In This Issue

First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, Part 1
Staff Sergeant Clinton L. Romesha, MOH
Cavalry Replacement Training Center
The Model 1913 Mule Riding Saddle
The Last Cavalry Horse
Nonmobilization and the Cavalry Divisions
OH! How the Horses Laughed
The United States Cavalry Association
Organized February 20, 1976
The aim and purpose of the Association shall be to preserve the history, traditions, uniforms, and equipment of the United States Cavalry, including mounted support units; to sponsor the U.S. Cavalry Association’s Museum and Memorial Research Library for educational purposes; and to preserve the literature used by the United States Cavalry throughout its history.

Article IV, USCA Constitution

Officers
President
Col. William H. Tempero, OKARNG
Vice President
Jeffrey L. Maahs
Secretary
Karen Tempero
Treasurer
Wendy Ogden

Board of Directors
Chairman
Vice Chairman
Col. Samuel L. Myers, USA Ret.
Members
Joan Gard Baird
Frederick E. Klink
Jeffrey L. Maahs
Daniel L. McCluskey
Lindsay D. Baird, Esq.
Col. William H. Tempero, OKARNG
Col. W. Glenn Yarborough, USA Ret.
Sgt. Jon Husby, USAR
CDR William Kambic, USNR Ret.
Capt. Jeffrey Wall, USMC Ret
Jimmy Johnston
Alan Ginos
Craig McVay

The Cavalry Journal
Published Quarterly
by
The United States Cavalry Association
Volume XLIII, Issue 2  1 June 2018
ISSN 1074-0252

The Cavalry Journal Editorial Staff
Col. Samuel R. Young, USA Ret., Editor
journaleditor@uscavalry.org
Karen Tempero, Assistant Editor
LTC Gary R. Polsinelli, USA Ret., Copy Editor

The Cavalry Journal is dedicated to the memory of all Cavalrymen.

Contents

1  First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, Part 1
5  The Model 1913 Mule Riding Saddle
6  Staff Sergeant Clinton L. Romesha, MOH
8  Cavalry Replacement Training Center
13 The Last Cavalry Horse
15 Nonmobilization and the Cavalry Divisions
16 OH! How the Horses Laughed
19 Book Review: Masters of the Field
20 Editor’s Notes
21 USCA Membership Application
21 Colonel Robert H. G. Minty

Join the Cavalry
See page 21
First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, Part 1
By Trooper Gary Polsinelli

This purely volunteer cavalry troop was the first organized in defense of the colonies. Today the Troop is the oldest mounted military unit and quite possibly the oldest military unit of any kind that has been in continuous service to the Republic. The times that called it into being, and the character of the original members who fought through the seven years of the American Revolution, together forged concepts of service and a body of tradition that have given it a continuity of purpose since 1774.

The unit is a private military organization, with membership by election. The Troop is also part of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard’s 28th Infantry Division. In war, the mission is to be the commander’s eyes and ears of the battlefield. As members of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, the Troop is also available to serve in a peacetime disaster relief role or otherwise in support of civil authorities.

History to the Brink of the Civil War

The First Continental Congress met in September 1774, in Philadelphia. A Committee of Correspondence was elected by the citizens of Philadelphia to determine the most effective means of resisting the British and to carry out the nonimportation resolutions of the Congress. The Committee first met on the afternoon of Thursday, 17 November 1774, in the Pennsylvania State House. That evening three of the members, together with twenty-five other gentlemen, gathered according to tradition in Carpenters’ Hall and associated as the Light Horse of the City of Philadelphia, a name that was later changed to First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry.

The gentlemen of the Philadelphia Light Horse were professional men—shipowners, importers, or traders, generally of conspicuous prominence
in the affairs of the day. The associates who met on the evening of 17 November 1774, voted to equip and support themselves at their own expense and to offer their services to the Continental Congress. The company prepared for active duty by holding drills at five in the morning and five in the afternoon several times a week.

Abraham Markoe, a Danish subject, was chosen to be the first Captain because of his energy in organizing the Troop and his previous Danish military experience. Though prevented from open participation in the War as a result of the Neutrality Edict issued by King Christian II of Denmark, Captain Markoe took an active part in the defeat of the enemy by all other available means. At the time there was no common flag in use by any of the colonies. Not long after the news of the Battle of Lexington reached Philadelphia, Captain Markoe presented the Troop with the Standard that was to be carried in the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, and Germantown, and in all parades until about 1830, when it was retired for safekeeping.

When George Washington was appointed Commander in Chief of the Continental Army in June of 1775, the Troop assumed varied duties. Close personal contact with the General developed as he was escorted to distant points in the Colonies. The command was frequently called upon to provide detachments to accompany prisoners and spies, to bear dispatches for the Committee of Safety, and to march with money for delivery to the Army.

**Trenton (26 December 1776)**

With Captain Samuel Morris at its head, the Philadelphia Light Horse reported to General Washington in late 1776. The Troop covered the rear of the Continental Army as it retreated across the Delaware pursued by Lord Cornwallis and his British and Hessian troops. On Christmas night, 1776, the Troop re-crossed the Delaware with the Continental Army. The craft in which the Troop embarked could not reach shore and the cavalrymen were forced to take to the water and make their way with their horses through the darkness and floating ice.

Approaching Trenton at dawn, the Troop rode near Washington in the column under Major General Nathaniel Greene. During the Battle of Trenton, the Troop served as escort to General Washington and his staff. A detachment of the Troop captured a body of Hessians fortified in a barn during a fierce engagement. The battle lasted forty-five minutes with the capture of about a thousand Hessians and the loss of two Americans. The Troop served as the Army’s rearguard as it re-crossed the Delaware, patrolling the roads until dark. A statue of a Trooper serves as the Trenton Battle Monument to this day.

**Princeton (3 January 1777)**

Trenton was reoccupied on 30 December. The Troop performed critical reconnaissance the next day. As Lord Cornwallis occupied the lines across from Trenton, Washington slipped the Army out at night and marched on Princeton. During the climax of the Battle of Princeton, General Washington, with many Troopers by his side, led the counterattack against the British. The Troop charged in “the fine Fox-chase” and the Army routed three British regiments that day. General Washington withdrew the Army to Morristown before Cornwallis could bring up his superior forces. The successful rear-guard action by the Troop saved the artillery train. “The ten days that changed the world” were over. It would be four long years until Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, but the Republic would prevail. General Washington relieved the Troop on 23 January and they returned to Philadelphia.

**Brandywine (11 September 1777) – Germantown (4 October 1777) – Valley Forge**

After its return to Philadelphia, the Troop engaged in months of arduous service. The Troop served under Maxwell’s command at the Battle of Brandywine and assisted in maintaining communications during the unsuccessful Battle of Germantown. The Troop served as detachments during the winter at Valley Forge. One group narrowly escaped capture with General Lafayette and his small force when they were nearly surrounded in the woods at Barren Hill. When the British withdrew from Philadelphia, the first troops to reenter the city were the Philadelphia
Light Horse with the city’s new commander, the hero of Saratoga, Major General Benedict Arnold.

Philadelphia (1779 – 1799)

The Troop suppressed a serious riot in Philadelphia in October 1779. In January 1781, the Troop assisted Generals Lafayette and St. Clair in suppressing a mutiny and administering its amnesty. The British surrendered at Yorktown on 19 October 1781, and the captured standards were placed in the care of the Troop. Eighty-three Troopers, including Honorary Captain Markoe, led a parade through the streets of Philadelphia to the State House and surrendered the trophies to Congress. At the cessation of hostilities on 11 April 1783, the Troop enrollment was eighty-eight members. Following Washington’s death on 14 December 1799, the Troop participated in the funeral pageant and paraded, dismounted, assembling “in complete uniforms at the State House for the purpose of paying the sad tribute of veneration to the remains of their late Commander in Chief.”

War of 1812 to the Brink of the Civil War

On 30 March 1811, a law was passed authorizing a regimental organization of the cavalry. Existing troops were allowed to retain their respective uniforms. The provisions of this law were accepted by the officers of the several units of the city and county of Philadelphia. Troop Captain Robert Wharton was elected Colonel of the Regiment’s combined troops.

The differences that existed following the War of Independence between the United States and Great Britain resulted in a declaration of war by Congress on 18 June 1812, and four days later the regiment of cavalry offered its services to the Government. During 1812 and 1813 the Troop drilled several times per month.

On 25 August 1814, news came of the Battle of Bladensburg and the capture of the city of First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry rarely participates in re-enactments but occasionally turns out for ceremonies in an approximation of its original uniform, which was based on the uniform of the Gloucester Fox Hunting Club, to which many of the founders of the Troop belonged prior to the Revolutionary War.
Washington. A requisition was made on Pennsylvania for fourteen thousand men. The Troop, under Captain Charles Ross, tendered its services on 27 August and was ordered to act as vedettes on the line between the Delaware River and the Chesapeake Bay, protecting Philadelphia from the expected advance of the British forces north from Washington.

On 11 September eight ships were seen heading for Baltimore, and on 13 September the firing of heavy guns was reported. The enemy was repulsed on 15 September. That day the Troop received an order from the Committee of Defense in Philadelphia to establish an extra line of scouts to Baltimore to bring intelligence of the movements of the enemy’s ships in the bay. Former Brigadier General Robert Wharton, who had been Captain of the Troop from 1803 to 1811, was serving once again with the Troop for the campaign as a private Trooper. He was taking his scheduled turn as one of the Troop’s cooks when news reached him, on 16 October, that he was being called back to the city to serve for the fourth time as the Mayor of Philadelphia. By 7 December 1814, the threat to the City of Philadelphia had passed. The camp at Mount Bull was struck and on 12 December, the Troop was discharged from service in the campaign.

By the time the Troop celebrated its 50th anniversary, on November 17th, 1824, with a dinner at the Franklin House, the Troop had seen much action both in the defense of the colonies against foreign threats and in recurrent duty to suppress civilian unrest and insurrection. It had become increasingly clear that the organization would carry on in the less spectacular times of peace as well.

Conforming to drill regulations and the expanding militia’s requirements, it proved itself ready on numerous occasions to serve either the Commonwealth or the Nation. It had set standards that influenced and encouraged the growth of similar units. Many members helped to organize or served in military organizations of a like nature.

In civilian and public life, the membership carried on the traditions begun by the Troop’s founders. By-laws and uniform regulations were adopted and closely adhered to. The claim of the Troop that it take the right of the line in all parades was legally established in the Militia Act of 2 April 1821. Efforts were made to record the organization’s early history, and the “Donaldson Narrative” was prepared and original documents filed for preservation in the archives. In the autumn of 1826, the copper plate still used today for the printing of membership certificates was engraved by Cephas A. Childs and first put to use.

17 November had long since been defined as “the day we celebrate,” and the Sunday nearest the anniversary of George Washington’s death had become the occasion of an annual church service. The dinner celebrations were held in rented halls (the Troop possessing no permanent facilities at the time) and the services were traditionally held at St. Peters on Pine Street or Christ’s Church on Second Street — places where founding Troopers often worshiped with General Washington during and after winning of the Nation’s independence. The fifteen years under Captain William H. Hart, 1827 to 1842, were to see these ceremonies mellow into traditions which are still upheld today, while at the same time, the pattern of the organization’s military duties became even more clearly defined.

The Republic of Mexico declared war against the United States on 4 June 1845, but hostilities did not begin until the following spring, when a proclamation of a state of war was issued by President Polk. Although there was no call for cavalry, Captain John Butler raised a volunteer company of dragoons in Philadelphia for the regular United States Service that served in the Mexican Campaign. Several individual members of the Troop served with distinction during the campaign.

An armory of sorts was established in 1853 by the renting and furnishing of a front room on the third floor of a building at Eighth and Chestnut Streets. Up to this time, there had been no permanent meeting place for the Troop. Business meetings had been held in the “Captain’s quarters,” or in rooms hired in various hotels and taverns. Some were held “in the saddle” and a number at the “castle” on the grounds of the State in Schuylkill. It was not
until 1863 that the Troop was to build its first permanent armory at Twenty-first and Ludlow Streets (then Ash Street).

Reference: www.firsttroop.com


Part 2, The History of the Troop from the Civil War to the Present, is planned for the next issue of The Cavalry Journal.

The silver rings which adorn the staff of the FTPCC Guidon commemorate the many historic battles in which the Troop has fought during the past 243 years.

The Model 1913
Mule Riding Saddle
By Trooper Sam Young

Many of us are familiar with the McClellan saddle and have probably ridden one. We know what it looks and feels like. But most of us are not familiar with the Model 1913 (M1913) Mule Riding Saddle which was issued to packers who rode mules. Until I started researching material for this article, all I knew was that it had a brass horn on the pommel and a double girth. I have since learned it is a specially-modified M1904 McClellan pattern designed for a mule’s build which is different than that of a horse. It is rigged for a double girth, and the regulation girths are different; each is a different width with different size rings and safes. The sidebars have a distinctive curvature, and the rear sidebars are less curved and create a distinctive notch as the sidebars turn toward the saddlebag stud. The regulation stirrups are the M1912 Stirrups, open iron stirrups in a dark finish.

References:
Staff Sergeant Clinton L. Romesha
3rd Squadron 61st Cavalry Regiment
Combat Outpost Keating, Afghanistan

Citation

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, 3 March 1863, has awarded, in the name of Congress, the Medal of Honor to Staff Sergeant Clinton L. Romesha, United States Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty: Staff Sergeant Clinton L. Romesha distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Section Leader with Bravo Troop, 3d Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, during combat operations against an armed enemy at Combat Outpost Keating, Kamdesh District, Nuristan Province, Afghanistan on 3 October 2009. On that morning, Staff Sergeant Romesha and his comrades awakened to an attack by an estimated 300 enemy fighters occupying the high ground on all four sides of the complex, employing
concentrated fire from recoilless rifles, rocket propelled grenades, anti-aircraft machine guns, mortars and small arms fire. Staff Sergeant Romesha moved uncovered under intense enemy fire to conduct a reconnaissance of the battlefield and seek reinforcements from the barracks before returning to action with the support of an assistant gunner. Staff Sergeant Romesha took out an enemy machine gun team and, while engaging a second, the generator he was using for cover was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade, inflicting him with shrapnel wounds. Undeterred by his injuries, Staff Sergeant Romesha continued to fight and upon the arrival of another soldier to aid him and the assistant gunner, he again rushed through the exposed avenue to assemble additional soldiers. Staff Sergeant Romesha then mobilized a five-man team and returned to the fight equipped with a sniper rifle. With complete disregard for his own safety, Staff Sergeant Romesha continually exposed himself to heavy enemy fire, as he moved confidently about the battlefield engaging and destroying multiple enemy targets, including three Taliban fighters who had breached the combat outpost’s perimeter. While orchestrating a successful plan to secure and reinforce key points of the battlefield, Staff Sergeant Romesha maintained radio communication with the tactical operations center. As the enemy forces attacked with even greater ferocity, unleashing a barrage of rocket-propelled grenades and recoilless rifle rounds, Staff Sergeant Romesha identified the point of attack and directed air support to destroy over 30 enemy fighters. After receiving reports that seriously injured Soldiers were at a distant battle position, Staff Sergeant Romesha and his team provided covering fire to allow the injured Soldiers to safely reach the aid station. Upon receipt of orders to proceed to the next objective, his team pushed forward 100 meters under overwhelming enemy fire to recover and prevent the enemy fighters from taking the bodies of their fallen comrades. Staff Sergeant Romesha’s heroic actions throughout the day-long battle were critical in suppressing an enemy that had far greater numbers. His extraordinary efforts gave Bravo Troop the opportunity to regroup, reorganize and prepare for the counterattack that allowed the Troop to account for its personnel and secure Combat Outpost Keating. Staff Sergeant Romesha’s discipline and extraordinary heroism above and beyond the call of duty reflect great credit upon himself, Bravo Troop, 3d Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and the United States Army.

Reference:
BADGE: Upon the kernel of an upturned, modeled, gold acorn, a black horse’s head, under the whole a black motto scroll, bearing the motto, “Build Well,” lettered and outlined in gold.

DESCRIPTION: The motto “Build Well,” and the acorn representing the proverb stating that “Sturdy Oaks from Little Acorns Grow,” make reference to the efforts of the permanent personnel of the Cavalry Replacement Center toward developing the nuclei of the organization into large and powerful units. The horse’s head symbolizes the element of Cavalry and mobility in this Replacement Center.
"These Are Critical Times: It is Our Duty To Train Men For War" was the message given to officers upon their arrival at the Cavalry Replacement Training Center in January, 1941. It had been the dominate theme behind the successful drive, and march toward the goal of making men fit to fight in those critical days when our country was at war.

Ever since October, 1940, when the War Department ordered the construction of a replacement training center for cavalry troops at Fort Riley, the wheels of industry and military training and organization have been turning at a speedy rate. Approximately 16,000 men have received 13 weeks of training and have been transferred to regiments. Another 6,500 now are being similarly trained. The enthusiastic praise of regimental commanders upon receiving CRTC-trained soldiers definitely indicates the success of the system of training.

Once started, hastily formed plans along several lines began to take shape simultaneously. While plans were still in a blueprint stage, ground was being broken for the camp at Fort Riley in the Republican Flats area in December, 1940; construction material, equipment and civilian laborers were hurried to Fort Riley, Regular Army officers were designated for key positions; reserve officers were winding up personal affairs and preparing for military duty. Hardly had the ground been broken for the first buildings before officers began to arrive for preliminary training. While buildings were rapidly rising, officers worked and studied long hours. Training schedules were mapped out; organization of units began to take shape as the officer assignments were passed out and a seemingly never-ending stream of supplies and equipment began to arrive. By the time the cadre arrived, the buildings were ready for occupancy; horses, motors, weapons and materials were arriving daily. On March 15, the first of the selectees arrived.

Today the CRTC is a model cantonment of 6,500 men. It is a part of Fort Riley, historic cavalry post, now consisting of 53,000 acres and located at the geographical center of the United States. About 350 buildings dot the scene of the once green meadowlands know as Republican Flats.

Under the command of Brigadier General Robert C. Rodgers, Lieutenant Colonel Wayland B. Augur and Major Alexander George arrived and began their duties as executive officer and plans and training officer, respectfully. These two key staff men soon were followed by other outstanding Regular Army officers including Lieutenant Colonel Harold G. Holt, chief of the motors department; Lieutenant Colonel H. P. Stewart, supply officer; Lieutenant Colonel Edwin M. Burnett, chief of the horsemanship department; Major Paul M. Martin, chief of the weapons department; Major Henry M. Zeller, horsemanship instructor and Captain Charles M. Iseley, assistant plans and training officer. A month before the first trainees arrived, Lieutenant Colonel T. Q. Donaldson assumed the post of adjutant.

In April, 1941, Brigadier General Harry D. Chamberlain assumed command of the CRTC. His presence was felt immediately and under his guiding hand many policies were instituted. In October, General Chamberlain was transferred to the Fourth Cavalry Brigade and he was succeed by Brigadier General Donald A. Robinson, formerly chief of staff of the Second Army, who still commands. Colonel Oliver I. Holman succeeded Lieutenant Colonel Augur as Executive Officer when the latter officer was transferred to Washington and early in December Major George B. Morse arrived and assumed the duties of Aide de Camp.

In January, 1941, under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Augur and Major George, assisted by the department heads, officers were put through a refresher course of instruction.
Housed in the old CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] barracks at Camp Whiteside, another part of the Fort Riley reservation, the officers underwent an intensive and comprehensive course of training and military administration under conditions made somewhat difficult by inadequate buildings and plenty of Kansas mud.

The officer training period ended, the unit moved to the newly completed quarters at the CRTC; the cadre arrived shortly afterward. The cadre had been assembled from every regiment of the United States Cavalry, with the exception of the Philippine Scouts.

While the cadre was undergoing its training, the Remount service of the Cavalry was busy sending mounts to the Center. Over half of the 1,600 horses here came from the remount depots at Fort Reno and Fort Robinson. In addition to the remounts, about 800 well-trained horses were shipped here from various cavalry organizations including the First Cavalry Division, the Second, Third, Fourth, Sixth, Eleventh and Fourteenth Regiments.

On March 15, 1941, came the first train load of selectees from Camp Lee, Virginia. They were followed during the next week by men from most sections of the country. Farm boys from Iowa, cowboys from Wyoming, machinists from Michigan, garment workers from Brooklyn, artists, musicians, writers, actors, school teachers, professional men, businessmen, farm, factory, and mill workers; all arrived to become part of the United States Cavalry.

The first thirteen-week training period began in earnest on March 24 and was completed the following June 14. To the horse training troops went 2,799 white and 192 colored soldiers, while to the motor training troops went 1,956 white and 221 colored soldiers. No sooner had the trained selectees been transferred to the regiments than the next increment began to arrive. The second increment training period ended September 27 and this time 4,288 white and 336 colored soldiers were sent out to the regiments with the exception of some who by virtue of their ability were retained as specialists and non-commissioned officers in training troops.

The third increment consisted of 6,175 [individuals]. Trainees of this fall increment were received over a five-week period from September 29 to November 1 and were divided into three equal groups for training purposes. These groups, consisting of five horse and four motor troops, began training in three consecutive weeks and were graduated in the middle of January in the same order.

At present the CRTC in compliance with a War Department order, is employing a stagger system of training selectee units. This system provides for a constant flow of selectees to the Center and a like constant flow of trained men to the regiments rather than a flow of larger groups of trained men every thirteen weeks.

Results already have proven that this stagger system of training and replacing works out more successfully than the first system employed here. Now it will be possible to furnish increments in groups of approximately 2,000 at intervals of five weeks.

The purpose of a training center is to provide men basically trained as individual soldiers to bring regiments up to full strength. The purpose of the Cavalry Replacement Training Center is to provide men as replacements for horse and mechanized cavalry units, capable of operating efficiently in garrison and field.

Originally each man was to receive complete training, either as a horse or motor-trained soldier. This objective was attained, but experience proved the necessity of broadening the general mission of the CRTC. As a result, there has been a steady program toward a more vitalized goal, that of furnishing tactical units the individual required to fit into a given spot in the organization. Training brought out the fact that some men were better machine gunners than others; some men were better horsemen; some were better scout car drivers; some made better cooks, clerks, or garagemen. The unfortunate formula of World War Number One of selecting a group of men with varying abilities and making all of them function as cooks or, as the case might have been, machine gunners, has been discarded.

The CRTC consists of a Headquarters and four provisional regiments. Each regiment is composed of two squadrons. Each squadron
consists of its headquarters and four troops, with the exception of two squadrons consisting of two troops each. Each troop is composed of 220 trainees who are assigned to one of four platoons.

Each provisional regiment is commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel. Each squadron is commanded by either a Lieutenant Colonel or Major. Each troop is commanded by a Captain assisted by two or more lieutenants. Troop officers function as administrators and as instructors in the basic training. Troop commanders are responsible for the housing, clothing and feeding of men as well as being responsible for all training. In the fields of horsemanship, motors and weapons, however, direct instruction and training is given under the supervision of the Horse, Motor or Weapons Departments.

Bearing in mind the ultimate goal of training men who will be fit to fight, each trainee, whether he eventually becomes a clerk, cook, or some other specialist, must know how to shoot. Major Paul M. Martin, internationally-known weapons expert, was given the assignment of heading the CRTC Weapons Department. Viewed as one of the most important training activities, instruction in weapons was stressed in preliminary training of officers, cadre and finally, selectees.

In warfare, marksmanship counts. It is safe to say that a majority of selectees had little or no previous marksmanship training, perhaps a smaller majority never fired a weapon. But it is a notable fact that throughout the first three increments, the average percentage of trainees who qualified with the M-1 rifle was well over the 80 per cent mark per platoon.

Instruction in weapons consists of training in maintenance, operation and use of cavalry weapons including the Garand or M-1 and M-1903 rifles, caliber .45 pistol, caliber .30 machine gun, both light and heavy, caliber .50 machine gun, 60 and 80-mm. mortars, and 37-mm. antitank gun.

Lieutenant Colonel Harold G. Holt was assigned the task of heading the Motors Department and continued in that capacity until he was needed with the armored forces. More recently, the department was placed under the supervision of Major Roland A. Browne. The department had as an objective the training of selectees in the inspection, operation and maintenance of military vehicles. Instruction includes the operation of vehicles in military formations and individually under all conditions of roads, terrain and weather. About 40 per cent of each increment’s selectees are placed in motor units and receiving such instruction. Upon conclusion of the training period, and if qualified, these men are sent to the motor and mechanized branches of the army.

As training progressed, equipment available for training was increased. Present equipment, in addition to weapons additions, consists of light tanks, scout cars, cargo trucks, solo motorcycles, tricycles, bantams, heavy wreckers, semi-trailers of various types and tonnage, combat cars and mortar carriers.

Approximately 60 per cent of the men of each increment receive instruction in horsemanship. Here too the versatility and natural ability of Americans has been demonstrated with success. In many cases, men from the cities knew only that horses performed in the movies and circus, but within a week or two these same men were saddling, bridling, riding and grooming horses…and experiencing the thrill of a lifetime. As one Brooklyn trainee put it, "Look Oving, four weeks ago I’m a soda jerk, now I’m a cowboy."

Instruction in horsemanship had for its purpose the production of men capable of handling cavalry mounts individually and in ranks, at all gaits, over all kinds of terrain, to execute well all mounted movements of the squad, platoon and troop including approach formations, combat charges and mounted attack. This, as well as the maintenance of horse and equipment under all conditions, was the objective of Lieutenant Colonel E. M. Burnett, head of the Horsemanship Department.

Trainees soon became imbued with the cavalry spirit; they developed an interest in the horse and when they went to the regiment they could ride hard and well.

A total of 162 hours is devoted to training by the Horsemanship Department. Emphasis is placed on developing a genuine love for horses,
and on quietness and smoothness of all mounted movements. An average of two and one-half hours is spent by each man in the care of animals and equipment.

During the first few weeks most of the time is devoted to equitation with particular instruction in the Chamberlain military seat, the aids and smooth control of horse. Later, instruction is given in mounted parade, scouting and patrolling, mounted combat, approach, mounted pistol, night marching, loading and unloading portee and transportation.

"Build Well" is the motto of the CRTC and in training men fit to fight, the army has not overlooked the importance of recreation and morale. Trainees may seek surcease [relief] from care at the theater, the Service Club, a recreation hall in each squadron area and a day room for reading, writing and a game of ping pong. Professional talent appears at intervals and squadrons invariably have enough talent to put on shows of their own. Boxing, wrestling, baseball and football have been encouraged in all troops. Regular dance nights are conducted for all units at the Service Club and young ladies from surrounding towns, brought here by American Legion and Service Clubs, add to the gaiety of such events.

In these most critical times, the CRTC continues to turn out replacements in a steady stream. One has to view personally the progress made to believe fully the achievement of the CRTC. The older officers and the more recent graduates of the officer training classes of the Army of the United States all have left their imprint on the trainees now serving in far flung Army organizations.

Few officers, however, will argue the point that the most important factor in the training of raw recruits here has been the caliber of the selectees. The intelligence, adaptability, enthusiasm of selectees trained here became evident immediately. The selectees, too, realize that these are critical times, roll up their sleeves, and work in a characteristic American fashion. The same men who were in civilian life a few months back soon are marching, riding, driving and shooting like veterans. Better still they are leading when the occasion demands. If, toward the end of a training period, one can view trainees, minus officers and noncommissioned officers, at an evening review, he can readily conclude that Americans, potentially are the best soldiers; trained American soldiers are the best soldiers in the world.

Reference: 3rd Training Regiment, Historical and Pictorial Review, Cavalry Replacement Training Center, 1941, Fort Riley, Kansas,
The Last Cavalry Horse
By Rickey Robertson

Everyone who lived during the large-scale Louisiana Maneuvers of 1941 remember many things of this great event, such as the long convoys of trucks and tanks, long columns of marching infantry units, little grasshopper airplanes that could land in your hay field, large camps and bivouac sites filled with tents and soldiers, but the one thing everyone talks about is the mounted horse cavalry. During the Louisiana Maneuvers two full cavalry divisions, both the 1st and 2nd Cavalry Divisions, plus several other cavalry regiments operated throughout the Sabine Maneuver Area. It was common to see a long dusty cavalry column coming by for what seemed like hours, with the long columns of mounted cavalry traveling day and night, often stopping only to water their mounts. Residents remember seeing the cavalry horses in column with feed bags on their muzzles, eating oats and corn as they traveled.

Many rural people tell of catching soldiers in their corn cribs trying to get additional corn for their mounts. The mounted cavalry trooper took care of his mount before he took care of his own needs. His most valuable piece of military equipment was his horse.

With the mounted units being used to and fro during the maneuvers, horses became sick and many were injured. The Quartermaster Section brought to Louisiana a re-mount section with over 800 replacement cavalry mounts ready for use, along with several hundred mules. The remount section was set up on the west-southwest side of Peason Ridge near present day Jett Road near Hornbeck, La. All these horses and mules were broke and ready for use. Each cavalry mount went through basic training when the Quartermaster Remount Section purchased them. They knew every move and turn, and yes, they knew every bugle call and knew just what to do when they heard the call!

And the big Missouri pack and artillery mules were trained in carrying heavy loads such as artillery field pieces, but they were also broke to ride! The artillerymen and mule packers could ride the animals if they were not carrying needed equipment. But something new was taking place in the U.S. Army. With the arrival of tanks, half-tracks, and other armored vehicles, the cavalry was to be phased out. It couldn’t happen, but yes it did. The famous cavalry regiments that had been mounted since [before] the days of the Civil War, the Indian Wars, and up to 1941 were about to have to turn in their famous mounts.

Cavalry trooper with his faithful mount during the Louisiana Maneuvers of 1941. (Rickey Robertson Collection).

By the end of the Louisiana Maneuvers, the beloved cavalry mounts were being traded for mechanized vehicles. To the cavalryman, his mount was more dependable than a motor vehicle. A veteran cavalryman could saddle and place his equipment on his mount and be in formation in less than 3 ½ minutes. The mounted units of the U.S. Army had performed magnificently during the maneuvers but were being displaced by the fast, mechanized units. As the units left the Louisiana Maneuver area in-route back to their home bases, at the Courthouse Square in Newton, Texas many of the units began disbanding and turning in their beloved horses.

But as these units turned in their horses, the U.S. Army Quartermaster Section began selling off all the cavalry horses 16 years old or younger. All the other older mounts were shipped to Fort Riley, Kansas where they were put out to pasture on that base. Over the years
these horses slowly died off until there was only one original cavalry horse left in the U.S. Army inventory and on its rolls. Chief, a big bay gelding, was the last cavalry horse living at Fort Riley. Chief had been foaled in 1932 and in 1940 he had been purchased by government purchasing agents as a re-mount for $163.00. He was brought into the service at Fort Robinson, Nebraska and after his initial breaking and training was assigned to the 10th U.S. Cavalry Regiment at Fort Riley, Kansas in late 1940. Chief was one of 6000 cavalry mounts that arrived at Fort Riley to be assigned to the various units and cavalry troopers. After the disbanding of the mounted cavalry units, 3 were kept on active duty at Fort Riley, with Chief being one of these. He was semi-retired in 1949 and was fully retired in early 1958 as the last living cavalry mount. Sadly on May 26, 1958 Chief, the last cavalry horse, passed away. Chief had lived to be 36 years old, which in human years is 108 years of age. A special funeral and burial took place for Chief at Fort Riley. A special coffin was made for Chief, and he was placed standing up in it. The Commanding General of Fort Riley gave a speech and remarks about Chief and his service to the U.S. Army. With the U.S. Army Band playing "Boots and Saddles ", the funeral procession carried Chief to his gravesite. If you have ever been to Fort Riley there is a large statue of a mounted cavalryman located there nicknamed Old Trooper by some and Old Bill by others. In honor of his faithful service to the U.S. Army and to the nation, Chief was buried at the foot of this statue and his gravesite is visited each and every day by visitors to this location. But is there any remnant of these magnificent cavalry horses left in existence? Yes there is, right here in Sabine, Vernon, and Natchitoches Parishes!

There is still a large wild horse herd on Peason Ridge Military Reservation. The ancestors of these horses were horses and mules that were used in the large scale logging operations from 1917 to 1935, were horses who were left by the settlers and homesteaders of Peason Ridge when the U.S. Army used imminent domain to take their farms and homesteads from them in 1941, and yes, many of the ancestors were cavalry mounts that had been turned loose as sick or lame by the Remount Sections, and some that had just escaped from the Remount Sections during the maneuvers. As you view these wild horses, you can see the blood lines of the cavalry horses of World War II in them. Many of the cavalry mounts, sick or lame, along with some who escaped, mixed with the wild horses roaming the Peason area and their descendants still roam freely throughout the area. You can look at these horses and can immediately tell which of these animals had an ancestor as a cavalry horse. So we may not have any living cavalry horses on the government rolls, but we still have their ancestors who will always remind us of these magnificent horses!

About the Author: Rickey Robertson retired from the LA. State Police in 2009. He was born and raised in the Peason Community in southeastern Sabine Parish. Rickey and his wife Patsy founded the Peason Historical Foundation Inc. in 2007 to gather and preserve the rich history of the sawmill town of Peason and of the settlers and homesteaders of Peason Ridge. They founded the Peason Memorial Park, which houses two historical markers and photo kiosks open to the public and they also have a small military museum at their home. Rickey is one of the few Heritage Family Members from Peason Ridge. Rickey writes historical articles for several local newspapers, and both local and national magazines.

A group of the wild horse herd located on Peason Ridge. You can see the blood lines of the cavalry mounts in these horses. (Rickey Robertson Collection).
Nonmobilization and the Cavalry Divisions
Major General Bruce Jacobs (Retired)

Scarcely anyone today is prone to remember (and why should they?) the nonmobilization of the four National Guard cavalry divisions in the 1940-41 call-up. These were the only major elements of the Guard destined not to be called to the colors.

Concurrently, the regular Army cavalry didn’t fare very well either! Considering the esteem in which the cavalry had once been held, this poses an interesting subject for study.

The Army’s last chief of cavalry, MG John K. Herr, insisted to the very last that the Army’s “infantry generals…prematurely and unwisely destroyed our great cavalry.” General Herr referred to instances both in World War II and in Korea in which he believed that horse cavalry would have been of vital moment."

Nowhere was the fate of horse cavalry watched more anxiously than in ranks of the National Guard which, in the interwar years, had made a major and costly commitment to the support of the horse cavalry.

For the historical record, two cavalry division headquarters were actually allocated to specific states and given federal recognition. MG James E. Edmonds commanded the 23rd with headquarters in Louisiana; MG William K. Herndon had the 24th Cavalry Division headquarters in Kansas. Neither the 21st nor the 22nd Divisions were ever permitted to organize federally recognized division headquarters or to designate division commanders. And as the likelihood of mobilization increased it became clear that the Army plans for mobilization did not include any of the National Guard’s cavalry divisions.

[Ed. While the Army continued the training and maintenance of the cavalry organizations in the National Guard and the Guard readied for mobilization in 1940 rumors abounded that the Guard’s cavalry divisions would not be called to active duty.]

All of the National Guard’s divisions, including the cavalry, took part in the three-week maneuvers in the summer of 1940.

An inspection team concluded that the 23rd “could take the field in campaign in 30 days” and it recommended that the division be completely equipped as promptly as possible.

“When I got home,” General Edmonds would say, “I got the last pages of the mobilization plan that gave us our assignment, where we were to go, and what we were to do. Concurrently, [I received] a telegram that the National Guard cavalry divisions as such were to be disbanded.”

As we look back, it seems strange in yet another respect. Bear in mind that it was during this period that the armored force was just starting to emerge. There was an absurd rivalry between the cavalry and infantry branches as to which would field the tanks. The tankers would always declare that they carried on the tradition of the flying hooves of the cavalry—but it was, in fact, the infantry generals who seized control of the new force—it only became a separate branch after the war.

In retrospect, it seems strange that little or no advocacy in the War Department was made for the notion of converting either of the two regular cavalry divisions or any of the four National Guard cavalry division to armored divisions.

General Lesley J. McNair, commanding the Army Ground Forces, approved his staff’s position against mobilizing of the Army’s two cavalry divisions at a time when the Army was looking for ways to enlarge the armored force. Yet, building the armored force was a major priority for the Army. The 1st and 2nd Armored Divisions were formed in July, 1940. The 3rd and 4th Armored Divisions came into being in April 1941. The 5th Armored Division was activated in October 1941. Between January 1942 and July 1942, the Army had a requirement for four more armored divisions. But it opted to build the 6th and 9th Armored Divisions from scratch.

The official Army history of the evolution of the World War II combat force notes that “It was decided in May 1942 to maintain the cavalry divisions as horse units...." Toward what end? The same official history relates the outcome of this decision:
The 2nd Cavalry Division was dispatched to North Africa in early 1944 only to be inactivated and broken up. Suitable employment for the 1st Cavalry Division was found in the Southwest Pacific where it fought dismounted, as infantry under special Tables of Organization and Equipment, which raised it almost to the size of an infantry division. It retained the basic square formation of the cavalry division.

What is to be learned from the nonmobilization of the four pre-World War II National Guard cavalry divisions?

For one thing—do not count on the system to follow logic. It would have “made sense” to convert the National Guard (and regular Army!) horse cavalry to armor simply to accelerate the pace of the armored force buildup. The Army preferred to build its armored force from scratch. The cavalry divisions paid the ultimate price—that of being left behind in the dust of ancient history.

[Editor: material for this article was extracted from a National Guard Magazine article by MG Jacobs, date unknown.]

OH! How the Horses Laughed
By 2nd LT Samuel L. Myers, 1st Cavalry
December 2, 1930

Report on transportation of the 2nd Platoon, Troop E, 1st Cavalry, to Ft. Clark, TX and return to Ft. D.A. Russell, TX.

On the night of 7 November 1930, six class B horse trucks, two class B baggage trucks and one Class B tanker were spotted in the rear of the Troop E barracks. All the trucks were running well and were expected to get an early start for a short run to Sanderson, our prospective first camp.

During the night a light rain fell, but it was thought that this would cause no trouble and the next morning at 6 a.m. we started to load. Due to the fact the horses were unaccustomed to being loaded in trucks, a great deal of difficulty was encountered, but after an hour and a half, everything was in readiness and we started. From that minute until we arrived at Fort Clark, five days later, the trip was one trouble after another.

Before the last truck cleared the post, one truck had locked in gear, necessitating a halt of 20 minutes to make repairs. This being repaired, we set forth once more only to find the two leading trucks stuck in the mud not more than 200 yards from the gate. Twenty minutes more were spent in getting them out and on the way again.

From there on, everything went well until we were six miles west of Marathon when we had to stop to gas the trucks and eat. Forth-five minutes were consumed doing this, but 1 o’clock saw us on our way and only 70 miles from our campsite.

But trouble was close upon our heels, and we had not covered ten miles when the rear-end went out on one of the trucks, rendering it helpless and necessitating using a good truck to tow it. Another five miles and the carburetor and intake manifold dropped off a truck. We stripped the necessary parts from the crippled truck and once more continued, this time to the pavement 13 miles east of Marathon. By this time, I had decided that it would be impossible to reach Sanderson, so LT Berry went ahead to pick out a campsite nearer to us. He took the G.M.C. truck with the rations and cook ahead with him.

We progressed about 5 miles into the mud east of the pavement without mishap. Then the truck...
being towed went into the ditch and became stuck, stuck so fast that it was impossible to get it out without endangering the trucks. As night was fast approaching and we were still 16 miles from our camp, I gave orders to leave the truck and continue the march. At this point, an epidemic of stopped gas lines struck the train and at least six halts had to be made to repair these troubles. But we kept on moving in low and second gear some hours making 2 miles and some only one, until 9:30. Then two more trucks went dead and the mud was so deep that the live ones could not tow the dead ones. I decided we must halt even though we were still 8 miles from camp. We stretched tow chains between the trucks for a picket line, unloaded the horses, fed them, and since the only water available was in the mud holes, we watered them there. In the meantime, I went into camp and sent the G.M.C. out beside the road and I took two men back to the abandoned truck to ride horses from it in bareback. After this, Lieutenant Berry and I had a brief council of war and reached the conclusion that we could not go further without aid from Marfa, so he went for help and I went back to camp to get more food ready for morning. Before daylight, I brought this food out to the men and at once we started moving the trucks and horses the remaining 8 miles to camp. This took all morning.

Since we had contemplated only a one-day trip, we had but two and one-half days rations and forage and this was already low. Also, the trucks were all in bad shape; consequently, I decided to stay here and get ready to move on as soon as the help came from Marfa.

The relief expedition also encountered difficulties and did not arrive until after dark. We then exchanged two dead trucks for their live ones, changed a horse body from one of our trucks to one of theirs, reloaded our baggage, rations, and forage, took over the supplies brought from Marfa and tried to sleep. But it was raining so much that there wasn’t a dry spot and sleeping was out of the question. The result was several small fires with groups of shivering men huddled around them discussing the possibilities of ever getting back to Marfa again.

We were all ready to go the next morning at daylight and go we did, about one mile. At this point we struck ten miles of road which I’m sure will always cause a shudder in every man who crossed it that day as long as he lives to remember it. It was a newly built road with a bottom of sand and a 10-inch surface of the slipperiest mud I have ever seen. It took us 10 hours to cross that 10 miles and we had to shovel, pick and pull every inch of it. In some places where the trucks would sink in to the body, it was necessary to dig all around them, jack them up and build a road of stones, brush and boards underneath. This same process had to be repeated for nearly every truck that crossed each hole, for the roads we built, though better than the ones we were traveling on, were none too substantial. Finally, at 7:30 we reached the pavement 11 miles west of Sanderson and from there to Dryden we traveled with but one breakdown. One of the trucks blew out a cylinder head 4 miles west of Dryden and it had to be towed in.

At this point, Sergeant Stutz came to see me with the news that we were out of gasoline. This seemed impossible for we had left Marfa with 980 gallons, but a check soon proved that we were indeed out. But Dryden has an airdrome and airdromes always have gasoline so we soon had three drums. Camp that night was quite comfortable because we were permitted to sleep in the hanger, out of the rain and wind.

Tuesday, the fourth day out, we proceeded slowly but steadily with only an occasional breakdown and without getting stuck until 8:30 p.m. when we encountered a treacherous detour 6 miles west of Shumola. Lieutenant Berry had gone to Fort Clark for more gas and rations, I had sent the G.M.C. to Shumola to make camp and there was no possible chance to camp near this detour, so we had to try to cross it, even though I felt certain that it could not be accomplished. At this time, we were towing two dead trucks which proved to be a great hindrance. However, we tried it and the first two trucks got through. Then came two live trucks towing a dead one and down they went into the mud, stuck hard and fast in the bottom of a gully where the sides were too steep to go forward of backward. After working for two hours it became apparent that we would never get out of this hole under our own power. It also
became necessary that we get out somehow because cars were filling the road for many yards on each side waiting for us to get out so they could pass. At this moment, a lifesaver in the form of a highway man came to our rescue with the good news that he had a tractor which would pull us out. He went for it and soon returned. It was a matter of minutes from then until we were out for that tractor walked through the mud and up the hill with 2 or 3 Liberty trucks fully loaded as easily as if it had no load at all. It seemed now that our troubles were lightened, but fate still had some bad news in store for us. We hadn’t proceeded a half-mile before two trucks got stuck and while attempting to pull one out a third went in the same hole. There was nothing to do but unload. The men rode the horses in to Shumola bareback and Sergeant Stutz, his drivers, and myself stayed to get the trucks out. After excavating about 50 yards of road we got them all on solid ground and this time made our camp at about 1:30 a.m. There we found rations, forage and 110 gallons of gasoline from Fort Clark.

On Wednesday morning, we started out with both the Pecos and Devil’s rivers to cross and only 110 gallons of gasoline. We knew that this much gas would only take us a short distance so Lieutenant Berry left at once for Fort Clark for more. Meanwhile, we crossed the Pecos Canyon without mishap and were on our way to Comstock. About 5 miles west of Comstock, we again ran out of gas, but inside of ten minutes from the time we halted, a tanker came out from Del Rio with 430 gallons which sufficed to complete the trip. From this point on to Fort Clark we had one broken connecting rod which necessitated towing another truck. Aside from this trouble, the remainder of the journey was comparatively uneventful and we arrived at Fort Clark at 10:00 p.m. 12 November, just five days after we had left Marfa.

On the trip we used 1,670 gallons of gasoline, 90 gallons of oil, 3 trucks were out of action and nearly stripped to replace parts on the other ones which were running; all our tow chains were broken; the whole train was in bad condition and parts were missing from every truck. The men and horses suffered a great deal from exposure and irregular meals, but two days rest put everything back in fairly good shape. Nearly all our clothes were almost ruined from the mud.

The return trip was much easier for the roads were dry nearly all the way. Of course, there was continual motor trouble and, even with the good going that we had, it was necessary to tow 3 trucks into Marfa. One of them with a broken cylinder head had to be towed all the way from Del Rio. However, in spite of all this trouble, we made 95 miles a day and the third day out from Clark saw us safely home.

In my opinion, the transportation of Cavalry by Liberty trucks is not only impracticable, but a waste of time in any weather. In wet weather it is impossible. These trucks are so old and worn out that the strain caused by pulling heavy loads over long distances is too much for them. On good roads and for short distances, this means of transportation might prove valuable. The bodies are excellent for this purpose. They are large enough to accommodate 5 horses without crowding and the tailgates made in the form of a collapsible ramp make loading and unloading easy. But until there are some good dependable trucks under these bodies, I would much prefer to do my future marching as it should be, on the back of a horse.

[Republished from the June 1993 Cavalry Journal.]
Masters of the Field: The Fourth United States Cavalry in the Civil War
John L. Herberich
Schiffer Publishing, Ltd. 2015
Reviewed by: Trooper Sam Young

Of all the cavalry regiments in the Union Army during the Civil War, only six were part of the Regular U.S. Army. The rest were volunteer regiments from the states. Four months after the start of the Civil War those six regiments (in order of seniority)—1st Dragoons, 2nd Dragoons, Regiment of Mounted Riflemen, 1st Cavalry, 2nd Cavalry, and 3rd Cavalry—were reorganized as follows: 1st Dragoons, the oldest mounted regiment in the Army, became the 1st Cavalry; 2nd Dragoons became the 2nd Cavalry; Regiment of Mounted Riflemen became the 3rd Cavalry; the 1st Cavalry became the 4th Cavalry; the 2nd Cavalry became the 5th Cavalry; and the 3rd Cavalry became the 6th Cavalry.

Five of those six regiments fought in the Eastern Theater of the war—Pennsylvania, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, and the coastal area of North Carolina. The 4th Cavalry was assigned to the Western Theater—Kentucky, Tennessee, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana east of the Mississippi River, South Carolina, and the rest of North Carolina—but its companies A and E fought in the Eastern Theater until March 1863 when they rejoined their Regiment in Nashville.

Like the other Regular Army regiments in the months before and after the start of the War, the 4th suffered a very significant loss of trained and experienced cavalry officers and non-commissioned officers, as well as private soldiers, who left the Army to support the seceded states. Many of the remaining 4th Cavalry officers and non-commissioned officers took their cavalry training and experience to the new volunteer regiments. While the 4th’s ranks were refilled many times due to these losses and casualties there was a nucleus of officers, non-commissioned officers, and private soldiers who trained and led the 4th Cavalry and its companies when performing their missions while separate from the 4th.

The 4th’s cavalrymen, whether acting singularly or in concert with two or more of their comrades, spent long, tiring, and often miserable hours, more often than not for many days in a row, in the saddle on horses weakened by lack of food and care due to the requirements of performing their cavalry duties. When their horses failed them, they continued on foot to perform their missions.

The author states “During the Civil War, the 4th United States Cavalry reached the zenith of professionalism and skills for a mounted cavalry regiment. The men fought equally well mounted or dismounted. They used their primary weapon, the saber, as no other cavalry regiment had before or since. Combined with the Spencer carbine, they became an almost undefeatable force.”

On 9 March 1863, at Spring Hill, Tennessee, Colonel Minty’s Cavalry Brigade, Army of the Cumberland, which included the 4th U.S. Cavalry, received the praise of Major General Rosecrans, Army of the Cumberland commander, for its performance with the saber during the brigade’s vigorous attack that overwhelmed and defeated a Confederate force that outnumbered it two to one. In addition to sending a “laudatory message” to the General-in-Chief, Henry Halleck, in Washington, Rosecrans stated in his General Orders “In recognition of the dash and gallantry displayed by his [Minty’s] brigade on all occasions, it shall hereafter be known as the Saber Brigade of the Army of the Cumberland.” And in January 1864, Rosecrans gave his cavalry the title “master of the field as it hesitates not to attack the enemy wherever he finds them.”

In February 1864 the 4th Cavalry was rewarded for its performance in the Mississippi campaign, where Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest had praised the 4th U.S. Cavalry for “the grandest cavalry charge I ever witnessed” at Okolona, “a brand-new Spencer carbine for every man in the regiment.” With these carbines, the most advanced weapon of the time, the cavalrymen could fire them seven times without reloading. The 4th’s cavalrymen quickly learned how to use these deadly carbines effectively and efficiently. From the Atlanta campaign to the end of the war, the 4th
added to the history of its most-remarkable mounted action with the saber, an equally remarkable record for its dismounted action with the Spencer carbine.

This is the story of the 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment in the Civil War through its member's own words. It is one of the most extensively detailed and referenced Civil War cavalry books. It has 38 pages of end-notes, 6 pages of bibliography, a 16-page index, and numerous detailed maps. It has appendices of the 4th's staff officers, the twenty-two future generals, identifies the four officers who received the Medal of Honor, attempts to identify all the officers who served with the 4th, enlisted field commissions, the Civil War roster of the 4th which includes Company I First Sergeant John M. Herberich (father-in-law of the author's grandmother), and the 4th Regulars on the Battle Monument at West Point.

This is Mr. Herberich's first book. It took most of his spare time during twelve years to research and write. In his message to me he said "This book has given me a great deal of pleasure." "My goal was to have the men of the 4th U.S. Cavalry and the brigade they rode with tell their own story. I think Colonel Robert H. G. Minty emerges as one of the best (if least known) cavalry commanders of the war, and the 4th U.S. as one of the finest cavalry regiments to ever ride." Masters of the Field is definitely a welcomed addition to the U.S. Cavalry Association's Cavalry Memorial Research Library.

Editor’s Notes

Have you ever thought about how fast time flies; especially when you are having fun? I just complete three years as the Journal editor! WOW! And I am still enjoying being the editor, even with the occasional challenges. Fortunately, they are vastly offset when I receive useable articles and book reviews for publication that fit into the U.S. Cavalry guidelines of the U.S. Cavalry Association. Yes, I have had to reject some interesting articles and book reviews that just don’t fit the USCA guidelines. Interestingly, the few items rejected have led me to topics that are applicable to the U.S. Cavalry that eventually may be published.

One topic that I believe must be in every Journal issue is Medal of Honor recipients who were cavalrmen. Recipients from the Civil War and the Indian Wars have from one word—gallantry—to maybe a sentence in their citations. That means research to find their stories. From the Spanish-American War to the present the citations are much longer and it is easier to find their stories. I find at least one new MOH recipient each week that is not on my list for inclusion in the Journal. So, this is another challenge—a nice-to-have-challenge.

Let's change horses from what I normally address in this column. In addition to being the editor I am also the “book librarian” in the USCA Memorial Research Library. I must ask that no more books be donated to the Library as we simply do not have room to either display all the books we currently have or store those that are not on display. If you have U.S. Cavalry or U.S. Cavalry-related books you would like to donate, please send me a list of what you have (title and author). I will let you know any that we would like to receive from you.

Enjoy this Journal, and please send your letters and article ideas to me at journaleditor@uscavalry.org or to my home address: Samuel Young, 712 Englewood Street, Lansing, KS 66043.

The Finest in Embroidered Military Apparel

www.ClothingMilitary.com

A Veteran Owned Company

Saber Exercise, Fort Custer, Montana
Colonel Robert H. G. Minty

Colonel Minty, born in Ireland and with prior service as an officer in the British Army, commanded Cavalry at regiment, brigade, and division levels throughout the Western Theater. He served under Generals Grant, Rosecrans, Thomas, Sherman, Kilpatrick, and Wilson. His brigade was known as the “Sabre Brigade.” He was promoted to brigadier general of Volunteers in 1865. He participated in the capture of Jefferson Davis.

Bentley Historical Library

Colonel Minty impressed upon his men, per a 4th Michigan Cavalry Regiment 2nd lieutenant: “Sabers are intended for use, not ornament.” And “the saber is the cavalryman’s weapon and that we should never lose a chance of using it.”

Per one Confederate cavalryman: “Col. Minty is one of the most gallant and dashing officers in the Federal army, and those who ‘scare him up’ may count on having a fight.”

Reference: Masters of the Field
2018 Bivouac & National Cavalry Competition
Wednesday, 26 September – Saturday, 29 September
Fort Reno, Oklahoma
Details forthcoming in the Spring 2018 Crossed Sabers