



THE DISPATCH

Vol. 3, Issue 1

Federal Volunteer Brigade

July 2016

155th Bull Run Camps

Things to Know:

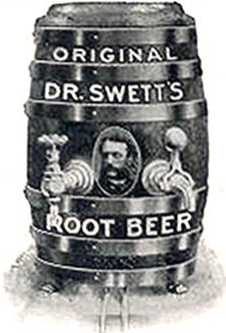
The 155th Manassas (Bull Run) event is a three-day event. The Battle of Rich Mountain will be held on Friday evening at 7 PM, Blackburn's Ford, Saturday 4 PM, and 1st Manassas on Sunday at 1 PM. Civilians are **highly encouraged** to participate in the Sunday scenario.

Federal parking will be approximately 75 yards from the Federal camps, in front of the Belle Grove plantation. A registration point (for pre-registered reenactors and civilians) will be at the entrance to the Federal

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DEE-LIGHTFUL!
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Sold in Quantities



S. G. PARKER CO., Proprietors
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Between Godford and Essex Streets. BOSTON



At 155th Bull Run

I bring you compliments of Col. Jim Cobb. I wish to inform you that we have a volunteer to give a talk for

the FVB College at First Manassas. Capt. Dustin Coleman of the 138th PA, Co. B will talk about "Why I am Here: Philosophy of Reenacting the Civil

War". The overview he provided is 3-fold:

1. Why I am here? (the motivations behind why individuals join the hobby).

2. How we can do it better?
3. Have fun doing it!

I look forward to this talk, as it may stir up sentiment about why we all joined in the first place. I am hopeful that members of 2nd Regiment, in addition to Adjutant Lt. Brian Curtis, will volunteer to be presenters for the College. Last year was a great success, and we look forward to this year's topics. Time and place will be posted

*Lt. Spangler, Adjutant
1st Regiment, FVB*



Col. Steve Reincke

In the blink of an eye... Life as we know it can change, for the good and the bad. It's in those moments, we realize life is sending us down a new path, and many times we drag our feet to stay in our comfort zone. Let's face it, change is hard. Life can be a challenging ride and requires more at times than we want to give. Then again, life can be amazing and filled with absolute joy and wonder. At those times, we run hard and fast at it. We agree?

Just in this year alone our brigade family has experienced everything from birth of babies to the loss of loved ones,

Chief of Staff Update

Divorce, loss of jobs, loss of homes, new homes, car accidents, loss of pets and starting new careers, just to name a few. Heck, even some of us sent kids away to college. Yay Empty nesters!!!

But at the end of the day, through all the highs and lows of life, what we will remember most are the moments when we were involved in something amazing. It is said, "Greatness sticks with us, even if just for a brief time." In fact, we will spend the rest of our years talking about our glory days around campfires and tentflly.

Some of the greatest moments in my life have occurred while with my FVB family. Many great battles, laughs around the fire, tears with friends, sweat and down right cold. (By the way did you know I hate cold?) This year I have experienced many of the things I mention above, all with a cost higher than I wanted to pay (I'm sure each of



you can relate), and after my 56 years, I realized that the only thing I control in my life is my attitude. In that same breath, I realized how important getting together with my FVB family is to my overall mental health and attitude. Somehow, there is something magical in getting into uniform, under canvas and facing the enemy together that helps me to remain balanced and focused in my 21st century life. Anyone else out there get what I'm saying?

I am so looking forward to getting the brigade back together again for Manassas in July. Many more great memories are yet to be made and this event is shaping up to deliver epic results.

I miss you all and need my reenacting fix with my FVB family. I remain respectfully, your servant and friend.

Capt. Timothy Komdoerfer
Federal Volunteer Brigade

headquarters, Army of the Potomac,
April 5, 1864

Excerpt:

"II. The Following is established as the organization and equipment of the pioneer parties of this army:

First, the unit of organization will be by brigade. In each brigade 1 man shall be selected for every 50 men equipped for duty in it; for every ten men thus selected a corporal shall be detailed, and for every 20 a sergeant, and for each brigade a lieutenant.

For each division a first lieutenant of the old date or a captain shall be detailed to command the pioneers of the division, who will be a member of the division staff, and be furnished with a horse and equipments by the quartermaster's department.

The pioneers will be armed as they were in regiments, and men and officers will be especially selected for fitness for the duty. They will be excused from all guard and picket duty and from

ordinary fatigue details... In camp, the pioneer parties will make the ordinary repairs to roads, bridges, &c. On the march, they will move at the head of the infantry column and promptly put in order all parts of the route where artillery and wagons have to pass, whether for their own command or for troops to follow."

By the command of Major-General Meade:

S. Williams, Assistant Adjutant General"

Pursuant to the directions ordered by General Meade in 1864 the Federal Volunteer Brigade is putting out a call to arms for Pioneers from within our ranks to fall out into the FVB Pioneer Brigade. Our ranks will be made based upon new recruits and should include only those soldiers who are fit and able for heavy labor. It is the mission of the Pioneer Brigade to be in front of the advancing column and present for all

Greetings to you from the front lines of the Army of the Potomac. Let this letter serve to instruct all the ranks of the Federal Volunteer Brigade on the newly commissioned Pioneer Brigade being formed at the behest of General Jay Henson at the direct instructions of Chief of Staff Colonel Steve Reincke. The new Pioneer Brigade will be formed under the rules authorized by General Order No. 15, delivered from

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Brigade Quartermaster



Maj. Kevin Harris

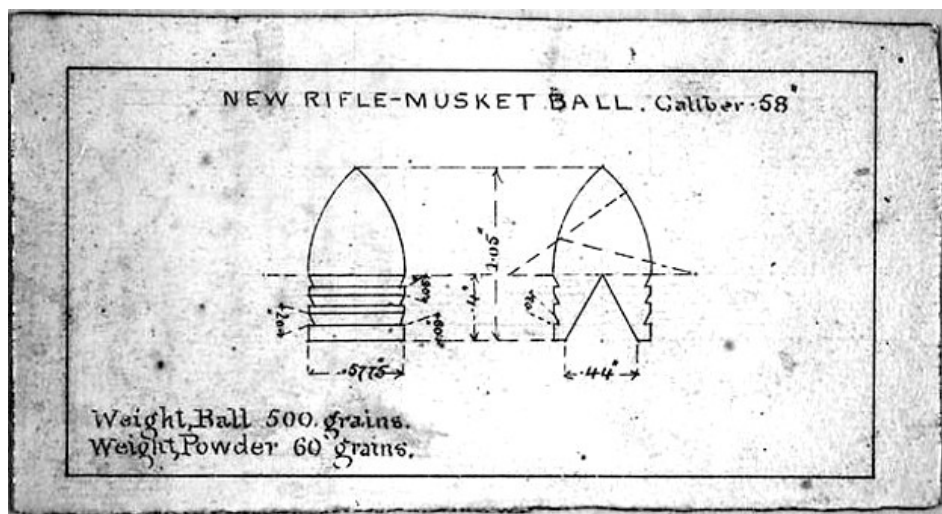
Ammunition concerns at Bull Run

The department with the widest range of responsibility in an army is the Quartermaster. The Quartermaster's department is charged with the duty of providing transportation by land and water for all the troops and material of war. It provides horses for artillery, cavalry, wagons, and ambulances. Supplies tents, camp and garrison equipment, lumber, and all material for camps; builds barracks, hospitals, wagons, and ambulances. Builds or chartered ships and steamers, docks and wharves; constructs or repairs roads, bridges, and railroads; clothes the army; and is charged generally with the payment of all expenses attending military operations which are not expressly assigned by law or regulation to some other department.

One of the biggest challenges was supplying ammunition for the many firearms present at the start of the war.

The firearms at the time were produced in .54, .58, and .69 caliber. Many of the .54 and .69 caliber rifles were smooth bore guns intended to be used with a single patched projectile or the "buck and ball" cartridge. Some late-model flintlock arms had been converted to percussion ignition and rifled to fire a .69 caliber Minié ball.

Major Claude Minié of the French Army invented the hollow-based conical projectile known as the "Minié ball". The original design had an iron



plug in the hollow base. When fired the expanding gases would push the iron plug into the hollow base causing it to expand into the rifling. Harper's Ferry Armory superintendent James Burton created the American "Minié Ball".

Burton did away with the base plug and deepened the bullet's base cavity to achieve the same result.



Claude Etienne Minié
(1804-1879).

The 1841 Musket was initially produced in .54 caliber. It had standard deep cut rifling designed to fire a round ball encased in a greased cloth. Conical Minié balls were issued in .54 caliber, but often gave less-than-satisfactory results because the Minié ball failed to expand enough to fill the old-style deeper grooves, allowing gas blow-by. Some were re-bored to .58 caliber with shallow groove progressive rifling. The Minié ball was able to expand into the shallower grooves to pro-

vide a better gas seal and increased accuracy.

The 1842 Musket was a .69 caliber smooth bore gun. Smoothbores fired a paper cartridge containing a 110-gr. charge of powder and a .65-cal. round ball or, more commonly, the round ball and three .31-cal. buckshot, referred to as "buck and ball." The paper prevented the undersized ball and buckshot from rolling out, reduced powder gas blow-by and to some degree stabilizing the projectiles in the bore to provide better accuracy.

The Model 1855 was a rifled gun firing 60 grains of powder with a conical Minié Ball. The 1855s were also equipped with the Maynard tape primer device. This was roll of paper-encased priming pellets, similar to the cap pistols we had as children. While this system did increase the rate of fire it proved less than reliable.

Several different calibers and different powder charges caused supply issues at

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Civil War Cavalry Units: Worth the Cost?

By Don Roberts
Warfare History Network

During the Mexican-American War, the great distances between objectives had dictated a need for highly mobile cavalry troops. Achieving success was often a result of fighting dismounted. Later, even more spectacular success came from saber charges. Consequently, "offensive and the saber" became grounded in cavalry tactical theory during the 1850s. When the Civil War unfolded, cavalry commanders naturally believed it was essential for their men to be utilized aggressively against the enemy. Cavalry charges against enemy cavalry or infantry did occur and some met with success. But the costs were high—by the end of the third year of fighting, Union cavalymen in the Eastern theater who charged enemy formations in major battles suffered an overall loss of 25 percent.

Rarely Counting for 8 Percent

It became all too apparent that the success gained by cavalry in the war with Mexico was not being achieved in the Civil War. The accuracy and range of the rifled musket usually spelled doom to charging horse formations. Even a broken infantry formation that found itself pursued by enemy cavalry could repel an aggressive horse charge with a steady volume of musket fire. In addition, cavalry units never assumed great proportions. Commanders on both sides had difficulty massing their horse soldiers for any effective tactical action against the enemy. Cavalry formations rarely numbered more than 8 percent of the total strength of any Civil War army. Maintaining a cavalry unit was very expensive. The price of a good horse was at least \$110, enough to pay an infantry private for eight months. Add to this the expense of saddle, saber, pistols, boots, horseshoes, and feed, and the cost became a monumental drain on the treasury in com-

parison to the simple requirements of an infantryman.

Confederates Held a Brief Advantage...

During the period 1861-1862, Confederate cavalymen enjoyed a period in which they held definite advantages over their Union counterparts. Many experts consider Southern horsemen to have been superior to Union horse soldiers from the very nature of Southern society with its emphasis on riding, hunting, and shooting. Additionally, Southern cavalymen had to bring their own mounts to camp. Riding a trusted, beloved mount rather than a "government issue" tended to boost morale and dash. But success on the battlefield was just as limited for Confederate cavalry as it was for Union horse units. The mainstay of Confederate success was the raid. Usually when Confederate cavalry did mass its force, it was little more than "a license to roam off into the enemy's rear areas searching for plunder and glory," writes historian Paddy Griffith.

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PIONEER CORPS

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instructions to ready roads, clear trees and brush and build bridges and water conveyance to allow for the smooth passage of man, beast, wagons and artillery. They are further utilized for securing defensive position by building breastworks, trenches and other such means to fortify said positions at the



request of the FVB staff. These volunteers will reside in camp with their respective units, at the ready, until such time as the call to muster is put out.



To learn more about this newly formed position within the Federal Volunteer brigade, we urge you to review the following information. Questions may be directed to me at the contact information below.

Captain Timothy S. Korndorfer
Federal Volunteer Brigade
Germanpiper@comcast.net

155th 1st Bull Run

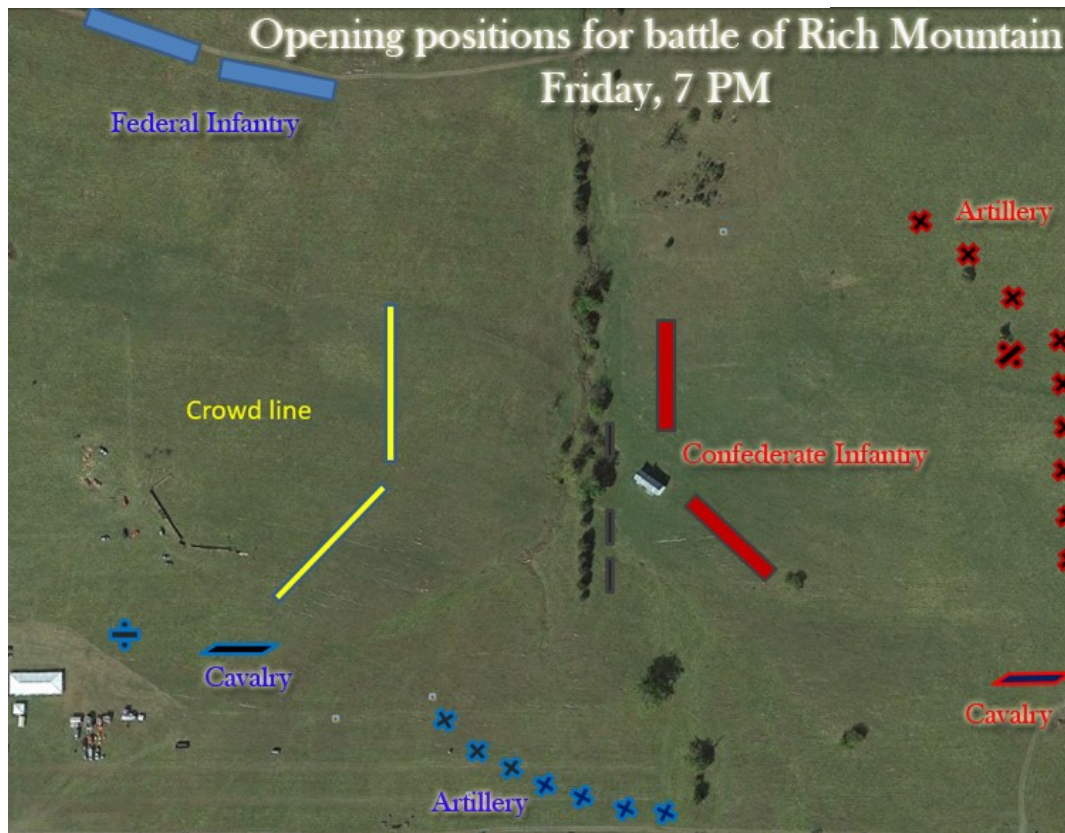
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Camp on Belle Grove Road. Walk-ons and all others will need to register at the Rt. 11 registration checkpoint.

Units doing a specialty impression will be encouraged and accommodated.

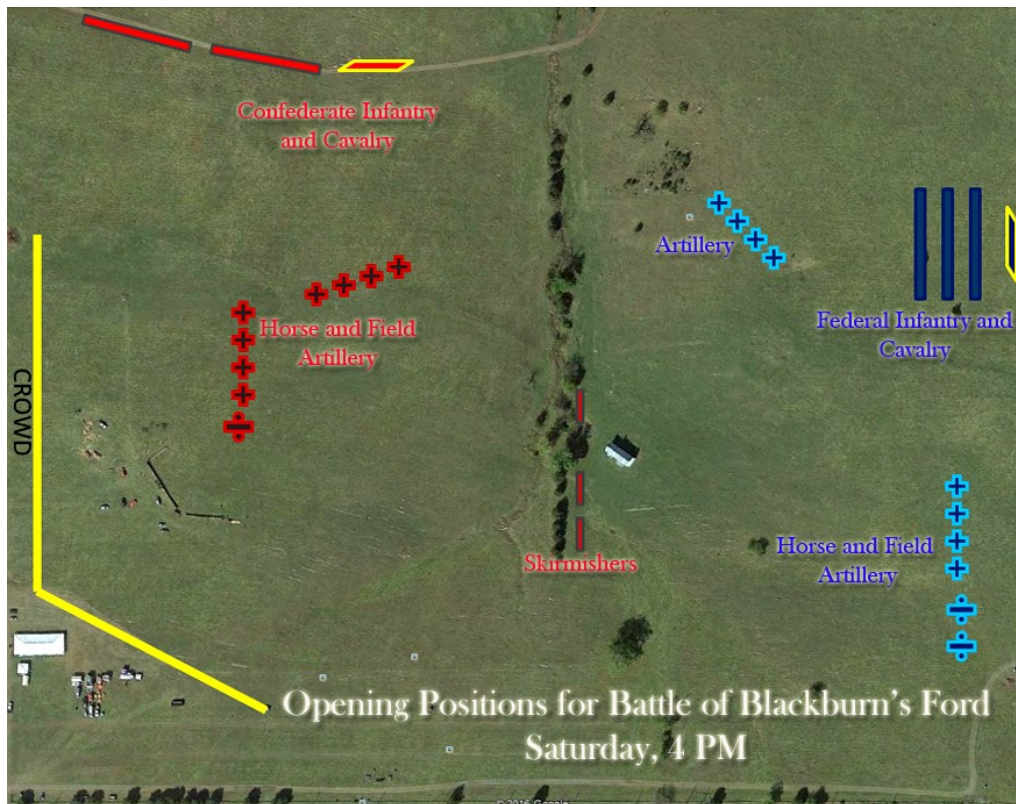
The Army of the Potomac, the Federal Volunteer Brigade and Birney's Division will constitute the 4th Division of the Federal Army. Over 1,000 reenactors are registered for the Federal Army.

Ice will be available and trucked to camps. The schedule will be announced and posted. Medical teams will be on standby during the day and for scenarios, and after camps close, medical can be reached by calling 911. All medical emergencies will be



Above, the opening positions for the Battle of Rich Mountain, Friday at 7 PM

Below, the opening positions for the battle of Blackburn's Ford, Saturday, 4 PM



reported to FVB HQ, AoP HQ and further.

A period church service is being planned for Sunday morning at the historic church in Middletown. Transportation is being arranged at press-time. A period base ball game is in the early stages of being organized, weather permitting. No games will be played if there is a high heat index.

The FVB has about 200 registered for the event.

We hope to have at least 8 streets for the 1st Regiment and at least 4 streets for the 2nd Regiment. There is planned a ***SPECIAL DESIGNATED CIVILIAN STREET*** within our camp for those civilians wishing to tent by themselves. Several civilian adjunct units have requested a separate area within the perimeter of the FVB camp, so tentatively, we are planning to open a street to civilians only.

This event is the "opening salvo" of the 155th anniversary events. If

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Civil War Cavalry Units: Worth the Cost?

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...That Was Soon Overturned

Late in the conflict when the Confederates were tightening their belts from lack of even the basic necessities, maintaining a coordinated cavalry force became extremely difficult. It was not the same situation for the men in Northern cavalry units. During the last 18 months of the Civil War, Union cavalry began to find its niche on the battlefield. Better training soon began to prove effective. Massed fire and fire-and-maneuver coupled with small- and large-unit tactics all combined to create a cohesive fighting force. More times than

not, late in the war horsemen fought dismounted in defense as well as in offense. Newer repeating rifles increased their firepower to such a degree

that, for the first time in the war, cavalrymen were able to have an impact in decisive battles.



At times during the Civil War, cavalry unit raids did achieve some measure of success, but more often than not, their success was inconsistent and costly.

Quartermaster

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Bull Run. U.S. Army Ordnance manual prescribed that a supply of 200 cartridges per man be on hand as an army approached combat, with 40 to 60 carried by each soldier and the rest in reserve. At Bull Run the Union only

had available about fifty to seventy rounds total per man. It was estimated that 19 to 26 rounds were expended by each man. This included dropped or discarded cartridges as well as fired. The supply on hand proved to be ample but it showed that a standard was very much needed.

As the war progressed the National Armory at Springfield, Massachusetts was able to increase production of the 1861

Springfield musket in .58 caliber. The Enfield rifles imported from Britain were also of .58 caliber. As these rifles made their way to the troops the need of the Quartermaster to supply various types of ammunition declined.



Right, the opening positions for the battle of 1st Bull Run (Manassas), Sunday, 1 PM

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our "community" is to survive, we need a good showing and participation.

Should you have any questions about the event and the scenarios, please contact us at once. We hope this will be a safe and exciting event. Lots of planning and detail has gone into this three-day event. We hope to see you there! Safe travels!

