

From the Sunday News, Feb. 25.

CONFEDERATE CHOCTAWS.

Their Old Commander Tells of Their Services in Alabama.

In Response to the Request of his Comrades, Messrs Thomas V Walsh and R J Brownfield, of Dick Anderson Camp of Sumter, Major S G Spann Tells of the Organization and Services of the Eighteenth Battalion of Confederate Cavalry and the First Battalion of Choctaw Indians

To the Editor of The Sunday News:

Private information has reached me that inquiry appeared in a former issue of your paper asking who commanded the 18th battalion of Confederate cavalry and where was it organized? In addition to this several personal friends and Confederate comrades, knowing of the merits of this command and believing that there are features of special interest that should not be lost to the history of the late civil war, insist that I should respond freely and give to the public some chief points of my war life and the work of the 18th battalion, and also the 1st battalion of Choctaw Indians, commanded by myself in conjunction with my 18th battalion of Confederate cavalry. I therefore send to you an epitome of what I hope will suffice for the present, with the promise of a more elaborate detail later on, and in a more substantial form than a mere newspaper communication. S G Spann. Sumter, Jan 30, 1900

THE CALL TO WAR IN ALABAMA

On the 11th day of January, 1861, Alabama, my adopted State, seceded from the Union. In the same month and year I, then a planter, residing in Dallas county, near Selma, volunteered as a private and joined Capt William Boyles' cavalry company, known as the Mobile Dragoons, on the Gulf coast, near Mobile. Capt Boyles was a prominent lawyer of the Mobile bar at that time. After serving 12 months the company reorganized with Capt J H Marshall, a noted wholesale merchant of Mobile, as captain. He was wounded in the Shieldsboro, Miss, fight, with the 9th Connecticut, and was so disabled that he never rejoined his command. Capt Boyles was authorized by the war department to raise a regiment. He succeeded in doing so. This command was known as the 56th or 57th Alabama cavalry.

After serving in Marshall's company a part of the ensuing year, and being anxious to see more active service, the coast service consisting entirely of scout, reconnoitering and skirmish engagements, I procured a substitute to take my place in the dragoons and accompanied Gen J W Hardee through Bragg's memorable march into Tennessee and Kentucky. Hardee was then moving northward, via Mobile, Meridian and Selma.

By way of digression I here say that Gen Hardee's plantation and my plantation, in Dallas county, Ala, joined with only a dividing fence between; hence our personal intimacy, and as a further digression I should say that my substitute made a gallant and faithful soldier to the end.

In the meanwhile I was in active duty in Kentucky and Tennessee, as an evidence of which I refer to the Atlanta Constitution, the Selma Reporter, the Chattanooga Rebel and other newspapers of October, 1862 date, for a full account of the battle of Perryville, Ky, in which S G Spann, of Alabama; J Rochelle, of Louisiana, and Johnson, of Georgia (Christian name not remembered), distinguished themselves for valiant conduct; for which conduct Hardee and several other officers signed a written commendation of S G Spann to the confidence of the secretary of war. On the faith of this paper I presented myself at the office of the secretary of war, in Richmond, Va, to whom I was introduced by my old friend and classmate the Hon A H Garland, U S senator from Arkansas.

The following is a copy of the document authorizing the enlargement of my usefulness, and speaks for itself; the original I hold in my possession:

Confederate States of America, War Department, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Richmond, Va, April 21, 1863—Authority is hereby granted to S G Spann to raise for the service of the Confederate States a company from the inhabitants east of the Mississippi river, as scouts or such other service as they may be assigned to.

After the company is raised Mr Spann may proceed, if he can, to organize first a battalion and then enlarge that battalion to a regiment.

The organization when raised will be mustered into service, and copies of the muster rolls forwarded for file in this office. It will be subject to the rules and regulations govern-

ing the provisional army of the Confederate States

By command of the Secretary of War Samuel W Meiton, Major and A A G S G Spann, present

Pursuant to the foregoing authority, I first organized a company in Mobile, with headquarters at Stone Street Redoubts; Lieut Ed Keith as drill master; John C Ransom, A Q; Gen Dabney H Maury, department commander. I then proceeded to raise other companies to form a battalion of mounted cavalry. This I succeeded in perfecting, with J M Tindal as captain of Company A, S A D Steel as captain of Company B, M M Burke as captain of Company C and John Harrison as captain of Company D.

In the outset this command was gotten up with the expectation of operating under orders of Gen Hardee, as indicated above. But Gen Hardee was transferred to the Eastern division, which changed the nature of the service and opened new territory for future operations. The above named companies were ordered to Tuscaloosa, Ala, where, in September, 1863, the command was duly organized, with S G Spann major. The muster rolls were formally made out, copies of which were forwarded to the secretary of war. Tuscaloosa was the gateway into Northwest Alabama.

It was at Tuscaloosa that the Confederate States Military Academy was established. The chief cotton, wool and shoe and hat factories were located there. The iron bridge across the Black Warrior River connected the western and eastern sections of Alabama at this point. The enemy had made frequent raids in that vicinity and the city was on several occasions under imminent danger of being captured. Gen N B Forrest was stationed at Okolona, Miss, Gen G J Pillow was stationed at Montgomery, Ala, and I was stationed at Tuscaloosa, Ala, with instructions from Gen Maury to report ready for duty to both Gen Forrest and Gen Pillow, who were about equally distant from Tuscaloosa. This was promptly done. My command up to this time was known as Spann's battalion of independent scouts. Gen Pillow objected to the style as calculated to mislead and produce confusion. He therefore advised that the command should take some numerical designation. No objection being interposed, the command was called the 18th Confederate cavalry, and forwarded Gen Pillow's recommendations to S Cooper, A and I General, Richmond, that in future Spann's battalion of independent scouts should be known as the 18th Confederate Cavalry, and it so appears in my subsequent reports.

Now that the main forces of Confederate troops had been transferred to Eastern field of action, all North Alabama was consequently exposed to Federal raids and depredations by deserters and Union sympathizers who had organized into bands and highway robbers generally.

This battalion had hardly gotten into fighting trim when a squad of reconnoitering scouts dashed into camp and reported two Federal raids heading towards Tuscaloosa, one under command of Federal Col Grierson, and the other under command of Federal Col Strait. Gen Forrest had received simultaneous notice of their approach and at once intercepted them at Sand Mountain, North Alabama, where he gained a signal victory with only slight casualties, himself receiving a wound in the heel. The 18th battalion, being skillfully deployed along the Watermelon Road, leading down to Tuscaloosa from the direction of the fight rendered efficient service against detached squads of the enemy. The thanks of the city officials, and professors of the State cadets, and the superintendents of the various factories were cordially tendered this battalion. Gen Forrest's command, after this engagement, moved to the front, but this battalion continued in Tuscaloosa and in the immediate support of Gen G J Pillow's orders.

For the more effectual execution of the duties devolved upon me I issued several general orders, defining the requirements of the law of exemption and conscription, also an appeal to the deserters then in hiding and who could not be reached by the ordinary process. These orders and appeal were published in the Tuscaloosa Observer, and also in hand bills for more effective distribution.

Just at this juncture another dark speck of turbulence showed itself in South Alabama and East Mississippi. About one hundred Choctaw Indians had been mustered into the Confederate service under Capt J W Pierce, an excellent and brave officer, but a camp feud sprang up and many of his Indian comrades mutinied which threatened his destruction and their desertion to the enemy. To avert this impending calamity all his commissioned officers (white) and non-commissioned officers (Indian) petitioned Adj Gen Cooper to have their commands transferred to my command and personal charge as dismounted scouts. This petition was granted and I established two camps of Choctaw warriors, one at Mobile, Ala, and one in Newton County, Mississippi, on the Meridian and Jackson Railroad. This command was styled 1st battalion of Choctaw Indians.

In a short time over three hundred warriors were enrolled and ready for service. Unfortunately, however, a part of the Indians, while reconnoitering near Lake Ponchartrain, were drawn into action before they were thoroughly drilled in the manual and skirmish tactics.

New Orleans was then in the hands of the Federals and their gunboats plied the coast all along Mississippi, and the Federal soldiers penetrated the interior. During one of their landings Company A, commanded by Capt B Duckworth, First Lieut Calvio Doolittle, Second Lieut R H Welsh, Third Lieut W Cunningham, First Corp'l G Ainsworth; Company B, Cap: Thos A D Steel, First Lieut Mobly, Second Lieut Furlow, Third Lieut John Harrison, First Corp'l Wm Robinson, together with their non-commissioned Indian officers and sixty three privates, engaged the enemy, who had landed in superior forces near Lake Ponchartrain. During this conflict these Indian braves fought nobly. But the skill of the enemy and their superior numbers and quality of arms were too much for them. Mobly and Pearce, together with seventeen warriors, were captured and placed aboard the Federal gunboat Maple Leaf and taken to New Orleans. Pearce and several of the Indians escaped and returned to camp. The balance were carried to New York city and exhibited as curiosities.

"Indian Warriors in Confederate Uniform!" This line furnished an amusing headline to the great dailies of the North.

This portion of the Choctaw battalion became greatly demoralized. Several of their leaders went to Mobile and employed Percy Walker, a prominent lawyer at the Mobile bar, to procure their release from service.

To prevent complications and consequent estrangement of the Indians against the Confederacy I promptly advised their full payment and honorable discharge the service. This was done at once. The other two companies of Indians continued in service, engaged only in scout and reconnoitering duties; piloting Confederate scouts and giving notice of Federal encroachments, which became of frequent annoyance after the fall of Vicksburg. I have elaborate data and propose to give the redskin braves and their excellent commanders conspicuous mention in my forthcoming "Four Years' Life in Camp." The historian who presumes on placing a history of the civil war before the world with the omission of Spann's battalion of Choctaw Indians will do himself an injury and a band of brave warriors a serious wrong.

The 18th battalion of Confederate cavalry continued to do desultory service in both offensive and defensive warfare in North Alabama. When Gen Pillow, with his brigade, was ordered to take the field I applied for admission into his brigade, but the officials of Tuscaloosa petitioned the war department to forbid this battalion's departure from their midst. This request was acceded to by the department. All these matters, and much more, which constitute the part I took, will be set forth more elaborately in due course of time.

As an evidence of the strong brotherly attachment that those brave, crude, full blood Indians cherished for Confederate soldiers I here instance one event that occurred near my Indian camp, in Newton County, Miss. A freshet was on and the water in Chukky River was running above the railroad bridge, trains came with soldiers going towards Vicksburg. The train plunged into the river, precipitating many soldiers into the raging waters. I was present at my Indian camp during this catastrophe and ordered my Indians to hasten to the rescue. Without an instant of hesitation over one hundred of these noble braves plunged into that turbulent river and rescued all the soldiers alive, except twenty-one, whom they brought out upon the bank lifeless and placed them side by side. After identification these unfortunate soldiers were crudely buried. The greatest interest was manifested by these Indians in their voluntary act of humanity as well as their pride of courage and respect for their commander. This incident can be vouched for by living witnesses, who now reside in the vicinity.

We must remember that the best history is that history which does not omit the minor details of even the most humble factor that helped to make up the grand whole. The tiniest rill pours its living current into some other stream, which helps to make the greater rivers that fill the mighty ocean; so, when the best history of the war between the States shall have been published the humblest Confederate soldier whose readiness to do his duty at all times on the battlefield as a soldier, though lacking often the opportunity to prove it, shall claim a conspicuous and honorable place in its pages.

With this spirit, future pages shall embrace not only the part I took, but particularly the heroic deeds of comrades with whom I claim the honor of having shared the four years' perils of soldier's life.

By way of postscript, my surrender was at Mobile, Ala, July 10, 1865—I retaining all equipment, side arms, etc.

The Appetite of a Goat. Is excited by all poor dyspepsies whose stomach and liver are out of order. All such should know that Dr. King's Liver Pills, the wonderful stomach and liver remedy, gives a splendid appetite, sound digestion and a regular bodily habit that insures perfect health and great energy. Only 25c at J. F. W. DeLorme's drug store.

A Lost Battalion.

Statements From Leading Ex-Confederates in Sumter

The Committee Appointed by Camp Dick Anderson, United Confederate Veterans, After Careful Investigation can find no Trace of the Organization Which Major S G Spann Claims to Have Commanded—Messrs Walsh and Brownfield do not Remember Ever to Have Asked Major Spann to Publish His "Experience."

To the Editor of The Sunday News: In your issue of 25th February appears an account of Major S G Spann of a battalion of Choctaw Indians and a battalion of Confederate cavalry (18th) commanded by him.

We would not take any notice of this piece but for the fact that Major Spann writes as if it is sanctioned by our camp, Dick Anderson, No 334, U C V. We therefore desire to make the following statement:

We are a committee appointed by the camp to examine into the war record of its members and wrote Major Spann asking where and what time the 18th Confederate battalion was formed. We could find no record of same in any of the histories which were accessible to us and we received no reply. When his piece appeared in your paper he was asked to appear before us, which he did on this day, and still we are unable, even with his assistance to find any record of the above mentioned commands, and we do not desire that our camp or any part of it shall be considered as sanctioning this account.

We respectfully ask that you publish Major Spann's letter, (addressed to Col T V Walsh, clerk of committee; Capt R J Brownfield, historian, and others of Dick Anderson Camp, Sumter, S. C.,) which was sent you with the account of his battalions mentioned above.

Also the enclosed letters of Col T V Walsh, clerk of our committee, and R J Brownfield, historian of our camp.

We, as a committee of Dick Anderson Camp, do not endorse in any way the account which appeared in your paper of the 25th of February nor does our camp do so.

When Major Spann can show to our satisfaction that he commanded these battalions during the war then we will be glad to change our present opinions.

Respectfully, W D Scarborough, chairman; P P Gaillard, committee Dick Anderson Camp, 334. Sumter, March 6, 1900.

MAJ. SPANN'S LETTER TO THE SUNDAY NEWS.

Col Thos V Walsh, Clerk of Committee; Capt R J Brownfield, Historian, and others of Dick Anderson Camp, Sumter, S C.—Confederate Comrades and Friends: Thanking you for courtesies, and yielding to your kind solicitations to contribute to the literature and history of "The Lost Cause" a report of the part I took in the war between the States, I take pleasure in complying with your request in this manner and to the extent that I presume is sufficiently adequate for the present.

The part I took was only the part taken by thousands of Confederate patriots, who, like myself, offered themselves a willing sacrifice to principle and conscientious duty. It is a pleasure rather than a task to have this opportunity to laud the heroic deeds of others, the glory of which I have the honor to say I sometimes shared. Yet, as for myself personally, so far short were my achievements when measured by my sacrifices and personal expectations, that I would really deem any effort on my part in this direction, if unsolicited, mere hollow egotism.

Replying, therefore, to your esteemed favor, and thanking you for the "blacks" to which you call my personal attention, and as a matter of respect and esteem, both to yourselves and those whom you represent, as well as to those brave, unflinching comrades whose patriotic fidelity I cherish dearer than life itself, I herewith send you the accompanying fragment of a yet unpublished "Four Years' Life in Camp." Fraternaly yours, S G Spann.

CAPT. BROWNFIELD'S LETTER

To the Editor of the Sunday News: I do not remember requesting Major S G Spann to publish his "experiences" with the 18th battalion, Confederate cavalry, as the headlines of his communication in your last Sunday's issue would indicate.

R J Brownfield.

COL WALSH'S LETTER

To the Editor of the Sunday News: I note in last Sunday's issue of The Sunday News you publish a communication from Major S G Spann as to the 18th battalion, Confederate cavalry. The headlines say that I and another comrade requested the publication of said piece. I can't recall ever making such request.

Thos V. Walsh. Sumter, March 1, 1900.

Major S G Spann's reply to the Dick Anderson Camp committee in yesterday's Item was banded in for publication this morning, but owing to its

length, we are compelled to let it lie over until next issue.

Maj. Spann says that at no time did he ever say that he was requested to "publish" his war record, but says he was requested to put in writing the time and place of the organization of his command, by the committee, and that he preferred printer's ink to writing ink, under the circumstances. He says he had nothing whatever to do with those headlines, they were the production of the printer and not himself. He says not even in those headlines does it appear that he was requested to publish his communication.

Democratic Organization.

Columbia, March 9.—Secretary Gunter, of the State executive committee, has been receiving a great many letters of inquiry about the Democratic organization and so that there may be general information upon the matter the following statement has been prepared:

The township or ward clubs, says Secretary Gunter, shall meet on the fourth Saturday in April. These local clubs elect a president a recording and a corresponding secretary and a treasurer, and shall have three working committees and not less than three members each, viz: A committee on registration, an executive committee and such other committees as may be deemed expedient.

These clubs shall operate under the control of a county executive committee, which shall consist of one member from each club, to be elected by the respective clubs. The executive committee shall appoint its officers, except the chairman, who shall be elected by the county convention. The local clubs shall elect one delegate to the county convention for every twenty five members and one delegate for each majority fraction of twenty five. The county convention shall be called by the county executive committee to meet on the first Monday in May and when assembled shall be called to order by the chairman of the executive committee, and the convention shall proceed to nominate and elect from among its members a president, one or more vice presidents, a secretary and a treasury, a member of the State executive committee and delegates to the State convention, each county being entitled to double the number of delegates in the State convention as it has members in the general assembly. The State executive committee to meet on the third Wednesday in May. The State convention elects delegates to the national Democratic convention and a member of the national Democratic executive committee.

London Word Cutters.

Time is required by an American ear to accustom itself to English "as she is spoke" in London. The cockney who had no difficulty of corrupting the Norman French, making Route de Roy "Rotten row" and Marie le Bon "Marylebone" and Beachamp, who was one of the principal lieutenants of the Conqueror and was rewarded with the lands at Warwick, into "Beecham" would readily call High Holborne "Ighobon" and Ludgate Hill "Lugutill." Indeed the English of the cab and bus driver, bright as they are in their own employments, is not readily understood. One has to ask a bus conductor more than once as to the identity of the place to which he is bound, for in calling out the names there isn't the faintest resemblance to what he considers the proper pronunciation.

The Way Out.

"So you refuse to give me the money?" said the prodigal son. "Not another cent do you get," replied the stern parent. "Then here goes," said the youth as he seized a silver mounted pistol from his father's desk. "Unhappy boy!" cried the old man, "would you take your life?" "No," replied the son, "I'm going to loan this to my 'uncle.'"—Chicago News.

Up to the New Standard.

"I understand you are looking for a servant," said the girl. "Oh, dear, no," answered the lady of the house. "When I was first married I was foolish enough to occasionally look for a servant, but I got over that. I'm looking for a general supervisor of the household now."—Chicago Post.

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An Awful Mishap.

Two passengers on an Atlantic liner, one an American and the other an Englishman, did not exchange the farewell courtesies when the steamer reached her pier usual between voyagers who have occupied adjoining staterooms and bobnobbed during an ocean voyage. A plausible explanation was vouchsafed by the American.

During the voyage the Englishman persisted in fraternizing with the American in a most obtrusive and annoying manner. Within two days of Boston the Englishman one morning hunted up the American and found him in apparent despondency, gazing seaward from the hurricane deck. "Confounded blue this morning, old chap. What's the matter?" And the Britisher slapped his companion on the back.

"Matter enough," growled the American. "Ship's lost; captain don't know which way to steer. Forgot to wind the compass last night."

The Englishman listened with mouth agape, then rushed off to tell his friends of the consequential mishap. Evidently the gullible Britisher was "pushed along" for some time until he found everybody guying him.—Boston Post.

Chesterfield's Wit.

Lord Chesterfield was never at a loss for a polite retort. Once he proposed a person as proper to fill a place of great trust, but which the king himself was determined should be filled by another. The council, however, resolved not to indulge the king, for fear of a dangerous precedent, and it was Lord Chesterfield's business to present the grant of office for the king's signature. Not to incense his majesty by asking him abruptly, he, with accents of great humility, begged to know with whose name his majesty would be pleased to have the blanks filled up.

"With the devil's?" replied the king in a paroxysm of rage.

"And shall the instrument," said the earl coolly, "run as usual, 'Our trusty and well beloved cousin and counselor?'" At this repartee the king laughed and with great good humor signed the grant.

At an auction sale of the effects of the late Herrmann, the magician, two pairs of silk stockings, said to have belonged once to the Empress Carlotta of Mexico, were sold for \$9. An expert who was present at the sale said the stockings probably cost \$30 a pair.

In 1861 the population of England and Wales was about 20,000,000. In that year 238 divorce suits were entered. Ten years later there were 416 suits among 23,000,000 population. In 1881 there were 618 out of 26,000,000, and last year there were 822 out of 31,000,000.

The storage of bicycles in Paris during the winter months is expensive. So a great many Parisians pawn their machines in the Mont-de-Piete, or state pawnshop. The interest paid on the advance of money is very small and is a great saving on what would be paid for storage.

Rev. S. L. Sloggett of Houlton, Me., has a copy of the London Times issued in 1796. As compared with the newspapers of today it is a very peculiar looking sheet. It contains an able editorial on the work of General George Washington and gives his address of resignation.

A Genius.

"Whew!" remarked the head of the firm after he had listened to the report of the chief collector. "Who can the rascal be? And all these people say that they have paid and hold a receipt?" "Precisely. Some fellow has been going the rounds, and wherever my men are sent they find that at least 75 per cent of the bills have been paid. He has even collected a lot of bills that we considered bad. He certainly must be a villain of the deepest dye, sir, and I have taken the liberty of notifying the best private detective in the city."

"Perfectly right. Send the detective to me as soon as he puts in an appearance. We must find this villain."

Half an hour later the head of the firm and the detective were closeted together.

"Can you find him?" asked the former.

"Sure! I'm satisfied now that I know who he is, and I'll have him inside the bars before morning."

"Who's hiring you and who's going to pay for your services?"

"You, of course."

"Then I'll do my own planning. If that fellow won't take \$150 a month to work for me, offer him \$200. He has the kind of talent I'm looking for."—Detroit Free Press.

The Final Touch.

"Brushley was a good hearted fellow; no one ever appealed to him for a loan in vain."

"No, and wasn't his death characteristic? He was struck by lightning, you know."—Philadelphia North American.