

DIRT DIGEST

MAGAZINE



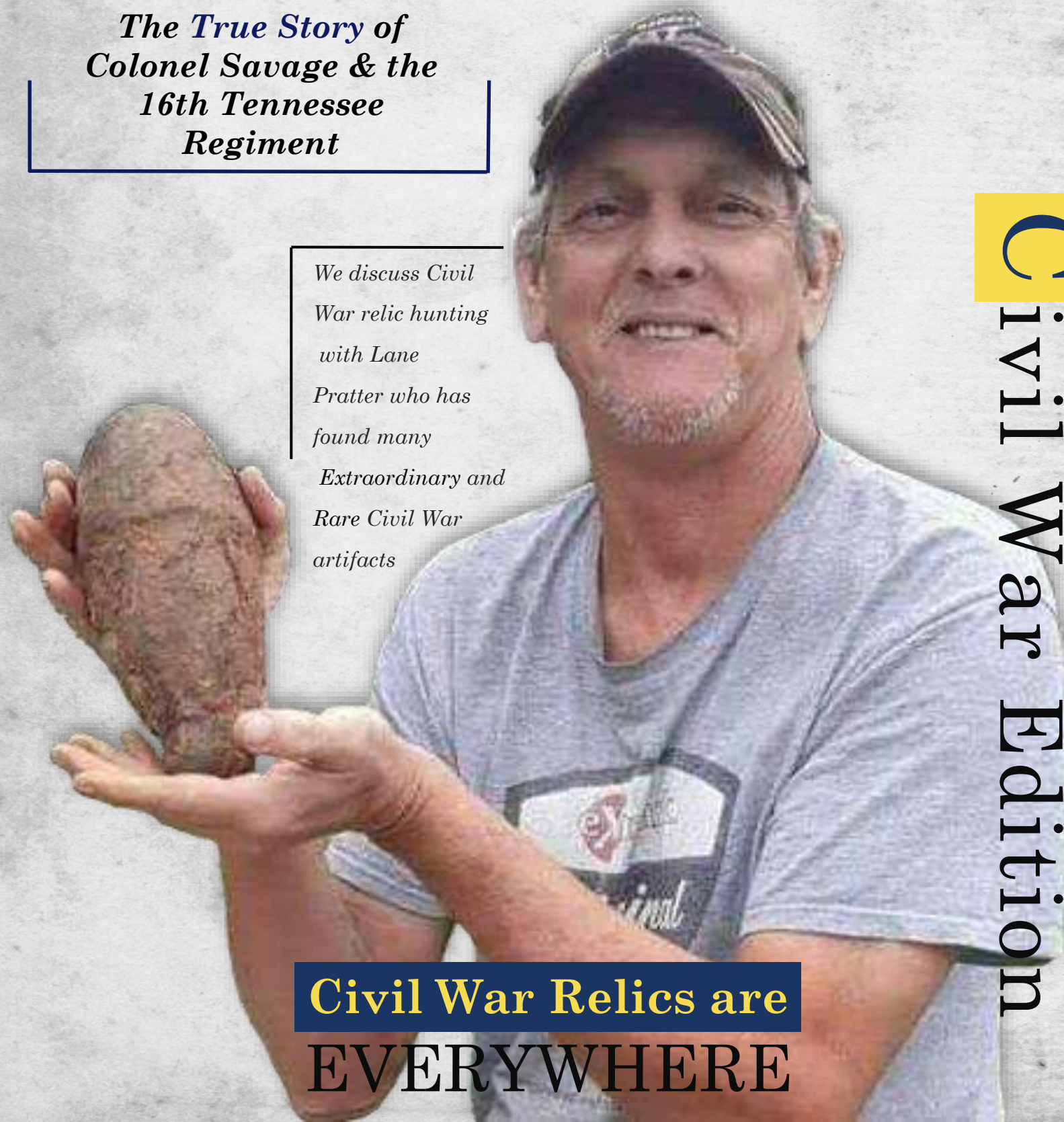
The Journal of Modern Treasure Hunting.

The True Story of Colonel Savage & the 16th Tennessee Regiment

*We discuss Civil
War relic hunting
with Lane
Pratter who has
found many
Extraordinary and
Rare Civil War
artifacts*

Civil War Edition

**Civil War Relics are
EVERYWHERE**



How to get the Most out of the Dirt Digest Experience

Before you get started on this issue of Dirt Digest Magazine, you might want to take a moment to read through this to get the most out of your experience.

First, lets start with navigating Dirt Digest. Top right, outside of the magazine is a navigation bar. From left to right is the following:

left arrow – turns pages towards front.

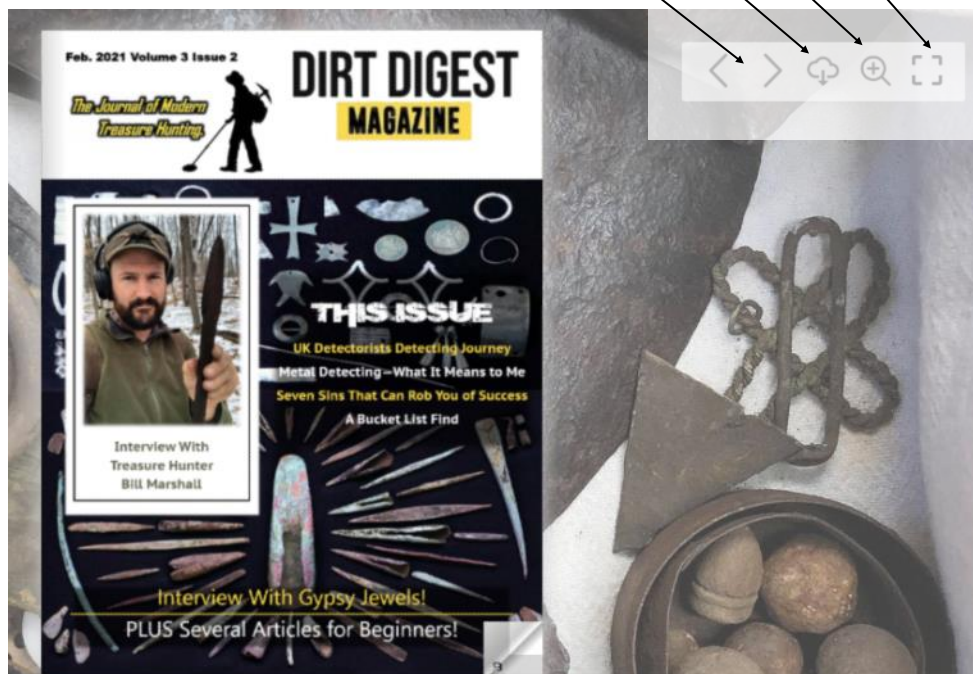
Right arrow – turns pages towards the back of the magazine.

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Magnifies the page you're on

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The Magazine Itself

As you flip through the magazine, as you turn a page you might see something quickly flash. That means there is a hyperlink to click on. For example, the Garrett ad and all of our other sponsors will have a hyperlink to click on to visit their website directly if you so choose to do. If you see any text a different color than the surrounding text and underlined it is a link to something else such as a supporting article, a website etc.

Turning Pages

There are three different way to turn pages. The arrows top left in the navigation pane that was mentioned earlier is one way. Another way is if you hover your cursor at the edge of the magazine a navigation key will show and you can turn the pages that way. A third way is moving your cursor over the corners. The corner will appear folded over and you can either click and drag the page or click the area of the next page showing.



Bar with arrow is another way to turn the page. Once opened, if you hover just off of either page the arrow and box will appear.

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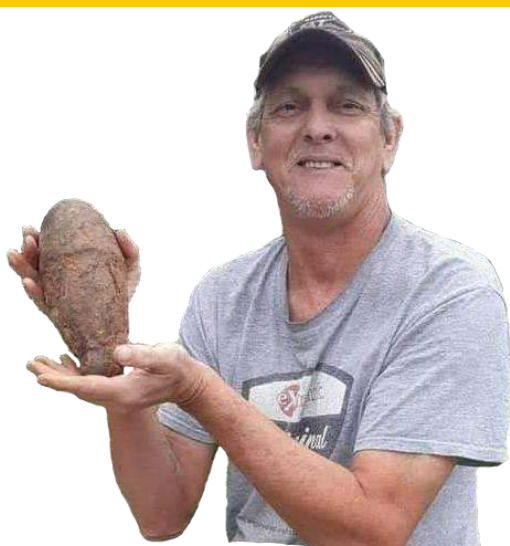
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DIRT DIGEST MAGAZINE



The Journal of Modern Treasure Hunting.

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Please submit articles, along with pictures to:

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Thank you!!!

We would like to express our appreciation to all who make this magazine possible and for everyone's continued support, without you, Dirt Digest wouldn't be possible!



From the Editor

There is probably no other subject that has brought people into the hobby of metal detecting more than the American Civil War.

Detectorists have sought out Civil War artifacts since the hobby's infancy and it only continues to grow. Although the chances of finding virgin sites are rarer each year, if you are a member of any of the Civil War metal detecting groups, we are reminded almost daily that there are still many amazing artifacts yet to be found.

Dirt Digest Magazine wanted to put together this Issue to highlight some of the great artifacts being found and to have our writers try to bring you some information that might help you increase your Civil War knowledge and finds.

Next month- with spring around the corner we hope to bring an informative issue on **BEACH & WATER** detecting. If you have any articles, ideas or find submissions related please contact us at mhaer@dirtdigestmagazine.com



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Frequency Shift	: Yes
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Built-in Wireless Module	: Yes
Detection Modes	: Audio / Vibration / Audio + Vibration / LED
Sensitivity	: 5 levels adjustable
Length	: 45 cm (17.7")
Weight	: 550 gr (19.4oz) including the coil cover
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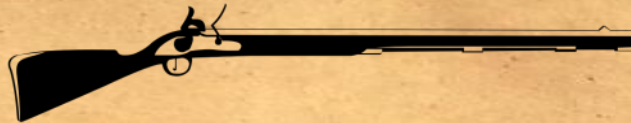
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Civil War Facts



The most famous Union gunboat in the Civil War was the U.S.S. Carondelet. In more battles than any other, it was sold for scrap after the war and ended up moored on the bank of the Ohio River near Gallipolis, OH and used as a wharf (warehouse) boat. Just before it was scheduled to be burned to recover the iron of its armor-plate, it broke loose in a flood and traveled 128 miles down the river with no one on board before grounding on the point of an island near Manchester, OH and gradually sinking to the bottom of the river.

Civil War Relics are Everywhere!



*“Civil War Artifacts
can be Found in
Almost Every State”*

Recently, in one of the Facebook metal detecting groups, someone new to the hobby asked what they might find in their state. When they asked the question, they said something like, "I know I can't find Civil war artifacts in my state, but what else could I look for." In their mind, there were no battles in their state; therefore, there cannot be any artifacts from the Civil war, right?

The truth of the matter is Civil war artifacts can be found in almost every state. Many years ago, when I first started metal detecting, I thought the same thing. John Morgan and his

Article by: Mike Haer

raiders had come into Ohio, and I was aware of that, but I lived nearly 100 miles north of where they came through, not much of a chance to find Civil War artifacts in my area, or at least that is what I thought.

That all changed one day many years back while I was metal detecting the front yard of an old home. I dug my first Eagle button, then not long after, I dug my second one in the same yard. Curious about how they could have ended up there, I decided to do some research. With a little effort, I found that one of the many



One of the few of my Civil War finds I could find a picture of. All my finds I still have (that didn't go to the property owners) are in Ohio.

homeowners throughout the years had served in the military and fought in battles during the campaign.

Since then, I have added many Civil war artifacts to my collection, far from any battles or even known activity. Buttons mostly, and I will say

“Soldiers brought home souvenirs”

my collection isn't impressive, but I do know of people with some great civil war artifacts that have been found far from any battle site.

One of the best places to find Civil war artifacts is to search out Civil War veterans' homes. It's been said many times that the Union soldiers would bring their jackets home that would then be worn around the farm. Anything they could bring home after the war was.



A plate my friend Bob Washabaugh found in an area with no Civil War action

Soldiers also brought home souvenirs. I know of people who have found confederate buckles, for example, in states that saw no activity or Union buckles found deep in the South, nowhere near any action.

Almost every state, even those that saw no battles, had troops,

*“Even
California
had a stake in
the war and
sent men to
fight”*

and they had to train them. A great way to find Civil war relics is to find those training grounds. I talked to a guy many years ago who had permission for one such site. The training ground was just a farm field now, and his collection of artifacts was impressive!



My good friend Dennis Wynne found all of this at the same ranch here in Texas, far from any battle (heel plate was found by me on one of those trips).

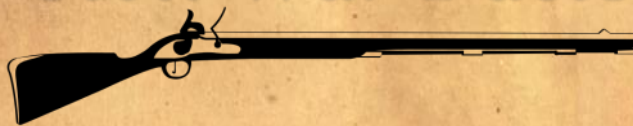
He lived in a state where there were absolutely no battles during the war, yet he had a very impressive collection of Civil war artifacts.

I have always thought of myself as someone who thinks outside the box, especially when it comes to metal detecting. I feel like I have a knack for stepping back in time and seeing how people lived back then. Recently though, while talking to Dorian Cook, he taught me something I had never thought about and should have.

Troops traveled! Well of course I knew that, but they marched and camped, but I had never given it much thought! Can you imagine being in Minnesota and marching to the South? How many times would you have to stop and camp? It's not like they pulled into a town with their convoy of trucks and stayed in a hotel. They marched and camped over and over again. I have yet to find one of these sites; they are out there, and there are many just waiting to be discovered. I have, however, heard stories about some of these discoveries, and often many relics recovered.

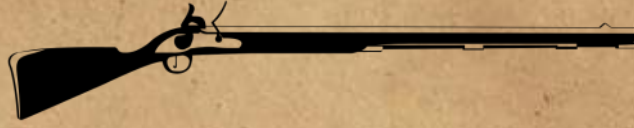
I will leave you with this. Even California had a stake in the war and sent men to fight. With a little out of the box thinking and research, almost every state holds artifacts from the Civil War.

Civil War Facts



During the first big battle of the Civil War at Bull Run, VA, the fighting raged around the McLean home. They were terrified and moved away to the south trying to escape the war. Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to U.S. Grant in their new home in Appomattox, VA. This gave rise to the expression, "The war started in the McLean's front yard and ended in their parlor."

Civil War Facts



The first submarine in history to ever sink an enemy ship was the C.S.S. Hunley commanded by Captain James Dixon during the Civil War. The small sub with a crew of eight, approached the U.S.S. Housatonic with a spar Torpedo attached to the end of the 20 ft. long wooden "spar" mounted at the front of it's bow. The torpedo was exploded, sinking not only the Housatonic but also the Hunley with the loss of its entire crew.

The Confederate officer who gave the order to fire the first shot from a cannon at Ft. Sumpter, SC that officially began the Civil War was named Captain George James. It is believed that this officer was the father of none

other than Jesse Woodson James... the famous outlaw.

Unknown to most, there were over 100 different versions of machine guns invented and tested during the Civil War. Out of all of them, only the famous Gatling Gun was adopted for use by the U.S. Army and that too late in the war to make any difference in the outcome.

Binghamton University historian J. David Hacker believes the number of soldier deaths was approximately 750,000, 20 percent higher than traditionally estimated, and possibly as high as 850,000.

Treasure's From The Dirt



Recently I was out metal detecting with my good friends Gypsy Jewels and Dennis Wynne. Dennis had a cool place lined up for us. Not much was found that day but Gypsy managed a nice, gold cuff link, Dennis found a nice Barber half dollar and I found this Brass lock.

The highlight of the day was getting the opportunity to find Dennis's control pad for his XP Deus he lost in some thick brush!

How to submit a find

Would you like to see one of your finds in Dirt Digest Magazine?! We would love to put it in! Please include a description of the find, what state, what kind of site you were hunting and any other detail that is relevant. Please include your full name and what metal detector or equipment you were using. Email your find to mhaer@dirtdigestmagazine.com

A silhouette of a Civil War era cannon on a field of tall grass at sunset. The cannon is positioned in the center, pointing towards the right. The background is a bright, golden sunset sky with scattered clouds. The foreground is filled with tall, dark grass.

Cannonballs...

The Civil War Relics Dreams Are Made Of

Over the past forty years, many is the time that I have heard these words come out of a metal detectorists mouth...

including my own... "I sure would like to find a Civil War Cannonball!" For some hard to fathom reason, it seems that beginner Civil War Relic Hunters are almost all fascinated with the idea of finding and digging a simple iron cannonball.

Article by: Dorian Cook

There are certainly far more valuable and rare Civil War relics that one can covet... like Confederate Belt Buckles, for example. Or rare uniform buttons or insignia or guns, for a few more examples. And once we do get involved in Civil War relic hunting, we do indeed soon add these types of artifacts to our bucket list, also. But... that being said... the fascination of finding a Civil War related CANNONBALL still remains firmly fixed on our "historical radar screens." Never, ever... have I heard anyone say... "Aw shucks... it's just another dang cannonball... I was hoping for a belt buckle." Whether it's your very first cannonball... or your hundredth... they still give a relic hunter a thrill! The lowly cannonball seems to be a "Rite of Passage" among relic hunters.

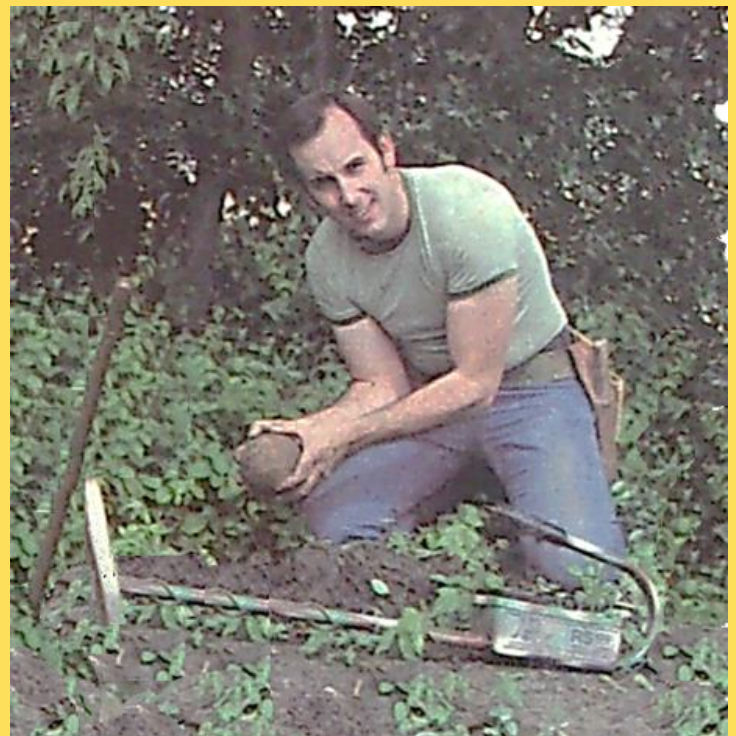
The purpose of this article is to give beginner Civil War relic hunters a bit of an education about cannonballs as there is more to them... and the finding of them... then a beginner might think. I also want to give "newbie" relic hunters a few tips on how to greatly increase their chances of finding one... and then more.

As it would turn out, I found a "cannonball" on my very first Civil War relic hunt and that probably brings an

image to mind like the one on the right. And that... would not be correct. That IS my first 12 lb. Cannonball I am holding in the photo but certainly not my very first cannonball.

You see, all cannonballs are not "created equal." They come in sizes from those weighing as much as 800 lbs. that were fired out of giant coastal siege guns to those that were less than a half-pound in weight and could be packed into big tin cans often containing as many as 75 of them. This allowed the cannons to be used like big shotguns to mow down a lot of

attacking enemies with each shot. These loads for the cannons are appropriately called "canister shot." While very small,



compared to the common 12 lb. cannonball seen in this photo, they are, nonetheless, still a cannonball and the kind you are mostly like to find first if you relic hunt.

The cannonball I found the day of my very first Civil War relic hunt back in 1977, looked like the canister shot circled in the picture on the left... it was fired from a Union cannon battery at the battle of



Perryville, Kentucky at the advancing men of the Confederate 16th Tennessee Regiment who were trying to capture the Yankee cannons. I will always wonder if it took a life before it came to rest there.

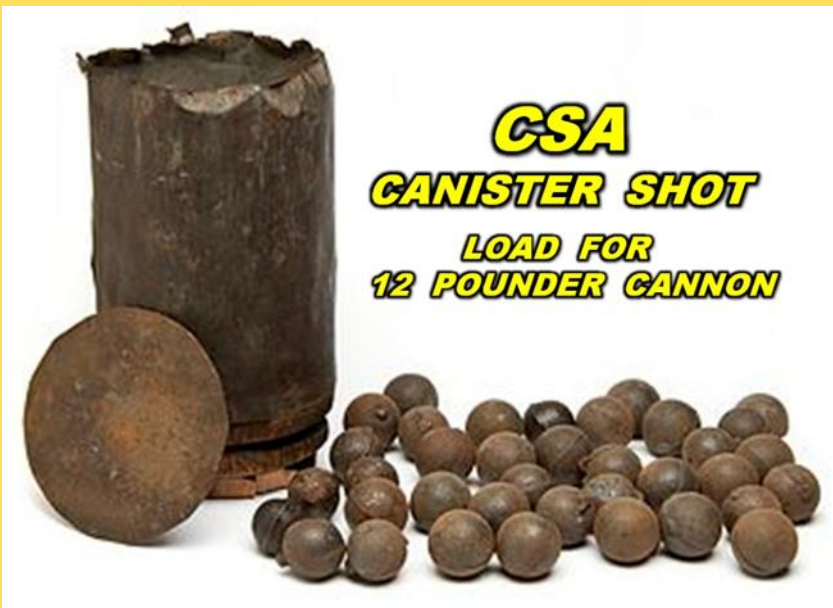
It was only about 4" deep and lying at the bottom of a crevice in the exposed bedrock of a creek that ran through the battlefield. Had I had a better detector and been more experienced, I most probably would have found more in the

surrounding soil, only deeper. I have recovered canister shot like these at depths of up to 16" as well as some as shallow as 1 inch.

The odds are that a canister shot will be the first type of cannon ball that a beginner relic hunter will recover as they are more plentiful than bigger cannonballs and not usually buried anywhere near as deep as the bigger ones. The difference between USA canister shot and CSA canister balls is that the USA canister shot was machined and is smooth all around (with the exception of any pitting caused by rust over time.) while the CSA canister is poured in a mold which leaves a line all the way around the center of the shot called a "mold-mark" and a "nipple" like protrusion somewhere on the shot called a sprue. This protrusion was caused by the cutting off of the iron in the filler tube that was still attached to the shot after the mold was opened. Also... CSA canister is bigger than the usual 1.75 inch diameter of USA canister shot.

The canister load, as seen below, has shorter range than the larger "solid shot" and is primarily designed to be a "weapon of mass destruction" to be used against oncoming charging enemy

soldiers, both infantry and cavalry, that are close enough to pose a threat of capturing the cannons of a deployed battery. Most canister shot encountered with a metal detector will be in front of where cannon batteries were deployed out to about 300 yards.



The next most frequently encountered types of cannonballs will be the 6 pounder And the 12 pounder in either solid shot or explosive "case shot" forms. The solid shot will of course always be in one piece.

Any of the different types of "case shot" may be found more commonly after exploding in various shaped pieces or... far less frequently... still completely intact with the black powder and lead balls still inside of them due to the fuse failing to ignite when the ball was fired. It is easy

to tell the difference in that case shot balls will always a fuse or fuse hole somewhere on the ball that will be visible unless the ball is badly encrusted with rust. When a rust covered cannonball is recovered, it is best to assume that it is a live shell with the powder inside still

intact until the rust can be SAFELY removed from the entire surface of the ball and it is seen that there is no fuse or fuse hole in the ball. NOTE: DO NOT BANG ON A RUST COVERED CANNONBALL OR ARTILLERY SHELL OF ANY TYPE with a hammer or other tool to remove the rust. Should it be a PERCUSSION FUSED case shot, designed to explode on impact...

but did not... banging on it violently could cause it to explode. If it does... you are dead... plain and simple. The explosive round balls can have a variety of fuse types made of lead, brass, pewter,copper or even wood plugs with a





12 LB. CASE SHOT SAWED... SHOWING LEAD BALLS SUSPENDED IN SULFUR MATRIX POURED IN WHILE HOT AS A LIQUID AND BRASS FUSE ADAPTER WITH BLACK POWDER EXPLODING CHARGE REMOVED FROM THE MIDDLE.

center hole filled with rolled up newspaper. I found a 12 pounder in the creek bank at Robert E. Lee's camp at Mine Run Virginia. It had a wood plug perfectly preserved by being underwater with a piece of rolled-up Richmond, VA newspaper in the center for a fuse. It had started to burn but went out before it got to the black powder the ball was filled with. I was able to extract it, unroll it and read enough to know it came from a Richmond paper.

It is not within the scope of this article to cover all the different fuse types and which ones are the most dangerous. Any such find should be protected from sudden shocks and fire and a person intending to search for Civil War cannonballs should educate themselves

on what the different fuses look like and which ones are PERCUSSION fuses as I believe those are the most dangerous.

No beginner should ever try to unload any kind of explosive cannonball... several relic hunters have been killed over the years while doing that. Most law enforcement agencies require that you report any such finds to them

and they WILL come and destroy the artifact.



10-6 LB. CASE SHOT BALLS... Found IN A CREEK BY A FOOTBRIDGE USED BY UNION SOLDIERS AS A RETREAT PATH FROM THE BATTLE OF CHICKAMAUGA.

Now... getting back to the solid iron... non-explosive cannonballs, the various sizes go from 1 lb. balls for Swivel guns used on ships and small boats and can also be found in 2, 3 and 4 lb. sizes but these are relatively rare and seldom found. After the most common 6 lb. and



12 lb. sizes, there are 18 pounders, 24, pounders (Of which I found one at Mobile, AL), and various other sizes that are much bigger for use in heavy artillery, river

gunboats, Navy ships guns, and coastal defenses. There are 100 lb. balls, 300 lb. Mortar Balls and so on all the way up to 800 lbs. and most of these are the explosive type.

You are not likely to ever find one of the bigger ones with a metal detector

A STAND OF GRAPE FOR A 30 LB. PARROTT RIFLE

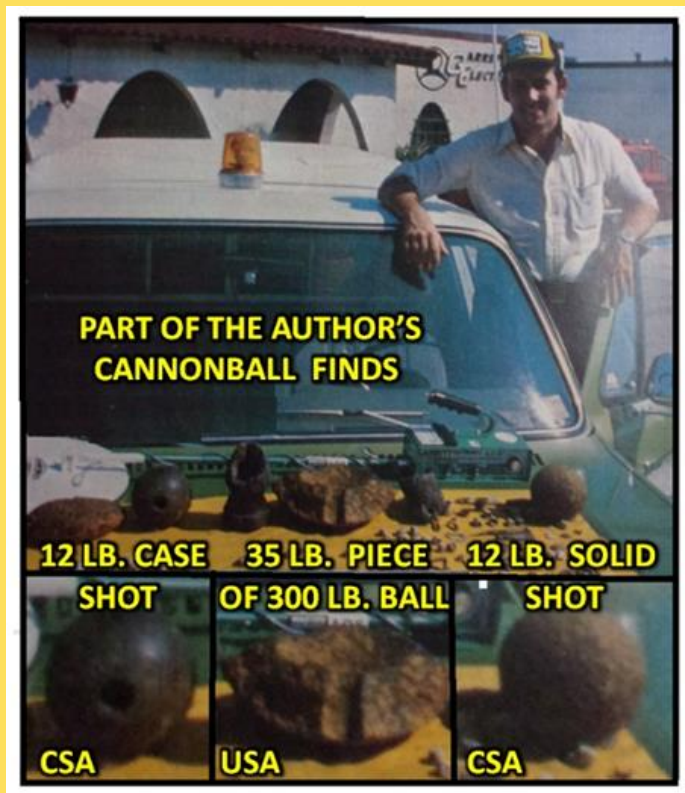


unless there is major earth erosion because they buried themselves deeply in the earth if they did not explode in the air most often beyond range of a detector (Up to 10' deep, according to soldier's diaries.) It is common, however, to find pieces of exploded shells... even the big ones. So far, my biggest piece came from a 300 lb. Mortar Ball fired from a Union gunboat at the siege of Port Hudson, LA and it weighed 35 lbs. with part of the fuse hole being visible in it. I have also found a number of artillery shells from the Civil War and a

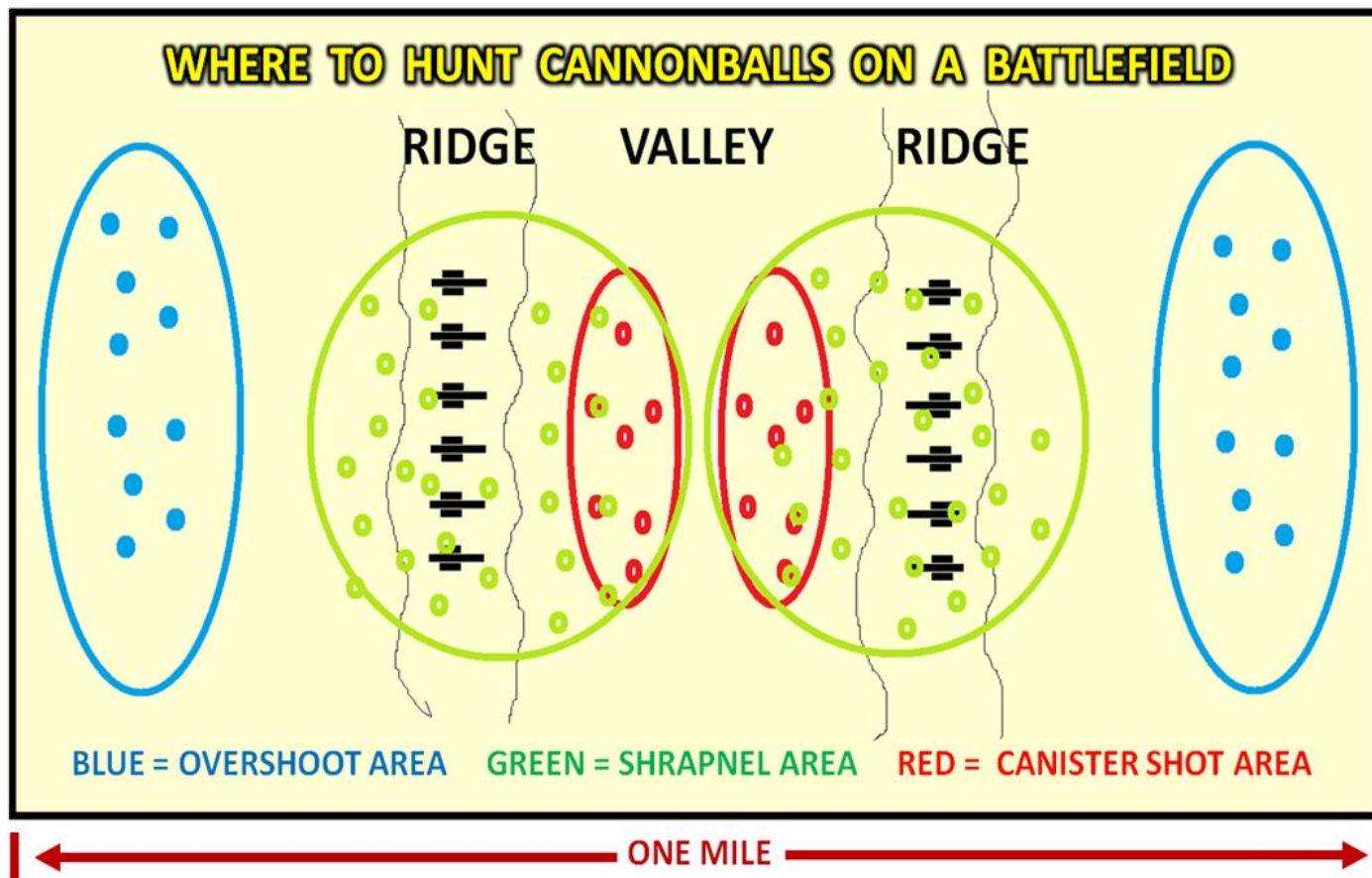


beginner could encounter one of these while searching for a cannonball. This article is dedicated to cannonballs, however, and one on Civil War artillery shells will have to wait for another issue.

There is another way a beginner might encounter a cannonball from another different type of a shell called GRAPE SHOT. The name is a little misleading as the size of these cannonballs is nowhere close to resembling the size of grapes with one exception...



there is a rarely found Confederate iron Grape Shot the size of marbles.



Grape Shot Shells come in sizes to fit the cannons from 12 pounders to 300 pounder size and possibly even bigger. Each shell is called a "STAND OF GRAPE SHOT." These loads were designed to come apart and spread the balls out as soon as it left the barrel of the cannon.

The pictures on page 20 shows what they look like. Take note of the base and head plates, the iron rings and the bolt that holds it all together... they are artifacts too and you would not want to throw them away thinking they were farmers junk iron. Quilted Grape, as it was called, made use of canvas and string netting to tie the iron balls into place around a central iron post and sat on a wood sabot as you can see in the picture.

The depths at which cannonballs can be located and dug can be really surprising. I found my first 12 lb. cannonball at a depth of exactly 4 feet on the Port Hudson, LA battlefield! This was possible for three reasons. 1. The soil was not heavily mineralized. 2. The ball had a "rust halo" around it where rust had seeped into the clay surrounding the ball and made it look like a much bigger

target to my metal detector. The ball is only about 6" in diameter but it gave me a reading as big as a metal garbage can lid. 3. I was using a BIG 14" coil on my metal detector that went much deeper on detecting large sized iron objects than the smaller ones favored for hunting coins and smaller targets. While a smaller coil can find cannonballs on un-worked sites that are not deeply buried in the ground, it is not advised for Civil War artillery hunting on sites that have

A CLOSER LOOK AT A CANISTER SHOT LOAD



already been worked many times by others. There, with rare exceptions, any cannonballs and shells not already found will be very deep and can only be detected with large search-coils. When digging deeply buried cannonballs, you will likely encounter both hard clay and rock so a very stout digging shovel designed for that purpose is advisable.

"But where do I go to hunt cannon-balls," may be on your mind at this point. The obvious answer is to go where a lot of them were fired. How do you find those areas? You search the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion online free using

skirmishes that are not today in parks but are still on private land where you might obtain permission to detect. The following diagram that I drew will help you get an idea on what areas to hunt once you have pinned down exactly

where the artillery was positioned and what they were firing at.

On the average, about 40% of all the Civil War explosive cannonballs and artillery shells were duds... they failed to explode as designed over the enemy troops visible to the artillerists and so they just

kept on going, sometimes landing as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile BEHIND enemy lines where no fighting actually occurred during the battle. Many relic hunters never consider this and so a number of these "OVERSHOOT" areas get ignored and have not been detected.

I would seriously recommend that beginners avoid hunting for cannonballs that are under saltwater or have been exposed to it by tides, floods, etc. unless you are an expert in preserving saltwater exposed iron artifacts.

Removed from the saltwater they were



**WAR LOG WITH 5 EMBEDDED
CANISTER BALLS VISIBLE IN IT.**

this link to them provided by Ohio State University. [**The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Civil War | eHISTORY \(osu.edu\)**](#) In the search window, type in words like "artillery duel" or "barrage" or "battery engaged" or the name of any battle fought near you and you will get links to the pages of this vast resource that pertain to the key words you typed in. Study the reports on those pages to discover the activities of the artillery in those reports and to find leads where the most cannon firing occurred. Look for artillery duels that sometimes went on for hours during smaller

found in and set out to dry, these cannonballs will quickly just fall to pieces and be no more.

Another tip: I had a metal fabrication shop cut me out a circle of iron 6" wide and a half inch thick to simulate a 12 lb.



cannonball. I then buried it in my test area at a depth of two feet so I can run any detector I want to over it to see how it responds with both detection ability and the number it displays on the digital read-out. I only buried it 2' deep because that will simulate what a ball with a rust halo will sound like at 3'. Odds are very good that any cannonball you find won't be any deeper than that unless it is one of the bigger balls used in heavy artillery or siege guns.

If you do not know what a cannonball sounds like in the ground on your detector and how it displays then you have greatly lowered your chances for success when you hunt for them. Also...

you should have researched the Civil War activity where you plan to hunt so you know what kind of cannons were used, where they were positioned and how much they were used during the battle. For example: At the battle of Stone's River at Murfreesboro, TN, the Union Quartermaster's report states that the Union Army used up 20 million bullets and 20,000 artillery shells!! Only 10% of that battlefield is on Government Park land... the rest is on private property... woods and fields mostly belonging to farmers still abound on the battlefield there so permissions might be possible for hundreds of acres with relics, including cannonballs, still on them.

Just going to a Civil War battlefield and hunting while trusting in blind luck is not very smart with only one exception that I



know of.

Back in the 1960's a detectorist named Bill Mahan, who lived in Dallas, TX, decided he wanted to find a cannonball so he drove to Arkansas to a big Civil War battlefield called Jenkins Ferry. He had not bothered to do any research on the battle and just ASSUMED that it was fought around the immediate area of the old ferry crossing on the Saline River and he could not have been more wrong.

The river was flooded at the time of the battle and while the retreating Union Army was busy building a pontoon bridge across the little swollen river, the commanding General sent troops from his army back the way he came to keep the Confederate Army in pursuit of the Yankees away from the river until they could finish the bridge and retreat across it. They would then destroy the bridge to delay the Rebs pursuit of them. This

caused the actual battle to be fought a mile North in the flooded river bottoms. The Yankee soldiers fought in water about 2' deep. They brought up a 12 pounder cannon like the one pictured on the next page and fired just two shots at the Rebs before the cannon sank to the axles in the flooded road. And THAT... was all the artillery firing that took place on both sides for the entire battle. It was fought solely with rifles.

Well, Bill Mahan, in his excited and blissful ignorance, began looking for non-existent cannonballs right at the Ferry crossing and after a while got a deep signal in the woods. He eagerly dug through the sandy soil until he hit clay and the digging got tougher. Finally, he heard the satisfying "CLUNK" of his shovel hitting cast iron.

He carefully cleaned out the dirt until he could see some of the rusty iron and saw

that it was curving like a cannonball does. Sure that he had one, he uncovered more of the object and discovered that it was much bigger than a cannonball and had three little protrusion of iron sticking up in a triangle on the object.

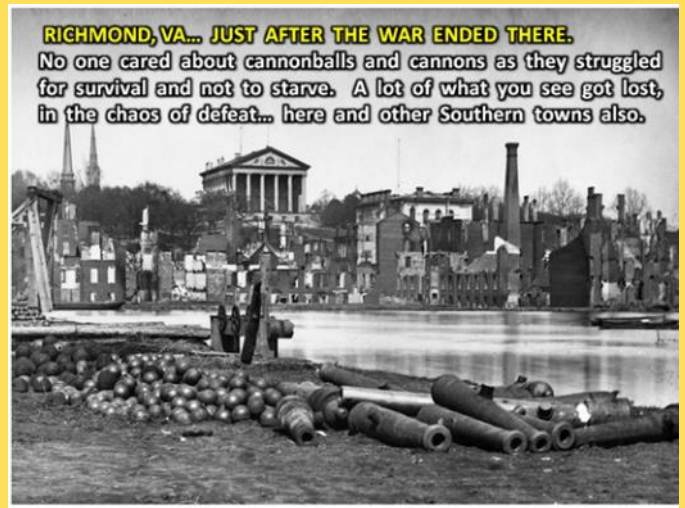
Suddenly, Mahan realized that he was looking at the bottom of an



**GRAPE SHOT FOR
BIG SIEGE GUNS
AFTER THE BUILDING
IT WAS IN BURNED.**



IN THE AFTERMATH OF CIVIL WAR...
 Hundreds of cannonballs lie scattered
 and stacked in the ruins.



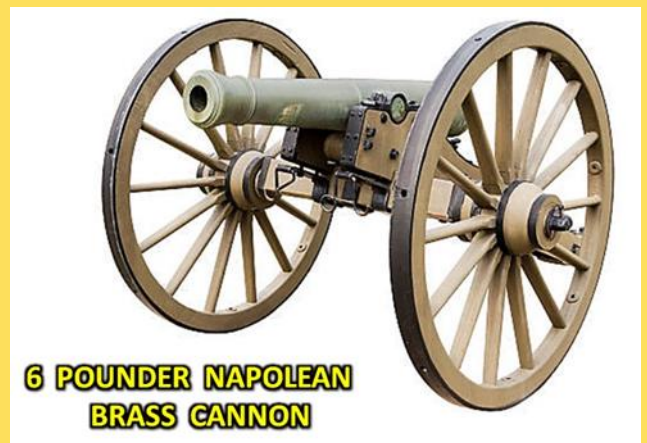
RICHMOND, VA... JUST AFTER THE WAR ENDED THERE.
 No one cared about cannonballs and cannons as they struggled
 for survival and not to starve. A lot of what you see got lost,
 in the chaos of defeat... here and other Southern towns also.

old 3-legged cast iron pot. His disappointment exploded like an artillery shell and he started to fill in the hole. Then... he remembered how much his wife liked old cast iron pot and he decided to go on and dig it up and take it home. It took him quite a while to dig around the pot to where he could lift it out of the hole. When he did... to his complete astonishment... he discovered \$60,000 in U.S. gold coins beneath the pot!

This is a true story and you can file it under... "Even a blind squirrel finds an acorn once in a while." Mahan used the money to found D-Tex Metal Detectors which was for a number of years back then a leader in the industry... but... he never did find a cannonball because he did not do the things I have pointed out to you in this article that turn the odds of success in your favor. So... in conclusion... have a BALL... and find a few!



**12 POUNDER NAPOLEAN
 BRASS CANNON**



**6 POUNDER NAPOLEAN
 BRASS CANNON**

Treasure's From The Dirt



I have been searching for a virgin site for a few years now. One that held 1800-1900's relics, coins, jewelry and many surprises.

While doing some research in an area that I had recently received permission to but has to wait until after deer season to explore. I plotted a few early 1900's homesites on my phone to check out.

One day, I went to my third plotted homesite later in the day and scored an 1858 seated half dime, 181? Large cent, Civil War eagle button, Civil War three ringer all on the first day! Super excited, I couldn't wait to come back the next day, then the next and the next.





decided to use a combination of two machines on this permission, various coils to see what else I could find. I was using the Garrett AT MAX and the Garrett Ace APEX. I would start with one and then switch to the other.

Finally, on my sixth or seventh trip out and while using the Garrett Ace APEX with the Viper coil, I get this screaming 76 VDI. I pop the sandy cotton field plug. Not finding the target right away, I grab my pin-pointer and it's in the above side wall. I use my hands to scrape the sand out until I see a round item pop out. As I grab a hold and begin to wipe the sand off from the face of the item, I start to see something amazing and that made me shake with excitement! I couldn't believe my eyes as I



read "NORTH CAROLINA" and see a sunburst in the middle of what looked to be a button. I flip it over and sure enough there is a shank too! Now I'm very excited, I snap a few pictures then a quick video for my future YouTube video. I couldn't wait to share this item with my friends and followers, so I went to Facebook and went live!

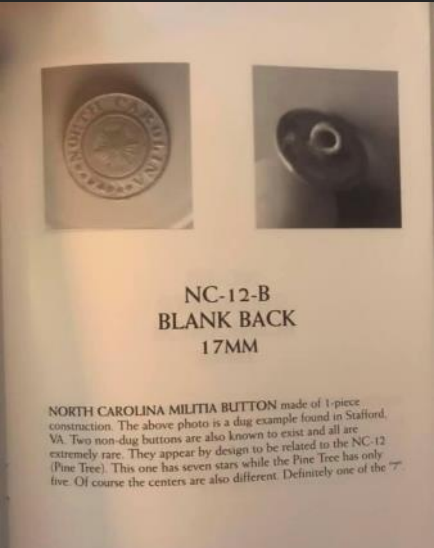
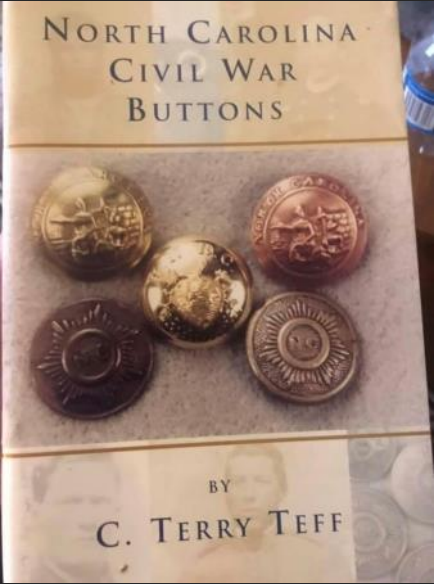
I later found out from a buddy who had a book titled "North Carolina Civil War

Buttons" by the late Terry Teff, this button is ULTRA SUPER RARE! Only 1 of 8 (now) known to exist! I couldn't believe I had just unearthed such a rare and amazing piece of North Carolina, Civil War and American history!

"DIG IT ALL, SAVE SOME HISTORY"

Found by: Shawn "SGT WHITEY" Sherrill

North Carolina, USA



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Civil War Facts



There were over 1200 different small arms (pistols and rifles) used by both armies during the Civil War... about 800 different types were used by the Confederates and 400 different ones by the Union Army.



Out of Place Archeology

Article by: Mike Haer

Pseudoarcheology is also known as alternative archaeology, fringe archeology, and a whole other list of names, but they get pretty ridiculous, and if you believe in Alternative Archaeology, downright rude. What is Pseudoarcheology?

Pseudoarcheology - refers to interpretations of the past from outside the archaeological science community, which reject the accepted data gathering and analytical methods of the discipline.

In other words, people who don't necessarily believe everything that the Archeological community subscribes to. At times, they seem to refuse to accept change to the official record even when clues and sometimes even facts are presented.

My interest in Pseudoarcheology started many years ago, not long after getting into metal detecting. In the early years of the internet, I was on a metal detecting forum (which one I have no clue), and a

guy posted a find that was suspected Egyptian.

The problem was he found it in the US.

Many years have passed, that my memory of that moment is very foggy, with little details remaining. I don't remember the object, the story behind the find, or even what part of the country it was found in, but it was one of the great lakes states, as I recall.

I do, however, remember that several people in the forum teased him, some harshly. The guy seemed very honest about the find, from what I recall. He wasn't saying it was evidence of Egyptians visiting the US and seemed confused on how it could have possibly got there and, if I remember, even suggested that maybe someone brought it over in recent times and lost it.

Giants of Ohio

Like most detectorists, I spend a lot of free time on my computer researching for possible metal detecting locations. Over the years, I've managed (usually accidentally) to come across many things that would fit in the Pseudoarcheology column.

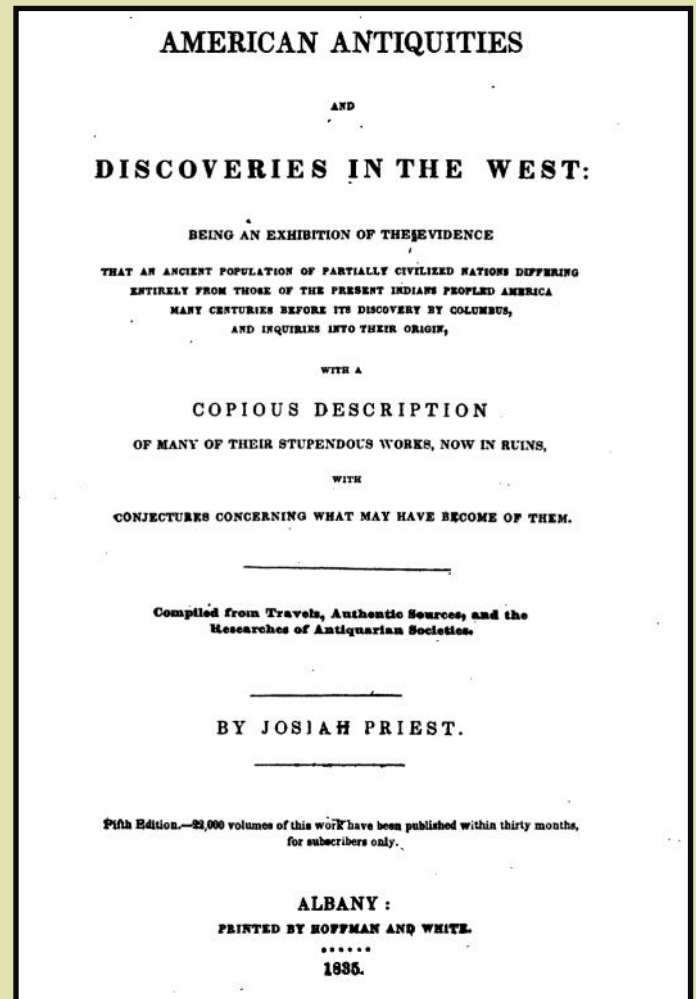
One of the first that I come across was the "Giants of Ohio" I came across a website that talked about the giants, and one part of the website listed off many 1800's articles from Ohio newspapers talking about discoveries of Giant bones being found.

I never visited any of those libraries and verified that those news articles listed were indeed in the archives. Still, I've had a few people who have told me they have confirmed it, at least at the ones listed in their local library.

These days, there is an overload of information on just about any subject you can imagine, including Giants of Ohio. If interested, do a quick search for yourself, and you can draw your conclusion if you think it was possible or not. My thought on it I believe it is possible that giants once roamed the

Ohio valley and beyond, but I have not dived in and researched it enough to draw a definitive answer.

A Shocking Read



Several months ago, my good friend and Dirt Digest magazine contributor, Dorian Cook, talked about this exact subject on the All Metal Mode Podcast. He brought up an obscure book that he suggested and even offered to send it to me. Fortunately, I was able to find it online, and at least for me, it was shocking, to say the least.

The book touches on several subjects that went from curious to shocking. Subjects like mummies found in caves in Kentucky, the discovery of giant bones, ancient text found etched in rocks, all here in the United States.

The book's most shocking part is its publish date, 1835, and the Author, Josiah Priest, talks about all of these different accounts in his book like it is common knowledge. It seemed like they were much more open-minded but then again, Archeology was in its infancy. If you would like to read the book, you can [find it HERE](#). The name of the book is "American Antiquities and Discoveries in the West."

Is it all lies?

Giants of the Ohio valley, America's Runestones, Tuscon artifacts, Egyptian writing found in the Southwest, Phoenician writing in Kentucky, Knights Templar clues found in North America, and MANY more all have one thing in common. They are highly controversial among Archeologists and other scholars.

My take on this is that educated people are giving uneducated opinions simply because "it" doesn't fit the history we

know. Let me give you an example. In 1960 in L'Anse Aux Meadows, Nova Scotia, a Viking settlement was discovered. Scholars recognized it as a Viking settlement, but it wasn't that way in the beginning. Many completely dismissed it without even seeing it! Why was it dismissed without even seeing it, one might ask, and the only plausible

Courtesy of: Ser Amantio di Nicolao/ Wikimedia



answer is simple. It didn't fit known history. Before the settlement was found, no one thought the Vikings made it to North America, so they dismissed the claim.

Some believe the Vikings made it to the

United States or at least farther south through Archeological excavations. During excavations, butternuts and butternut wood were found at Aux Meadows. Butternuts don't grow any farther north than Brunswick and are common in the Northeast United States. In most people's eyes, this is proof that the Viking at the very least explored farther south than Aux Meadows yet some Archeologists and Scholars disagree.



Courtesy of: Eric Ewing / Wikimedia

My point is this. It seems, at least to me,
The great Serpent Mound - Ohio

even when overwhelming proof is brought forward, if it can change history, it will take a lot to get it accepted. I'm not against the scrutiny objects fall under when it can potentially change history. As

a matter of fact, that's the way it should be but what I am against and disagree entirely with is things being labeled fake and hoaxes by "experts" who never examined the artifact(s) in question!

Why?

I talked to Dorian Cook the other day, and I was telling him I wanted to write this article. I was excited, gave him a rough outline, and he listened intently. When I finished up he asked me how I was going to tie it into treasure hunting?" I didn't know what to say at first, he elaborated a little more, "what does this have to do with metal detecting?" It left me speechless for a moment, and for a split second, I thought about not sharing it in Dirt Digest.

The thought quickly fled, and it came to me. Years ago, I found a relic that I believe resulted in a Paranormal incident. Most think I'm a little odd anyhow so I would share my Paranormal experience. It was amazing how many people told me their own Paranormal experience involving treasure hunting, but it was surprising how many people didn't want me to share their story!

Seeing how that guy was treated by

fellow detectorists in that forum many years ago, knowing how the so-called "experts" treat finds that don't fit the historically known, I don't know if I would ever share a find if I thought there was a possibility it didn't fit what's accepted.

People have found artifacts in the US that don't fit. They are shared in secret, almost whispers amongst the metal detecting community. Everyone seems scared to share, and for a good reason! I wish I could share the few stories that have been relayed to me, but I gave my word I wouldn't. One of my favorites and has now come from a few various

sources is Roman coins on the Florida beaches, including supposed stories of several found in ancient pots.

I wanted to share every detectorist I know of has a passion for adventure. Most of us are fascinated with history, and what could be more exciting, even if we didn't share it with anyone else, finding something that changes history as we know it?

If you have a story involving something found out of place, we would love to hear it, even if we can't share the story. Please email me at mhaer@dirtdigestmagazine.com.

Treasure's From The Dirt

While on a recent trip to Louisiana I managed to find this AVC (Alabama Volunteer Corps) button and a few Civil War bullets.

Found by: Gypsy Jewels



YouTube



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Lane Pratter

Louisiana Civil War Artifact Hunter

A sit down with Lane Pratter who has been metal detecting since the late 60's. Lane has found some incredible Civil War artifacts throughout the years.



First seated quarter!



1861 Union officers small dress buckle

Lane Pratter holding a Confederate Schenkl shell he found metal detecting.



Bridle Rosette with lions face.



Dirt Digest - how did you get started Metal Detecting.

Lane - When I was 4 years old, I was walking through a field around me and found a Seated dollar. I was living with my aunt and uncle and when I showed my aunt, she told my uncle he needed to buy me a metal detector. My uncle was into civil war artifacts and would take me to sites related to the civil war. I detected until I was about 22 and didn't get back into it until I was 42.



9 ring ringtail Confederate bullet.

Dirt Digest - Lot of years that you didn't metal detect. What made you leave the hobby for so long?

Lane - I got busy with the military then life and didn't get back into it until after I left the military. I got back into the hobby hardcore in 2005.



Confederate Engineer button.

Dirt Digest - What metal detectors have you used

Lane - First, I used the Whites 66T goldmaster. It took 6 round 9-volt batteries and I still have it. Second, Red Baron 550 D -TR with a 6-inch coil and you couldn't change the coil, still have that one as well. Third was the Bounty Hunter Ace with 6-inch coil. Later I had the Whites Prizm II followed by the Garrett At Pro and now I have the Garret AT Max.



Dirt Digest - When did you decide to concentrate more on finding Civil War artifacts?

Lane - I live in a Civil War rich area with a lot of kin that owns land where battles and skirmishes took place. I was already finding Civil War artifacts before I was even searching for them so I decided to concentrate my efforts on finding more.

Dirt Digest - Tell me about some of your favorite finds.

Lane - I found a finial from a flagpole that looks like a spade. It's not as rare as I thought but none of the guys, I hunt with in Louisiana have ever found one. I found a Hotchkiss shell that was 75 percent together. What makes it so rare

is the cap usually flies off of them and this one still has it.

I got an 1878 S 50 cent piece that is has an extremely high value. It was my first ever coin find but I didn't find it metal detecting. Back in 1968 I was walking a field, picking up ears of corn that were laying on the ground when I found it. I didn't send it off to be graded until 2017, I knew it was rare but was surprised it was valued that high.

Dirt Digest - Tell us a few of your favorite metal detecting stories.

Lane - I was using a Fisher M-scope back about 1973 or 74. I got a signal and the signal moved on me. I asked the guy I was with why it was moving and he told me it was an oscillating



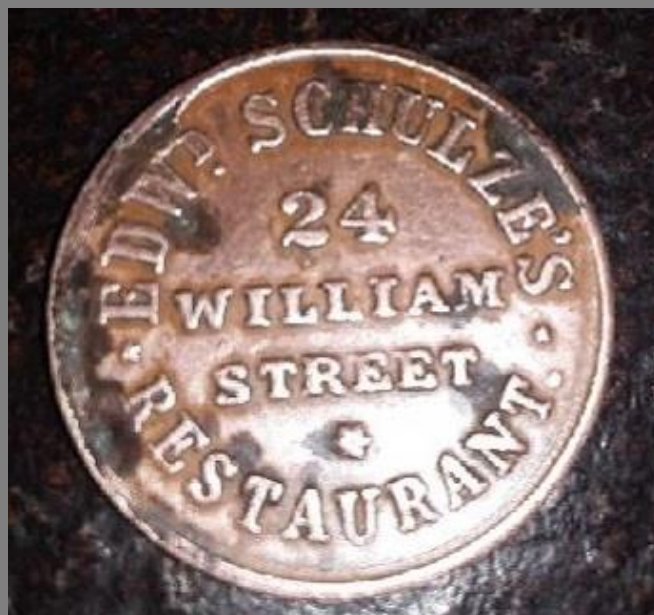
Louisiana Civil War button



The highly sought after 1916 D (Denver mint) Mercury dime. With only 264,000 minted, making it a rare and valuable find.



Store card token was found between two bricks that were mortared together. Lane was metal detecting where a house had been that the Union destroyed while in the area. The house had been built just after 1863.





Hotchkiss shell with 75% still remaining

detector and would pick up anything and it might be something alive moving. I started digging and suddenly a Tarantula jumped out at me! That metal detector would false if you touched the grass or if the wind blew too hard. I gave the metal detector to the couple I was hunting with and told them no thanks, it's bad luck!

Another time I was on the side of a creek and found my first cannonball. I don't remember what it was but it had a



brass fuse. I left it on the side of the hill while I kept metal detecting to come back to it when I was done metal detecting. I was probably a mile away when I heard an



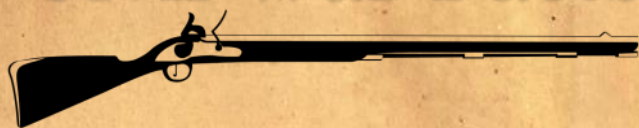
explosion. When I went back for it later it was gone and a pile of rocks that was below it was gone. Evidently it rolled down the hill and exploded! My first cannonball I didn't get to bring home!

Dirt Digest -So tell me about your most recent run in with a cannonball.

Lane - One of the things I did in the army was dispose of ordinance. A local farmer plowed up a cannonball from



Civil War Facts



- ♦Arlington National Cemetery occupies the front yard of the pre-war home of Robert E. Lee.
- ♦It is estimated that 10,000 bullets were made for every man killed or wounded during the Civil War.
- ♦After the famous battle of Gettysburg, over 24,000 rifles were picked up off the battlefield.

the Civil War. He called me to come get it and when I arrived it was a BIG one. I called some friends to come help me. As we were working on carrying it out one of the guys said "that fuse just turned" we quickly sat it down and ran but unfortunately, I didn't get far enough away and it blew me about 70 feet. I was the only one who got hurt. It fractured my hip in 3 places and crushed the ball of my femur. It pretty well also destroyed the truck we were going to load it into. Currently I am still laid up waiting on surgery.

Dirt Digest - Can you give advice to



anyone who might find a Civil War shell

Lane— Get it in water as soon as you pull it out, make sure there are no chemicals in the bucket. If you have any concerns its best to just have the bomb squad come out and dispose of it. I once had a 7-pound Confederate cannonball I dug up that was leaking gunpowder. I wanted it bad but it was best to have the bomb squad come out and take care of it.

Dirt Digest - Tell me the strangest thing you've ever found.

Lane - I was using the Max with a small coil in a really junky area that I had been

skipping over in the past. I got an 85 so I was thinking it was a silver quarter, that's where they usually come in for me on the Max. I dug it up and it ended up being a button that read "Republic of Connecticut". After doing some research I found out it is a Civil War button that is exceedingly rare for this part of the country.



Civil War Facts



During the siege of Port Hudson, LA... a small village perched on bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River 40 miles below Baton Rouge... The Union Army surrounded the two-mile defensive line established around it by the Rebel soldiers and bombarded the Rebels with over 50,000 artillery shells over a period of 49 days.

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Finding Civil War

Relics

Is not
Easy



Article by: Rich Creason

Over a century and a half ago, the hills and valleys of many southern states rang with the sounds of conflict. Cannons roared, muskets boomed, and sabers clanged against each other. The screams of wounded and dying soldiers filled the air. Smoke from the rifles stung the eyes and noses of the combatants and the noise was deafening. As one side ran forward in a charge, the others might be retreating. Equipment was dropped during the fighting and trampled into the ground by the boots of the men and the hoofs of many horses. Bullets were dropped in the haste to



ram another round down the barrel of their guns. Buttons were ripped from uniforms. When the skirmish or battle ended, the dead of both sides slowly decayed into the ground leaving all manner of metal objects in the dirt to mark their

passing. Many items of the period were also lost in the relative quiet of campsites. The soldiers carved the soft lead bullets into chess pieces to while away the long nights. Harmonica music was common in the camps and harmonica



*The early
detectorists were
able to find huge
amounts of these
artifacts and
amass
outstanding
collections*

reeds were left behind. Even coins of the mid-1800's were lost in the dust. The wounded who were being attended to had to hold a bullet in their teeth to help contain the pain since painkillers were not commonly available. Hence the term "Bite the bullet". These items were discarded when the soldier no longer needed them for whatever reason.

A century later, those who had possession of early

metal detectors, would begin finding all of these lost items from the Civil War. Once again, relics from that period would be discovered and again see the light of day. The early detectorists were able to find huge amounts of these artifacts and amass outstanding collections of these items.

As the decades went by, unsearched Civil War sites became scarcer and more hours were spent trying to find these sought-after

areas. More time was spent researching than actually in the field hunting. Those who were lucky enough to have located these sites earlier went back again with newer detectors and discovered the items they had missed in past searches.

So, how can a newcomer to the hobby acquire some of these historic items for himself? Susie and I found the easiest way was to attend seeded hunts which offered Civil War relics as targets or



prizes. We started attending these paid hunts over 40 years ago. Our first encounter with these relics was when a guy from Tennessee named Cliff Williams (some of you other old timers might remember him) put on a 30-minute hunt at one of Kenny Wray's events near Freetown, IN. He wanted to promote his relic hunt in TN, so he charged \$10 and buried lots of targets. When the hunt started, Susie and I hoped to find a few relics to take home. Her second dig was a cannonball slightly bigger than a baseball. She had to carry it throughout the hunt! When it was over, I had my coin pouch full, both jeans pockets stuffed, and I had to walk off the field holding my pants up because of the weight. We had bullets, buckles, buttons, J-hooks, sword scabbard tips, and much more. We were hooked!



We arranged our finds in a collection box at home, and Susie took the items to school to show her third graders. They found them much more interesting than looking at a picture in a book. History came alive for them. Our daughter, Angi, took them to her school, and we showed them to scout groups and at nursing homes. When some of our friends from down south (we met them at hunts) heard we were showing them to kids, they started

giving us some of their items to make a more impressive display. We then found we could take some of our duplicate items to the seeded hunts and trade them for items we didn't have. Many two-day hunts would have an auction at night and we would buy rarer items. We added spurs, bullet molds, rare buttons, and other items to our collection this way.

We started attending relic hunts in Virginia and Texas. At some of these locations, the hunt was

actually held on property where you could still find actual relics in the ground besides the items planted for the hunt.

Our grandson, Benjamin, got his first detector when he was five. At that early age, he was interested in our Civil War collection. He started his own. We gave him some items to start, and he began finding more in seeded hunts. And like us, he traded for more. He would sell the

money and prizes he had found in these hunts and buy more relics. When he was about 10, he started entering his collection in his 4-H fair. During the last two years before the pandemic hit, (no fair that year), his Civil War collection took Grand Champion of all collections at the Fort Wayne, IN fair.

Benjamin is now 15, has five detectors of his own, and continues to add to

his display. He has made a great friend from North Carolina who has an outstanding collection of his own which he has found over many years of hunting. He meets with Benjamin every year at Treasure Fest in southern Indiana. Over the last five years, he has given our grandson three or four rare items each year. They sit around the campfire and talk about the War. "Doc" says he has never

Treasure's From The Dirt

I was metal detecting the yard of my old house in Fort Oglethorpe, GA and found this Civil War KMA cartridge box plate. It is from the Kentucky Military Academy. Fort Oglethorpe is just outside of the Chickamauga Battlefield and was part of the route of retreat of the Confederate army after the Battle of Chattanooga. I found it January 29th and the only information I have found was from a book on plates that has their example as the only known one. I am still in shock.

Fort Oglethorpe was a US Army Calvary post for the 6th Calvary from the early 1900s until the end of World War II. **Found by: Ronald Slatton**



met any kid that young who is that interested and knowledgeable about the Civil War, and he encourages that interest with his gifts.

We were at Treasure Week in Pennsylvania last year. Terry Smith from Texas was putting on a relic hunt one day. When Benjamin found out about this, he said he was going with us. A lot of the southern hunters brought their Civil War displays to show off. Doc brought a 50 caliber Enfield Confederate rifle to show. It was found with a detector, completely intact except the wooden stock was rotted away. During show and tell that evening, Doc asked Benjamin to come up to the podium. He presented the boy with a 50 caliber Enfield bullet and asked if he knew from what that bullet was fired. Benjamin replied it would have been fired from the type of rifle on display on

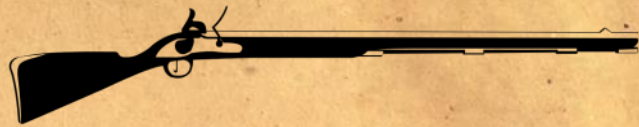
the table. Doc then presented that outstanding relic to Benjamin for his collection.

While most of us will never have a friend that generous, buying, trading, and sometimes, finding, the remains of this terrible war will help

start your own collection of these sought-after relics.

The author may be reached at eyewrite4u@aol.com.

Civil War Facts



- ♦ At the battle of Stone's River in Murfreesboro, TN, the Union Quartermaster reported that the army used up 20 million rounds of small arms ammunition and 20,000 artillery shells in the four-day battle.
- ♦ The Civil War saw the creation of the largest artillery pieces in history, some capable of firing explosive cannonballs weighing as much as 800 lbs.

*“We learned a lot from that experience
and continued to return for future hunts”*

Article by: Stephen Stewart

Organized *Hunts* 101

I remembered several years ago; I had been metal detecting for a few years and first heard about an "Organized Hunt." It was in an area rich in Civil War history,

and I had always wanted to find civil war relics, so my interest was piqued. At the time, my hunting buddy and I were going out 2-3 days a week, all day long, hunting residential yards of houses dating the late 1800's up through the 1940s. We both loved the "old" silver coins, Indian head and Wheaties, and occasional tokens and rings we were finding. But I had found a Confederate South Carolina Civil War-era Uniform button and a three-ring bullet in a couple of these yards, and I had completely



caught the relic bug. So, we began trying to research how to attend one of these organized hunts. Finally, we got into one, and as the hunt was months away, we had plenty of time to plan and form misconceptions about the upcoming hunt. We really had no idea what to



expect, and our first foray into relic hunting and at an organized hunt was, let's say, less than optimal, but still yet a success. Through research, my buddy discovered that the area we were attending had some notoriously mineralized (often referred to as "hot" soil) ground. While VLF's would work to a degree, pi (pulse induction) detectors were optimal for the area due to the soil and numerous years of detecting that occurred with VLF machines in the past,

*“Organized group hunts
are not seeded hunts
unless advertised as so”*





meaning that what had been in the VLF range in that soil was mostly gone. We each made the significant investment of buying a pi detector. We figured if we were going to spend the money for the entry fee for the hunt, the expense of travel, lodging, and food, we wanted to maximize our chances of finding something good. Which in hindsight,

I don't think we could have made a better decision. That was one area where we were spot on! We practiced with our new machines in our area for a couple of months before the hunt, which was a good idea.

However, setting up the machines for the intended hunt area was still a mystery to us. Finally, the day came, and we were there for the hunt. I remember feeling overwhelmed as the morning talk ended and we were released to begin hunting. I had never been in a group of 200 plus people, all with the same goals and intentions as me while using an almost brand-new detector. I had a backpack on which I wasn't used to and had everything but the kitchen sink. The day went on, and I found some bullets and buttons and other relics while trying to

cover every one of the hundreds of acres of land. By 3 pm, I finally took my backpack off and laid down due to exhaustion. My buddy said he saw me from a distance and wondered if I was dead, we still laugh about that all these years later!



Looking back, we both did pretty well for our first attempt at this type of hunting and our first group hunt. At the time, we felt we didn't do so well, but that was due to us having unrealistic expectations. We learned a lot from that experience and continued to return for future hunts and reached out to a group that was starting to put on organized hunts and offered our medical skills as a service. We became part of the team for those hunts that we still put on today, some eight years later.

I thought I would write this article to explain a little about group hunts, and the do's and don'ts to help anyone considering attending one. I see a lot of comments such as "the day I pay to metal detect is the day I call it quits" or "I



would never do a group hunt," well let



me say this to the naysayers, I have what I consider my best finds have come from group hunts. from a Union Soldiers Identification Disc to a complete 10lb Parrot Artillery shell, a cut Spanish Pistareen, 110 confederate bullets all from one ford, and so on. All from various group hunts, from hunts that I'm a part of, and some of these from other hunts where I was just a participant. Along with numerous great memories of others finds that I got to witness being found and hold in my hands some of those rare items I would otherwise only see in a museum. Organized group hunts are not seeded hunts unless advertised as so; they are natural hunts in areas with



some known history, and so just like when you go out at home, there are no guarantees, you still have to get your coil over it! You are ***paying for an opportunity*** to hunt on land you otherwise would not be able to, and that is what you must keep in mind. So many times, I've seen people that are used to coin shooting a park at home, go to an organized hunt with a machine not suited for the area, spend half of the first day, then give up and then complain, "there was nothing there" or "wow I found a 200 bullet", blaming their lack of success on the group organizer. These hunts are hard work; 3 days of detecting 9-10 hour days is what it takes to be successful;

even then, sometimes you aren't. For all the stellar hunts I've had where I found one of the items I mentioned earlier, I have had five hunts where I found very little. It's just the nature of the hobby. Think about it, when you go out at home, you probably have a lot more days with average (or less) finds than days where you found a bucket lister. But, at every organized hunt I have attended, and that's upward of 60 now, ***someone*** has found a bucket list, eye-popping find. And if you let yourself, you will have a great time. You just can't put pressure on yourself to "find enough to cover the expenses," I mean do bass fisherman catch enough fish to pay for the boat?



Do hunters get enough game to cover all their expenses?? Do golfers get a low enough score to cover theirs??? No!!

“he slowly turned his gaze toward me while still holding the little badge and said, "I think I found one of these and threw it away!"”

Metal detecting is a hobby, like all of those, for enjoyment and fun; this happens to be the one hobby where you have the **potential** to pay for your expenses, and then some, but you can't get hung up on that being your measure of success. I have a good number of valuable relics and coins, and I've never sold a single one of them; in fact, I spend way more than I will ever recover on metal detectors, gear, gas, and travel, but I enjoy myself, which is worth more to me than some money!

I'm going to tell you a story of one of my early hunts, that's funny and amazing and has a real lesson to be learned from it. At one of those first organized hunts I attended, I was the driver of a carpool to



One of the fellows in my carpool picked up a small silver item and asked, "what's this," and the fellow explained, "that's a 6th corps badge, they made them themselves often out of a seated dime, if you look close you can see "one dime" on the back of it" well this fellow got as pale as a ghost. A look of horror came across his face. It was so obvious I said, "what's wrong, bud?" he slowly turned his gaze toward me while still holding the little badge and said, "I think I found one of these and threw it away!" I asked him

the hunt site (this is often required to keep vehicle traffic to a minimum at the hunt sites). My friend and I and two people we didn't know at the time (often, your carpool mates will turn into lifelong friends!), so on the 3rd and last day of the hunt, the organizers were putting on a lunch. Often the participants show off what they have found up to that point, and as the 4 of us from my carpool were making the walk to the lunch, a group of people was gathered around a well-known "youtube" personality, and he had his finds laid out on his truck tailgate.



where did he throw it away? "In the trash can in the hotel this morning, I thought it was aluminum," so I tossed him my truck keys and said, "go see, **NOW!!**". Now by this time, it was 1145am; check out is typically 11 am. Had it been me, my 6th corps badge would have been in the local landfill, but this guy had the luck of the Irish because, in a few minutes, he arrived at the lunch and was holding his 6th corps badge, made from a seated dime, you could still see "one dime" on it! The lesson here is, **NEVER** throw anything away until you are sure it's not a relic or desirable item!

So if you are thinking of attending an organized hunt, keep a few tips in mind, and go in with the intent of having fun, and let the finds be the icing on the cake!

DO:

Research hunts that offer the types of finds that interest you.

See what soil type is in the area of the hunt and plan accordingly.

Take a spare detector, coils, pin pointer, shovel, and so on.

Have the means to carry in the field **necessities such** as water, food, field repair kit, clothing, and socks

Talk to others that have attended a similar hunt before and heed their advice.

Go in with a positive attitude and **realistic** expectations.

Have Fun!!

Don't:

Set unrealistic expectations.

Expect to cover expenses with finds made.

Leave trash or iron junk lying on the ground.

Leave open or terrible looking dig holes.

Blame your lack of preparation or effort on the hunt organizers or anyone else.

Crowd in on others already hunting an area; there is always an adequate area to hunt without encroaching.

Throw anything away until you have identified it.

Civil War Facts



The Confederates employed explosive mines in the James River near Richmond, VA to stop Union Navy ships that were triggered by wires carrying electricity from batteries on shore.

Treasure Legends

Tuscon, Arizona – This one goes right along with the Pseudo archaeology article on page 32. In 1924 thirty-one lead objects were found in Tuscon, Arizona. Several crosses, swords, and other artifacts were discovered with



several bearing inscriptions, including one with 800 A.D.

There have been several theories on how they might have gotten there. Romans possibly, and it has even been suggested it was the knights templar. Although it might never be discovered who made them or why they were found there, undoubtedly, whoever made them knew Latin, so it wasn't natives who inhabited the Southwest at the time.

Of course, scholars are still arguing today whether they are authentic or not and will probably never agree. What catches my interest about this story is no one has ever profited from these

finds. Why go through all the trouble and time to make them, if not for profit?

One of the crosses has the inscription "Calalus, the unknown land," which could mean it was a European colony of sorts and there might be a lot more artifacts just waiting to be found.

Dents Run Pennsylvania – In 2018, you might have heard about the F.B.I. descended on Dents Run and secretly digging. Millions in gold lost during the civil war were supposedly the reason they were there. Researching the story led me to several different legends surrounding the gold in question. From the best I can tell, gold was being moved during the civil war secretly by Union troops when "something"



happened, and it became lost.

The gold in question was said to be bars that were to be used to pay the troops. There are so many problems with this story, in my opinion, that it's hard to believe.

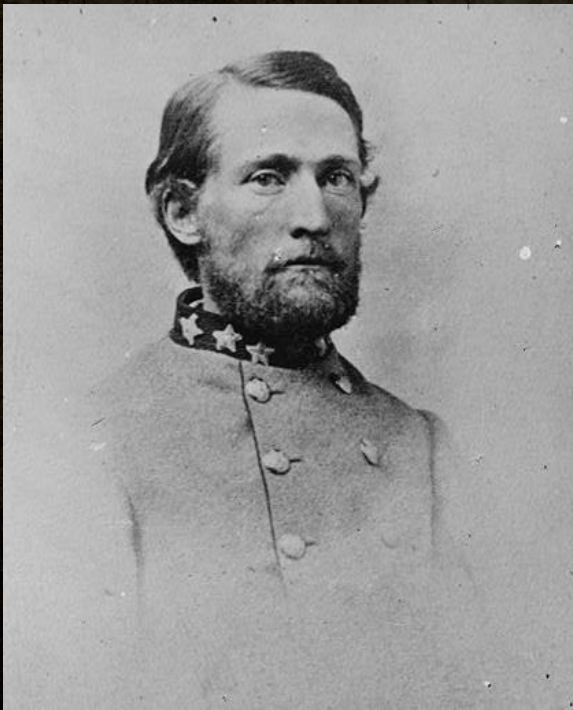
Over the years, I have heard about so many treasure stories involving lost payroll headed to pay troops. The stories are always so similar yet a different war. Second, why would gold bars be used to pay the troops and not coins or even paper money that was being used? It makes much more sense to use paper money that could easily be replaced. Third, there is debate on whether gold was even used to pay troops during the civil war.

With many holes in this story, you might ask yourself why we included this story at all. We have to imagine the F.B.I. didn't send 50 agents to the small town for nothing. Something led them there, although the F.B.I. did report that nothing was found. Still, even if they did, we would probably never hear about it.

IF nothing was found, maybe whatever they were looking for is still there. The fact that the F.B.I. took it seriously,

perhaps there is a treasure, and there is some truth to the story!

Fairfax County Virginia – John S. Mosby was a daring confederate soldier who wreaked havoc on Union forces during the Civil War. Known for his daring raids into the North, he and his men would quickly disappear and blend in with other civilians.



His most daring raid was into Fairfax county Virginia in the middle of the night, several miles past the Union lines. He captured General Edwin H. Stoughton and reportedly took back somewhere in the ballpark of 350,000 worth of gold, silver, and heirlooms stolen by Union troops from wealthy Southerners.

While making his way back after the raid, it was reported there were Union troops moving nearby, and Mosby decided to bury the treasure and never to return.

Legend says that Mosby said there was a lot of treasure buried in the Virginia countryside on his deathbed, and he regretted never going back for it. If true and the phrase "a lot of treasure" makes one wonder if he was referring to this single treasure or possibly others as well from his many daring raids.

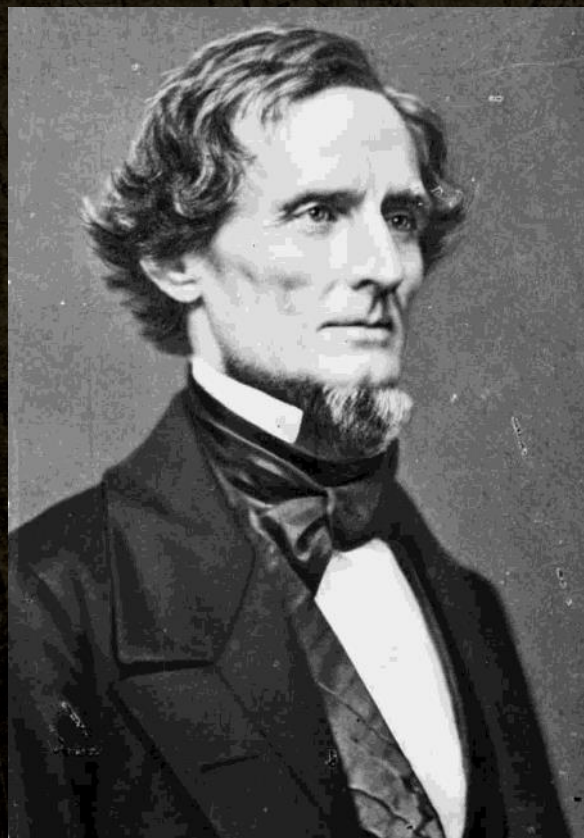
The treasure is believed to be between Culpepper and Norman.

Wilkes County, Georgia – The biggest treasure story involves Confederate president Jefferson Davis.

Upon getting word that the fall of Richmond was imminent, it is rumored that Jefferson Davis, along with Confederate troops, loaded up the gold and silver from the treasury to keep it out of the hands of the Union.

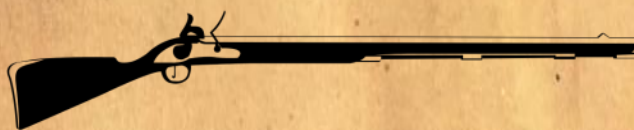
He also took gold reserves from Richmond's banks that would later be deposited in a vault in Washington, Virginia.

The story gets a little crazy after that. The Richmond gold reserves fell into Union troops' hands that supposedly later came under attack, and much of it was stolen.



As far as what happened to the confederate gold, silver and valuables are anyone's guess. It is suggested that much of it was spent to pay troops and buy supplies on their way South but what we do know is when Jefferson Davis was captured six weeks after leaving Richmond, He only had a few dollars left on him.

Civil War Facts



Notorious Confederate guerrilla leader, William Clarke Quantrill, and his brother were on their way from Missouri to the California goldfields, intending to stay out of the war. During their first night's stop in Kansas on their journey, a group of Union soldiers called "Redlegs" entered their camp, and unprovoked tortured and killed Quantrill's brother then shot him and left him for dead. Quantrill was found and his life saved. After a year spent recovering from his wounds, he joined the "Redlegs" and one-by-one secretly assassinated all 22 of his brother's killers. He then deserted and formed his famous guerrilla band.

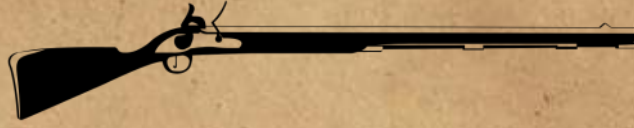
Treasure's From The Dirt

I found this sword belt hanger in December 2020. it is civil war period and a style that's usually identified as Confederate. I found it in Rogersville Tennessee with my Minelab Equinox 800 with 6" coil. Its made of brass and the coin is for scale.

Found by: Stephen Stewart



Civil War Facts



The number of women who served as soldiers during the war is estimated at between 400 and 750, although an accurate count is impossible because the women had to disguise themselves as men.

The mortality rate for prisoners of war was 15.5 percent for Union soldiers and 12 percent for Confederate soldiers.

The Civil War devastated the Confederate states. The presence of vast armies throughout the countryside meant that livestock, crops, and other staples were consumed very quickly. In an effort to gather fresh supplies and relieve the pressure on the Confederate garrison at Vicksburg, Mississippi, Confederate General Robert E. Lee

launched a daring invasion of the North in the summer of 1863. He was defeated by Union General George G. Meade in a three-day battle near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania that left nearly 51,000 men killed, wounded, or missing in action.

Arguably the two most famous military personalities to emerge from the American Civil War were Ohio born Ulysses S. Grant , and Virginia born Robert E. Lee . The two men had very little in common. Lee was from a well respected First Family of Virginia, with ties to the Continental Army and the founding fathers of the nation.



ON THE GOLD

with

THOMAS "PENNYWEIGHT" FOWLKES

My First Gold Club Outing

It was a cold, damp October Saturday, and the people were still coming into camp.

My son and I had gotten there the night before. When we arrived, there was a pretty good crowd gathered. Many clubs from the surrounding states and even one from Pennsylvania showed up. This was the final outing of the season for the local GPAA (Gold Prospectors of America

Association) club and my first outing ever. I wanted to experience a GPAA

"I suited up and went to the creek to get some gold"

outing. I was not a member yet and wanted to see what the association had to offer.



I had just converted my highbanker into a dredge combo and wanted to learn how to use it. I thought this outing would be an excellent place to do that since it was held on a good known gold creek. So, we woke up Saturday

morning and had our usual camping breakfast of bacon and eggs. I've evolved our breakfast to include ham and

"I joined the GPAA shortly after that. There is value in GPAA"

pancakes now. There were a few vendors there with equipment to sell. I started my walk around the campsite to see what they offered. There were a few people I knew, but not many. What I noticed as I walked was that people said good morning and waved. Some stopped and struck up a conversation. Things like How long have you been prospecting? Where are you from?

It eased my mind a bit that people were friendly and seemed to be enjoying themselves. After about an hour of this, I suited up and went to the creek to get some gold. As I got down there, people were already working part of the gravel bar that I was. We talked for about 5 minutes, and I headed to my equipment. The water

temperature was not too cold for October. I started my pump and worked the material. My son and I worked until about 4 pm. The club had a dinner planned for all the people there. So, we shut down everything and headed back to the tent. I changed, and we went to the gathering area. When I got there, I was amazed at the number of people that were actually there. There must have been a 125+ people there. Quite a few families with kids. A mixture of kids, teenagers, and adults. From where we were, I could see the creek. There, several



floating dredges and many more highbankers and trommels.

This was a huge gathering.

The dinner line started, and we got into it. There was plenty of food, and people sat around and talked about all manner things include the gold they were seeing

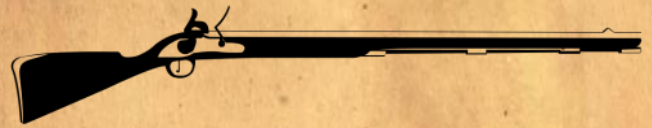
while eating. After dinner was over, they had raffle drawings. The vendors and clubs were raffling a lot of items, from gold prospecting to metal detectors. I had bought a few earlier during my walk. There were some excellent prizes given out. Unfortunately, I didn't win anything, but people were enjoying themselves. I believe this is the value of the GPAA membership. Everybody hung out until it started getting dark, and then they grouped up and hung around the campfires and continued to tell tales of adventures taken and dreamed of. It was interesting listening to these experienced guys. I was learning tips and tricks that I, as a newcomer, had not learned yet.

The next morning was pretty much the same. Breakfast, talking to people, and then hitting the creek. The big difference is that as the day went on, fewer people were working the gravel bar. By the time I got back up to camp, there were very few people left. We broke camp and packed up. I thanked the guy running the place, and we headed home. We had a great time, and I joined the GPAA shortly after that. There is value in GPAA. There is some value in the claims, but the best value is in the people. The knowledge you can get from them.

So, if you're thinking about trying gold prospecting, join the GPAA of your local club and GO GET THAT SHINEY!

For great prospecting videos find Thomas on: 

Civil War Facts



When Union General Edwin Stoughton put out notice of a large reward for the capture or killing of Confederate guerrilla leader, John Mosby, the cunning officer responded by bluffing his way through the Union lines around Fairfax, VA on a rainy night with a party of his men. He captured General Stoughton in his bed and then successfully led his men back through the enemy lines with his prisoner, thus ending the military career in humiliation of the man who vowed to see him dead.

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Viper AT Coil Testing



Article by: Gypsy Jewels

YouTube

"I was able to detect quarters as deep as 12 inches"



"My overall impression of the Viper Coil was it is excellent at honing in on deep finds"

Since receiving the AT Viper Coil to test on my Garrett AT series detectors, I could only get out twice to try it on my AT Max before the freeze made it to Texas. I have not had an opportunity to test it out on the AT Pro. However, I am hoping to as soon as the ice and freezing temperatures clear away. I am excited to tell you about the two times I had an opportunity to test the coil and share my results!

The Viper Coil by Garrett Metal Detectors comes standard with a new Garrett Apex, but it is specific to the Apex only because of the Multi-Flex technology. This coil will not work on the AT series.

Garrett Metal Detectors has introduced the new AT Viper Coil 6" x 11" DD that will fit on any of the following Garrett AT series detectors: Pro, Max, and Gold.

My first use of this new AT Viper coil was in the rocky terrain of a Texas riverbed and at a local swim area. I was able to detect quarters as deep as 12 inches and dimes as deep as 8 inches. I found this to be impressive because the signal and audible noise were strong and consistent - providing a strong, repeatable signal.

I will say that it is a delightful surprise to learn how sensitive the coil has been on smaller targets, such as fragments of bullets and slivers of aluminum!

After the swim area, my group and I moved along the river to an area where old homesteads existed, and I detected further using the Viper coil. In this area, there were many iron bits from the old homesteads that used to exist. The coil proved to have highly effective iron separation- allowing efficient detection of the "goodies" from the iron trash. It was here that I found my best find of the day, a gold-filled boxing pendant from 1938! If you are interested in learning more, the entire video can be viewed by [visiting my YouTube channel!](#)



My second test run was the following day in the same swimming location at the river. After having some time to get comfortable with the coil, I was better equipped to get right to it. I focused on deeper targets this time, finding many more coins. Between the two days combined, approximately 12 hours spent testing this coil, total coins found is estimated to be more than one hundred!



In addition to the coins, I also dug a men's tungsten wedding ring and a class ring. The class ring is dated 2001 and has some identifying marks. Research will continue as I attempt to find its original owner and return it to him. The tungsten was reasonably shallow, about three inches below the surface.

The stainless steel class ring was approximately 6 inches below the surface.

My overall impression of the Viper Coil was that it is excellent at honing in on deep finds, separating between iron and preferred hits. The physical sizing made it easier to navigate between rocks, roots, and foliage. Usually, I use the smaller 5" x 8" DD coil on the AT Max as my go-to. Still, this Viper Coil will likely become my preference for a similar function while more easily covering more ground and with added depth capabilities. I will definitely bring this Viper Coil along on field hunts, wooded areas, old homesteads, uneven terrain, and likely other places as I learn more about it with continued use.

Keep an eye on my channel to learn more about it and updates on field test results!

As always, you are appreciated. Please stay safe and be well my friends! This Texan needs to warm up a bit, then I will see you on the next!!

~ Gypsy Jewels



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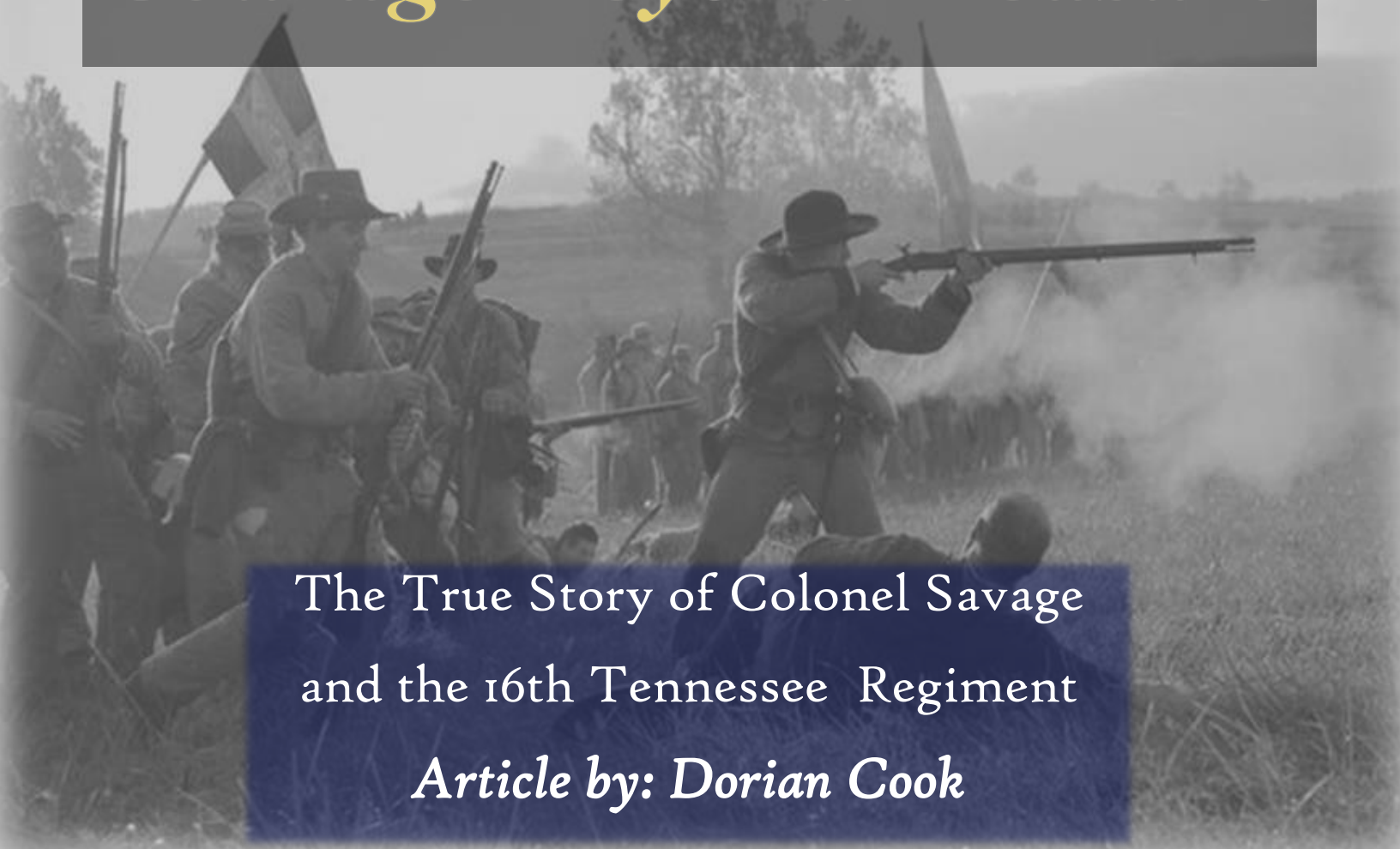
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Courage Beyond Measure



The True Story of Colonel Savage and the 16th Tennessee Regiment

Article by: Dorian Cook

The next time your detector finds a Minie Ball or a piece of shrapnel from a cannon shell on a Civil War battle site, as you hold it in your hand and feel that satisfying thrill of success... think of the men in this story and the literal hell on earth they endured for the sake of their willingness to defend the convictions they held. Imagine, for a few moments, the noise and chaos of battle all around you, the shrill Rebel yell, that struck fear into the hearts of their enemies... and the blood that so stained the ground you are walking on in great patches. That artifact

you hold in your hand... and every other one you dig as well... is a bigger monument to their courage beyond measure than the tallest and most expensive statue ever placed on a battlefield!

Our story comes from the Battle of Perryville, Kentucky... one of the twenty biggest battles of the entire Civil War. The main part of this great struggle began around 7:00 AM on October 8th, 1862 and ramped up in intensity all day until the armies stopped fighting as darkness fell about 7:00 PM. Our story

begins about 1:30 PM as Reb Colonel Wharton and his cavalry regiment move out of the large horseshoe shaped valley bordered by the Chaplin River and a semi-circular rock bluff, called Walker's Bend. Their mission is to secure the Confederate right flank for the major assault on the Union lines by the entire



Rebel army that is about to begin.

Also, happening at the same time, General Daniel Donelson of Cheatham's division is ordered to move out of Walker's Bend and attack what the Reb

generals think is the Federal left flank. They are badly mistaken on this score and will attack the very center of the strong Yankee line instead of its extreme end on the Union left. The plan was to turn the left flank of the boys in blue and roll up their entire army. Although, they are doomed to fail in reaching that goal, they will inflict terrible casualties on their foes and push 1/3 of the Union army on the field back over a mile before the day's fighting ends at dark and thus will be able to claim a "technical victory" in the battle. It will be, however, an "empty victory" for the Rebs when measured against their own terrible casualties and results in nothing towards subduing Kentucky for the South and adding it to the list of the eleven Confederate States. It is said that the hopes of the southern leadership for a Confederate Kentucky died that day along with its brave soldiers at Perryville.

While all these troop movements are going on, even though the massed troops are not yet blazing away at each other from close distances, men are already dying on the battlefield from long-range rifle bullets and exploding shells from artillery on both sides.

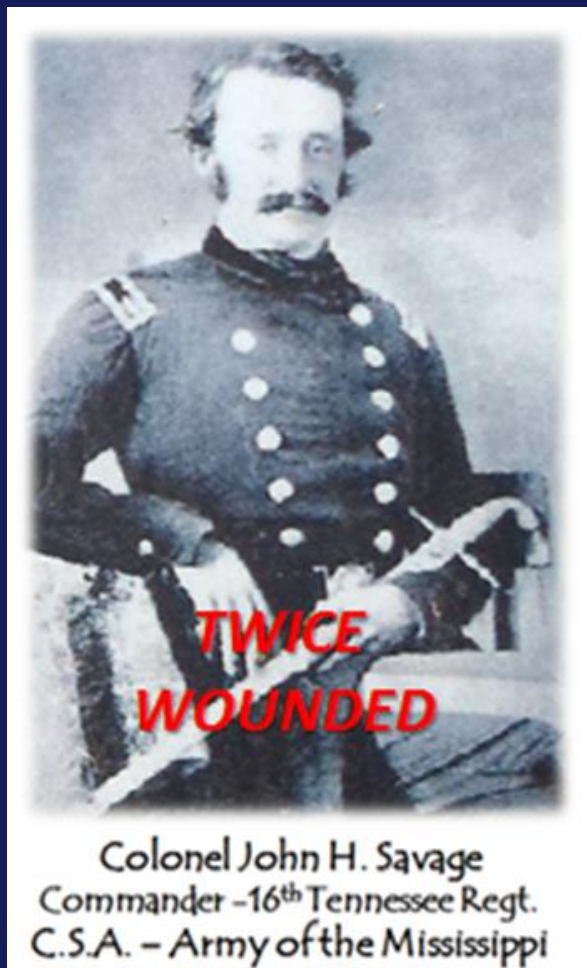
Meanwhile, up on the heights of the

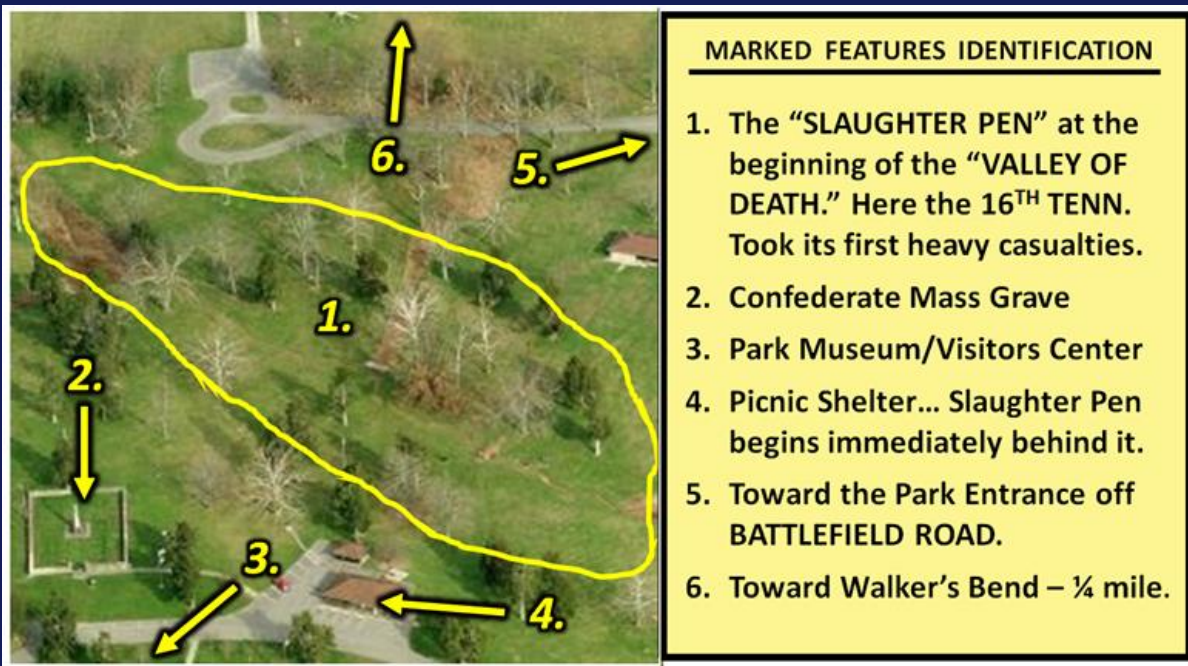
Chaplin Hills, General Donelson is issuing orders to his brigade (Consisting of 5 understrength regiments.) as they start to move out to the attack. Colonel John Savage in command of the 16th Tennessee Regiment is told to move forward and attack the only battery visible to him, about a half mile away on a distant ridgeline... that of Sam Harris's Indiana Light Artillery. Savage, carrying a reputation for being hard to get along with and who hated Donelson "fervently" from previous negative encounters that had taken place between them, now

badly misinterpreted Donelson's instructions.

He thought he was being ordered to attack that battery with just his understrength regiment alone... with no support from the rest of Donelson's brigade. In this perception he was totally wrong. Donelson simply meant that when the whole brigade attacked together that Savage should make the Indiana battery his specific target for his part in the attack. Savage thus jumped to the conclusion that Donelson was having him do this to kill him and his men.

NOTE: A full-strength regiment in the Civil War was right at 1000 men and sometimes upwards of 1200, if recruiting efforts were really successful. In the case of the 16th Tennessee, they had already been worn down by war, disease and desertions to where Colonel Savage would face the enemy at Perryville with only about 400 men. At the war's end, in the spring of 1865, only 50 men of the 16th would be left to return to their homes. Savage and his men would be attacking a very strong Yankee battle line that day with thousands of soldiers and at least 2 dozen artillery pieces that would all have this small bunch of Rebs





in their sights.

After a sharp exchange between the two officers and being ordered three times by Donelson to attack, Savage resigned himself to his fate, so to speak, and he ordered an advance. He led his men forward towards their goal feeling like he had been tasked to win the battle all by himself. Up over the bluffs above Walker's Bend they went and down into what would come to be called, "The Valley of Death" to the right of the low hill known then as the Open Knob but now called Parson's Ridge. This hill was occupied by Union General Terrill's brigade of blue-coated infantry and the eight big guns of Captain Charles Parson's battery. Donelson and Savage both, were completely unaware of these

Yankee forces and the eight big cannons on top of the Open Knob. The 16th Tennessee Regiment was literally about to become "cannon fodder!"

The brigade deployed to the attack as ordered and the main part of the Battle of Perryville was now underway. The time was about 2:15 PM.

Colonel Savage drove his men forward relentlessly as fast as they could go off the bluffs above Walker's Bend and down into the "Valley of Death" on its extreme Northern end. It was here that they first encountered heavy artillery fire that began to cut them down quickly. They would later call it the "Slaughter Pen." Savage realized they had to move on quickly or be decimated right there and so they pushed on rapidly. They were



Colonel Savage's 16th Tennessee Regiment of Donelson's Brigade bravely charges across the "Valley of Death" unaware that on the slope ahead lies a "slaughter trap" so terrible that half of them will not return.

heading straight toward the battle line of Col. George Webster's 34th Brigade of Jackson's division... a few hundred men of one regiment charging towards thousands of their enemies... enemies whose many loaded cannons awaited them with canister and case shot.

The Federal skirmishers they soon encountered of the 33rd Ohio "offered little resistance" but fell back toward their main lines quickly, enticing the 16th Tennessee ever closer and into a "slaughter

trap" of the worst kind... worse than the one they had left.

The 16th Tennessee, in their haste, had now left Colonel R.C. Tyler's 15th Tennessee, their supporting regiment in



Re-enactors man their big guns at the exact spot that Harris' Indiana Battery was located on the ridge top.

the attack, far behind... soon to be nearly half a mile. The 16th was now effectively isolated and a large portion of the 3rd Corps of the Yankee army was focused upon their advance. Thousands of loaded rifles and over twenty cannons, double-loaded with hundreds of plum sized iron balls and explosive case shot shells filled with 69. caliber lead balls, manned by anxious gunners awaited the Tennesseans.

The Federal troops of Webster's brigade lost sight of Savage and his regiment due to the broken terrain until the Rebs got pretty close. To the boys in blue, the Confederates seemed to appear suddenly out of nowhere.

Savage's lines had been put into disorder in the charge across the valley and up the

slope by the irregular terrain and stone fences. He stopped his men under cover of a small knoll and re-ordered his lines before continuing his charge. As they advanced up the slope toward the Yankee main battle line, the Indiana Light Artillery under command of Capt. Peter Simonson, opened up on them with canister shot. It tore great holes in their battle line, maiming men terribly, and for a moment the 16th Tennessee wavered... but only for a moment. They closed ranks where the gaps were and came on, as one of the Union soldiers watching them testified, "In fine order." Another charge of canister shot was fired into the Tennesseans and this time their line broke. The slope behind them was now littered with the horribly maimed dead and dying, their life's blood staining the



WHAT THE GUNNERS OF HARRIS'S BATTERY SAW:
That is the "Hollow" that became the "SLAUGHTER TRAP" for Colonel Savage and the 16TH TENNESSEE. The trees were not there then. Off in the distance just in front of where the haze is... is Walker's Bend from where the 16TH started their advance. The Yellow "X" marks the approximate location of the Widow Gibson's House where Colonel Savage was wounded twice.

bluegrass in great red splotches in the "Valley of Death." These died, never having gotten to fire a single shot in the great battle. The 16th, unbelievably, reformed their line and came on again... their collective courage and determination an incredible testimony in the face of impossible odds!

Due to the "X" shape of the Federal battle lines at that point, the Rebels were now caught in a cross-fire when Harris' Indiana Battery... the goal of their attack... opened up on them also.

Colonel Savage saw a depression or

"hollow" in the landscape ahead that he believed would give temporary shelter to him and his men from the terrible rain of canister and grape they were enduring and so urged his men on until this goal was reached. Once there, he once again "dressed," (re-ordered) his lines... now seriously reduced in numbers... and continued advancing towards Harris battery just 60 yards away. It was now 2:10 PM in the hot, extremely dry afternoon.

Suddenly, things went from absolutely "terrible" to "horrific" for Savage and his men! Without warning of any kind



This is the slope at the end of the Valley of Death that the 16th Tennessee had to charge up in order to capture or drive off Harris' Indiana Battery of Artillery. *Picture taken during the battle re-enactment while soldiers portraying that Indiana battery fire off their big guns.*

Parson's 8 big guns on top of the Open Knob began throwing every kind of shell they had at the 16th Tennessee Regiment as they re-formed in the protective hollow where they thought they were safe for the moment. The artillerymen may have been "green as gourds" when it came to battle but Captain Parsons had drilled them well in how to fire their guns and hit what they aimed at! From their elevated position, the gunners could see their targets clearly. Thus, the shells they fired poured into the little hollow landed with deadly accuracy, catching the Rebels from behind because of how they faced the "X" formation of the enemy above them. Of small comfort to Savage & company, in their present predicament, Gen. Cheatham's Rebel batteries on top of Chatham's Hill were making it hot for the Yankees on the ridge top, as well!

Men of the 16th Tennessee fell by the dozens, their mutilated bodies coming apart in some cases literally and spraying the ground and their fellow soldiers with their life's blood and pieces of their internal organs.

The veritable rain of cast iron shrapnel and lead balls being poured down upon the Rebels trapped in what they thought was a safe "hollow" was

incomprehensible to them! C.H. Clark of the 16th Tennessee commented that he thought all of them would be killed as he watched his "schoolmates and playmates, neighbors and friends" cut down mercilessly. He had no hope of coming out alive but did... how, he knew not. One of the Reb officers... H. I. Hughes... suffered a freak wounding in one of those "once in a million" coincidences that occur during intense battle. He was shouting loudly, trying to make himself heard above the awful roar of battle when two 1 3/4 inch diameter iron canister balls came at him from opposite directions at about 45 degree angles. Unbelievably, they collided inside of his open mouth! They knocked out all his lower teeth and lodged in his neck, killing him instantly. It was reported that the outside of his face was not marked at all. About this time, Colonel Savage's horse took a canister shot hit to its head, just under its eyes, somehow without instantly killing it but... forcing Savage to dismount and continue on foot. Incredibly, at the end of the day, a twice-wounded Savage would be seen riding that same horse and herding 16 Yankee prisoners off the battlefield!

It was at this moment that Donelson and

Tyler's 15th Tennessee caught up with Savage and the pitiful remains of his regiment and they too began taking heavy casualties from the same crossfire of the three Yankee cannon batteries. They could not

retreat... the only course of action offering the chance for any of the Tennesseans to survive was to quickly charge and capture Harris's battery directly in front of them. Looking like ghouls of some sort in their blood splattered and powder smoke blackened faces and ragged uniforms, they charged up the slope yelling like Banshees... right into another crossfire! This time it was rifle fire from the strong Yankee battle lines to both their left and their right fronts. Volley after volley was poured into what was left of the two Tennessee Regiments as this part of the "Slaughter Trap" on the west facing slope of the "Valley of Death" was now completely sprung on the Confederates!



The skirmishers of the 33rd Ohio attempt to make a stand at a rail fence on the West slope of the "Valley of Death" but cannot hold against the fierce onslaught of Col. Savage's hard-charging 16th Tennessee Rebel Soldiers.

When Colonel Savage and his 16th Tennessee Regiment had first rushed to the attack, the Yankee skirmishers on the valley hillside out in front of Rousseau's battle line were the men of the 33rd Ohio Regiment. They immediately fell back under the vicious surprise onslaught of the hard-charging Rebels and ended up taking cover behind a heavy rail fence that ran down the hill from the ridge top into the valley at a 90 degree angle. As this part of the battle for the ridge top progressed, the 33rd Ohio now found themselves in the perfect position to enfilade (Means... to fire into from the side or behind.) the right flank and the rear of the Rebel regiments moving up the hill in their desperation to get out of the "slaughter trap." And enfilade they



of Death," the Widow Gibson's place. As soon as the 16th Tennessee routed the Yanks from behind the rail fence, they headed for that gap. Meanwhile, General Donelson, amazed by the success of these

did! Suddenly a swarm of angry Minie Balls came tearing into the badly decimated ranks of the 15th and 16th Tennessee boys from a new direction and Col. Savage wheeled his men to the right and charged the Ohioans behind their rail fence and it proved exactly the right thing to do. The Yankees held for a few volleys and then, because they started taking heavy casualties from the well-aimed guns of the attacking Rebels, retreated up the hill to their main battle line.

They left their Colonel, Oscar Moore, and dozens of their fellow Ohioans lying wounded or dead at the rail fence as they fell back.

As it happened, there was a gap in the Yankee lines directly in front of the one small structure in that part of the "Valley

too-far-advanced regiments, returned back across the "Valley of Death" to bring up the remainder of his brigade to support their attack as fast as possible.

From the top of Chatham Hill, General Cheatham and the not-yet-engaged regiments of his division watched in horror as the slaughter of so many of Donelson's men was taking place. Cheatham, without waiting for, or advising Donelson of his intention to do so, ordered Donelson's three remaining regiments forward to the attack.

Meanwhile, back across the valley near the ridge top, things were still going badly for Col. Savage and the 16th and 15th Tennessee Regiments. The remaining soldiers of the two regiments had amazingly progressed to within fifty yards of the main Yankee battle line.

These intrepid Rebs started to pour volleys of rifle fire into the massed enemies directly in front of them and now the Bluegrass began to receive the blood of the blue-coated soldiers in an ever-increasing quantity also... but still, as of yet, not even close to the amount contributed so far by the slain and wounded Rebels. Unbelievably, considering what they had endured already, Savage's men also started to take hits from "friendly fire," on top of everything else. Some bullets being fired by the regiments trying to come to their rescue fell short of reaching the Yankees above them and hit among their advanced comrades, instead.

Tennessean, James Thompson was in the act of resting his gun on the top of a tree stump for better aim when a bullet coming from Rebel troops in his rear hit the stump, just missing him. He is reported as angrily turning and threatening to "come back there and kill any man who shot him."

Now the chaos and confusion of the battle began to take a serious toll on the morale of the Union soldiers facing the seemingly unstoppable attack of the 15th and 16th Tennessee regiments. The Yankees facing them saw that they were

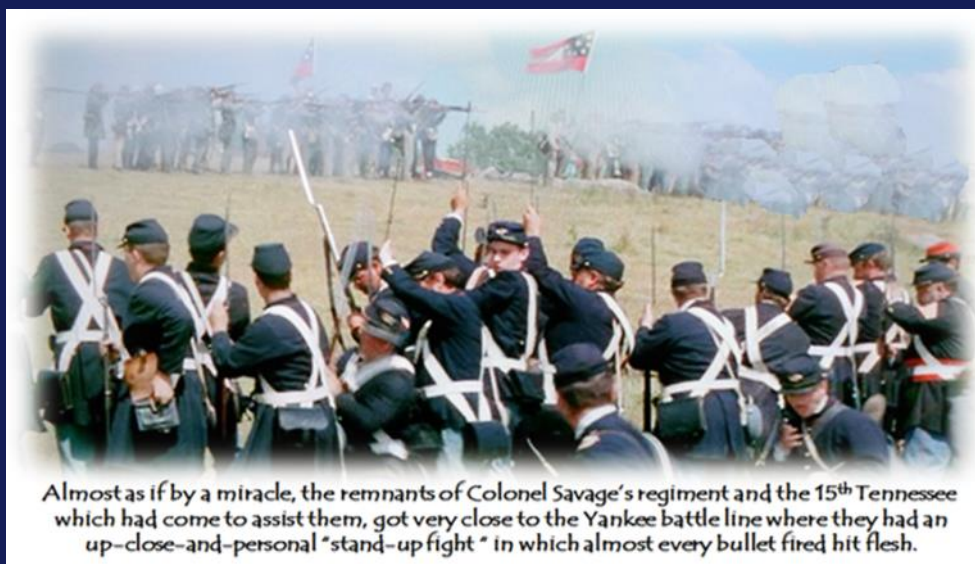
wreaking a horrific slaughter among these Confederates like nothing that they had ever seen in war before and yet these "devils" in gray just kept on coming... and killing... their tormentors! They were beginning to believe that the ONLY way to stop the Rebels would be to kill them all and now they could see that large numbers of re-enforcements were on the way across the valley to make that a seemingly impossible assignment. "Why don't these Rebs know when they are licked?" was the thought on the minds of many of these Northern farm boys and store clerks in blue.

Meanwhile, General McCook was rushing the 2nd Ohio Regiment forward to help the 33rd Ohio fill in the dangerous gap in his battle lines which was directly in front of Colonel Savage and his men. The green troops of the 2nd quickly panicked in the face of the desperate Confederates advancing rapidly on them and fled to the rear. The 33rd Ohio also began crumbling quickly in its ability to stand its ground.

Extreme confusion and accompanying pandemonium was now spreading like a gasoline fire among the Yankee defenders. The Rebel attackers, nevertheless, continued to take brutal

casualties from the sheer numbers of enemy troops and cannons they were confronting. About this time the dogged Colonel Savage took a Minie Ball through the lower part of one of his legs and then was struck in the back hard by a big chunk of wood torn from the Widow

15th and the 16th regiments now became so intermingled with them that Donelson lost all order and cohesion among the units on his battle line. His remaining two regiments were lost somewhere in the rear and Stewart's desperately needed brigade of



Gibson's cabin by a cannonball. He found himself temporarily paralyzed and relinquished command of his surviving men to General Donelson who had returned to them by this time. But don't count Col. Savage out yet... this guy is as "tough as nails" and he will somehow survive this "living nightmare" and still be somewhat in action at the end of this great battle!

In just another fifteen minutes, the 38th Tennessee, brought up to re-enforce the

reinforcements still had not arrived.

By this time, the 16th had suffered a collective loss of over 50% of its men and Donelson had at least 20% casualties among the 15th already. Believing that the fate of his other regiments would be similar to that of the 16th, he called off the attack and began to retreat back to the bluff above Walker's Bend where he had started.

Apparently, however... the remnants of the 16th Tennessee did not leave their



position and retreat to safety at that time and participated in helping General Cleburne's brigade drive the Yankee soldiers completely off that contested ridge and back almost a mile before darkness ended the battle. As was mentioned, previously, twice wounded Colonel Savage was reported coming off the field at the end of the battle riding his horse that had been struck in the head by a canister shot and bringing off more than a dozen Union prisoners with him.

Colonel Savage, a lawyer and member of the U.S. House of Representatives before the war and then a Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army, would be wounded again the same year after the battle of Perryville at the Battle of Stones River. In 1863, he would

resign his commission as an officer in the Confederate Army in anger over not being promoted as he thought he should be. He would spend the next 35 years being involved in Tennessee state politics by serving in the state's legislature.

As it would turn out, I would dig my very first Civil War Minie Bullet and a canister shot in 1977 in that "Valley of Death" traversed by Col. Savage and his men. It would be 40 years later before I would return to find many more Perryville Civil War artifacts on one side of the Open Knob... just a short distance from the "Valley of Death." The battle for the Open Knob would be even more brutal as it would become hand-to-hand combat... but... that is a story for another day. ~ END.

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