



# The Delta General

January, 2013      Volume 16, Issue 1

Dedicated to the memory of Brig. General Benjamin G. Humphreys



## Camp News:

### Commander's Corner: Joe Nokes

Compatriots,

I hope that you all had a joyful Holiday Season. I know that most of you, like me, were extremely busy. I know also that many of you feel like you need a break to wind down. But let me urge you to take that energy and channel at least some of it into our beloved organization.

As the Sesquicentennial heads into its third year, we have a very busy list of activities for the upcoming year. I will try to include just a few of the more important ones that come to mind.

Our Lee-Jackson Banquet date has been set for January 12. The camp will supply the meat for the event and everyone bring sides, desserts, etc. This is what we did last year and had a very successful event. Also, we will be awarding the CSS Hunley Medal to a deserving NJROTC cadet. In addition, we will be inducting new members (a trend from our past several meetings that I am happy to see continuing).

On the weekend of January 25-26, the Museum of the Mississippi Delta will be hosting the opening ceremonies for the "War Comes to the Mississippi Delta" series. We are working very closely with the MotMD to make this a memorable event for all involved. Special guests include Bertram Hayes Davis and Dr. Curtis Fields who portrays General U. S. Grant. Reenactors and anyone interested in participating in period dress are more than encouraged, but we will also need members to man a recruitment/information table and to mingle with the public. There will be a variety of events in the months to come.

On February 4, there will be an AoT conference in Birmingham, Alabama. This leadership conference looks to be informative and well-worth the time.

On March 8-9, our Living History will be at Fort Pemberton, sponsored by the camp in conjunction with the Museum of the Mississippi Delta.

The SCV National Heritage Rally is set for March 16 at Beauvoir. The Library Dedication will take place during the Heritage Rally. This is a once in a lifetime event. I need say no more.

In April (undetermined Sunday), we will have our Camp Memorial in Greenville at the cemetery. Moreover, the Memorial at Soldier's Rest in Vicksburg is set for April 20. I feel strongly that we need to support these as many of our Mississippi ancestors are interred in these beautiful of cemeteries.

In closing, to all of you, keep up the hard work. Remember, WE are the protectors or OUR legacy. It is up to us to carry on the work of our honorable ancestors. They found reserves of energy to soldier on even when all seemed lost. I humbly ask: Can we truly honor them by doing any less?

I remain respectfully,  
Joe Nokes, Camp Commander

## CONTENTS

Camp News – pp. 1-3

OCR News – p. 2

Division News – pp. 3-5

National News – p. 5

Happy Birthday Generals –  
pp. 6

Battle of Stones River – pp.  
8-9

Museum of the MS Delta –  
p. 10

## UPCOMING EVENTS

January 12, 2013 – Camp's  
Lee and Jackson Banquet

January 25 – War Comes to  
the MS Delta – Museum of  
the Delta Exhibits open

February – Battle of  
Quitman Reenactment at  
Quitman, MS

## Lee/Jackson Banquet, January 12

The B/G Benjamin G. Humphreys Camp # 1625 cordially invites you, you family and friends to attend our 17th Annual Lee – Jackson Birthday Banquet, **Saturday, January 12, 2013**, at the 1st Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 311 Catchings Avenue, Indianola, MS. Social Hour will begin at 6:00 pm with dinner at 7:00 pm. Our Guest Speaker will be History Professor Doug Adams who will speak on the "Post-War Years of Nathan Bedford Forest". We will also honor C.J. Blankenship with the Hunley Medal. All Color Guard members should be present 6:00 pm to organize and practice presentation of colors.

Dress will be semi-formal with period dress encouraged. Please notify Dan with your reservation and how many in your party **no later than January 10, 2013**. This will be a "Pot Luck" dinner with the Camp providing the meat dishes. We ask everyone else attending to bring their favorite side dish, salad, bread or dessert.

There will be a raffle so anyone wishing to donate an item, please contact Annette McCluney

([confederate@suddenlink.net](mailto:confederate@suddenlink.net)) or Missy Stillman ([mis\\_gator@yahoo.com](mailto:mis_gator@yahoo.com))

There will be a Candle Light Memorial to honor our Confederate Ancestors. If you would like your Ancestor to be remembered, please email me his name, rank and unit to [danmccas@tecinfo.com](mailto:danmccas@tecinfo.com). If you have any questions, you may email Joe Nokes; [joenokes0128@yahoo.com](mailto:joenokes0128@yahoo.com); Larry McCluney; [confederate@suddenlink.net](mailto:confederate@suddenlink.net); or Dan; [danmccas@tecinfo.com](mailto:danmccas@tecinfo.com).

To revitalize interest in camp meetings, a door prize raffle that is conducted and carried out by the OCR. The OCR has also revived the

... continued on page 2

Lee/Jackson continued . . .

Capture the Yankee as a fund raiser. There is a red chip for every member in the Camp in the pot and a white chip for every OCR member. One blue chip symbolizing the Yankee. Chances are \$.25 cents each and whomever captures the yankee gets half the pot. That yankee has yet to be captured The pot is now up to \$38.00 and growing. Come to the meetings and lets see if you can capture that elusive Yankee. These two activities will be continued at our February Camp meeting.

## Adjutant's Report: Dan McCaskill

**7:00 pm** The Camp Meeting of December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 was called to order by Commander Joe Nokes at 7:00 pm. The Meeting was opened with an invocation and blessing by Camp Chaplain Earl McCown. Commander Nokes welcomed all members and guests attending the Meeting. The Commander then invited all to partake in the evening meal. After the meal, Commander Nokes reconvened the Meeting. Color Sergeant Chris Lewis led the members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag and salutes to the Flag of Mississippi and the Battle Flag of the Confederacy followed by the reading of "The Charge" given to us by Gen. Stephen D. Lee. Commander Joe Nokes had the privilege of inducting Anthony Browning into the Camp as its newest member.

**Program:** Our guest speaker for the evening was unable to attend due to an illness in the family.

**Announcements:** The Camp's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Lee – Jackson Birthday Banquet will be held Saturday, January 12, 2013 at the 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall in Indianola starting at 6:00 pm. The Banquet will be our January Meeting and the February will be as scheduled. January 25 – 26, 2013 will be the opening of the "War Comes to the Delta Exhibit" at Cottonlandia Museum in Greenwood, MS. Camp members and Re-enactors are encouraged to attend. January 18 – 20, 2013 will be the weekend for the Re-enactment at the Arkansas Post.

**Officer Reports:** 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Commander Larry McCluney announced the speaker for the Lee-Jackson Banquet will be History Professor Doug Adams whose subject will be "That Devil Forest, Post-War Years". Larry is still working on a program for February. Adjutant Dan McCaskill reported that all National and Division dues had been paid for 51 Camp Members. This is a decrease of 8 members; 2 due to death and 6 due to non-renewal. The Camp's checking account has a current balance of \$ 1,763. Larry as Camp Editor inquired about everyone receiving the Camp Newsletter. As AOT Councilman, Larry reported the next National Heritage Rally will be at Beauvoir on March 16, 2013. There will be a parade to Beauvoir, Dedication of the Presidential Library and various speakers. Earl McCown reported that the Gen. Charles Clark Chapter of the MOS & B needed a few good men. OCR President Annette McCluney reported that the Ella Palmer Chapter will pay the traveling expenses for the U. S. Grant re-enactor for the Cottonlandia Museum opening.

**Camp Business:** The first order of business was Dan placed before the Camp the application of Michael E. Campbell for membership in the SCV. Mike had paid all his dues and his Ancestor served honorably. Earl McCown made the motion to approve the application which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Junior Stillman and passed unanimously. Final touches were made to the upcoming Lee – Jackson Banquet. After some discussion, Larry McCluney made a motion to have the Camp cater the meat and members bring the side dishes. The motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Earl McCown and passed. Junior was asked to coordinate the cooking and delivery of the meat. Anyone wanting to donate a door prize was asked to bring it to Missy or Annette or to the Banquet. The Camp, being the sponsor of the H. L. Hunley JROTC Award, Larry McCluney presented the name of C. J. Blankenship as this year's Awardee. After a brief discussion, Earl McCown made a motion to approve the nominee, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mike Lavender and passed unanimously. With no other business coming before the Camp, Commander Nokes asked Chaplain Earl McCown to dismiss the Meeting with a word of prayer which he did. Attendance for the evening was 21.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dan McCaskill, Adj.

## Order of Confederate Rose News

Ladies,

Our Lee/ Jackson Banquet looks to be another great evening. I would ask that all ladies bring a covered dish to go with the main course that the men are buying. Anyone that has raffle prizes that they would like to donate, please make contact with Sandra Stillman at and she will pick them up from you if you would like but please let her know what you have so she can put it on the list. All money raised will go toward the January 25<sup>th</sup> event at the Museum of the Mississippi Delta to make that night successful on behalf of the Ella Palmer Chapter.

As a reminder to the members of the Ella Palmer Chapter, our annual membership dues are now due.. We have a grace period till January 1. Renewals are \$20.00 and can be paid to Annette McCluney at the meetings or by mail:

Annette McCluney  
1412 North Park Dr  
Greenwood, MS 38930  
Make Checks out to: Ella Palmer Chapter #9, OCR

## Welcome New Member

Welcome to our newest member of the Camp, Michael E. Campbell. Compatriot Campbell's ancestor that he joins us with is his 3rd Great Grandfather Henry L. Muslewhite; Pvt, Co. K, 30th MS Infantry. For those who are not aware of it, that is the same company and regiment that the Camp reenactors portray. We keep growing and yet there is more room in our family.

## The Sesquicentennial War Comes to the MS Delta

GREENWOOD, Miss. – To commemorate the sesquicentennial of when Union and Confederate forces clashed on the winding rivers of the Mississippi Delta, a new Civil War exhibit will open at the Museum of the Mississippi Delta. The exhibition “War Comes to the Mississippi Delta” will run from January 26 through August 31.

The exhibit will highlight the Battle of Fort Pemberton during the winter of 1863, when Confederate forces held off Union soldiers with the hurriedly constructed Fort Pemberton outpost.

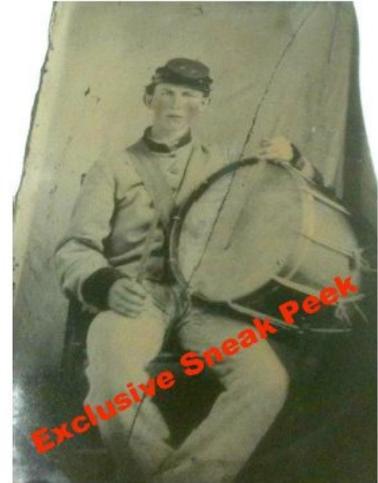
Visitors will see artifacts from the battle, including items from the ocean steamer “Star of the West.” The ship originally served as a Union transport ship, but after being captured by Rebel forces, it was eventually sunk next to Fort Pemberton to block the passage of Union ships on their way to Vicksburg.

Other artifacts that capture the battle include items from the Union’s ironclad “U.S.S. Cairo,” period clothing and the Lady Polk cannon. Used in the Battle of Fort Pemberton, this unusual canon is one of 17 Civil War-era cannons left in existence today and the only one that has been restored for firing.

A special free event on the exhibition’s opening day will include portrayals of General Ulysses S. Grant, as well as Union and Confederate re-enactors.

The Museum is seeking family photographs, letters or personal items belonging to soldiers or their families. The items will be included in the exhibit as a temporary loan to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Battle of Fort Pemberton in March 1863. The exhibit will use home items to show the role of women and children on the home front and how they managed with their men away at war. The exhibition will highlight the effects of the Emancipation Proclamation that was signed on January 1, 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln and the role of the U.S. Colored Troops in Mississippi.

This photo is of an ambrotype photograph of a soldier with a drum and will be on loan to the Museum from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History along with 10 other items. For more information, visit [www.museumofthemississippidelta.com](http://www.museumofthemississippidelta.com)



### Editor’s Note:

Anyone interested in putting on loan artifacts they may have for this exhibition please contact Larry McCluney at 662-453-7212 or Cheryl Taylor, Director of the Museum of the Mississippi Delta at 662-453-0925. They are looking for more weapons, personal affects, and pictures of ancestors that fought in the war with all military information on them. If you bring items to camp please tag them with your name, address, and phone number and Larry McCluney can deliver those items

### Division News:

#### Membership Retention Report

Gentlemen,

This is a brief report on the results of Membership Renewals. The good news is 7 Camps have achieved 100% renewal while two other Camps missed by one. Unfortunately, four Camps did not submit any dues for their members. Membership from the last Fiscal Year is down 20% which translates to a loss of 277 members. This does not include loss due to death. Fortunately the Division has picked up past and new members totaling 88. Current membership including Division Life Members now stands at 1,245 which is 86.6% of last year’s membership.

If any member knows of someone whose has not renewed their membership, help your Camp Adjutant by encouraging them to renew their membership. You can also help by recruiting new members.

Your Servant,  
Dan A. McCaskill, Division Adjutant

### Announcement

Dear Friends of the Mississippi Division,

My term on the Board of Directors of Beauvoir expires in 2013. I sincerely hope that you have found my service to you on behalf of the Mississippi Division as a Director on Beauvoir Board of Directors worthy and acceptable, I humbly ask you to vote to allow me one more term as a Director. We have several ongoing projects that I am involved in that need to be completed, and I would be most honored if you would allow me to complete this work at Beauvoir.

The Mississippi Division has always been at the heart of the decisions and choices that I have had to make while serving on the Beauvoir Board throughout treacherous and unpredictable times, fraught with difficulty. By the grace of God, we have prevailed, and will continue to prevail as we endeavor to complete the remaining work at hand.

Thank you, each and every one for allowing me to serve you at Beauvoir, and I would appreciate your consideration of me continuing as Director on the Board of Directors one more term.

With kindest personal regards to you all,  
Ed Funchess, Vice Chairman  
Combined Boards of Beauvoir

**OFFICAL REGISTRATION FORM**  
**118th Reunion – Mississippi Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans**  
**and 19th Reunion – Mississippi Society, Order of Confederate Rose**  
**Rankin County – June 21-23, 2013**  
**Hosted by: The Lowry Rifles Camp #1740 Rankin County**

SCV MEMBERS NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_ SCV CAMP & NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE NAME (for badge): \_\_\_\_\_

OCR MEMBERS NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

OCR CHAPTER NAME AND NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

All registered SCV members will receive a name badge, a convention medal, a program, and a bag of goodies. Registration at the door will receive the same as long as supplies last. (OCR registrants will have a Tea in lieu of a medal.) **Please register for your respective organization below.**

**REGISTRATION AMOUNTS**

SCV on or before June 07, 2013.....**\$30.00 each for registration** .....QTY \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SCV after June 07, 2013.....**\$35.00 each for registration** .....QTY \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OCR on or before June 7, 2013 \$10.00 each after June 07, 2013 \$15.00 each QTY \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Ancestor Memorial:** Each memorial is \$10.00..... QTY \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**(Please Print or type each memorial on separate page, Thanks!)**

**Program Ads:** \$100.00 for full page; \$50.00 for half a page; \$25.00 for quarter page; \$15.00 for business card size advertising **(Please submit ad information on a separate page before May 15, Thanks!)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Banquet Registration (per plate) \$30.00** .....Qty \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**(No Meal Registration after June 7, 2013) Dinner (TBD)** .....**Total Amount \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks Payable to:** Lowry Rifles Camp #1740

**Mail to:** Bill Hinson  
238 South Fox Hall Road  
Pearl, Ms. 39208

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** Bill Hinson: (H) 601-936-9048; or email: [BHLH87@aol.com](mailto:BHLH87@aol.com)

**Convention Hotel:** Cabot Lodge-Millsaps, Jackson, Ms. Reservations can be made by calling: 601-948-8650, ask for the Mississippi Division, SCV Convention Rates. Rates are \$109.00 + tax per night and plus happy hour from 5:30pm-7:30pm for hotel guest only. Reservations **MUST BE MADE** before June 07, 2013.

## Support Beauvoir by making a purchase at the Gift Shop

Visit Beauvoir's website at <http://www.beauvoir.org> and see all that is offered for sale in the Gift Shop. What better place spend some of your money and help the last home of President Davis at the same time.

While there take some time to make a donation. Money to run Beauvoir is very important.

**Beauvoir , 2244 Beach Blvd., Biloxi, MS 39531**



## QUITMAN RE-ENACTMENT

The event this year will be held in Feb. on the 22 – 24 at Archusa Water Park, near Quitman, MS. It will be the 3 Annual Battles for the Texas Hospital. Below are the highlights for the weekend:

**Friday - Possible school presentation that morning, TBA.**

**Noon - Check in begins for re-enactors and sutlers.**

**4 -6 PM - Encampment.**

**6 - 7 PM Night Cannon Firing.**

**7 - 10 Encampment.**

**Saturday - 9 - 11 AM - March to Quitman with Memorial Service at Clarke County Courthouse. Followed by parade through town to Confederate Cemetery to conduct another memorial service.**

**2 - 3 PM Battle will be fought. Then supper for troops at 5 PM. At 6:30 another firing of cannons at night.**

**7 PM - Dance begins with the group Kracker Dan providing the music.**

**Sunday - 9 -10 - Church Services. Battle will be from 2 -3, then at 4 PM re-enactors disband.**

**For further info contact - Dianne Long - Carlin on Facebook, or [carlindianne@yahoo.com](mailto:carlindianne@yahoo.com) or 601 – 678 - 5382.**



The Sesquicentennial (150th Anniversary) of the Cause for Southern Independence is upon us! The Sons of Confederate Veterans has established a unique way you can show support for our efforts and build a legacy for the future. It is the SCV Sesquicentennial Society! By joining this prestigious group you will help in supporting two projects very important to the future.

First- the General Executive Council made the commitment in October of 2008 to start the process to erect a new building on our property at Historic Elm Springs. One

of the uses of this new building is to give us office space and return Elm Springs to its original grandeur. However the main function is to house the Confederate Museum. We are planning a museum that will tell the truth about what motivated the Southern people to struggle for many years to form a new nation. It will give an accurate portrayal of the Confederate soldier, something that is lacking in most museum and in the media. 75 % of the money received through this effort goes to that building fund.

Second-we need to leave a legacy for our Compatriots who will be the members and leaders of the SCV when the Bicentennial of the Cause for Southern Independence arrives 50 years from now. One can only guess at the obstacles they will have to face in putting forth an accurate commemoration. 25% of the money will go into a fund to be used by the SCV at that point in time.

Here is how you can take part. To join it is a minimum payment of \$200. ( You can give more if you wish!) You will receive a handsome SCV Sesquicentennial Society Medal and Certificate. This program will end at the close of the Sesquicentennial. You may pay all at once or you can make non-refundable installments of \$50 ( you will receive the medal and certificate when paid in full).

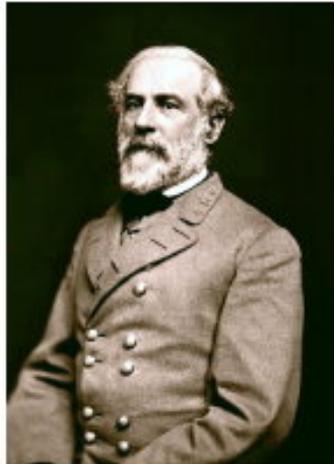
Send a check to:  
Sons of Confederate Veterans  
c/o Sesquicentennial Society  
P.O. Box 59  
Columbia, TN 38402

Or you can call 1-800-MY-DIXIE to pay by credit card. You may also use the on-line donation page at <https://scv.secure-sites.us/donation.php> At this time the on-line page does not have a \$200 option. You can select \$250 (donating an extra \$50) or you can donate \$100 twice. If you choose to pay by installment there is \$50 option. Be sure to put Sesquicentennial Society in the box marked purpose of payment

## Sesquicentennial Article

### General Robert E. Lee's Birthday

This month, all over the South, Southerners will raise a glass of buttermilk to toast the birthdays of Gen. Robert E. Lee and Gen. Stonewall Jackson. Lee was born on Jan. 19, and Jackson on Jan. 21. No American general comes close to matching their battlefield exploits until we get to Gen. George S. Patton in World War II. Lee, despite being on the losing side, was universally admired the world over and was showered with offers of lucrative jobs and even an estate in England. Lee — unlike today's lesser generals who leap at book contracts and fat speaking fees despite have no record of any great accomplishment — refused to profit from the fame earned at the expense of so many young men's lives. He turned down the gifts and the job offers and instead accepted the position of president of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University). His salary was \$1,500 a year. Americans in all regions would do well to recommend this man's life as a model for their sons. Lee came as close to being perfect as a human being can be. He was tall, handsome and bright, and finished second in his class at West Point without a single demerit. He married a descendant of George Washington and, again unlike some people these days, kept his wedding vows and loved and cherished his wife. Lee was a hero long before the secession crisis. He was superintendent of West Point. He distinguished himself during the Mexican War and showed such sterling character, courage and leadership that he was the first choice to lead the Northern armies when the secession crisis arose. Now think for a moment what a decision this man faced. He was by choice a professional soldier, and here he was being offered the highest position a professional could hope for. Furthermore, he thought slavery was a moral evil, and he was opposed to secession. As a professional soldier, he surely knew that if war came, the South would lose. It was outmanned, outgunned, out-railroaded and out-industrialized from Day One. A man who put ambition above all else would have accepted in a New York minute, and no doubt the War Between the States would have been over much sooner. It was Lee's tactical genius that kept the South going. But Lee could not bear to make war on his native state of Virginia, where all of his family and friends lived. He declined the offer and resigned his commission. He showed such brilliance on the battlefield that he is ranked among all the greats in the history of the world. But it is Lee's character, not his war exploits, that marks him as a man worth emulating. One of his generals said of Lee, "As a soldier the men respected him; as a man they loved him." Though old for his time (he died at age 63 in 1870), he shared the hardships of the men, often sleeping on the ground. Any presents sent to him were passed along to his men. He wore a plain uniform. He never spoke ill of anyone, even his enemies. He never took credit for victories, but he always accepted personal responsibility for defeats. He was a devout Christian. His son tells a story that illustrates how revered he was. After the war, Lee's sons answered a knock on the door to find a big Irish sergeant wearing a Yankee uniform and carrying a large basket of food. He had heard that Lee was hungry, and having served with him on the frontier before the war, could not stand that thought. Lee's sons were assuring him that no one was hungry when Gen. Lee came to the door. He convinced the sergeant that he would accept the gift only if he could pass it along to the wounded in the hospital. The sergeant grabbed Lee in a bearhug and said, with tears streaming down his face, "Goodbye, Colonel. God bless ye. If I could have got over in time, I would have been with ye." I doubt any sergeant has hugged a general since then. (January 15, 2005) By Charley Reese



Robert E. Lee



Thomas Jonathan  
"Stonewall" Jackson

### General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson

Thomas Jonathan Jackson was born on January 21, 1824 in Clarksburg, Virginia. He entered West Point in July 1842 and, in spite of his poor childhood education, worked hard to graduate seventeenth in his class in 1846. Upon graduation, Jackson was sent on military duty to Mexico, and continued his service in the United States Army in positions in New York and Florida. In 1851, Jackson became professor of artillery tactics and natural philosophy at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia. He resigned from the army as of February 29, 1852. Jackson's summer vacations from teaching were often spent vacationing in the North and in Europe where his interests were aroused in art and culture rather than military or political aspects. This somewhat calm, domestic period in his life came to a close on April 21, 1861 when he was ordered to go to Richmond as part of the cadet corps. Since military aspirations had faded from his life, he was virtually unknown in this sphere. It was during the Battle of Bull Run in the Civil War when Jackson assumed his nickname. Amidst the tumult of battle, Brigadier-General Barnard E. Bee stated, "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall." As the war continued, Jackson continually impressed his Confederate compatriots with his skill on the battlefield and in planning conferences. He distinguished himself in the Valley campaign of early 1862, the Battle of second Manassas in August 1862, and the Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862. Jackson was a Southern hero, and in spite of his eccentricities, he was loved and respected by his soldiers. He strictly observed the Sabbath, and his religiosity was constant in all facets of his life. On May 2, 1863, in his last march of the Civil War, Jackson was wounded by friendly fire. He died of pneumonia several days later on May 10 at Guiney's Station, Virginia. His body was carried to Richmond and then to Lexington where it was buried. It is said that The Army of Northern Virginia never fully recovered from the loss of Stonewall Jackson's leadership in battle. General Robert E. Lee believed Jackson was "irreplaceable." Source: Virginia.edu

## **Battle of Stones River, December 31, 1862-January 2, 1863**

From the beginning of the Civil War, the strategy of the Union armies operating west of the Appalachian Mountains centered on two major objectives: (1) gaining control of the Mississippi River and (2) driving a wedge through the Confederacy along the railroads running southeastward through Tennessee and Georgia. By the end of 1862, only the Confederate strongholds of Vicksburg, Miss., and Port Hudson, La., thwarted the first goal. The second, of which the Battle of Stones River was a major step, would cost more time and more blood.

In the winter and spring of 1862, Federal troops advanced into Tennessee, capturing Forts Henry and Donelson on the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers and driving the Confederates from the field at Shiloh. By autumn Union armies occupied the western half of the state, including Nashville, the capital. In October, Confederate forces under Gen. Braxton Bragg retreated from Kentucky after the Battle of Perryville ended hopes of bringing that state into the Confederacy and went into winter quarters at Murfreesboro. Union Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans's 14th Army Corps (soon to be renamed the Army of the Cumberland) followed as far as Nashville, 30 miles to the northwest.

On December 26, Rosecrans left Nashville with 43,000 men, intending to sweep aside Bragg's 38,000-man Army of Tennessee and drive on to Chattanooga, 125 miles farther southeast. Four days later the Federal army reached Murfreesboro and encamped within half a mile of Bragg's troops, drawn up northwest of town astride the main road and rail line. Ironically, both commanders planned to attack the other's right flank the next morning with similar goals in mind: Bragg's to drive the Union forces into the northern loop of Stones River; Rosecrans's to isolate the Confederates from their base.

### **The Battle of Stones River: Wed., Dec. 31, 1862 at Dawn**

The Confederates seized the advantage by striking first. At dawn two of Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee's divisions, supported by divisions of Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk, furiously assaulted the Union right wing under Maj. Gen. Alexander M. McCook. By 10 a.m. the Southerners had driven the right wing and part of the center back through the surrounding cedar woods almost to the Nashville Pike. Only desperate and stubborn fighting by units under Brig. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan and Brig. Gen. James S. Negley prevented a Union rout.

### **The Battle of Stones River: Wed., Dec. 31, 1862 at Noon**

In a desperate attempt to reinforce his right and center and stem the Confederate onslaught, Rosecrans rushed fresh troops from Maj. Gen. Thomas Crittenden's left wing into position along the Nashville Pike and the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad. Told by "Old Rosy" to "contest every inch of ground," the Union infantry and artillery beat back one Confederate attack after another, inflicting very heavy casualties. Some of the hardest fighting took place in the area known as the Round Forest, near the present-day Hazen Monument. At times, the noise was so intense that soldiers paused to stuff their ears with cotton.

Bragg tried to revive his faltering offensive by sending Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge's brigades, which so far had taken no part in the fighting, against the Union center. Had Breckinridge executed his orders at the battle's critical point (just before noon) the weight of his blow might have crumpled the Union line along the pike and railroad. But his troops arrived too late and in such piecemeal fashion that several Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois regiments, after expending their ammunition, were able to beat off the attacks with rifle butts and bayonets.

That night, after the day's battle sputtered to a close, no one celebrated New Year's Eve. The two armies remained in position the next day, but there was little fighting.

### **The Battle of Stones River: Fri., Jan. 2, 1863 at 4 p.m.**

Bragg, confident that Rosecrans would withdraw, was surprised to find the Federals not only still on the field but on the east side of Stones River occupying a hill that threatened his army's right flank. To remove this threat, Bragg ordered Breckinridge's five brigades, totaling 4500 men, to seize the high ground and drive the enemy back across the river. The assault began about an hour before dusk and, despite a cold, driving rain, carried the crest after overcoming some initial resistance. The outnumbered Union soldiers fled down the back slope to a shallow river crossing known as McFadden's Ford. There the pursuing Confederates encountered a deadly surprise.

When the Southerners were first forming for their attack, Union Gen. Crittenden ordered his chief of artillery, Capt. John E. Mendenhall, to provide support for the Union troops across the river. Within half an hour, Mendenhall assembled 58 guns (45 on the heights about 100 yards west of McFadden's Ford, the rest in two batteries to the southwest) and trained them on the ground across which the Confederates would come. As Breckinridge's soldiers came into range, the Federal gunners opened fire. In minutes, 1800 Confederates were killed or wounded; the rest withdrew, as Union troops spearheaded by men from Negley's division crossed the river and reclaimed the heights. Mendenhall's concentrated artillery fire had turned a dashing charge into a grim retreat.

### **Aftermath of the Battle of Stones River**

Tactically indecisive, the Battle of Stones River cost 12,706 Federal casualties and 9870 Confederate. After Bragg withdrew from Murfreesboro, Rosecrans claimed victory, providing a much-needed boost to Northern morale following the disastrous Union defeat at Fredericksburg, Va., just three weeks before. President Abraham Lincoln thanked Rosecrans and his soldiers "for your and their skill, endurance, and dauntless courage.

**"THE DELTA GENERAL**

**1412 North Park Dr  
Greenwood, MS 38930**

**We are on the Web!  
[www.humphreys1625.com](http://www.humphreys1625.com)**



**Don't be a Straggler!  
Come to the Meetings!**

