

The Monthly Muster

KEY WEST AVENGERS NEWSLETTER | SEPTEMBER, 2025

Upcoming Events

The fall schedule can be found here, or at our website (linked below). Please make sure you have these dates on your calendar and your gear is in order.

Fort McAllister is a very cool event and we have been invited to portray Confederates inside the original fort - a special honor as it is invite only.

[Full Schedule](#)

2025 Fall Schedule

★★★ Key West Avengers ★★★

October 10-12 *Fort Clinch CSA Garrison*
Fort Clinch State Park,
Fernandina Beach, FL

October 24-26 *Sandersville*
Forest Grove Plantation,
Sandersville, GA

November 14-16 *Dade City Raid*
Pioneer Florida Museum,
Dade City, FL

December 12-13 *Fort McAllister*
Ft. McAllister State Park
Richmond Hill, GA

See <https://www.flreenactors.com/schedule> for the full season schedule

Captain's Desk

Captain David Hendrix



This fall we have a busy schedule. We start at Ft Clinch where we will learn how the troops garrisoned an active fort. We will stay in the barracks on bunks and eat in dinning rooms while performing the CSA impression. This event will feature a refresher on drill and proper uniforms and equipment. The Florida Battalion performs beautifully on the field because we work hard at ensuring our drill is accurate. Then we march to Sandersville, Georgia where we switch informs and begins the reenactment of Sherman's March to the Sea. We will literally march into Sandersville and take the town square. Then back to Florida to our own back yard and the Battle of Dade City at the

Dade Pioneer Village. This event shows us what it was to defend a small town from Union incursions to the interior of Florida. Then back to Sherman's March to the Sea where we will change back to our CSA uniforms and live in and defend Ft McAllister. As you know Sherman started his march across Georgia in Atlanta, went thru Sandersville and finally captured Savana by capturing Ft McAllister. We have the opportunity to reenact both the start and the finish to Sherman's March to the Sea. I hope you can all attend all of these events as they hopefully provide a wide range of reenacting experiences and opportunities.

Your Obedient Servant

Captain David Hendrix

History Headline

The 7th Florida at Chickamauga, September 18-20, 1863

Report written by Colonel Robert Bullock



The following report was written by Colonel Robert Bullock (pictured right), who commanded the 7th Florida through the Battle of Chickamauga, 162 years ago today. The fighting he describes on the 19th took place at the southern end of the battlefield in the Vinyard Field. The fighting on the 20th took place on Snodgrass Hill, and the assault the 7th participated in ended the battle. The prisoners he describes, including the flag, repeating rifles, and Colonel, were from the 21st Ohio. The original report can be found in the Official Records of the War of Rebellion.



Image courtesy of Florida Memory Project.



HDQRS. SEVENTH REGT. FLORIDA VOLUNTEERS,

Near Chattanooga, East Tenn., September 25, 1863.

CAPT.: I have the honor to report the following as the part taken by my regiment in the battle of Chickamauga, on the 19th and 20th instant.

Early on the morning of the 19th, my regiment was formed in line of battle on the north side of Chickamauga Creek, which line was at intervals advanced until the afternoon of the same day, when a charge was made upon a battery of the enemy stationed in a field in front of our line, from the destructive fire of which I was ordered to shelter my command behind the cover of woods immediately on my right, near which place my command bivouacked for the night in line of battle.

Early on the morning of the 20th, the line of battle was advanced as the enemy receded, until in the afternoon of the 20th the regiment was detached from the brigade with the First Regt. Florida Cavalry, and sent 1 1/2 mile back on the main road to intercept what was supposed to be a cavalry advance, from which place my command was moved in quick time to rejoin the brigade on the left of the hill in front of hospital, and then moved with the brigade upon a position of the enemy's in front and to the right, which resulted in the capture of about 150 prisoners, 1 stand of colors, and 12 Colt revolving rifles. Among the prisoners was Col. Carlton and Lieut.-Col. McLaw, regiment not remembered.

The conduct of the officers and men of my command was in the highest degree satisfactory.

I am happy to report but few casualties in my command, nearly all of which occurred in the charge on the 19th, and of which a report has already been furnished.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. BULLOCK,
Col., Comdg. Seventh Florida Regt.

Capt. JAMES BENAGH,
Assistant Adjutant-Gen.”

First Sergeant's Report

First Sergeant Lawrin Ellis



Firearms, Sidearms, and Edged Weapons of The Civil War

The Civil War witnessed a technological revolution in weaponry. This was highlighted by a changeover in shoulder-fired weapons from smoothbore firearms that had to be loaded through the muzzle each time a shot was fired to rifled-barrel firearms, some of which loaded at the breech. Most of these new rifle-muskets still had to be loaded between each shot, but repeating weapons such as 7-shot Spencer and 16-shot Henry rifles and carbines were developed as well. Unfortunately for the common soldier, tactics did not advance as quickly as

technology. Napoleonic linear tactics from earlier in the century now combined with more accurate, faster-firing weapons resulted in catastrophic casualty figures throughout the War.

Rifles and Muskets

Over 100 types of muskets, rifles, and rifled muskets were used in the Civil War, especially in the early days as both the Union and Confederate armies struggled to arm their rapidly-expanding forces. Everything from antique flintlock firearms to early examples of machine guns and sniper rifles saw use to one extent or the other. However, the most common weapon to be used by Northern and Southern soldiers was the rifled musket. Born from the development of the percussion cap and the Minié ball, rifled muskets had much greater range than smoothbore muskets while being easier to load than previous rifles.

The diversity of long guns in the war led to a classification system which categorized them by their quality and effectiveness. There were "first class" weapons like Springfield rifles, "second class" weapons like the older M1841 Mississippi rifle, and "third class" weapons like the Springfield Model 1842 musket. Efforts were made to ensure that troops had the best possible firearms available, including rearming with captured enemy weapons after a battle.

Even with the advantages offered by the rifled musket, some soldiers preferred to stick with smoothbores as it allowed them to fire buck and ball shots. The combination of a bullet with several buckshot was devastating at short distance, but rifled firearms could not use them as they damaged the spiral grooves.

Although breechloading and repeating rifles were available as early as 1861, few were issued for reasons such as cost, technical complexity, and institutional resistance. This did not stop some individuals from purchasing these weapons themselves. One of the most famous examples of this was the Lightning Brigade, whose wealthy commander, Colonel John T. Wilder, purchased Spencer repeating rifles for the entire formation.

Carbines

Around 18 different carbines were used during the war. Since they were smaller, lighter and more robust than infantry rifles, they were the preferred long gun for cavalry. While

accuracy was comparable, their range was lower on account of their shorter barrels and lighter gunpower loads. Early models had been muzzleloaders, but because of the difficulty reloading them on horseback, the majority during the war were breechloaders employing linen cartridges. The largest number of these was the Sharps carbine, which was also available as a rifle.

As the war progressed, increasing numbers of Federal cavalymen were armed with repeating carbines. The most widespread of these was the Spencer carbine, which was adopted as the Union cavalry's official carbine in 1864. However, since the South was incapable of producing the metallic cartridges necessary for their function, Confederate troopers were severely limited in their use of repeating firearms. As late as 1863, the British officer Arthur Lyon Fremantle observed Confederate cavalry in Texas armed with a wide variety of weapons: rifles, shotguns, carbines and revolvers.

Sidearms

Thirty-four different pistols and revolvers were used in the Civil War, although the most common were cap and ball revolvers with five or six chambers. Revolvers were the standard sidearm of infantry officers; many soldiers also brought handguns with them when they first volunteered, but these were often discarded. Nearly all cavalry soldiers carried at least one handgun but more frequently two. John Mosby's rangers were famous for carrying four revolvers, with the additional pair held in saddle holsters.

The most popular revolvers were those produced by Colt, with over 146,000 purchased by the US government. The bullet and gunpowder could be packaged together as a paper cartridges or loaded separately into each chamber. Some models also came with a shoulder stock.

Edged Weapons

There were numerous edged weapons used during the war, but the most common carried by both sides was the bayonet given to infantry soldiers. Beyond its use as a weapon, the bayonet had utilitarian purposes, such as a makeshift entrenching tool and even a spit.

Infantry sergeants and officers were also equipped with a sword. Sabers were the traditional weapon of the cavalry, although Union cavalry tended to place greater emphasis on their use in combat over the Confederates.

Machine Guns

Machine guns were available during the Civil War, but their impact was minimal and very few were fielded by either side. One reason for this was opposition to their adoption by the military establishment, but also important were drawbacks in these early weapons' design. The use of black powder meant obscuring smoke quickly formed after firing the first few rounds. The weapons themselves were too heavy to be carried except on a carriage, which limited where they could move. Their ammunition also was heavier, making it more difficult to carry enough rounds for adequate use.

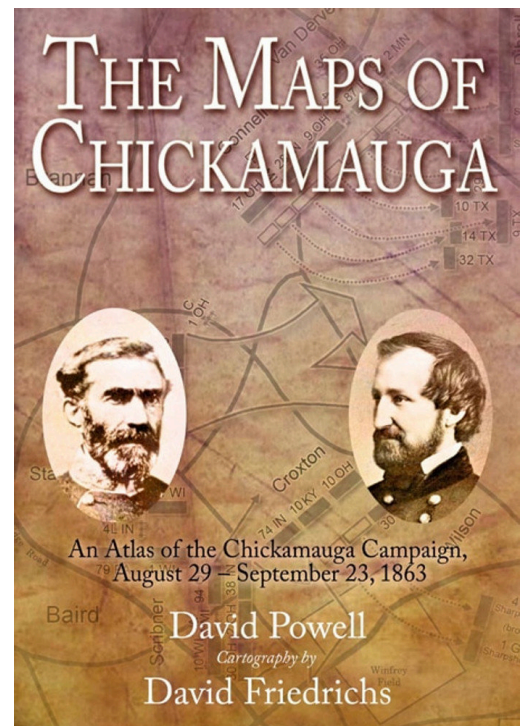


Book Recommendation

The Maps of Chickamauga

David Powell

There are several exceptional books about Chickamauga but this is a must-read for anyone looking to learn about the second costliest battle of the war. Written by one of the best Civil War historians around, this gives an almost minute-by-minute account of the battle, with maps for just about every single engagement in this battle. When in print, it can be found directly through the publisher.



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