



May 2012

The Cannon Report

The Powhatan Troop, SCV Camp 1382



John Moody
Commander

Paul Houser
Lt. Commander

Bishop Dennis Campbell
Adjutant

Andrew Seamons Jr.
Treasurer

Bishop Dennis Campbell.
Chaplain

Dr. Ronald W. Toney
Surgeon

Malcolm Campbell Jr.
Color Sergeant

Vacant
Aide-De-Camp

Stuart Townes
Quartermaster

Kenneth Phibbs
Camp Historian

Gordon Drumheller
Judge Advocate

Paul M. Houser
Editor TCR
Webmaster

Commander's Comments

Our May meeting will be at the Italian Delight Restaurant in the South Creek Shopping Center (near the KFC restaurant) with lunch at 1:00 P.M. and our business starting about 2:00 P.M.. This is the last regular meeting of the year and my last regular meeting as Commander. This will be a business only meeting and the first priority item will be the election of new officers for the term of August 2012- July 2014.

I have held Camp expenses to the bare minimum for the past two years and Camp finances are not yet critical. Our status with the State Corporation Commission is up to date and our federal tax information is up to date so the Camp remains charitable donation for those members that wish to help as they have in the past. However, we have been spending well beyond our income for years and while a change in income is not likely, we must begin to discuss where the Camp goes in the future to stay within our income. There are a couple of other matters that I have to bring up, but the meeting should be a relatively short one.

The SCV's Grand Annual Reunion will take place in Murfreesboro, TN on July 11-14. Anyone that would like to attend as our Camp delegate should contact me. Also as a reminder, the annual Confederate Memorial Day service at Huguenot Springs Cemetery will take place at 2:00 P.M. on Monday, May 28. The speaker will be Lt. Commander-in Chief Charles K. Barrow. The JEB Stuart Camp will have other activities planned that weekend for those interested in meeting with Mr. Barrow. I will forward any information that I receive. Our Camp will be one of many that will present a wreath at the Memorial Day service and I hope to see many of you there. If the cannons do not misfire, it is quite a show.

I'm also pleased to announce that I have persuaded my wife to let us host the Camp picnic at our home in June. We'll set the date for that picnic at our May meeting and you'll receive the announcement in your June newsletter.

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Cannon Report

A little Virginia history this month 150 years ago.

May 6 - 11, 1862: Destruction of the CSS Virginia



After the historic battle between the USS *Monitor* and the CSS *Virginia* the two ironclad vessels kept each other in check for a period of about two months. The *Virginia*, commanded by Commodore Josiah Tatnall, spent much of her time docked at Norfolk undergoing repairs. Lt. Catesby Roger Jones, Executive Officer for the *Virginia*, wrote in 1874 that "Commodore Tatnall commanded the *Virginia* forty-five days, of which time there were only thirteen days she was not in dock or in the hands of the Navy Yard." Yet, Jones wrote, "he succeeded in impressing the enemy that we were ready for active service. It was evident that the enemy very much over-rated our power and efficiency. The South also had the same exaggerated idea of the vessel."

On May 8, a squadron of Union vessels, including the *Monitor*, bombarded Confederate batteries at Sewell Point. The CSS *Virginia* immediately left the yard for the Roads," Jones recalled. "As we drew near, the *Monitor* and her consorts ceased bombarding, and retreated under the guns of the fort, keeping beyond the range of our guns. Men-of-war from below the forts, and vessels expressly fitted for running us down, joined the other vessels between the forts. It looked as if the fleet was about to make a fierce onslaught upon us. "But we were gain to be disappointed. The *Monitor* and the other vessels did not venture to meet us, although we advanced until projectiles from the Rip Raps fell more than half a mile beyond us. Our object, however, was accomplished; we had put an end to the bombardment, and we returned to our buoy."

On May 10, 1862, Norfolk was evacuated, leaving the *Virginia* without a home port. The crew tried desperately to lighten the heavy vessel enough to navigate the James River, "but ceased on the pilots saying that they could not take her up," Jones added. "Her shield was then out of water; we were not in fighting condition," he wrote. The ship was run ashore on Craney Island, and set on fire after the crew was placed ashore. "The magazine exploded about half-past four on the morning of the 11th of May, 1862," Jones recalled.

Confederate Major H. Ashton Ramsay, the *Virginia's* Chief Engineer, recalled the last moments of the ironclad in a Feb 1912 Harper's Weekly article:

Still unconquered we hauled down our drooping colors, their laurels all fresh and green, with mingled pride and grief, gave her to the flames, and set the imminent fires roaring against the shotted guns. The slow match, the magazine, and that last, deep, low, sullen, mournful boom told our people, now far away on the march, that their gallant ship was no more.

***Paul M. Houser
Cannon Report Editor***