

AAR for Lincoln

This past weekend (11-13 September) saw: Darwin, Lisa, Aaron, Mike, Michelle, Andy, Ellie, Dan, Kat, Rachel, Gwen, Kevin, Bob, Joe (friend of Mike's) and Wayne participated in the reenactment event at Chase Farm, Lincoln, RI. *** Hail! Hail! The gangs all here. NICE!

Weather: Do you get the feeling that a Civil War weekend equals a rainy weekend? On Friday we had rain off and on throughout the day. Although it seemed to stop at the right moment to allow us to accomplish an activity, i.e. put up a tent and fly. It rained hard Friday night and we awoke up to a light to moderate rain on Saturday. While it was not great and the ground was certainly wet (not too muddy like the Union camp area) we were able to drill and have the battle in light mist. Sunday was a very nice day.

Friday: Darwin, Lisa, Kat, Rachel and Gwen, Wayne, Aaron, Mike and Dan arrived by 3pm. Six tents were set up; one for Darwin/Lisa, one for Kat/Kevin, one for Rachel/Gwen, one for Aaron/Dan, one for Mike/Andy and one for Wayne. After the fly was put up we went to Mike's Mom's home about 20 minutes away. With all hands pitching in, Kat making the aluminum case, Darwin measuring the power, Ray & Gwen filling the baggies, Dan sealing and cutting the extra foil, Mike & Aaron loading the ammo can, we had 17 rounds made in no time. Michelle, Andy and Eli showed up just as we finished and it was off to Longhorns Steakhouse for dinner. We arrived back at camp around 1900 and just prior to the downpour. Michelle and Ellie spent the night at Mike's Mom's house. With the wet weather only a few hearty souls stayed up past 2200, but it wasn't long before most people turned in for the night.

For Artillery, besides the 1st Co., Richmond Howitzers, we had present Morton's Battery, Dements Battery and Palmetto Battery [which had many of the former members of the Richmond Howitzers present as a kind of reunion; Rick, Chris, Jeremy, Mike, Stumpy, David and Wendy.

In addition, we had down in Unity former members; George, Julie and Walter present.

The Cav. had seven horses and the Infantry were present in strength.

Saturday: We woke up to some light rain. Members were on their own for breakfast. Michelle, Andy, Ellie, were all back in camp early enough to bring some hot coffee, tea and treats for everyone to enjoy. Bob reported for duty early in the morning and Kevin, who had to work, reported for duty before noon.

Lunch was on your own, and several members took advantage of vendors onsite, while others relaxed and ate what they brought under the fly.

We took the trailer with the cannon to the field and the battle scenario began at 1400

There were four batteries and Captain Wayne was the acting Chief of Artillery. The battlefield was rectangular in shape. On the left was a small hill where the spectators watch from. At the top, was where the Union force came from. The Union had five horses and three cannons. One cannon being pulled by limber and horses. On the right was where the Cav. from both sides carried on sword and pistol fights. On the bottom of this rectangular field was where the Artillery was, closest to the hill on the left and the Infantry, was closest to where the Cav. was located on the right. The fighting was like a 3-ring circus,

everyone doing their own thing which allowed them freedom to fire and move without blocking one of the other elements. The Richmond Howitzers fired seven rounds and the Confederate forces won the day.

Captain Wayne and Pvts Lisa, Aaron and Dan went to the Union camp to retrieve the primers we had loan the Union forces at Fort Nathan Hale, to get five cans of powder for the night firing (bounty) and to pickup the registration check for the cancelled Groton event. We got the primers and powder, but Mrs. Grant forgot the checks at home and promised to mail them when she got home.

Once back in camp and after a little rest, dinner, hearty chicken soup, made onsite by our very own QMSgt was served.

After dinner we waited to hear if the candlelight tour of our camp was going to be held in addition to the night time firing. While the tour never made our camp, the night firing did occur. Both Richmond Howitzers and Morton's batteries fired five rounds. A few spectacular pictures of this firing are on our homepage album.

Back in came we caught our breath and munched on some snacks. In spite of the weather it was a good day with lots of fun and tired Richmond Howitzers.

Bob had left for home earlier in the evening and after the night firing Michelle and Ellie headed to family's home for the night. With only a few exceptions most people turned in early.

Sunday: Members once again were on their own for breakfast. Michelle and Ellie were all back in camp early enough to bring some hot coffee, tea and treats for everyone to enjoy.

Mike's friend Joe Peavey arrived around 0830, got dressed and we held some gun drills. Joe trained on the #1 position and the #4 position firing two primers and one live round with no problem.

Wayne gave out a Gettysburg handout consisting of a NPS park tour map and a map for each of the three days battle. This was to help people think about what they would want to see when they go to Gettysburg in November. He also handed out a rough trip to Washington, DC, Arlington, and Manassas planner. Again to give people an idea what is being planned for a field trip in the spring of 2010.

Bob called and report he was not feeling well and would not return.

General Lee joined us about mid-morning for Sunday's events.

The Battle was very similar to Saturday's, but started at 1300, Captain Wayne was relieved as COA by Major Karl and this time the Union won the battle. Joe was the #4 for the battle and did an excellent job as did the entire gun crew. QmSgt Darwin was the Gunner for both days. We fired nine rounds for the day (21 rounds for the event).

While we tried to hold them off we were soon outnumbered and I am sad to say we lost many a good men that day trying to save our cannon. While acting classes helped, the "dying" is something to work on in the future.

On Saturday we had about 300 spectators and on Sunday that number jumped to 700 watched the battle.

We cleaned the gun just off the battlefield and then headed back to camp. Once in camp, we held a short ceremony where Joe was presented with a primer wire as an indication he fired the cannon during a battle.

NOTE: Chase Farm, Lincoln, RI moved the Union force and Unity up the hill in the location in previous years where confederate forces were located. While being “up the hill” was bad for several reasons, not the least was distance from bathrooms and the battlefield. In hindsight, at least our camp was not a mud hole and the hill offered a nice position to do the night firing.

There was a Cumberland reporter who took some pictures and we will wait and see if, as she stated, we will be in this paper.

My Mom, Dad, Sister and Niece came to see the camp prior to the battle and stayed for the battle on Saturday.

Thanks for all who made the trip and made it a safe and enjoyable time.

With the cancellation of the Groton, MA event this ends the campaign season. We are arranging for a cannon & trailer repair day for Saturday 10 October at Mike and Michelle’s home in Winchendon, MA to include a BBQ.

Respectfully submitted

Captain Wayne

Commanding Officer

1st Co., Richmond Howitzers