

# Woodbury AAR

On the weekend of 24-25 August 2013

The 1<sup>st</sup> Company, Richmond Howitzers participated in their Fifth event of the season.

## **Weather:**

One could not have asked for nicer weather. Day time temps were in the mid/ high 80's with bright sun and a slight breeze. Night time temps were in the mid 50's, a little bit on the cool-side, but if one dressed warmly, perfect for sleeping. The combination of location and the clear skies at night made the viewing of the millions of stars – breathtaking.

## **Friday 23 August 2013**

By late afternoon, Wayne, Mike, Randy, Joyce and Vinnie where on site. Dan, who lives close by also arrived with the Company tent and assisted with the setup of camp along the tree line next to our sister company Dement's Battery. When all was done we had four A-frames and the Company fly up and our cannon position out front. As the last bit of daylight disappeared, Dan returned to his quarters and by candle light the rest of us enjoyed some "catching up" conversation under the fly.

## **Saturday 24 August 2013**

Morning found everyone in good spirits. Breakfast meal was had in various locations in town by the members. Bob arrived and setup a fifth A-frame and slept over on Saturday night. Travis also arrived and reported for duty.

The field where we camped was separated from the battlefield, Union camp, Activity tent, vendors and Suttlers by a tree line with a good size stream running through it. A very nice bridge was built, in order to cross the stream. The bridge was approximately 40 yards long and 8 feet wide and connected the two areas.

At 0930 we held the "Drill of the Piece" with Randy #1, Dan #2, Travis #3, Bob #4, Mike was the Gunner, Vinnie, for the non-firing drill, was #5 and Wayne was at the ammo box. We were assigned three cadets to move the gun to the battlefield and one (Greg) stayed with us and was our #5 and ran powder.

At 1100 we had what they were calling a skirmish, but very quickly turned in to a full blow engagement of all Union and Confederate forces. Our position on the field allowed us to cover the left wing while Dement's covered the right wing. We were already on the field when the initial action started in our front by our dismounted Cav.

Very quickly the Confederate forces were out numbered and were pushed back to the bridge. We fired only 3 rounds before we too were forced to withdraw. At this point, Confederate troops were arriving in large numbers and we were unable to leave the field as we would have blocked the bridge for use by our on coming troops. The fighting at the entrance to the bridges, were we had position ourselves just to the left, was intense with bodies of both armies lying all around us.

The man of the Richmond Howitzers fought like demons, but due to overwhelming odds were either killed or wounded. However, with a rush of fresh Southern forces over the bridge our cannon was not captured. Those who survived this fight witness the horrors of war this day up close and personal as literally the waves of troop passed over them several times. Our lines were finally stabilized and the Union troops withdrew under heavy fire from our infantry.

Back in camp we had a short Company meeting whereby Travis was voted in as a full member. Half the Company's members brought some vittles for lunch, while the others went to the vendors for sustains.

We formed up for battle at 1400 and fell in with the infantry. Dement's was position as before on the right wing. The battle began and we found ourselves still on our side of the bridge. It was not until all the infantry units moved forward did we bring up the rear. This was the plan setup by HQs.

As we cleared the tree line the battle was in full swing. Our planned position, on the left wing, was under heavy fire by Union infantry so we moved to the right and joined Dement's and fought together as one battery. Our men were in the same positions on the gun as for the skirmish with Captain Wayne sometime breaking free to direct both batteries as the COA.

We safely and effectively fired 8 rounds even after being the last unit on the field. – Nice job!

Back in camp and after a short rest both Dan and Travis left to return to their quarters.

Captain Wayne joined the other Battalion Captains to discuss "current events" regarding issues that occurred at Gettysburg 150<sup>th</sup> and at Look Park. There will be a meeting at the next event to discuss the points brought up at this meeting with the Headquarters staff.

Upon Wayne's return, the Company enjoyed meals that each person bought for themselves for dinner. After dinner, we cheered on Joyce as she was our Company representative in the Ladies' Pan Tossing contest. While she did not win, she display great form and determination and made us proud. I am sure with more practice and Randy as a target she can improve on the distance of her tosses. Thanks Joyce for stepping up and we had a good time watching this event.

For the rest of the night we sat by the fire under a heavenly sky filled with countless number of stars. Vinnie became our marshmallow cooker extraordinaire.

We were joined at the campfire by Major Lee Jones, who was in command of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion this weekend, who sat down and stayed a good while. It was a welcomed visit. As it happens, time flies by when you have good company and good conversation, for when we checked the time it was midnight. We soon were saying our good nights and going to our tents.

## **Sunday 25 August 2013**

Another cool morning and I saw all sleepy but happy faces as one-by-one reveille was observed. Bob, Mike and Wayne had breakfast at the Lion's Club trailer and the Freeloves ran out to DDs, bringing back a very welcomed "box of Joe."

By 0900 Dan returned and Darwin and Lisa reported for duty. We spent the next few hours catching everyone up on what was happening within our own Company and also the Battalion. We had a good number of visitors and everyone took a turn speaking to them about our unit and our gun.

We held a second Company meeting and CPL Mike was promoted to SGT and Pvt Lisa was promoted to CPL. In addition, the Freeloves were voted in as full members of the Richmond Howitzers.

Congratulations to Mike & Lisa on their well deserved promotions and to the Freeloves, you are a welcome addition to our "family."

Darwin and Lisa brought a cake to celebrate Wayne's birthday and we shared the happy moment with our friend, Dement's Battery.

At 1330 we formed up and proceed to the battlefield and position ourselves to support the infantry on the left wing. While our infantry forces were engaged with two Union companies on their right and front, we with the assistance of the dismounted Cav held off the advances of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Union infantry company on our infantry's left and directly in our front.

The gun crew was Randy #1, Dan #2, Lisa #3, Bob #4, Mike was the Gunner, Greg, our cadet, was #5 and Darwin was on the ammo box. Wayne was free to be COA and direct the cannon action.

Our crew performed without a flaw and we gave our new CPL (Lisa) a chance to be the Gunner for a couple of firing sequences.

We fired 10 rounds and with the help of our infantry drove the Union forces from the field.

We were back in camp at 1430 and the event closed at 1500. We were allowed to bring in our wagons at that time and by 1600 we were saying our goodbyes and heading home.

In total for the weekend we fired 21 rounds.

– **NICE job** to all who attended and thanks for coming out.

## **NEXT EVENT:**

**Chase Farm, Lincoln, RI: 14-15 September 2013**

– Look for more information about this event in future emails.

### **\* \* \* Comments \* \* \***

#### **(1) – Worchester, MA event –**

The Worchester, MA [Green Hill Park] event WILL BE a Company-wide Day-trip (Saturday 12 October). We will spend the day under the fly and maybe have a tent or two to change and stow our stuff. After the event we can say our "thanks and goodbyes for the season" and for those who would like, we can go out for a simple bite to eat before we head home.

#### **(2) – BOUNTY –**

We did receive \$100 from the Woodbury event coordinator.

#### **(3) PICTURES of Woodbury by Wayne, Joyce and Randy are on our RHs' Website**

<http://1stcorichmondhowitzers.com/photo-gallery/?album=1&gallery=17>

#### **(4) Congratulations:**

On Promotions to Mike & Lisa and full membership to Travis, Randy & Joyce

(Vinnie is just an added value that comes with the Freeloves)

#### **(5) Madison, CT event scheduled for 28-29 Sept:**

Due to most of our membership having other commitments and we having insufficient people to man a gun crew; the Richmond Howitzers will NOT be attending this event.

#### **(6) Weekend Summary:**

Weather --- Excellent

Location & Battle --- Super

Company's Performance & Friendship Shared --- Outstanding [priceless]

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Yours in services and respectfully submitted

  
Captain Wayne

ps: There was a little confusion regarding enlisted rank structure over the weekend so I have attached to this AAR a little summary of how this structure works in order to clear up the confusion and as a refresher or learning opportunity.







# Civil War Enlisted Rank Structure

**Military ranks** are a system of hierarchical relationships in armed forces.

**Uniforms** denote the bearer's rank by particular insignia affixed to the uniforms.

**Enlisted personnel** are personnel below commissioned rank and make up the vast majority of military personnel.

**Non-commissioned officers (NCOs)** are enlisted personnel, under the command of an officer, granted delegated authority to supervise other military members or assigned significant administrative responsibilities. They are responsible for the care and direct control of junior military members

<u>Sergeant Major</u>	<u>Quartermaster Sergeant</u>	<u>Ordnance Sergeant</u>	<u>First Sergeant</u>
			
<u>Sergeant</u>	<u>Corporal</u>	<u>Private</u>	
		no insignia	

**Sergeant Major**

During the Civil War was the highest enlisted rank

**Quartermaster Sergeant**

Ranks below Sergeant Major & above Ordnance Sergeant; responsible for supplies or stores.

**Ordnance Sergeant**

Ranks below Quartermaster Sergeant & above First Sergeant, responsible for the weapons and ordnance.

**Note: The above three ranks were normally associated at the Battalion level**

**First Sergeant**

Generally the senior non-commissioned officers of a company (battery, troop) sized units

**Sergeant**

Ranks below First sergeant & above Corporal. Usually commands a section of 20 men with 2 corporals under him.

**Corporal**

A non-commissioned officer and may direct the activities of other soldiers.

**Private**

A soldier of the lowest military rank with no command authority.