

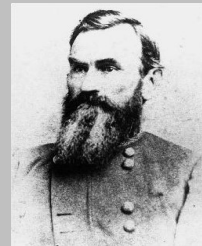


The Delta General

Camp Website: www.humphreys1625.com

October, Volume 24, Issue 9

Dedicated to the Memory of Brigadier General Benjamin G. Humphreys



In this Issue:

- ZAGONYI'S CHARGE (BATTLE OF SPRINGFIELD)
- THE CSS MANASSAS
- DAN MCCASKILL WILL BE OUR GUEST SPEAKER GIVING A REPORT ON THE FORREST REINTERNMENT WITH A SLIDE SHOW

Commander's Comments—Larry McCluney

Compatriots,

I hope everyone is ready for cooler temperatures like I am because Fall is here. By the time you read this, our Forrest Reinternment event at Elm Springs whad taken place and if I sayso myself, a great success with over 2,500 people registered for the event and there were no incidents and no protestors. Five of our Camp members attended, and 4 of our ladies from the Ella palmer chapter was present. That's about 20% of our Camp and OCR people. Job well done.

Our October meeting will feature Dan McCaskill as our guest speaker who will give a presentation on the Forrest Reinternment from his perspective with a slide show as well. You do not want to miss this.

I will be unable to attend this meeting because I will be on National SCV business in Tennessee. Please keep me in your thoughts and prayers as I travel.

The CERT program in Greenwood at the Confederate Memorial Building was a great success as 5th Brigade Commander Forrest Dawes led the meeting.. After the meeting the participants went to the Greenwood Cemetery to practice what they learned with hands on training cleaning headstones. There were 26 people in attendance.

Please bring a friend or potential recruit at our October 2 meeting. We hope to see you there.

CERT Training at Confederate Memorial Hall in Greenwood, MS—September 25, 2021

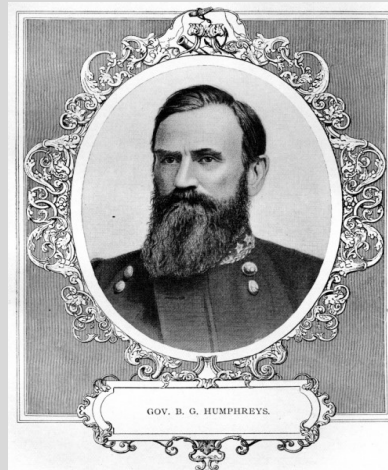
You may ask, "What is CERT Training?" Well, members of the Mississippi Division from Upper Mississippi gathered at the Confederate Memorial Hall in Greenwood, Mississippi to learn the answer to that question from Forrest Daws, Monuments Committee Chairman. CERT is an acronym for Confederate Emergency Response Team. In light of the events of 2020 with the desecration and destruction of Confederate Memorials across the South, SCV Divisions across the South are creating these teams to respond to vandalism of monu-



ments both Confederate and other historical to clean and protect them from future vandalism. Incorporated in the same presentation, was the cleaning methods for headstones which have suffered the same types of vandalism as our monuments. Forrest first introduced the items needed to clean monuments and headstones. These are plastic putty knives, soft horse hair bristled brush (shoe shine brush is excellent), pump up sprayer for water, Orvus soap (for horses) and D2 Biological Cleaner. The first step is to get permission in writing from whoever owns or controls the cemetery before entering the cemetery to start cleaning. Explain to them that this is a long-term process and the headstone will change color but that this is only the cleaning agent working. Forrest then explained

the step by step cleaning process. After the first application, wait two weeks and depending on the condition of the headstone, repeat the application as needed. He emphasized the cleaning of a headstone/monument is a process that can take multiple applications spread out over weeks or months depending on how clean it takes to restore the stone or monument to its original appearance.

After the classroom instruction, we all proceeded to the Old Greenwood Cemetery for some hands-on application. I will not go into the step by step procedure but to say it took about 10 minutes to complete initial cleaning and first application of the D2 Biological Cleaner. Larry McCluney volunteered to come back in two weeks and report on how clean the headstone had become. Twenty-six members attended the seminar and after receiving their Certification Card, Forrest requested that these men spread out across the Division and other States instructing other Camps on this process. The Division's goal is to have at least one certified CERT Team per Brigade. Other programs discussed were the Monument Guardian Program by Forrest Daws and the Guardian Program (for Confederate Grave Sites) by Terry Arthur. If anyone is interested in any of these programs, please contact either Larry McCluney at confederate@suddenlink.net or Dan McCaskill at danmccas@tecinfo.net



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Camp Commander / Editor:
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Guardians needed

Everyone knows the atmosphere in this country where it comes to anything Confederate. Last summer we saw how vulnerable our Memorials were to the rioters. Sadly, it has spread to the cemeteries the place where the left wants all the Memorials moved. In the past few weeks, the Sleeping Lion Memorial to the Confederate dead in Oakwood Cemetery in Atlanta, GA has been removed. Our Confederate Dead and our Memorials are at risk to removal and vandalism. This why we need Guardians to watch over our Memorials and burial sites of our Confederate Dead. Most of our members live in Counties with Confederate Memorial Monuments and all live near a cemetery where Confederate Dead are buried. The Mississippi Division has the MS Division Guardian Program for burial sites where a person adopts a burial site or several sites and watches over the site ensuring it is properly cared for. The Division now has the MS Division Monument Guardian Program. With this program, a person signs up to keep watch on a Memorial. There is a contact person to report any vandalism and/or threats of removal. If anyone is interested in either or both of these programs, please contact me by either email: danmccas@tecinfo.net or cell phone: 662-822-1096. One or two people cannot be everywhere. It takes a group effort. This is one way you can live The Charge given to the Sons by Gen. Stephen D. Lee.

Chaplain's Corner—Earl McCowen

Providential beliefs and practices had a momentous impact on the Southern war effort. Chief among Providence's influences was the inadvertent death of Stonewall Jackson and dozens of other officers who acted rashly and even suicidally in exposing themselves to both enemy and friendly fire in an effort to lead from the front and be capable generals. While contemporary military practice helped to contribute to these deaths and injuries, the belief in Providence as expressed by hundreds of Confederate generals and subordinate officers encouraged them to take unnecessary risks and expose themselves to enemy fire.



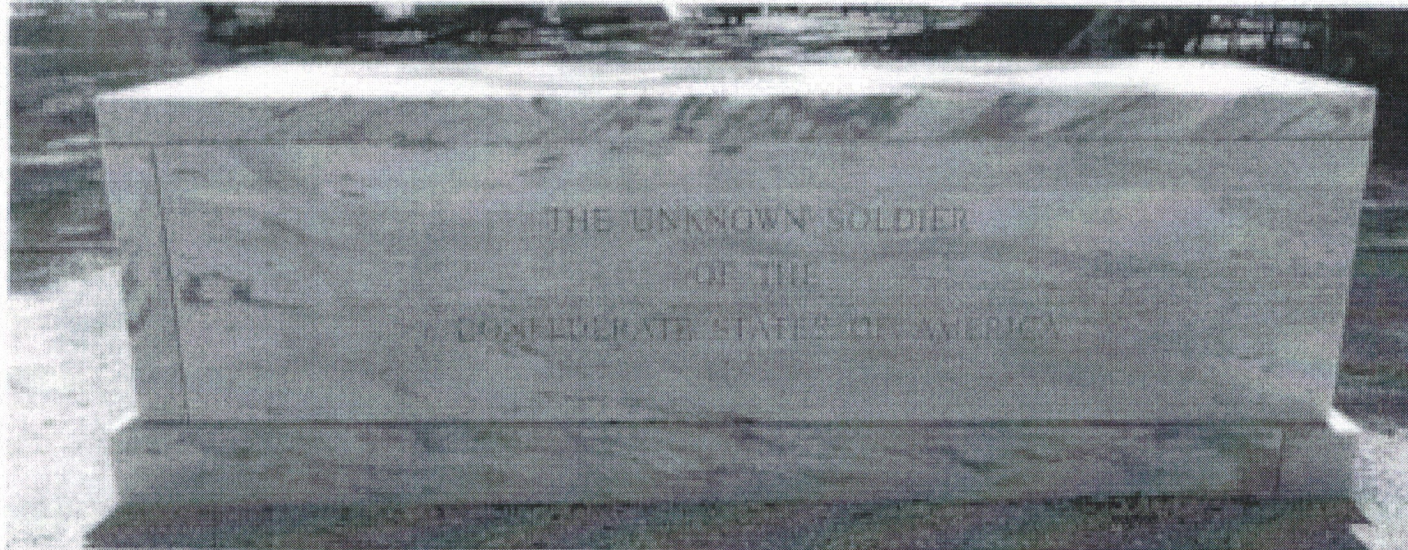
Calvinist beliefs in predestination, that one's specific time, place and cause of death were predetermined by God before time began, combined with ideas of Providence lead some of the preachers to reassure generals that they were in no more danger on the field of battle that they were sitting in their dining room at home. When one's time had come, it had come, and dodging bullets would not succeed in prolonging one's life. While such ideas strike twenty-first century readers and bizarre, the testimony of hundreds of both Northerners and Southerners attest to these lethal beliefs.

Forrest Reinternment Pictures



Bricks for Beauvoir and the Tomb of the Unknown Solider

Honor your confederate Ancestors by purchasing an Ancestral Memorial Brick for \$50.00 each in the Memorial sidewalk of the Confederate Cemetery at Beauvoir. The plans for the sidewalk are nearing completion, so if you want a brick put down for your ancestor you need to get your order in soon, so as not to miss out.



Each brick that you purchase will be engraved with your ancestors rank, name, unit and company. Memorial bricks will be laid, memorializing your ancestor, in a sidewalk from the UDC Arch to the Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Solider at Beauvoir.

Detach and send in the form below to the address listed to order your bricks.

Ancestral Brick Order Form

Instructions: Use the lines as laid out no more than 15 spaces per line..You may use abbreviations when necessary. Please include your name and address, for confirmation letter. (See Sample Below)

Line 1: _____

(First and Last Name)

Line 2: _____

(Rank)

Line 3: _____

(Unit)

ORDER YOUR ANCESTOR'S BRICK TODAY!

Make Checks out for \$50.00 per brick for:

Bricks for Beauvoir

Mail to: Bricks for Beauvoir

2244 Beach Blvd

Biloxi, MS. 39531

OR

Visit our gift shop where you
can pay by cash or credit!

Example:

Pvt. JAMES W.

McCluney

6th MS CAV, CO. F

BEAUVOIR

*The Jefferson Davis Home
& Presidential Library*

35th ANNUAL FALL MUSTER **OCTOBER 16th & 17th 2021**

Period Vendors

Drills/Skirmishes

Reenactment

Living History

Period Music

Camp Exhibits

5th Alabama Regimental Band

<https://www.facebook.com/beauvoirms/> www.visitbeauvoir.org

2244 Beach Blvd. Biloxi, MS. 39531

2015
Marston



Walkways of Remembrance
Bricks and Pavers For the Walkways for the
General Headquarters for the Sons of Confederate Veterans at Elm Springs
and the
Confederate Museum at Elm Springs

Remember and honor your Confederate Ancestor, a family member or any cherished memory with the purchase of a Memorial Brick to be laid for a walkways at the General Headquarters for the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Confederate Museum at Elm Springs.

Brick sizes:

The 4” x 8” brick will allow 3 lines with 21 characters (including spaces) per line and will cost \$50.

The 8” by 8” brick will allow 6 lines with 21 characters (including spaces) per line and will cost \$100.

Layout for 4” x 8” brick with 3 lines max and 21 characters per line max (including spaces) \$50

Layout for 8” x 8” brick with 6 lines max and 21 characters per line max (including spaces) \$100

Make checks payable to SCV and write “Bricks” in the memo line. Please fill out this form and mail to:
SCV, P.O. Box 59, Columbia, TN 38402
Credit card payments are available by calling 1-800-MYSOUTH and contacting Merchandising.

Please include all your contact information so we can contact you.

Name: _____
Address/City/State/Zip: _____
Phone number: _____
Email address: _____



Friends of The Confederate Museum at Elm Springs Annual Membership Application

All memberships are tax-deductible and include the E-Newsletter.

_____ Yes, I want to join the Friends of The Confederate Museum at Elm Springs

_____ Is this a Corporate Membership?

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Membership Levels & Benefits

Longstreet Level: \$25

- Membership for one
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs

Judah P. Benjamin Level: \$50

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs

Patrick Cleburne Level: \$100

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- 10% Gift Shop Discount

N. B. Forrest Level: \$250

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum
- 10% Gift Shop Discount
- Free Elm Springs Hat or T-Shirt

Robert E. Lee Level: \$500

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum
- 15% Gift Shop Discount
- Free Elm Springs Hat and T-Shirt

Jefferson Davis Level: \$1000

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum
- 20% Gift Shop Discount
- Free Elm Springs Hat, T-Shirt and Polo

Please check the following membership level:

_____ Longstreet Level

_____ Judah P. Benjamin Level

_____ Patrick Cleburne Level

_____ N. B. Forrest Level

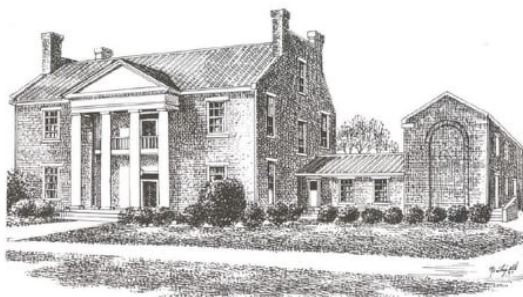
_____ Robert E. Lee Level

_____ Jefferson Davis Level

Please make checks payable to Sons of Confederate Veterans and mail to:

Sons of Confederate Veterans, P. O. Box 59, Columbia, TN 38402

If paying by credit card, please call (931) 380-1844 or email at exedir@scv.org



Friends of Elm Springs

Annual Membership Application

All Proceeds go to the restoration and maintenance of the Home
Elm Springs built in 1837

All Memberships are tax-deductible and include the E-Newsletter

_____ Yes, I want to join the Friends of Elm Springs

_____ Is this a Corporate Membership?

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Membership Levels & Benefits

Elm Tree Level: \$25

- Membership for one
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs

Cool Spring Level: \$50

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs

Todd Family Level: \$100

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- 10% Gift Shop Discount

Susan Looney Level: \$250

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum
- 10% Gift Shop Discount
- Free Elm Springs Hat or T-Shirt

Abram Looney Level: \$500

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum
- 15% Gift Shop Discount
- Free Elm Springs Hat and T-Shirt

Frank Armstrong Level: \$1000

- Family Membership
- Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs
- Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum
- 20% Gift Shop Discount
- Free Elm Springs Hat, T-Shirt and Polo

Please check the following membership level:

_____ Elm Tree Level

_____ Cool Spring Level

_____ Todd Family Level

_____ Susan Looney Level

_____ Abram Looney Level

_____ Frank Armstrong Level

Please make checks payable to Sons of Confederate Veterans and mail to:

Sons of Confederate Veterans, P. O. Box 59, Columbia, TN 38402

If paying by credit card, please call (931) 380-1844 or email at exedir@scv.org

National SCV News:

Join the Confederate Legion**Membership fees & donations support the Southern Victory Campaign**

- Individuals and organizations can join. Membership in the Sons of Confederate Veterans is not required.
- Businesses, associations and S.C.V. camps can join.
- An individual member can organize an independent Confederate Legion group and name it whatever he/she likes.
- Members are expected to follow moral standards, obey the law, and participate in the Southern Victory Campaign.
- Credit cards and checks are accepted. Credit card payments can be recurring.
- Payments are tax deductible because the S.C.V. is a 501 (c) (3) entity.
- Members receive an ID card, certificate, access to support and communications. Most of all, you get the satisfaction of knowing you're part of the offensive!

Dues and donations are used to mount a two-prong offensive that we call the Southern Victory Campaign. It's led by the Heritage operations Committee of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Phase One of the campaign offensive involves direct action by the Heritage Operations Committee of the S.C.V. Prong Two involves direct action by individual and group members of the Confederate Legion.

Objectives include:

- Reestablishing public support for the principles of liberty held by the founders of the United States and the Confederate States of America.

Rebuilding respect for the Confederate States of America that preferred to leave the Union rather than abandon the principles of liberty like the Northern states were doing under Leftist influences of that day and age.

For those interested in more information on how you can help "Make Dixie Great Again" go to <https://www.makedixiegreatagain.com/>

Dues Time. Here are some Reminders

Compatriots,

With dues time upon us again, I want to remind everyone that the physical address for Elm Springs and the National Confederate Museum has changed.

All packages, certified and registered mail needs to be sent to:

Sons of Confederate Veterans

**2357 Park Plus Dr,
Columbia, TN 38401.**

All other mail should be sent to:

Sons of Confederate Veterans

PO Box 59

Columbia, TN 38402-0059

Any mail sent to the old address of 740 Mooresville Pike, Columbia, TN will be **returned** to sender by the USPS.

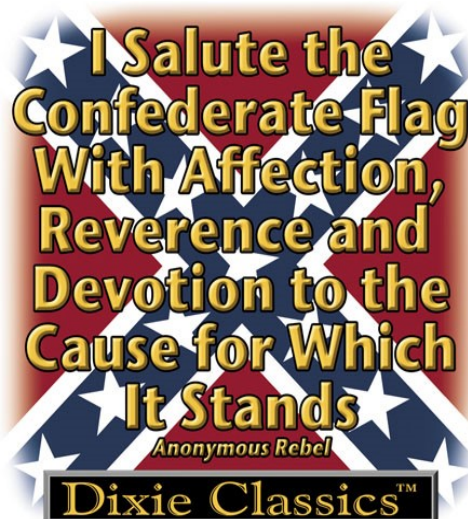
Adjutants, please also note we are not accepting Division dues this year. Please send all Division Dues to your division as instructed by your Camp or Division.

Thank you,

Adam Southern, Executive Director



Every Monday Night on Facebook at 7:00 PM Central time and on Thursday Nights at 7:00 PM for Look Around the Confederation



ZAGONYI'S CHARGE (BATTLE OF SPRINGFIELD)

Following two significant Union defeats in Missouri in less than six weeks (Wilson's Creek on August 10 and Lexington on September 20, 1861), the Lincoln administration prodded Western Department commander Major General John Charles Fremont to take decisive action to eliminate the threat posed by the Missouri State Guard.

Led by Major General Sterling Price, the Missouri State Guard had enjoyed considerable success against Union forces. Price and his Missourians had managed to force Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyon's army to retreat from southwest Missouri after Wilson's Creek, then, following a three-day siege, captured the 3,500-man Union garrison in the Missouri River town of Lexington.

Hoping to prevent yet another disaster for the Union cause in the state, General Fremont finally left St. Louis in late September in pursuit of the State Guard. He commanded an impressive force of 38,000 troops and 68 pieces of artillery. Price's smaller army retreated to extreme southwest Missouri, although a detachment of State Guardsmen held Springfield.

By late October, as Fremont approached Springfield, he learned that no more than 500 State Guardsmen occupied the town, and that most of them were poorly armed. One of the many foreign-born officers accompanying Fremont's army was Major Charles Zagonyi, commander of the general's personal "Body Guard." Zagonyi and his men had been ridiculed in St. Louis for their fine uniforms and their easy duty protecting the general, so Zagonyi, sensing an excellent opportunity to prove the reliability of his troops and demonstrate they were more than "kid glove soldiers," asked Fremont for the chance to capture Springfield.

Fremont agreed, but ordered him to unite his three companies with three other cavalry companies, the two-company "Prairie Scouts" of Major Frank J. White and the "Irish Dragoons" led by Captain Patrick Naughton. Zagonyi and his men set out from camp about 9 p.m. on October 24 with 172 members of the Body Guard, and soon joined Major White and his 154 Prairie Scouts.

Just after sunrise, about eight miles north of Springfield, the Federals happened upon a State Guard foraging party, some of whom escaped to carry the alarm to town. Worse, Zagonyi soon learned that the State Guard force in Springfield did not number fewer than five hundred men, as he originally believed, but perhaps as many as 1,800 or 1,900. Despite this sobering intelligence, Zagonyi refused to retreat. Because the Body Guard had been "so shamefully abused," he believed he had only two options—to go forward, or leave the country in disgrace.

Fortunately the major soon learned from a pro-Union citizen that the enemy was inexperienced and would likely run at the approach of the Body Guard, and also found out additional intelligence about Springfield, its landmarks, and which way the State Guardsmen were likely to flee. Zagonyi then decided to make a several-mile detour in order to cut off their most likely route of retreat. He left the Bolivar Road north of Springfield and moved to the western side of the town.

While Zagonyi maneuvered around Springfield, the Missouri State Guard soldiers in town prepared for battle. The State Guard camp was located on both sides of the Mount Vernon Road, near the county fairgrounds, about a mile and a quarter west of the Springfield public square. Although Zagonyi believed he faced nearly 2,000 of the enemy, it is far likely that only about 1,000 men were present, including approximately 700 cavalymen and 280 infantrymen. Fortunately for Zagonyi's men, most of the Missourians were fresh troops with little experience, mostly armed with shotguns, hunting rifles and revolvers, while some had no weapons at all.

Despite their inexperience, the State Guardsmen enjoyed the advantage of position. Riding toward town down the Mount Vernon Road, the Federals would first encounter a dense forest of oak, covered with underbrush impenetrable to men on horseback due to an abundance of wild grape vine. After passing through the woods, Zagonyi's men would emerge into a clear space from which Springfield could be seen. From that point the ground descended rapidly for about 150 yards

to Jordan Creek, then climbed again to the high ground where the town was situated. The State Guard officers chose the high, cleared ridge at the wood's entrance on the north side of the road to make their main stand, although skirmishers were scattered throughout the woods on both sides of the road. A high "stake and rider" fence enclosed the road.

The main body of State Guardsmen was drawn up in a line of battle, facing southeast, conforming to the outline of the dense woods that protected their rear and both flanks and offered them refuge if forced to retreat. The Missouri cavalry was on the extreme left, their line of battle at right angles to the infantry. Despite the fact that the high ground commanded the Mount Vernon Road, the ground sloped gradually for a short distance, and then, in places, declined abruptly to Jordan Creek. If the Federals could charge down the road and reach the point where the creek and the road intersected, the natural bluff on the west bank of the creek allowed a certain amount of cover to allow them to form a line of battle.

Zagonyi and his column left the Bolivar Road about 2:30 and halted out of sight of the enemy on the Mount Vernon Road about 4:30 p.m. He turned to his men for a dramatic speech before riding into action. The major let his men know the enemy was 1,900 strong, but promised them victory "if they will be what I thought and expected them to be."

Zagonyi, with the honor of Fremont and his soldiers at stake, then gave his men a battle cry that would ironically seal the fate of the Body Guard. "Your watchword shall be, 'Fremont and the Union!'" Drawing his saber, he gave the commands to set his column in motion. Later, Fremont's enemies would use the major's cry as evidence of the Body Guard's primary loyalty to the general, not the Union cause.

The Federals rode at a fast trot down the Mount Vernon Road, formed in a column of companies, one company directly behind the other. They soon encountered some mounted State Guard pickets, and "to the charge" was ordered.

The Federals initially trotted along with little trouble, but after half the Body Guard passed the timber and entered the cleared area the State Guard opened up on the head of the column with "a murderous fire of small arms" from both sides of the road. As the head of the column recoiled from the fierce fire, the situation became critical.

In the meantime, at the rear of the column, each company of Major White's Prairie Scouts had become separated from the other and from Zagonyi. As Foley took down the fence and tried his flanking maneuver, Captain Charles Fairbanks of the Scouts came upon the struggling mass of men and horses in the road. At that moment, an unidentified Body Guard officer, perhaps Foley himself shouted to Fairbanks that the Missourians were running, and he should take his men down a nearby farm lane on his left and cut off their retreat. Fairbanks did as ordered, followed by Captain Miles Kehoe's company. Fairbanks and Kehoe apparently made two or three attacks on detached parties of State Guardsmen in the rear of the main line.

The Irish Dragoons under Captain Naughton, the last company in line, intended to go down the lane as well, but when they galloped upon the scene they encountered a member of the Body Guard who pointed down the road and indicated that Zagonyi had gone in that direction. Naughton resolved to run the gauntlet just as the Body Guard had done, but when he reached the hole in the fence Foley had made, and saw no other Federals, he thought that Zagonyi had gone in that direction instead and decided to follow into the underbrush. The State Guard now had new targets, and poured their fire into the dragoons. Thirteen of them fell, including Naughton, who was shot in the arm and dismounted, and Lieutenant Patrick Connolly, who received two bullets in the lungs and one in the left shoulder. Without their officers and with number of their comrades down, the disorganized Irish Dragoons retreated. One sergeant soon tried to lead his men on another drive down the road, but they were again driven back by the fierce fire. Five of the dragoons did manage to fight their way through to join Zagonyi, but apparently the surviving members of the company joined Fairbanks and Kehoe for the remainder of the fight.





Under the creek bluff, Zagonyi prepared to pay the enemy back for the deadly charge down the road. Looking up the gentle, grassy

slope, dotted with tree stumps, he prepared his men to charge again. As the enemy fire slackened, Zagonyi and his troopers moved in open order up the hill, the groups of men spreading out like a fan as they advanced. Their charge unnerved the State Guardsmen. The State Guard cavalry fled in all directions without waiting to receive the charge; many threw themselves from their horses and hid in the corn or the woods. The infantry briefly stood and fought, but soon their line wavered and broke, and most fled, although some continued to fire their weapons from behind trees, fences and stacks of corn. Captain Foley described the scene: "Wheeling right and left, the fight spread along the entire front, and became a series of hand-to-hand encounters which resulted in scenes it were wise not to describe. It was rebel muskets, shot-guns and rifles against Federal pistols and sabers."

As the State Guardsmen retreated, Zagonyi and his men gave chase. Many Guardsmen headed for the protection of Springfield, but the Federals continued to hunt them through the streets. In less than a half hour, the formal pursuit was over, and Zagonyi collected his men and rode into town. Although Zagonyi had dispersed the State Guard and secured Springfield, he had lost a considerable number of men killed, wounded and unhorsed, night was coming on, and he faced the possibility of a State Guard counterattack. The major could either remain in town and fashion some sort of defense, or retreat back to the main army. Zagonyi chose the latter course. The Union troops rejoined Fremont, and early on the morning of October 27, rode back into town as Fremont and the rest of the Federal finally reached Springfield.

Casualties were heavy in Zagonyi's ranks. His three companies suffered a total of 16 killed and 24 wounded. At least two enlisted men in the Irish Dragoons were wounded. Although casualty figures are unknown for the other two companies of White's command, one participant estimated they lost 33 men. Missouri State Guard casualties are much harder to determine, but it is unlikely that they lost

Confederate Missouri Troops led by General Marmaduke

substantially more than the attacking Federals.

Unfortunately for Fremont, the general had made an enemy of President Lincoln. Frustrated by Fremont's lack of energy in prosecuting the war in Missouri, and still smarting over Fremont's earlier emancipation proclamation (in which he had freed the slaves of enemies of the Union in the state), Lincoln decided to relieve the general of his command. On the morning of November 2, Fremont received the order from Washington to turn over command of his army to Major General David Hunter. The following evening, November 3, as Fremont held a council of war to plan the upcoming fight, General Hunter dramatically arrived to take command. A short time later Fremont's army was dispersed, and Sterling Price's State Guard remained in southwest Missouri through the winter of 1861-62.

General Fremont and his Body Guard returned to St. Louis. There, because of their perceived loyalty to the general, Zagonyi and his men were mustered out of service. With this depressing end to the campaign, the victory-starved Federals lauded the actions of Zagonyi and the Body Guard, and images of the charge appeared in newspapers and popular news magazines such as Harper's Weekly. Members of the Missouri State Guard understandably downplayed the event.

In reality, both the Federals and Missouri State Guardsmen were correct in their assessments of the charge. Zagonyi and his men had bravely attacked a superior enemy force and put them to flight. On the other hand, they had faced largely untrained, poorly armed recruits who nonetheless still managed to mount a stiff defense and caused the attackers significant losses.

Despite the efforts of Zagonyi and his men, Springfield remained in Southern hands until February 1862, when a new Union army under General Samuel Curtis captured the city for the final time.

The First Ironclad Emerges: Battle of the Head of Passes By John V. Quarstein

When the Civil War erupted, Confederate Secretary of the Navy Stephen Russell Mallory knew that the South could only counter and defeat the larger US Navy if ironclads were employed. Mallory immediately ordered the construction of ironclads. The first project was the conversion of USS *Merrimack* into CSS *Virginia* at the Gosport Navy Yard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Mallory then ordered two ironclads laid down in New Orleans, and another two built in Memphis, Tennessee. These vessels could not be built fast enough to stem the Union's advance against Confederate ports.

Ironclad Imagined

The urgent need for ironclads was recognized by New Orleans Commission

Agent Captain John Stephenson who also served as secretary of the New Orleans Pilots' Benevolent Association. Stephenson went to meet with President Jefferson Davis in Montgomery, Alabama, to ask for the use of a heavy tug, altering it to make it "comparatively safe against the heaviest guns afloat, and by preparing ... bow in a peculiar manner ... rendered them capable of sinking by collision the heaviest vessels ever built." With

Davis's approval, Stephenson returned to New Orleans to build an ironclad privateer, quickly raising more than \$100,000 in subscriptions.

Building a Hellish Machine

Fortunately for Stephenson, the privateer *Ivy* (later pressed into Confederate service) captured the tug *Enoch Train* off the coast of Louisiana. The powerful tug and its heavily reinforced bow seen service as icebreaker; and it was taken to a shipyard in Algiers, Louisiana, just across the river from New Orleans.

The vessel's superstructure and masts were cut down and a convex shield was built over the main deck. The shield was built of 16 inches of oak and pine backing topped with 1.25-inch iron plate. The convex design was intended to cause enemy shot to glance off the side of the ironclad. The vessel's bow was extended and strengthened to mount its cast-iron ram just below the waterline. The ironclad also featured a 64-pounder gun (later replaced by a 32-pounder), difficult and dangerous to reload; however, it could be aimed by pointing the ship at the intended target. The gun did have a cast-iron port shutter. Another defensive feature was a set of pumps installed to blow steam and scalding water across the ironclad's shield to repel any boarders.

Once the conversion was completed, the ship was named *Manassas*, in honor of the Confederate victory on July 21, 1861. It was now 15 feet longer and its beam was widened by five feet. The draft had increased by four and a half feet. *Manassas's* shield reached just six feet above the waterline. The engines needed overhaul; however, they were still able to push the ironclad forward 4 to 6 knots. Although it had been reported that *Manassas* had two stacks placed at a rakish angle, most observers noted that the ironclad only had one smokestack.

Something Much Like a Whale

The ironclad *Manassas* was launched on September 12, 1861. Many observers called the ironclad a turtle or a long floating cigar; and it was the only ironclad on the Mississippi River. The commandant of the New Orleans Naval Station was Flag Officer George N. Hollins who had served under Stephen Decatur during the War of 1812 and the Second Barbary War. When the Civil War erupted, Hollins was the commander of USS *Susquehanna*. He gained great fame for his daring capture of the steamer *St. Nicholas* on June 29, 1861.

Later assigned to New Orleans, Hollins endeavored to create a fleet. He pressed every available vessel into service with his "mosquito fleet," including

CSS *Calhoun* (flagship), CSS *Jackson*, CSS *Pickens*. CSS *Tuscarora*, CSS *Ivy*, and CSS *McRae*.

Armed with eight guns, *McRae* was his most powerful ship. Formerly the Mexican warship *Marquis de la Habana*, it was captured as a pirate ship by USS *Saratoga* during the March 1860 Battle of Anton Lizardo. Hollins knew that he needed more powerful vessels if he was to stop the advance of the Union fleet toward New Orleans. Therefore, he cast his eyes lustfully upon the ironclad privateer *Manassas*.

Union Fleet Arrives

The first Union ship to arrive off the Mississippi Delta was the steam screw sloop USS *Brooklyn* on May 27, 1861. The sidewheeler USS *Powhatan* and the screw frigates *Niagara* and *Minnesota* soon arrived. These ships blocked the three outlets — Southwest Pass, South Pass, and Pass D'Loutre — for the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico.

The squadron was commanded by Captain William W. McKean. Once McKean received some reinforcements, he sent four warships to the Head of Passes where the outlets joined with the Mississippi River.

This flotilla consisted of four ships commanded by Captain John Pope of USS *Richmond*. He began assembling his command at the confluence of the passes in late September. The screw sloop *Richmond* was the most powerful of these ships. Mounting 14 IX-inch Dahlgren shell guns, this warship could blow

Hollins's mosquito fleet out of the water. *Richmond* was joined by the sailing sloops *Vincennes* (18 guns) and *Preble* (16 guns) as well as the sidewheeler gunboat USS *Water Witch* (10 guns).

When Flag Officer Hollins learned that Union ships had occupied the Head of Passes, he sent CSS *Ivy* to investigate on October 9, 1861. *Ivy* mounted two guns — an 8-inch shell gun and a 32-pounder banded rifle that outranged all of Pope's guns. *Ivy* opened fire on the Union flotilla. The shells screaming overhead unnerved Pope, a veteran 45-year officer. He wished to abandon his position as he thought it was untenable. Yet Pope was ordered to stay in place. Despite his fears of an assault by a stronger force, Pope failed to set out picket boats, stations with flares, or any other precaution to warn him of the enemy's approach.

Manassas is Seized

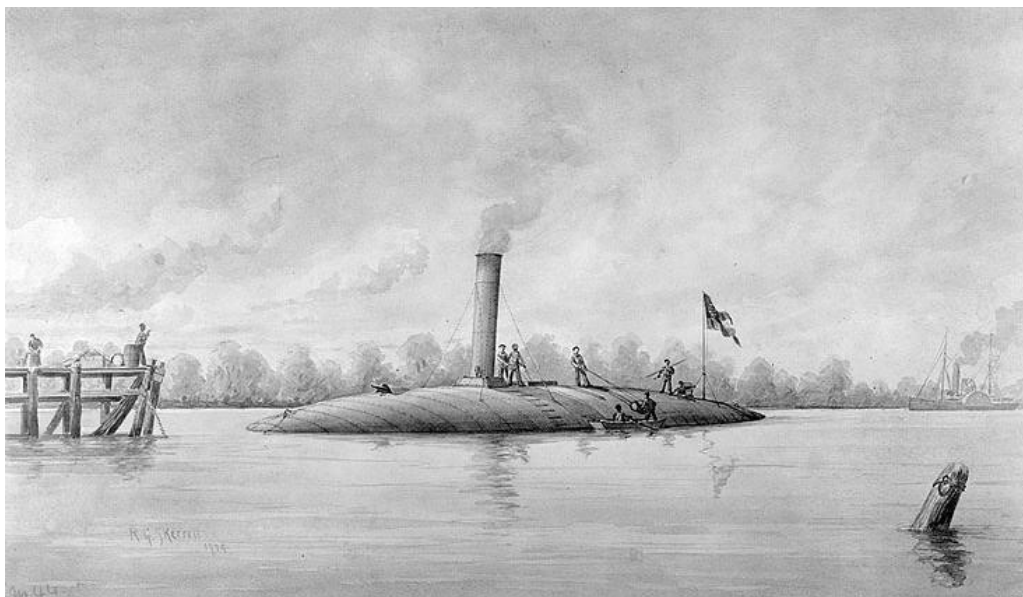
Hollins recognized the need to supplement his squadron with the ironclad *Manassas*. On October 10, he ordered Lieutenant Alexander Warley to take command of the vessel so that it could be added to the Confederate fleet. Despite protestations of the privateer's owner and crew, Warley took the ship himself, armed with his cutlass and revolver. Warley was not impressed by what he had captured. The lieutenant called *Manassas* a "bug bear — no power, no speed, no strength of resistance and no armament." Nevertheless, Warley quickly assembled a crew as Hollins planned to attack the Union fleet the next morning

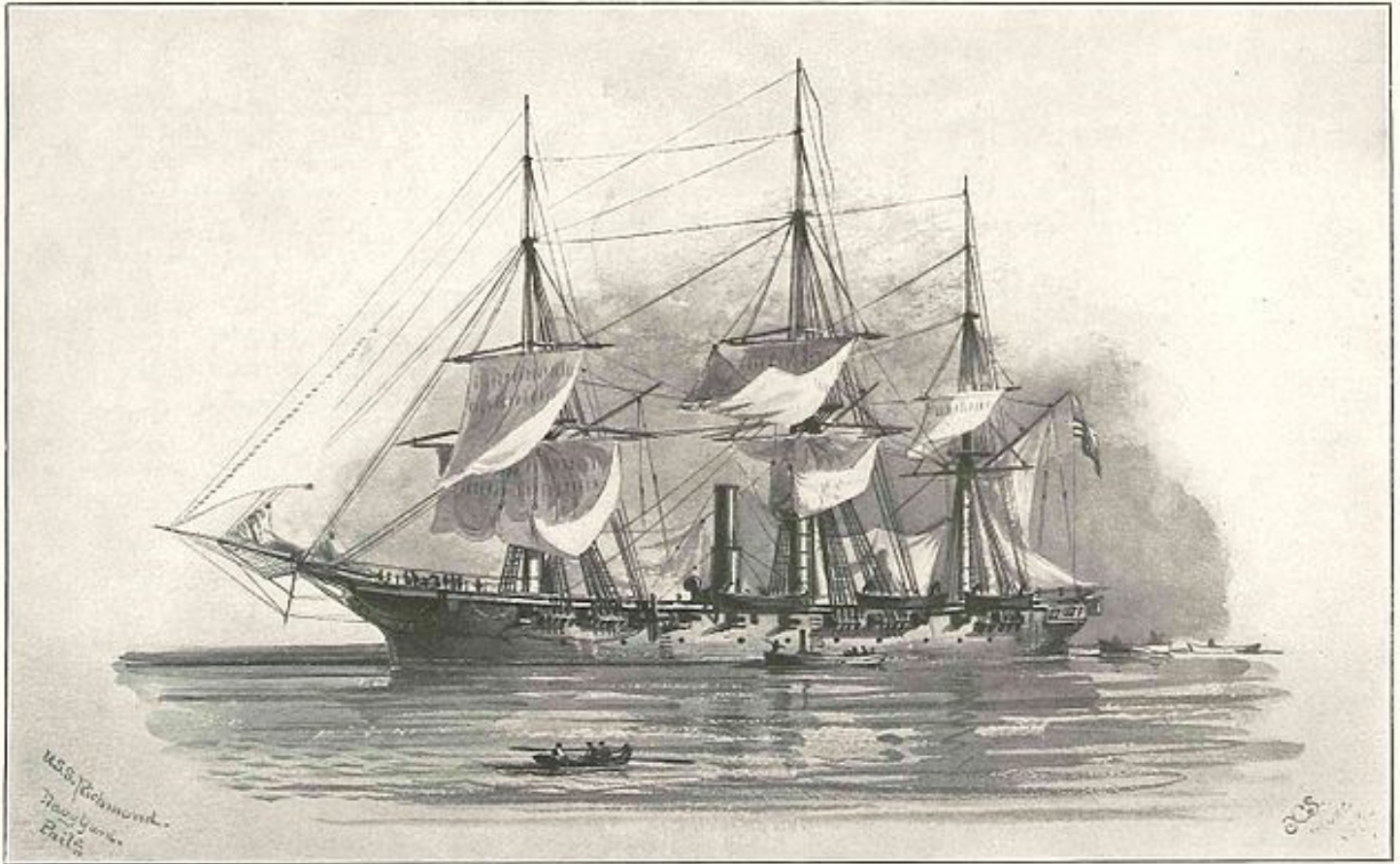
Confederate Attack

In the early morning of October 11, 1861, Hollins's fleet headed down river. The conditions were perfect — "very dark, the moon had set, and the mist hanging low over the river" — for Hollins's preemptive attack. The vessels were almost invisible in the eerie gloom. In the lead was *Manassas*, followed by three chained together fire rafts and the rest of the squadron. Once it had attacked an enemy vessel, *Manassas* was to launch three flares to announce that the fire rafts should be released.

About 4:40 a.m., *Richmond* was in the process of loading coal from the schooner *Joseph H. Toone* when a lookout from *Preble* shouted, "Ahoy! There is a boat coming down on your port bow." The noise of the coaling probably masked the sound of this warning when suddenly, *Manassas* appeared out of the mist.

When *Manassas* sighted *Richmond*, the firemen poured on coal and other combustibles to give the ram a burst of speed, enabling the ironclad to ram the Union sloop.





UNITED STATES STEAMER RICHMOND.

Although *Richmond* was damaged and sprang a major leak, the coaling schooner *Toone* absorbed much of the impact. The ram was momentarily trapped between *Toone* and *Richmond*. The lines parted, causing the coaling vessel to drift away, enabling *Manassas* to escape. The ironclad was severely damaged when it hit *Richmond*. The impact caused the ram to break off, causing a leak. The hull buckled, resulting in yet another leak, and one of the engines was knocked off its mounting. To make matters worse, the ram's smokestack was knocked down causing choking fumes to engulf the Confederate ship's interior.

In all this confusion, *Richmond* and *Preble* fired at the ram; but, because of the ironclad's low profile they overshot *Manassas*. As *Manassas* struggled to make its way upstream, the crew began to set off the flares, indicating that the fire rafts should be released. The scene almost became comical as one of the rockets was accidentally released inside *Manassas*, ricocheting about the interior. Upon seeing the other rockets burst in the air, the fire rafts were released and floated down the river toward the Union flotilla.

Pope's Run

Captain Pope panicked when he saw the fire rafts floating towards him. He ordered his ships to slip their cables and retreat down the Southwest Pass. *Water Witch* was the last to leave the Head of Passes. When this sidewheeler reached the bar at the mouth of the river, it witnessed *Richmond* and *Vincennes* running aground. Only *Preble* had reached the safety of the Gulf of Mexico.

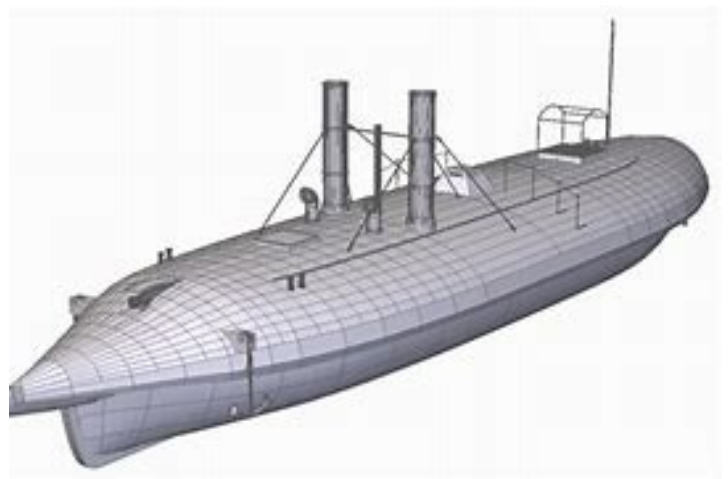
At daylight, Hollins's squadron approached the Union vessels and began shelling the grounded, hapless warships. The commander of *Vincennes* misread a signal from Captain Pope and ordered the ship to be abandoned. As the sailing sloop's crew reached *Richmond*, they learned that the order was to read "Get Underway." So they returned to their ship and cut the fuse leading to the magazine. Finally, these Union ships were freed by the changing tide and crossed the bar into the Gulf.

A Hero's Acclaim

Flag Officer Hollins missed an opportunity to capture *Vincennes*. He broke off action as his ships were low on ammunition and fuel. He returned to Fort Jackson towing *Manassas* and the captured coaling schooner. Lauded throughout the South, even though it suffered more damage than its victim, *Manassas* was the first ironclad attack of the Civil War. The result? Ram Fever was born!

A Most Ridiculous Affair

Captain Pope reported, "Everyone is in dread of that infernal ram." Squadron commander Flag Officer McKean reported, "the more I hear and learn of the facts the more disgraceful it does appear." The ridiculous Union actions during the engagement resulted in Capt. John Pope's resignation for "health reasons." Shortly thereafter, Flag Officer David Glasgow Farragut organized the West Gulf Blockading Squadron and was detailed to capture New Orleans.



Model that depicts the CSS Manassas

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