



The Wheeler Dispatch



*The Official Newsletter of the General Joe Wheeler Camp #1245 in Aiken, South Carolina
A Camp built upon Duty, Honor, God and Country August 2023*

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Commander's Column

Greetings Fellow Compatriots,

I just returned home from a successful and enjoyable 128th SCV National Reunion in historic Hot Springs, AR, home of the first National Park. Ken and I were honored to represent the Wheeler Camp. A fairly large representation of South Carolina compatriots was in attendance, even considering the distance to drive there. We got together Friday night to share a good meal and great fellowship. Our Camp Newsletter, "THE WHEELER DISPATCH" tied for first place with the Secession Camp #4 in the National Competition. These were the only two SC Camps that won awards at the Award Banquet. Out of 868 camps in the SCV, only 72 camps were present representing 532 delegates.

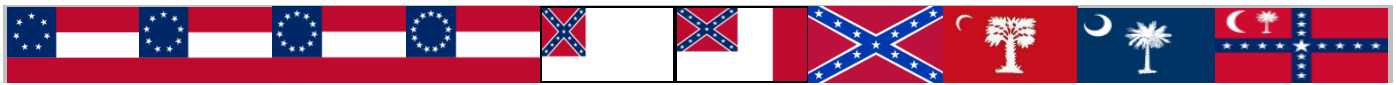
The 2024 National Reunion July 16 - 21, 2024 will be in North Charleston, SC, so more Wheeler Camp members should attend next year. Next year will be the election of new National Officers.

Please remit your **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL STATEMENT (MRS)** with your dues payment to our Adjutant, Danny Brown, as soon as possible. Your membership means a great deal to this Camp, but even more so to your heritage and Confederate Ancestor. So, let's all re-enlist! If anyone fails to receive an MRS, let me know. We don't want to lose a single member.

Our August Speaker will be Wheeler Camp 1st Lt. Lee Duvall. Lee will be filling in for me as Commander, since I will be out of town for the August 7th meeting. He also will be providing the meal. So, come out and support Lee.

Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations. May God bless you and may God bless Dixie. Blake

"Remember, Confederate soldiers never die until they are forgotten."



1st Lieutenant Commander

Since Commander Moore will be out of town for the August Camp meeting, I will be filling in for him, as well as being the program speaker. I will be talking about Camp Chase, a Confederate soldiers' prison camp in Columbus, Ohio. Also, with help from others, I will be providing the meal. Look forward to seeing you on August 7th.

2024 and 2025 National Reunions

Register NOW for the 2024 Reunion

Registration for the 2024 SCV National Reunion to be hosted by the Secession Camp #4 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in North Charleston, SC. The dates are July 16 - 21, 2024. To register, please visit the Reunion website, <https://scv4.org/2024/>.

The 2025 SCV National Reunion will be in Houston, TX. No website information has been provided on the National SCV website.

2nd Lieutenant Commander

You should have received your 2023-2024 Membership Renewal Statement (MRS) in the mail the first week in July. If you are not a Life Member, most are paying dues for 3 memberships: National \$35, SC \$10 and the General Joe Wheeler Camp \$20. The bill should be a total of \$65 plus any donations that you might like to make. Make the check payable to General Joe Wheeler #1245. The checks will be gathered from all of our members, deposited, and the camp will pay both National and SC dues. You should mail your MRS with dues to Adjutant Danny Brown, 601 Foreman St., Jackson, SC 29831, to arrive no later than August 7th or bring it to the August 7th camp meeting. It is very important to pay your dues on time; there is no leeway for being late.

By-Laws Committee

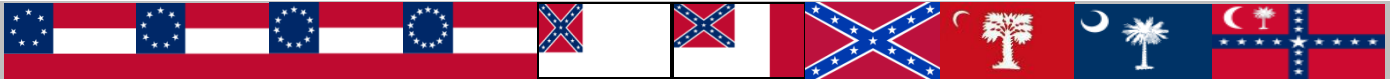
The By-Laws Committee and the Wheeler Camp made so many proposed changes to the Joe Wheeler By-Laws that it is taking me awhile to incorporate all of them. I am working on incorporating these changes and will email them to the Camp when finished. Lee Duvall, Chairman

Wheeler Coin Committee

The Wheeler Coins continue to sell well. Since last month, the Camp members have increased the sale of the coins from 85 to 112 coins. Lee Duvall, Chairman

Adjutant's Report

I am slowly getting the MRS's from the Camp members. Please send your dues to me as soon as possible. My address shows on the return of the MRS, but in case you can't find yours, send it to Adjutant Danny Brown, 601 Foreman St., Jackson, SC 29831. **I need to receive the MRS's no later than August 7th or bring them to the August 7th camp meeting. It is very important to pay your dues on time.**



From the Chaplain's Desk



The following account is taken from the book, R.E. Lee, A Commitment to Valor; by Army Chaplain J. William Jones.

“I can never forget my first interview and conversation with General Lee on religious matters. It was in February, 1864, while our army was resting along the Rapidan. Rev. B.T. Lacy and myself went, as a committee of our Chaplain’s Association, to consult him in reference to the better observance of the Sabbath.... The cordial greeting which he gave us, the marked courtesy and respect with which he listened to what we had to say.... Soon put us at our ease. But as we presently began to answer his questions concerning the spiritual interests of the army and to tell of that great revival which was then extending through the camps and bringing thousands of our noble men to Christ, we saw his eye brighten and his whole countenance glow with pleasure; and as, in his simple, feeling words, he expressed his delight, we forgot the great warrior, and only remembered that we were communing with a humble, earnest Christian.”

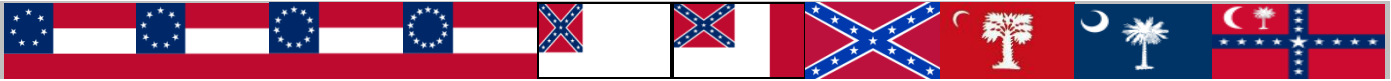
What a testimony that Lee through his character left upon other folks. Let us commit ourselves to a more worthy character, one that reflects the love of Jesus. Blessed be His Name, Ken



Chaplain’s Prayer List: Please remember our fellow compatriots and their family members who need prayers:

Michael Allen, Jacob Cook, Lee Duvall and his daughter Melanie, Clair Henkes, Tom Huckabee, Ken Temples, Eddie Rodgers & SC Adjutant Joe and Brenda Willis



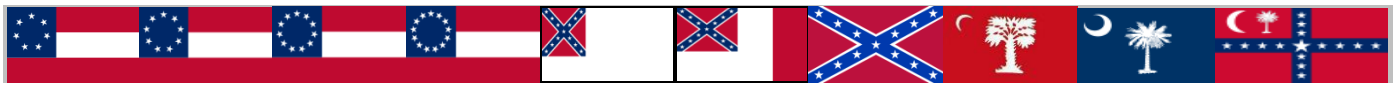


Beech Grove – Hoover’s Gap Confederate Cemetery

While passing through Tennessee on the way to the National Reunion, I stopped by the Beech Grove – Hoover’s Gap Confederate Cemetery just off of Exit 97 on I-24. Buried in the cemetery are 52 Unknown Confederate Soldiers as well as a few other Confederate Soldiers from the Army of Tennessee.

Battle of Hoover's Gap
 From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Battle of Hoover's Gap	
<p>Tullahoma Campaign</p>	
Date	June 24, 1863 – June 26, 1863
Location	Bedford County, Tennessee and Rutherford County, Tennessee
Belligerents	
United States (Union)	CSA (Confederacy)
Commanders and leaders	
William Rosecrans John T. Wilder	Alexander P. Stewart William B. Bate
Units involved	
XIV Corps	Stewart's Division
Casualties and losses	
61	146



The **Battle of Hoover's Gap** (24 June 1863) was the principal battle in the Tullahoma Campaign in which Union General William S. Rosecrans drove General Braxton Bragg's Confederates out of Central Tennessee. Rosecrans' feigned move on the western end of the Confederate line had left the eastern mountain passes lightly defended, and Colonel John T. Wilder's mounted infantry achieved total surprise when they attacked Hoover's Gap. Success was attributed both to Rosecrans' brilliant deception tactics and the high morale of Wilder's "Lightning Brigade", equipped with the new Spencer repeating rifle in use in battle for the first time.

Background

Main article: Tullahoma Campaign

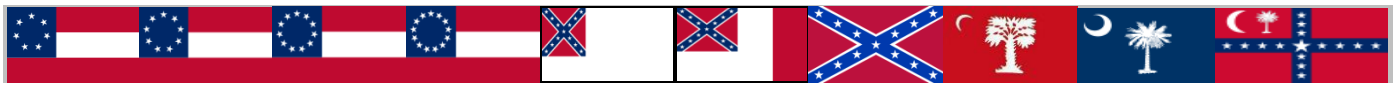
Following the Battle of Stones River, Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans, commanding the Union Army of the Cumberland, remained in the Murfreesboro, Tennessee, area for over five months. In an effort to block further Union progress, Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg, commander of the Army of Tennessee, established a fortified line along the Duck River from Shelbyville to Wartrace. On the Confederate right, infantry and artillery detachments guarded Liberty, Hoover's, and Bellbuckle Gaps through the Highland Rim (near Beechgrove, Tennessee). Rosecrans's superiors, fearing that Bragg might detach large numbers of men to help break the Siege of Vicksburg, urged him to attack the Confederate positions.

One of the Army of the Cumberland brigade commanders, Colonel John T. Wilder was impressed by the ability of Confederate General John Hunt Morgan to raid behind Federal lines in Kentucky. When he found that Rosecrans wanted to increase the strength of his mounted force, Wilder proposed to mount his infantry brigade by launching raids of the surrounding countryside to steal horses. Rosecrans gave him permission. By the middle of April 1863, Wilder's brigade was fully mounted. Having witnessed a demonstration of a new repeating rifle by Christopher Miner Spencer in March, Wilder determined to arm his brigade with that weapon. Wilder got his soldiers' whole-hearted support to re-arm them with the Spencer repeating rifle, and each soldier pledged a note for \$35. With notes in hand, Wilder co-signed them and took out a loan from his hometown banks. Soon the brigade was armed with the new seven-shot repeaters and began performing spirited mounted service.

Battle

On June 23, 1863, Rosecrans deployed forces to feign an attack on Shelbyville while massing forces against Bragg's right. Union troops struck out toward the gaps. On June 24, Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas's men, spearheaded by Colonel Wilder's "Lightning Brigade", attacked Hoover's Gap. Wilder's mounted infantry pushed ahead and reached the gap nearly 9 mi (14 km) ahead of Thomas's main body. Wilder's men were armed with new Spencer repeating rifles and when they attacked, the Confederate 1st Kentucky Cavalry (converged with the 3rd Kentucky Cavalry) under Colonel J. Russell Butler, was easily pushed aside. As Butler's unit fell back the entire 7 mi (11 km) mile length of Hoover's Gap, it ran into Brig. Gen. William B. Bate's brigade of Maj. Gen. Alexander P. Stewart's division.

It had been reported to Wilder that Bate's brigade defended the top of the gap. However, Wilder found the summit unoccupied and his soldiers could see Bate's camp in the valley below. Wilder dismounted his troops and prepared to hold the gap despite orders from his division commander Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Reynolds to retreat. Wilder entrenched on the hills south of the gap and determined to hold this extremely advanced position. Bate's brigade counterattacked throughout the day but could not dislodge the Federals. When he received orders to fall back through the gap, Wilder refused claiming he could hold his ground. Meanwhile, Brig. Gen. Bushrod Johnson's brigade arrived and now Bate and Johnson



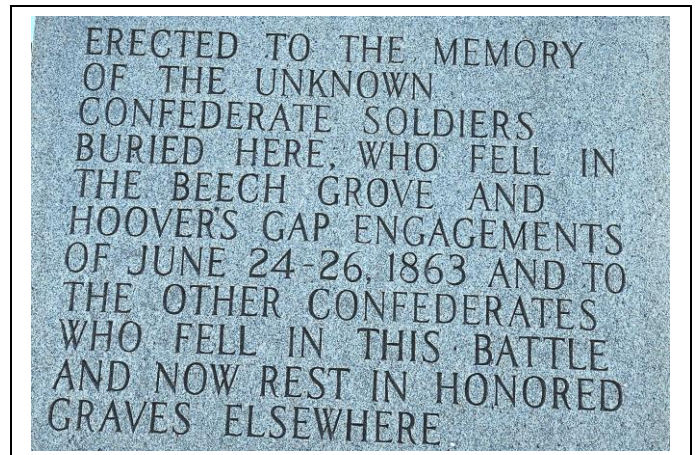
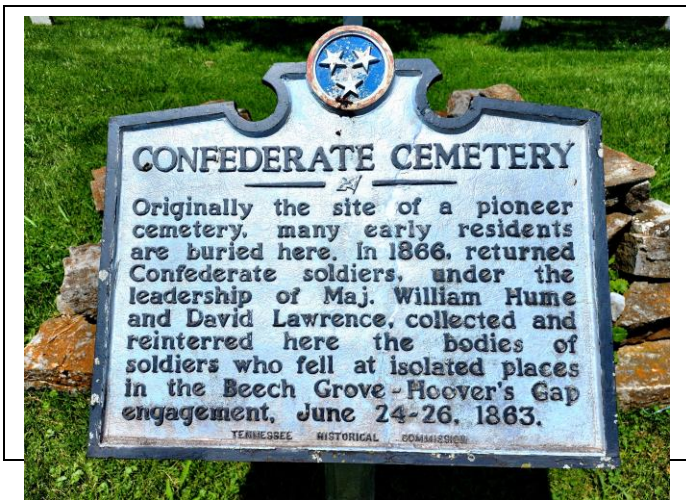
planned a final attack on Wilder. This attack was also repulsed and by 7:00 p.m. units from Lovell Rousseau and John M. Brannan's divisions of Thomas's corps arrived at the gap.

When Wilder saw Generals Rosecrans and Thomas riding up to his position, he expected to be chastised for ignoring orders to withdraw. Instead, he rode to Rosecrans and explained that he had disobeyed orders because he knew his soldiers were capable of holding the gap. Rosecrans was thrilled and shook Wilder's hand, saying, "Thank God for your decision. It would have cost us 2,000 lives to have taken this position if you had given it up." Just then, Reynolds arrived. Before he could say a word, Rosecrans told him, "Wilder has done right. Promote him."

Just before noon on June 26, Stewart sent a message to Johnson and Bate stating that he was pulling back and they should also. Although slowed by rain, Rosecrans moved on, forcing Bragg to retreat from his defensive line and fall back to Tullahoma. After reaching Tullahoma, Rosecrans sent Wilder's Lightning Brigade ahead to hit the railroad in Bragg's rear. Arriving too late to destroy the Elk River railroad bridge, the Federals destroyed railroad track around Decherd.

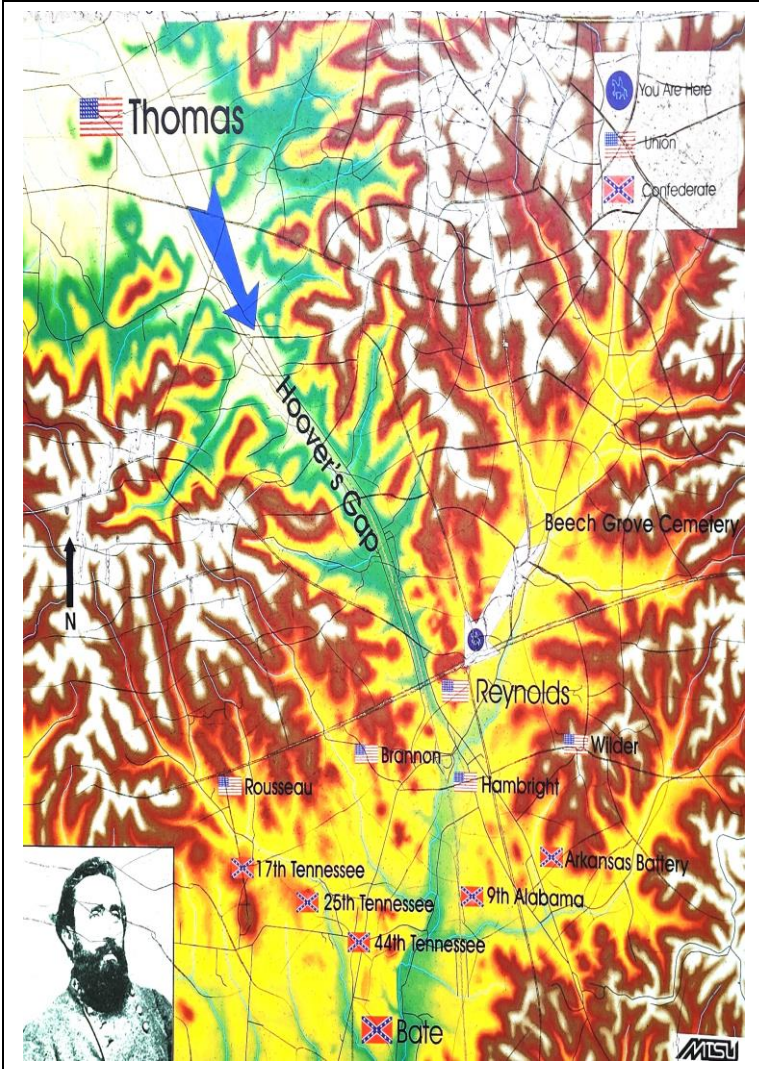
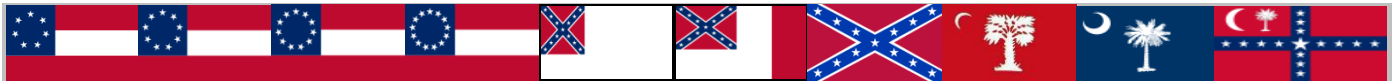
Aftermath

Bragg evacuated his forces from Middle Tennessee and withdrew to the city of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Rosecrans followed and captured that city on September 8, 1863.



52 Unknown Confederate Soldiers Graves





BATTLE OF HOOVER'S GAP
 JUNE 24 - 26, 1863
STEWART'S DIVISION
BATES' BRIGADE
 4TH GA. INF. BTN. SS. 15TH TENN. INF. REG'T.
 37TH GA. INF. REG'T. 20TH TENN. INF. REG'T.
 2ND 9TH ALA. INF. BTN. ALA. EUFAULA ART. Y. BTRY.

BROWN'S BRIGADE
 14TH GA. BTN. LIGHT ART. Y.

JOHNSON'S BRIGADE
 17TH TENN. INF. REG'T. 37TH TENN. INF. REG'T.
 23RD TENN. INF. REG'T. 44TH (CONS) TENN. INF. REG'T.
 25TH TENN. INF. REG'T. MISS PETTUS FLYING ART. Y. BTRY.
 FRANK MANEY'S TENN. LT. ART. Y.

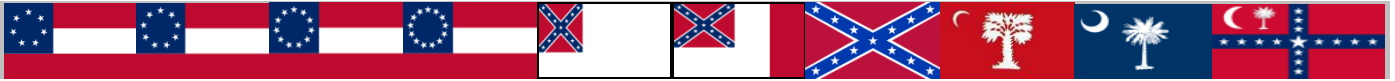
NO FAINT OF HEARTS EXISTED IN THE BRAVE SOLDIERS OF STEWART'S DIVISION AS THEY MARCHED DOUBLE QUICK THE FIVE MILES FROM THEIR CAMP AT FAIRFIELD IN THE RAIN ON THE AFTERNOON OF FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 1863 TO MAKE THREE FRONTAL ASSAULTS AGAINST THE ENTRENCHED INVADING UNION FORCES OF JOHN WILDER'S MOUNTED INFANTRY AND ELI LILY'S 18TH INDIANA ARTILLERY. CONFEDERATES FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER IN THE WAR FACED THE NEW 7 SHOT SPENCERS IN THE HANDS OF WILDER'S TWO THOUSAND MOUNTED INFANTRY AND ELI LILY'S SIX 3 INCH RIFLES AND FOUR MOUNTAIN HOWITZERS. THE RIFLE FIRE AND 350 DOUBLE-SHOT CANISTERS ROUNDS BARELY PREVENTED CONFEDERATE FORCES FROM OVERRUNNING UNION POSITIONS. DARKNESS ENDED THE FIGHTING.

Deo Vindice

PHOTOS FROM THE SCV NATIONAL REUNION

Members of the National SCV GEC





Blake is receiving the Newsletter Award from CIC Jason Boshers with the Awards Chairman Randy Burbage in the background.



Happy Birthday!

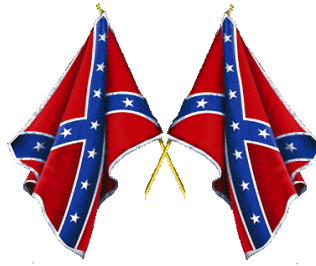
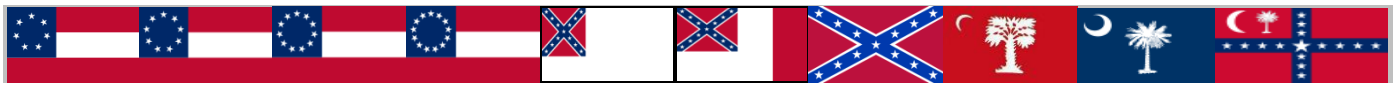
Camp Compatriots for August

Trevor Ritter – August 19

2023 – 2024 Camp Officers

Blake Moore– Commander
Lee Duvall – 1st Lt. Commander
Mark LeGrand – 2nd Lt. Commander
Danny Brown – Adjutant

Bob Ritter - Treasurer
Ken Temples – Chaplain
Nathan Oxner – Color Sergeant
Nicholas Ward – Judge Advocate



The General Joe Wheeler Camp is named after Major General Joseph Wheeler of Augusta, Ga. It was Wheeler's troops who turned back Sherman's Cavalry led by Gen. Kilpatrick in February of 1865. Wheeler is known as the Savior of Aiken.

Remaining 2023 Camp Activities

- August 7, September 11, October 2, November 6 and December 4 camp meetings will be held at the Aiken County Historical Museum at 6:30pm.
- Dec. 16 – The Wheeler Camp will host the Wreaths Across America Service at 3:00pm in Bethany Cemetery honoring all Veterans, especially Confederate Veterans.

The Camp has adopted and cares for 54 Confederate graves located in Bethany Cemetery, Aiken's largest cemetery where the only Unknown Confederate grave is located in the city.

MEETING TIME: Normally, the camp meeting is the first Monday of the month at 6:30pm with no camp meeting in February or July. The camp meeting in September is on the second Monday due to Labor Day. The Prayer Breakfast is our regular meeting in January.

MEETING PLACE: Aiken County Historical Museum, 433 Newberry St. SW, Aiken, SC 29801

For additional information contact: scscv1245@gmail.com