The Cavalry Journal
The Journal of the United States Cavalry Association

Volume XXXVIII, Issue 2       June 2013

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The United States Cavalry Association
Organized February 20, 1976

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The Cavalry Journal
Published Quarterly
by
The United States Cavalry Association
Volume XXXVIII, Issue 2 June 2013

This edition of the Cavalry Journal is dedicated to the memory of all cavalrymen.

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ISSN 1074-0252

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Editorial and Publication offices: P.O. Box 2325, Fort Riley, Kansas 66442-0325, 785-784-5797
Published four times a year; 1 March, 1 June, 1 September, 1 December

Subscriptions included in Annual Dues; Individual Annual Dues $40.00, Family Annual Membership $55.00, Individual USA Life Memberships Dues $400.00, Organization Annual Dues $45.00, Corporate Annual Dues $500.00, Overseas Annual Dues $60.00

Membership classifications: Charter-Modern Cavalry-Heritage-Regular

All Dues are payable in advance

Single Copies $5.00, Extra copies to members $3.50

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Possibly one of the more glossed over conflicts in U.S. military history, the Korean War was an international campaign that continues to impact world events and military moves even today.

Japan made Korea a protectorate in 1905 and annexed the country in 1910. It continued to occupy Korea through World War II. At the end of World War II, the United States reached an agreement with the Soviet Union to occupy Korea, with control split at the 38th parallel. The result was a Soviet and communist-backed North and an American-backed south, with the intent being to eventually allow Korea its independence. However, both sides claimed they had a right to the other half and to control the unification process.

On June 25, 1950, about 135,000 soldiers of the North Korean People’s Army invaded across the 38th Parallel, and entered Seoul three days later. Initial U.S. forces were outnumbered and suffered heavy casualties (24th Inf. Div.’s Task Force Smith). In July, Eighth Army deployed from Japan to assume command of all U.S., Republic of Korea Army, and allied nation’s combat forces fighting NKPA forces. Incoming forces set up a defensive perimeter around the port city of Pusan.

It is here that the 1st Cavalry Division makes its first appearance. On July 18, 1950, the 1st Cav. Div. carried out the first amphibious landing of the Korean conflict at Pohang-Dong. About 11,000 soldiers wearing a 1st Cav. Div. patch made the initial landings. The landing was unopposed. Pusan perimeter, the area the 1st Cav. Div. landed in and spent a large period of time fighting to defend, was a rectangular area about 100 by 50 miles. The western boundary was the Naktong River, the northern boundary was a “line” through a mountainous area from Naktong-ni to Yongdok, the eastern boundary was the East Sea of Japan, and the southern boundary was Tsushima Strait.

In early October, UN forces had the North Korean Army pushed against the Yalu River and the China border. The 1st Cav. Div. crossed the 38th Parallel on Oct. 9, 1950, and into the capital city of North Korea on Oct. 19. Soldiers of the First Team fought through the series of clashes that followed, after the Chinese intervened on behalf of the North Koreans (Chinese entered clash on Oct 14).

China ultimately committed 780,000 troops to the conflict on behalf of North Korea. Once China entered the war, the 1st Cav. Div., and UN forces were forced back below the 38th Parallel, however during 1951, the 1st Cav. Div. was part of United Nations’ forces that fought the way back to the 38th parallel.

During the Korean War, a number of 1st Cav. Div. assets were deployed. Those assets included the 5th, 7th, and 8th Regiments, along with division headquarters company, and seven other elements. After 18 months of fighting in Korea, the division was rotated back to Japan to reset. It
returned to Korea in 1957 to patrol the demilitarized zone until 1965.

5th Cavalry Regiment
The 5th Cav. Regt. was the second regiment to wade ashore during the landing at Pohang-Dong. The regiment, along with 70th Heavy Tank Battalion, conducted a series of probing and striking attacks in the Taegu area in an effort to extend the Pusan perimeter. The 5th Cav. Regt. succeeded in capturing several points along the Naktong River during the striking attacks. The regiment also distinguished itself later in April 1951, when North Korean and Chinese forces fought at “Line Kansas” (the 38th Parallel and the Imjin River), trying to push through and recapture Seoul. The 5th Cav. Regt., along with elements of the 70th Tank Battalion, relieved a British Brigade at Kapyong, and then reinforced 8th Regiment as the First Team pushed back into North Korean territory.

Three members of 5th Cav. Regt. were bestowed with the Medal of Honor for their actions in combat. They were Lloyd L. Burke, Samuel S. Coursen, and Robert McGovern.

7th Cavalry Regiment
The 7th Cavalry Regiment fought in some of the Korean War’s most intense battles, including Hwanggan, Poksong-Dong, Kwanni, and the Battle of Pusan Perimeter. The 7th Cav. Regt. landed near Yonil during the initial division landings, with the mission of securing the airfield at that location. The regiment fought numerous battles with the Pusan Perimeter, especially in the mountainous areas along the northern line. In September 1950, the regiment (along with most of the 1st Cav. Div.) participated in Operation Chromite, an amphibious landing at Inchon, behind North Korean lines. During this major offensive, soldiers of 7th Cavalry Regt. participated with Task Force Lynch in the Pusan Perimeter Breakout, fighting through 106 miles of enemy territory in about 24 hours to meet the 7th Infantry Div. at Osan.
One of the most painful chapters of 1st Cav. Div. action in Korea took place at Usan. The 8th Cav. Regt. was withdrawing from action to regroup, but was trapped by roadblocks. Chinese roadblocks blocked further withdrawal, and soldiers scattered in groups. The larger groups who managed to stay together set up a command post, but were very isolated with just a few tanks on the valley floor.

Elements of the 5th Cav. Regt. and the 7th Cav. Regt., tried to reach their fellow soldiers, but were rebuffed by Chinese forces. The 8th Regt. soldiers withdrew in small groups from the area under cover of darkness. Fighting in the area raged for five days. The 3rd Battalion was the hardest hit, and was completely destroyed. Only a few survivors made it out. More than 600 troops were lost.

Sources used in this article included "Of Garryowen in Glory: The History of the 7th U.S. Cavalry" by Lt. Col. Melbourne C. Chandler and "1st Cavalry Division in Korea," by the 1st Cavalry Division Association.

**From the Library: Korean Cultural Materials**

Whether a soldier fought in the Korean War or was stationed there after the conflict, they often had the opportunity to attend courses on the language, culture, history, and geography of Korea. While it is not required of soldiers currently stationed in Korea, the courses help servicemembers and families acclimate to a vastly different culture.

Within the U.S. Cavalry Association Memorial Library is a selection of books used in the courses for soldiers headed to Korea. The first set is nearly complete and includes Korean Basic Course I and II – languages, along with geography and history. This set is dated 1956, and was used soon after the Korean War ended through armistice in 1953. The language book demonstrates pronunciation, example conversations, and basic writing, similar to methods used in any foreign language course. The geography course book.

See Korea, continued on page 17
It Was a Tough War
by
Trooper Niven Baird

In 1964, the war in “La Indochin” was escalating, and the most heavily contested area was that north and northwest of Saigon. To the west lay extensive rice fields and the Cambodian border, and to the north lay War Zone C, some of which was known to all Vietnam war veterans as the “Iron Triangle.”

The 1st Armored Cavalry Squadron of the Army of Vietnam (ARVN) had its headquarters just outside Saigon in the largely Chinese community of Cholon. Its three armored cavalry troops, equipped with M-113 personnel carriers, were apart from the headquarters, and spread throughout the area, making contact with Viet Cong forces wherever they could be found. The headquarters of the cavalry squadron was not permitted to leave the Saigon area, for it was seen as the anti-coup force most capable of protecting the serving President.

The Senior Advisor (SA) to the squadron, an Army major, spent a week at a time rotating among the three cavalry troops in the field. Each troop had one American captain as an advisor. The humidity was equal to the temperature that summer, and the four Americans were kept busy tightening their belts as the pounds fell away. The rice diet, although tasteful, did little to maintain a “fighting weight.”

In mid-afternoon on a Friday, one of the Vietnamese troop commanders received a radio message from the squadron headquarters, which he immediately passed on to the SA who had spent that week with the troop. The message told the major that he was needed back at the squadron headquarters the next morning. All advisors serving in the field at that time were on the same radio frequency, so he was able to hail a passing helicopter and obtain a ride back to Bien Hoa (the air base and army post just outside Saigon.) He then enjoyed a bath and a safe night’s sleep in one of the transient hotels in Cholon.

During the evening, the major contacted the squadron operations officer, a highly competent ARVN captain by the name of Pierre Tuan. Now, it must be understood, Pierre was rich. The son of a French army officer and a local belle, he had inherited a considerable estate. This included two very nice motored boats, which he maintained at the old French Club Nautique on the Saigon River. The operations officer suggested that the major report to the boat club the next morning, with swim suit.

On arrival at the club, he was met and taken to a sleek boat sitting in its berth, and along with the squadron commander and executive officer, he took a seat as Captain Tuan made ready to venture out onto the river. The major noticed two Thompson submachine guns secured in a rack. Pierre powered the boat up river for couple kilometers, then stopped in the middle. The floorboard was lifted and two long slalom skies were produced. The squadron commander and executive officer went overboard with a ski each, fitted them onto their feet, grasped the tow ropes, and off they went, weaving back and forth across the boat’s wake. The crisscrossing was to present a harder target for a sniper who might be tempted to fire from one of the river banks. After about 30 minutes, the boat slowed and the skiers sank into the water and were picked-up. The major was given some instruction, and told it was his turn. After a couple abortive attempts to “get up”, the wonderful moment came when he was flying along behind the speeding boat.

About noon, the boat, now a couple kilometers down river, pulled into a cove and was secured to a small dock. The party took the weapons and walked up to a wooden deck attached to a small house. They sat under an awning and were brought cold drinks. One of the unofficial (and un-approved) duties of American advisors was to go to the Saigon post.
Editor's note: This is the second installment in the Wounded Knee series.

This first phase of the fight was unique for modern times; soldiers and Indians stood on their feet and shot it out face to face. The soldiers had the advantage of position, being at intervals of two or more yards on a quarter-circle. The Indians were within that curve and closely crowded. The soldiers had the disadvantage of the single shot carbine, the Indians the advantage of the seven-shot repeating rifle. But the latter advantage ends with the emptying of the magazine; it is difficult to use the rifle as a single loader and a soldier handy with the carbine could get in several shots in the time necessary to fill the magazine.

There is much uncertainty as to how long this first phase lasted, estimates varying from a "few minutes" to "eight or ten minutes." It would seem that the repeating rifle could not all fire at once; they expected their bullets to kill the soldiers, but most of them stayed on their feet and continued firing; they believed themselves immune to the soldiers' bullets, but found themselves being killed fast; attempts to reload their new Winchesters must have been fumbling at best; one may reasonably conclude that fighting was over for the Indians when they had emptied their magazines, perhaps in two or three minutes. Bewildered, disillusioned, the remaining Indians – more than half – rushed through the line of soldiers toward the only refuge in sight, the brushy ravine beyond their own camp. Some few wounded continued to fire from a tepee; a soldier ran across to it with the remark that he would bring him out, slashed an opening in the tepee with a knife and was promptly shot and killed. The battery then disposed of the Indian by two or three shells fired into the tepee. A number of Indians fired from concealment elsewhere in camp, but were soon killed.

Things happened fast when this melee began. On the north, Lt. Nicholson, a staff officer, "made a break and went around in rear of E Troop, and watched the fight from the battery." Colonel Forsythe also made his way to the battery. On the east, Troop G broke in the center, the right platoon led by Lt. T.Q. Donaldson went to the rear and "around the wire fence," dismounted, and returned to the field to fight on foot. This troop was the only one in the line of fire of Troops B and K during the melee, and it did not have a single casualty. The rest of the troop went to the left rear into the ravine and also dismounted to fight on foot. On the south, flying bullets caused the sentinel line to run forward down the slopes of the ravine, the nearest shelter. The Indian scouts scattered, part following the sentinel line into the ravine, part going farther to the right where Troop G was preparing to fight on foot, part going to the rear and left seeking shelter in the small ravines. When bullets reached the line of Troops C and D, they began a rearward movement which was accelerated when a 1.65-inch shell fell close. Captain Godfrey said, "I ordered the troop to rally behind a hill to our left rear." Troop C conformed and the two formed a dismounted line of the crest of the hill. Squaws and children rushed out of camp to the west, southwest, and south, seeking shelter in the ravines. Quite a number of squaws and some bucks, managed to start the pony herd off to the northwest along the Fast Horse Road. They passed Troop E in a cloud of dust, into which that troop, now dismounted, fired in an effort to stop them.

Some Indians fired back, one of them a squaw – and Lt. Sedgewick Rice prevented his men from shooting her. The battery fired a few shots ahead of the herd and it came to
a halt less than a mile from where it started. Some of the Indians who fled to the ravines hid at once, but many kept on up the big ravine and many crossed it and continued their flight up the slopes to the south through the sentinel line. Some of these groups were fired on by the battery and by Troops C and D – bucks being hardly distinguishable, and there were some of the latter.

Capt. H.J. Nowlan, Troop I, had command of what was left in the sentinel line on the south side of the ravine, and his testimony gives a clear picture: “Indians rushed down in the ravine, up and down it; not a shot was fired at them but they were allowed to escape. But right behind them came the bucks and the cry went up from the officers and men, ‘Here come the bucks, let them have it,’ and our fire was returned by the bucks. Which goes far to establish what is said above about the Indians trying to shoot it out and then making their dash for shelter; the women and children had got clear of the camp before they did. And certainly most of these found dead or wounded in camp must have been the victims of Indian bullets, since the Indian fire directed against the men of Troops B and K – which was practically all of it – necessarily passed through the Indian camp, directly behind the soldiers.

Maj. Whitside had gone to the south side of the ravine, to the second position of Troops C and D. There, he directed Capt. Jackson (Troop C) to take his troop up the hills “and round up anything I found there,” and bring in the Indians’ pony herd, which he pointed out, then “a couple of miles to the northwest.” Jackson started due west “up the bluffs” with his troop and had to go two miles to reach the head of the ravine. There he found some Indians well protected in the sharp breaks of the ravine’s edge. He dismounted and attacked on foot. The fire fight lasted some time and one soldier was killed. Lt. Taylor came up with two of his Indian scouts, and these crept near enough to open conversation with the Sioux. “It took a half hour’s talk and I had to withdraw my men before they would come out.” There were eight bucks, of whom five were wounded, and seventeen women and children, about half of them wounded. Jackson at once sent a request to Col. Forsyth for an ambulance and a wagon for the wounded. Meantime first aid was given to all.

Before the arrival of Whitside on the position, Capt. Godfrey had sent Lt. S.R.H. Tompkins with 12 men toward his left front to prevent Indians making their way up the ravine into the hills. Before he got in position, the party Jackson found at the head of the ravine must have gotten by, and also a larger party that took up a position in one of the lateral ravines and had to be dislodged by artillery fire. But there were still armed Indians coming up and Lt. Tompkins’ party had some skirmishing which resulted in three bucks being killed.

Whitside directed Godfrey to pursue, with the remainder of his troop, some Indians seen going up the hills to their rear. He did so, but saw only one Indian, far off. He continued on to the divide – a couple of miles from his starting point – and down the opposite slopes for some distance. It was on this scout that an incident occurred that was the cause of a special investigation. Godfrey started on foot with two or three men to search a brushy ravine head, and suddenly glimpsed blankets quite close, and opened fire. No reply coming, they went in and found a squaw, a boy, and two small children, dead. Godfrey and his men were exonerated of the charge of wanton killing. Returning toward camp, he saw Jackson’s troop off to the north and joined him. Jackson was waiting for the transportation for his wounded prisoners. Jackson was senior and suggested that Godfrey return to camp, scouting the ravine as he went. Godfrey detailed a few men to follow the bottom of the ravine, he with the others, to follow them on the high ground. They were just starting off when four or five mounted Indians approached from the direction of the Agency (west), and waited to see what this
might portend. These Indians were armed and one wore the badge of the Indian Police.

They rode up with words of friendly greeting and shook hands with the two officers. One gave Godfrey’s hand such a pull as nearly unhorsed him. He asked the policeman what the man meant by it, and received the peculiar reply, “I don’t know, he is my father.” Then they rode off in the direction from which they came, turned at about a hundred yards and fired – except the policeman, who was waving his arms and appeared to be trying to stop them. These Indians then galloped off and disappeared, but presently some 50 or 60 came in sight from that direction, deployed in line and at the gallop. Others appeared approaching on either flank. The Indians began firing; one of the soldiers was wounded. Jackson mounted quickly, abandoned his prisoners, and retired to a better defensive position about a quarter of a mile to the rear and north of the ravine, where he again dismounted to fight on foot.

He had 34 men, Godfrey 14, allowing the minimum of horseholders, about 40 soldiers awaited the attack of mounted Indians whose numbers had now increased to about 150. But the attack was not made; Troops E and G were in sight, “coming up from the jump” and most of Troop A. Indian scouts, and the hostile lines faced to the rear and galloped off.

It was learned later that these were Brule Sioux from Pine Ridge Agency. Of course all Indians thereabout must have known of Big Foot’s surrender and been greatly stirred up about it. The news of the fighting must have reached them, but that seems scarcely probable in the time available. It was thought, and with good reason, that no particular band was involved; that this was a gathering of hotheads who started off with some idea of a relief expedition. There is a possibility that some contact was made with Big Foot’s band during the night and that the latter expected
some such relief party, which might explain the long delay about the surrender of arms and the frantic efforts of the squaws to get the train packed and ready to move.

Immediately after the melee, Edgerly (G) and Taylor (Indian Scouts) had assembled their commands and proceeded to the vicinity of the battery. There Col. Forsyth directed Edgerly to proceed with these two troops and Troop E to the west, to round up the Indian herd and look for hostile Indians. He quickly did the former, left some soldiers and scouts in charge and went on, arriving in time to save Jackson and Godfrey from their precarious situation, as described above.

One batch of Indians had established themselves in the head of a small ravine, about half a mile up the big ravine, and a lively fight went on for some time. Finally, Forsythe sent one gun under Lt. Harry L. Hawthorne to dislodge them. He went into action at 500 yards and the Indians were soon finished off. Hawthorne was severely wounded early in this action.

Besides the other small engagements above described, there were many smaller exchanges of shots on or in the vicinity of the battlefield. It must be remembered that smokeless power had not been heard of at that time. When an Indian fired from concealment a large puff of smoke betrayed his position, and brought shots from all who saw it. Should the soldiers have waited and tried to learn if any women and children were in the vicinity of that smoke? The idea is absurd. There was an armed buck at that smoke, trying to kill one of them and he might succeed if there was any delay in dispatching him.

During this mopping-up, officers gave repeated warnings to their men against shooting women and children, and it is highly improbable that a single one was intentionally shot. There was one case of intentional shooting of a wounded buck by a very young soldier. His troop commander gave him a savage berating on the spot. The boy burst into tears and said he understood a wounded Indian was as dangerous as any.

From the testimony of several witnesses, it is possible to give a fair picture of what happened at the camp after the melee. The mass of the Indians rushed through Troop K, through the Indian camp, to the ravine, but some hid in the camp and continued firing from concealment there. Troop K fell back on the cavalry camp, thus clearing the way for artillery to end the activities of an Indian in a tepee, as related above. The men of Troop K were now, of course, facing south and southwest and their fire against these Indians was for the first time in the direction of other troops — the sentinel line from A and I, the Indian Scouts, and Troops C and D. Lt. Garlington was in charge of the sentinel line on the west and with the men near him, dropped into a sunken road. He was wounded by an Indian firing in the ravine after the rush through, and the hospital steward was killed near him. The action by the sentinel line on the south is described elsewhere. Just when or how the heavy losses by the sentinel line occurred cannot be determined, but when the Indians opened fire those men were standing in groups of three, along the arc of a circle over which the fire swept, and from 100 to 150 yards from the rifles. It is much more likely that their losses were greater then than during the subsequent intermittent firing.

Troop B suffered heavily in the melee, but the rush of the Indians through Troop K freed them of pressure and Capt. Varnum led them to their picket line, mounted up, and reported to Forsythe, who directed him to “cover the hospital,” and some hours later, to clear up a portion of the ravine. He found many dead and wounded Indians and brought out 19 unwounded women and children.

The losses suffered by these two troops (nearly one-half the total) and those inflicted by them on the Indians, were almost wholly during the progress of the melee. Two-thirds of Troops A and I, in groups of three or four, formed the sentinel line behind the Indian camp, wholly in the field of fire of the Indians. Their casualties nearly equaled those of B and K. After the melee, in the
mopping up of the camp, the fire of these lines into it endangered both, but it was not heavy and was soon ended. None of the other troops fired into the camp area.

Capt. Capron "opened fire with all four guns as soon as the field was sufficiently cleared as to allow us to shoot without injury to our own men." His first target – "for my own two guns" – was at a "bunch of Indians firing on our troops," about 300 or 400 yards away. He fired at groups here and there over the field, but could not distinguish squaws from bucks. After the fight, he saw a group of two bucks and one squaw, that had been killed by artillery fire, "2,000 to 2,500 yards from the battery."

The fire from scattered Indians finally ceased, with one notable exception: a lone buck in the head of a coulee kept up the fight until the troops had marched for Pine Ridge Agency. Forsythe stated this in his formal report of December 31; fire had failed to get or dislodge the buck and the colonel considered him not worth the casualties that might follow in an attempt to rush him.

Charges of inhumanity by the troops were refuted by every witness. Surgeon John Van R. Hoff was emphatic. "I saw none. All the field which was the center of active operations came under my observation, and a considerable number of wounded bucks and squaws brought in had had their wounded dressed by company bearers." As to whether any soldiers were victims of the fire of the troops, "I have not the slightest reason to know or think so; it was possible, but I have no reason to believe it." And in his capacity of surgeon of the command, he must have known the nature of all the gunshot wounds.

The fighting at an end, the troops gathered up the wounded Indians and their own dead and wounded, and marched to Pine Ridge Agency. They had one officer and 26 men and an Indian Scout dead; four officers and 30 enlisted men wounded. Sixty-two women and children and 83 bucks were buried in a common grave a few days later. Some of the wounded also died later.

Some writers have chosen to animadvert on this abandonment of Indian dead. But the troops had suffered a heavy loss, collecting the wounded and getting them ready for the march required some time. The march would require four hours, and it was necessary that the command return to the Agency as soon as possible, not only to get proper medical attention for the wounded but to escape possible attack by the thousands of Indians within a few hours' march. There was only a short winter afternoon available – they made the best possible use of it. And eventually, several thousand Indians decamped that night and were only returned to the reservation after several skirmishes.

On the following day, December 30, six of these troops of the 7th Cavalry were ordered out and before evening had scored another victory in a skirmish at White City Creek. Each had one or more casualties, the total being one killed and seven wounded, Lt. James D. Mann among the latter.

There is nothing to conceal or apologize for in the Wounded Knee battle – beyond the killing of a wounded buck by a hysterical recruit. The firing was begun by the Indians and continued until they stopped it – with the one exception noted above. That women and children were casualties was unfortunate but unavoidable, and most must have been from Indian bullets.

To be continued in the next issue.
Editor's note: This is the second installment of the “Little Phil” series.

Who was this Sheridan? Practically unknown in the East, he had flashed only once across the front pages of war history – when he stood in the captured rifle pits at the foot of Missionary Ridge, and lifting his whiskey flask toward the rebels on the towering summit, shouted “here’s how!” before he drank the toast. As the last drops trickled down his gullet, a shot from a big gun up there threw dirt all over him. “I call that damned ungenerous,” cried Sheridan. “I’ll take those guns for that!” And flinging the empty flask up the slope, he started after it – the beginning of that incredible charge up a mountain like a mansard roof.

Army circles knew slightly more about him. They knew him for the hero of the fighting at Perryville, where he had held his division all day against overwhelming rebel attacks, and in the evening put on a counterstroke that tore Bragg’s line to pieces. He had done well at Chickamauga where, though his division had been one of those carried from the field, he rallied it in time to come back and cover Thomas’ retreat. At the dreadful battle of Stone River, he had done surpassingly well; had slowed and then halted the Confederate attack of the first day and formed the anchor of Thomas’ line. In the dramatic mid-night council of war, he stood with Thomas against retreat, and even asked permission to lead the counter that eventually won.

Most of the rest was gossip that drifted up by word of mouth through junior officers, for Sheridan was the youngest division commander in the armies of the West, belonging to a later generation than most of the high command. That gossip would tell, for instance, how he came to West Point, a tough little Mick of a store clerk from Ohio, poor as Job’s turkey, with a chip always on his shoulder. It would also tell how he wrangled during drill with Cadet Sergeant Terrill, and after trying to jab that student officer with a bayonet, had challenged him to a fist fight behind the buildings, coming out of the encounter with a black eye and a year’s suspension. Sheridan graduated from West Point in 1853, an undistinguished 34th among 52, and was ordered to Fort Duncan, Texas, as a lieutenant of infantry.

There again, he fell on stormy weather, which can perhaps be traced to the fact that all his life long Sheridan was a picturesque and a vivid swearer, while the colonel in command was equally noted as a God-fearing man of the Puritan type. There was as much disagreement as there can be between a very junior lieutenant and a very senior colonel, with petty persecutions on one side, petty sabotage on the other. Sheridan finally escaped via a requested transfer to the 4th Infantry, then on duty against the Yakima Indians in the Pacific.
Northwest.

The country was ill-explored, the Indians almost inveterately hostile, and young Lt. Sheridan was very much on his own in leading detachments out to deal with them. But in that hard service, he found himself. He displayed a perfect passion for topography; never went out on an expedition without taking surveying instruments along and mapping every inch of the country he covered. Two other details of this period have survived, interesting in view of his later career. Sheridan formed the habit of requisitioning all the mules he could lay hands on and mounting his infantrymen on them for movements up to the scene of action; and in dealing with the Indians, he displayed a wonderful gift of blarney, could always talk them out of hostile action if he could get them to pow-wow before the shooting started.

Much of this, however, was not to be dredged from memories and records till the young lieutenant was famous. The service papers lying before Lincoln, Halleck, and Grant at that winter conference would have stated only that Sheridan was ordered east at the outbreak of war, arrived late because of the distance, and was assigned to the Herculean labor of auditing the accounts left in confusion by the ornamental Fremont. A year after the war had began, he had only attained promotion to captaincy and was a quartermaster of Southwestern Missouri, that is, effectively buried. Grant and Sherman were already generals, the former already a famous general; Thomas had an independent command and McClellan more military authority than any American since George Washington.

But at this juncture, Sheridan caught his tide. Quartermaster business brought him frequently to the headquarters of the western armies where he met and was liked by Gordon Granger, then a brigadier of several months standing. Granger’s old regiment, the 2nd Michigan Cavalry, had gotten into bad shape since he moved upstairs. He wanted an officer to straighten the command out, and the name of the young quartermaster, who was running his department like a clock, naturally suggested itself.

Granger put the matter up to Halleck, then commanding the west. That formalist, who had already been impressed by the neat way Sheridan ran his freight schedules and his fastidious paper work, gave the promotion his blessing. This was how Sheridan, whose nearest approach to mounted action had been mule back operations in the 4th Infantry, came to be pitched into the Corinth campaign at the head of a regiment of horse. He was to be a lieutenant general before he received his colonel’s commission.

Fortune rode with him on his first mission, a detached one to hold Boonville, Missouri, with 11 companies of his own regiment and the 2nd Iowa, about 759 men all told. Most might not consider it fortune, however – Confederate Chalmers came down to shoot up the place on July 1, 1862, with 4,000 men. Sheridan had chosen a position where his flanks were covered by a pair of swamps, and the attack was canalized into a narrow front where his dismounted riflemen waited, but the disparity in numbers was so great that by noon things began to look grim.

Sheridan summoned a trustworthy officer, Capt. Alger; gave him 90 men, armed with Colt “revolving carbines,” and told him to go by a circuit and fall on to the enemy’s rear, shooting for all they were worth from the saddle, making a racket whether they hit anything or not. Now, says Alger, who has told the story, he understood why his colonel had spent half the previous night poring over maps of the region. In the heat of that conflict, among the ceaseless attacks, Sheridan gave him road directions as clear and precise as though he were telling a man how to find the post office. Alger rode off with his 90, made his circuit, and charged the rebel rear with guns banging. At the same time, Sheridan threw forward his own dismounted men in a countercharge against the Confederates, who were mostly still in the saddle.
There is one thing about mounted Cavalry. If it once gets started going either forward or back, it is very difficult to stop. Chalmers men had started going back when Alger struck. Sheridan’s charge kept them going with doubled speed, and in half an hour the four thousand had left the seven hundred fifty in possession of the field and enemy wounded.

It was an outstanding feat of arms in a campaign that had very little outstanding about it. The young commander was given a temporary brigadier’s rank and sent by Grant to Buell a month later, when Bragg’s invasion of Kentucky caused the Army of the Cumberland to ask for help. Sheridan was taken from his two regiments of horse to arrange the defense of Louisville, which he did so well that he was placed in charge of one of the two new divisions of infantry in the campaign that led to Perryville. While ex-Cadet Sergeant Terrill was being killed at the head of his brigade in one part of the line that day, Sheridan in another was the heart of the Union defense, the best man on the field, winning his step on the ladder that had how brought him to Chief of Cavalry in the Army of the Potomac.

There is a certain amount of mystery in how Grant came to assent so enthusiastically to the nomination for the most important cavalry command in the nation of a young man whose ten years of active service had included only four months with cavalry, and those at the head of a single regiment. The commander-in-chief did not know Sheridan well. He had seen him in action as a general officer only during the week or two of the Chattanooga fighting, and the most favorable reports on Sheridan came from men Grant was rather inclined to distrust – Buell, Rosecrans, Halleck.

The choice is perhaps explained by a remark of Grant’s long later: “No man ever had such a faculty of finding things out as Sheridan. He was always the best informed man in his command as to the enemy.” This is full of illumination, not only on Sheridan, but also on Grant’s own theory of the employment of horsemen in a world where they had been banished from the battlefield. He evidently thought of the arm as a screen and countscreen, whose function was to conceal the movements of one’s own forces and to acquire information about those of the enemy. Sheridan’s preternatural activity, physical and mental, his deep interest in and knowledge of topography, his ability at questioning prisoners (“That there man, he’ll talk the eyes right of your head,” said one of them) – these things impressed Grant as the proper equipment of a cavalry leader.

Yet both Grant and Halleck had misgivings when the man arrived in Washington on April 4, too late for any changes to be made before the opening of the campaign. Grant, particularly, as he confessed later, “formed a very unfavorable impression.” Seen in a drawing room Sheridan was a “most extraordinary figure. His chest was large and full, his legs short and small, and his arms so phenomenally long that his hands reached down below the level of his knees.” Above this was a small head, bearing little bright eyes like those of a bird and a face that registered doubt both about his own ability and the wisdom of accepting the new appointment.

Sheridan was, in fact, inclined to view the cavalry command as a demotion. He was due to take over a corps in the western armies and liked service there, among the free-and-easy veterans who turned out on parade to bleat at an officer when they considered his behavior sheeplike, or offered him chewing tobacco as a special delicacy when they liked him. The Army of the Potomac, he understood, was more strait-laced in discipline. He doubted his ability to give satisfaction under the conditions. Grant eyed him ruminatively, puffing cigar smoke, and was ultimately delivered of the remark that the new Chief of Cavalry would have pretty much of a free hand on one condition – that he keep Jeb Stuart out of mischief. Sheridan’s face cleared at once, and two days later he was riding down to inspect his new command.

There were 10,000 effectives in three divisions, commanded by Gregg, Torbert (a
new man come up through the ranks to replace Kilpatrick, who had gone west to join Sherman), and Wilson. The last was another of Grant’s surprise appointments – the youngest man so far to bear stars on his shoulders, an engineer of the West Point class of 1860, who had been a kind of secretary and personal inspector general to Grant in the West, but who had never led troops. The men looked strong, healthy, smart – Sheridan has recorded his pleased surprise at their appearance – but the horses were the merest flea-bait. It did not take the new commander long to discover the reason for a state of affairs that would be pardonable only at the close of a long and hard campaign.

The cavalry was doing picket duty for the entire army, round a circuit of 60 miles, besides having the standing assignment of furnishing heavy escorts for every provision train and every column of infantry that moved on the roads in back areas. Sheridan went to Meade with a demand that his corps be concentrated as a fast battle wing of the main army and relieved of drafts for the service of security.

Meade’s concept of cavalry was that which had grown up in the Army of the Potomac. It was not thought out at all; it was imposed on the Army from outside, by the pressure of Mosby’s lightning jabs and Stuart’s long rides around the rear; and it was essentially defensive. The commander was horrified by Sheridan’s demand. “What will become of my trains, my flanks, my moving columns” he asked.

Sheridan said, “If you let me use the cavalry as I wish, you need not worry about trains or flanks. As for the infantry, it ought to be able to take care of itself on the roads.” Mead demurred, filled with the engineer’s distrust of new ideas that could not be expressed in figures and Sheridan had to develop his theme. The infantry, he said, were about to attack the enemy’s infantry; why then, should our cavalry stand on the defensive against the confederates? If our mounted men be concentrated, the enemy will dare just one more of those long raids – his last. For a concentrated cavalry corps will then face him from a prepared position across his line of retreat, or alternatively, deliver 10,000 men at any desired spot on the enemy rear at any time desired.

“It is the business of cavalry to fight cavalry,” Sheridan went on, “and if there is no cavalry there to fight, to attack the enemy’s infantry in their most vulnerable point.” Warming with his own logic, he demanded thrice the normal equipment of artillery for his horse, as much artillery as infantry would have. Cavalry used as he meant to use it would be seizing positions behind the enemy, points vital to that enemy, which he would fight like the devil to regain. Cavalry mobility was a means to the end of arriving at an effective point for an enemy battle.

At this point, Sheridan had parted company not only with Meade, but with Grant also. The latter’s theory of cavalry was different from that of either Meade or Sheridan, but he possessed a brain so habituated to following the essential through mazes of side issues as to resemble a mechanical instrument. The registering dial of that machine reported to him that Sheridan was proposing to submit the rebel cavalry to the novel experience of being attacked. This chimed with his own idea of cavalry as a service of information and anti-information. He decided the argument about concentration in Sheridan’s favor, but as for the extra artillery – no, not at present. The decision accurately reflected Grant’s questioning middle-ground attitude at the time.

The inquiries and arguments too two weeks. Sheridan was granted two weeks more in which to assemble the men and to rest their horses before reveille on the third of May blew the opening of the Hammering Campaign. Two of Sheridan’s divisions led the two columns of infantry across the Rapidan that morning. Division Torbert, by Meade’s orders, was held back to guard the rear – a perfectly proper employment for the nimblest troops of the Army by Meade’s ideas. Though Sheridan could hardly have
agreed, he forebore any protest at the time.

On May 5th, the Battle of the Wilderness broke among the tangled thickets south of the stream. Only two of the three big Confederate corps reached the field that day. On Lee's left, Ewell, with ground and good tactics in his favor, held Warren and Sedgwick around Wilderness Tavern amid appalling losses on both sides. On the Confederate right, A.P. Hill did not get his men up quite so soon, and when he did arrive, found Hancock's II Corps, with the best battle-captain in the Union Army, facing him. The fighting went ill for the Confederates; Hill lost ground, men, and more, only closing night saved him from a break.

But out of that partial defeat, Lee drew a battle plan for the second day as perfect as a painting by Leonardo (Map 1). Longstreet arrived during the night with the third big corps. While Ewell held on the Confederate left and Hill slightly retired in their center, this fresh corps was to work round Hancock's flank and strike, crushing Hancock's corps and the line behind him against the anvil of Hill and Ewell. Stuart, who had also just arrived with the cavalry, was to ride round Longstreet, throw out a wing to menace the Union supply trains around Fredericksburg, then turn in behind Longstreet against the Federal rear. Like Leonardo's greatest work, the plan went to pieces through the shifting of the foundation on which it was painted. As expected, Hancock attacked again the next morning, rushing Hill back till Longstreet came in on his flank. The Union division of General Mott was swept away, men coming back through the woods all disorderly, some with weapons
The Fort Carson Mounted Color Guard placed 1st in the Open Mule Parade Hitch at the National Western Stock Show, Denver, CO January 12-27, 2013. This year over 700,000 people attended the NWSS. On the escort wagon, pulled by John and Henry, is driver Sgt. Nathaniel Aston and Master Sgt. Shawn Farnsworth. Other Color Guard members assisting at the NWSS were Sgt. Seaman, Sgt. Anderson, Spc. Smith, Sgt. Statton, and Staff Sgt. Stonerock.

and a few without. But they came past Hancock himself. He rallied them in person, shouting, “halt here!” Finally, a brigade of his own reserve and a division from Grant reestablished the line. Under the increasing pressure, he took up the retrograde indeed, but slowly, in good order, with no real gain to the attackers. Longstreet, trying to press home, went down with a bad wound. His corps took losses it could afford only as the price of crushing victory, and as twilight sifted through the spring leaves, crushing victory, any victory, was still distant, riding with Stuart.

For Hancock’s stand and Longstreet’s wound had left Confederate success dependent on Stuart – whether he could coax Sheridan back on the trains, break his connection with the II Corps and arrive on its rear with something over 8,000 men. And Stuart, for the first time in his career, had failed to reach his final objective, or any objective.

To be continued in the next issue.
Horse Jumping a Rich Cavalry Tradition
by
Tricia Osuna

Horse jumping has a rich history that reaches back thousands of years. Perhaps not as a sporting event, but as a means of defending countries in battle and warding off enemy soldiers from as long ago as the Roman Empire.

And the role horses have played in the U.S. Military throughout the years cannot be overstated either. Riding through rough terrain while transporting soldiers and their gear was only possible with well-trained, high endurance equine assistance.

The very qualities we observe while watching jumping competitions are the same qualities that soldiers require in the battlefield: strength, stamina, calmness, and precision. Horses have been bred over the centuries to be used in battles throughout history.

Lt. Col. Bill Jordan is retired from the U.S. Air Force and is a member of the U.S. Cavalry Association. The organization works diligently to preserve the history and traditions of the United States Cavalry. As an active member, Jordan travels to horse shows throughout the country, sharing his personal collection of artifacts as well as his vast knowledge with the public. Some of his collection will appear at the expo in a historical display of the U.S. Cavalry at this year’s International Omaha.

“If you really look at what a military cavalry unit is supposed to do, some of the things that you would see at the International would be relevant in a cavalry exercise,” shares Jordan. “Clearing fences, being able to cover [long] distances in a short period of time...a lot of the aspects...were rooted and refined in the U.S. Military.”

“You really start to see, at the turn of the century, the U.S. Military’s knowledge of riding. Equitation is really starting to take off,” says Jordan. “The whole idea of being able to move a cavalry troop from Point A to Point B across various terrains really has a lot of the [elements] that you see in modern events, like steeplechase, cross country, jumping...All of that has military aspects.”

Jordan describes a Cavalry Exchange Program of sorts, during which the U.S. military would send troops over to the French and British cavalry schools, and bring back their manuals, ultimately translating them and incorporating the best of their information.

“A little-known cavalry officer by the name of George Patton was sent over to a French riding school, where he refined his riding techniques,” says Jordan. Patton went on to represent the United States in the 1912 Olympics as a rider in the Pentathlon. Jordan shows the link between the training that officers such as Patton and Lucian Truscott, a U.S. Army General, received in the cavalry to their military maneuvers in World War II. “A lot of these general officers being trained in the early 1900s had their foundation in the cavalry,” says Jordan. “So George Patton, horse soldier, and George Patton, tank commander; moving around on four legs and moving around on the treads of a tank...the concepts are pretty much the same.”

Jordan describes the Remount Program that was established in the early 1900s throughout the Midwest. “The U.S. military was actually going out and buying fairly high-value horse blood lines and then breeding them to make their own stock.”

“These guys were looking at Thoroughbreds and Quarter horses and those types of things, integrating them into the ideal cavalry mount.” The ideal horse would be able to cover long distance and be able to jump fences at the same time, while carrying the soldier and all his necessary gear. “It’s a lot of weight,” says Jordan.

Another aspect that needed to be addressed was the fact that these horses needed to remain calm as they carried their men into
examines physical geography, such as mountain ranges, rivers, and other such characteristics. It also includes information on natural resources, industrial districts, and commerce and transportation. All the books are primarily written in Korean, with some notations in English.

A second book within the library’s collection is an unclassified North Korea handbook, dated 1993. This book, produced by the Defense Intelligence Agency, contains general information about the Korean peninsula as a whole. The handbook also includes North Korean military units, with their formations, weapons and preferred battle tactics. Some introductory information on South Korean military ranks and unit organization is also included.

The materials demonstrate the evolution of information on the Korean peninsula as used by the U.S. military, and the long-term importance of the location to U.S. interests abroad.

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**Tough War, continued from page 4**

exchange, and while shopping for necessities, a couple bottles of good Scotch should be purchased. The Scotch would be presented to the Vietnamese unit commander who would serve it at appropriate moments. The major was asked if he could eat hotly spiced food? As a New Mexican, raised with a spoon of chili in one hand and a glass of soothing milk in the other, he assured the commander (somewhat condescendingly, perhaps) that he could eat anything along those lines.

Two servers brought out large bowls of curry and all the accompanying condiments, and everyone dug in. The education of the major was further advanced as the first bite hit his mouth. Pure fire. He had never eaten anything so hot, and gulps of Scotch did little to cool the blaze. Nevertheless, pride won out, and the food was consumed. It was explained to him that this was the best of curry, made with the meat of a very young goat.

After a short “siesta”, the skiing continued until a helicopter with loudspeakers flew up and down the river warning all personnel that evening was approaching and that the river must be cleared. The major was taken back to Cholon, and the next morning he bummed a chopper ride back to one of the cavalry troops. A strange way to fight a war!
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