

AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: Feb 2002 - Annual Meeting - report by Orderly Sergeant Krenitsky

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 02/02/2002 09:04:07 PM

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BODY:

We held the meeting at Corbin's place. I did not take an actual count, but there must have been around twelve. The highlights are as follows.

Elections:

1. Capt. John Henry Kurtz
2. 1st Lt. Mark McNeirney
3. 1st Sgt. Tom Krenitsky
4. Cpl. Dickey Lee
5. Cpl. Larry Nottingham
6. Cpl. Duncan Trussell

We did not feel the need to fill the vacant 2nd Sgt. and last Cpl. until we field more men at each event.

We discussed several ways in which we can enhance the events, so look forward to more Mail Calls, boxes from home and spectator participation. Mark McNierney has promised to make more events, which equals more drill. Rader is taking on revising the Web Site and producing authentic rations. Milligan is going to work on Mail Calls. Trussell is going to work on wooden muskets for spectator participation. He is also working on a reproduction of the charge into the Wheatfield to include spectators to bring us up to the correct numbers.

Dennis Moore has also reappeared and is making an effort to make more events. He has also agreed to take the rank of 2nd Lt. In as needed position. He will help fill the gap created when Moyer left.

We have also started a Recruitment Committee in an effort to boost our numbers, which have been lacking the past year. We have seen poor numbers in the field. Realizing that everyone has another life, we are going to make an effort to raise field numbers by increasing our membership. It seems to be a percentage thing, therefore more members equals more men in the field. Pvt. Milligan has agreed to help with this so refer all new possibilities to him.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: April 2002 - Fort McHenry Civil War Days - report by Private Milligan

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 04/30/2002 09:04:30 PM

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BODY:

When I arrived Saturday morning, I was pleased to see that, despite the official absence of the NR, the turnout was not a total disaster. There were enough infantry to form two 20+-man companies, plus extraneous NCOs and half a dozen officers. There were also about four cavalry (a squadron!) and a gun that kept the spectators happy, but firing more or less at random through the day. There was also a continuous garrison of a dozen or more in the fort, who guarded the sally port and paraded around, provided by the 8th Ohio, who came all the way from their native state to take the position held by the original unit.

There seemed to be more things for visitors to see and do than just the military, this year. Some highlights of the day:

Spectators were encouraged to help with the pumping on an original fire engine from 1853, that was brought down from the Baltimore Fire Museum, while one of the firemen would aim the hose at a barrel containing the imaginary fire.

A working telegraph that was set up between the fort and the visitors center. Maybe it wasn't there. The same outfit was also signalling with flags to another group across the Harbor in Patterson Park.

This year, there was a return to decent food. Lunch was salad, cookies, bread, and delicious roast beef in large quantities, cooked on site by some guys who, if not reenactors, were at least in uniform.

The appearance, just before the evening dress parade, of the entire ship's Company of the Constellation (about 15-20, I think), who marched in and joined us. I got a fleeting glimpse of Mike Comfort as they departed, but didn't get a chance to talk to him. They brought their own color guard, which was nice, since the "battalion" lacked one.

Hearing the cute Park Ranger with the long dark hair, in her introductory speech for this year's Peterkin Award winner, mention "the Frenchman, Baron von Steuben," who trained Washington's troops. I was strongly encouraged not to point out her error, as apparently history is not her strong suit.

The inspection, performed prior to the firing demo, in which two somewhat neophyte Rangers of a gender not to be identified for legal reasons took foocorrevvver to go through our small unit. And then we were all required to fire caps -- one person at a time -- prior to going out onto the field. Each of us was issue with two count them two rounds for our exciting companion volley.

The crowds were, however, good, and I do hope we return to this event next year, as thousands of people always go through the fort during the weekend.

Final note -- as we were setting out for our final dress parade of the day, we did a right-face and began to march. We went exactly two steps when the order, "Halt!" was shouted, as it was clear we were heading straight for a tent about six feet in front of the music (of whom there were three fifers and four drummers). As we stood there in confusion for a moment, a voice from the ranks said, "Have we lost already? General laughter.

B.C. Milligan, Pvt  
Reporting for Company K

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: May 2002 - Recon II - report by Corporal Trussell  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 05/19/2002 09:04:59 PM

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BODY:

Attending the event from Company K were: Myself, Tom Krenitsky, Mark McNeirney, Wade Russell, Larry Nottingham, Joe Bordonaro, Dick Geottel, Dennis Moore, Henry Schmied, Bob Enders, and Andy McKeegan. The National Regiment decided to make this event a "Max-effort" in lieu of Fort McHenry.

I arrived on site just after three p.m., on Friday afternoon. The event site was easy to find and well-marked with signs, the parking was plentiful and the walk to the registration area was a short one. I saw Tom just as I pulled in. We put on our traps and headed-off to sign in. Registration itself was the usual signing-away of rights, the issuance of a "casualty card," and directions to the Federal camping area. Our weapons were given a cursory inspection and we were sent on our way. Contrary to what had been said by the organizers, posted on the "official" Recon 2 website, and endlessly discussed/debated on the forums, there was no individual inspection of uniforms or equipment. From what I could see, the organizers had adopted a "anything goes" policy for the weekend. This may have been done because of low numbers, or maybe they just chickened-out a the last minute, but I saw an abundance of

slouch hats, assorted hat brass (harps, Scottish thistles, etc.), Masonic emblems, bandanas, two-banded zouave rifles, a fair amount of '42's, purple fuzzy Barney style Federal coats, etc., etc. Basically, Recon had all looks of your average reenactment/streamer fest. Tom and I adopted a "wait and see" attitude and made our way to the Federal camp. They had a miniature sutler area in the Registration area and a Rob Szabo setup his photography studio. (Insert shameless plug here) I had a chance to look at some of the stuff offered by Joe Hoffman, AKA the "Jersey Skillet Licker." He was selling Federal-issue shirts made by Nic Sekala. They're more expensive than mine and from my research not constructed correctly. The walk to camp was about a half-mile. The weather was clear skies and gusting wind. No doubt the coming night was going to be a cool one. On the way to camp, we encountered Mark and Wade. Wade decided to make his yearly pilgrimage to the "colonies" for this event, rather than the Antietam gig, because he'll be leading a series of WWI and WWII battlefield tours in Europe next fall. He sent his best to those from the unit who weren't able to be with us. When Tom and I arrived in Camp, we found our place in line and began to get ourselves organized. The National Regiment was divided into four companies. We were assigned to the second company and designated "Company G," which in the original 183rd, was the color company. For whatever reason, it was decided that the NR would not carry colors at this event. Better for our company, as we didn't have to worry about pulling nine guys out of the ranks as a color guard. The camping area was between the Heater house and Route 11. Not the most period of camping areas, with cars driving by honking their horns, and the glare of the lights from the nearby Chevron station and pharmaceutical company. Water and porta-johns were setup next to the Chevron, about three-hundred yards from camp

We weren't in camp more than an hour when we were ordered to form-up details to gather rations. We took a quarter-mile walk to the Quartermaster's area and loaded-up. Gotta admit the Quartermasters setup was pretty impressive. Nobody should have gone hungry this weekend. We were given a HUGE amount of bacon (I think we only used about 1/2 to 2/3 of it), potatoes, eight loaves of soft bread, a crate of hardtack, coffee, sugar, and an ammo crate. There was more food than we could possibly have used. We went back to camp and immediately began cooking up the bacon. Various strategies were employed in trying to cook the bacon. We broiled a couple of slabs, while others opted to cut it into pieces and fry it. Given the distance to the sinks, I decided to pass on the bacon, and subsist on hardtack and coffee. Larry rolled in to camp about this time, followed shortly by Joe.

First Company, a mixture of the 5th NY and the Regulars, were assigned to the skirmish line. Second Company drew guard duty from eight to twelve. There were six posts established around the camp, and the guard was set. Basically the guards were charged with making sure late-arrivals were directed to their proper camps. A group of civilian women also kept the guards on their toes by trying to cross the lines. At first, they were somewhat indignant about being turned-back. At one point, Tom, as Sergeant of the Guard, had to threaten one with arrest. This went on until almost midnight when they were "officially" given passes and safe conduct through the lines. Sometime around nine o'clock Dennis and Dick came into camp. Our turn at guard ended at midnight when we were relieved by Third Company. I gotta admit, this aspect of the event was pretty cool. At one point, nearby Winchester, Virginia, was having their annual

Apple Blossom celebration, and started shooting fireworks. You couldn't see the actual bursts or hear them, but you could see the horizon light up. It kind of looked like something out of "Private Ryan," and for me at least, was one of the better "moments."

Friday night was a cold one. Most of us spent the night around the fire trying to stay somewhat warm. By dawn, Second Company had grown to about 30 men with a full-compliment of officers and file closers. We got everybody up before dawn and formed the company. This was followed by the first of what would become many "downtimes" of the event. There was a lengthy delay until it was decided what to do by the "higher-ups." Most took the opportunity to make coffee and warm themselves by the fire. The Battalion was once again formed and advanced toward the sounds of a developing skirmish. We advanced in a battleline over the top of a ridgeline, fired a couple of volleys, and then layed-down in line. From there, we rose, angled to the left, and engaged the Rebels from a tree line. It wasn't long before the Confederates, faced with a 3:1 disadvantage in numbers, were forced to fall back and retire. This was standard reenactment stuff, with opposing forces standing a couple hundred yards apart and blazing away at each other. Of course, nobody on either side was taking hits, as we had casualty cards for that. (insert sarcasm here) Morale among the Federal forces was high at this point. Once again there was down time while our next move was planned. Earlier, I mentioned we had been issued "casualty cards." These had a number on them and a wound disposition. Mine was "Hand wound," number 49. Tom's didn't have a number, he was just supposed to run away at the first sign of combat. He later traded with Pap, figuring it was more appropriate for Bob to have that card than the First Sergeant. We had been told that following each engagement, the "umpires" would assess casualties. They would call out random numbers, and the men with those numbers would be evacuated to the rear. The units would then continue at reduced numbers. The "causality" would be held at the field hospital for half hour to an hour, and his "wound" actually treated. Sounded like a pretty cool aspect to the event. I was actually hoping to get my number called, but at no time during the entire event were the cards ever utilized on either side. I don't know whether there was a problem, or somebody just forgot. There was never any explanation offered. This was also the first time I had to get a real look at some of the impressions on the Federal side. It was pretty sad, considering the stress they had put on uniform impression standards on their website. Hell, there was a female "cavalryman" who made absolutely no effort to hide her gender. Although, I must admit, she was kinda cute with that pony tail stretching down her back...Don't get me wrong, there were some righteous impressions to be seen, but there was too much of the same old mainstreamer crap right along side it. Given all the publicity, I expected a little bit more effort, but I guess in that respect, I'm an optimist. Can't help but wonder how accurate it was for the Battalion Sergeant Major to be toting a Henry rifle though... During this downtime, a water detail was sent-out. The nearest water was back at the registration area, about a half-mile away. When the water detail returned, it was learned that a portion of the Confederate forces had quit the event. Whether this was fact or rumor, the effect was noticeable on the morale of the Federal forces. From what we saw of the Confederates during the event, I'd guess that there was less than a seventy of them all total, in comparison to around two-hundred Federals.

Before too long, the Battalion was again formed and we started off on what ended-up being a a mile, mile-and-a-quarter hike around Belle Grove Mansion. Again we halted for about a half hour while the officers discussed/debated what to do. We setoff again, this time on a, "march fifty yards, stop...march fifty yards, stop...march fifty yards, stop" endeavor. The whole time we could hear a growing engagement in front of us.

We were soon in the fight, working our way up a ridgeline. The Confederate forces had built breastworks and were using them to advantage. Now from this point, I can only report on what I saw in terms of the ensuing battle. The Federal forces became somewhat disorganized, but because of their superior numbers, were able to push the Confederates back up the ridgeline. The Federal forces stayed mainly to the road, being assaulted from their right and front. It would have been interesting had the organizers of the event taken the time to utilize the casualty cards at this point. I've no doubt that the Federals took the top of the ridge, but I would suspect, they did it at a high cost in casualties. The Rebels also would have taken a hard pounding. Unfortunately, we'll never know. It was learned at the conclusion of the action that Captain McNeirney and Private Bordonaro had captured about a dozen Confederates in their advance. This phase of the event was pretty cool. It's not often you get to fight through woods like this. The sounds, the smoke hanging in the trees, the shouts, and the images of figures darting around through the trees, the "confusion and chaos" of the fight were all pretty cool, and were for most I think, the highlight of the event.

At the top of the ridge, we had another lengthy downtime as the Officers consulted. Many used the opportunity to grab a quick nap. We sorted out the companies and prepared to move out again. About this point someone pointed out that it was becoming rather overcast. For whatever reason, it was decided to ignore the road and advance the entire Battalion through the woods in a column. It might not have been so frustrating if we couldn't see the road about twenty yards to our left, but orders are orders. It wasn't long before we ran into the Confederates again. Apparently, we were moving back the way we had come, and the Confederates were operating from the opposite side of their own breast works. Again, this is from my own perspective, but we moved against them, in company front, down the ridgeline. Near the bottom, we swung to the left, and were driving them, when we were told to move back up the ridgeline, because we were about to be cutoff. It turned out that an order to pullback had been issued, but we never received it. We were hunkered down behind some abandoned Rebel breastworks, and McNeirney was ready to make a fight of it, but the "umpire" made us pullout, insisting that we were, in fact cutoff, and that we should retire to the main body Federal forces. Speaking to some Confederates after the event, it turns out that the Confederates thought that they were surrounded, and were figuring either to conduct a fighting withdraw or to surrender, when we were pulled-out. Oh well. Again, I wish we could have fought it out and then seen what the casualty card count was...

We re-formed in a roadway and were then ordered to move through the woods, further up the ridge and await orders. At this point the first of the raindrops began to fall. Before long, Second Company, minus the Ninth Reserves who had opted to go home, was ordered to relieve Captain Pohanka's First Company on the skirmish line. We weren't in position but

a minute or two, when firing broke-out up and down the line. I also noticed that some guys were either double-loading or Larry's not the only one who's sometimes generous with the powder. A couple of times, you'd have thought we had a cannon in the woods. By this point, I had gone through about thirty or forty rounds throughout the day's fighting. I don't think I was firing any more or less than the other men in the company, so it gives you some idea of the amount of firing we were doing. During this period the rain picked-up in earnest, and it was here, that the talk of cutting out of the event began to gather steam. A lot of Rebels began making their war through the lines, stating their decision to quit the event. They were coming through in groups of four and five, so it didn't take much surmise that the Confederates were going to be down to a platoon before too long. I had the chance to talk to the event organizer at this point. Standing in front of one of the water points was a Confederate with combat boots on (I kid you not!) filling his canteen, I asked him why, despite all the promises and statements to the contrary, there weren't any impression inspections or enforcement. He told me that they had decided to leave that up to the individual battalion commanders, and that he thought they had done a "good job" of keeping all the "farby stuff" out of the event. He pointed out the lack of hat brass as an example. Mm-mm. I, being the gentleman and soft-spoken man that I am, refrained comment, and returned to the skirmish line.

The firing on the skirmish line began to diminish in direct proportion to the increased rain. Second Company was pulled off the line and escorted to their bivouac area for the night. The rain at this point was steady and several of us made the decision to go home. This was based not only on the rain, but because there was only a small skirmish, and dress parade, planned for Sunday. Add to that, we were already soaked and the temperature was starting to drop. Captain McNeirney, Privates Moore, McKeegan, Russell, Bordonaro, and Goettel, decided to make a go of it and spend the night. Tom and I made our good-byes and started up the road. We'd only gone a couple of hundred yards when we saw the organizer headed the other way. He told us that the parking lot was starting to become a quagmire, and for that reason, he was calling-off the event. The walk to the cars was about a mile long and up hill. Near the end, Tom and I ran into Andrew "I need new stuff, so I guess I'll set my old gear on fire" Doddington. He was his usual "cheery" self. Tom and I peeled off at our cars, and "Evil-Mongo" kept walking up the road, happily talking, not realizing no one was listening. Tom and I hung-out until the rest of Company K made it to the cars. We said our good-byes, Tom gave the officer's uniform to Dennis (Is it "Lieutenant Moore" now?) and hit the road. Somewhere along the Pennsylvania/Maryland line, the rain stopped. So that was Recon, at least from my perspective. On the whole, I would give the event a D+. There was an absolutely incredible amount of potential for this event that was never utilized. Obviously, given the constraints of the location, there were going to be a lot of modern intrusions, but the organizers never seemed to try to avoid it. The placement of the Federal camp is a good example. The camp could have been moved a couple of hundred yards over a ridge, and even though we would still have heard Route 11, we wouldn't have seen it and all the subsequent headlights. The rations were good, but why so much? And why issuehardtack and soft-bread? The initial combat was unimaginative. Were it me, I would have had the Confederates make a predawn attack, catching the Federals as they were just getting-up. I could go on, but I think you

get the point. It just seemed that the organizers were more interested in the idea of Recon than actually implementing those ideas. And what about the casualty cards?! This was something that could have added an entirely new twist to the scenarios, but it was totally ignored. And the impression standards...?! That too, was completely forgotten about. Maybe they named the event RECON for a reason. Maybe it should have been named REYAWN, because so much of the event was just the same old thing.

However, my complaints aside, the main reason I do these events is because of the unit, and to that end, I would give the event an A+ on the Company K scale. Once again, we had a great turnout. So far this year, after four events (Drill, St. Patrick's Day, Five Forks, and Recon) we've averaged fifteen guys per event. Way to go! Can't say enough about how great it is to have Mark back in the field with us. Between his efforts, and those of Tom, the Company runs smoothly through the event. Everybody was enthusiastic, and tried to make the most of what, at some points, was a pretty lame event. There were the usual round of stories and jokes. Give credit to Moore for putting-up with all the sock puppet jokes. And of course, it's always great to see Wade take the field with us, and hear all his great takes on life in the "colonies." In short, while the event may not have been the best, we all had a good time. I realize I'm biased, but within the National Regiment, I think it's safe to say that Company K is the cream of the crop.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: June 2002 - Goose Creek Church - report by Corporal Trussell

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 06/09/2002 09:05:54 PM

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BODY:

For the second time this year, James Owens has introduced Company K to an event that will, I hope, become a regular fixture on our yearly schedule. Attending the event from the company were myself, Tom Krenitsky, Ben Kullman, Bruce Milligan, and Eric Mueller. The weather was partly cloudy, with temperatures in the high seventies to low eighties. Mt. Zion church, built in the early 19th century, appears very much as might have during the war, albeit in some disrepair. There is a sizable cemetery behind the church and a large woods to the left of the church. A small tent was

erected in one corner of the property, under which, cold drinks, snacks, and eventually dinner was served. A water truck was provided, as well as, several porta-johns. The property is shaded by a number of trees, and with the addition of a breeze, it was quite a pleasant way to spend a Saturday.

The Church and its property were used as a field hospital in June of 1863 following what was primarily a cavalry engagement running along the Warrenton Turnpike (modern-day Route 50)

The Federal Infantry numbered about 25-30 men, including two buglers. James Owens acted as the Officer, Tom as First Sergeant. Our day began with the formation of the company, some brief instructions from James, and then an "opening ceremony" in the cemetery in which there are a number of Confederate and Union soldiers buried. Following the ceremony was the usual living history type stuff. Tom set out a bunch of his equipment and haversack stuffers, Eric did his uniform demonstration, and the rest of us answered various questions from the tourists.

In addition to the Federal Infantry, there were a couple of Federal and Confederate Cavalry, and a contingent of a half-dozen or so members of the Southern Guard. Lester Shumacher laid out an extensive collection of original cavalry equipment inside the church. There was a contingent of civilians, including Andrea Kent and Dr. Anita Henderson. A medical display and display of period brass instruments were there, although I didn't get a close look at what they had. Throughout the day I would imagine that there were somewhere around 150 to 200 tourists that came through the site.

A series of demonstrations were scheduled throughout the day, with the Federal Infantry demo timed for three o'clock. We did the standard demo of various firings and then a very condensed version of skirmish drill. What made it truly interesting is that with two musicians attending the event, we could move in accordance with the proper bugle calls. The only shortcoming was that the field was just too small to really utilize. Perhaps we can arrange to have one of these buglers present for one of our own living history events. There was a second, impromptu, demo by the infantry when a busload of Army officers arrived at the site.

Following this final demo, Bruce had to return to Baltimore, as he was competing in a fencing match on Sunday. The hour before dinner was passed by having Eric and Ben entertain us with their German dancing and singing. Musical accompaniment was provided by one of the medical officers and his accordion. For dinner, we were served fried chicken, barbecue, rolls, cole slaw, potato salad, and apple pie.

At seven, James gave a breakdown of how the torch-lite tours were to be conducted. Tom drew the camp scene along with Eric. Eric was also detailed to be the featured singer for the musical portion of the tours. Ben was sent to the hospital, where he received what I understood was a gruesome wound. I got detailed to lead a picket post. The highlight of the tours for me was as the groups were coming through the lines, the Nissan Pavilion in Manassas was hosting the Dave Mathews Band. You couldn't hear the music, but following the concert, there was a massive fireworks display. It was just far away enough that the horizon was illuminated and you could hear muffled concussions. It truly added to the ambiance of the moment.

The tours ended around 10:30 or 11 o'clock, and a number of us took our leave at this time. The day ended with the organizers producing a couple of cases of beer for the participants.

All in all, this was a first-rate event. Plenty of shade, plenty of food and water, plenty of good conversation and camaraderie. Next year will mark the 140th anniversary of the church's role in the war. James has already asked that we mark this event on our calendar, and I would encourage anyone who wasn't able to make this years event, to join us next year.

Our next event is Gaines' Mill, June 21-23. This year, of course, is the 140th anniversary of the battle which took place on June 27th. Dicky has once again offered-up his house as a place to stay for those arriving on Friday night. The 5th New York is also scheduled to be there. To date, McNierney, Krenitsky, Nottingham, Dicky, Milligan, Mueller, Kullman, McKeegan, Moore, Geottel, and Lynch have said they will be there. Let me know if you're planning to join us ASAP, as we have a couple of special sideline events planned. Additionally, we are talking about having a unit dinner Saturday night. The basic idea would be to collect ten dollars from everyone, go to a local grocery, and pick-up a bunch of steaks, potatoes, and corn and cook 'em over the fire in camp. The alternative is for everyone to fend for themselves. Again, let me know your preferences or plans ASAP, so that everyone can plan accordingly.

Finally, congratulations to Brion McClintock, Sam McClellan, and Andy McKeegan on their recent graduation from high school. My understanding is that Brion will be attending York College of Pennsylvania (My alma mater, and he's still going!). Not sure what Sam or Andy have planned yet, beyond going to Senior week at the beach and chasing bikinis. Good luck guys.

--Duncan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: June 2002 - Gaines Mill - report by Corporal Trussell

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 06/19/2002 09:06:18 PM

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BODY:

The event ended several hours ago. I've made the drive home, unpacked my car, my uniform and equipment are back in the closet for another couple of weeks, I've showered and shaved, and I've got a cold Guinness in front of me. Still, the air conditioning of my apartment seems almost too cool. I can still smell the dust of the Virginia peninsula and the smoke of the

fire in my nose, and ringing in my ears are McNierney's seemingly never-ending commands, "By Platoon, on the right, into line....."

The men began gathering at the home of Dicky Mo on Friday night, June 21st. Riding with me from Pennsylvania were Ryan Drummond and Brion McClintock. We arrived at the Mo residence around ten o'clock. Already there, were Larry Nottingham and Bill Lynch. Shortly after we got there, Dennis Moore and Dick Geottel arrived. Tom Krenitsky would be the last to make it to Dicky's, arriving about an hour later. Larry had brought along a copy of the hour-long Fredericksburg video. For those of you who haven't seen it, it's worth adding to your collection. Copies can be obtained by calling the Fredericksburg National Military Park book store. Dennis, Dick, and Bill decided to do a "reconnaissance in force," and headed for the site to spend the night on the field. The rest of us chose to enjoy one last night at Dicky's house. For those of you who haven't heard, Dicky and Cathy have sold their home and are moving to the Gettysburg vicinity. While it will be great to have Dicky near the spiritual home of the unit, the loss of his home to stay in, marks the end of an era in Company K history. If you've ever stayed there, take time to thank Dicky and his wife for always being willing to provide a dry roof over our heads and their seemingly limitless hospitality. Morning arrived all too quickly. We changed into our uniforms and headed for the field. Arriving on site, it was quickly evident that the Park Service hadn't been idle since we last visited. The open field has been expanded to both the South and the West, giving a much better picture of what the field looked like in 1862. Split rail fence has also been added on the left of the Federal line, and another pair of cannon have been put on the site. We parked along the tree line, unloaded our gear, and made our way to camp.

This year we set up a row of "dog tents" between the Watt house and the shed, as opposed to our usual one shebang at the front of the property. Joining us on the field were Ben "Ferret" Kullman, Bruce Milligan, Eric Mueller, Dave Preston, and Mark McNierney. A total of fourteen men from Company K would take the field this weekend. Our numbers would swell to fifteen the following day when we were joined by Andy McKeegan. The weather was as close to ideal as can be for this time of year on the peninsula. Clear skies, a slight breeze, and not oppressively hot temperatures. Camp was set on the western side of the Watt house, under the shade of the trees.

Joining us for the event were about a half-dozen members of the Fifth New York. Apparently, they are scheduled to appear in mass at next week's "Seven Days" reenactment, and as such, had a low turnout. The upcoming reenactment was also the cause for the noticeable lack of any rebel troops. We had invited the Regulars to participate in the program, but they declined, citing a lack of interest combined with a reluctance to play because of the heat. Their loss. This weekend would prove to be one of the best living histories I've personally ever had the privilege of participating in.

We didn't have long to catch up on what everyone had been doing before Mark had us accoutered and out on the field, running through the maneuvers we would later perform for the crowds. But for the first time, at least since I've been with company, there was a new twist to our drill. We found ourselves with not one, but two officers from our own company. The long awaited debut of Second Lieutenant Moore was finally upon us. Several of the men commented that he looked "Fresh from da West

Point School up 'in da New York State," but Lieutenant Moore quickly proved that his shoulder boards aren't just for show, and that he knows his business. Mark, now joined by an equally enthusiastic and perfection seeking Dennis, quickly had us running through our paces. Given our numbers our officers decided that we would spend considerable time working by platoon. The constant repetition, and fine-tuning of our movements, by Lieutenants McNierney and Moore may have seemed overly zealous, but it certainly showed when we went before the crowd. The performances were scheduled for eleven, one, and three o'clock respectively. Prior to each demonstration, our own ammunition had to be collected from the Park Ranger, Ed Sanders, and then distributed to the men. Following each demo, the ammunition was again collected and returned to the Ranger. Now, while I understand the "logic" behind this procedure, it was in my opinion, the only less than positive aspect of the entire event. Rules, as they say, are rules, and we followed the NPS procedure, but our day could have been a lot less rushed had the Rangers trusted us enough to keep forty rounds of ammunition in our boxes.

I don't know how much advertisement, if any, the event receives, but we had fairly sizable turnouts of tourists throughout the weekend. Our demonstrations basically consisted of a talk by the Ranger explaining the battle, a talk by me explaining the Reserves and Company K, and then the drill and firing demo by the company. After each demonstration, the public was invited back into the camp for more detailed presentations. Tom laid out his impressive display of soldier's personal effects. Eric did his now infamous uniform presentation. Bruce's recently purchased toy muskets were quickly put to use as a new generation of recruits got their first introduction to Mr. Casey's choreography. The rest of us answered questions from what quickly became a sizable crowd. Adding to the camp scene was the latest addition to our camp equipment, an accurate reproduction hardtack crate, filled with G.H. Bent crackers. Just another example of your dues, and Larry, at work.

Around mid-afternoon, we had a mail call, with most of the men receiving letters from home. Eric and Bruce discovered that they are to be fathers. The only problem is, there is but one girl involved and she is the minister's daughter. Time will tell as to who will be changing diapers in the future and who will breath a sigh of relief. Ferret has learned that his "darling wife" has succumbed to the "dragon" and has a monkey on her back. Ryan's "wife" is apparently receiving quite a bit of "help" around the farm from his cousin. Tom's wife reported the goings on around the farm. The Lieutenant's "wife" spent the bulk of her correspondence attempting to defend herself from a yet undelivered piece of mail from the Lieutenant's "mother." I do believe she doth protest to much sir! My own "wife" is expecting our sixth child, and is protesting the fact bitterly.

The letters are the product and brainchild of Andrea Kent, who took considerable time and effort into insuring that we would enjoy a unique aspect to the weekend. She has graciously agreed to continue the correspondence. If you want to write back to your "wife/mother/girlfriend" send your reply to me via email, and I will forward it to her. Be sure to note the names and the color of ink used in your letter so that you will get the proper reply. The next mail call will be at Berkeley Hundred, July 20-21.

In addition to our three demos, we were placed in formation for the arrival and review of Ed Bearss and one of his busloads of battlefield

tours. As he passed us, Bearss quizzed us about the brigade commanders of the Reserve Division. A quiz, I might add, we passed with flying colors. With the departure of the tourists, the Company was treated to a battlefield tour by one of the Rangers. Larry and I took the opportunity to make a trip to the "commissary wagons" and retrieve our rations. Arriving back on the field, we enjoyed a feast of first-rate proportions. Might not have been the most authentic in nature, but not much beats the taste of a thick steak cooked over an open fire, good conversation, and something cool to drink. The Virginians have enjoyed a bumper crop of watermelons this year, and so Larry and I lost no sleep over our foraging a pair of melons for the company. There was some singing, but given the efforts of the day, the camp was quiet by midnight.

Sunday morning dawned early with a fast-burning dew that promised the day would be considerably warmer than the previous one. The morning started slowly with the men cooking their breakfasts and attempting to clean their weapons. Several men took the opportunity to walk over portions of the battlefield. Joining us on the field, as I mentioned earlier, was Andy McKeegan. Andy spent Saturday at Fort Frederick, MD, re-shooting some scenes for the forthcoming "Gods and Generals" movie. According to Andy, these were to be scenes for Fredericksburg, and as such, he spent the day in a great coat, then got up at o'dark thirty to drive a couple of hours and join us on the field. Nice effort Andy!

At this point we took a group photo, or what might be better described as a really big portrait of John Griffiths. John recently underwent surgery which, although proves him to be just as healthy as ever, has probably left the lad in some discomfort. Once we get the prints, we'll be sending him a get well card from the company.

Again the tourists began to arrive, and with them, the demonstrations began again in earnest. Dave made the initial presentations this time and I narrated the company's movements on the field. The zouaves had departed the previous evening and so we had the site to ourselves. The day passed quickly, at least for me. Mark and Dennis continued to add to our knowledge of drill, with the reintroduction of guard mount. While I may be mistaken, I think the crowds were somewhat larger than Saturday's, and spent more time examining our camp.

I should note at this point that this was the first time, at least since I joined the company, that we ended the event with more guys than we started with. Everybody stayed until the end of the event, despite the fact that some were facing a drive home of more than a couple of hours. Way to go guys, hopefully, this will become the norm as opposed to the exception.

After the three o'clock performance, we quickly broke camp, policed the area, and made our way to the cars to change back into our 21st century clothes and personnas. By four thirty, good-byes having been exchanged, everybody was on the road. The gods continued to smile on me at least, as I ran into a minimum of traffic on the way home.

So ends yet another living history at Gaines' Mill, Virginia. Even though it was the 140th anniversary of the battle, the crowds were the same, the site looked basically the same, and there was no hint of anything out of the ordinary, but still there was, something special about the event. I don't think it was necessarily the fact we had a good turnout, or that everyone stayed for the entire event, it wasn't specifically the mail call, the meal, or any one thing that was said. What it was, was the effort that each individual put into making sure everyone else had a good

time. This was truly a team effort on the part of the Company as a whole. The end result was that both we and the spectators experienced something unique and different from the typical, run-of-the-mill living history demos.

Mark and Dennis were superb in their efforts. Dennis is impressive in his new role, and gave the impression he has been wearing the shoulder boards for years. Tom was, as usual, always keeping the men on track, and as a result, keeping the officers happy. Eric and Dave did nonstop presentations of their uniforms and equipment. Bruce's initiative in buying the "muskets" has added a unique dimension to our repertoire. Shortly, we will add another ten "muskets" to the Company's arsenal and Tom has volunteered to construct a period crate to transport them in. Bill, Ben, Dick, and Dicky, kept us laughing with a nonstop run of quick wit. Larry's provision of the hardtack box and crackers, as well as, all his efforts over the fire cooking steaks, kept everyone well fed. And of course, it's always great to see old/young faces back in the ranks. Ryan, as evidenced by his brand-new Schyukill Arsenal jacket is a first-rate tailor. Now, if we can just get him to make stuff for the rest of us. Brion brought along some of his Bucktail equipment, including a Sharps Rifle, which I think at one time or another, everyone managed to handle and admire. Forget it lads, your lot is to shoulder a '42 and load the buck and ball! To Andy, thanks for making the effort to join us on Sunday. It would have been great, if you could have been there both days, but hey, a hundred bucks is a hundred bucks. Finally we owe a big "thank you" to Andrea for the letters. It takes a lot of time not only to write the letters, but to come up with a dozen or more different scenarios, and then wind them together as she did. Hopefully, this is something that everyone enjoyed and that we can continue to do in the future.

Our next "official" event is the Berkeley Hundred living history on July 20-21. On June 29-30, several members of the company will be participating with the Mifflin Guard as they do their battlefield walk from the Pennsylvania Monument to the Wheatfield. Contact Larry if you're interested in participating. Of course on July 5-7, Gettysburg will be the site of the annual reenactment. A number of guys from the company will be going to the event as individuals. Others will be attending the Cashtown Inn festivities. If you need any details, give me a call or email me. On August 10-11, we have an event scheduled for City Point, near Petersburg, VA. This is another James Owens production, and like the first two at Goose Creek Bridge and Mt. Zion Church, I think we can expect a first-rate experience. That same weekend there is also the possibility of participating in a combined infantry and artillery demonstration at the Pennsylvania Monument. I will forward details as they become available, but in the meantime, let me know your preferences as to which event we want to attend. Planning is now underway for our own living history event at Gettysburg on August 17-18. This will be a very special event, as we will be recreating the actions taken by Company K on July 2nd, 1863. We need a MAXIMUM turnout on the part of the unit for this one. If we get it, we can field over 20 men, just from our own company. Invitations are being made to a some guys from other units who have joined us in the past, and so we have the potential for more than thirty guys in the ranks. Mark your calendars now, put in for the day off, do whatever you have to, but lets try and make this our biggest turnout of the year. On that note, we are averaging around twelve guys

per event which is way up from last year. Way to go guys, lets keep it going.

--Duncan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: June 2002 - with the Mifflin Guard in the Wheatfield - report by Private Milligan

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 06/25/2002 09:06:37 PM

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BODY:

..for the first time in 139 years.

Yesterday, Larry, Mark, Dave Cohill and myself joined the Mifflin Guard to have the opportunity to take part in a truly history event, the return of a brigade of the Army of the Potomac to the Wheatfield at Gettysburg. For those who were not there yesterday, i.e., most of us, I can only say one thing: it was awesome. Perhaps the Mifflin Guard doesn't have the best impressions, but by thunder, when on the field, they look like a regiment.

In fact, yesterday, two regiments, as the 250 or so of us who were there were divided into the 61st New York and the 81st Pennsylvania. A third "regiment" (the 148th Penna. I think) of spectators -- estimated to be at least 500 in number -- was formed, and given their own officers, NCOs, national standard and color guard. Very few of them fell out, over about three hours and a roundtrip hike of at least three miles. Most of the time, there were another hundred or so spectators hovering on the fringes of the event, plus we could see necks craning from as far away as Little Round Top, where the late-afternoon crowd was clearly fascinated at the sight of a Union regiment issuing forth from the woods to their north. Around six or so, we finally got going, after a prayer by Father Corby, the regimental chaplain (Larry kept muttering about "those damned papists," to which I, as a good Scottish Presbyterian, can only concur), and set out across the fields and through the woods. It was quite an impressive column, with the three regiments marching side by side. When we reached the Wheatfield road, ranger Scott Hartwig gave a fairly detailed account of what happened that day, to that brigade, and then we marched into the field itself, where the regiments all deployed. The two reenactor regiments delivered four crashing volleys, and then, to the

wild cheering of all of 700-800 of us, we charged across the field, across the stream, and up the hill and to glory. And then an extended period of gasping for breath and emptying canteens. It was an incredible event; even better than last year's Willard's Brigade event, and my only regret is that this year -- unlike last -- the Pennsylvania Cable Network was not on hand to videotape.

Bruce

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: July 2002 - Harrison's Landing - report by Private Bordonaro

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 07/19/2002 09:06:57 PM

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BODY:

Friends,

The 1st PA, Co. K, was represented at the Harrison's Landing event by Mark, Tom, Dennis, Andy, and myself. The site was excellent. When the camp was set up it looked like a page from history, with the James River as a backdrop. The camp was very military-looking and it was run in a very military style, with proper guard mounts, music, cooking, and drill. On Saturday night there was live entertainment, consisting of a fiddle/guitar player, and a banjo player/singer. Various members of the regiment stepped forward to sing. Members of the 83rd PA put on a hilarious segment of a Shakespeare comedy. The night ended with the playing of "Taps" by Jari Villanueva. Harrison's Landing was the site of the creation of the bugle call "Taps", of course, in July, 1862. There was quite a bit of first-person interaction. I was involved in an impromptu "learning how to write" scenario. What happened was that I signed my name with an "X" at pay call. Later on, one of the guys from the 83rd PA offered to help me learn how to write my name. So, as we were sitting under one of the outstanding brush arbors that had been set up he showed me how to write my name. It was pretty neat when a couple of folks who happened to be wandering by stopped by to see what we were up to. I was really into it. I even felt a true rush of pleasure when I accomplished writing my name "for the first time". There was a film crew there at one point. I don't know if I'll get left on the cutting room floor, but they filmed me crushing coffee beans. (I never dreamed that

crushing coffee beans would be my ticket to Hollywood!) The film crew was actually primarily there to do a piece on the history of "Taps", I believe. There was a lot of times when people weren't in first-person, but nobody seemed to be freaking out about it. Some of the guys in my Company K felt that some of the folks in the two "campaigner" companies were kind of looking down their noses at us a little, but I didn't notice that myself.

All in all, I thought it was a great event. There was no firing of muskets all weekend, but I didn't miss that too much, especially when I got home with a clean musket! The guard duty was kind of long for some folks. They kept soldiers on for 12 hours, with one hour on, two off. That is how it was done, I guess, but it's a long tour of duty. I lucked out myself, so maybe that's why I enjoyed the event so much. My turn for guard duty didn't come until 8 on Sunday morning, and I was pressed into duty as a "Corporal of the Guard". So, the only time I actually had to stand guard was to relieve the folks who wanted to get their image taken by a wet-plate artist. Then, guard was dismissed early (a little after noon, I think because of the heat- someone had almost passed out around 10 A.M.), so I only had to walk a beat for about 40 minutes. It was a long 40 minutes, due to the heat, but I still had it easy. I think the rest of our guys had to do a full 12 hour tour.

If you've never been to Harrison's Landing, I would highly recommend stop there the next time you're in the area (it's very close to Malvern Hill). Hope to see everybody at our Living History in August.

-Joe

PS The five of us had our image taken, so hopefully we'll be able to scan that for your viewing pleasure (?) at some point.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: August 2002 - Gettysburg Living History - report by Corporal Trussell

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 08/19/2002 09:07:16 PM

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BODY:

What to write? Most of us were there. This was a really good event and I think everyone had a good time.

For those of the company who weren't able to take the field, the plan was to try to do something a little different this weekend. Not only did the National Park Service give us permission to conduct a march from the Pennsylvania Monument to Little Round Top, but we also wanted to try and extend our repertoire of camp demonstrations. In both these endeavors, we were successful.

Turnout, while not reaching the initial projections, was higher than it has been in previous years. Taking the field for the weekend, or at least part of it, were McNeirney, Moore, Krenitsky, Nottingham, Dicky, Bordonaro, Kullman, McKeegan, Milligan, Mueller, Rader, Schmied, Drummond, McClintock, Miller, and myself. We were also joined by Jack Thompson and Marcellus. Several of the guys had 21st century obligations which required them to leave the event early. Hats off to them for at least taking the time to come out and support the company, despite long drives or prior commitments.

This year, with the addition of Jack Thompson's wall tent, we setup a company street rather than our usual bivouac-style collection of shebangs. We set the tents along the tree line which provided some shade for most of the afternoon. Prior to each demonstration Jack Thompson led the company through "load in nine times" for the benefit of the tourists. Our first two demonstrations followed the usual script; a short talk on the background of the unit, a demonstration of the School of the Company, followed by a firing demonstration. Back in camp, Eric conducted his uniform talk, Tom displayed his personal effects, Jack Thompson gave several impromptu talks on a variety of topics, and the rest of us answered the questions of the tourists. We were supposed to have had a mail call, but because of the inefficiency of the modern-day postal service, it has been postponed until the Antietam event.

The wooden rifles, which have been provided by Bruce Milligan, were put to use and have proven to be a great addition to our presentations. At this point we have four in company stores, with another ten having been ordered. It will truly be something to be able to put a dozen kids through the School of the Soldier at our next living history event. It was during this time that a film crew arrived, who were putting together a video for small children about gun safety. Tom and I were both interviewed. My understanding is that this will be part of news program geared toward New York school children. I was told that I would be sent a copy when they finish editing it, and will let you know when it arrives. We began to form for the march to Little Round Top around mid-afternoon. Initially, we were joined by a dozen or so tourists. McNeirney led us as the first platoon, Thompson led the tourists as second platoon. Upon reaching the summit or Little Round Top, we were joined by a number of other tourists, as well as a troop of Boy Scouts which allowed us to recreate, to the man, Company K as it would have appeared on July 2nd, 1863. Larry performed all the narration for this portion of the program, and did an outstanding job. We had initially thought of hiring a licensed battlefield guide for this job. I'm glad we saved our money, as what Larry provided us was far greater than anything we could have paid for. With a cry of "Revenge for Reynolds" we stepped-off and began to make our way down the slopes. Acting as a file closer, I can attest to the fact that we created quite a scene. The crest of Little Round Top was lined with people watching the movement. The ground, as uneven and rocky as it was, covered with high grass and weeds, and temperatures reaching the high eighties, posed the same obstacles that faced the soldiers of '63.

It was truly a sight to watch the line, or at least the semblance of a line, make its way down the slope. About fifty yards from the stone wall, McNeirney ordered the line to charge, and in fairly short order, the line reached the wall. Larry finished his presentation, and from there it was a matter of moving back to the road and up the hill to the parking lot where we had left a pair of coolers filled with bottled water. Each participant had been issued an identity card which gave them the name of an original member of the company and explained what had happened to that soldier. The tourists seemed to enjoy this aspect of the program as well. At least one pair of tourists enjoyed the company of the unit so much, that they marched all the way back to camp with the unit. I should mention too, that we were joined in this portion of the program by descendants of William T. Jobe, an original member of Company K. Earlier in the day, a descendent of Craig Wisotzky, the first member of the company to fall in battle, joined us at the Pennsylvania Monument. Following the march, Krenitsky, Lee, and I went to gather rations for dinner. This was the second time we have grilled steaks on the field and once again, it met with great success. Steaks, salad, cold drinks...does it get any better? Who knew we had a chef in our midst in the form of Henry Schmied? He even had a period chef's cap! There was more than certainly more than enough dinner for everyone. Following dinner, there was the usual good conversation and some singing of songs. As the evening progressed several members of the company left to either walk the fields or venture into town.

Sunday the ranks were considerably reduced, and it was decided to limit our demonstrations to the basics. We conducted three demonstrations, each one well attended by tourists. By three-thirty, we were breaking camp and making our way home.

Again, this was a really successful event. I am convinced that the spectators came away with considerably more than they would, had we not, or had another unit, been at the Pennsylvania Monument. Everyone was involved in making this event work. Someone in the unit is really going to have to step-up to fill Eric's shoes when he deploys for Korea later this year. In earlier posts, I coined the phrase "three-ring circus" for what I envisioned our camp would look like. I think we achieved that. The crowds had several displays to look at, and I don't think anyone walked away without getting their questions answered, or without a better understanding of the Federal soldier.

We initially had over twenty guys say they would be attending this event. In point of fact, we got about two-thirds of that number, but still, it was a larger showing than either of last year's Gettysburg living history events. Several guys, as I wrote earlier, had commitments which required them to leave the event early. To them I would say thanks for taking the time to attend at least part, or the bulk, of the event. Thanks to Andy McKeegan who got up at 4 a.m. and drove the five hours to Gettysburg. Dennis Moore joined us around midday, and he and Andy stayed until the end of the march and then made the five hour trek back to their homes Saturday night. Joe Bordonaro left early Saturday morning to participate in a dedication for a victim of the 9-11 attacks who was both a firefighter and a reenactor. And finally to Ben Kullman, AKA "Ferret," who lost a member of his family this past week, the unit sends its condolences and thanks you for even making part of the event.

Again, by all accounts, the tourists, Tom Holbrook, and the other rangers of the Park Service, this was an extremely successful event. I personally

had a number of people approach me and state that what we had done was one of the best, and most informative, living history events they had attended. Despite a disappointing lack of projected numbers and some truly oppressive weather, the unit put on a program that will in many respects serve as a measuring stick for other living history events. We are scheduled to be at the Pennsylvania Monument again in October on the weekend of the 19th and 20th. Depending upon the weather, and the conditions of the ground, we have the option of repeating the Little Round Top portion of our program. It has been suggested that should we do this again, we omit the march from the Pennsylvania Monument and simply meet the tourists at the crossroads. This, like everything, is open to debate and can be discussed at our next event; Antietam. Thanks again to everyone who helped make this event a success. I hope to see you all on the field at Antietam, September 13th, 14th, and 15th.  
-Duncan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: November 2002 - Phoenixville & Remembrance Day  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 11/09/2002 09:01:06 PM

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BODY:

For those of you who expressed an interest in the Veterans' Day Parade in Phoenixville (actually, Paddy says it's not a parade, but rather 2 ceremonies and a march in between), here are directions: It's on St. Mary's St. If you are coming off of Rt. 23 from Valley Forge, you make a right on Main St. (looking at my Street Atlas, it looks like Main Street is Route 29 which turns into Route 113- Joe) and follow that all the way till you get to High St. Make a Left. Stay on for a few blocks and make right on Franklin Ave., the next traffic light. Then about 20-30 feet after that make a right onto St. Mary's St. Follow down for a few blocks, you'll see a white church on your left (St. Mary's Catholic Church). We'll be forming in the street there. We are supposed to form up at 12:30. The event begins at 1 PM. -- Joe

For those who are interested in Remembrance Day activities, we could all go to breakfast together at the Avenue around 8:30. At 10 there is a dedication in the Evergreen Cemetery of a Statue of Elizabeth Thorne as

a tribute to the women in the Civil War. We form up at noon at the middle school, parade is at 1. There is a ceremony at Lincoln Cemetery at 3:30 for those who would like to attend. Hope to see you there. -- Larry

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: November 2002 - Remembrance Day  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 11/17/2002 09:00:17 PM

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BODY:

A couple of Remembrance Day reminders.

"Hotel Nottingham" opens for business on Wednesday, November 13. Larry mentioned the possibility of meeting for breakfast at the "Avenue Diner" on Steinwehr Avenue at 8:30 on Saturday morning. They will be dedicating the newest statue at Evergreen Cemetery at 10. This one is to honor the woman who lived in the gate house at the time of the battle and then was charged with burying the dead, despite the fact that she was well along in her pregnancy. The parade begins to form, behind the middle school, at noon. The parade will begin at 1. Immediately following the parade, we will be holding our own ceremony at the site of Minnigh's grave in the National Cemetery.-At 3:30, there will be a ceremony at the Lincoln Cemetery. It's just a stone's throw from Larry's house, and I know several of the guys from the Company plan on attending. At some point, we will be holding ceremony at the Company K monument in the town square. My guess would be around 4 or 5 p.m. Dinner is at the Dobbin House. Like last year it is \$15 per person and begins at 7:30. We will present the awards following dinner.

Hope everyone has a safe trip to Gettysburg, and I will see you all this weekend.

Duncan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: January 2003 - Meeting  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 12/30/2002 03:03:39 PM

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BODY:  
The meeting is apparently scheduled for Saturday January 18, 2003.  
Further details will be forthcoming.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: 2003 Meeting  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 01/14/2003 02:12:25 AM

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BODY:  
The meeting is finalized for 10AM, Saturday January 18 at Larry's house.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: January 2003 - Site Updates  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 01/30/2003 02:35:17 PM  
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BODY:  
Added the Event Calendar (such as I have it) for 2003 and updated Milligan's picture on the Soldier of the Year page as a nod to his vanity. But what a fine looking soldier he makes!

Still looking for any additional or more concrete info on 2003 events and also for specifics on last year's Soldier of the Year, etc awardees so I can make a 2002 SotY page. If anybody has info, email me.

-Your Humble Webmaster  
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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Harrisburg St. Patrick's Day Parade  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 02/14/2003 07:22:34 PM  
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BODY:  
Here are the highlights of what I received from the organizers today:

On behalf of the 2003 Parade Committee, I would like to welcome you to the line of march for the Harrisburg Saint Patrick's Day Parade to be held on Saturday, March 8, 2003, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

For this years parade, we will be forming and dissolving the parade on the Commonwealth grounds behind the State Capitol Building. We look forward to having you in the parade and helping us celebrate the spirit

of the Irish and Irish America with our Grand Marshall James Gallagher, the national President of the Irish American Unity Conference based in Washington, D.C.

We have been assigned to Division 1, "Leinster"

Please be at the parade staging area no later than NOON on March 8. The formation area opens at 11:00 a.m. (parking will be tight. I recommend getting there early. -DBT.)

Uniform will be light marching order, haversacks optional. The parade staging area is located on the Capitol Complex grounds which are located behind the Commonwealth State Capitol Building in downtown Harrisburg. Our staging area entrance is on Commonwealth Avenue. To enter, turn right from Forester Street. See directions, listed below.

The parade officially begins at 1:30 p.m. The parade should last about 2-2 1/2 hours and ends back at the staging area. Commonwealth regulations prohibit vendors on the Capitol Complex, so either eat well beforehand, or bring something with you.

In the event of inclement weather, the parade will be canceled no later than 10:00 a.m. on the morning of the parade. If you haven't heard anything to the contrary, you can assume the parade will be held. The parade telephone number is 717-232-6151. There will be a recorded message stating whether the parade has been canceled or not.

Parade route: From the Capitol Complex we march along North Street. We then turn left onto 2nd Street, which will have us marching against the normal flow of traffic. From 2nd Street, we turn left onto Market Street, then left onto 3rd Street, then right onto Walnut, and then left onto Commonwealth, which puts us back at the starting point. All in all, it's probably no more than a mile and a half.

**Directions to the staging area:**

From Gettysburg and points south, take route 15 north. You'll pass the Camp Hill Mall on your left. Starting with the traffic light at the mall, you'll go through two traffic lights. At the third light, turn right onto Market Street. There is a Friendly's restaurant at the intersection. Follow Market Street through Camp Hill and Lemoyne. Eventually, you will come to a traffic light at the intersection of Market and 3rd Street. There is an out-of-business Hardee's to left. Continue on Market, getting into the extreme right-hand lane. At the next light, you'll be turning to the right, and crossing the Susquehanna River, via the Market Street Bridge. Once across the river, go to the second light, and turn left onto 2nd Street. Follow 2nd Street, staying in the right-hand lane, until you get to Forester Street. Turn right onto Forester, and then turn right onto Commonwealth Avenue, which is our staging area. The organizers say that as you pull into the entrance there will be a Capitol policeman there. "simply roll down any window in your vehicle and hold up the number of fingers that correspond to your Division number," which in our case is one. Hey, it's their parade. I'll leave it to you as to which finger you want to hold up, but I'll

warn you, these guys carry guns and they don't get many opportunities to use them. Additionally, if you look at a map, you may be tempted to take the Harvey Taylor Bridge across the river, as it looks to be a more direct route. Unfortunately, the bridge is under construction and is typically closed to motor traffic on the weekends.

If you're coming from Interstate 81 north or south, take the Enola exit which is on the West bank of the Susquehanna River. Follow Front Street and then turn left onto the Market Street Bridge. There will be a Catalano's Restaurant on your left when you make the turn onto the bridge. Follow the directions above.

If you're coming from 83 south, take the Second Street exit, just as you cross the Susquehanna River. At the bottom of the ramp, there's a traffic light. Continue straight, following the directions above.

From anywhere else, or if you have any questions, just give me a call at 717-761-3842.

I need to provide the organizers with a count of how many guys are going to be participating, so let me know ASAP. Hope to see you all there.

-- Duncan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: AAR from Jim Thorpe, PA, and New York City

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 03/18/2003 07:38:07 PM

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BODY:

Two parades in two days.

Dave Cohill, Bill Lynch, and I left the Harrisburg area around eight-thirty on Sunday morning for Jim Thorpe, PA, for their annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade. The drive was an easy one; Interstate 81 to 78, north on the Northeastern Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and then a series of two-lane roads into the town itself. Jim Thorpe is nestled into a tight little valley. The buildings are all rather

Germanic looking and old. The town has much of the same feel as Harper's Ferry, the way the buildings are backed right into the steeply rising mountains. It would appear the main businesses are tourism and bars, as both types of establishments are plentiful.

We parked near the railroad tracks without any problem, although the lot was filling up fast. Apparently the St. Pat's parade is a major event in the town. We had a little time to scout around. At one of the shops we stopped in, (a sporting goods store specializing in kayaks, bikes, climbing equipment and paintball supplies) we found out about a group that tries to coordinate paintball and historic battles. For anyone who wants to put on their kit and go play "Gettysburg" with a paintball gun, I have the brochures. They apparently do Rev War and WWII too. On the whole, it's a pretty neat little town with lots of character, and I'd be willing to bet, lots of characters.

Originally, we had been led to believe that we would be marching with the Phoenix Iron Parads, a progressive-minded group like ourselves. Instead it was primarily a mainstream endeavor with an emphasis on burning powder. There were three "companies;" all-in-all, I'd say there were around fifty or sixty participants. In addition to Dave, Bill, and myself, we were joined by Vance Sheffer and Richie Dunn from the 2nd Maryland. Jamie Ivers and Scott Rader came to the parade in uniform, but owing to the ill effects of the previous night's festivities, declined to march, or join us for the trip to NY. We were assigned to a company made-up of primarily the 33rd New Jersey. These guys sport a sort of chasseur/zouave style uniform.

We were transported about three miles by school bus, uphill, and just outside of the town. After about an hour we started off, down the hill, back into town. About every hundred or so yards, the companies would stop and fire a volley, or two. The crowds loved it. None of us fired, as we hadn't brought any powder, and besides, nobody wanted to dirty their weapons prior to the NYC parade. The streets in the town are pretty narrow, and they were packed with people. Personally, I questioned the wisdom of firing in such tight confines, but I wasn't in charge, and none of us were firing to begin with. As I stated earlier, it doesn't appear that there's much in this town to do, so when something like a parade comes along, EVERYBODY turns out in force.

It seemed like every house was having a party. Lots of Irish and American flags, lots of beer, lots of excited people. As excited as people were to see us, and as loud as they cheered when the companies fired, I think they were a lot more excited to see "Sponge Bob," who was marching behind us.

There were a lot of little vignettes that stick out from this event. Dave cutting his finger on the bayonet lug on his '42 and bleeding profusely, the ceremony at the jail where the Molly Maguires were hung, the lady who ran out between the ranks with two trays full of shots of Jameson's Whiskey, the guys wearing IRA tee-shirts, the officer of the 33rd ordering his guys to "double load, and ram both tubes!" There was a certain "wildness/devil may care" kind of attitude you just don't see

anymore. Obviously, the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board doesn't know about the existence of Jim Thorpe.

The parade lasted about two hours. When it was over, we retired back to my car and enjoyed a Guinness, or two, while we waited for the traffic to thin out. As I said, the place was packed, and with only two-lane roads leading out of town, it took about two hours before the place was cleared out enough to get back on the road.

This was a pretty neat little parade and one we should consider adding to the 2004 schedule, so long as we took enough of our own guys and McNierney, so that we could march as our own company.

The drive to New York City didn't take very long, considering we stopped for some dinner at a Burger King near the Pennsylvania/New Jersey border. The traffic wasn't very heavy, and even at the Holland Tunnel we didn't have to wait more than five or six minutes. We found the 69th Armory without a hitch, and as in previous years, we found a parking space right around the corner from the entrance. Everything in the Armory is pretty much the same as it was last year. We dropped our stuff off in the weight room downstairs and made for the Officer's Club. The Club recently had its floors refinished, so they did ask that we remove our brogans. Owing to the fact that the parade was on a Monday this year, there wasn't as much of a crowd as the last two years. We had a couple of beers, got some pizza from across the street, and were asleep by around midnight.

Monday morning we were up around six o'clock. There was a lot of activity on the part of the guard, who were running around trying to get ready to march. Seems like the whole modern-day 69th is made-up of nothing but NCOs and Officers. I think I saw only a half-dozen enlisted men all day. We did the usual breakfast at the deli/grocery across the street. Our first formation was at nine o'clock. All total, I think there were probably about 120-130 guys making-up the Civil War contingent. Dave, Bill, and I were assigned to the Second Company. Here the parade fell into a predictable pattern. We formed-up, marched to the subway, boarded the trains, got off at Grand Central, re-formed in the street, and marched to our step-off position. This year, instead of waiting in front of Connelly's Bar, they parked us in the "Diamond District." No girls trying to flash us from the windows, but certainly a lot just walking around. Here we waited for about an hour and a half to two hours, before we got to start on our way around twelve thirty. We did the usual stop at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. I think there were more people along the parade route this year, probably because we were marching a lot earlier. There was also a lot less starting and stopping this year. We would slow, mark time, and then move off again, but there weren't the prolonged "stop and wait a couple of minutes," as in previous years. There was also the same old argument as to which way we should be dressing the lines. Some correctly argued for left-dress, while others insisted that we should dress to the center, a la the green line painted down the center of Fifth Avenue. McNierney where are you when we need you?!

The parade was over pretty quickly. This year's weather was even warmer than last years, with temperature somewhere in the high sixties. After a short delay, we made our way back onto the subway, and back to the Armory. Not staying this year, we packed our stuff, loaded the car, grabbed some food at Ray's Pizza, and headed for home.

The final analysis...It was a good time. Admittedly, Jim Thorpe was a little weird, but it was fun. I think if we had the bulk of our Company there, combined with some of the Second Marylanders and maybe their musicians, we could have a first-rate time there, and really shine to boot. I think the thing to do, might be to try and rent/borrow an RV, and get up there the night before and take advantage of some of the local establishments. New York was, well, New York. The numbers were about a third of what they have been the past two years. Obviously, Saturday parades allow more guys to attend than a midweek affair, and unfortunately that won't change until 2008-2009. Still it was a good time and it is still a thrill to be marching under arms down Fifth Avenue in front of 250,000 people.

The next Company K event is drill, April 12, at Spero's farm in Gettysburg. Hopefully we'll have a strong turnout so that we can make it truly worthwhile. I'll look forward to seeing everyone there.

Duncan

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EXTENDED BODY:

I second Duncan's comments on the Jim Thorpe gig. A righteous little town that really knows how to do St. Patrick's Day right! I saw more energy in the couple of hours we were in that town than in two years of NYC together.

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: Jo-Boo's Excellent Adventure, or Fort McHenry: Day One

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: 1

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 04/28/2003 08:21:27 PM

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BODY:

Despite a rainy morning, by noon, the rain had stopped, and before I go further, this is a friendly appeal for those of you who live within

reasonable driving distance will consider coming tomorrow, as it will be 71 degrees and sunny, and this really is a good event, and next year, when the Constellation comes over, it will be even better, and my theory is the more of us who support it, the more they will remember us next year.

Attending from Company K were Sgt. Krenitsky, Corporal Trussell, Privates Schmied and Milligan, and Private Donovan (what is your last name, Donovan?), who drove 12 hours from Charlotte just for today, and who is on his way home even as I write this.

Attendance for today, which was originally expected to be around 135, was reduced by half because of the weather, but we still had four small companies, and 70 or so muskets in the field, for our short battalion drill and our two dress parades. Tomorrow we expect to do some firing, as well as do our own version of drill, with our wooden muskets and hapless spectators. As usual, the Zouaves did their popular bayonet drill, and Sergeant Krenitsky and Corporal Trussell were later observed attempting to replicate some of the Zoozoo moves -- there were no fatalities reported.

You all know what sort of things <strong>we</strong> did today, and will do tomorrow, so I won't ramble. Since only Duncan and I will be there from today's contingent, however, I hope that whomever lives within a couple of hours of Baltimore will consider joining us. The first dress parade is at ten, and the last one is at three, so it will not be too onerous a day, and my guess is there will be several thousand visitors to the fort tomorrow. If I have to bribe you, I will -- anyone going north gets their first Guinness free, if they wish to stop there on the way home, at An Poitin Stil, an Irish pub about one mile east of I-83 in Timonium, just north of the Baltimore Beltway. I'll do whatever it takes!

Jo-Boo had a productive day. After getting his photo taken at the Fort, he commanded the five of us to escort him to his local temple (there seems to be one in every town we visit), the Temple of Hooters. First, though, we were obliged to take the Water Taxi to Baltimore's Inner Harbor, so the locals could play their favorite game (the "Who Are You Guys Supposed to Be?" game -- there were four votes for "Confederates," and one woman, on the Water Taxi ride back, guessed right, for which she got her photo taken with us, with the promise it will be emailed to her).

After disembarking, His Booness demanded to be taken to the Constellation, a.k.a. the "Consternation," when they saw us approaching, but after a quick body search, we were permitted aboard. Able Seaman Comfort, whom we had intended to visit, had, alas, eluded the guard boat, and was presumably at large somewhere in the city, when we got there.

Jo-Boo then directed us to march in route step through the Inner Harbor to the Temple. After realizing who we were, the staff quickly seated us, and he took a position of honor in the center of the table. The usual food was eaten; the usual drooling comments were made about the waitresses, and the usual small talk was talked. Some photos were taken,

including a special photo for Private Mueller, whom this writer predicts will resign his commission, and rush to Baltimore, as soon as he receives it. As well he should, as it is a photo of his future wife.

Jo-Boo and his escort then proceeded to visit several other vessels in the Harbor, including a U.S. Army tug (?), the topsail schooner Clipper City (scene of this writer's most recent wedding, which marked the high point of his most recent disastrous marriage), and then the Revolutionary War brig (I think), the Sultana, not to be confused with the one that blew up in 1865.

The triumphant procession then paraded back to the Water Taxi, which returned us to our point of embarkation, after which the five (I mean six) of us began our own various journeys home, some to return, and some not.

A minor highlight of the day was the appearance of a man whom I can only describe as J.E.B. Stuart's grandfather, with his wife, who showed up later in the afternoon, gaily attired in his Confederate general's uniform. I knew he must be older than J.E.B., as his plume had turned white, from its original yellow. Inasmuch as several civilian friends (no names, please!) of Company K had been discouraged from coming in period attire this weekend, and were severely disappointed as a result, I found this a wee bit amusing.

I hope we will see a few replacements tomorrow. Remember -- free Guinness!

Pvt. Milligan, reporting

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Goose Creek AAR  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 06/16/2003 04:09:16 PM

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BODY:

It wasn't quite the sun of Austerlitz, but the sun did indeed shine on Goose Creek Bridge, near Upperville, Virginia, when a number of us did a Living History there as part of the annual Hunt Country Stable Tour.

The National Weather Service once again confirmed my suspicion that the way they make their forecasts is to have a blindfolded citizen throw a dart at a huge revolving board which has sections on it labeled "Heavy Rain," "Sunny all Day," "Partly Cloudy and Mild, Except During the Hurricane," etc., as the predicted deluge did not luge on us.

Present from Company K were Privates Lynch, Bordanaro, McKeegan, Trussell, and your humble correspondent. Ben Kullman put in a guest appearance later in the day, and we were happy to see him. We were joined by James Owens and a tall contingent of his unit, as well as the 10th Maine Cavalry (I think), both mounted and dismounted. Last year's adversaries, a spiffy Reb cavalry unit, declined to take the field, in part, no doubt, because in places the field they would have taken was almost two feet deep in water.

Surely one of the highlights of the day was the reassignment of Company K to the engineers, as we put our shoulders behind Lester Shumacher's pickup, in a noble effort to help him extricate said vehicle and his horse trailer from a muddy hillside. After an hour of battle with the mud, various boards, and battalions of black ants (filling in for the absent Johnnies), Lester got back onto the pavement.

Goose Creek is one of my favorite events, in part because of the pristine appearance of the field, where a savage fight was fought between J.E.B. Stuart -- screening Lee's advance to Gettysburg -- and the Union cavalry. There is not a modern building in sight, and we guarded the bridge all day without seeing a single tractor trailer or cruise ship.

Although small in number, I would have to honestly say our drill was near-perfect, and when we discharged our weapons, our volleys were perfect, and congratulations to the lads for being so precise, after such a long layoff (I don't think any of us fired at Fort McHenry, and not all of us were at McDowell).

We also did what has now become our patented drill of future recruits, using the wooden muskets. This part of our program is always very popular, with both parents and our (usually) young participants.

The Union horsemen did a very impressive demo of cavalry drill and skirmish tactics, and then Lester, filling in for the AWOL Rebs, appeared in Confederate cavalry uniform and described the differences between (in particular) the equipment of the horsemen of the two armies.

The hosts, gracious as always, served another stellar lunch, but this did not prevent us from later going to Mosby's Tavern in Middleburg for dinner. Following dinner, we strolled about this beautiful little town a bit, to the dubious glances from worried-looking locals, who had vague ancestral memories of previous appearances by men in our uniforms. As a grand finale to the day, we "burned down" Mosby's Tavern (photos to come), causing a slight amount of hysteria among passers-by.

I still don't know what that B-17 was doing.

I look forward to seeing some of you guys at the Mifflin Guard event June 14, and everybody at Gettysburg

Private Milligan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Goose Creek AAR 2  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: 1  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 06/16/2003 04:15:54 PM

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BODY:

Dear Friends,

I arrived at Goose Creek Bridge about 10:30 on Saturday morning. It was overcast, but after driving through rain most of the trip from New Jersey, overcast looked good. Actually, it turned into a nice day weather-wise, although the sun never broke totally free of the clouds. Of course, that may have been a good thing, as it would have been very warm if it had been sunny.

When I arrived, I saw Andy and James Owens starting to unpack their gear from their wagon. I also saw Bill unpacking his wagon. I did the same, then we walked down to the bridge where we found Duncan waiting for us.

After saying hello to everyone and getting settled into our 19th century mindsets, we started entertaining the visitors who stopped by. It didn't seem like a lot of visitors were there, but we were told on Sunday that over 300 people visited on Saturday, and the hosts seemed quite pleased with the turnout. They seemed very grateful for our participation and they demonstrated their gratitude with some first-class lunches on both days.

Bruce showed up with a friend (Rosa, a medical student from Washington state) and about 12 of his wooden muskets, which we put to use through the day to entertain the youngsters and hopefully teach them something about the Civil War, or at least pique their interest in the topic.

Sgt. Owens put us through our paces a couple of times on Saturday, with more informal talks and demonstrations occurring at various times during the day. I must compliment Mr. Owens on his engaging manner with the public and his eagerness to answer their questions.

Due to the flooded condition of the field near the bridge, the Confederate cavalry was unable to participate in the event this year, although Lester Shumaker did show up and presented a very authentic impression of a Confederate cavalryman to the public. He also very generously allowed two members of the 1st Maine (cavalry) use his horses as they presented a Federal cavalry impression. Speaking of the 1st Maine, Dave from the 1st Maine has issued a cordial invitation to us to attend their Union Mills event on July 12 & 13th. I'm going and hope that some other members of the outfit can go. It is a very authentic site, full of history (it was on the line of march during the Gettysburg campaign) and promises to be a good event. (Chris Daley and Jersey Joe Hofmann, the Skilletlicker, are going to be there as well.)

Anyway, the day's proceedings went splendidly and the weather cooperated by not raining on us. After our hard day's work, we repaired to the Mosby Tavern (in the center of Middleburg, or was it the middle of Centerburg, ha-ha) and had a fine meal and enjoyed some liquid libations (I enjoyed some Yuengling that was on tap.)

After dinner we tried to set the tavern on fire but the matches the tavern supplied us weren't up to the job, so we had to leave it standing, complete with its signboard featuring the traitor Mosby engaged in what appears to be an abduction of some poor Southern lass. Oh well, unfinished business...

We said farewell to some of our brethren who had other obligations and returned to our camp. (Those returning to the camp included James Owens, Bill, and myself. Lester and a friend were camping there, also, but camped seperately so as to keep an eye on their two horses.

Sometime during the night a fairly active thunderstorm hit our campsite. However, having set up our shelter halves under a large tent fly that Lester had generously donated to our cause, we fared pretty well. The temperature stayed fairly mild, as well, so all-in-all we enjoyed a good night's sleep.

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EXTENDED BODY:

On Sunday morning we awoke to find that we apparently were inside a cloud. (The fog was so thick that Bill said he was unable to see the bridge from the scenic overlook!) The ground was also very wet. Undaunted, we set about the all-important task of fixing some coffee. After digging a small fire-pit (none was needed the previous night because it was not cold) with Lester's period spade (from Mike Thompson's collection) we managed to get a small fire going with some small pieces of firewood that we had kept under our tent during the storm. The wood was still somewhat damp, but after much huffing and puffing we managed to coax a small fire to burn long enough to brew some coffee (and for James to cook his breakfast). Mission accomplished, we were able to view the

coming day's activities with a less jaundiced eye, despite the threatening pile of clouds which the eventual drifting away of the heavy fog revealed.

We set off for our duties at the bridge at about 9 o'clock. Present for duty were James, Bill, and myself, while Lester was sighted from time to time atop one of his horses, leading them to water, firing at unknown enemies in the woods, etc. The sight of him moving through the woods to the creek was actually enough to make you think you were in 1863.

Meanwhile, James and I settled down to a serious game of checkers. After a careless move resulted in the capture of two of my troops and the appearance of one of his soldiers in my headquarters area, I recruited my wits and was able to uphold the honor of our regiment by battling James to a draw. We were unable to finish our game, however, due to the unwelcome and unneeded appearance of yet more rain. We retreated to our tent and sat out the rain, meanwhile reading about the battle (Lester's friend Donna had an excellent book about the battle) and discussing it with various visitors who braved the elements to continue their tour. Fortunately, the rain soon let up and we were able to resume our duties at the bridge.

Once again we continued our program of living history to the delight (hopefully) of the public who stopped by to see the bridge. Although it was somewhat discouraging to only have three soldiers to present our program, yet it made me feel all the more valuable, as my presence represented 33 and 1/3 percent of the program's manpower. The visitors seemed to be very appreciative, I learned a lot myself from listening to James' discourses, and our hosts also seemed very appreciative of our continued presence at the event and once again provided us with an excellent lunch.

Wrapping up the day's activities at 3, we decamped and sped on our various ways, happy in the knowledge that we had done our part to bring history to life for the public and also happy to have spent a great weekend with great comrades-in-arms in such a beautiful and historically important part of our country.

Private Bordonaro

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: Gettysburg Living History - AAR

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 08/18/2003 05:20:11 PM

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BODY:

I won't ramble on with the AAR, as I am really not sure who would be interested, among those who did not attend. My personal highlights:

\* Larry's second bon mot of the season. First, a few weeks ago, it was, "General Lee, I have no buffet." This weekend, it was when, during th demo, he explained to the rapt spectators that because the shorter guys stood in front, they tended to get shot sooner, which is why -- and I actually believed this for about five seconds -- "By the end of the war, the average soldier was three inches taller." Nice work!

\* Duncan's first-rate narrative of the battle, as we led our little army of recruits to Little Round Top, with frequent stops to describe the battle so one could almost see it.

\* Dickymo's shirt. Although unable to join us during the day, due to work commitments, we were delighted to have Corporal Dickymo come with us to dinner. I don't know how to describe his shirt. I will say that it convinced me to either stop taking drugs, or to start. I can't figure out which would be better. He promises he will be able to join us at Cedar Creek.

\* Tom's "ten minute soldiers." I swear those 24 we equipped with muskets marched in step, and did their changes of facing, better than most reenactors. Nice work, Tom!

\* The recruits themselves. There must have been about forty of them who joined us, all told, and as we went down the slopes of Little Round Top, through the chest-high grass and the waist-high stickers (which literally lacerated the legs of some people wearing shorts), nary a one of them fell out of the ranks. I honestly couldn't believe it.

\* Our private for a day, and new honorary member, Rob Carter of the 69th New York. For those who don't know him, he was Father Corby in the Wheatfield Living History done by the Mifflin Guard two years ago, and apparently this past St. Patrick's Day, when he was once again in priestly attire, caused some consternation among some real priests, when he was waving a shillelagh and making, ah, comments to some of the drunken colleens on Fifth Avenue.

\* Rob -- who also filled in for Eric as our company songleader, in which he did an excellent job -- gave Company K one of the best compliments I have ever heard. After a weekend in which our demos seemed to all run into one, starting about 9:30 each morning and ending sometime around five, and our camp was always overflowing with visitors, Rob said to us, "I've seen a lot of reenactor units, and you guys do a better job with spectators than any of them."

To be honest, I think he was right, but it was great to hear an outsider say this. We had far more people in our camp than did the Potomac Legion

last month, when there were 200 of us on the field. I think our interaction is somewhat unique, and I consider it a great honor to be part of Company K.

Touch the elbow,  
Bruce

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Antietam Torchlight Tours AAR  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 09/18/2003 10:01:47 PM

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BODY:

Seven of us braved the rain (which was gone by mid-afternoon, fortunately) for what I think we would mostly agree was a great evening at Antietam last weekend.

Present for duty were Lieutenant McNierney, Sergeants Krenitsky and Nottingham, and Privates Trussell, Goettel, Murphy and Milligan. We were joined in our little skit by two of the Frederick Ladies, as well as five young privates from parts unknown, two of whom were former members of Company K.

The moon came out, and it turned into a lovely, misty evening. According to one of the rangers, 400-450 people came through our camps that night. For a cloudy Saturday night far from big cities, I think this was quite a tribute to the interest there is in this event. But maybe next year we can be promoted to reading letters from home, or something.

Alas and alack, although he offered us support and helped us prepare for the performance, Private Trussell was called away on a staff assignment before sunset, so we had to carry on without him.

<b>The Burial Detail: A Very Short Play in One Act</b>

The setting: Somewhere on the Antietam battlefield, that night of the same day. Thousands of men lie on the field. Some are dead. Some are sleeping. Some are wounded. Some are drunk. Some are dead drunk.

Two ladies approach a team of gravediggers, in desperate search of one of their husbands.

Here is our cast of characters:

The Corpse -- Sergeant Krenitsky. Hailed for his previous performances in "Waiting for McClellan" and "Where de White Wimmens?: The True Story of General Hooker," Sergeant Krenitsky played his role masterfully, not moving one muscle during his entire performance. Several very attractive young women were seen requesting his autograph, following the play. But our dear Sergeant remained in character the entire time, and never budged.

The Gravedigger -- Private Murphy. Taking to it as if he had been digging graves since he was in short pants, Mr. Murphy displayed a wide range of emotion and acting skills, as he soared from the grumbler with a shovel, to the happy, simple man who was making the joyful discovery that another man's shoes fit his own feet. Plus the other fellow was dead, so he didn't have to pay for them, or anything. Audiences will also long remember his virtuoso wielding of that shovel, which -- although in constant use for over four hours -- never once broke the ground.

The Sentry -- True, Private Goettel did not have that many lines, compared to some of our stars, such as Private Murphy or Sergeant Nottingham. And neither did he have as demanding a role as Sergeant Krenitsky. You try being dead without snoring sometime, and see how easy it is. Just ask Corporal D\_\_\_\_. But all were in awe of the private's true military bearing, as he stolidly walked his post, never once flinching or shirking his duty. And well it was that Sergeant Nottingham reminded him not to tarry, as he took the grieving wives off in their search for the husband of one of them, for had this not been done -- who knows? We all say the light in their eyes, when they realized that it was none other than Private Goettel who was to be their escort!

The Lieutenant -- Although his early attempts to organize the gravedigging team for some company drill met with failure, when Private Murphy threatened to bash him with his shovel, our Lieutenant was good-natured and got into the fun of the event, gallantly helping the ladies discover whether or not the beloved husband resided in our little garden. A subdued role this was, for the Lieutenant, but we all know we will once again see him take the stage and shine in golden splendor, when we stride across the field of Mars at Cedar Creek.

The Officious Sergeant -- The normally mild-mannered Sergeant Nottingham shone in a new light this past Saturday evening, when, now in command of his band of merry gravediggers, he acted in a manner that would have shamed the Booths themselves (those who were capable of being so shamed, I mean). We shall heretofore refer to him as "Sergeant Junius." Barking commands at the lads as if he were born to the purple, in a clear, loud voice that could be heard afar as the Rohrbach Bridge, Sergeant Nottingham's Arthurian performance provoked at least one anonymous private to whisper, "Pray to the Lord that Sergeant Krenitsky will live again, once this cruel skit is over."

The Body Collectors -- Who were these guys? Okay, I forgot, but one of them was Brian McClintock, unfortunately out of the modern Army, after tearing three ligaments in a training exercise. Although we were happy to see him, we were sorry for the reason.

Those of you who have seen Larry's photos will agree what fine young corpses the five of these fellows made, to the general consternation of our visitors. There was applause heard at some of the other six stops on this tour, but only stunned silence greeted our performance. Before deciding to emulate the great Sergeant Krenitsky (though they never came close to attaining his heights of acting excellence), these lads would burst right through the crowd in the middle of our skit, with four of them carrying the fifth in a blanket, who was then dumped unceremoniously at graveside. It was very effective, and got even better when Brian, or somebody, started "vomiting."

The Recorder -- Tis none other than your humble reviewer, Private Milligan. And they said I couldn't write my own name! Okay, so I didn't actually have to write my name because, you see, it wasn't myself who was dead! So there, you low-down ornery scoundrels. Make fun of whom you dare, but not my writing. I wrote "Reb: Unknown," "William Scott, Third Maryland," and "James N. Harmon, 125th Penna." so many times that night that their unfortunate names will be forever engraved upon my memory.

Here is a tip, to you would-be actors. The best way to get your play reviewed as you would wish it to be is to write it yourself.

And here is another tip, to all of humanity. This thought just occurred to me last week, a day after visiting the Franklin battlefield. As you may recall, this is where Hood managed to destroy his own army, losing 15 generals in the process. Here's what I realized: If you can fool yourself, you don't ever have to fool anybody else. Just keep that in mind.

See you all at Cedar Creek, and five of you back at Antietam in two weeks!

Yours Respectfully,

Private B.C. Milligan  
First Penna. Reserves, Company K

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Antietam 2003 - AAR  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 10/01/2003 05:37:41 PM  
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BODY:

Hopefully this won't be an overlong AAR, but I thought the event deserved a strong effort on my part to report on it.

I drove to the event with a friend, Mark Hintzen (also of the 1st Pennsylvania Reserves, but Company B-Mifflin Guard, not our Co. K), his wife Faith, and her daughter-in-law Cindy. It was very relaxing to not have to drive and the company was very pleasant.

Arriving on-site, we unloaded, suited up, and walked behind the Dunker Church to registration. The fact that it was Dunker Church made it the most memorable registration I've been through for an event, that's for sure. Registration was easy, but there was a pretty long wait for inspection, due to the fact that it was a very thorough inspection. And afterwards, we had to wait for our copy of the inspection form. But it was a nice day and it was fun sitting around talking to friends while waiting. During this time I met up with Bill and Tom, which made the wait even less of a bother.

Inspection finally complete, we were offered a ride to the camp, but a few of us decided to walk. I'm glad I did, because one of the guys we were with asked if we wanted to stop along the way in the West Woods. It sounded good to us, so we did. Turns out the fellow was something of an authority on the action in the West Woods and showed us the lay of the land and the site of McLaw's ambush of Sedgwick's division. A young musician was with us, and I asked his father if it would be appropriate if he sounded "Taps" in honor of the hundreds of men who lost their lives at this site. He said that, in fact, he had brought his son there for just that reason. I was hoping that the young man could actually play the bugle, but my worries disappeared as soon as he played the first note. He played it clean and clear and it really sounded good. As we left I told his father that even if nothing else happened that weekend listening to Taps being played there made the event for me.

After a walk of about a mile or so we arrived at the first night's camp, just in time to go on a rock-collecting fatigue detail. Lucky us! Well, we accomplished our mission and soon had plenty of rocks for all four company fire pits. Next came ration call. We spread two gum blankets and began laying out 25 piles of coffee and sugar, and began cutting the bacon slabs into 25 pieces. There was a box of hardtack crackers there also. About this time I was detailed to be a part of the picket guard, so I had to leave before having a chance to cook my rations. But Corporal Reynolds told me he'd cook my rations for me, and he did.

Guard mount was carried out and then it was off to our post. I was assigned five privates as the first relief and we set the men at their posts. I thought I was going to have an easy time of it, since I didn't have to walk a post myself, but it turned out to be a very busy night out on picket and I got very little sleep. First, one of our guards called for "Corporal of the Guard" and reported two men who ran after being challenged. We formed a small skirmish line and advanced to try and find them. They were not to be found, however, one of the men spotted a rider on a horse. Going to investigate I met a cavalry sergeant who had not been able to get into camp since he didn't know the password. So, I escorted him into camp. Upon return, all h\*\*l broke out. Two guards were calling for "Corporal of the Guard". We learned that men with southern accents had been heard near our lines. One of them was captured and turned out to be a reb who was foraging for apples. The lieutenant in charge of the picket organized a "sweep" and we were able to capture three more of the rebs. One of them was very belligerent and all of them were clearly disposed to escape, so it was no easy task herding them along to our reserve post. But we finally got them there. Then the lieutenant detailed me to take a squad and bring the prisoners back to our main camp. I was worried that they might escape, which would have been very embarrassing, but we managed to get all four of them back to our camp. After turning them over to Captain Watson, who was Officer of the Day, we filled our canteens and returned to the picket post. After that, things quieted down, but it also got colder and without a fire (we weren't able to get a good fire going due to the fact that it was too dark to look for kindling, and all we had to burn were a few fence rails) it was hard to get to sleep. I finally decided to "cheat" a little and get my blanket out of my knapsack (we were sleeping on arms, which was to include your backpack). With the warmth this provided, I was able to get a little sleep that night, in between posting and checking on my relief's second stint of guard duty.

Finally, we heard the "recall" being sounded. I collected the men who were on post, and we formed up the picket guard and marched back to camp....

Upon return to camp, it was time to form up for drill. First we had company drill, which Captain Sterner did an excellent job with. Then, it was on to battalion drill, with Major O'Beirne doing a good job. There was a short break and then we formed up for a very short march to a nearby wooded area. After another break we formed up again and marched to and through the "cornfield". Unfortunately, this year the field is in soybeans, and it has not been harvested yet, so we couldn't form line and advance across the field. Instead, we stayed in column until we were through the field and near the spectator line. We formed line there and went through a short drill for the benefit of the spectators. Then we marched off to the side and took another break. Not being able to go through the cornfield properly was the only real disappointment I had at this event, but it was an unavoidable disappointment.

From the cornfield area we marched over to the NPS Visitor Center. We took a longer break there and then marched around to the other side of it and put on the first of two demonstrations that we would do during the weekend. The demo went quite well. Our company was not firing, and we

were stationed behind the firing companies, so we had a good look at how they were doing. Actually, this would be a good training technique, because you can really see what is being done correctly and what isn't when you can look at a firing line without having to worry about firing yourself.

After the demo we went on one of our longer hikes of the weekend, over to the Mumma House. There, we stopped for our dinner break. No additional rations were issued, so we had to live on our hardtack and pork. While sitting under a tree cooling off a young friend noticed that there was a nice uneaten apple left on a table near the house. The officers had been treated to apples and cheese, but apparently no one had wanted that last apple. My young friend wanted to "forage" the apple, but not wanting him to get in trouble I took on the job myself. Strolling over, casually, to the house, and pointing to various spots nearby to my two young friends, I got close enough to the apple to snatch it and toss it to one of my comrades. We beat a hasty retreat to our shade tree and enjoyed what tasted like the best apple I ever ate in my life. My apologies to the unit for risking our good name, but I think you will understand our extremely strong desire for something to eat other than hardtack and pork at that particular time.

Lunch over, we formed up and marched towards the Sunken Road area. Here we experienced a great moment when "Father Corby" rode by us on his horse and gave us absolution. Our colonel then called for three cheers for Gen. McClellan and the Army of the Potomac, and then we advanced the line of battle over the ridge and down to the Sunken Road. The green flag of Ireland snapping in the breeze, and "casualties" falling as we went (men had been given numbers ahead of time and when called, they took a knee and grounded arms, thus simulating casualties), the line approached the Road and then stopped. After stopping, they simulated being relieved by Caldwell's brigade and marched back to our start point. It was a moving sight, let me tell you.

After this, we marched down to the Sunken Road area and took a fairly long break. We were all pretty bushed by this time, and in fact one reenactor had to be evacuated by ambulance due to extreme dehydration. But, after our break we carried on and put on another demonstration- this time the charge of the 7th Maine to clear snipers from the Piper farm area. I was an early casualty here, so I was spared the long march to the farm and back. Personally, I think we could have skipped this demonstration as the men were all tired, but no one thought to ask me. Anyway, afterwards we had a short rest and then it was time to head to our next campsite.

We were warned that we would be covering some rugged terrain, and we were offered a ride there, which a few men accepted. The rest of us saddled up and headed out. Major O'Beirne wasn't lying about the rough nature of the ground, either. The area heading down to the creek was extremely rough and in fact forced us to march in single file.

Finally, though, we made it across the (modern) bridge over the creek and soon came to our campsite. A welcome sight it was, too! The first thing we did was set up our tents on a nearby fence rail. Then I went over to

the creek to cool off. The water was high, fast, and cold, so the only thing I put in the water was my feet. But, that was a very refreshing treat.

Back in camp, we ate some watermelon and apples that had been "donated by patriotic locals". Some of us cooked (most had nothing to cook, having cooked all our rations the previous night) and thus passed the evening. Most men went to sleep early due to exhaustion. I was about to do the same when I started seeing lightning on the horizon. Sitting by the fire and chatting with friends, I was reluctant to head in for the night but finally the close approach of the storm drove me to cover. And storm it did. Most tents were no match for the fury of the storm, and the one I was sharing with two others was no exception. Water poured in through the seam where the two halves were buttoned together and we ended up soaked, as well as our clothes and shelter. The storm passed but the damage was done and we spent a miserable night under wet blankets, shivering. I got some rest but little if any sleep. Oh well..."Who wouldn't be a soldier?"

Reveille didn't wake up very many soldiers Sunday morning, due to the fact that most of us had been lying under our wet blankets shivering and weren't asleep. In any case, reveille was more of a relief than a nuisance since we knew that the long cold night was drawing to a close and the sun would (hopefully) be up soon. Surprisingly enough, we were able to get a fire going, after much effort. The fire was mostly used to pick up our spirits and to boil water for coffee, as little in the way of rations still were around to cook. In any case, soon enough it was time to police the camp and to fall in for drill. Around this time we were told that because our bedding was soaking wet it had been decided to allow us to have our knapsacks taken back to the dismissal point by "wagon". Being a contrary cuss, once I had permission to do so I lost all desire to do so and ended up toting my knapsack the rest of the day. Most of the soldiers were more sensible, though, and took advantage of the offer.

Soon, we formed up and marched out. A short march took us past Burnside's Bridge (we marched past it so as to approach it from the "correct" side for the demo. Here, our Major gave us a short speech and asked us to take the bridge. A couple of us in the ranks called out, "Will we get our whiskey?" and the Major promised us we would, if he had to pay for it out of his private purse. We shouted our approval and formed column of companies. Marching towards the bridge, we started taking casualties. I was one, so I had a ringside seat for the rest of the action, which was truly spectacular. The battalion rushed over to the stone wall near the bridge and started volley firing on the rebs on the opposing side of the creek. Then, the Major directed the color guard to advance the colors to the bridge. Planting their colors, the color guard acted as a stimulant to the battalion. Waving on the men, the Major directed the assault on the bridge. Advancing at the double-quick, the battalion surged across the bridge and captured it. It was a stirring moment.

After the assault, we "casualties" formed up and marched across the bridge and rejoined the battalion. We enjoyed a short rest, and then it was on to the cemetery. It was a fairly short march, but a very steep one, up a hill. So, it was a relief to unsling my knapsack and drop my

accoutrements once we arrived. We rested awhile and then gathered for a memorial service. A chaplain delivered a very affecting memorial service, using a period text. After that, our own "Father Corby" - Rob Carter - led another memorial service in which the names of the soldiers in the four regiments we portrayed, who gave the ultimate sacrifice and were buried there, were read out. This was a very touching moment. Standing there in the shadow of the large statue of the common soldier I felt as though he was looking down in approval.

Finally, it was time for our final march. We marched from the National Cemetary over the lovely rolling terrain of Sharpsburg on to the National Park Visitor Center. We enjoyed another rest there and then it was time for our final demonstration of the day. We were lesser in numbers than we were on Saturday but we delivered a good demonstration to the visitors.

We marched back to the other side of the Center and were dismissed. A memorable event had ended and after saying goodbye to our friends it was time to hit the road.

This was one of the best events I've participated in and I can recommend wholeheartedly that the 1st Pennsylvania should give careful consideration to participating in any further events that the Columbia Rifles host.

-Joe

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Cedar Creek 2003 - AAR  
STATUS: Publish  
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DATE: 10/23/2003 04:00:24 PM

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BODY:

Eleven and a half current or semi-current members of Company K journeyed to the Great Valley last weekend to take part in the 139th Cedar Creek Reenactment. Relatively speaking, the battle on the second day, at least, may even have remotely resembled the historical event, and that's something.

Present for action and/or inaction on Saturday morning were Captain McNierney (I guess he got promoted), Sergeants Krenitsky and Nottingham, and Privates Enders, Trussell, Reis, Schmeed, Lee, Murphy and Milligan. The Private Formerly Known as Dusel put in a special guest appearance in uniform, and hung out with us into the evening, but did not take the field. And sometimes Company K Private Kibler was sighted in the camps of the First Battalion of the Army of Northern Virginia Saturday night. He will eventually get over this affliction.

Those of us who drove down to Cedar Creek Friday night at first suspected more of the same for this season, in the form of the rain that seems to have dogged just about every event in 2003. Rain, at times heavy, accompanied most of us, and the traffic on I-81 was almost impenetrable, apparently due to a truck that had turned over.

We arrived in dribs and drabs, and nobody seemed to be able to find anyone else until the next morning, for the most part, though there were scattered sightings through the night. Due to the rain, most of us camped in the wagons, which was no treat, as the temperature fell below 40 degrees, and everybody was pretty cold.

When dawn came on Saturday however, it was bright and sunny, if brisk, and the Valley revealed its incredibly beautiful visage. I can see why it was worth fighting over, and the sight of the sun rising behind the Massanutten Mountains, and sending its warm rays through the mists that covered the ground, combined with the rows of tents across the camps, was, for me at least, quite compelling.

A welcome surprise for those of us who wandered past it was the Chevron station right next to the Federal parking area. From the outside, it was just another gas station, but an investigation of the interior revealed a delightful country-style restaurant (the steak dinners were cheap and superb), not to mention the three lovely daughters of the owner, two of whom Larry and I have reserved, but daughter number three (who probably has the most interesting tattoos) is still available, at last report.

But getting back to 1864, Saturday we went out and did battalion drill, etc., etc., and there is no need to report on that. We were joined by half a dozen members of the 9th Penna. Reserves, who seemed to enjoy our company immensely, and who promised to fall in with us at future events.

A nice touch -- for those who dared -- was the issuance by the National Regiment of rations, which including hardtack, apples, carrots, coffee, and something they called bacon. Sergeant Krenitksy rose to the challenge, cooking a slab of said substance over our fire for an extended period. The only visible success of his efforts was that it got smaller, thus meaning there was less to consume. But if you liked your bacon charred to a crisp on the outside, and almost raw on the inside, this was the breakfast of your dreams!

Saturday's battle -- "Goose Creek" -- was a bit silly -- the National Regiment, for reasons unknown, advanced upon the Rebs all by itself, and stood about 100 feet from a Reb battery with everybody but the guns blasting away and nobody falling down, until eventually we retired, and

then the Confederates attacked. It looked pretty silly. A Reb gunner later told us that we were supposed to capture his battery, and he and his men were waiting for us to do this, but apparently nobody told the NR's officers, or (I heard this from another source) they were waiting for a second regiment to come up in support, which never happened).

Anyway, it felt silly, and looked sillier, and I was told the event's announcer said, over the PA, "I don't know what they are doing out there, but they seem to be having fun." When the shooting started, too, virtually nobody on each side deigned to fall down and play dead.

The whole thing was distinctly unentertaining.

Saturday night, some of the lads went back to the Gas Station of Their (okay, Our) Dreams, for more good homemade food and another glimpse of the future Mrs. Company Ks, but the serious elite (Duncan, Dickymo, and the two Marks, among others) cooked over the fire and drank massive quantities of fire-retardent beer (just in case).

Some of us wandered over to watch the dance and listen to the music, which was sort of fun, but far better music was being provided about sixty feet from our own campfire, as David Kincaid and two other very good musicians offered an impromptu concert of their own.

Around 5 a.m., as all were well-burrowed into as many blankets as they could find on another very cold night, the regimental adjutant came around looking for "volunteers" for the dawn tactical." What he found -- except for the stalwart Captain McNierney -- was, seemingly, a camp filled with motionless corpses. This until a muffled voice shouted out, from beneath a blanket, "Go away!" No, that wasn't Private Trussell. No, really. I'm sure he would never say such a thing to the regimental adjutant. No, of course. Not him. Really!

On Sunday, per tradition, Company K was reduced to half the previous day's strength, but to be fair, all those who departed really had to be elsewhere, mostly for professional reasons.

Luckily, the bulk of the people who had been there Saturday stayed, as a whole, and the NR was not greatly reduced. At a future date, I will opine upon why it is the "serious" reenactors who always seem to leave soonest, and the mainstreamers who tend to remain till the end. Maybe this is because they have so much camp furniture to load in the truck.

Anyway, the numbers looked good on Sunday -- I don't know how many people were on the field in total, but it must have been at least 3,000 or so.

As noted, Saturday's battle was a disgrace. For reasons unknown, Sunday's fight, on the other hand, might have been the best battle I have been in since I got into this hobby. We began deployed, with muskets stacked, in the Reb camp, because that is where the VIII Corps was (among their own tents, I mean), when Early hit them.

There were only about 300 or so of us there, with all the rest of the Federals far to the rear. The Rebs came surging down the street and

between the tents on the double, deploying very smartly from companies into line, before opening a brisk fire upon us.

We fired several volleys, and then began to fall back, losing men steadily as we withdrew. Sergeant Krenitsky, who had an urgent appointment elsewhere (in Heaven, I mean, not a family function!), was the first to fall. He will be sorely missed, at least until Remembrance Day. We soon lost Sergeant Nottingham and Private Schmeid, and at the end, only the indefatigable Captain McNierney, Acting Corporal Reis, and Acting Corporal Myself remained standing.

Our retreat, up and down rocky, slightly damp hills, became a panicky rout, and I think it looked pretty good to the spectators. We were joined by three or four pieces of artillery, desperately prolonging their guns up the hills. Serves them right for being too lazy to march the rest of the time.

Almost the entire National Regiment band went down, too, which was a sad sight indeed (all those young boys lying dead among their drums). Well, their mothers should have kept them in school, if they really cared about their sons.

We must have fallen back at least half a mile, during which, as noted, three of the six Company K guys who began the fight were gone. Mike, our new guy and my co-worker, fell too, but Mark said, "You can't die Mike -- we need you!" so he pulled himself to his feet. I took a spectacular "hit" when I went flying after hitting a patch of mud, but hadn't intended to die, as there were so few of us left already. David Kincaid, too, took a spectacular hit, and crashed face-first into the ground less than ten feet in front of me.

When we finally got back to where the rest of the Feds were waiting, on a hilltop, everybody started firing again. Then "Phil Sheridan" came galloping up, and rode the length of the Union lines, waving his hat, to thunderous cheers from the lads. The entire Union line then surged forward, and this time it was the Rebels who were routed.

I was very pleased to draw a bead on one Reb about sixty feet away and fire, and then to see him fall face forward onto the ground. As we advanced past him, I leaned over and slapped him on the back, and said, "Nice job!"

This was a much better fight than any I have seen, and -- more or less -- actually sort of followed the historical story. Lots of people went down, and our rout was almost genuine, with men running as fast as they could, while the officers kept shrieking at them to form up into line and fire back at the enemy. It was quite a jolly battle, I must say.

And that, I think, is my report. For those of you who wish to see photos, Larry took some good ones, and so, I think, did others. And there are a lot of photos of Company K members at the NR and Sykes Regulars' Web sites.

See you all on Remembrance Day.

Reporting from Camp Cocksville,

Private (formerly Acting Sergeant) Milligan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: Winter Meeting 2004

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 01/08/2004 04:49:11 PM

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BODY:

They tell me the winter meeting is at Dennis Corbin's at 9 AM on 10 January 2004.

I hope someone's bringing coffee.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: Spotsylvania 2004 - AAR

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 05/10/2004 02:46:42 PM

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BODY:

But first a note and a request -- my personal narrative ends pretty much on Saturday, as I was floating on a sea of pain Saturday night, due to wounds suffered in the previous day's action, and as such, I withdrew to my own shirkdom, under a tree about 150 feet from the camp so I would not impede the maneuvers of the battalion when it formed around 4 a.m. I hope someone who took part in the successful attack will fill in the blanks on the dawn battle.

<b>PART ONE: SPOTSYLVANIA IS A HARD ROAD TO TRAVEL</b>

Private Kibler and myself departed Cockeysville around 1 p.m., for what should have been a three-hour drive. Instead, it was more like five, or maybe five and a half, as we fell under the magical spell of that infernal, Satanic region known as "the Mixing Bowl," where the D.C. Beltway meets I-95. I am not quite sure why it is called that, inasmuch as the traffic was <i>quite</i> insoluble, but anyway, we had a delightful time, moving at slightly more than the speed of a buggy drawn by a nag that knew full well its next journey would be to the equine equivalent of the breakers yards.

Later that same day -- I think -- we arrived at the site: parked, registered, - "Keep this pass with you at all times!" (has anyone ever been challenged to produce their pass?) - then walked the short one-mile distance from the parking lot to the National Regiment site, past the various KOA sites of the USV, the Mifflin Guard, Vincent's Platoon (they had just two campfires), and other motley units. I will say that I enjoyed hearing a late arrival to the NR site say he knew how to find us, because of the great number of dog tents in our camp, versus elsewhere.

After settling in, Charlie, myself, and a new friend -- Jeff, from the 8th Ohio, who had driven in from Cleveland -- set off around six or so to visit the sutlers' area, and see what was what.

<b>PART TWO: WE SHALL MEET, BUT WE SHALL MISS HIM</b>

When we arrived, company streets were set out for the various companies, of which there were eight in total. It was easy to find the Second Company's street (ours), as there was but one dog tent there. Hopefully a time will come when Company K will once again show up early, and depart when everyone else does, as was true for my first event three years ago. Anyway, Charlie and I set up ours, and then set out with our new friend, Jeff (from the 8th Ohio and Cleveland), to look for some fun at the sutlers, which were comfortably sited a mile or so from our camp.

<b>PART THREE: RAIN OF TERROR</b>

While we were getting registered, I overheard some of the locals discussing the "40 percent chance of rain" about which we had been warned. They confidently noted that when thunderstorms came to this area, they always went down the river (the Rappahanock), and would not come through our camps. That statement can now be amended to read, "Almost always..."

<b>PART FOUR: THE LAST OF THE PORT-A-POTTIES</b>

As we three innocents were walking along the road, talking about the impending fight while thinking to ourselves of home, we couldn't help but

notice a rapid darkening of the sky, and a concomitant lowering of the temperature. And when the wind boxed the compass, and picked up considerably, this old sailor couldn't help but think that we were about to experience -- as we used to call it in my sailing days -- "some weather."

Some weather. The wind picked up to a point where it was roaring like an express train, and the dust swept up from the dirt road was, if not blinding, certainly a Big Pain in the Neck. At this point, we were halfway between the sutlers and the camp, and it was clear there was no chance of getting to either in time (and lucky for us, too, as it turned out!). Instead, we bolted off the road toward what appeared to be an abandoned private residence a couple of hundred yards away. Just as we arrived, the rain hit, not in torrents, but in a crashing barrage of water.

We first took refuge on the porch of the house, with another soldier, and a couple of spectators. But as the wind picked up, and the rain increased, Charlie discovered that while being on the porch was okay, being down in the crawlspace beneath the porch was *much* drier, so there the three of us went, and sat out the storm.

And what a storm it was! As I noted on the Szabo forum, I have lived through typhoons and hurricanes aplenty, and once, when about three miles offshore from Atlantic City, was caught in a storm whose winds were recorded at 70 miles per hour, which put our 14-ton boat almost on its beam ends. This wind came close. And the lightning that accompanied it was extremely impressive, being constant and spectacular -- at one point, I saw five lightning bolts simultaneously streak from one horizon to another, forming an electric "hand" of dramatic proportions.

The port-a-potties started to topple, casualties of this assault by Nature against the works of Man. First one, then another, went down, until, as Charlie noted, "There goes the last of the port-a-potties." But they didn't just fall over -- some tumbled out into the road; others flew up and landed atop another such casualty.

And what we saw, though dramatic, was far from the worst of it. Almost every tent in the various camps came down, and everything in each was totally drenched. When visiting Charlie's friends the next day, in the Confederate camp, we heard of a woman who had been attempting to hold her tent together, when the pole broke and came down, cracking her skull (which later required three staples). Another woman, we were told, was lifted three feet off the ground by the wind, and carried about ten feet, before crash-landing -- the perils of hoop skirts. His friends put their two children under their camp bed, and then the two adults sat atop it so their kids wouldn't blow away. And I am sure there were dozens of stories such as this, all over the camps.

The storm ended just in time for an incredibly spectacular red sunset, and then the survivors emerged and began to put their little world back together. I checked -- the National Weather Service recorded winds of

43.6 miles per hour in Fredericksburg, but ours had to be between 50-60, at the minimum.

<b>PART FIVE: FOUR MEN IN A DOG TENT</b>

When Charlie and I get back to the ruins of our tent, we put it back up, plus Charlie and another of our New Friends -- Matt and Jeff, two very nice young privates of the 9th Penna. Reserves, who may be joining us, as their own unit is semi-moribund -- put up the tent of the two Mystery Men whom we had not yet encountered. Just after this task was accomplished, a second, and much smaller storm, arrived, causing Matt and Jeff to crowd in with us to ride it out. That was fun, I think.

<b>PART SIX: GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?</b>

Sometime later, the Mystery Men arrived, and I was delighted to see they were none other than Wade Russell and Ben Kullman, neither of whom I had seen in a while. It was great seeing them again, and they told us that our own Lieutenant McNierney was present, as well, safely esconced in his wagon. That was good to know, as our numbers had now swelled (including Matt and Jeff) to six privates and a lieutenant, for the Second Company. Dinner was cooked or not, as the case may be, and we sat around the campfire and chatted, before turning into to attempt to sleep in our completely drenched clothing under our even more drenched blankets.

Around 3 a.m., I arose to find Private Kibler sitting by the fire. We were joined by a couple of other guys, seeking to dry their still sodden clothes or selves, and chatted for a while. We were soon joined by two young drummers, who solemnly informed us they had encountered "two drunk guys" nearby.

Two drunk guys? Now, that would have been a sight! Imagine, that such a thing could happen on a battlefield! Two drunk guys!

<b>PART SEVEN: GUESS WHO'S COMING TO BREAKFAST?</b>

Saturday morning, things got better and better, as additional members of Company K and the Second Company began to arrive, starting with Sergeant Nottingham, and including Lieutenant McNierney, the always-reliable Private Schmied, and others. I think we eventually had 11 Company K guys there, but Larry will know for sure, as he took the roll. By the time the NR was ready to begin battalion drill, our company numbered about 30 men, and was one of eight similarly-sized companies, so, by my guess, the National Regiment fielded about 250 men, which was a nice sight. In fact, we may have been the largest Federal battalion on the field.

<b>PART EIGHT: DRILL, YE TARRIERS, DRILL</b>

You know the drill -- it was the drill. We practiced going from battle line into a column of divisions (i.e., two companies abreast) for an hour or so. I am sure there is a more proper name for this maneuver. There was a wee bit of confusion, as first we were the Second Company, then the Seventh, then (at least in one officer's mind - no names pleez!) the Sixth, and then the Seventh again. But it all worked out, and we were ready to duplicate the massed formation that Colonel Upton adopted in his original attack on the Mule Shoe.

<b>SIDEBAR: VINCENT'S PLATOON</b>

I was just wondering whatever became of Vincent's Brigade. There couldn't have been more than a dozen of them at this event. Maybe this time it was because they had too much firewood.

<b>PART NINE: THE HUCKLEBERRY BROTHERS</b>

If you even encounter the Huckleberry Brothers -- four great singers and musicians from who knows where, but who were, I believe, in our Fourth Company -- be sure to stop by and listen for a while. Charlie and I went over that afternoon and sang with them for a bit. And if you see them, ask them to do their hit song, "Mary had a Little Lamb," to the tune of "Marching Through Georgia." Or, if you prefer, another variant on that melody, "Marching from Berlin to Belgium."

<b>PART TEN: MARCHING ALONG</b>

How often have you, in your reenacting career, been mustered hours before a battle, to march off to its location, and then be forced to stand, or sit (if you are lucky) for hours in the broiling sun, while waiting for an event that always starts at least half an hour behind schedule? Well, not this time! Nosirree, not at all. We were cheerfully informed that once we got to the battlesite, we would stack arms, and lie in the shade, in imperial splendor, until it was time for the assault to begin.

Well, that's what they told us, honest!

Anyway, off we went, leading the other Federal units, and joined by a hundred or so of what I assumed must have been the campaigner battalion. I only say this as they came out of the woods, and were all in heavy marching order, which is just what I would do, too, were I about to make a desperate assault upon a fortified position. After all, you never know when you might have time to sit down and fix a meal, or set up your tent, when you are in the middle of storming an enemy trench.

As we marched, who should we spot joining the column but the legendary Private Griffith, a.k.a. "Fossil," shouldering a musket and clamoring to be led to the enemy. What a fine martial sight that was! By this time, Private Enders and a couple of other members of Company K were with us as well.

<b>PART ELEVEN: "LIKE A RESISTLESS WAVE, THE COLUMN Poured OVER THE WORKS."</b>

So wrote Colonel Upton, describing the attack his men made upon the Confederate trenches at the Mule Shoe. Of course, for us, there was first the obligatory two hours in the broiling sun, with arms stacked, though we were less than 200 yards from the foe. Luckily, though, recognizing in advance the futility of firing at us at a distance of more than 50 feet, the enemy thoughtfully held their fire, so we could stand around, tell jokes, and hear Private Russell explain to us exactly how a man with no poison, rope, belt, shoelaces or weapon could still commit suicide. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to him, if you want to know.

One thing I have to admit I did like was that we marched to the battlefield (which I think was a bit more than 1.5 miles from our camp) right through the sutlers area, and the spectators certainly enjoyed seeing our column of 800-1,000 (my estimate) and our bands do this. That

was a good way to advertise that the battle was imminent ("imminent" in terms of the entire lifespan of our galaxy, I mean, to which two or three hours is as a mote of sand).

There was, in fact, shade available, which our band enjoyed. They might not be so happy tonight, though, as the woods were wreathed in poison ivy. City boys!

After an hour or so -- time seemed to stop -- the artillery began its traditional banging away, and, once again, with the predictable results (i.e., who ever saw a man killed by artillery?). The airbursts that accompanied their booming, we decided, were aimed not at the enemy trenches, but at the annoying small plane that kept circling the battlefield.

We formed into our swell column, and then stacked arms, but eventually, the order came to go forward, and the dance began. Though, as is often the case, some aspects of the battle might have seemed a bit silly to us (the "take no hits" order, for example, that we were given), spectators later told me that they were deeply moved by what we saw. Against all orders, I took a fairly early hit (before we reached the trenches), and I have to say that, save the horribly bad shooting, the battle looked pretty good to me. Two succeeding waves of Federal infantry, also in column, passed over my slowly reviving body, and they looked good.

I will let someone who actually made it into the trenches write about that, if they wish. Suffice it to say that like all battles before and after this one, eventually it ended, the Lazarites such as myself experienced a miraculous recovery, and the audience roared its approval.

<b>PART LAST: AFTER THE BATTLE</b>

After the battle, I was delighted to see we had further reinforcements, in the forms of Privates Bordanaro and Reis, both of whom later took part in the dawn battle. One of the highlights of Saturday night, at least for myself, was the opportunity to hear David Kincaid and his friends sing. A particular highlight for Private Kibler, without a doubt, was when he lent me his carkeys with the admonition, "Don't lose these keys -- they're the only ones we've got." I guess the battle had damaged my hearing, as I could have sworn what he really said was, "Lose these!" which I promptly proceeded to do. Fortunately, they appeared about an hour later.

As I said, I will leave any account of subsequent events to another author. Sunday morning, after the dawn battle, the entire National Regiment decamped, in part no doubt because it was Mother's Day, and partly because they had not slept much in the two previous nights, and had already taken part in two battles, and two lengthy (for reenactors -- four miles or so each) marches in less than twelve hours.

<b>FINAL NOTE: WHY WE FIGHT (in this war, at least!)</b>

As Charlie Kibler and I were leaving, we met a guy named Clarence Crumpton. Clarence, who had never seen a reenactment before, was the event's farrier. He said to us, "I thought I knew something about the Civil War, but I was wrong." He also told us that he had found the

entire weekend incredibly moving, and said that he was definitely going to get into the hobby. I do think that Rob Hodge arranged better demos, away from the field, than what are commonly seen, and that might have been part of it. But the reaction of this guy, to a battle that some jaded reenactors are certain to criticize -- and doubtless rightfully so -- is one of the reasons I believe what we are doing is worthwhile.

I hope that the next time Company K takes the field, we will have a slightly better turnout, and that perhaps those who think they are able to make it will come, and will stay, as long as they can.

I had a nice chat with James Owens about Goose Creek. I will be there. And he is planning something for next April that he hopes will bring a battalion of the Army of the Pacific to Virginia. He is also mulling renting a van for Franklin, so if anyone wants to go, let him know.

Touch the elbow. I did not proof this.

B.C. Milligan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: 2005 Winter Meeting  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 12/29/2004 05:23:59 PM

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BODY:

The winter meeting is to be held at 10 AM Saturday January 15, 2005 at Dennis Corbin's.

If you don't know where that is or how to get there; contact myself or Larry Nottingham for directions.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Events '05  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 01/24/2005 09:50:01 PM

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BODY:

The 2005 <a href="http://firstreserves.messofthedamned.org/events.html">Events Calendar</a> is up.

Most of the listed events are linked to information pages. Some of the locations are linked as well.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Events Update  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 02/09/2005 10:53:29 PM

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BODY:

Directions and information on Company K's February 19th drill day are now on the <a href="http://firstreserves.messofthedamned.org/events.html">Events page</a>. An 11 o'clock start time is planned. The weather date is still February 26.

Information and a schedule for the National Regiment NCO school is also listed on the same page for anyone attending.

Lastly, Lee's Final Retreat - the campaigner Appomattox event - has been cancelled. Funds are being raised by various individuals to try to help out those who committed large amounts of money to attend the event (ie. the lads from the UK with non-refundable \$500 plus tickets).

Information can be found on the <a href="http://www.authentic-campaigner.com/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=7">Authentic Campaigner forums</a>.

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Drill Day  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 0  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 02/21/2005 05:00:34 PM

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BODY:

Despite the below freezing temperatures and the non-stop wind whipping across the parade deck, it was good to put on the uniform and take the field with familiar faces again. Ten members of the Company were in attendance; Nottingham, Krenitsky, Schmied, Bordonaro, Griffiths, Kibler, McKeegan, Milligan, Reis and Trussell.

After warming ourselves by the fire for a bit, Nottingham, in his new role as First-Sergeant, began to put us through our paces. It took a while to shake-out the cob webs, but before long, the movements were again familiar.

We spent a couple of hours on the field before moving into the museum for some lunch and then everyone taking off on their own.

--Duncan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: Gettysburg Living History  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 07/20/2005 05:03:59 PM

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BODY:

Beautiful, sunny and cool (for this time of year) weather highlighted a very successful weekend for Company K's flagship event of the season, the charge down Little Round Top, which seems to become more popular every time we do it. It would have been nice had more actual members of Company K been able to take the field, but I am sure the fact that this was Father's Day weekend kept a number of people home.

Saturday's march to Little Round Top, and charge down into the Wheatfield, attracted 30 uniformed participants, including eight members of Company K. Every one of the former group was invited, and all of them seemed to know what they were doing, as our drill and volleys evinced, over the course of the weekend.

Present for duty were First Sergeant Nottingham, Corporals Schmied (Henry, I know I spelled your name wrong -- next time don't chew me out when I am on picket; just kidding. Maybe) and Lynch, and Privates Kibler, Carter, Goettel, Bordonaro and Milligan. Earlier in the day, Duncan Trussell gave a very good presentation for our second demo, but then was called away to attend to family matters. There were rumored sightings of a couple of other Company K members, but this writer didn't see any, so I suspect this was not the case.

In addition to our own troops on the field, we had people from a number of very good units. Our officer for the weekend was Butch Diamond, of the 53rd Pennsylvania, and I think he did a superb job. By the end of the day on Sunday, we were firing better volleys than I have heard on a long time. On Saturday, we were also joined by two members of the Second South Carolina String Band as our fifer and drummer. They also performed at the Pennsylvania Monument throughout the afternoon, and I appreciated the drummer, Joe Whitney, identifying them as "Company K's field music."

We also had a doctor come and set up a tent to do a medical demo. This Civil War doctor was also a modern EMT, which was useful for me, later that day. He also very thoughtfully went around the camp, serving lemonade to the boys. I am sorry I did not ask his name.

Saturday, we did three demos, in which we included a couple of new maneuvers Company K had not done before. We also kept a picket post throughout the weekend, and the regular reliefs (every 15-30 minutes, as

opposed to Tom Krenitsky's legendary 12-hour shift a couple of years ago) kept things fresh and interesting for spectators and for us.

Then at 4 p.m., joined by an entire Boy Scout troop that had shown up specifically for this event (whose leader I would like to recruit, as he gave great orders to his boys while we were marching), as well as a number of other civilians, about 60 of us total marched to Little Round Top, with occasional stops for narration by Larry Nottingham. For the first time, we had numbers approximating those of the actual Company K.

Our drummer had a broken toe, so the music did not march with us. But as we approached Little Round Top, the fife and drum struck up, which added to the drama of our arrival.

This year, instead of racing from the top of the hill to the Wheatfield, we started our charge from a bit lower, which not only helped keep things a bit more in order, it probably so prevented the cuts, bruises, and lacerations on our "volunteers" that I have seen in the past. I did not see one person fall out the entire time we marched and then charged.

When we charged across Plum Run, only one person fell in, which is a fairly low casualty figure, and not only our people, but also nearby park visitors, seemed to find the spectacle of interest. Having a company of 30 -- not to mention another 30, most of whom have wooden muskets -- does seem to attract attention.

My personal highlight for the weekend -- if that is the correct word for it -- came when I had a round cook off on my barrel during Saturday's noon demo, in a very odd and unpredictable fashion. Fortunately, I was holding my weapon facing outward, so only my right forefinger was injured. I guess it was fun that in the three subsequent demos, every time Tom Holbrook said we were "experts in dealing with Class A explosives," three or four guys would swivel their heads around and look at me.

I guess.

As we always do, after each demo, we invited the spectators to come back into our camp, and as always, they did so, in droves. We got a lot of good questions this weekend, and that's one reason I personally enjoy living history events.

Saturday night, some people camped on the field (my estimate is 10-15); some went home for the night (like myself, for some remedial medical attention), and others just went home.

Sunday morning, by the time the 10 a.m. demo was to begin, I was quite pleasantly surprised to see that including our doctor, we still had over 20 people on the field, including another drummer. I think that fact alone is a good testimonial to how much people were enjoying the weekend.

We did two more demos, and then began to depart around 1 p.m.

I think that those of us who were there had a very good time, and our "Company K for a day" contingent seems to have done so, too. A day may come when this will be a battalion-level event, if interest continues to grow. Perhaps some of our members who could not make it this year might come next year.

My personal choice for the quote of the weekend was from a girl who was, maybe, ten or twelve. We offered her some hardtack, and unlike a lot of people, she took it. When asked if she liked it, she said, "Yes!"

When asked what it tasted like, she said, "Cardboard!"

I am hoping that we will see a good turnout at Fort McHenry. I also hope that if anybody who was at Gettysburg this weekend has anything to add to this report, they will do so.

Touch the elbow,

Bruce Milligan

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher

TITLE: Charge down Little Round Top, June 17, 2006

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_

ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 04/20/2006 12:57:35 PM

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BODY:

About 4 o'clock we were hurriedly called into line, and ordered to sling knapsacks, which command to us always meant, "get ready for quick and devilish work," as "Snap" put it. We were hurried at a double quick to the extreme left, at the Round tops, to reinforce the 3rd Corps, which had met with reverses and was driven by the enemy. Gen. Sykes' Regulars had previously gone to the support of Sickles, but had also yielded the ground.

"The First Brigade, formed hurriedly in brigade front, as best they could, the nature of the ground compelling the regiments to overlap each other to some extent, on the crest of Little Round Top, facing the wheat field. As we thus formed, we looked down over the field of carnage, and

could hear the victorious shouts of the enemy, and when the smoke of battle lifted momentarily, we caught glimpses of fleeing friends and hotly pursuing foes, the general outlook being anything but assuring." One Saturday, June 18, Company K of the First Pennsylvania Reserves would like to once again invite all interested Federal infantry units and civilian "volunteers" to join us when we conduct our annual march from the Pennsylvania Monument to Little Round Top, from which location we will follow the route of the Pennsylvania Reserves, as they charged down into the Wheatfield on the second day of the battle of Gettysburg.

This will be the fifth time we have done this event. Last year, we had 30 uniformed participants (including a drummer and fifer recruited from the Second South Carolina String Band), and at least an equal number of spectators, including some extremely enthusiastic Boy Scouts. This out-of-the ordinary event is always very popular with spectators and participants alike, and we hope you will consider joining us, for the day, for the march, or for the weekend.

Except for the march and charge itself, we will follow the time schedule of most Living History presentations at Gettysburg NMP. Below is the tentative schedule for Saturday. For those who are with us on Sunday, we expect to do presentations at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

#### Saturday Schedule

8:00-9:30: Inspection, drill, etc.  
10:00: Firing demo and public drill.  
12:00 p.m.: Lunch.  
1:30 p.m.: Form up for second demo  
2:00: p.m.: Firing demo and public drill.  
3:30 p.m.: Form up near Pennsylvania Monument for march to Little Round Top.  
4:00 p.m.: March to Little Round Top.  
5:00 p.m.: Charge down Little Round Top.  
5:07 p.m.: Fish our lieutenant out of Plum Run.  
5:30 p.m.: March back to Pennsylvania Monument.  
6:30 p.m. Company dismissed. Dinner on the field, for those who wish to stay and camp with us.

Here are some additional details:

On Saturday afternoon, we will gather a group of spectators, arm 24 of them with wooden muskets, and give them some rudimentary drill. Then, with our flag flying and drum/s beating, we will all march to Little Round Top, with pauses for narration on the key events of the battle from our First Sergeant, Larry Nottingham. Looking down into the Valley of Death, and accompanied by our civilian "volunteers," we will then give a cheer "particularly our own," as Lieutenant Minnigh wrote, and charge down the hill to the stone wall near the Wheatfield, as did the original Pennsylvania Reserves on that fateful day.

Every year, we have a slightly larger number of participants, and we are hoping to boost our numbers closer to the 51 men the original Company K took into the battle. If you or any of your members would like to join us

for the day or for that weekend, we would be delighted to have you. Non-uniformed participants are welcome, too, as this is an interactive event, and the more the public is involved, the better.

We will be camping at the Pennsylvania Monument over the weekend.. Those who wish to come only for this are more than welcome to do so, without any obligation to stay the night or the weekend.

Because we need to give the NPS a tally of expected participants, if you think you will be joining us, the sooner we know, the better.

You can find photos of previous Little Round Top events at our Web site (URL below), by going first to "The Original Company K" link, and then to the bottom of that page, and clicking on "On Home Soil."

We know all uniformed participants will come properly equipped and attired as would be representative of the Army of the Potomac in the first week of July, 1863. We are happy to answer questions about uniform guidelines, if asked.

Touch the elbow,

B.C. Milligan  
Company K, First Pennsylvania Reserves  
<http://firstreserves.messofthedamned.org/>

"We deliberately waited till the front was cleared of our retreating and vanquished troops, many of whom passed pell-mell through our ranks, then at the word of command, with a ringing cheer, particularly our own, we swept down the face of the hill, meeting the rebels as they came rushing forward, on the face of the hill. (I can only speak for my own regiment). There can be no doubt in any unprejudiced mind, that a few moments delay would have lost to us the position on Little Round Top, the key to the battle-field. The so-called historians of the battle-field, asserts that there were no rebels in our front when we charged forward. Nonsense! the evidence of those who were there, we think, should have more weight than that of of a mere citizen hundreds of miles away from the field of strife.

Well with a quick dash we swept down into the valley, across plum-run swamp, over the valley and up to their stone fence, across this fence and through a narrow strip of woods, (now removed), to the eastern edge of the wheat-field, where, by orders, we halted."

-- Henry Minnigh, The History of

Company K

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: bangpitcher  
TITLE: 2006 National Memorial Day Parade  
STATUS: Publish  
ALLOW COMMENTS: 1  
CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_  
ALLOW PINGS: 0

DATE: 05/30/2006 10:30:58 AM

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BODY:

Today marked the second annual National Memorial Day Parade, and I am certain, from what I saw today, that as the years go by, this event is going to continue to grow in size and popularity. As nearly as I can discern, about 4,000 marchers, in over 100 organizations, took part, and although I have no idea how many people watched us, it was certainly more than the 50,000 who viewed the parade last year. The parade was also broadcast over the Armed Forces Network to American military personnel around the world, which was one reason I was hoping that Company K might have produced a slightly better turnout. But we still had a good event.

Our own group was originally slated to number 17, but reenactor math set in, and about half those who had committed to the parade realized, either last night or this morning, that they had more important things to do. This was a bit dismaying, but no surprise. We wound up with nine, including Tim Carter and myself from Company K, and fell in behind the SUV, who field another ten or so, all of us marching behind President Lincoln's carriage. A lone member of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry brought up the rear. Originally, he said, his unit was going to be present in force, but most of them realized they "had other things to do" at the last minute.

"I wonder what would have happened if the guys at Omaha Beach had said they had other things to do," he mused. That sort of sums up my feelings, too.

We marched for those who marched before us, and who march today, to the sound of real guns, including those members of Company K currently serving their country here and overseas. We marched for those who have marched for well over 200 years, and for those who died, and would never march again. It was a deep honor for us to do this, and I hope that next year, we can field a battalion, instead of a weak platoon. Doug Dobbs, the organizer of today's event, and I are committed to doing this, if we can.

Anyway, enough attempts at motivation. We were the 40th unit in the parade, so I cannot really say who went before us, save I know the first unit was comprised of 600 troops recently returned from Iraq. There were scores of marching bands from all 50 states (including the "7th Cavalry Band" from Wyoming, who actually looked and sounded pretty good). The SUV were led, I am sorry to say, by a bagpiper. Hearing "The Battle Hymn

of the Republic" on the pipes was almost enough to make me renounce my Scottish heritage. But at least they all marched in step, as did we. We were sort of a color guard, as our three flags included the National flag; the flag of the New York Fire Zouaves (two guys from Birney's came, in their red shirts, as a prep, I think for First Manassas), and the flag of the Sixth Corps, carried by Doug Dobbs.

After our part of the march ended, Doug, his students, and the Zouaves departed, and Tim and I spent another hour watching the parade. We were treated to the sight of a 105 year-old vet of World War One; former Pittsburgh Steelers running back Rocky Bleier; a float filled with Medal of Honor winners; former members of the 442nd RCT (the most decorated unit in World War Two), and many bands and veterans groups.

It was hot, hot, hot, but that was okay, as er, um, ah, the girls who were watching the parade were a major distraction from keeping in step. Luckily, though, we somehow managed to do that. Marching down Pennsylvania Avenue, both with our rifles at the proper slope for right shoulder shift, and then also in the proper position for support arms, was a great thrill for us, and I could only wonder what it might have looked like, with a full battalion in the parade, instead of a weak company. Considering that Memorial Day began in 1866, as Decoration Day, and considering that we were marching down Pennsylvania Avenue, Doug and I are hoping that next year we will really have a battalion of infantry in the parade. He already has a commitment, hopefully not to be reenactor-mathized, for up to 18 cavalry.

I have to say the humorous highlight of the day came at the very end, when a dirty, bearded Confederate, in his torn and dusty uniform came sauntering over. Rob Hodge apparently had an interesting morning -- the Capitol Police, seeing him on the street and not part of an obvious unit, arrested him, believing him to be a homeless guy with a gun! When he insisted he was in a parade, they said, "We don't see anybody else around here with a gun, buddy." It apparently took a while, and the intervention of a couple of other people, before they let him go. Since it took Tim and I about 20 minutes to argue other Capitol Police that we should be allowed to park in the garage of the Ronald Reagan Building, I can sympathize. They went over my car with a fine-toothed comb, checking under it with a mirror for bombs, and looking through everything in my trunk. Only later, when I found a package of 10 rounds in my trunk, did I doubt their efficiency.

Anyway, I ramble. I hope that at least a few of you who still consider yourselves part of Company K will consider joining us next year for this most worthwhile of events. If anything ever related to what this hobby that is more than a hobby is all about, surely it must be the National Memorial Day Parade.

And -- for those who may still be reading -- please don't forget that on June 17th, we will be doing our Little Round Top event at Gettysburg. I was told today that other people have been talking up this event to their units, so I hope the host unit can produce more than three or four of us.

And finally, let us remember this day and its true meaning, in between sales and barbecues.

Touch the elbow,

Bruce

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EXTENDED BODY:

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EXCERPT:

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KEYWORDS:

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AUTHOR: firstpa

TITLE: The 2007 Season has Begun

STATUS: Publish

ALLOW COMMENTS: 1

CONVERT BREAKS: \_\_default\_\_

ALLOW PINGS: 0

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BODY:

Ten members of Company K gathered in Gettysburg early in January to discuss the unit's future, and also to plan for the coming season. Among our number was the one of the original founders of Company K, John Henry Kurtz. We were also joined by our new captain, Jason Lander. Jason has been a reenactor for almost 20 years, and also spent more than a decade on the U.S. Army, where he was also a captain. We are looking forward to John Henry's return and Jason's arrival. Along with Jason come about half a dozen members of his former unit.

Company officers were elected at the meeting, for both on- and off-field positions. Our president is John Henry Kurtz (off the field -- Mr. Lincoln still holds that position when we are in uniform). Larry Nottingham is our first sergeant and treasurer. Jason Lander is our first lieutenant or captain, and Mark McNierney will be our second lieutenant. I (B.C. Milligan) am Company K's secretary, and I will be getting a newsletter in the mail by the end of February.

Company would like to thank Scott Rader for his years of service to Company K and the hobby, in creating and maintaining this Web site, among many other contributions. Scott has moved away (I think to Florida) and probably won't be falling in with us in the near future, but his efforts live on. At some point, we will probably be creating a new Web site.

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