



The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

The *RUNNER*

Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor Bob Cooke

March 2010

Our next meeting will be Thursday 8 April 2010 at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound (Airlie Rd.)
Social Hour at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7:30 p.m.



Semper
Fi!

Our featured speaker for April will be our own **Ed Gibson**. Ed considers himself a native Tar Heel by virtue of having been born to parents who lived at Camp LeJeune, N.C. His father, a career Marine, was stationed there at the time, but Ed also calls Philadelphia, Pa., home. After a career in law enforcement with the Wilmington Police Department, (and a stint as Chief of Police in Burgaw) Ed has found time to delve into his true passion- Civil War history. His talk will focus on the both the United and Confederate States' Marine Corps during the Civil War. Please join us for what promises to be a most interesting talk about a most interesting subject.



Raffle Winners

The Last Ninety Days of the War- Palmer Royal

The C.S.S. Hunley- W.A. Hickmon

1776- Ed Gibson

All for the Union- John Boulger

Gettysburg (video) - Ed Mahoney

Pickett's Charge- Ray Martin

(Grand Prize)

Men of God, Angels of Death- Mary Royal



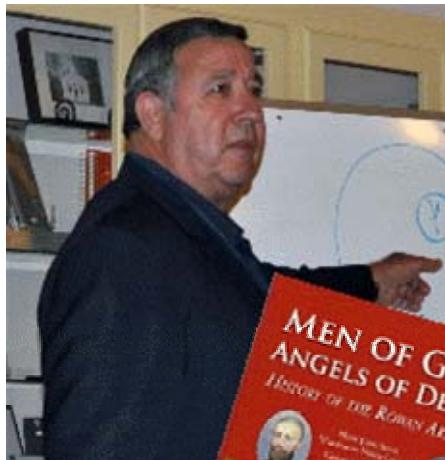


Image by
Harry Clements

Gettysburg and "The King of Battle" !

That might have well been the title of member **Jack Travis's** talk on artillery at that decisive battle in July 1863. Taking us back to the "why" of Gettysburg (lack of food), Colonel "Black Jack" Travis (*his rank denotes his stature among re-enactors*), began his talk about the movement by Lee's army northward. With a train stretching some ten miles long, horses, mules and oxen dragged Lee's artillery towards that fateful meeting. Commanded by General William Nelson Pendleton, the artillery arm of the Army of Northern Virginia was already somewhat hamstrung by that officer. Described as "less than effective...while serving as chief artillerist" for Lee, Jack admitted that Pendleton's alter ego, U.S.A. commander, General Henry Hunt, was the better artillerist. Indeed, it has been written that "Hunt was the driving force in welding the Army of the Potomac's artillery into a superb organization.

As events unfolded on the battlefield, discrepancies in the Confederate arm began to take a toll. In addition to a lack of shot and shell, many of the Confederate guns were captured U.S cannon. These guns, as Jack told us, were a "mixed bag" of different calibers, requiring a multitude of ammunition, whereas, Hunt had only one type of gun in each section. The hot July weather began to wear down men on both sides, even as there was much work left to be done- casualties to be replaced, guns to be cleaned and ammunition to be loaded; various parts of damaged cannons had to be replaced by wagon-mounted portable forges. The U.S. forces were able to replace worn-out gun tubes; Confederates could not. Even the lack of sleep, according to Jack, played a major role in the battle.

Describing the failed attack on Cemetery Ridge, Jack noted that smoke over the battlefield, made it hard to locate targets, while Confederates, firing uphill towards the ridge, were thought to be overshooting their quarry. Jack informed the group that the powder being used was the likely culprit: when the Southerners use captured U.S. gunpowder, their fuses fail to detonate properly, causing the shells to explode beyond the hill. A further fiasco occurred when Pendleton ordered nine guns and their ammunition train moved back to safety. As he had not notified E. Porter Alexander, commanding the First Corps artillery which was supporting the attack, that general could not locate the guns when they were needed. When Pickett's Charge came, Hunt had an additional eighteen guns rolled into position to repel the attackers. At Appomattox, recognizing who was the better artillerist, General Henry Hunt would not speak to Pendleton, but rather went to talk with General Alexander.

C F C W R T - 2010



Image by *Gerry Gassman*

