

**Report of Brig. General Darrell N. Markijohn, USV, commanding
OCTOBER 14-15, 2017--The BATTLE OF FIRST WINCHESTER AND CEDAR CREEK,**

**HDQRS. USV Brigade,
Middletown, Va. October 17, 2017**

REPORT ON PIPE BOMB EVACUATION AND ITS AFTERMATH

Immediately after Saturday's Battle, at approximately 4:00pm, a Sutler owner found a large pipe bomb in her tent. This particular tent was adjacent to the large activity tent and adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Confederate Army camp.

Law Enforcement was immediately contacted, and the entire Sutler area and Confederate Infantry and Artillery Camp was evacuated. The Frederick County Sheriff's Office responded. A Bomb Squad was dispatched to the site. A robot loaded the device into a bomb detonation vessel and with the use of secondary explosives, blown up. It has yet to be confirmed if the device itself was armed and capable of exploding on its own.

At the time all of this was going on, the Federal Army was in Camp in the far North West Corner of the Cedar Creek Battlefield, very far away from this scene. The information regarding this incident that came over the radio was vague at first. Our first hint of trouble was a statement that the Sutler area had been shut down due to a bomb "threat." Then we heard that there was an actual pipe bomb found in the Sutler area.

The news of this, and a bunch of unsubstantiated rumors spread through the camp like a wild fire. As a flood of individuals converged on General Brennan's Federal Headquarters, he wisely decided to issue a general Officers' Call so that he could disseminate what we knew. Approximately 100 individuals appeared around his command tent. At that time, he was going to advise everyone that the Sutler Area had been closed and that we were to remain in camp and await further instructions. As we waited for everyone to assemble, a radio communication from a Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation Representative ordered the Federal Army to "immediately evacuate through the North Gate." We were ordered to leave "without taking anything with us." We were told that law enforcement was going to inspect our camp, and once they decided that the area was safe, we would be permitted to return. Everyone standing around the command tent heard these orders.

Further private discussions with the CCBF representative revealed that the evacuation was being ordered by law enforcement and was due in part to safety concerns as well as criminal investigatory concerns. When we asked where we were to evacuate to, there was no immediate answer.

At about this time, a Frederick County Deputy Sheriff closed the north gate, and refused to let anyone in the camp, and began preparing for the evacuation.

General Brennan's response was measured and appropriate. He asked that the law enforcement official responsible for the evacuation order be brought to our camp for an in person discussion. He also ordered the entire Federal army to conduct an immediate and thorough search of the camp.

He demanded that every tent, every box, every container, etc., be searched, and that each company commander prepare a written report detailing the search of their respective company street. All reports were then ordered to be sent to Regimental headquarters, signed off by the Regimental Commanders, and then sent to and signed off by the Brigade Commanders. Within less than 45 minutes, the Federal Camp had been searched by the BEST PEOPLE that could determine if any strange and sinister device had been left there – the very folks that owned and were familiar with the camp.

We waited for our visit with law enforcement. No one came. Then about 6 pm. General Brennan and I were summoned to the Sheriff's Command Center for a meeting with the Frederick County Sheriff. Fortunately, by then, we were able to secure the written search reports from the 1st Brigade and the Federal Artillery, and we gathered them into a folder and brought them with us for our meeting.

When we arrived, we noticed approximately 30 individuals in the command post. Representatives from the FBI, ATF, Virginia Highway Patrol, Middletown Police, and the Frederick County Sheriff were present.

The Sheriff advised us that he brought us there to develop a plan to evacuate the Federal Camp. We were told that 4 school buses had been assembled to take the Federal Troops and civilians to a local elementary school. Law enforcement was then going to inspect our camps, and until they were able to determine that the area was safe and clear of any dangerous devices, we would not be permitted to return.

Fortunately we had our written inspection reports, and we were able to provide them to the Sheriff and advise him they were sound and reliable. We stressed that every person in the Federal Camp had registered for the event by providing proper ID and that the CCBF had the name of every person. We also were able to assure the Sheriff that we were an ARMY, that we had a chain of command, and that every person in that area was accountable to someone up that chain, and ultimately to General Brennan. We asked the Sheriff to trust the results of the search and allow us to remain in camp. The fact that 3 hours had since gone by since the pipe bomb was discovered, and that the evacuation of 1,000 individual in 4 buses would take another hour at least was not lost in our discussions with him.

After excusing himself, and having a discussion with someone at the command station, the Sheriff wisely relented. He assigned one of his Deputies to accompany General Brennan and myself on an inspection of the Federal Camp and to review the written inspection reports. If they were deemed acceptable to the Deputy, he would allow us to remain in camp.

General Brennan and I left with the Deputy and walked down the entire line of the Federal Camp. We started with US Artillery, then moved on to the Infantry Brigade camps and concluded with a visit to the Cavalry Camp. It was now completely dark. At the end of our inspection, the Deputy was appeased and we were able to report to the Sheriff that our camp was secure. The evacuation order was duly lifted.

We then turned our attention to lifting the ban on folks coming in and out of the Federal Camp. Only registered reenactors would be permitted in and out of the camp. General Brennan stayed at the North Gate to assist the Deputy Sheriff to confirm that folks attempting to come and go were registered. I stayed at the command tent to assist the Confederate Army in their attempt to return to their respective camps. The USV, at the request of the County Sheriff, was able to secure three licensed law enforcement/Firemen from the ranks to assist in checking ID's of all of the Confederate troops that were being permitted to return to their camps. We were stationed at the north end of State Rt. 11 near the Barbeque Restaurant where we checked a long line of cars and busses loaded with Confederate Troops heading back from the local elementary school.

Just before midnight, all of the Confederate Troops were finally back in camp and we returned to headquarters.

Observations

This was an attack on our hobby, LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY! It was a lethal attempt to harm our family and friends.

It is not known whether it was an active bomb. Most of the "reports" we have heard is that it was NOT an actual bomb. Law enforcement is understandingly reluctant to comment on that issue while it investigates this heinous crime. We may never know.

Regardless, someone spent a lot of time putting this thing together. The longstanding dispute over Confederate Flags, and the more recent assault on Confederate Monuments, is now aimed at Civil War Reenactors and their families, Blue and Gray.

We must now consider security measures at our Civil War Reenactments and Living Histories. And we will. This Hobby will not Stand Down.

And most importantly, we will not give this demented individual or individuals the satisfaction of knowing that they gained anything. They may have caused an event to be cancelled, and a lot of inconvenience, but they have only strengthened the resolve of every person present to continue with our mission of reenacting the history of our country. We do not tell political stories. Civil War Reenactors tell military history stories and there is no place for political movements inconsistent with this respectable objective, let alone ones premised on violence.

And finally, I commend all of our friends at the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, Board Members, volunteers, and especially Pat Kehoe and the Foundation President Joe D'Arizzo. You all worked your tails off to help us. Nobody should have to deal with this kind of emergency. We saw the stress and strain in your faces and yet you never took a rest until everyone was back in camp and safe. I speak for the entire USV in offering our thanks for the extraordinary efforts you exhibited in taking care of our members.

Very Respectfully, your obedient servant,
D. MARKIJOHN

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