

AAR for “On to Richmond,” Woodbury, CT

This past weekend (13-14 August) saw: Darwin, Lisa, Mike, Michelle, Andy, Ellie, Dan, Bob, Elodie, Aaron, Joe and Wayne participated in the reenactment event at Woodbury, CT.

Weather Saturday was great, but Sunday was rainy and wet.

FRIDAY: Darwin, Lisa, and Dan arrived about 4pm, followed shortly by Aaron and Wayne at 5pm. The Brady's arrived about 5:30pm. Six tents were set up; one for Darwin & Lisa, one for the Mike, Michelle, & Ellie, one for Andy, one for Dan, one for Aaron and one for Wayne. Our camp was setup with Morton's Battery to our immediate right. In addition, two other batteries were present; DeMents Battery and Morgan's Artillery (unit from New York). Captain Ray of Morgan's was the Acting Chief of Artillery in Major Karl's absence.

Once the trailer was emptied, the cannon remove and the fly up it was off to dinner. We went to a local restaurant, Dottie's Dinner and the nine of us had an enjoyable meal. Upon our return to camp, some stories and tells were shared, but it wasn't long before most people turned in for the night.

SATURDAY: The morning started with NCO's call attend by CPL Mike, followed by a nice breakfast of pancakes, sausages and bacon cooked by our QMSgt. At 0900, Captain Wayne attended Officers call, Bob, Elodie and Joe arrived on site and around 0945 we held a gun drill.

Dan was #1, Joe #2, Lisa #3, Bob #4, Aaron #5, Mike was the Gunner and Darwin was the Chief of the Caisson. Captain Wayne was the Section leader that included the Richmond Howitzers and Morton's Battery.

At 1100 we had a skirmish of “fight for Federal supplies” We were number 3 gun on the right with Morgan's to our left and Morton's on our right. We fired 5 rounds.

By 1130 we were back in camp. Due to the schedule we choose to postpone our RHs Activity and instead relaxed, setup for individual lunches or visited friends, sutlers or activity tents.

The main battle took place at 1430 and was based on the Battle of Balls Bluff. Our position in line remained the same, but the location was rotated 90 degrees to run parallel with the length of the field putting the spectators close behind us. We fired 7 rounds as our Infantry was very close at times. The unit performed very well and two thirds into the battle, Pvts Bob and Lisa were sent off to the right to fight off Union infantry with their pistols. QMSgt Darwin filled in as #3 and Gunner Mike also assumed the #4 position and ran the gun from there. The cannon crew fired flawlessly two more rounds.

During the day, some of our ladies attend a talk by Juanita Leisch Jensen, who has written several books on women's clothing, and our very own Miss Michelle with several other ladies were asked by the speaker to come up front so she can talk about the clothes and hats they were wearing. With fear in her eyes, Miss Michelle walked to the front. One by one the speaker discussed what was right and wrong with each ladies outfit. Then it came to Miss Michelle's turn, her heart was pounding, her brow showed small pearls of sweat, and there was a tension showing on her face.

Finally the speaker talked and all you hear was high praise about Miss Michelle's outfit and hat. When the speaker asked where Miss Michelle bought the hat, and she told her she made it herself, the speaker praised even more. The tension in Miss Michelle's face quickly vanished and she had a smile as big as the moon. And rightfully so. Nicely done.

At 1630 Captain Wayne and all the other captains of the regiment attended a reception hosted by the Commanding Officer of the 12 GA. A very classy act with many special touches such as; finger food on china, apple cider in wine-glasses, guards posted, servers with white gloves and seats provided.

At 1740 we sat down to a marvelous dinner coordinated by QMSgt and Miss Michelle. We had corn on the cob, macaroni salad, summer squash, corn bread and Miss Michelle's world famous BBQ beef. No one went away hungry and all had smiles on their faces. – THANKS!

Around 1830 our now camp-wide kickball game was well in progress with about sixteen players and many more spectators. It was a close game and I am sure if we kept score someone won, but we all had a good time.

With night over taking the light we went back to camp to recover from the aches and pains that were sure to come to those "young of heart," but old of age. We got the word of possible rain storm and we took precautions. Some folks brought in their cars to park unnecessary items and a few even spent the night in their cars. The rain finally came and in the very early morning hours, while most were asleep, it was heavy at times, but the worst predicted never occurred,

Prior to bed, we had a birthday cake and cupcakes for Pvt Aaron, who was turning 18 and for Captain Wayne, who is just a little older.

It was a good day with lots of fun and many tired Richmond Howitzers. Bob & Elodie departed for a nearby "residents in town" and Joe went to his nearby quarters.

SUNDAY: The morning started wet. However, by 0800 the word was to remove the cars from the field and "since we are here, already wet, let the event continue.

While the rain came down, it is not the worst we have been out in and at times it almost stopped.

We stayed pretty dry under the fly and just took it easy to see what would develop. Bob & Elodie returned to the field only to pick up some of their belongings and they then went home. Joe called and informed us it was pouring where he was and presumed it was the same where we were and therefore, he remained in quarters.

As it turned out, the commanders and event coordinators decided to do one battle and to start it at noon. The scenario would be the Battle of Williamsburg (Fort Magruder) we were on the right side of the Fort together in a section with Morton's. QMSgt took #2 and Gunner Mike ran the gun and did the #4 position. All other positions remained the same. The battle was fought in light rain, but due to the low clouds and very light breeze blowing in our faces, the BOOMS were louder and the smoke blew back across our gun and at times we were lost to the crowd due to it. I heard afterward from those who saw it say how cool it appeared. We fired 9 rounds.

After the battle and while still on the field we cleaned the gun.

Shortly after our return to camp we got our wagons and started to break camp and load our gear in to them.

The rain came down medium hard and the process went very smoothly. Due to the rain and for staging purposes the fly was the last canvas taken down.

We said our good byes and left the field around 1430.

NOTES and THANKS

(1) Nice job to the TEAM work display by the 1st Co., Richmond Howitzers during this weekend.

(2) Rounds fired -- 21

(3) Thank you to Darwin for organizing camp, and arranging for the dinners.

(4) Thanks everyone for bring your share of dinner and the goodies. A very specially thanks for Michelle for the BBQ beef -- yummy

I am sure I am forgetting someone or something special, but not intentionally. I am (still) so PROUD to be part of the Richmond Howitzers for the effort and freely giving and contributing of all members.

Some of you may say this was not a good event and mainly because of the rain. I would have to disagree. In spite of the weather it was a Great event. OK Saturday was SUPER and Sunday less so, but it is the people that we share our time with that makes an event and not where we are, not how big the event is, not how many rounds we shot or the weather. Since we have not been together for several weeks, being together at this event was the HIGH point of the weekend for me and I hope also for you.

Next up is:

Chase Farm, Lincoln, RI on {setup on Friday if you can make it} Runs 17-18 September.

(1) If Michelle is willing we love to see her try being a Cannoneer again and do the box as we will be putting Aaron on the cannon now that he is 18.

(2) I would like to also try some folks at different position to include being Gunner for some of the battle (Lisa – I am thinking of you – what do you think?)

(3) Things should be a little slower at Chase Farm, so we will go back to after gun drill and before lunch to do our RHs Activity time. Mike and Bob we will have you do your reading during this event.

Respectfully submitted

Captain Wayne

Commanding Officer

1st Co., Richmond Howitzers