

Sons of Confederate Veterans
Roswell Mills Camp No. 1547
MILL TALK

Howard Bryant, Commander - James Wells, 1st Lieutenant
Rick Leake, 2nd Lieutenant - Ross Glover, Adjutant
Buck Wilson, Judge Advocate General

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July 2010

Commander's Comments

Three members of our camp attended this year's Division Reunion June 11-12 in Milledgeville-- Adjutant Glover, Past Commander Maddox and the undersigned. Total attendance was about 190 which filled the room used for the business meeting on June 12. Host was Host Capitol Camp #688.

They did an excellent job, particularly considering they had only a five month notice as the camp previously selected as host was unable to do so due to matters beyond its control.

Camp 688 Commander Craig Coleman and his group worked hard and successfully met the challenges they faced.

This was my first attendance at a Division Reunion, and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting compatriots from other parts of Georgia.

Major topics at the business meeting were voting on proposed amendments to the SCV Georgia Division Constitution and voting on Division and Brigade Officers.

Of the five proposed amendments three were withdrawn for modification before resubmitted next

year. Two proposed amendments generated significant discussion and voting ran approximately 50/50, less than the two-thirds majority necessary for adoption.

One of those related to the method of electing the two Division Lieutenant Commanders and the other related to federal tax exemption. In the election of officers, only three positions had more than one candidate. These were Division Adjutant and Brigade Commanders for the 6th and 12th Brigades.

For Adjutant, Tim Pilgrim, who resigned as 12th Brigade Commander in order to run, faced incumbent, Tom Brown. Tim was elected. For his replacement as 12th Brigade Commander, Rhett Coleman was elected. Rhett had been endorsed by Tim.

Several projects seeking financial aid from the state vehicle license tag fund were presented and all were approved by unanimous vote. The one nearest to us is the new walkway at the Marietta Confederate Cemetery.

Howard Bryant
Commander

Dr. Lee Harford Tells Why South Lost

“It was the railheads,” Dr. Lee Harford said. “The South should have protected its railheads. Every thrust by the Union Army was to capture railheads.”

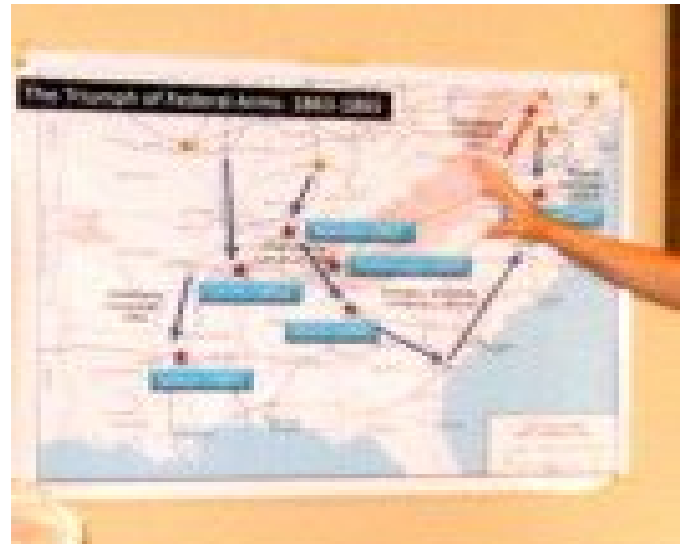
An excellent theory but admittedly only one of several causes for the defeat of the Confederacy.



Dr. Harford illustrates the geography of the Confederacy. There were natural barriers formed primarily by the Appalachian Mountain range.



Our speaker shows each railhead that should have been defended. After capturing the South's railroads, Federals used them to supply their own troops



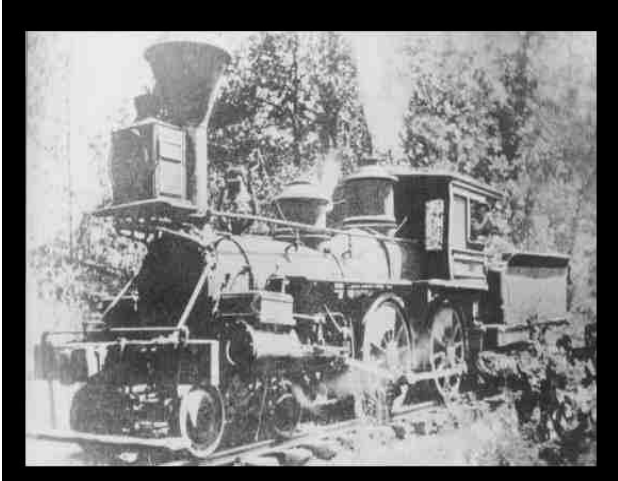
There were seven railheads the Union army captured...Jackson, MS, Corinth, MS, Louisville, KY, Chattanooga, TN, Atlanta, GA, Savannah, GA, Richmond, VA. The chart shows these railheads that the South failed to defend.

The importance of railroads to the South may be illustrated by the transportation of 30,000 soldiers from Tupelo, MS to Chattanooga, TN for Braxton Bragg's invasion of Kentucky. In September, 1863 Longstreet's corps of 12,000 was moved from Virginia to North Georgia approximately 800 miles for the battle of Chickamauga.

The Confederate government never had a railroad czar with any power while the Union created the U.S. Military Rail Road Department and gave an experienced railroad man a generalship with the full authority from the Secretary of War to confiscate any rolling stock for military use. The Confederate government appointed a political front office railroader with very little authority.

Contrary to historical belief, the South's railroads by and large were the same 5 ft. gauge. There was no standard gauge anywhere during the War. At the beginning of the conflict the North had 21,000 track mileage and the South 9,000. The South's rail was designed for short run hauling agriculture products.

Southern rails were used extensively and destroyed by the Union military leaving the Northern roads intact for use during reconstruction.



The *Texas* used by Conductor William Fuller to chase the *General* carrying Andrews' raiders.

Holding the railheads were certainly important in the South's fight but keeping the railroads from deteriorating was just as important. At the beginning of the war some of the largest Confederate victories were won with the use of railroads.

By 1863 rail was wearing out all over the south and the Confederates didn't have the ability to produce enough steel to repair the rails. The bad track slowed engines down to a crawl, and it took twice as many engines to haul food and supplies to the front.

When rural rails carrying food from farms were cannibalized to keep major lines operating, both civilian and military suffered from lack of food.

The engines were not mass produced. Replacing a part often meant fabricating a new one. But skilled craftsmen capable of building engines were at munitions factories turning our war materiel.

After three years of war many engines were declared useless, many more setting on the side waiting for repairs by overworked mechanics.

Rolling stock, wood boxcars and flat cars, were easily repaired with the exception of the cast-iron wheels and axles. The process of manufacturing a wheel is fairly sophisticated operation, and even minor imperfections wheels will slow the train and damage rails. Although there were foundries in Augusta capable of make wheels, the railroad could not deliver raw material in sufficient quantities to turn out enough to make a difference.

Parts were not the only problem that the Southerners contended with. It took crew of five to seven men to operate a train. As the war went on qualified railroad men began to disappear due to enlistment and train accidents.

To maintain a mile of track it took five to seven men. In additional personnel included station agents, telegraph operators, switch-men to operate manual switches that diverted rolling stock from one track to another, craftsmen and laborers to maintain rolling stock and accountants to keep the books.

As the War progressed the Confederacy needed soldiers more than railroad workers. The railroads made do with the personnel they had, but under these conditions more accidents happened with the loss of engines and men.

Dr. Lee Harford was right. The South should have protected its railheads, but without the ability to maintain trains that was a waste of time and men.



The *General* at Kennesaw



New Division Adjutant Tim Pilgrim with Commander Howard Bryant.

Cobb's Corner

By
John Cobb
Sesquicentennial



Notes

I couldn't make it to Allatoona Pass for the Alabama monument dedication. I've heard that most of the small number there were from Alabama. Of Confederate states, only Louisiana and North Carolina are yet to be remembered for their soldiers' valor in that 1864 battle, and the latter is close to being a reality, if only wisdom prevails.

Three Cobb County camps received tag fund money from GA Division for this project. It has been designed and a contractor selected for manufacture and installation, at a cost of over \$5K. But the application has not been approved by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, which now has a lease on the site from the Army Corps of Engineers. It seems a tax payer-salaried bureaucrat

has lowered the P.C. hammer because of the proposed wording, and it comes down to one word: invasion. Yes, political correctness now dictates that we must not use historical fact in stating that those men died defending the South from invasion! For surely that's what Sherman (phooey!) had done. At the request of Brigade Commander Tim Pilgrim, I contacted a friend in the Etowah Valley Historical Society in Cartersville, which formerly developed and maintained the battlefield trails and markers. He promised to try arranging a meeting between DNR officials and the SCV, in order to come to some agreeable compromise over this issue. My friend's opinion is that wording on some of the monuments in place prior to DNR administration might not be approved by them today. As of this writing, I am waiting to hear if the meeting will happen. Stay tuned.

I should remind you that our own Roswell mill workers monument is inscribed that they were deported "by invading Federal forces." We got those words through the City approval gauntlet eleven years ago. I doubt that they would fly today.

Chap-Line

Let's pray always that our character may be strengthened by reaching upward for things of the Spirit.

**Ray Barry
Chaplain**

Next Meeting-Thursday, July 1

Place: Harp Irish Pub

Dinner: 6:00

Program: 7:00

Harp is located at 1424 Market Blvd, off Old Alabama Road.

Bring your WBTS memorabilia for a Show and Tell program

Come out and support our Camp.