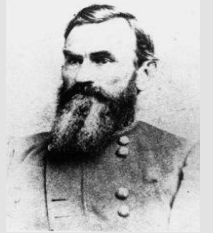




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The Delta General

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CAMP NEWS:

EVENTS CALENDAR – “FEBRUARY IS BLACK CONFEDERATE HISTORY MONTH”

- **3/17 – Regular Camp Meeting**
- **3/19 – Headstone dedication at Indianola, Cemetery**
- **4/8-10 – Battle of Fort Blakely, AL – CS Marine Artillery Impression**
- **4/17 - Camp Memorial Service, Old Greenville Cemetery in Greenville, MS – CS Marine Impression**
- **Apr. 30, 2011**— Confederate Memorial Day at Beauvoir will be April 30, 2011. Guest speaker will be Tom Strain, Commander of the Army of Tennessee. As everyone knows Confederate Memorial Day at Beauvoir is a Division sponsored Memorial service.
- **June 3-5, 2011**—Mississippi Division SCV 116th Annual Meeting in Gulfport, Mississippi.
- **July 13-16, 2011**— Sons of Confederate Veterans Annual Reunion

DAVIS SAYS FAREWELL TO VICKSBURG A HUGE SUCCESS



In front of about 200 onlookers Saturday, Jefferson Davis walked to his perch in the balcony of the Old Court House and bid the City of Vicksburg farewell.

The Confederate President, played by local stage actor Jack Burns, delivered the address to a crowd on the East Lawn of the Old Court House on Cherry Street one day after the 150th anniversary of Davis’ original speech.

On Feb. 11, 1861, after being told he had been named President of the Confederacy, Davis, who lived south of Vicksburg, stepped off a boat at the Jackson Street landing where he gave his farewell speech before departing for Montgomery, Ala.

To celebrate the occasion Saturday, about 40 reenactors, and many more onlookers, turned out in full military and civilian attire.

The event, sponsored by the Mississippi Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, is one of many events throughout the South that will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the War between the States.

“The purpose of this event, and all the others that we have had and will have, is to mark the 150th anniversary of the war,” Chuck Rand of the SCV board of directors said. “Also to see that the public has a chance to learn about these events and to reflect upon that history.

“Many of these people have ancestors that were participants in that history. So basically we are doing what the Sons of Confederate Veterans meant to do, in keeping that history and heritage alive.”

The militia was called to attention and the crowd of civilian reenactors and modern-day spectators applauded as Burns approached the Court House and proceeded up to the second floor balcony to give the same address the real Davis had given in 1861 next to the river.

“The empathy between the crowd and the President and of course the stirring display by the militiamen was awesome,” Burns said of the role. “I tried to get a feel for who was saying this and where they had been and where they were going and I found that to be extremely useful.”

Many of the reenactors, who dressed in authentic garb and equipment, came from all over Mississippi for the event. The soldiers were dressed mostly in red shirts and tri-cornered hats, which were uniforms typical of Mississippi militiamen at the beginning of the war.

“It’s quite an experience to be able to be in the areas where Jefferson Davis actually had to speak 150-years ago,” reenactor Charles Tucker of Brandon said. “It’s an interesting way of studying history and it is a very fun part of it.”

This event is one of many sesquicentennial celebrations to be put on by the SCV.

Inside this issue:

Vicksburg Event	1
Camp and Society News	1-2
MS Division News	3-4
The Truth About Fort Pillow	5-7
Forrest’s Report on Fort Pillow	8-9
National News	9
Beauvoir	4, 10

CAMP NEWS:

CAMP ADJUTANT’S REPORT: DAN McCASKILL

The Meeting was called to order by Commander Junior Stillman at 7:00 pm and he asked Camp Chaplain Earl McCown to open the Meeting with a word of prayer. After the invocation, Color Sergeant Joe Nokes led the members and guest in the Pledge of Allegiance and salutes to the Mississippi and Confederate Flags.

Junior welcomed everyone to the meeting. We had two guests, Jason Zuehlke, Assistant Scout Master and Mitchell, who is a member of the SCV Camp in Columbia, TN. He then asked for Officer Reports. 1st Lt. Commander Gator Stillman was absent; 2nd Lt. Commander Ronnie Stewart reported he was working on several prospective members but could not get any to commit to joining the Camp; Camp Adjutant Dan McCaskill presented the 2011 Camp Budget to the members for consideration and discussion. This year’s budget is \$ 200 less than last year due to the funds spent on memorials to members and family members who passed last year. Also, this year we are asking for volunteers to donate \$ 25 per month to go to the church for the use of the Fellowship Hall. This action will save the Capitol Reserve of the Camp. Money has been collected for four months of the current year from Earl McCown, Junior

Stillman, George Brumfield and Dan McCaskill. A total asset of the Camp which includes the checking & savings accounts plus the CD totals \$ 5,315.10. Earl McCown made a motion to adopt the budget as presented; seconded by Joe Nokes and passed unanimously. As AOT Councilman, Larry McCluney emphasized that the SCV and its members will be under attack during the Sesquicentennial and that we should be ready. The next big event is the re-enactment of Jefferson Davis’ inauguration in Montgomery, Saturday, February 19th sponsored by the Confederation and the Alabama Division. The MS Division got things off to a good start with the re-enactment of Jefferson Davis’ farewell speech in Vicksburg the previous weekend. For that event, there were between 200 and 300 in attendance and several thousand will be anticipated in Montgomery.

Camp Business: Dan McCaskill reported he had 6 Confederate Markers to be placed in the Indianola Cemetery. Weather permitting, it was decided to place the markers on Saturday, February 26th starting at 2:00 pm. An invitation was extended to the local Boy Scout Troop to help with the placement of the markers. It was also decided to have the dedication on March 19th and try to have Rob Thacker

as speaker.

Larry brought the subject of the JROTC Medal. Since very few of the members new about this award and we never meet the recipient, he thought the presentation of the medal & certificate could be made at our Lee – Jackson Banquet. After some discussion, it was decided to present the medal at the school function and have a second presentation at our Lee – Jackson Banquet.

Camp Program: Scout Master Jason Zuehlke of Troop 4041 in Indianola, MS gave a short program on Scouting. Jason talked about all the work the scouts do in preparing them to become good citizens. The top goal of every scout is to become an Eagle Scout. Jason is an Eagle Scout. He assured some of the scouts would assist in placing the markers which would be credited to their community service hours. With no other business coming before the Camp, Commander Stillman asked Earl to close the Meeting with a prayer.

Attendance for the Meeting was 16. The next scheduled Meeting is March 17th at 7:00 pm at the 1st Presbyterian Church Fellowship, Indianola, MS.

Submitted by,
Dan A. McCaskill, Adj.

NEWS FROM THE MOS&B: THE LAST COMMISSION

The Military Order of The Stars and Bars exists because of the work, the honor, and the sacrifices made by those who came before us. This page exists as a memorial to members of the Order who have joined the souls of their Confederate ancestors. Perhaps no other letter written to the family of a fallen soldier better describes the sense of loss felt by compatriots left behind than the letter written by J.E.B. Stuart upon the death of his friend and fellow officer, John Pelham:

Letter from General J.E.B. Stuart to Dr. Atkinson Pelham

Hd Qrs Cavr Division A. of N.Va.
March 29, 1863

My Dear Sir –

With the deepest grief, I approach a subject which has doubtless brought to your household sorrowful wailing. I refer to the death of your son – my comrade – friend all but brother, – John Pelham who was to me as a younger brother – whose place on my staff – at my fireside – in my Division – but most of all at the head of the corps to which his genius has imparted so much efficiency and fame – the Horse Artillery – is vacant, – and that vacancy sends pangs to my heart that knew him, and in the space elapsed, a nation’s wail is heard from out yon capitol, mourning her lost hero – so noble – so chivalrous – so pure – so beloved.

I know that man’s sympathy is emptiness, to one who has lost as you have, the promise and hope of a noble son – but when I tell you, I loved him as a brother, you will permit me to share with you a grief so sacred, so consoling.

He has won a name immortal on earth, and in heaven he will reap the rewards of a pure and guileless heart. I attended church with him the sabbath preceding his death, and marked his close attention to the Word: often have I seen him reading the Sacred volume, and I doubt not in its Sacred truths the young soldier founded hope of a bright immortality above.

If you would know his military exploits, (and I know he was too modest ever to have informed you) read my official reports since the commence-ment of the war, these are his biography, and had he lived he would have risen to the highest honors in the nation.

Major Pelham lost his life in the battle of Kellysville on the 17th inst in the strict and legitimate discharge of his duty – with no display of rashness and excessive zeal as some have insinuated – but displaying the same coolness and self–possession for which he had always been distinguished.



Continued on page 3 . . . Bottom of page

NEW MISSISSIPPI SCV LICENSE PLATE AVAILABLE IN 2011

- In tribute to the five years of the war, we will have a different design each of the next five years. The Beauvoir design is for 2011, there will be a Battle of Corinth design for 2012, Siege of Vicksburg design for 2013, Gen. Nathan B. Forrest design for 2014, and Confederate veterans tribute in 2015.
- The flag incorporated into the state map of the Sesquicentennial logo will also change each year: 2011-Bonnie Blue, 2012-First National, 2013-Second National, 2014-Gen. Forrest's battle flag, 2015-Third National.
- The Executive Council can change any part of the wording across the bottom each year as well, so, if "SCV" versus spelling out the whole "Sons of Confederate Veterans", is an issue for you, let them know. The more letters we add, the smaller the font will become, possibly making it more difficult to read.
- If you have the current, 8 year old design, SCV plate, you are not required to get the new tag each year. You can keep the one you currently have, and just put the year sticker on the plate when you renew each year.
- These plates are being done to commemorate the War between the States Sesquicentennial. These tags will be collectible and conversational. There will be many non-SCV members that will purchase the plate for their own reasons, apart from the things we normally would buy it for. This will bring new money to the SCV treasury, much more than the 8-year-old design that's been out. It will also bring more attention and hopefully more members to the SCV.



GOVERNOR BARBOUR PLEDGES TO BLOCK LICENSE TAG OF FORREST



Mississippi GOP Gov. Haley Barbour on Monday issued his strongest language yet on a state license plate honoring a Ku Klux Klan leader, telling the Associated Press he would not sign the proposal if it reached his desk.

"I said accurately this is not going to happen," the Republican said in an interview. "The bureaucracy denied it, the legislature won't pass it and if the legislature passes it, it won't become law because I won't sign it."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) last week called for Barbour to condemn a proposal to create a license plate honoring Confederate Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, a Klan leader. Barbour refrained from formally disavowing the proposed plate, sparking controversy.

Barbour further inflamed his critics by stating he would not denounce Forrest. "I don't denounce individual people whether they've been dead 100 years or not," the governor said.

Monday's statement marks the first time Barbour has pledged to veto the measure.

The license plate flap is the latest race-related controversy dogging the governor as he mulls a 2012 bid for the presidency. Barbour this month denied he supported amnesty for illegal immigrants and continues to face fallout for suggesting the civil-rights era was "not that bad" in Mississippi during his childhood.

Continued from page 2 . . . MOS&B

A tribute to his memory, sent my staff, who loved him dearly, to the Richmond papers will I trust accompany this letter — together with some verse, and General Division orders announcing his death. His remains were sent to you in charge of his cousin and I hope have reached you.

His trunk with its contents just as he left it, his sabre, two servants, and two horses, awaiting your orders as to their disposition.

In conclusion let me beg of you the favor to send over any photograph, or daguerreotype you may have of our dear departed comrade and friend, in order that I may have it copied, to keep as a precious token, to recall in future years his noble face.

I shall be glad to hear from you, and will cheerfully render you any service in my power.

Most Respectfully
and truly yours
J.E.B. Stuart
Major Gen'l
Commanding

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MS DIVISION: FROM LT. COMMANDER ALAN PALMER

Gentlemen,

All of us are painfully aware of the recent attacks against us over the Forrest Tag proposal and there has been much written by both sides as of late because of their unwarranted prejudice against anything Southern, especially the SCV. One interview I gave came out very good and was to a black reporter from Jackson who told me he had studied Forrest in war college and knew all the hype about him was false, or misconstrued, or made far worse than the reality was. He is one of a few but there are others out there and that is why I am writing this to the division.

I have received two calls as of late from fellow division members who said they are personally experiencing repercussions at work due to this flak over the "proposed" tag. They were both of the mindset that we should not have proposed doing a Forrest tag, that we should have known it would be controversial, and that we have received a black eye over this. I must admit when it hit the fan I was feeling we had made a major mistake but whether we did or didn't (that's up to everyone's personal feelings) the lines have been drawn, we cannot now sound retreat. As Greg Stewart said, if we can't defend Forrest who or how can we defend any of our ancestors! I know there are many plans out there for creating bumper stickers and "front of car" tags and such, and we should be proactive and let everyone know we will not be intimidated. However, that being said, we must do these things with the mindset of "education" and not "agitation". What I mean by that is that everything we do must be on the basis of educating the misinformed, the lied to, the uneducated masses. We have three years to educate the public about Forrest and who he really was and was not, and we must use every opportunity, be it an interview, a symposium, a bumper sticker, a billboard, a pamphlet, or a one on one discussion with a fellow co-worker. We cannot simply say that it is not true because no one will believe us, we have to show the proof that exists and let that speak for us. How many of you have read or know about the 450 pages of Congressional records directly dealing with N.B Forrest's trial

before Congress?

How many of you know that the opening statement of that trial was (this is not a direct quote but close) "we are here to investigate, try, convict, and hang General Forrest"! They had their minds made up before it began and yet he was not only found not guilty but was completely exonerated! Even black union soldiers who were at Fort Pillow testified on his behalf. Now they call us the revisionists!!!

Like you I am pissed off and madder than you know what, and would love to tell them all where to go, show em the way, and speed them on their journey, but we have to hold our cool if we have any chance of winning. There are many people who will believe we are a bunch of racist KKK members no matter what we do or how much of the truth they read, but there are also many, 'many southerners' who will begin to understand and realize they have been wronged, they have been misled, and they have been outright 'purposely' brainwashed, and that it has been going on for the past 150 years. These are the people we must reach out to and we can only be successful if we do it in an honorable way and show we are better than those other people. Let those other people wallow in the gutter from which they come and let us stand firm on the truth and I believe righteousness of our cause.

"If we loose this fight I believe we will loose the war" I heard in the movie Gettysburg. I believe this same line could be applied to us now, like it or not, we must fight this fight, and win loose or draw we must show them we have something they will never understand, honor, a since of belonging, and a love for something greater than ourselves. We are southerners and once again we have been invaded, and they not only want to destroy us, they want to 'write' us away as if we never existed. 'Education' is our only hope and the only way we will ever reach our fellow southerners with the truth and wake them up to their impending demise.

Sincerely,
Alan Palmer, Lt. Commander Ms Div SCV

BEAUVOIR LIBRARY TO OPEN THIS FALL FROM THE SUN-HERALD

BILOXI -- The Jefferson Davis Presidential Library and Museum at Beauvoir is scheduled to open late this fall, two years after work began. That's a little behind schedule because of the complexity of the concrete work that was required to ensure the 25,000-square-foot building remains intact if another hurricane the size of Katrina strikes. Every building at the Confederate president's retirement home was damaged or destroyed by Katrina.

The library was less than 10 years old when Katrina washed through the first floor, said Richard Forte Sr., acting Beauvoir director. Instead of repairing the library, which sat in the middle of a flood zone, FEMA agreed to pay \$10.5 million to restore the national landmark on higher ground to the northwest.

"It's a massive concrete structure," said Danny Broadhead, construction supervisor. He said 160 holes 4 feet apart, each 60 feet deep, were filled with reinforced concrete. Over a grid of concrete for the foundation and concrete walls poured on site will be an exterior of brick veneer and cut stone that looks like marble. J.C. Duke and Associates of Mobile is the general contractor.

On the first floor will be a gift shop, offices and a multi-purpose room for events and meetings. Safely out of the storm surge on the second floor will be the presidential library, two museums -- one honoring Davis, the other a Confederate military museum -- and the boardroom with a balcony overlooking the Gulf.

Larry Albert of Albert & Associates in Hattiesburg, who designed the original library, was chosen as architect of the new building. Stars will draw visitors' attention to the soaring ceiling of the entryway, 56 feet overhead. Curved balconies, four sets of 12-foot-tall wooden doors and incredible views will make the new library a memorable location for weddings and other events, Forte said.



JOHN FITZHUGH/SUN HERALD The Jefferson Davis Presidential Library and museums under construction can be seen at right behind the main house at Beauvoir in Biloxi.--

FORREST AT FORT PILLOW (WHAT REALLY HAPPENED!)

TAKEN FROM THE STAINLESS BANNER NEWSLETTER – TIPPAH TIGERS CAMP

Reports of massacre began within days after Forrest's capture of Fort Pillow. While the U.S. Congress held hearings that solidified the atrocity, the Confederates were silent. No explanation or defense was issued. The reason was simple. Forrest had sent his official report to General Polk, his superior officer, but Polk had been killed at Marietta as Johnston retreated toward Atlanta, therefore, the report had not been forwarded to Richmond. Forrest wrote General Stephen D. Lee that "my official reports are in the hands of the Department at Richmond. I did not, nor do I consider that I have any defense to make, or attempt any refutation of the charges... I have taken pains in my official report made to Lieutenant General Polk to place all the facts in the possession of the Government in order that they might meet any demands by Federal authority."¹

Polk's aides forwarded the missing report to Richmond where it was read by Secretary of War James Seddon. He saw in the report Forrest's complete vindication. But four months had passed, and the Union newspapers had done their jobs well. Fort Pillow became "the" atrocity of the war.

What happened at Fort Pillow? Did Forrest order a massacre or did a massacre even occur? We cannot know exactly what happened, of course. We were not there. But, hopefully, a careful examination of the actions of both Confederate and Union troops during the battle can shine a light on what did occur.

The Confederates erected Fort Pillow in 1862 at the First Chickasaw Bluff on the Mississippi River. If one traveled the river, Fort Pillow was eighty miles from Memphis. It was located 600 yards from the river and was angled along the river on the west and Coal Creek on the north. The original fort was two miles long, but General Villepique, CSA, built a second set of breastworks inside of the first, shortening the interior lines. When General Beauregard retreated from Corinth after the loss at Shiloh Church, the Confederates abandoned the fort. The Union army quickly took possession and further reduced the fort's dimensions. "The breastworks were 125 yards in length and enclosed no more than the high clay buffs in the apex of the angle between the creek and the river. The Villepique trenches were retained as an outer line of rifle pits"²

Union troops moved in and out of the fort as Sherman began his march on Meridian, Mississippi. By time Forrest made his attack, the fort was occupied by the 13th Tennessee Cavalry (USA) under the command of Major William Bradford. Most of the men of the 13th Tennessee had deserted from Forrest's ranks. Bradford's commanding officer, General Hurlburt, believed that the major was too inexperienced for the post, so he ordered Major L.F. Booth to take command. Booth brought with him four companies of heavy artillery, a section of light artillery, and colored troops. His orders were to put the works in order and strengthen the fortifications. Hurlburt also wrote Booth that "Forrest's check at Paducah will not dispose him to try the river again, but that he will fall back to Jackson, and thence cross the Tennessee. As soon as this is ascertained, I shall withdraw your garrison."³

If that should be the case, Booth reported that "he could hold the post against any force for forty-eight hours."⁴ Local citizens reported to Forrest that raids were frequently conducted from the fort by small detachments of both white and colored troops. The purpose of the raids was to forage, but the citizens were also subject to "robbery, insult, and greatest humiliations."⁵ The citizens requested Forrest leave behind a brigade of his cavalry as protection against these outrages. Forrest would do them one better. He wrote Polk, "there is a Federal force of five or six hundred at Fort Pillow, which I shall attend to in a day or so..."⁶ His purpose was not just to stop the raids. Fort Pillow was also a storehouse of much needed supplies and horses. On April 10th, Forrest ordered General

brigades. Chalmers arrived at Fort Pillow at 5:30 in the morning on April 12th. A company of the 2nd Missouri surprised and captured most of the Federal pickets. The few pickets that escaped retreated into the fort and raised the alarm. By sunup, the Confederates were within the original works erected in 1862. Chalmers employed his sharpshooters behind trees, logs, and in gullies, pinning down the Union soldiers behind the walls of the fort. Any soldier who raised his head above the ramparts was shot and killed. Captain Anderson of Forrest's staff wrote, "Anyone could see at a glance that the fort was ours."⁷

After the capture of the pickets, McCulloch's brigade took position a half a mile south of the fort, near the river, while Bell's brigade was ordered toward the center. Wilson's regiment was posted in front and engaged the garrison in a heavy skirmish. The rest of the brigade was to be deployed along Coal Creek, but when it was realized that the brigade would be exposed to the fort's guns, the plan was changed. By 8:00 a.m., the two companies of Union skirmishers that had been thrown forward to hold the advanced rifle pits had been compelled to retire after considerable loss. Chalmers ordered an assault, but it was successfully repulsed.

Forrest arrived on the field at 10:00 a.m. He began an up-close reconnaissance of the fort. When his horse was shot, it reared, throwing the cavalry leader, who suffered serious injuries. Forrest quickly mounted another horse, which was also shot and killed. Undaunted, Forrest mounted a third horse and continued his reconnaissance.

A second assault was repulsed, but the Confederates had gained possession of the two rows of barracks that ran parallel to the south side of the fort. Forrest then had his men advance in short bursts of yardage covered by the sharpshooters. The Confederate line was short and compact and it held a well-protected position that extended from the river on the south to Coal Creek on the north. The line was also formed on the declining ground from the fort to a ravine which encircled the fort at a distance varying from 50 to 150 yards of the works. Gunboat #7, the *New Era*, on the Tennessee River, shelled the Confederate forces, but the shells fell harmlessly. By 1:00 p.m., the gunboat had expended its ammunition and quit firing on the attacking forces. The fighting was halted when the Confederates ran low on ammunition. Forrest's ordnance trains were struggling through the thick April mud from Brownsville. They would arrive at 3:30 p.m.

Negotiations for Surrender

When the trains did arrive, Forrest sent in a flag of truce with the following note: "I have force sufficient to take your works by assault. I therefore demand an unconditional surrender of all your forces. Your heroic defense will entitle you to be treated as prisoners of war, but the surrender must be unconditional. I await your answer."⁸ This call for unconditional surrender was typical of the types of demands Forrest often made. Major Booth had been killed in the opening hours of the battle. Even though correspondence would be made in his name, it was actually Major Bradford who determined the course of action within the fort. Bradford asked for one hour so that he could consult with the commander of the *New Era*.

Forrest observed a troop transport (steamer) approaching the fort. He also saw the smoke from three more boats steaming up the river, presumably headed to the aid of the garrison. He believed Bradford's request was a stalling tactic in order to allow the now approaching gunboats to land reinforcements. The fort made no attempt to signal the gunboats away from the shore or of the truce that was now in place.

Forrest sent 200 men from McCulloch's brigade, under the command of Captain Anderson, down the ravine to the steamboat landing below the bluff on which the fort stood.

Continued on page 6 . . .

Continued from page 5 . . . Fort Pillow

He also sent Colonel Barteau with another 200 men down the Coal Creek ravine to prevent the landing of reinforcements at either point. These movements would later become a huge point of contention in the retelling of what happened at Fort Pillow. Union officials accused Forrest of violating the truce to move men into position in which to storm and overwhelm the fort. Actually, the opposite is true. Forrest removed 400 men from his assaulting columns in order to protect his rear and flanks from an attack from the river or creek. One of the gunboats, the Olive Branch, was warned off by Anderson and kept at a safe distance. Captain Marshall, commanding the *New Era*, ordered the Olive Branch to steam toward Cairo, stop all approaching river traffic as he went, and return with 400 to 500 rounds of ammunition. All this was done while the flag of truce flew.

Forrest sent another note into the fort giving Bradford twenty minutes to capitulate. If Bradford refused, Forrest would attack. One of the Union officers, who met with the Confederate couriers, took Forrest's second message into the fort. The remaining Union officers expressed their doubts as to whether or not Forrest was actually on the field.

In March, Colonel Duckworth of the 7th Tennessee had been able to convince Colonel Hawkins posted at Union City that Forrest was demanding the Union garrison's immediate surrender. Hawkins complied only to find out later that Forrest was not there. Duckworth had successfully bluffed Hawkins into surrender.

The Confederate couriers sent to the rear for Forrest, who rode up, introduced himself, and asked for "an answer in plain, unmistakable English. Will he fight or surrender?"⁹

While Forrest waited, the colored troops made threats and demonstrations against Forrest personally, and his staff feared that the cavalry leader might be shot while waiting for Bradford's reply. They tried to convince him to return to the rear, but Forrest would not go until he received an answer. Bradford sent his final refusal. He would not surrender the fort.

The Final Assault Commences

Forrest returned to the rear and sent word to Colonel Bell: "When he hears my orderly bugler sound the charge, (he is) to go over these works. (Even) if he gets killed and every man in his command, tell him I don't want to hear of Tennessee being behind."¹⁰ He sent a similar message to Colonel McCulloch. "When he hears my orderly bugler sound the charge, (he is) to go over the works. (Even) if he is killed and every man in his command, tell him I don't want to hear of Missouri being left behind."¹¹

Forrest's troopers did not disappoint. The charge was sounded. The sharpshooters began their deadly fire. The first wave scrambled across the remaining ground to the 12 foot wide ditch and jumped into the mud and water. Helping one another, they climbed up to a small ledge along the parapet, then, with guns loaded and being boosted by those below, went up and over the walls. They fired at point-blank range at the defenders. Before the garrison could reload, the second wave was over the wall and they too fired into the garrison. Lieutenant Leaming (USA), who survived the assault, described the charge "as if rising from out of the very earth."¹²

The Union garrison broke. The soldiers fled back through the fort to the brow of the bluff above the river side and plunged over.

The Garrison Is Routed

Bradford had used the hour he demanded from Forrest to arrange a signal with Captain Marshall. If Bradford was forced to abandon the fort, the men would drop down below the bank, and the gunboat would give the Rebels canister. Once under the bluff, the garrison would reorganize and continue the battle. The Federals fled from Forrest's men, fully expecting the *New Era* to fire on the Rebs. The routed men could only watch in surprise as the gunboat, out of ammunition since early afternoon, steamed out of range. Captain Marshall had given the order to abandon the fort because he was afraid that the Confederates would turn the fort's guns on his boat. Without support from the *New Era*, panic seized the routed garrison.

The Union soldiers ran into Anderson and the men from McCulloch's brigade. Hastily retreating the other way, they ran into the guns of Barteau's men. Trapped between the two Confederate forces, the Federals jumped into the river in an attempt to escape. Many of them drowned.

The American flag still flew overhead from the pole in the fort. As long as it did, Anderson and Barteau believed that the battle on top of the bluff continued. Forrest and his staff entered the fort on foot. Drunken Union soldiers were stumbling about, firing in a dazed sort of way. Partially emptied barrels of whisky and kegs of beer were scattered about with tin dip-pers attached.¹³

Confederate troopers closed in from the flanks, shooting and killing. Forrest ordered the halyards cut and the American flag brought down. Below the bluffs, the Confederates quit firing. Union soldiers kept up a show of resistance and were either shot or disarmed and captured. The final assault lasted about twenty minutes. At sunset, Forrest turned over command to Chalmers with instructions to bury the dead, collect arms and other property, transfer the Union wounded to the first steamer passing by the fort, and to

follow after Forrest as soon as practicable. Forrest had been hurt in the fall from his horse, so he stopped that night at a farmhouse seven miles from Fort Pillow for some much needed rest. Chalmers withdrew his troops from the fort at night. In the morning, he would set fire to the tents and cabins. He would also make arrangements for the wounded to be transported via the river.

Accusations of Massacre

Within days, Union officials accused the Confederates of perpetrating a massacre on the helpless men who sought to surrender but were not allowed to. Instead, according to the Federals, Forrest's men shot them down even as they pleaded for their lives. The main slaughter happened below the bluffs. Soldiers who were trying to escape by swimming across the river were shot in cold blood.

Sergeant Achilles V. Clark of the 20th Tennessee wrote his sister two days after the fort fell. Clark confirmed Northern reports of massacre. "Our men were so exasperated by the Yankees' threats of no quarter that they gave but little. The slaughter was awful. Words cannot describe the scene. The poor deluded Negroes would run up to our men fall upon their knees and with uplifted hands scream for mercy but they were ordered to their feet and then shot down."¹⁴ He goes on to say that "General Forrest ordered them shot down like dogs and the carnage continued. Finally, our men became sick of the blood and the firing ceased."¹⁵

Yet, Surgeon Samuel Caldwell of the 16th Tennessee wrote that the Union soldiers "refused to surrender - which incensed our men and if General Forrest had not run between our men and the Yanks with his pistol and saber drawn not a man would have been spared."¹⁶

Other Confederates contended that there had been no slaughter because the Union soldiers had not surrendered. In fact, the troopers could not trust the surrendered soldiers to stay surrendered.

In 1884, Colonel Barteau described the scene under the bluffs. "They made a wild, crazy, scattering fight. They acted like a crowd of drunken men. They would at one moment yield and throw down their guns, and then would rush again to arms, seize their guns and renew the fire. If one squad was left as prisoners...it was soon discovered that they could not be trusted as having surrendered, for taking the first opportunity, they would break loose again and engage in the contest. Some of our men were killed by Negroes who had at one time surrendered."¹⁷ Barteau's account is corroborated by Second Lieutenant Daniel Van Hom (USA)

Continued on page 7 . . .

Continued from page 6 . . .

of the colored artillery regiment who wrote in his official report that "there never was a surrender of the fort."¹⁸

These contradictory "eyewitness" reports can be found in both North and South historiography. For every report of massacre; another report exonerating Forrest can be easily produced.

An Assessment

Forrest's attack on Fort Pillow served two purposes. His troops needed the horses and the stores in the fort, but the main object of the raid was to "break up the nest"¹⁹ and relieve the citizens in the counties from the frequent raids originating from the fort. Forrest moved on the fort with enough men to accomplish his purpose.

The fort was defended by the 13th

Tennessee, which was made up of deserters from Forrest's cavalry. This gave the defenders a strong motive not to surrender. When Forrest's men scaled the fort's walls and began their assault, the Federal garrison broke. Routed, they headed down the bluff to the river banks where they ran into the forces Forrest had posted along the river. The garrison still refused to surrender, so the battle continued until Forrest ordered the halyards cut and the American flag lowered. When the flag fell, Anderson ordered the fighting along the riverbank halted.

The fort had been manned by 557 men. Three hundred and thirty six soldiers survived, while 231 were killed during the battle or drowned in the river, resulting in a 41% casualty rate. Does the high casualty rate mean that there was a massacre? No, it does not. What occurred was a hard fought battle for control of the fort. The 13th Tennessee's fear of falling into the hands of their former comrades was the primary reason Bradford refused to surrender, even when it was obvious that the Confederates could storm and take the fort. Adding to the casualty rate was the heavy loss of officers during the opening hours of the fight, especially the loss of Major Booth; the open whisky barrels and beer kegs; and the failure of Bradford's plan to have the New Era shell the Confederates with canister.

When the routed men arrived on the riverbank, they found themselves trapped between the two forces sent by Forrest to protect his columns from a possible attack from the river. Many of the panicked soldiers dove into the river and tried to swim to safety. They drowned.

In the days and weeks that followed, Northern papers were filled with accusations of a massacre, which went unanswered by the Confederates. Forrest's official report had been sent to General Polk, who had been killed during the Georgia campaign. Several months went by before



Polk's aides forwarded the report to Richmond.

At the time of the attack on Fort Pillow, Forrest enjoyed a reputation as a hard fighter, but at no time had he been accused of being a murderer of the innocent. It is true that he fought to win, but once victory was secured, he treated his opponents as prisoners of war, tending to their wounded and allowing their dead to be buried.

His actions at Fort Pillow are in line with his previous actions. Besides the contradictory letters written within days of the massacre wherein one Confederate soldier accused him of ordering the massacre and another Confederate soldier praised him for stopping it, the Confederates are in agreement. The loss of life was steep because the Union garrison refused to surrender even in the face of certain defeat. History's charge that a massacre occurred relies more on Forrest's occupation as slave trader before the war and his affiliation with the Ku Klux Klan after the war than it does on his actions at Fort Pillow.

Portrayals of Forrest as a racist only lend credence to the charge that Forrest ordered the massacre or, at the very least, did not stop it when it began. Forrest's honorable service during the war should not be subjected to such prejudice. And that prejudice should certainly not be the sole factor in accusing him of such a heinous crime.

In writing to the *New York Times* after the war, Forrest states that if he was guilty of such a transgression, then surely he would have been arrested and tried at the war's conclusion. But he was not. He insists this proves his innocence. One hundred and forty-seven years after the assault on the fort, academia has predetermined Forrest's guilt based on his pre and post war activities and then employed rumors, innuendos, and flat out falsehoods associated with the events at Fort Pillow to convict him. Forrest and the men who

served under him deserve better than being left to the agenda and verdict of politically correct historians who only care about advancing their agenda and not the reputation of the Wizard of the Saddle or the truth of Fort Pillow.

1 U.S. War Department. *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Volume 32, Part 1, Serial 57, page 618. (This work will be referred to as O. R.)

2 Robert Self Henry. *Forrest – First With the Most*. (New York: Konecky & Konecky, 1992), 249.

3 O.R. Volume 32, Part 1, Serial 57, pages 608-609.

4 Henry. *Forrest – First With the Most*., 249.

5 Mathes, James Harvey. *Great Commanders: General Forrest*. (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1902), 214-215.

6 O.R. Volume 32, Part 1, Serial 57, page 609.

7 O.R. Volume 32, Part 3, Serial 59, page 176.

8 O.R. Volume 32, Part 1, Serial 57, page 560.

9 O.R. Volume 32, Part 1, Serial 57, pages 614.

10 Mathes, James Harvey. *Great Commanders: General Forrest*., 222-223.

11 Mathes, James Harvey. *Great Commanders: General Forrest*., 223.

12 Henry. *Forrest – First With the Most*., 255.

13 Mathes. *Great Commanders: General Forrest*., 227.

14 Henry. *Forrest – First With the Most*., 264.

15 Ibid.

16 Letter of Surgeon Samuel.H. Caldwell to his wife, dated April 15, 1864.

17 Henry. *Forrest – First With the Most*., 256.

18 O.R. Volume 32, Part 1, Serial 57, 570.

19 Mathes. *Great Commanders: Forrest*., 228.

FORREST'S REPORT ON FORT PILLOW

The War of Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume 32, Part I, pages 609-611

HEADQUARTERS FORREST'S CAVALRY DEPARTMENT,
Jackson, Tenn., April 26, 1864

Lieut. Col. THOMAS M. JACK, Assistant Adjutant-General – COLONEL

I have the honor respectfully to forward you the following report of my engagement with the enemy on the 12th instant at Fort Pillow:

My command consisted of McCulloch's brigade, of Chalmers' division, and Bell's brigade, of Buford's division, both placed for the expedition under the command of Brigadier General James R. Chalmers, who, by a forced march, drove in the enemy's pickets, gained possession of the outer works, and by the time I reached the field, at 10 a.m., had forced the enemy to their main fortifications situated on the bluff or bank of the Mississippi River at the mouth of Coal Creek. The fort is an earthwork, crescent shaped, is 8 feet in height and 4 feet across the top, surrounded by a ditch 6 feet deep and 12 feet in width, walls sloping to the ditch but perpendicular inside. It was garrisoned by 700 troops with six pieces of field artillery. A deep ravine surrounds the fort, and from the fort to the ravine the ground descends rapidly.

Assuming command, I ordered General Chalmers to advance his lines and gain position on the slope, where our men would be perfectly protected from the heavy fire of artillery and musketry, as the enemy could not depress their pieces so as to rake the slopes, nor could they fire on them with small arms except by mounting the breast-works and exposing themselves to the fire of our sharpshooters, who, under cover of stumps and logs, forced them to keep down inside the works. After several hours of hard fighting, the desired position was gained, not, however, without considerable loss. Our main line was now within an average distance of 100 yards from the fort, and extended from Coal Creek on the right, to the bluff or bank of the Mississippi River on the left. During the entire morning the gunboat kept up a continued fire in all directions, but without effect, and being confident of my ability to take the fort by assault, and desiring to prevent further loss of life, I sent, under flag of truce, a demand for the unconditional surrender of the garrison, a copy of which demand is hereto appended, marked number 1*, to which I received a reply, marked num-

ber 2. The gunboat had ceased firing, but the smoke of three other boats ascending the river was in view, the foremost boat apparently crowded with troops, and believing the request for an hour was to gain time for reinforcements to arrive, and that the desire to consult the officers of the gunboat was a pretext by which they desired improperly to communicate with her, I at once sent this reply, copy of which is number 3, directing Captain Goodman, assistant adjutant-general of Brigadier General Chalmers, who bore the flag, to remain until he received a reply or until the expiration of the time proposed. My dispositions had all been made, and my forces were in a position that would enable me to take the fort with less loss than to have withdrawn under fire, and it seemed to me so perfectly apparent to the garrison that such was the case, that I deemed their [capture] without further bloodshed a certainty. After some little delay, seeing a message delivered to Captain Goodman, I rode up myself to where the notes were received and delivered. The answer was handed me, written in pencil on a slip of paper, without envelope, and was, as well as I remember, in these words: "Negotiations will not attain the desired object." As the officers who were in charge of the Federal flag of truce had expressed a doubt as to my presence, and had pronounced the demand a trick, I handed them back the note saying: "I am General Forrest; go back and say to Major Booth that demand an answer in plain, unmistakable English. Will he fight or surrender?" Returning to my original position, before the expiration of twenty minutes, I received a reply, copy of which is marked number 4.

While these negotiations were pending, the steamers from below were rapidly approaching the fort. The foremost was the *Olive Branch*, whose position and movements indicated her intention to land. A few shots fired into her caused her to leave the shore and make for the opposite. One other boat passed up on the far side of the river and the third one turned back.

The time having expired, I directed Brigadier General Chalmers to prepare for the assault. Bell's brigade occupied the right, with his extreme right resting on Coal Creek. McCulloch's brigade occupied the left, extending from the center to the river. Three companies of his left regiment were placed in an old rifle pit on the left and almost in the rear of the fort, which had evidently been thrown up for the protection of sharpshooters or riflemen in supporting the water batteries below.

On the right a portion of Barteau's regiment, of Bell's brigade, was also under the bluff and in rear of the fort. I dispatched staff officers to Colonels Bell and McCulloch, commanding brigades, to say to them that I

should watch with interest the conduct of the troops; that Missourians, Mississippians, and Tennesseans surrounded the works, and I desired to see who would first scale the fort.

Fearing the gunboats and transports might attempt a landing, I directed my aide-de-camp, Captain Charles W. Anderson, to assume command of the three companies on the left and rear of the fort and hold the position against anything that might come by land or water, but to take no part in the assault on the fort.

Everything being ready, the bugle sounded the charge, which was made with a yell, and the works carried without a perceptible halt in any part of the line. As our troops mounted and poured into the fortification, the enemy retreated toward the river, arms in hand and firing back, and their colors flying, no doubt expecting the gunboat to shell us away from the bluff and protect them until they could be taken off or reinforced. As they descended the bank an enfilading and deadly fire was poured into them by the troops under Captain Anderson, on the left, and Barteau's detachment on the right.

Until this fire was opened upon them, at a distance varying from 30 to 100 yards, they were evidently ignorant of any force having gained their rear. The regiment who had stormed and carried the fort also poured a destructive fire into the rear of the retreating and now panic-stricken and almost decimated garrison. Fortunately for those of the enemy who survived this short but desperate struggle, some of our men cut the halyards, and the United States flag, floating from a tall mast in the center of the fort, came down.

The forces stationed in the rear of the fort could see the flag, but were too far under the bluff to see the fort, and when the flag descended they ceased firing. But for this, so near were they to the enemy that few, if any, would have survived unhurt another volley. As it was, many rushed into the river and were drowned, and the actual loss of life will perhaps never be known, as there were quite a number of refugee citizens in the fort, many of whom were drowned and several killed in the retreat from the fort. In less than twenty minutes from the time the bugles sounded the charge, firing had ceased and the work was done. One of the Parrott guns was turned on the gunboat. She steamed off without replying. She had, as I afterward understood, expended all her ammunition, and was therefore powerless in affording the Federal garrison the aid and protection

Continued on page 9 . . .

Continued from page 8 . . . Forrest Report

they doubtless expected of her when they retreated toward the river. Details were made consisting of the captured Federals and negroes, in charge of their own officers, to collect together and bury the dead, which work continued until dark. I also directed Captain Anderson to procure a skiff and take with him Captain Young, a captured Federal officer, and deliver to Captain Marshall, of the gunboat, the message, copy of which is appended and numbered 5. All the boats and skiffs having been taken off by citizens escaping from the fort during the engagement, the message could not be delivered, although every effort was made to induce Captain Marshall to send his boat ashore by raising a white flag, with which Captain Young walked up and down the river in vain signaling her to come in or send out a boat. She finally moved off and disappeared around the bend above the fort. General Chalmers withdrew his forces from the fort before dark and encamped a few miles east of it.

On the morning of the 13th, I again dispatched Captain Anderson to Fort Pillow for the purpose of placing, if possible, the Federal wounded on board their transports, and report to me on his return the condition of affairs at the river. I respectfully refer you to his report, numbered 6. My loss in the engagement was 20 killed

and 60 wounded. That of the enemy is unknown. Two hundred and twenty-eight were buried on the evening of the battle, and quite a number were buried the next day by details from the gunboat fleet. We captured 6 pieces of artillery, viz., two 10-pounder Parrott guns, two 12-pounder howitzers, and two brass 6-pounder guns, and about 350 stand of small arms. The balance of the small arms had been thrown in the river. All the small-arms were picked up where the enemy fell or threw them down. A few were in the fort, the balance scattered from the top of the hill to the water's edge.

We captured 164 Federals, 75 negro troops, and about 40 negro women and children, and after removing everything of value as far as able to do so, the warehouses, tents, &c., were destroyed by fire. Among our severely wounded is Lieutenant Colonel Wiley M. Reed, assigned temporarily to the command of the Fifth Mississippi Regiment, who fell severely wounded while leading his regiment. When carried from the field he was supposed to be mortally wounded, but hopes are entertained of his ultimate recovery. He is a brave and gallant officer, a courteous gentleman, and a consistent Christian minister.

I cannot compliment too highly the conduct of Colonels Bell and McCulloch and the officers and men of their brigades, which composed the forces of Brigadier General Chalmers. They fought with cour-

age and intrepidity, and without bayonets assaulted and carried one of the strongest fortifications in the country.

On the 15th, at Brownsville, I received orders which rendered it necessary to send General Chalmers, in command of his own division and Bell's brigade, southward; hence I have no official report from him, but will, as soon as it can be obtained, forward a complete list of our killed and wounded, which has been ordered made out and forwarded at the earliest possible moment.

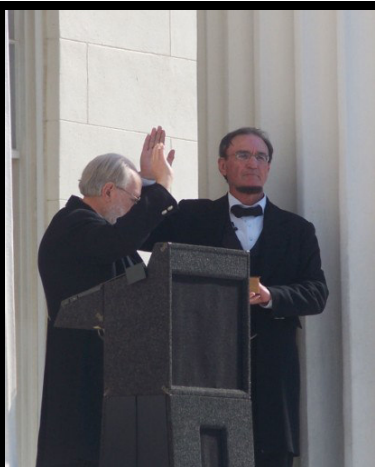
In closing my report I desire to acknowledge the prompt and energetic action of Brigadier General Chalmers, commanding the forces around Fort Pillow. His faithful execution of all movements necessary to the successful accomplishment of the object of the expedition entitles him to special mention. He has reason to be proud of the conduct of the officers and men of his command for their gallantry and courage in assaulting and carrying the enemy's work without the assistance of artillery or bayonets.

To my staff, as heretofore, my acknowledgments are due for their prompt and faithful delivery of all orders.

I am, colonel, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
N. B. FORREST, Major-General,
Commanding

NATIONAL SCV NEWS:

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF JEFFERSON DAVIS' INAUGURATION A SUCCESS



Jefferson Davis takes the oath of office in Montgomery, AL on Feb. 19, 2011

The day started off cool and cloudy but by the time the Confederates took to the streets for the march up Dexter Avenue, God had blessed us with a glorious day. You can tell by the sun-shine in photos.

As with most of our events there was a good crowd but we sure could have used more. I was a little disappointed in the turnout for this the 1st major event sponsored by the national organization. I just don't know what we can do to impress upon our members the importance of attending these events.

There were many dignitaries and they all gave greetings and excellent speeches. Past Commander-in-Chief Chuck McMichael probably gave the best. He got the crowd really fired up when he said at the end of his speech while holding the Battle Flag, "As long as a Southern breeze blows this flag will wave in it." After all of the VIP speeches, President Davis arrived in a horse drawn carriage to the applause and well wishes of those in attendance. His speech was read with much dignity and enthusiasm. After the speech the First National flag was raised in front of the State Capitol and everyone began singing "Dixie." It was a great day to be a Southerner and a great kick-off to the Sesquicentennial. The next big

event planned will be in Richmond, VA.



At Right: A crowd gathers for the event. Estimates were around 5,000 in attendance.

**The Delta General
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com**

Also part of the Beauvoir restoration is the replacement of the carpenter and foreman shops. The façades will look as they did during Davis' time, but inside they will be outfitted for today's needs with a catering kitchen and a dining hall.

To rebuild the kitchen that served the main house, Forte had to turn to the Internet and eventually the Library of Congress. A 1901 postcard wasn't clear enough to re-create the kitchen, but Forte discovered the Library of Congress had the original glass negative from 1885. The Department of Archives & History enlarged the photograph, placed it in the spot the picture was taken on the lawn of Beauvoir and determined the precise location and scale of the building. The Plexiglas enlargement will be a permanent exhibit on the lawn when the library opens.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy Arch that later marked the entrance to Beauvoir is being rebuilt near the cemetery on the northwestern area of the 50-acre property. Forte said 35,000 commemorative bricks have been sold that will pave the area between the restored arch and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Another fundraiser is the 2011 Beauvoir license plate. Forte said some of the proceeds benefit Beauvoir.

Forte, a former dealer of military artifacts, has two degrees in history and has served on the Beauvoir board for 31 years, 22 as chairman. He put the word out that the board was seeking loans and donations of historical items for the new library and museums.

"We've had good response," he said. The National Park Service will loan a Confederate-manufactured cannon and a private collector will provide 60 muskets. Forte said they have all the documents that were on the library's second floor when Katrina hit, and four original Confederate flags, which would be worth at least \$100,000 each.



JOHN FITZHUGH/SUN HERALD The Jefferson Davis Presidential Library and museums under construction at Beauvoir in Biloxi

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