

Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler Camp #863, Conyers, Ga.

GEN. JOE'S DISPATCH



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Camp Officers:

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Camp Adjutant: Steve Camp

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Coming Events

Jan. 11, 2011 - **29th Annual Lee-Jackson Dinner** -
Philologia Lodge, Conyers,
Georgia

July 14 - 16, 2011 - **2011 SCV Reunion**, Montgomery,
Alabama

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Historian Persists In Efforts To Correct Record, Honor Deceased

By: Kathryn Jorgensen, Civil War News



SALISBURY, S.C. — Many a Civil War enthusiast develops passion for his interests, but not many become a published authority, a crusader trying to do right by veterans and a sleuth involving a tale of intentionally inflated prison deaths.

Mark Hughes, most recently author of *The New Civil War Handbook* (Savas Beatie 2009), has written five books about Union and Confederate cemeteries. The Kings Mountain, N.C., resident is not a historian by trade — he teaches electronics. After 24 years at it, he calls himself an independent researcher and authority on Confederate prisons.



He's trying to bring that authority to bear on the Department of Veterans Affairs. He wants it to list the names of soldiers buried in trenches as unknowns at Salisbury National Cemetery or allow the names to be listed at non-government expense.

Hughes makes a convincing case for why the names of 3,501 "known but unknown" men were not recorded at the cemetery. Those "unknowns" include at least 47 members of the black 54th Massachusetts Regiment and Robert Livingstone (as Rupert Vincent), whose father was David Livingstone, the famous explorer.

Hughes' chronology begins on July 24, 1867, when Bvt. Brig. Gen. J.J. Dana of the Quartermaster Corps reported 3,501 known and three unknown soldiers from the Confederate prison camp were buried at Salisbury. Hughes says they comprise more than 90 percent of the prison's dead.

The government spent \$4 million reinterring the bodies and creating the cemetery. Eighteen burial trenches for men who died at Salisbury were marked with head-and footstones. Dead from other sites were also buried at the site, which was established as a national cemetery in 1870.

In 1868 the dead were recorded in Volume 14 of the Roll of Honor of Federal servicemen. Hughes has located the handwritten burial roster on which the roll was based at the National Archives.

Someone in the Quartermaster Department altered the records in 1868 to inflate Union deaths at the prison. Hughes has seen the original report of Bvt. Col. C.W. Folsom, Inspector of National Cemeteries, that reported 5,000 deaths. That number was written over in

something like crayon and changed to 12,000.

Folsom's account that the dead were buried in 13 trenches was changed to 18. Thus the printed report claimed 12,000 dead in 18 trenches.

"I think the numbers were changed to make Salisbury look worse than it was," Hughes says.

"I think they were trying to prove conspiracy. They didn't want to admit that more Confederates died in Union captivity, than Union died in Confederate captivity." He notes that the last Salisbury prison commandant, Maj. John H. Gee, was acquitted of war crimes charges in 1866.

In 1869 the Inspector General of National Cemeteries visited Salisbury, had two burial trenches opened to see if the bodies were in caskets, and from this said an estimated 11,700 men died.

Congress in 1873 allocated \$10,000 for a monument that was erected in 1875 and still stands honoring the 11,700 U.S. soldiers buried in the cemetery.

In 1897 B.F. Booth, who had served in the 22nd Iowa Infantry, Co. I, wrote *Dark Days of the Rebellion* about his time at Salisbury Prison. Hughes says that Booth, who was released on Feb. 21, 1865, had copied the burial register and reported 3,800 deaths from

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Our Commanders Comments



By: Commander Tommy Cook



Fellow members and friends of Joe Wheeler Camp 863,

First and foremost, I hope that you and your family had very joyful Christmas.

At our last meeting Mr. Joe "Howard" Underwood was elected Camp Commander. I would like to wish him the best of luck and pledge my support to him for the next two years. I believe that the voting members could not have made a better choice for this position. We should all congratulate Joe and offer our help to make this transition in to his new role as effortless as possible. The following officers will support Joe.....

- First Lt. Commander – Tommy Cook
- Second Lt. Commander – Jerry New
- Adjutant – Steve Camp

Historian/Photographer – Dan Bass

Chaplain – John Maxey

Our annual Lee –Jackson dinner is scheduled for **January 11th, 2011 at 7:00 PM.** The early start will allow us ample time for a great BBQ dinner and program. This year we will also install the new officers and present the Person and Compatriot of the year awards. **Make sure that you call or contact our camp adjutant – Steve Camp no later than January 4th to reserve your spot.** As always the entire family is invited and it costs only \$12.50 per person.

At our last meeting the mini program was provided by Adjutant Steve Camp about his great grandfather who was a wheelwright in the Confederate Army; he did not carry a weapon, but he did participate in several major battles, building wagon and caisson wheels. As a young man he traveled from Georgia to his new home in Alabama where he is buried at the church he helped charter. Thanks for the program Steve!

The past two years as camp Commander have been challenging and rewarding. While we have not grown in membership we have retained the core members of our camp. These hard working individuals have cleaned cemeteries, attended festivals and supported our camp every inch of the way. I am proud to have served as your Commander and would like to thank each of you for your support and hard work over the past two years. I now ask you to help our new Commander and to give him the support that you have always given me.

I look forward to seeing all of you on January 11th, 2011 at our annual Lee-Jackson dinner. Please join us and make this a very special event.

Yours in the South,
Tommy Cook



Comments form the Commander Elect



The camp elections were held last month at our regular meeting. There were two nominee's for Camp Commander and the choices seemed clear. One was a man with 25 plus years experience in the SCV hav-

ing been commander several times for several camps, the Georgia Division Chief of Heritage Defense and who knows what other titles and accomplishments and the other a man who's only experience was a compatriot of this camp for the past five years and editor of this newsletter. The

latter was not concerned that he would be elected. Oops!

Seriously gentlemen, I am honored that you would have enough confidence in me to elect me your Camp Commander.

Since my being elected I have thought a lot about what is next? What will my goals be? What do you expect from me? How can we improve the Camp, etc? It is obvious that I am going to need a lot of help so if you have suggestions on any subject that might help improve the Camp, please do not hesitate to

contact me. My e-mail is joe@jonesmetalmolding.com, and my phone numbers are; home: 770-483-4995, office: 678-413-3195 or cell: 678-898-8393.

I will tell you that my short term goal will be to get to know all of you and my long term goals will be to increase our ranks, improve our compatriot's participation and above all continue to Honor our Confederate Ancestors and their cause.

J. H. Underwood, Commander Elect



Civil War Heritage TrailsSM Reach Into Alabama & South Carolina

From the Civil War Heritage Trails Newsletter



The same 501c3 non-profit organization currently creating six Civil War Heritage Trails in Georgia has actively begun planning the creation of several additional trails throughout Alabama and South Carolina. Exact numbers and names of all the Alabama and South Carolina Civil War Heritage TrailsSM are pending, but will likely include additional segments of the Jefferson Davis and Wilson's Raid Heritage Trails. Partnering with dozens of Alabama and South Carolina communities and agencies, this expansion of the Civil War Heritage Trails will benefit both the citizens of and visitors to all three states: Alabama, South Carolina and Georgia.

At least two of the probable South Carolina Civil War Heritage Trails...the Sherman's March and Jef-



Fort Sumpter, South Carolina

erson Davis Heritage Trail will directly connect with two Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails (the March to the Sea and Jefferson Davis Heritage Trails, respectively). *"By meeting at the Savannah River, these trails create a continuous two-state interpretation of the war's history throughout both South Carolina and Georgia," according to The Honorable Daniel B. Verdin, a South Carolina State Senator from Lauren*

South Carolina Civil War Heritage Trails will mark the route traveled by Confederate President Jefferson Davis and others during late April and early May 1865, beginning in the Charlotte metropolitan area and stretching through the Piedmont region of South Carolina.

The Jefferson Davis Heritage TrailSM will travel through portions of York, Chester, Union, Spartanburg, Laurens, Greenwood, Abbeville and McCormick Counties. At the Savannah River it will connect with the Georgia portion of the same trail, continuing generally south to Irwinville, where Davis and his companions were captured by Federal cavalry on May 10, 1865.

In addition to its title theme, along and near each trail route a series of National Park Service-styled

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Historian Persists In Efforts To Correct Record, Honor Deceased

By: Kathryn Jorgensen, Civil War News, (Continued from page 1.)



Oct. 6, 1864, to Feb. 21, 1865.

This period at the prison was hard because the small site held over 8,700 men, four times more prisoners than it could handle. There was a shortage of food and medical supplies and disease was rampant. According to the Salisbury Confederate Prison Association the death rate that had been at 2 percent rose to 28 percent and a mass burial system was initiated.

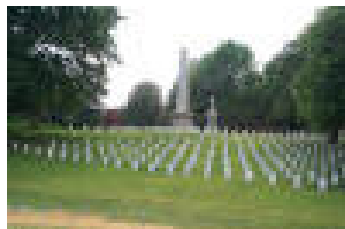
Louis A. Brown, author of *The Salisbury Confederate Prison, A Case Study of Confederate Military Prisons, 1861-1865* (Broadfoot 1980, 1992), also reported the lower number of deaths.

"My goal is to try to get these soldiers, sailors and civilians' graves marked," says Hughes. While it's possible some deaths in the barracks were not recorded in the hospital records, he knows 3,501 names were listed.

The dead in the trenches included at least 53 political prisoners. Hughes says one of them

was James Brown Hamilton, a Virginia Military Institute graduate who was a federal mapmaker. He died of heart disease on Sept. 23, 1864.

Hughes says he asked the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2003, 2005 and 2010 to memorialize the dead. "Each time the VA gave a different excuse for not marking these graves," he says.



Most recently, this past spring, he was told "existing lists would need to be examined, other records located."

That won't be difficult. Hughes recently found the Original Register of [the] Rebel Prison Hospital [at] Salisbury, NC, Kept

by Rebel Authorities. He says it can be used to validate the names in the Roll of Honor.

Hughes doesn't think his request is unreasonable. He notes that Finn's Point, New Jersey, and the Ashland Cemetery Soldiers' Lot in Carlisle, Pa., have single markers with soldiers' names. In addition, national cemeteries have group burials as recently as the Iraq War.

"These are American soldiers, they need to be memorialized," Hughes says. "Their relatives never knew what happened to them. The War Department and Inspector General's office suppressed this hospital roster. It is time to correct this injustice."

For more information about Hughes' efforts and his Salisbury information go to www.civilwarhandbook.com. The Salisbury Confederate Prison Association site at www.salisburyprison.org offers additional information.

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CivilWar Heritage TrailsSM Reach Into Alabama & South Carolina

From the Civil War Heritage Trails Newsletter (Cont. from page 3)



markers will comprehensively interpret numerous other military, cultural and civilian aspects of South Carolina's history during the war era. Two additional trails through South Carolina will feature interpretation of "Sherman's March" through South Carolina, plus the war along and near the Carolina coast ("Coastal War").

The driving routes for Alabama Civil War Heritage Trails have yet to be determined. Major themes such as the war in the Tennessee River Valley, major federal raids including Streight's, Rousseau's and Wilson's, the ironworks and other manufacturing centers of Alabama, plus the war on and near Mobile Bay will all be included. One of more Alabama Civil War Heritage Trails will also connect with neighboring Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails, again enabling visitors to understand a complete history of the war in both

states.



First White House of the Confederacy, Montgomery, AL

"I heartily endorse the Civil War Heritage Trails project and welcome the opportunity to assist in any way possible. We have needed such a venture in Alabama for many years," stated Dr. Norman R. Dasinger, Sr. of Gadsden, a past Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Alabama's and South Carolina's roadways will feature the same colorful Civil War Heritage Trails "trailblazer" directional

signs, similar in appearance as used in Georgia, yet with an outline of each state, respectively, surrounding a Civil War cannon. Each new driving trail will include many Civil War era historic sites, each with its own new interpretive marker.

With the addition of Alabama and South Carolina, a new website, www.CivilWarHeritageTrails.org, has been constructed. It features information on the Civil War Heritage Trails in all three states...Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. Visit www.CivilWarHeritageTrails.org to enjoy the new website's many new features. Many additions to www.CivilWarHeritageTrails.org will occur in the months ahead