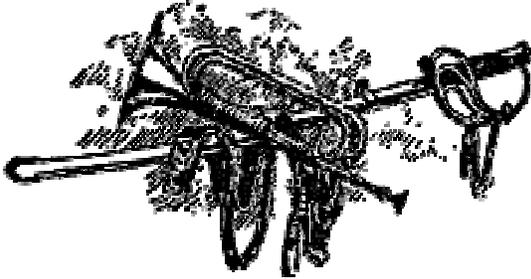


Olustee Observer - July, 1998
P.O. Box 382
Glen St. Mary, Florida 32040



Olustee Exposition
Sept. 19-20, 1998
Olustee Reenactment
Feb. 12-13-14, 1998

Olustee Battlefield Citizens Support Organization Membership Application

I wish to become a member of the Olustee Battlefield Citizens Support Organization, and to support its efforts in maintaining a part of Florida's, and our nation's, history.

Check one: new member renewing member

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE: work _____ home _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Please select your membership category: Method of payment: check cash
 Individual \$10 Family \$15 Patron \$30 Organizational \$50
 Individual Life \$100 Corporate Friend \$500 Corporate Sponsor \$1000

Make checks payable to: "Olustee Battlefield CSO," and mail to:
Olustee Battlefield CSO, P.O. Box 382, Glen St. Mary, Florida 32040

Museum Site Update

Andy Smith has made the initial contacts with **Georgia-Pacific**, the owner of the land south of Highway 90 that is also part of the original battlefield. The discussion of the possibility of the CSO obtaining this land in some manner has begun. It is here that the CSO hopes to build Florida's Civil War Museum. It is still much too early to report how this land, or even how much of it, might be obtained by the CSO. This is a major effort of the CSO and our thanks go to Andy. Please contact him if you can help in this effort.

Look For Our Ad!

The CSO is running a series of ads in the **Camp Chase Gazette** to advertise the **135th Anniversary** Reenactment of the Battle of Olustee or Ocean Pond. Members can also print a poster for the event from the WWW site and make copies for distribution to youth groups and other organizations, individuals, magazines, bulletin boards, and the media.

Membership

A **CSO Membership Application** is now available on the WWW site, as is our Mission Statement. Please make copies and distribute them to potential members. An application is also included with this newsletter. Please help increase our membership.

Clean Up

The Olustee Battlefield Historic Site was part of the **National Park Cleanup Day** in April. While over 200 people worked throughout the National Forest, approximately 20 Boy Scouts from Neptune Beach cleaned up the area of the Battlefield around the Interpretive Center.

Olustee Video and Booklets

Our video on the **Battle of Olustee and the Civil War in North Florida** is selling well. If you are interested in becoming a distributor for the video, or know of someone who might be, contact **Alice Williams** (904-259-3965) for details on the wholesale price and quantity. An order form for the video, booklets and other materials is available on the WWW site. The video is an excellent gift for schools.

The booklets are also available to distributors at reduced prices. Speaking of which, **David Coles** plans to update and reprint **Volume II: Men and Arms: Sketches of the Commanders and Units of the Olustee Campaign** which is currently out-of-print. David is also planning a fourth booklet that will contain letters from participants of the battle.

Battle Roads

An attempt is underway to identify the original roads that Union forces used on the way to and from the battle site. If discovered, these roads might be reconstructed and perhaps incorporated into the reenactment scenario.

History Mystery

James Henry Gooding first appeared in history as a 19-year old who signed on as an ordinary seaman on a whaler at New Bedford, Massachusetts in July, 1856. While at sea he wrote a series of letters that were printed in the **New Bedford Mercury** newspaper. These letters revealed that he had obtained a classical education sometime in his first nineteen years. This was unusual in mid-19th Century America, as Gooding was an African-American.

Historians are puzzled as to how and where Gooding received this education, but thankful that he did. Since most African-American Civil War soldiers were former slaves who could not write, Gooding's letters are one of the few sources of the experiences and attitude of the 186,000 black Americans who served in the Union forces.

Gooding was one of the first to enlist in the famous **54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry**. He supplied the **Mercury** with letters on his experiences in the unit on a continual basis. In fact between March, 1863 and February, 1864, the newspaper printed one of his letters almost every week. These letters are compiled in the book **On The Altar Of Freedom: A Black Soldier's Civil War Letters From The Front**.

Gooding survived the assault on Battery Wagner, but was wounded at Olustee while serving as a Corporal. Captured, he was sent to Andersonville prison, where he died. The preface to the book states that, "Gooding's eloquence helped persuade Congress to equalize the pay of white and black soldiers in 1864." What might this **Man of Letters** have contributed to our history if he had lived? A letter from Captain Grace, Gooding's commanding officer, reporting on Gooding's presumed death is available on the WWW site.

Memorial Services

The memorial service to the Confederate dead has long been a part of the mandatory, Sunday morning parade at the reenactment. Afterwards, a non-mandatory, memorial service takes place at the Union memorial park and cemetery near the railroad tracks.

After standing for an hour on parade it is understandable that many of the reenactors

wish to return to their camps for a late breakfast, last minute sutlering, or to prepare for the 1:00 PM Battle. However, some reenactors do take time to attend the Union Memorial Service. They feel that this service is especially important as many of these dead are still buried on the Historic Site.

As the lone representative of the 15th U.S. Infantry at last February's Union Memorial Service, I wish to extend the CSO's appreciation to the following units for also attending: 17th Connecticut; 54th Massachusetts; 47th, 48th and 115th New York; and a special thank you to the unidentified Confederate unit that joined us in remembering the Union dead.

Battlefield Kiosks

The artist has received the last recommendations for the design of the new battlefield kiosks. The design has now gone to the Park Service. Everyone involved is working to ensure that the kiosks are in place before next February's reenactment.

Olustee WWW Site

The Olustee WWW site recorded 41,184 "hits" as of July 31, 1998, and averages 50 hits a day. Our award winning site is located at: <http://battleofolustee.org/>.

Park Computer

The CSO provided the Olustee Battlefield Historic Site with a computer. It is used to answer snail mail and e-mail, produce press releases and process registrations, as well as store information on the site.

Olustee Exposition

September 19-20, 1998. Be there!