



Lee's Dispatch



Captain Bob Lee SCV Camp 2198

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Commander's Report

By Doug Garnett

As the summer of 2013 burns itself across Texas I find myself regulated to remaining indoors as much as possible. Makes me wonder, just how did our ancestors survive the heat in the summers 150 years ago? They wore wool clothing, with shirts of linsey woolsy cloth a heavy blend of cotton and wool. Our ancestors were indeed a much tougher generation than ourselves. We owe these strong soles who gave us what we have today.

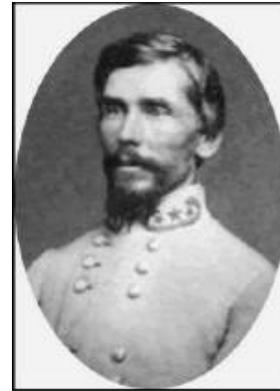
The Captain Bob Lee Camp has made a step forward by finding a great location for our meetings; the Mormon Church 1540 State Highway 78 south. We only have to honor a few simple requests, no coffee, eating only in the kitchen, and leaving the building as clean as or cleaner than when we got there. Our first meeting will be there September 7th, 2013 at 9 AM.

We also have a new member to be sworn in at our next meeting. I encourage everyone to attend and welcome our newest member.

The Fourth Brigade Texas Division of the SCV is working on a website and it currently is up in a testing form at <http://www.captboblee.org/brigade/home.htm> The calendar on the brigade site is up and running for scheduling please refer to it as well as the calendar located on the Captain Bob Lee site.

Please bring a friend, family member bring a future member with you to every meeting or event. And be safe out there during these hot Texas summer days.

Lee's Dispatch is the official newsletter for the Sons of Confederate Veterans Captain Bob Lee Camp 2198 and is intended for the sole purpose of keeping the camp members and friends of the camp informed to the activities and news of Camp 2198. Statements in this newsletter are those of the author and may not reflect the opinions of the Captain Bob Lee Camp, editor or the National Sons of Confederate Veterans. Within articles or quotes written by outside authors mistakes in spelling, grammar or sentence structure are strictly those of the author and may be left as is.



Patrick Cleburne

Patrick was born in Cork County Ireland. He was the second son of a middle class doctor, Joseph Clebrune. His mother died when he was only eighteen months and by the age of fifteen so had his father.

In 1846 he attempted to follow his father into the medical field and took the exams to Trinity College of Medicine and failed. Failure drove the young man to enlist into the British Army. He joined the 41st Regiment of Foot; eventually rising to the rank of corporal.

In 1849 Cleburne bought his discharge out of the British Army. He along with two brothers and a sister then immigrated to the United States.

First settling in Ohio then they moved on to Helena, Arkansas. Cleburne and his brother joined in partnership in the newspaper business in 1855. After surviving a gun fight in 1856 Patrick Cleburne then went on to become a lawyer and a popular one with the local citizens.

When the issue of secession reached a crisis, Cleburne sided with the Southern states. His choice was not due to any love of slavery, which he claimed not to care about, but out of affection for the Southern people who had adopted him as one of their own. As the crisis mounted, Cleburne joined the local militia company (the Yell Rifles) as a private soldier. He was soon elected captain. He led the company in the seizure of the U.S. Arsenal in Little Rock in January 1861. When Arkansas left the Union, the Yell Rifles became part of the 1st Arkansas Infantry, later designated the 15th Arkansas, of which he was elected Colonel. He was promoted to brigadier general on March 4, 1862. The Rest is a well known history.

Commerce Raiders

Part two

(see part one in June 2013 Lee's Dispatch)

To recap in the June issue the *CSS Alabama* had completed seven expeditionary raids and was heading back to a French port for refit, provisions and repairs. The *CSS Alabama* had been at sea for 534 days out of her 657 days of existence. During this time she never visited a Confederate port. She boarded nearly 450 vessels, and taken more than 2,000 prisoners without a single loss of life from either prisoners or her own crew. *CSS Alabama* had burned 65 Union vessels of various types.

Captain Semmes knew the ship was in need of refit; her ammo was damp and needed to be dried or replaced. Repairs requiring a dry dock were also needed. To this end Captain Semmes set his course to Cherbourg France.

Arriving in Cherbourg on June 11th 1864 Captain Semmes requested permission to dry dock and overhaul the *Alabama*. He had already begun the process of purchasing provisions and even spreading out his ammunition to allow it to dry.

June 14th, the *USS Kearsarge*, under the command of Captain John Ancrum Winslow arrived and took up station just outside the harbor. From the last port of call for the *USS Kearsarge*, Winslow had sent word to Gibraltar for the *USS St. Louis* with provisions and to provide blockading assistance. The *CSS Alabama* was now bottled up with no place to run.

The *USS St. Louis* was a, somewhat, aged frigate. She was not a steam powered vessel, but by sail from her three masts. She also carried twenty 24 lb guns. Commissioned on December 20th 1828 she remained in service until May 12th 1865. The *St. Louis* was rearmed in Philadelphia around September 1861. The *St. Louis* now armed with four 8 in (200 mm) shell guns, twelve 32-pounder guns, two 20-pounder Parrott rifles, and one 12-pounder smoothbore.



USS St. Louis

Captain Raphael Semmes, was a very aggressive man, proud of his ship and men. He could not bear the idea of the *CSS Alabama* sitting in the French port rotting away. Semmes, through diplomatic channels, sent a challenge to the captain of the *USS Kearsarge*; ***“my intention is to fight the Kearsarge as soon as I can make the necessary arrangements. I hope these will not detain me more than until to-morrow or the morrow morning at farthest. I beg she will not depart until I am ready to go out. I have the honor to be Your obedient servant, R. Semmes, Captain.”***

Captain Semmes took the next couple of days gathering up his ammunition most of which were still contaminated with sea water. After making his ship as ready as could be for sea, gunnery drill became the order of the day.

Dawn on June 19th, only five days after *Kearsarge* arrived Captain Semmes took his gallant crew and the crippled *Alabama* out to meet the enemy.

Kearsarge turned to meet her the *CSS Alabama* opened fire. Winslow waited patiently until the range had closed to less than 1,000 yards. The ships began to circle each other both attempting to “cross the T”; which a maneuver of crossing the bow or stern of the opponent. As the ships circled they also drifted in a southwesterly direction because of the current in the channel.

A shot from *Alabama's* 7 inch Blakely rifle mounted on a pivot, struck a very vital spot on the *Kearsarge* early in the battle. Striking the vulnerable stern post and causing the steering gear to bind. The shot, from deteriorated shells and fuzes, failed to explode. Such an explosion would have severely crippled or even caused the *Kearsarge* to sink.



Drawing of unexploded shot.

The *Alabama's* crew, were loading and firing their guns too fast and not taking time to aim properly. Many of their shots went high. Also against the *Alabama* was the iron clad siding which had been installed on the *Kearsarge*. The iron was somewhat hidden by deal board and was a factor not known to the crew of the *Alabama*. Captain Semmes later insisted that if he had known of the iron clad protection he would not have issued the challenge to Winslow.



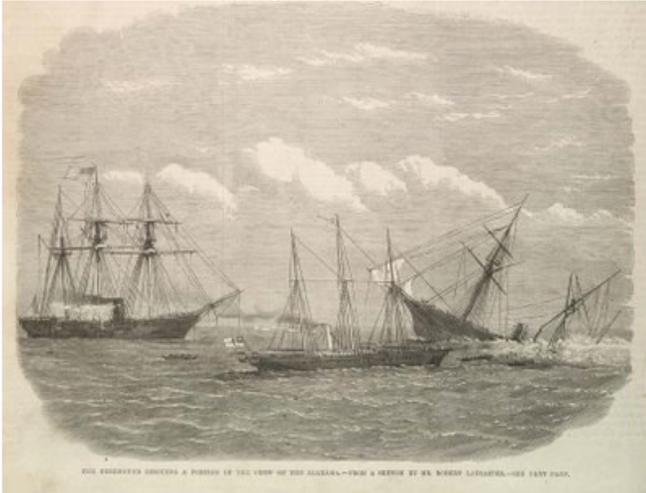
Ships Duel

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A shot from *Kearsarge* tore into and exploded in the stern post of the *Alabama*, the same spot the *Alabama* had struck *Kearsarge* earlier. *Kearsarge's* shot exploded dooming the *Alabama*.

Between the poor gunnery skills, contaminated powder and fuzes, the battle did not go well for Captain Semmes and the *Alabama*. Finally Captain Semmes sent a boat to the *Kearsarge* requesting assistance with survivors. A British flagged sloop the *Deerhound* also rushed in to rescue survivors from the sinking *Alabama*.



Deerhound saves about 30 of *Alabama's* crew

Captain Winslow on the *Kearsarge* could do nothing but watch as the British yacht *Deerhound* took most of the crew, including Captain Semmes and as the *Deerhound* began to pull away from the rapidly sinking *Alabama* one of the crew from *Alabama* rescued the flag and saved it from sharing a watery grave with its ship.

Captain Winslow was begged by his crew to fire on the *Deerhound* as it made off with Captain Semmes, twelve of his officers and about eighteen of the crew.

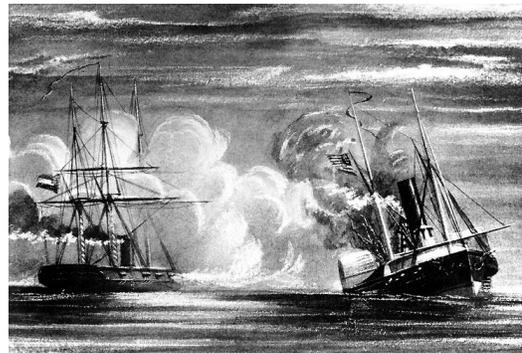


The stainless banner, 2nd National flown from *CSS Alabama*

Authorities consulted about this flag concur that this is a genuine Confederate Naval flag and was very probably the property of the *CSS Alabama*, given its provenance. The flag came to the Mariners' Museum in 1985 as part of a collection of artifacts and archival material associated with the *CSS Alabama*. These items were once the property of James Dunwoody Bulloch. During the American Civil War, Bulloch was the American agent in England responsible for the construction and acquisition of vessels for the Confederacy. He oversaw construction of the *CSS Alabama* in Liverpool. His half brother, Irvine Bulloch, was a midshipman on the *Alabama* and family legend holds that Irvine rescued this second national ensign from the *Alabama* before she slipped beneath the waves on June 19, 1864.

One of the engagements during *CSS Alabama's* expeditions was with the *USS Hatteras*, a ship of the US Navy on blockade duty off Galveston, Texas.

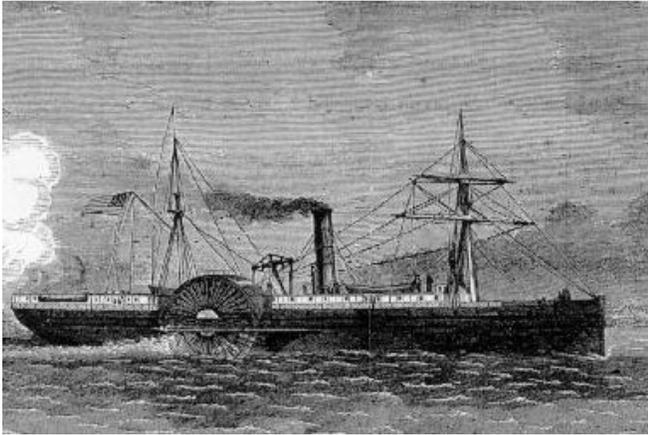
January 1863 sails were seen on the horizon and *Hatteras*, commanded by Commander Homer C. Blake, went to investigate. Over four hours of giving chase found the *Hatteras* within hailing distance. First claiming to be a British ship, then striking the Union Jack the *Alabama* flew the Stars and Bars of the Confederacy. During a short twenty minute exchange of gun fire the *Hatteras* was holed, on fire and sinking. Captain Semmes dispatched his boats to rescue the survivors and wounded. The entire engagement was over in forty five minutes from the first shot.



CSS Alabama sinking the *USS Hatteras*

USS Hatteras

The wreck of the United States Navy vessel *USS Hatteras*, sunk in an engagement with the Confederate raider *CSS Alabama*, lies in sixty feet of water about twenty miles south of Galveston, Texas. The site is one of the few shipwreck sites in the National Register of Historic Places. Its significance is twofold. The vessel is a relatively early example of a steel-hulled, side-wheeled steamship representative of the transition between the wooden sailing ship and the modern steamship; and she is comparatively intact since she sank very rapidly and, unlike the majority of Texas shipwrecks, lies in deep water away from the destructive surf.



The *USS Hatteras* in better days

The *Hatteras* was a converted merchant ship of 1,126 tons, 210 feet long, with a draft of eighteen feet, formerly named the *St. Mary*. She was acquired by the United States Navy from Harland and Hollingworth of Wilmington, Delaware, on September 25, 1861. She was armed and fitted out at the Philadelphia Naval Yard and commissioned in October 1861. Her armament consisted of four thirty-two-pounders, two thirty-pounders, one twenty-pounder, and an eight-pounder. The ship and her crew of 126 first saw duty with the South Atlantic blockading squadron and subsequently with the Gulf of Mexico blockading squadron. She carried out raids on the Confederate coastline, engaged a Confederate warship, *CSS Mobile*, in an inconclusive action, and captured a number of blockade runners. The *Hatteras* was sunk by Confederate captain Raphael Semmes after a short battle on January 11, 1863, only two months after her second captain, Commander Homer C. Blake, assumed command.



Two photos of current work on the wrecked *Hatteras*

The wreck site is shown on nautical charts and has long been known to local divers and amateur historians. It has also been located by commercial treasure hunters, who filed a suit claiming to be, by right of discovery, the salvors and owners of the wreck. Because the wreck is a United States naval vessel, the federal government was able to keep control of the site and preserve it for scientific investigation. This is one of the few cases in which the courts have found in favor of historic preservation and against commercial exploitation of a historic shipwreck site. The New Orleans Outer Continental Shelf Office of the Bureau of Land Management, as the responsible federal agency, has undertaken various investigations of the wreck.

Note: Recently while naval archeologists were examining the wreck of the *USS Hatteras* they discovered two other sunken vessels close to the wreck *Hatteras*. Both of these ships wrecks appear to have gone down in the early 19th century. Below is a link to the other ships found.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/26/gulf-shipwreck-exploration-two-more-sunken-vessels_n_3659337.html

Audit: National Archives At Risk

BRETT ZONGKER | 10/26/10

An audit prompted in part by the loss of the Wright Brothers' original patent and maps for atomic bomb missions in Japan finds some of the nation's prized historical documents are in danger of being lost for good.

Nearly 80 percent of U.S. government agencies are at risk of illegally destroying public records and the National Archives is backlogged with hefty volumes of records needing preservation care, the audit by the Government Accountability Office found.

The report by the watchdog arm of Congress, completed this month after a year's work and obtained by The Associated Press, also found many U.S. agencies do not follow proper procedures for disposing of public records.

Officials at the National Archives, which houses the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and other treasured documents at its Washington rotunda, had no immediate comment Tuesday on the findings.

The report comes more than a year after news reports of key items missing at the nation's record-keeping agency. Some of the items have been missing for decades but their absence only became widely known in recent years.

The patent file for the Wright Brothers flying machine was last seen in 1980 after passing around multiple Archives offices, the Patents and Trademarks Office and the National Air and Space Museum.

As for maps for the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, military representatives checked them out in 1962, and they've been missing ever since.

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The GAO report did not specifically mention those or other examples of missing items including Civil War telegrams from Abraham Lincoln, Eli Whitney's cotton gin patent and some NASA photographs on the moon.

A second GAO report obtained by the AP details "significant weaknesses" in the Archives' security. The Oct. 21 report refers to a lost computer hard drive from the Clinton administration and highlights problems with the Archives' computer access controls, clearance requirements for employees and physical security. A third report not yet released is expected to detail 213 recommendations to improve Archives' security, the GAO said.

The risks highlighted by the GAO could affect volumes of mundane legal memos but also key pieces of history. Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa requested the audits last year, alarmed at the "apparent lack of effective security." He noted the loss of the Wright Brothers' patent, the Clinton administration computer data with classified information and lost maps from World War II.

"This agency is the country's record keeper," Grassley said in a statement Tuesday. "It's responsible for protecting classified materials and for preserving our most important historical documents. ... The agency needs to commit to fixing its problems and follow through."

The Archives acting alone "cannot solve the persistent problems facing federal records management," the report said, because each agency is responsible for preserving documents. But the Archives can improve its oversight, the GAO wrote, by pressing for improvement in government-wide records management.

Each agency is supposed to either seek permission to destroy records or recommend preservation at the Archives. An archivist reviews agency submissions, which must include clear descriptions of the records involved, in a four-step process. Archivists often review the records themselves. Proposals to dispose of records must be published in the Federal Register and undergo a 30-day comment period.

The entire process can take a year, but some agencies never begin the process, leaving their records at risk of being lost in the shuffle. As the Archives works to get more agencies to comply, it may not be able to handle the workload, the GAO warned. The National Archives and Records Administration has 44 facilities in 20 states, including 13 presidential libraries, funded by about \$470 million this year from Congress. Archives Inspector General Paul Brachfeld said Tuesday that the reports build from his investigations in recent years.

The worst threat to historical documents is theft, he said. *"We continue to be victimized by people that understand there's money to be had by trading our documents,"* Brachfeld said. *"They're taking from every American citizen."*

Meanwhile, some documents face the threat of deterioration even though they're already at the Archives. Figures from 2009 show 65 percent of its holdings need preservation steps. In some cases, a document's condition already is so poor, it can't be read – a backlog amounting to more than 2 million cubic feet of records.

Brachfeld said new leaders at the Archives understand the problems and are making changes. The GAO recommends the Archives boost its inspections of agencies, improve internal management, streamline hiring and enhance security.

More photos from Vicksburg Campaign:



Castle Hill, circa 1863. Note the Union soldiers camped on the lawn. Possibly looking East.



Castle Hill as it is today looking west.

