during Pickett's Charge. I enjoyed shooting at them from Hurt's Battery, especially when we advanced forward with the charge and then withdrew by prolong. The horses added a new dimension to the artillery!

Once again, see you all at Hawes Ranch,

Byran



Featured Unit this issue:

## 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Cavalry, Co A Union Brigade

### History of the First U.S. Cavalry, Company A (1833 to present)

[This article is a composite of an article written by Sergeant Kit Barlow, First U.S. Cavalry, Company A with the Cascade Civil War Society and Wikipedia.]

**T**he *United States Regiment of Dragoons* was organized by an Act of Congress approved March 2, 1833. It became the *First*



*L to R: Lt. Steve Kerns on Copper, Cpl. Jared Silva on Amerac, Pvt. Darrell Illian on Paisley, Pvt. Bob Brown on Ben, Pvt. Jeff Maddox on Red, Pvt. Jeff Eveland on Spot, Pvt. Mark Baird on Flick*

*Regiment of Dragoons* when the Second Dragoons were raised in 1836. Headquarters were initially established at Jefferson Barracks, near Saint Louis, Missouri. The First Regiment of Dragoons spent the majority of its time in the field, along the frontier and in Indian Territory.

During the Mexican-American War, the Regiment, especially Companies A and E under Zachary Taylor, saw three years of fighting from Mexico City to California. In 1847, headquarters was at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; by July 1854, it was transferred to Fort Union, New Mexico Territory to quell Indian raids and then moved to Fort Tejon, California, in December 1856, with the various companies scattered throughout the West. For the next 5 years, the regiment engaged in a variety of Indian fights, seeing action at various times against the Navajos and Apaches in the Southwest and several tribes in the Northwest.

From Fort Tejon Company A was detailed to Fall River Valley in Shasta County where they were engaged in the construction of

Fort Crook, acquiring scientific specimens for the Smithsonian Museum and keeping peace between native Americans and settlers.

By an act of Congress on August 3, 1861, the First Regiment of Dragoons became the **First United States Cavalry**. This act renumbered all the current cavalry regiments and changed the piping worn from the Dragoon orange to Cavalry yellow. The ten companies of the First Cavalry were along the Pacific Coast at the time, missing the first battle of Bull Run.

During November and December, the regiment, except Companies D and G which were still stationed in New Mexico Territory, was transferred by steamship from the Pacific Coast through Panama and then to Washington, D.C., arriving by the end of January 1862. The regiment was attached to the 2d Brigade, Cavalry Reserve, Army of the Potomac and stationed at Camp Sprague. Regimental strength as of February 1862, showed 424 members, 48 of them on sick call.

Assigned to the Army of the Potomac, the First U.S. Cavalry participated at Wilson's Creek, the Peninsula Campaign, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Appomattox, New Mexico, Virginia and Maryland.

After serving through the Modoc War, the Nez Perce War and several other Indian wars, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, World War II, Vietnam, the unit still exists today as 1st through 8<sup>th</sup> Squadron assigned as reconnaissance for armor and infantry divisions. To this day, the unit's special designation is *First Regiment of Dragoons* and their motto is *Animo Et Fide* (Courageous and Faithful).

You might win...



**N**ancy Duncan made these two Irish Watch Caps, one gray and one blue, which she plans to donate to the RACW at Hawes Ranch School Days. The caps are to be raffled off among those members that supported/taught/etc. during the school days.



### Candidate's Letter of Intent

This is my letter of intent to run for confederate brigade commander. I believe that I can bring the confederates together while having fun and bring families back to the RACW so vote for me. That is all for now.

– Don “Pappy” Walton



### Guns of the Confederacy

Hurt's Alabama Battery at Gettysburg

– Capt. Ken Janson

**W**hile on the field at Gettysburg this past July the members of Hurt's Battery, Alabama Light Artillery, RACW, made a pilgrimage to the three locations where the Battery fought during the battle of July 1-3, 1863.

**July 1** – Shortly after Heth's Brigade made its unexpected contact with Union forces west northwest of Gettysburg several batteries of Confederate artillery were brought up to press the attack. These included



*The Whitworths were the longest range field guns in use during the war with an effective range of 4 ½ to 5 miles, and Hurt's two Whitworths were the only two such in either army on the field at Gettysburg.*

McIntosh's Battalion in whose ranks were to be found the four guns of Hurt's Battery: two 3” ordnance rifles and two 12 pdr. Breech-loading Whitworth rifles.

Hurt's guns along with the others were put into line along the north-south running Herr's Ridge with the two 3” rifles contributing expertly to the Union defeat on that day.

**July 2** – Hurt's Battery was ordered to unlimber on the north end of Seminary Ridge just south of the edge of town.



*Hurt's Cannoneers raise a toast in remembrance on the spot where the Battery fought on July 2, 1863*

This was a less than ideal position for long range guns, being too close to the enemy, and one of the Whitworths

suffered a broken axle when struck by a shell fragment.

**July 3** – Hurt's two 3" ordnance rifles remained at their position on Seminary Ridge, but the Whitworths were relocated on Oak Hill far to the northwest. This allowed these guns to make good use of their extraordinary range and accuracy of fire while being out of range of any enemy guns.



*Capt. Janson with one of Hurt's Battery's two Whitworth Rifles on Oak Hill, Gettysburg*

During the retreat from the battle on July 5-7 Hurt's Battery was active in protecting Gen'l John D. Imboden's column and the Potomac crossing at Williamsport, MD.

## Artillery Thoughts

– Major Don La Porta

**H**ow a unit is formed and what battery it re-enacts is an interesting process. For the RACW Union artillery the process and changes are the subject of this article. When the Union artillery was formed (1996) the RACW Union Brigade portrayed the XI Corps and the infantry portrayed the 127th New York Infantry. We looked into the artillery batteries that were in the XI Corps at the battle of Gettysburg

for a battery to portray. The 1st Ohio Light Artillery, Battery "K" was chosen to re-enact.

We didn't really know much about artillery or re-enacting for that matter at that time. One of the enjoyable parts of our hobby is the research of the Civil War, units and battles. It soon became apparent that the Union army wanted to use only one type of cannon in each battery and that the cannons we were re-enacting with a 3" Ordnance Rifle and a 10 pdr. Parrott were not used by the 1st Ohio battery. When we got the bronze Napoleon (2000) we corrected this first error by forming a separate battery for each cannon and matching the correct battery with cannon type. The 1st Ohio Light Artillery, Battery "K" was to get the new Napoleon, 13th New York Independent Light Artillery would have the 3" Ordnance Rifle in its battery and the 5th U.S. Artillery, Battery "D" would use 10 pdr. Parrott for its cannon. All was good...well for a while.

We got a reprint of a diary from a war time member of the 1st Ohio. Great reading but a big mystery! In reading the diary written by Henry Clay Ott, who served in the battery from September 1861 to January 1865 we made an interesting discovery. "September 25, 1862 — We exchanged our steel battery for a brass battery and moved to Fairfax and camped." Questions: What were these cannons? We only knew of the use of the bronze Napoleon... Lots of reading and research and no answers.

Finally! an article in THE ARTILLERYMAN magazine (Vol.34 No.3 Summer 2013) answered the questions and forged an even tighter bond within the RACW.



*Wiard "6 pdr" 2.6" bore*

What was the "steel battery" that the 1st Ohio had used early in the war? Well, it seems that eccentric inventor Norman Wiard had created perhaps the best field rifles of the war. The cannons were exceptional in that they were manufactured from STEEL a rare and expensive material in the 1860's. Wiard's cannons were capable of very high elevation that would have allowed a much longer range that other cannon types in addition to the use of the latest cannon wheel with steel Archibald hubs, a truly advanced design.



You ask yourself why isn't more said about this design? The fact is that the Federal Chief of Ordnance, Brigadier General James W. Ripley had a big dislike of its inventor and went out his way to stop the inventor and his cannon from succeeding.

Next connection with the RACW is the fact that the FIRST ORDER for this new cannon was from Daniel E. Sickles in May 1861 for the brigade of Infantry and three Artillery Batteries he was raising for the war! Sickles, politician that he was, wanted Wiard's cannons because they were made in Manhattan (even then politicians looked to protect their congressional districts). You ask yourself why haven't I heard of these cannons use by Sickles? Well, in October of 1861 General Ripley got control of all state contracts and kept the cannons at the Washington Arsenal for the entire war!

Four Wiard batteries were used during the war. The 1st Ohio Light Artillery, Battery "K" was one of them. Equipped with two 2.6" (6 pdr) and two 3.4" (12 pdr) rifles until September 25, 1862 when the Wiards were withdrawn from service and Battery K received bronze 12 pdr. smooth-bore Napoleons.

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### **Free Civil War Times**

Free to a good home! – Assorted issues of *Civil War Times Illustrated* from 1964 thru 1980. They're in excellent condition.

Contact John Harris of Gridley, CA at [tjohn1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tjohn1@sbcglobal.net)

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### **Publication Information**

The **Shoulder Arms'** new editor is Ken Janson who will be happy to receive any help/suggestions/submissions you might have to offer.

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