



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

DECEMBER, 1967

Vol. 11 No. 3

89th Meeting

DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1967

SPEAKER: MR. FRITZ LATTIN

SUBJECT: "RECONSTRUCTION"

PLACE: HERMIT CLUB, DODGE COURT

PRELIMINARIES: 6 PM DINNER 7 PM

BOOK SALE: 5:30 to 7 PM

MR. FRITZ LATTIN

Mr. Lattin was born and educated in Toledo, graduating from Libbey High School shortly after World War II started. Immediately after he graduated he enlisted in the Marine Corps.

During the three years that he was in the Marine Corps he rose to the rank of sergeant in the intelligence section. He served in the Asiatic-Pacific theater of operations and took part in the battle for the Philippines. His outfit also went to Northern China to repatriate the Japanese in the Peking area.

After World War II Mr. Lattin obtained the following degrees: Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Education, and Master of Education from the University of Toledo.

Mr. Lattin has been teaching since 1951 and is now teaching in Perrysburg, which is a suburb of Toledo. He is a member of Phi Delta Kappa, which is a scholastic professional fraternity of men in education.

He is a charter member of the Civil War Round Table of Toledo and served as its president in 1961 and again president this year.

* * * * *

"THE MARCH TO THE SEA"

The membership was treated to a rare evening. For less time than we liked, we lived with Sherman and his men as they cut loose and systematically went through Georgia. The episode at Snake Creek Gap served to illustrate Col. Julian's talk. "Joseph E. Johnston could not have held Snake Creek Gap with a corps, let alone a division," contended The Colonel. He went on to make the point that Johnston was an example of generals blighted by political interference. In many cases historians have judged by what politicians said, rather than what happened, Julian said. The Colonel remains high on our list of speakers.

CIVIL WAR BOOK SALE

1. A Stillness at Appomatox	1954	Bruce Catton	\$2
2. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary (Vol. I)	1935	J.B. Jones	\$1
3. Assassination of Lincoln	1892	P.M. Harris	\$3
4. Belle Boyd	1944	Louis A. Sigaud	\$1
5. Dan Sickles	1945	Edgcomb Pinchon	\$2
6. First Blood	1957	W.A. Swanberg	\$2
7. Gideon Wells	1943	R.S. West Jr.	\$2
8. Home Letters of General Sherman	1909	M.A. Howe	\$2
9. James Longstreet	1936	Eckenrode	\$3
10. Jeb Stuart	1929	J.W. Thomason	\$4
11. War Years with Jeb Stuart	1945	W.W. Blackford	\$4
12. Lincoln & His Generals	1952	T.H. Williams	\$2
13. Lincoln	1929	Emil Ludwig	\$1
14. Lee's Lieutenants (3 vols)	1944	D.S. Freeman	\$15
15. Life of General Grant	1868	J.T. Headley	\$5
16. Lights and Shadows of Army Life	1865	Rev. W. Lyle	\$3
17. Marse Robert	1929	J.C. Young	\$2
18. Meet General Grant	1928	W.E. Woodward	\$1
19. Memoirs of General Grant (2 vol)	1885 (Green)	Autographed?	\$4
20. Memoirs of General Grant (2 vol)	1885 (Brown)	Autographed?	\$6
21. Rec. & Ltrs of Gen R.E. Lee	1904		\$3
22. Regimental Losses in The Civil War	1889	Wm. F. Fox	\$15
23. Stonewall Jackson	1936	Col. G. Henderson	\$7
24. Sheridan	1931	J. Hergesheimer	\$3
25. Swords & Roses	1928	J. Hergesheimer	\$1
26. Sickles The Incredible	1956	W. Swanberg	\$2
27. Sherman	1932	Lloyd Lewis	\$3
28. The Coming Fury	1961	B. Catton	\$2
29. This Hallowed Ground	1956	B. Catton	\$2
30. The Fiery Epoch	1931	C. Thompson	\$2
31. The Lincoln Reader	1947	P. Angle	\$1
32. Rebel War Clerk's Diary	1958	J.B. Jones	\$2
33. As They Saw Forrest	1956	R.S. Henry	\$2
34. Chancellorsville	1958	E. Stackpole	\$2
35. Civil War on Western Waters	1956	F. Pratt	\$2
36. Ghost Ship of the Confederacy	1957	E. Boykin	\$2
37. Inside the Confederate Government	1957	R. Kean	\$2
38. Johnny Shiloh	1959	J. Rhodes	\$1
39. Last Train from Atlanta	1958	A. Hoehling	\$2
40. Jeb Stuart- The Last Cavalier	1957	B. Davis	\$2
41. Quantrill & His Raiders	1956	W. Connelley	\$1
42. Secret Missions of the Civil War	1959	P. Stern	\$1
43. South of Appomatox	1957	Buger	\$2
44. South after Gettysberg	1937	C. Hancock	\$2
45. Spies of the Blue & Gray	1959	H. Kane	\$1
46. Storming of the Gateway	1960	F. Downey	\$2
47. The 20th Maine	1957	J. Pullen	\$2
48. They Called Him Stonewall	1954	B. Davis	\$2
49. Thunder at Harpers Ferry	1958	A. Keller	\$2
50. The War for the Union	1960	A. Nevins	\$2
51. A Shower of Stars	1966	J. Pullen	\$2
52. Benjamin Franklin Isherwood	1965	E. Sloan III	\$2
53. B & O in the Civil War	1966	W. Bain	\$2
54. Tour Guide to the Civil War	1965	A. Cromie	\$2
55. Fredericksburg Campaign	1957	E. Stackpole	\$2
56. Gallant Mrs. Stonewall	1957	H. Kane	\$1
57. Trial of Mary Todd Lincoln	1955	J. Rhodes	\$1
58. Soldier-Gen Pickett's War Letters	1928	G. Pickett	\$4
59. Gen Jo Shelby-Undeafated Rebel	1955	O'Flaherty	\$3

* * * * * MANY MANY MORE BOOKS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE SALE * * * * *

THE COURIER
of
THE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OF CLEVELAND, OHIO
FOUNDED FEBRUARY 19, 1957

PRESIDENT FRANK A. MORAN
VICE PRESIDENT. DONALD A. HECKAMAN
SECRETARY GUY DI CARLO JR.
TREASURER FRANK A. SCHUHLE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TERMS EXPIRING 1968: John W. Cullen Jr.
Frank Saxton
1969: William Victory
Paul E. Guenther

EDITOR, NEWSLETTER GUY DI CARLO JR.

"THE COMANCHES"
by
JOHN DIVINE
HAGERSTOWN CWRT, MD.

The aura built around Colonel John S. Mosby has caused the exploits of another "Border Partisan" to be almost entirely ignored. Lt. Col. E. V. White, dashing leader of the 35th Battalion Virginia Cavalry, rendered service to the Confederacy on a scale greater than that of the more renowned Mosby. Too often White's Battalion was called from its border warfare to fight with other segments of the army, thus he was not afforded the opportunity to be identified solely as a partisan. The hard bloody fighting, while filling pages of the Official Records, does not appeal to the romantic writer.

Elijah Viers White was born near Poolesville, Maryland, but at the outbreak of war was farming in Loudoun County, Va. For distinguished service as a volunteer aide to Colonel Eppa Hunton at Ball's Bluff, White was commissioned Captain in the Provisional Army of the Confederacy with permission to organize an independent company for service along the border. The original company was organized at Leesburg in December, 1861. This company became the nucleus of the 35th. Battalion better known as White's Battalion or "The Comanches". This hardy band, under the daring leadership of White, possibly saw as much action as any unit in the Confederate Army. Excellent riders, well mounted, armed with two revolvers and a sabre, their attacks created terror in the unsuspecting enemy.

Their first service with the regular army was as scouts and couriers for General Ewell in the Valley. A strange attachment sprang up between "Old Bald Head" and this little band of "Comanches." Ewell relied on their information and they in turn idolized this eccentric dyspeptic.

White suffered the first of two wounds during the Valley Campaign, but returned to duty in time to lead his men in the battles around Richmond. They followed Ewell's Division on to Cedar Mountain where they preyed on scattered parties from Pope's Army. As the armies moved on toward Second Manassas, White returned to Loudoun where he surrounded Captain Means' Loudoun Rangers in the Waterford Baptist Church. After a two hour battle in which both sides suffered heavily the Rangers surrendered and were paroled. He then joined the main Confederate Army as it invaded Maryland. At Frederick, White fell under

the displeasure of General Stuart who ordered him back to the south side of the river. (This was probably a renewal of the old argument that White had organized only for border service.) Finally General Lee resolved their differences by ordering White on a scouting expedition to Harpers Ferry and to report only to him (Lee). The "Comanches" returned to Loudoun and were engaged with Union Cavalry under Kilpatrick at Leesburg. In charging 400 Blue cavalymen the Confederates were repulsed and their commander suffered a shoulder wound.

A Maryland company under Captain George W. Chiswell joined White, and shortly thereafter three more companies were organized. His daring was attracting young men in search of action. On October 28, 1862, Colonel Bradley T. Johnson formally mustered these five companies into the Confederate service; a sixth company was later added.

The battalion was quite active during McClellan's return from Maryland. Striking quickly at loosely guarded wagon trains, White captured about 1000 prisoners and 200 wagons while the Federals were crossing Coudoun. Christmas eve, 1862, saw the battalion ford the Potomac into Maryland and bring off sixty horses and large quantities of supplies from upper Montgomery County.

In January, 1863, White was formally assigned to "Grumble" Jones' Brigade. Open mutiny almost broke out over this order as the men claimed that theirs was an independent command not subject to assignment to any regiment or brigade. The Maryland company claimed they owed no allegiance to the Confederacy and had the right to select their service. White soon quelled this insubordination and the battalion settled down to fighting Yankees again. As in so many similar organizations discipline was a problem. White was not a disciplinarian, believing that his mission was to fight and leave the "house-keeping" to others; however he was promoted to Lt. Col. in February.

The battalion continued to serve with Jones' Brigade in the Valley but made frequent sorties into Loudoun to battle their old border enemies, the Loudoun Rangers and Cole's Maryland Cavalry.

Ordered to join Ewell in Pennsylvania, White led Early's advance to the Susquehanna. It was the "Comanches" who dashed into Gettysburg on June 26th Pennsylvania Militia, thus firing the first shots on that great battlefield.

Again back in Virginia they served with Jones until his death, and then with General Rosser as the brigade picked up the famous sobriquet of the "Laurel Brigade". When Rosser moved on to division command White was the popular choice to succeed him, but the old problem of discipline stood in the way. Governor John Letcher and Judge Brockenborough petitioned President Davis in White's behalf, but General Lee could not be swayed because of the laxity of the battalion while not engaged in battle; drilling and sabre grinding were termed as a "perfect nuisance" by White. On one occasion General Lee wrote Rosser to say that no reports had been received by the ordinance department from White's Battalion. Rosser replied that he had never been able to get a report from White, and if General Lee could get it he would be happy to see it.

Hard service had depleted the battalion to a mere skeleton of its former organization by the fall of 1864, but a favorite pastime throughout that winter was raiding General Devin's lines around Lovettsville. Devin had camped his cavalry brigade there to protect the B & O Railroad and the Canal against raids by White and Mosby, but hardly a night passed in which the pickets were not fired on.

Engaged at Five Forks, the battalion now numbering only eighty men formed the rear guard for Pickett and Fitz Lee as the long retreat to Appomattox began.

At High Bridge the "Laurel Brigade" was surrounded by both infantry and cavalry. General James Dearing then in command of the brigade, ordered a charge to break the encircling ring. Dearing went down mortally wounded but White led the brigade through.

At last the command which had been so long denied was his, but only for a few days. As the infantry surrendered at Appomattox White led the brigade on to Lynchburg following Rosser. There they disbanded to seek paroles individually over the next few weeks.

The battalion hardly numbered more than five hundred men, but accounted for many times their number in killed, wounded, and captured of the enemy. If they had bothered to carry a guidon its battle streamers would have shown the Seven Days, Cedar Mountain, Brandy Station, Gettysburg, Mine Run, Wilderness, Trevillian Station, The Cattle Raid, Petersburg and Five Forks. In addition to these were the countless unnamed skirmishes that occurred daily.

The 35th Battalion Virginia Cavalry, led by the intrepid White, was truly one of the best fighting organizations in the Confederacy.

* * * * *

GEN. NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST

by

J.P. YOUNG, MEMPHIS, TENN.

This article appeared in the June, 1897 issue of the CONFEDERATE VETERAN Vol. 5 No. 6, Nashville, Tennessee.

If one should examine current history and biography to obtain a correct estimate of Gen. Forrest's life and character, only the bitterest disappointment would result. A central figure in the great martial drama of the war between the states, as can be plainly seen in the multitude of reports and dispatches penned during the contest by the leading commanders of both armies, he has been neglected in a marvelous degree since its close by the busy so-called historians and biographers, in accord with the shevolomaspheulsadismised with slight mention; in others, as, for instance, a certain encyclopedia of American biography, he is pictured as an "illiterate cutthroat and butcher." And even in a leading school history, printed in the South and used in most of the educational institutions in this community, we find in the whole book only this historical tribute to the man who Gen. Sheridan pronounced one of the most remarkable produced by the war on either side: "N.B. Forrest and John Morgan--famous for their raids in the West." And this the man whom Lord Wolseley, the commander of the British Army thought worthy the careful study of great soldiers, and to whose military career and skill he paid, in a long analytical article, a glowing tribute.

Only in a little volume entitled, "Campaigns of Forrest and Forrest's Cavalry," published in 1867, by Gen. Thomas Jordan and J.P. Pryor, is there a fairly correct statement of Forrest's military career and this book was written by gentlemen entirely capable, but who were not eyewitnesses of the great cavalry leader's achievements, and therefore loses greatly in graphic detail and description.

I therefore feel it to be a sacred duty of those who are familiar with any part of his career to contribute while still living their mite to rescue the story of this remarkable man from oblivion. The late lamented Maj. Rambaut, of Forrest's Staff, had undertaken this task for the Confederate Historical Association, of Memphis, but was cut off after his second article by an untimely death--a mishap greatly to be deplored, as he was an accomplished and accurate writer and a companion of the noted general throughout the war.

But to revert to my subject. Few people except those advanced in life and who had met Forrest before his death, which occurred nearly twenty years ago, have a correct idea of his personal appearance and distinguished presence; and of these few, only those who have seen him in battle have any adequate conception of the heroic mold and fiery energy of this equestrian son of Mars. Tall beyond his fellows, of herculean build, broad shoulders surmounted by a massive head, dark gray hair, keen gray eyes, which blazed when lighted with the fire of

battle, he was instantly recognized, even by strangers, as the commander of his army, and was as well known by sight to Federal as to Confederate soldiers. His face was peculiarly intellectual and his features strongly marked, the expanding nostrils and massive jaw indicating impetuous energy and overwhelming will power.

In the company of other distinguished officers he showed to the greatest advantage. Grave, dignified, unobtrusive, he was ever alert, and, when his opinion was asked, the lighting was not quicker. His ideas were tersely, lucidly, and briefly delivered, and he at once relapsed into silence. He never resorted to argument. His manner, while respectful, was almost imperious at such moments. The incident at Fort Donelson is richly illustrative of the character of the man under such circumstances. He, then a colonel of cavalry, being called upon by the council of war for an opinion, pointed out that it was the duty of the three generals to withdraw their commands by a road which he indicated, instead of surrendering them to the enemy; and, his advice being rejected, he curtly told them that the bones of his men should bleach on the hills than to surrender them. He strode from the room to withdraw his command from the fort by the route indicated, which he successfully accomplished without losing a man.

But to the rank and file Forrest was a delight. He was absolutely approachable at all times to the humblest soldier. When not absorbed in thought or engaged in combat he indulged constantly in playful familiarity and exchange of badinage with his men, as did also the great Napoleon. No general officer ever dreamed of taking liberties with his hair-trigger temper. No private soldier in his ranks ever hesitated for an instant to jest him about any trivial matter or to guy him about his personal appearance or unusual actions, even in battle.

On one occasion, at Richland Creek, Tenn., when the enemy's artillery was hurling shells like handfuls of marbles about us, the General coolly dismounted and stepped behind the only tree in the vicinity, a movement which all of us longed to make, but dared not in his presence. One of the men said to him: "Come out from behind that tree, General. That isn't fair; we haven't got trees." "No, but you only wish you had," laughingly replied Forrest. "You only want me out to get my place."

On another occasion, at Mount Carmel, Gen. Forrest dismounted under a hot fire of musketry, and sat down on a rock, an example which was quickly followed by the writer, who was attending him, and who took care to get down on the opposite side of his horse from the enemy. The General, who had begun feeding his warhorse, "King Philip," with some blades of fodder he found there, turned and, observing point of vantage playfully said, "You had better get on the other side of that horse, bud, and stop the bullets. Horses are lots scarcer than men out here" --a suggestion, by the way, that was not followed.

But there were two liberties which no one, private or general, ever attempted to take with Forrest. One was to disobey his orders, and the other to abandon the field in the presence of the enemy. Lither of the breaches of soldierly conduct instantly brought down upon the offender wrath that was truly frightful. On one occasion he seized a piece of brushwood and thrashed an officer whom he detected running away from the field almost to the point of taking his life.

Col. D.C. Kelley, major of his first regiment, wrote: "The command found that it was his single will, impervious to argument, appeal, or threat, which was ever to be the governing impulse in their movements. Everything necessary to supply their wants, to make them comfortable, he was quick to do, save to change his plans, to which, everything had to bend. New men naturally grumbled and were dissatisfied in the execution, but when the work was achieved they were soon reconciled by the pride they felt in the achievement."

Gen. Forrest always exhibited the profoundest regard for religion. Col. Kelley, then and still a preacher, relates that Gen. (then colonel

Forrest and himself were intimately associated in camp for the first year or more of the war, tenting together, during which time Col. Kelley continued his lifelong habit of holding morning and evening prayers. These services Gen. Forrest always reverently attended, though not at the time a member of any Church. However, he became a very devout member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church some years after war.

After returning from his successful expedition into West Tennessee, in May, 1864, he immediately issued the following most unusual General Order No. 44:

"HEADQUARTERS FORREST'S CAVALRY DEPARTMENT,

TUPELO, May 14, 1864.

"The major-general commanding, devoutly grateful to the providence of Almighty God, so signally vouchsafed to his command during the recent campaign in West Tennessee, and deeply penetrated with a sense of our dependence upon the mercy of God in the present crisis of our beloved country, requests that military duties be so far suspended that divine service may be attended at 10 A.M. on to-morrow by the whole command. Divine service will be held at these headquarters, to which all soldiers who are disposed to do so are kindly invited. Come one, come all. Chaplains in the ministrations of the gospel are requested to remember our personal preservation with thanksgiving, and especially to beseech the throne of God for aid in this our country's hour of need.

"By order of Maj.-Gen. Forrest.

"W.H. Brand, Acting Assistant Adj.-Gen."

To ladies Forrest was instinctively knightly and deferential. A man of singular purity of life and absolutely temperate, he held woman in the highest regard, and lavished a degree of affection upon his devoted wife altogether unusual in a man of his fiery temperament. Only under peculiar circumstances did he seem to become oblivious of the presence of ladies, and that was during those fits of intense absorption in thought into which he so often lapsed when working out the great military problems which engaged his attention. On these occasions his staff discreetly withdrew to a distance and left him undisturbed. As soon as he had arranged matters in his mind he would rejoin his staff and at once proceed to chaff them in a vein of pleasantry. Once, while thus absorbed on a railroad car, as related by Maj. Rambaut, a lady, against the protest of the staff, insisted on going back and interviewing him. In a moment the stately dame returned in a towering rage, declaring that the General was not a man, but a bear. A few moments later he came forward, and with deft politeness not only pacified, but captivated the offended matron. Presently, struck by a peculiarity of his appearance, she suddenly asked: "General, why is it that your hair is so much grayer than your beard?" As if with some faint recollection of his recent misbehavior, he quaintly replied: "I don't know, madam, unless it be that my mouth is always shut when my head is working."

On another occasion, as related by the venerable Mrs. John McGavock, of Franklin, during the storm of the great battle there, Gen. Forrest rode rapidly up to her door, where she had gone to meet him, and, without so much as seeming to notice that she was there, strode by her into the hall, up the stairway, and out on the balcony, where he gazed intently through his glass for ten minutes at the enemy's position, and then returned in the same way to his horse, without paying the slightest attention to her presence, and rode rapidly away.

But another incident, related by Col. D.C. Kelley, vividly exhibits Gen. Forrest in another mood. When campaigning with his regiment in the vicinity of Fort Donelson the men captured some Federals who were in the country where they enlisted.

The wife of one of these prisoners, seeing her husband in captivity, rushed out to where Col. Forrest was standing and, falling on her knees, appealed to him for his release. Col. Kelley witnessed this incident from a distance, and, observing the woman spring from the ground and clap her hands, questioned Col. Forrest about the unusual scene when he came up. The Colonel replied with rather unsteady voice: "They can have their husbands if I've got them--that is, if they will make them behave."

When in camp Forrest's restless mind was ever busy with the details of organization. Nothing escaped his attention, and no one, since the days of Napoleon, could more quickly equip an army or form a powerful military force out of raw recruits. In speaking of this marvelous power of organizing his raw West Tennessee volunteers later in the war, Gen. Thomas Jordan says: "In that short time (sixty days) he had been able to imbue them with his ardent, indomitable spirit and mold them into the most formidable instruments in his hands for his manner of making war."

Another characteristic of the man was his boundless fertility of resource when in close places. On one occasion, on crossing the Tennessee River, he found himself in a rough, rocky country, with unshod horses. At once he was at a standstill, for the horses could not march on the sharp rocks, and there was no material with which to make shoes. Encamping for the night, he at once sent details throughout the country to bring in all the old wagon and buggy tires that could be found at the farmhouses and barns around. Putting his smiths to work with this material, by morning he had all his horses splendidly shod and resumed the march without delay.

On another occasion, when on his rapid march of one hundred miles to attack Memphis, in August, 1864, he learned, when nearing Coldwater River, that that stream was out of its banks and that no bridge or ferry existed. Without apparent hesitation details were made, with instructions to scatter through the country, take up the heavy plank floors of the ginhouses, and meet him at the river with the planks, which the troopers carried on their horses. He then hurried forward with some axmen, felled the telegraph poles near by and the large trees on the river bank, and, rolling the logs into the stream, secured them with such ropes as he had, supplemented with grapevines, and, laying the planks first as stringers and then across, soon had a substantial floating bridge ready, over which his command marched with scarcely a halt when they arrived.

In battle Forrest was the very genius of war. Habitually riding a large gray horse, "King Philip," of great spirit, his towering form was seen everywhere on the field. At the investment of Murfreesboro, in December, 1864, it was the writer's fortune to witness one of those characteristic but unconscious displays of martial heroism by Gen. Forrest of surpassing grandeur. He had posted a division of infantry to meet a daring sortie of the Federal garrison, and, taking a cavalry brigade, had sought the enemy's rear. Learning that the infantry had given way, he came bounding back on his grand horse, and, pausing a moment, rose in his stirrups to survey the scene. Then, throwing off his military cape, his saber flashed in the air, and, seizing a flag, he plunged, with blazing eyes, into the mass of fleeing men, right under the awful fire of the enemy's guns, staying the stampede by sheer force of will power, and rider and horse presenting a picture in the terrible tragedy it were worth all the perils of the battle to have witnessed.

In war he was always aggressive, never waiting to receive an attack but, after a rapid personal reconnoissance, invariably hurling his whole command on the enemy. He seemed at all times imbued with

That fierce fever of the steel,

The guilty madness warriors feel,

even to the point of unreasoning rashness. But there was method in his madness, and no charge was ever made by Forrest that was not justified by the outcome.

It is stated that he was one hundred and seventy-nine times personally under fire in his four years of service, and it was rare that he suffered a check, never a defeat. His constant successes against almost incredible odds inspired his men with unbounded confidence in him, and he was thus enabled to hurl his unquestioning brigades like thunderbolts upon his less active enemy, and always with disastrous results to the latter. Nor was this all. Without training, but by instinct a very master of the art of war, he was quick to see an enemy's vulnerable point, and concentrating with marvelous rapidity would strike the deadly blow before his opponent could correct the mistake. Brice's Cross Roads or Guntown, was a type of one of his battles. Having but three thousand and two hundred cavalry, and his enemy, Sturgis, moving on the rich stores of grain about Tupelo with eight thousand and three hundred men, of which five thousand were infantry, Forrest, who was watching on the flank, observed that Sturgis' Army was marching in a straggling column of eight or ten miles in length along a narrow, muddy road, and impeded with enormous wagon trains. Quickly conceiving his plan of action, Forrest galloped his command to the head of the Federal column, and, concentrating in front of the enemy's first brigade, a cavalry force about fifteen hundred strong, by a common impulsion threw his whole command upon it and crushed it before help arrived. Attacking in turn the succeeding brigades of cavalry and infantry as they arrived and took position--the latter so exhausted by a double-quick march for miles in the mud under a hot June sun that they could not at once begin the fight they were successively crushed, and by 3 P.M., after five hours' fighting, the whole mighty host of Sturgis was a defeated and flying rabble, run down and captured by hundreds as they scattered. So great was the terror inspired by the furious energy of their pursuer that the Federal commanders report that the flying fragment of infantry covered the entire distance to Collierville, Tenn., ninety miles, in a little over forty hours, leaving all their trains and artillery and more than one-third of their force dead, wounded, or captured, in Forrest's hands. No such annihilating overthrow overtook any other command of either army during the war.

But it is not my purpose to describe Forrest's battles in detail, and I will present only a brief synopsis of his military career. Gen. Forrest joined the Confederate army June 14, 1861, at Memphis, as a private soldier in Capt. Josiah White's Tennessee Mounted Rifles, afterwards Company D, Seventh Tennessee Cavalry. His career as a private soldier was uneventful for about a month, but was rendered notable among his comrades by his constant and lucid criticism of the current military movements of the great armies. Having been authorized, in July, 1861, by Gov. Harris, of Tennessee, to raise a command, he at once went to work, and by October had, with characteristic energy, raised a battalion, and soon after a regiment, of which he was elected colonel.

With this regiment of dare-devils he soon became famous, and at Fort Donelson, Shiloh, and Murfreesboro, where he earned his promotion, he gained a distinction never before enjoyed by an American cavalry commander. As a brigadier-general, he rose rapidly in public esteem, gaining great distinction at Chickamauga, and, during the Streight raid capturing that daring Federal commander and eighteen hundred men with less than three hundred of his own troopers.

But it was in his characteristic operations in Tennessee, on the enemy's lines of communication--destroying railroads, capturing block-houses and garrisons, with thousands of prisoners and hundreds of wagons, teams, etc.--that he became the terror of the Federal generals. "If I could only match him," wrote Gen. Sherman, "with a man of equal energy and sagacity, all my troubles would end."

However, it was only when Forrest was given a cavalry department with the rank of major-general, his district embracing North Mississippi and West Tennessee, that he attained the utmost splendor of his renown.

Here he was made guardian of the granary of the Confederacy, the rich prairie lands of Eastern Mississippi and Central Alabama. Having a domain without troops, he rode straightway with a small force through the enveloping Federal lines into West Tennessee, and, collecting several thousand hardy young volunteers, mostly well-grown boys, he mustered them in a few weeks into that famous band which, with some veteran troops collected together, is now known to history as Forrest's Cavalry.

The Federal commander at Memphis, Hurlbut, who had thousands of men guarding the railroad from Memphis to Corinth, was superseded by Gen. Washburn because of his failure to prevent Forrest's movement into and return from West Tennessee with his recruits and supplies. In February Gen. Washburn sent Gen. William Sooye Smith, with a powerful force of seven thousand men, to find Forrest and punish him for his impertinence, and, incidentally, to destroy the great grain stores about Okolona. Forrest fell upon him with his new recruits, about three thousand strong at Okolona and Prairie Mound, and utterly routed his great host, driving it back to Memphis. In return Gen. Forrest rode again into West Tennessee penetrating to the Ohio River and capturing Fort Pillow, Union City, and other points, with their garrisons.

After his return, in June, Gen. Sturgis, with eighty-five hundred men, marched against the grain fields in Eastern Mississippi, and at Brice's Cross Roads, or Guntown, was fallen upon by Forrest and annihilated, losing more than one-third of his force with all his artillery and equipage.

Sturgis was followed in turn by Gen. A. J. Smith, with fourteen thousand men, who, after a terrible battle with Forrest at Harrisburg, near Tupelo, July 14, returned hastily to Memphis. Enraged by his defeat, Gen. Smith reorganized at Memphis and started again, in August, by way of Oxford, with a powerful army. Forrest, with his exhausted command, was unable to check this army by force, and resorted to strategy. Leaving half his force under Gen. Chalmers in front of Smith at Oxford, he rode with the remainder, less than two thousand men, by way of Panola one hundred miles, in less than sixty hours--to Memphis, capturing the city, and almost capturing Gen. Washburn, getting his uniform, hat, boots, and papers in the residence, No 104 Union Street, the doughty General escaping down an alley in his night clothes. This caused Gen. Hurlbut to remark, as related by Gen. Chalmers: "There it goes again. They removed me because I could not keep Forrest out of West Tennessee, while Washburn can't keep him out of his bedroom."

The movement, however, as Gen. Forrest anticipated, resulted in the rapid retreat of Gen. Smith again to Memphis. Then for a period Forrest gathering his forces, roamed at will over Middle Tennessee, destroying the Federal railroad lines and trains and capturing garrisons; and, though finally enveloped by thousands of the enemy, escaping across the Tennessee River with rich spoil. Then, riding leisurely down the west brink of that stream to Johnsonville, more than one hundred miles, he destroyed the enemy's great depot of supplies there, with more than six million dollars' worth of property and their gunboat fleet--"a feat or arms," wrote Gen. Sherman, "which I must confess excited my admiration."

Next followed perhaps the grandest achievement of Forrest's military career. Gen. Hood had moved on Nashville, fighting his way to the Tennessee capital, with Forrest in advance, and had rashly risked a battle with a foe outnumbering him two and one-half to one, and been defeated. His army, for the first time in its history was routed and disorganized. Halting at Columbia, he sent for Gen. Forrest and appointed him commander of his little, hastily formed rear guard. There were two thousand infantry, picked men, and fifteen hundred cavalry, but every man was a hero. With these Forrest calmly undertook to hold in check the victorious Federal army of nearly seventy thousand men, and so he did. Backward, step by step, from Columbia to the Tennessee River for eight days and nights, did Forrest and his Spartan band hold back

the eager enemy, while Hood's routed columns gathered at and crossed over the river.

In vain did the great blue masses essay to break over this slender barrier and get at Hood, by crushing whom they could speedily and the war in the West. Forrest's mailed hand was everywhere, and struck sturdy, deadly blows, which paralyzed every effort of their advance guard to break through his lines. The weather was bitter cold and the sleet came down, while the roads were streams of freezing water; but the ragged, barefoot heroes and their grand leader never faltered. The enemy were delayed until Hood's last men and wagons were across the river, and finally the little rear guard, cut and slashed and weather-beaten, crossed at midnight with their indomitable leader, to rest in safety beyond. This masterly achievement has only its parallel in the heroic Ney, who covered Napoleon's beaten columns in the retreat from Russia.

Such was the great leader whom Memphis gave to the Confederate army.

And now one word about duty. Out in beautiful Elmwood, with only a plain circlet of marble to mark the spot, sleep the remains of this great soldier. No marble shaft there points to heaven, with scroll or tablet to tell the passer-by: "Here rests a hero." Only a sprig of oak carved on the circle tells of his fame. Thoughtless thousands, in whose interest and for whose benefit his mighty deeds were done, pass daily to and fro about this city without giving a thought to his history or a tribute to his fame. O shame upon our people. If we cannot, like the appreciative Roman populace, bring his statue to stand in our beautiful square, I urge that at least in the great Battle Abbey about to be erected Memphis build into the wall a tablet that will rescue from oblivion the name and fame of the greatest cavalry leader perhaps that the world has ever seen.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I hope you find this article on Forrest as fascinating as I did. My thanks to Gordon Tatum, a charter member of our Round Table now living in Florida, for sending me the copy of the CONFEDERATE VETERAN

FORREST - - GOULD

A civil court would certainly have vindicated Nathan Bedford Forrest for the slaying of Lieut. A. W. Gould on June 14, 1863, at Columbia, Tennessee.

The young lieutenant had been transferred because he lost the two guns he commanded in the action at Day's Gap. Brooding over this fancied injustice, Gould sought an explanation. Forrest told him the truth and then Gould shot Forrest at close range with a gun he had in the pocket of the linen duster he was wearing.

Forrest happened to have a pocket knife in his hand and although wounded, used this to stab Gould. Gould's abdominal knife wound caused his death a few days later. This was the second time during the war that Forrest was wounded.

***** Harry Whiteside (Les Swift) *****

A captured Union Chaplain hearing of Forrest's terrible reputation fully expected to be shot. Much to his surprise he was returned back through the lines. Forrest said he might have kept him if he were not "needed so much more by the sinners on the other side."

7th VIRGINIA CAVALRY

7th Virginia Cavalry Formed at Romney

* * * * *

McDonald, Ashby To Lead

Romney, Va., June 25--The Seventh Regiment of Virginia Cavalry has been organized here under the command of Col. Angus W. McDonald.

Turner Ashby has been named lieutenant colonel of the regiment. In his recommendation of Ashby to this position, McDonald said: "I need not speak of his qualities, for already he is known as one of the best partisan leaders in the service. Himself a thorough soldier, he is eminently qualified to command." Company A will be commanded by Captain Richard Ashby of Fauquier County, brother of Lt. Col. Turner Ashby.

Richard Ashby Wounded At Patterson's Creek

Fight At Kelley's Island

Turner Ashby Routs Brother's Assailants

Romney, Va., June 26, 1861--Captain Richard Ashby, commander of Company A of the newly organized Seventh Regiment of Virginia Cavalry, was critically wounded today in a fight near Patterson's Creek Depot.

Early this morning Ashby left his quarters on Patterson's Creek, about 10 miles from the Depot, on a scouting expedition with a party of 19 men, and proceeded toward the Depot.

When they reached the railroad tracks opposite Kelley's Island, Ashby divided his command into two groups. With seven men, he proceeded up the railroad tracks and sent the other 12 under Dr. Templeman of Fauquier County, Va. in the opposite direction.

At a sharp turn in the railroad, Ashby's party found themselves confronted by a mounted picket of 13 Federal soldiers. The Union troops charged upon Ashby and a hand-to-hand fight followed. Ashby was wounded in several places and left for dead by his men, who managed to escape. The Federals retired to Kelley's Island in the Potomac River, taking Ashby's horse with them. The wounded Ashby rallied enough to drag himself to the side of the railroad where he concealed himself.

Col. Turner Ashby with a larger force was patrolling the railroad. He was informed by a citizen in the area that heavy firing had been heard in the direction of Kelley's Island. Ashby proceeded there.

When he reached the spot, he sighted the Federal troops on Kelley's Island from the Virginia shore of the Potomac River. Seeing his brother's horse nearby, quietly grazing without a rider, he charged across the river and ordered his men to follow.

While crossing, they were exposed to the raking fire of the enemy and Ashby's H.C. Rust's, and Granville T. Smith's horses were killed from under them. Ashby then gave the command to his men to "charge them with your knives." A sharp hand-to-hand fight followed and fists, after which the Federal troops were forced to retreat. Two Confederates and one Union soldier were killed; several were wounded on both sides.

Ashby, not knowing his brother's fate at the time, and his command returned to camp for reinforcements. Upon their return to carry away the bodies, Richard Ashby was discovered lying in a culvert.

Richard Ashby was taken to the house of Col. George W. Washington, where he is reported in critical condition with cuts over each eye, a deep cut in the arm above the elbow and cut in the abdomen. He had been shot through the palm of one hand and two fingers of the other were mutilated by the passage of a ball.

RICHARD ASHBY DIES

Romney, Va., July 4, 1861--Captain Richard Ashby who was wounded in a fight with a party of Federal Soldiers at Patterson's creek on June 26, died yesterday at the home of Col. George W. Washington.

* * * * *

Editor's Note: The above articles were condensed from actual newspaper articles taken from the VALLEY NEWS, ECHO, a recent publication sponsored by THE POTOMAC EDISON COMPANY in observance of the recent Centennial.