



# The Palmetto Vindicator

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PALMETTO BATTALION, INC.

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## Field Orders

Tom Grazioli,  
Colonel

Summer is on us and we're through the very busy spring re-enacting schedule. There's nothing going on now until Brattonsville in June, then Tunnel Hill in September. October will see the NSA national event in Corinth, Mississippi. I didn't figure there would be much interest because of the distance and the unwillingness of people to travel. I am pleasantly surprised to see a swelling number of folks making plans to go now.

The rules for the event will be a little different than they were for Franklin. We're expecting to go as Confederates, but I don't know yet what unit we'll portray. One of the conditions is they will not allow us to wear sky blue trousers with a southern impression. The time is October 1862, early in the war. That was the Commutation Period that resulted in a variety of outfits. A frock or civilian coat would be acceptable. The organizers are going to allow Columbus Depot jackets even though they did not begin to appear until shortly after this engagement. I suspect anything made from jean cloth will suffice. Check the bulletin board on the NSA website [www.nsalliance.org](http://www.nsalliance.org) for more and new information.

For camping, let's do it campaign style. Wedge tents will be allowed, but I encourage lighter gear. If you're going to bring women, children or heavy canvas, plan to stay in the civilian camp. NSA rules dictate that a battalion will have 100 rifles to take the field with independent command. The likelihood is that we'll fall in with another group. At this time I believe we'll make one or possibly two good companies and join with the 33 Alabama under Dave Neel.

Some important Battalion business is upon us. Briefly, membership dues are supposed to be turned in by July 1<sup>st</sup>. It seems that each year we have stragglers that are still getting checks in just in time for Secessionville in November. Dues are required to vote in Battalion elections. Please make every effort to get them in as soon as possible.

The date for elections is Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. It will be at Sesquicentennial State Park, as it has been in the past. We'll eat at noon and begin the meeting at 1:00. I suggest companies arrive early and have your company level elections before lunch. At elections this year a new commander will be chosen at this year's elections. My three years will conclude at Secessionville. There has been little discussion about who will take

over. We shouldn't wait until the last minute and then solicit someone from the assemblage. If you or someone you know is willing, capable and has the time to do the job, then contact should be made with me or a member of the staff. I want the transition to be as smooth as possible so the business of the Battalion won't be disrupted. If you want to serve but don't feel comfortable in the command position, we're going to need an adjutant as well. David Chinnis has given several years to the Battalion. The work he's done behind the scenes has been exemplary. We'll need someone with good organizational skills and a few hours a month to keep up with the books, paperwork, etc... Let me know right away if you're that person so we can get you together with David to see how things are done.

The Camp Of Instruction that we conducted last year was good for several reasons. We were able to get together in a leisurely setting and spend some time exercising our battalion maneuvers. It was apparent on the field. We were also able to see some good presentations showing details that many might overlook. And there was a relaxed opportunity to spend some time together. The Bee Camp in Aiken was very generous to allow us to use the event site, and the men of the 14<sup>th</sup> put some effort in to make the camp a little more ready for us. It's a great venue that we'll use again if the offer is extended to us. This year the COI will be on the weekend of August 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>. A few good points were made to convince me that we need to have elections at a different time than this gathering. Foremost is the need to have a general membership meeting before the date of elections. With that in mind, there will be a general membership meeting at the Camp Of Instruction on Saturday evening after all the pig has been pulled and the dishes cleaned up. By my timepiece that will be 7:00 pm.

I'll see you at Brattonsville next month.  
At Your Service,

Tom

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## From the Lt. Colonel

Mike "Rusty" Weatherford  
Lt. Colonel

Greetings everyone, I hope all are doing well. It's hard to imagine that we're nearly halfway through another year! My, how time flies! Since our last meeting on these pages, we've well met the challenges presented to us from Florence to Bentonville to Columbia.

We've also suffered a tragic loss with the untimely passing of Marine Lance Corporal Josh Torrence in Iraq. I was very proud to have been a part of this Battalion participating in the funeral ceremonies rendering appropriate honor to a fallen American hero. You have my compliments, all of you, for duties well performed. Thank you.

At this time, I want to discuss a few things with you deviating from the subject that I'd planned to discuss. That being, a March ceremony honoring Lt. Colonel Axalla John Hoole and, as a corollary subject, the wonderful contribution made by the late Sgt. Ben Gormley. How finely honed the gifts of wordsmith and memory that this man possessed! He will be greatly missed by multitudes of historical enthusiasts—living historian and visitor alike. Perhaps another time will permit this topic.

Realizing that May is already upon us, I figure that it's time that I share with you some personal thoughts as September fast approaches. Some of you are interested in what my plans might be for the future. Interestingly, an anonymous bulletin board post has brought this issue to the fore in my mind. As I responded, both publicly to the poster and more privately to an e-mail query, I felt that I should broach the topic with all of you.

The issue was presented from an accusatory perspective that By-Laws (specifically #8) and Field Orders (specifically #27) had been inappropriately suspended in 2004. As you may recall, Battalion Elections were cancelled the day before they were to have commenced with the threat of severe weather about the time of Hurricane Ivan. With other By-Laws (the remainder of #8 noting proper notification) and Field Orders (#4 specifically) to be considered in the aftermath of this decision, the meeting and elections did not take place until November at Secessionville. So far so good, under the circumstances as Secessionville is well attended by the membership and this provided the best opportunity for maximum participation during elections.

As one delay usually begets another (as the Holidays ensued), the meeting to set the upcoming (2005) calendar of events was to have taken place at the end of January at River's Bridge following what was hoped to be discussion among the membership and lists of selected events submitted via their unit representatives to the Adjutant. From this list, the final schedule was to be reviewed and approved at River's Bridge by the membership in attendance there. Yet another blow struck my Mother Nature cancelled this event and, thus, the anonymous implication that we have no rules guiding this Battalion.

I wanted all of you to know that the ultimate decision, leading to the subsequent series of unusual events, was borne entirely of a phrase contained in By-Law #16 (oddly enough this By-Law deals with impeachment—though I'm not, I hope, presenting a case for you). This phrase is easily overlooked, I suppose. But it states, "not working in the best interest of the Battalion" as just cause for impeachment. I believe it is necessary to state at this point that I—as well as present Staff—consider your safety paramount to "working in the best interest" of this Battalion. The decision that led to the interruption of our normal method of conducting business was made based upon ensuring your safety. This was, in no small part, due to our 2003 experiences with sudden, severe weather at Aiken.

But there's more that I believe you should know: I do not believe that if faced with similar decisions in the future that I would act—pertaining to elections—any differently! I believe that no By-Law or

Field Order is constructed to be so rigid in a volunteer organization that it cannot conform—when the "best interests" of this Battalion are better served yielding to personal safety concerns—to the unforeseen, uncontrollable, potentially unsafe situation presented.

I hope that all of you can better understand the rationale behind the decisions late in 2004. Certainly, it is hoped that no such circumstances arise again. But should they, and so much as it falls to my input to make a decision, you can be assured my first consideration will be our "best interests" in that we all live to fight (or in this case vote) another day.

I stand fully behind Colonel Grazioli in these decisions and I am happy to receive your comments. Be advised, however, that I prefer *you* speak with me not your alias. We're all adults here (well, most of us) so we should be able to converse with one another as such.

Additionally, I personally believe that the time has arrived that our By-Laws and Field Orders should acknowledge that, on rare occasion, circumstances are such that our meetings cannot take place as expected and specified. Our By-Laws to do not acknowledge, reasonable and unexpected events, such as: (a) severe, inclement weather where personal safety is a serious consideration, (b) a Colonel's unexpected inability to preside "as moderator at all meetings"—whether that be due to illness or other important personal conflict making his attendance impossible, etc.

Too, our By-Laws do not consider existing technology (such as our own website/bulletin board and e-mail) that promotes the ease with which ideas might be disseminated. Many of us utilize this technology daily. It should not be a reach to think that something such as the event schedule cannot be "discussed" utilizing this technology. We should better organize our network such that if a physical meeting is precluded our discussion and planning are not shut down as a result. At times, it is not practical or even necessary to schedule a physical planning meeting when useful alternatives exist that can and should be utilized to continue our progress.

Further, there are By-Laws that read more as Field Orders and Field Orders that read more like By-Laws. I believe Battalion Staff should seek to remedy this situation and present the remedy to vote of Battalion membership. Our By-Laws should define and govern our business function rules. Our Field Orders should speak to circumstances related to our functions in the field—Safety Regulations inclusive. The two should be identifiably separate documents and the scope of each document easily discernible.

These are several opinions that I hold and I submit them for your examination.

Finally, the toughest part of my mini-novel this issue: What to do about approaching elections? Friends, I still have not decided. Though, perhaps for many of the reasons stated herein, I tend to lean toward declining your nomination to the position of Colonel. No doubt, the job is a tough one! The Colonel often wears many hats simultaneously. The position requires a handsome investment of time on and off the field. The position requires administrative and personal skill, tact and diplomacy, knowledge of regulations and drill, etc. It seems, to me, quite a daunting duty! How thankful we all should be for those we've known with "all them stars on the collar!"

I've never, in my years as a member of this Battalion, seriously entertained the thought considering myself even a candidate for the position. I know this might seem strange to many of you, but it's true. I consider myself a pretty good front rank two! I've told many of you that, in my humble opinion, I am not the best candidate for the position. For personal reasons (i.e. family, career, etc.) as well as my lack of certain skill sets that I believe are necessary to the position. I am not an administrative magnate. Multitasking is only a word that I am

(Continued on page 7)

## From the Dog Tent

Claude Sinclair  
Sgt. Major

During February I had the pleasure of participating in the Re-occupation of Fort Sumter. It was a very good campaign event. Each morning we lined up and received rations of salt pork, beans, coffee, brown sugar, bread, and etc. It was an experience that I was not accustomed to but it was a learning experience. I would encourage companies to try giving out rations and having the men to form in mess groups to prepare their food. Perhaps the School of the Soldier we can have another clinic on preparing your food while on campaign. Cornbread, you are a master at this. We need you to show us how it was done. Following are some articles I copied regarding rations, recipes, and cooking. The first is from "The Civil War Dictionary" by Mark M. Boatner III and the second is adapted from the National Parks Service at Gettysburg NMP.

### *Civil War Army Rations*

A ration is the amount of food authorized for one soldier (or animal) for one day. The Confederate government adopted the official US Army ration at the start of the war, although by the spring of 1862 they had to reduce it. According to army regulations for camp rations, a Union soldier was entitled to receive daily 12 oz of pork or bacon or 1 lb. 4 oz of fresh or salt beef; 1 lb. 6 oz of soft bread or flour, 1 lb. of hard bread, or 1 lb. 4 oz of cornmeal. Per every 100 rations there was issued 1 peck of beans or peas; 10 lb. of rice or hominy; 10 lb. of green coffee, 8 lb. of roasted and ground coffee, or 1 lb. 8 oz of tea; 15 lb. of sugar; 1 lb. 4 oz of candles, 4 lb. of soap; 1 qt of molasses. In addition to or as substitutes for other items, desiccated vegetables, dried fruit, pickles, or pickled cabbage might be issued.

The marching ration consisted of 1 lb. of hard bread, 3/4 lb. of salt pork or 1 1/4 lb. of fresh meat, plus the sugar, coffee, and salt. The ration lacked variety but in general the complaints about starvation by the older soldiers was largely exaggerated.

Generally the Confederate ration, though smaller in quantity after the spring of 1862 and tending to substitute cornmeal for wheat flour, was little different. But the Confederate commissary system had problems keeping rations flowing to the troops at a steady rate, thus alternating between abundance and scarcity in its issuances. Soldiers of both armies relied to a great extent on food sent from home and on the ubiquitous Sutler. (See "The Civil War Dictionary" by Mark M. Boatner III)

### *Feeding the Troops*

Feeding the troops was the responsibility of the Commissary Department, and both the Union and Confederacy had one. This organization was to purchase food for the armies, store it until it could be used, and then supply the soldiers. It was difficult to supply so many men in so many places and the North had a greater advantage in their commissary system was already established at the outbreak of the war, while the Confederacy struggled for many years to obtain food and then get it to their armies. Choices of what to give the troops were limited by today's standards. Meats were salted or smoked while other items such as fruits and vegetables were dried or canned.

Rations were often issued uncooked so the soldiers were left up to their own ingenuity to prepare their meals. Men would form small groups "messes" to cook and share their rations. If a march was imminent, the men would cook everything at once and store it in their haversacks. The soldier's diet on the march was very simple- meat, coffee, sugar, and hard-tack. Of all the items soldiers received, it was this hard bread that they remembered and joked about the most.

### **Basic items to have in your haversack**

Bread (hard tack, soft bread, or corn pone)  
Meat (dry cured bacon, side meat, salt pork, or cooked beef)  
Sugar, salt, coffee  
Tin plate, spoon and knife.

*Claude*

### **Palmetto Soldiers' Relief Society**

#### **Ladies' Summer Workshop Schedule**

#### **Elements of Style of the 1860s**

**May 28, 10 - 4 Charleston Public Library, Dorchester Rd. Branch**

Discuss what defines a day dress, work dress, ball and dinner dresses, and mourning. Fabric sale.

#### **Creating an Ensemble**

**July 9, 10-4, Charleston Public Library St. Andrews Branch**

Choosing shoes and stockings, purses and reticules, jewelry, shawls, scarves, outerwear, bonnets and hats.

#### **Fitting Your Bodice**

**August 6, 10 - 4, Charleston Public Library Mount Pleasant Branch**

Lynn Cogdill will teach fitting bodice with a pattern that fits your body perfectly.

#### **I Bought It at Wal-Mart**

**August 27, 10 - 4 Charleston Public Library Otranto Branch**

Share some of the secrets of modern market shopping.

For questions, please call or email Mary Hatcher, rickh@viperlink.net, 843-388-1960 or Jean Hutchinson, jrnhutch@bellsouth.net, 843-766-1418

## South Carolina Department of Archives

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Supplying the troops was ongoing problems with the Confederate Army. Although the South could produce ample food, the logistics of moving supplies to where they were needed was often a problem. The following letter from Richard Caldwell, Commissary General of South Carolina indicates the quantity of supplies the State acquired. Some of the references to spoiled food and holding it over another summer in the first paragraph seem indicative of the problems with getting the food where it was needed. The letter also illustrates the problem and dilemma the State governments had between taking care of their own citizens and helping the central government.

Columbia, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1863

*I beg leave respectfully to call the attention of your Excellency to the following report of the condition of the Stores in this Department, and to ask for instructions relative thereto. There is now on hand, about 6000 lbs. Lard, 34,000 lbs. Bacon Sides, 2,000 lbs. Tallow Candles, 900 galls Molasses, 1,000 lbs. Hams, 6 tcs. (tierces) Old Rice, 16 Hhds. (Hogheads) Sugar, & 54 Bags Coffee. Condition of all good, with the exception of the Hams, Rice and Molasses. All the above Stores have been on hand a long time & will not improve either in quality or quantity, by being held over another summer.*

*It has been the custom heretofore of the Department to offer the Stores first to the Confederate Commissary at cost & ex-*

*penses, and if declined, to sell some to citizens, in small quantities, to prevent speculation, at or near the market price. One object in offering the Stores to the Confederate Govt. is, that citizens of the State in Confederate service on the coast & elsewhere throughout the State, are to be the consumers, & would be benefitted. I would therefore respectfully recommend that at least one half the Stores on hand be offered for sale – first to the Confederate Commissary at Charleston & if declined by him, they be then sold to citizens or if your Excellency should see proper, they might be disposed of at public Auction to the highest bidder – in which case a very large profit to the State would be realized – altho' such course might be objectionable, as involving the charge of speculation on the part of the State. The Hams, Molasses, & Old Rice, should be disposed of at once, to prevent further loss. Of the other half of the Stores, portions should be issued to, as required by the several Works and Military Institutions of the State, & a part reserved for our Troops. The 750,000 lbs of Rough Rice purchased by Col. Walker & sent to Mill in Charleston, is now ready for delivery. Shall the same be stored in Charleston, brought here or sold to Confs. Govt?*

*Very respectfully your obt. svt.*

*R. Caldwell*

*Capt. 1st A.C.S. Acty. C.G.S.C.*

### “Mule Shoes in the Barrel”

#### Confederate Culinary Remembrances

Joe Long  
Historian, SCCRR

301 Gervais Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-737-8097

James Madison Allison, joined a South Carolina regiment at age sixteen and served until losing his right hand in the Seven Days' Battles. Allison's memories years after the war are the source for these notes. Keep in mind that he described the most dramatic incidents of his service.

*“Allison was a cook for his squad and while stationed at Wilmington a barrel of pickled meat was their ration. He remembers that it was from some foreign country. The men ate it but kept asking, ‘What kind of meat is this?’ He laughed and answered, ‘It may be mule for all I know.’ In the bottom of the barrel they found a mule's foot with the shoe still on it but the meat had all been eaten.*

*“Mr. Allison cooked for a squad of eight men when he was in service but that was never a strenuous job for there was seldom anything to cook. They ate crackers most of the time and had lots of peas. No meat could be found after they went into battle. Very often they picked up corn in the road and parched it.*

*“...After three days marching and skirmishing with no food but that which they might pick up on the wayside, the most welcome sight he ever beheld was great pots of steaming meat and potatoes which were given to them at Wilmington. Then at Kingston each man was given a slice of ham about the size of a man's hand.*

*“In most places where the men were stationed, negro*

*women were allowed to come to the camp and sell pies. They would never put a pie in your hand until you had placed money in theirs. Mr. Allison and other soldiers would show the negroes a quarter in their open palm which they were to drop in the negro's hand. Under the quarter was a button and it fell to the negro while the quarter was saved for another pie.”*

(However, the much-abused pie vendors seem to have gotten their revenge...)

*“...once when Mr. Allison bought a fine-looking ‘possum’ pie, he and his friends were enjoying it immensely when they fished out a cat's paw. They bought no more ‘possum’ pie....*

*“...during the Seven Days' Fighting after having been without food for three days, he found a cow's head. The cow evidently had been killed by flying bullets. He cooked it and he and his friends scraped the meat from it and ate it with crackers.” –“Recollections and Reminiscences” Volume 7, 294-298, published by the South Carolina UDC*

That's all for now. Remember the warning about “possum pie”; after all, it's possum – at BEST.

## Improving Your Impression

(Editor's note: Do you recognize good first person when you see it? The Sgt Major telling you to fall in on time, talking about your children, an impromptu wrestling match, a song by the fire. When I think of well-done first person, I think of speech or activity so smooth you don't even notice it or you wonder if they're in character or not. We are lucky that some of the best first-person characters in the hobby call the Battalion home. (Cornbread and Kentucky come to mind immediately, but there are some others.) Good first person isn't contrived; it is as simple as doing or saying the things as a soldier would in the same situation. The next time your file partner gripes about how hot it is and drill going on too long, before you change the subject to computers, consider this "Is he in first person?" If he is, and you say something modern, you've ruined his moment. If he isn't, and you respond in first person, you've created a moment for both of you. Do we even have to say anything at all to "do first person?" Nope. Not at all. I hope you enjoy Brad Ireland's article below)

### So you have nothing to say?

By Brad Ireland  
200 Lily Court

Hagerstown, MD 21740

So there you are, all dressed up in you uniform. You have your leathers, blanket roll, a haversack crammed with three days worth of hard tack and salt pork, and you're ready to immerse yourself into 1860-whatever. Everyone around you has stepped into character. They begin to converse in "first person", talking and acting as if they really are back in 1860-whatever. Although you have studied, read up on the campaign, and collected general information about the daily life of the civil war soldier, you just can't seem to find anything to say. You either don't know what to say or you are suffering from a variation of stage fright. What do you do? Well, the answer is simple. Find something to do. Who said that you have to talk to be in first person? There are an infinite number of possible scenarios that can be conducted in living history with out saying a word. Just because you are not up to talking doesn't mean that you can't participate in "first person". Being in character doesn't necessarily mean you have something to say. Often times if you are doing some sort of physical activity, a spectator is eventually going to ask you "what are you doing?" Of course you can answer them and your conversation will naturally go from there. Next time you find your self in this situation try doing some of the following activities.

1. Cook up those rations. This is a process that can be broken down into many thought-provoking activities. First you will need to prepare your food to be cooked. Remember that Salt Pork is salty. Many soldiers needed to wash the salt off before cooking. Corn meal needs to be mixed. Soldiers often did this on their gum blankets. The use of canteen halves, boilers, and other improvised cooking utensils are very interesting to spectators.
2. Sew something. Soldiers' clothing would wear out on campaign and often needed repair in the field. If your uniform develops a hole or tear, don't wait until you get home to fix it. Repair it in the field. Buttons are always popping off. Save them to repair in camp and not on the couch. Sew your name into your blanket so no one will steal it.
3. Write a letter. You could be busy writing a letter. What, you have no paper? Well, use a wrapper from your pack of 10 cartridges in your cartridge box. Ask a spectator how to spell a word, or have someone write the letter for you. Drawing a picture is also a common soldier activity.
4. Read a letter from home. Have a spectator help you with a difficult word or have them read it to you.
5. Read a penny novel, newspaper, or some other period publication. These were often carried by soldiers and became ratty as they were passed from hand to hand.
6. Gamble. Play a game of cards or dice. Games such as Poker, Chuck-a-luck, and Euchre were very popular amongst the soldiers. Soldiers had the necessary game boards painted right on their ground covers. Use period money or buttons to gamble with. Soldiers even raced bugs on a warm plate like graybacks, ants, termites, etc... What? Don't have chuck-a-luck on your ground cover, well draw it on. Save this activity to do in the field and not on your couch.

7. Lead a bible study. There was a wave of religious interest that swept through the ranks during the war. It would be interesting to have some people playing poker in one part of camp and a bible study session going on in another at the same time.
  8. Perform the duties of a picket post. Post guards and a Corporal of the Guard. Run the guard post authentically.
  9. Whittle a stick. Soldiers often carried pocketknives and there are examples of soldier carvings in many books. They carved sticks, bullets, etc...
  10. Clean your musket. The musket is the life's blood of the soldier. It was his responsibility to keep it clean and in good working order at all times. You should have period tools for maintaining your gun.
  11. Are you socks wearing thin? Darn them. It's easy to do, just weave new thread/yarn through the webbing of your socks.
  12. Clean your clothes. Grab a bucket full of warm water and wash those stinky socks and drawers.
  13. Cut hair. Get yourself a pair of scissors and offer your services as a barber to your pards. Sitting for a haircut is also a real activity.
  14. Play some sort of physical game. Baseball and wrestling were popular amongst the soldiers.
  15. DRILL! Soldiers drilled everyday. So should you!
  16. Be sick. Ever felt bad at an event? If your stomach hurts from what you ate or drank, say so. Ask your comrades for a remedy
  17. Have a coffee ration issue. Have the sergeant divvy up the coffee ration. Make separate piles on a gum blanket and the soldiers can fuss and argue over which pile is bigger and how they need to be more equal.
  18. Make coffee. Grind up the beans your self. Boil it. Use a coffee substitute. Boil some sassafras roots when coffee is of short supply.
  19. Organize a work detail. Use period shovels and tools to dig sinks.
  20. Punish a soldier that is out of line. Have them ride a rail, or simulate some of the many punishments that are detailed in the book *Hard Tack and Coffee*.
  21. Are them graybacks itching ya? Go skirmishing for 'em. Pick through the seams of your clothing, grab them little suckers, and pop them.
  22. Shine your brass. Some officers were very strict about the brass buttons and buckles being shiny, more so in the Union Army. Use fire ash or rotten stone to polish up your brass. Make sure having shiny brass fits your impression.
  23. Remember, it's authentic to sleep. The real soldiers tried to catch up on their sleep as much as possible. Imagine being ordered to fall out, just dropping down where you are and nod off before even removing your traps. It happened!
- These activities are daily occurrences in camp and should be portrayed more often in living histories and best of all they require little or no conversation. This list of activities will help to spark your imagination, but don't stop there. The possibilities are endless and

*(Continued on page 7)*

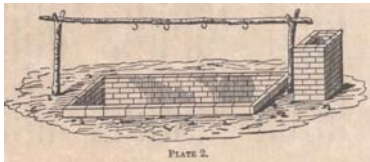
“The utensils and means furnished by the government to the soldier for preparing his food are of the most primitive character. The former consist of camp kettles, made of iron, with a handle, and varying in size from four to seven gallons, (they should be made so as to have one slide into the other, in nests of four,) and mess pans, also of iron, about 12 inches in diameter, and sloping to the bottom. The latter consist of a certain amount of wood per diem, which is to be consumed a taste of ingenuity may dictate. The usual and most simple mode is to dig a trench 18 inches wide, 12 inches deep, and from four to six feet long. At each end plant a forked stick of equal height, with a stout sapling, from which to suspend the kettles, extending from one to the other. (See Diagram No.1)

This, however, is neither the best nor the most economical mode, as it consumes much fuel, wastes much of the heat, and causes great



inconvenience to the cook. An improvement can be effected by casing the sides of the trench with brick, adding a little chimney at one end, and in place of the forked sticks, using iron uprights and cross-

bar, to which half a dozen hooks for hanging kettles are attached. (Original articles often give us a writer’s perspective on a “new” or “better” way for something. We should be thoughtful about adopting his method into our own impressions. What if no one ever took the advice? On the other hand, when a writer refers to a way of doing something “the usual mode”



this can be good information for helping us determine what was plain, everyday, and common – thus what would be an accurate portrayal of soldier life. Ed.)

“The Cook’s Creed

“Cleanliness is next to Godliness, both in persons and kettles: be ever industrious, then, in scouring your pots. Much elbow grease, a few ashes, and a little water, are capital aids to the careful cook. Better wear out your pans with scouring than your stomachs with purging; it is less dangerous to work your elbows than your comrade’s bowels. Dirt and grease betray the poor cook, and destroy the poor soldier; whilst health, content, and good cheer should ever reward him who does his duty and keeps his kettles clean. In military life, punctuality is not only a duty, but a necessity, and the cook should always endeavor to be exact in time. Be sparing with sugar and salt, as a deficiency can be better remedied than an overplus.

“Kitchen Philosophy

“Remember that beans, badly boiled, kill more than bullets; and fat is more fatal than powder. In cooking, more than in anything else in this world, always make haste slowly. One hour too much is vastly better than five minutes too little, with rare exceptions. A big fire burns your face, scorches your soup, and crisps your temper. Skim, simmer, and scour, are the true secrets of good cooking.

Selected Receipts

“Pork Soup With Vegetables

This soup is good for a change and quite economical. Take four pounds of clear pork, without rind or bones; cut it into pieces about one inch square; a into the pan a little fat, which much be as hot as possible; and throw in enough pork to cover the bottom, which is to be fried quite brown, and turned into another pan whilst the balance is being fried. Have three camp kettles filled with clean water; boil it, and add to each kettle one-third of the fried pork with a handful of

salt. Let it boil moderately for fifteen minutes, and in the meanwhile, having soaked the desiccated vegetables, add one third to each kettle and continue boiling, not too fast, for one hour and a half. Season with pepper, salt, and a little vinegar, and if there’s any stale bread to be had, three or four loaves should be cut into pieces two inches square or less, and divided equally in the three kettles. After fifteen minutes slow boiling the soup is ready to serve. Whatever far floats on top, before the bread is added, should be carefully removed.

Beef Stew

Take the pieces of beef reserved for frying or broiling, and cut them into pieces about two inches square and one inch thick; sprinkle them with pepper and salt, and put them in frying pans, with a little fat; place them over the fire until half cooked; then turn them into camp kettles, adding a handful of flour and six onions cut in quarters to each kettle, with just enough cold water to cover the meat; add also to each kettle two dozen potatoes pared and cut in quarters. Stew slowly over a moderate fire, skimming every now and then, for three hours and a half; then stir in each two tablespoonsful of vinegar, and serve smoking hot. All kinds of vegetables, - such as leeks, carrots, parsnips, and turnips – can be added to this stew with advantage.

To Prepare Coffee

Of all the articles of diet afforded the soldier none is more important or popular than his coffee. The open tin pans used for roasting it are singularly unfit, wasting, even when regularly burnt, the fragrance or aroma, which forms the chief virtue of the drink. To obtain a small roaster, coffee mill and strainer should be the first effort of the cook, and the best outlay of the company fund. If, however, circumstances prevent that, great care must be bestowed to prevent its burning. To avoid this, some use a little fat, and others add a table-spoonful of sugar; and all stir it constantly over a very slow fire. When well browned, cover immediately with a damp cloth, and allow it to cool; then grind it, passing it through the mill twice. The kettles in which it is to be prepared should be perfectly cleaned, and scoured inside and out with ashes and hot water, scalding them before using. The water should be fresh and perfectly clear. Fill the kettles very nearly to the top, and place them over a brisk fire to boil. Whilst boiling, throw in the coffee, which should be slightly moistened before with warm (not hot) water; and stirring it into the water, let it boil up briskly for two minutes; then dash in a cup of cold fresh water, and take it off the fire immediately. Let it stand five minutes, the allow the grains to settle, and then pass it slowly through a flannel strainer into another kettle, from which it is served. By this mode alone can the coffee be prevented from being impregnated with the dust formed by grinding it, and make it more palatable and wholesome. Whatever number of men may have to be served, measure out careful so many rations of water, adding five for leeway, so that it may lose nothing in strength or quantity.”

Although Cpt Sanderson mentions four kettles sized from 4 to 7 gallons, the unpublished Quartermaster manual of 1865 lists different specifications, calling for three nesting iron kettles sized 12 inches diameter by 11 ¾ inches deep, with a capacity of 4 ½ gallons; 10 ¾” by 11 ½” holding 3 ½ gallons, and 9 ½” by 11 ¼” holding 2 ½ gallons. The manual also listed an iron mess pan, 11 ½ diameter at the top by 8 ½” diameter at the bottom, 5 ½” deep, holding 5 quarts and weighing 2 lbs.

WK Osman is a source for authentic iron kettles that meet the 1865 specifications. The 3-kettle set is \$125 shipping included. They also have the correct iron mess pans for \$30 shipped.

Wendy K. Osman  
5424 Elliott Avenue South  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55417 (612) 823-4009  
foragecaps@earthlink.net

*(Continued from page 5) So you have Nothing to Say?*

you should not limit your camp life activities to these humble suggestions. Explore your impression and expand your mind. There is infinite amount of possibilities you can tap into during a living history.

*(Continued from page 2)*

vaguely familiar with (I can spell it). Generally, I tend to think that there are others more capable than I to meet the varied demands of the position.

Rest assured that my trepidation concerning the matter is through no lack of confidence in you. I believe that this Battalion is comprised of dedicated, generous, kind-hearted and noble souls. Your devotion to the purpose of Palmetto Battalion is noticeable and praiseworthy.

As we consider our collective futures, I am hopeful that we might ask His guidance and His blessing upon our efforts and our decisions; that we might be unified in both.

In the meantime, spring moves into full bloom and Memorial Day observances are taking place. Let us all hope to keep their memory green and fragrant.

To the boys!

With appreciation and thanks as always, I am

Your obedient servant,

Lt. Col. M. "Rusty" Weatherford  
Palmetto Battalion

*(Continued from page 6)*

If you'd prefer to cook for just yourself or your mess, our very own Sam Lail makes some of the finest Period correct frying pan reproductions on the market. They are the result of four years of research that included the examination of originals at the Museum of the Confederacy and the Petersburg Battlefield Museum, and others. He spends about three hours making each pan by hand on his forge. The pan is stamped sheet iron, 9 inches wide at the top. The 1.75 inch sides are rippled from the crude 1860's stamping method. The handle is 11 to 12 inches long and made of half round iron stock, from an English source, the same as used for making horseshoes of the period. The handles are attached to the pan with three rivets per the originals, and can be made with a rat tail or punched-hole end. The pans are sanded (no burs), and cleaned, hand rubbed with olive oil and fired in the oven at 400 degrease for 2 hours, they are ready for use. The price \$65.00 ea. Plus \$10.00 Shipping. See the special below.

Sam Lail

116 Forest Park Dr.

Shelby, NC 28150

704-482-6376

aquajet50@hotmail.com

## First Person Accounts – An Early Barbeque

(Editor's note: Notice that the description of the cooking trench matches almost exactly Capt Sanderson's description from the Army of the Potomac. This is from a slave account....)

**T**he method of cooking the meat was to dig a trench in the ground about six feet long and eighteen inches deep. This trench was filled with wood and bark which was set on fire, and, when it was burned to a great bed of coals, the hog was split through the back bone, and laid on poles which had been placed across the trench. The sheep were treated in the same way, and both were turned from side to side as they cooked. During the process of roasting the cooks basted the carcasses with a preparation furnished from the great house, consisting of butter, pepper, salt and vinegar, and this was continued until the meat was ready to serve. *(So, even back then folks kept their sauce recipes a secret! Ed.)*

"Not far from this trench were the iron ovens, where the sweetmeats were cooked. Three or four women were assigned to this work. Peach cobbler and apple dumpling were the two dishes that made old slaves smile for joy and the young fairly dance. The crust or pastry of the cobbler was prepared in large earthen bowls, then rolled out like any pie crust, only it was almost twice as thick. A layer of this crust was laid in the oven, then a half peck of peaches poured in, followed by a layer of sugar; then a covering of pastry was laid over all and smoothed around with a knife. The oven was then put over a bed of coals, the cover put on and coals thrown on it, and the process of baking began. Four of these ovens were usually in use at these feasts, so that enough of the pastry might be baked to supply all. The ovens were filled and refilled until there was no doubt about the quantity.

"The apple dumplings were made in the usual way, only larger, and served with sauce made from brown sugar. It lacked flavoring, such as cinnamon or lemon, yet it was a dish highly relished by all the slaves.

"... About noon everything was ready to serve. The table was set in a grove near the quarters, a place set aside for these occasions. The tableware was not fine, being of tin, but it served the purpose, and did not detract from the slaves' relish for the feast. The drinks were strictly temperance drinks - buttermilk and water. Some of the nicest portions of the meat were sliced off and put on a platter to send to the great house for Boss and his family. It was a pleasure for the slaves to do this, for Boss always enjoyed it. It was said that the slaves could barbecue meats best, and when the whites had barbecues slaves always did the cooking."

"...After dinner some of the women would wash, sew or iron. It was a day of harmless riot for all the slaves, and I can not express the happiness it brought them. Old and young, for months, would rejoice in the memory of the day and its festivities, and "bless" Boss for this ray of sunlight in their darkened lives.

**HUGHES**, Louis. *Thirty Years A Slave, From Bondage To Freedom, The Institution Of Slavery As Seen On The Plantation And In The Home Of The Planter, Autobiography Of Louis Hughes*, Milwaukee: South Side Printing Company 1897 [Online] Available at docsouth.unc.edu

### Why Would Someone Do That? Daniel Fodera, Editor

While we're talking about cooking and first person, I'd like to share a moment with you by the campfire. The scene is a national event. You go through great trouble to bring only authentic rations. You track down that dry cured bacon, and bring unprepared corn meal or wheat flour. You experiment with cooking these rations over the open fire, maybe kneading

*(Continued on page 8)*

# The Palmetto Vindicator

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vindicator@palmettobattalion.org

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## THE PALMETTO VINDICATOR

### The Adjutant

First off my apologies for the delay in this edition of The Vindicator. The “real” job interfered with the timely publication of this issue. The lateness of it does not, however, lessen the great information contained within.

#### **BATTALION DUES—DUE JULY 1**

Battalion Dues of \$20.00 per person were due to the Adjutant by July 1, 2005. At this point I have received dues from 4 units, and I thank them kindly for their promptness. Unit Reps should mail their members dues to:

Adjutant

203 Hollytree Circle

Ladson, SC 29456

Mailings **MUST INCLUDE** a roster of paid members along with the members current mailing address and email address (if applicable). Any monies forwarded to me without this complete information will be returned to the sender. Please send **ONLY** information for those members whose dues you are forwarding—do not duplicate rosters with each submission!

In addition, all Corinth registration should be forwarded to the above address as well immediately! The roster of paid members will be compared to the registrations and only those current with dues will be forwarded by the registration deadline.

Thanks,

David Chinnis

Adjutant

*(Continued from page 7)*

dough on your gum blanket or roasting meat on the end of your rammer. You feel like you’re “getting it right” as you sit back with your meal to enjoy the fruits of your labor. Wait! What’s that smell? I can’t believe it! Someone has thrown a pile of plastic trash into the fire. It bubbles and smokes and stinks. The moment is ruined. We’re not in a civil war camp anymore... we’re just camping.

Please consider your comrades before tossing that modern trash in the fire. The smell of burning plastic can ruin the moment just as quick and sure as a truck in camp.



#### **Schedules**

Jun 11-12 Brattonsville - Brattonsville, SC - Other

Aug 27-28 Camp Of Instruction.

**Sept 10-11 Tunnel Hill - Dalton, GA - Affiliated**

Sep 29-Oct 2 Corinth, MS - Information

**Oct 15th Palmetto Battalion Elections.**

**Nov 18-20 Secessionville - Charleston, SC - Affiliated**

Nov 26-27 Relic Room Living History - Columbia, SC -

Other